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A STUDY OF CORNEILLE'S EVOLUTION.

(1630-1642)

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INTRODUCTION.

The present thesis proposes to study the early years of Corneille, from 1629 to 1642, some of his comedies and of his early tragedies, in the light of his environment, of his personal life, and of both the literary and personal influences he has undergone.

The earnest and affectionate study and research of quite an imposing line of scholars has—in a measure,—supplied lacunae in Corneille's biography, elucidated the text of his plays and minor poems and destroyed some unwarranted assertions and legends more picturesque than veracious. Even compared with the existing literature about other authors of first rank, Corneille's bibliography is abundant. The weighty "Bibliographie Cornélienne", supplemented by the volume of additions of Le Verdier and E. Pelay, is so imposing that it is only with humility that one can approach anew a subject in which so many scholars have done so much valuable work.

It seems yet justifiable to submit the general conception of Corneille's early work to scrutiny. The comedies to which he owed his early fame, have been considered as almost realistic portrayals of the higher society of the time, created, without examples, by an innovating artist. While this is true in a measure, it must yet be pointed out that Corneille's inspiration for his early comedies was to a large, if varying, amount, literary, derived rather from reading than from the observation of the daily life around him.

The critics of Corneille of the past century have been rather prolific with studies which betray unfamiliarity with the milieu and the examples by which his works, and especially his early verses and plays, were, in a measure, modeled.

His first play, *Mérite*, has been thought to be partly an auto-biographic self-revelation. But, by a comparison of the play with the literature of the times, the auto-biographical element in it is seen to shrink to slender proportions or to vanish almost entirely. In other respects the literature of the first decades of the seventeenth century influenced Corneille's early works. From it he took his examples of Preciosity in the *Mérite*, rather than from the refined salons of Paris with which he was not yet acquainted; from the theories of the "quelques modernes", whose works he said he had read before composing the *Mérite*, he evolved his early literary opinions. These influences prove that Corneille was well aware of the literary life of his period, even at his *début*, and that he cannot be conceived as a young man, who, without any literary preparation, began to write comedies to celebrate his sweetheart's charms.

How did Corneille become acquainted with the literature of his epoch? His native city, Rouen, was at that time a literary center and a printing center which compared quite favorably with the capital. It is in these surroundings that he grew to be a great tragedy-writer. To understand adequately the genesis of his early works, his environment must be closely studied.

With the present thesis it will be attempted to bring to light some of the relations which existed between Corneille and his predecessors in literature: to study the links which

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bound him to his surroundings and times; to trace, in the measure of the possible, the influence of these surroundings upon his spiritual development. In this way the man, the work and the times will appear more logically connected.

Corneille's early plays drew inspiration both from the literature of the times and from his own experience. But while they are considered, by critics, almost entirely as realistic creations, his tragedies, on the contrary, are conceived as abstract and intellectual; as evolved without being influenced by his own life as a man. With them Corneille is said to have changed his methods entirely, to have deliberately left the portrayal, in any form, of contemporary life, to bring on the stage superhuman heroes, who are rather incarnations of abstract principles than living beings. His heroic characters have been styled creations only of dramatic sensibility, into which not a part of his personality entered.

It will be endeavored here to point out that no such sudden change of method occurred in Corneille's career. He changed, no doubt, from the portrayal of the more real types of the time to the portrayal of heroic characters, but his tragedies too have roots in his own life, in his surroundings, in his experience. His characterization changes; his method of approaching a subject remains the same. For his tragedies as for his comedies he draws inspiration both from literature and from his own life. This will be exemplified here with the *Cid*, *Horace*, *Cinna*, and *Polyeucte*.

Corneille possessed a vitalizing power, which, in the words of M. Lanson, made him perceive in a few indifferent lines of a Latin historian the nucleus of a powerful tragedy. Now, this very vitalizing power is necessarily derived from

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insight into other men's thoughts and feelings; from a fine and analytical comprehension of the motives behind the actions of his contemporaries. And, since Corneille takes political passions as subject-matter of his tragedies, his power of vitalizing the facts which he read about in historical treatises, was yet derived from observations made upon the politics of his own time.

How much of his own surroundings and of his own life passed into his apparently so abstract tragedies, will be studied more in detail in the last chapters of this thesis. It is hoped that thus Corneille's early comedies will appear less as disconnected phenomena without any links to the literature which preceded them; and his tragedies less as abstract creations of an artist self-sufficient and individualistic to an unexampled degree.

Yet, in stressing the importance of Corneille's surroundings in his evolution as an author, will we sacrifice to a literary determinism? Shall we pretend to explain fully Corneille as an artist solely by the facts and events of his surroundings, by the personal and literary influences he has undergone? It is indeed not so easy to pluck the heart out of the artist's mystery. Even when Corneille's surroundings will have been studied in detail, there will remain still many veils which have not been lifted. The ultimate secret of genius is its own. Even if we could spy on him when he weaves the threads of his creative imagination, of his personal experience and of his deepest thoughts into the magic patterns of his tragedies, we would not understand him and his work, unless we felt deeply and sympathetically the beauty which was his guiding principle.

But the question is not whether the study of sources,

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time and surroundings will solve altogether the mysterious problems of the creation of art. It is rather: Will a better understanding and a more circumstantial knowledge of the genesis of Corneille's plays diminish or destroy our esthetical delight in them?

It is true that our pride and our sense of human and artistic independence rebel against the belief that men of genius and their work are modeled, even to a limited extent, by their environment, which they obey quite as much as they control it. And Corneille's work especially seems to evolve so much in the clear light of abstract conceptions that it may seem diminished by a search for the almost material conditions of its growth. In connecting Corneille with his milieu shall we have lessened his originality, shall we have robbed him of his individual creative power? Not in the least. His eminence and the fervid beauty of his art will remain his own, untouched and unspoiled. The enchantment of his work will not be dimmed, but rather increased, by a better understanding of the influences which moulded it and guided it, for in this light, his works will appear, not only as detached "things of beauty", but, also, as symbols of the spirit of that time of superior, active and strong-willed humanity: the French 17th century.

CORNEILLE'S EARLY FRIENDS AND SURROUNDINGS .

The literature of the seventeenth century is, in general, of little value for revelations of a personal nature about the authors of the time, since it favors the abstract, the general, the typical rather than the particular. The "honnêtes gens" —and what seventeenth century French author did not aspire to be classified among them?— inclined to be reticent about their private life. They considered it bad form to display too much of their intimate existence to the indiscreet gaze of the crowd. A significant illustration of this state of mind is that Pascal condemned Montaigne for his unrestrained indulgence in self-revelation. Imbued with the conceptions of his day, Corneille possessed to a high degree this aristocratic reserve about his personal feelings and adventures. With the exception of a few scattered lines for instance, in his *Excuse à Ariste*, he hardly ever referred directly to his "ego". To reconstruct his surroundings, to gather facts about his life, we have had to rely chiefly upon the doubtful anecdotes of the *Ana*, echoes of the gossip of the day; recently the valuable researches of Taschereau, Gosselin, Bouquet; and more recently still those of G. Dubosc and W.A. Nitze have revealed new aspects of Corneille or unknown Cornelian documents, and have disposed of some picturesque legends and unwarranted assertions.

Yet Corneille's formative years, when he was a student, a youthful lawyer, and a pleasure-loving rhymer at Rouen, have

remained comparatively dim and unexplained. He has been depicted at his *début*, as a young man without poetical training, isolated in his province; as one who, incited solely by the magic spur of love, produced his early poems and plays. The critics credited him with but slight literary culture and persuaded themselves that his inborn genius was sufficient to foster his talent in spite of his isolation and his supposedly unfavorable surroundings.

Sainte-Beuve, in contradiction here to his general views, conceived Corneille's genius as a kind of spontaneous blossoming, altogether independent of his surroundings, and he may be taken as representative. He declared that Corneille's was "a genius by instinct, personal and free of movement." (1) Nisard wrote: "No writer has merited more than Corneille the title of creative genius. He is unique in the history of literature by the prodigious distance which separates him from those who immediately preceded him.... An abyss separates Corneille from all that can be called dramatic production before him.... Descartes created the method and only purified the language. Corneille created both the language and the method." (2)

But is it not more logical to claim for Corneille no exceptional evolution, to conceive his talent as due, at least in part, to the intellectual atmosphere of his native city, to the books he read, to the friends he made, and to the plays he saw represented there? Genius, although not entirely dependent upon its environment, is modeled by it and developed in certain

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directions; it uses the humbler material of its daily life in the building of masterpieces. Has Corneille been a fortuitous exception to this rule?

The root of the conception of his genius as "free and independent", as blossoming forth without preparation, lies in a too literal interpretation of Fontenelle's anecdote, which no modern historian accepts at its face value: Pierre Corneille was suddenly transformed into a playwright by his love for a Rouen girl, the *Mélite* of his first work. We cannot doubt that his amorous feelings were the occasion for the first important expression of his talent — Corneille said, "Love taught me to rime" — but it is certainly not its origin. Without a certain mastery of verse-technique and of vocabulary, and, in a measure, of stagecraft, all of which presuppose an adequate knowledge of contemporary French literature, he could not have written even such a work as *Mélite*. Corneille was thrown upon his own resources in acquiring mastery of his mother-tongue, for the Jesuits of the time, in whose school at Rouen he was educated, employed only Latin and ignored the vernacular. (3)

In the past, critics have conceived Paris as the only outstanding literary milieu in the France of the time: this it became only decades later; Rouen has been regarded as a provincial town where literature received but scant attention. A more attentive study of Corneille's early surroundings reveals the fact that, in the first decades of the seventeenth century, Rouen was as favorable

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a literary milieu as was the capital. Corneille found there in abundance all that could give impulse to his early poetic endeavors and guide them toward the fervid art of his masterpieces: books and friends who incited his talent with the sympathy of common interests. His early work reveals serious preparation in language, verse-technique, and, relatively speaking, in stage-craft. He was well acquainted with the literary fashions of the day, and even so early a work as *Mélite* shows unmistakable traces of the literature of the time. (4) His early achievements are due less to a sudden flare of genius, kindled by love, than to his environment, which happily nurtured his poetical gifts. This literary and linguistic training ~~is~~ must have ^{been} acquired by his own efforts and at Rouen, for there is no evidence and little likelihood that he ever visited Paris before 1630 or the beginning of 1631, when *Mélite* was played there.

The present chapter proposes to give some information about Corneille's early friends who created the literary atmosphere in which his talent unfolded, and to point out some facts about his surroundings which must have stimulated his early literary endeavors. Some of his literary acquaintances were Parisians, whom he may have met at the capital after 1630-31, for, in 1635, La Pine-lière testified in his "Le Parnasse, ou le Critique des Poètes" (p. 30) that young authors were proud to be acquainted with Corneille Mairet, Rotrou and du Ryer.: "Tantot ils s'eloigneront un peu d'eux, et reviendront incontinent leur dire: "Messieurs, je vous demande pardon de mon incivilité: je viens de saluer M. Corneille

qui n' arriva qu' hier de Rouen; il m' a promis que demain nous irons voir ensemble Monsieur Mairet, et qu' il me fera voir des vers d' une excellente pièce de théâtre qu' il a commencée."

Other among his literary friends were his fellow-citizens at Rouen. Their relations with him are proved by poems which they dedicated to him or by other contemporary testimonials. Yet, in some cases, it is sufficient to prove that a Rouen poet or author, living at the time of Corneille's debut, enjoyed some local or more general fame, to conclude that he was known to Corneille, if not personally, at least through his works. In a city of the size of Rouen, where the poor quarters were separated from the richer ones, the inhabitants were so jostled together that a more or less intimate acquaintance must have sprung up between them. They knew of the works each one had published, and it is safe to conclude that among the books written by authors of his direct surroundings, Corneille must have read a number, which he heard mentioned by the authors themselves or by mutual friends. Unless we believe Corneille to have been entirely devoid of literary curiosity, he must be supposed to have been acquainted with the works of those authors who dedicated verse to him or in whose praise he wrote poems. And, since the number of such literary friends is considerable and the list of their works imposing, it is clear that Corneille was extensively acquainted with the literature of his times.

Other evidence for the reconstitution of his early surroundings is found in the great number of literary works printed

at Rouen in the first decades of the seventeenth century and in a few contemporary testimonials detailed hereafter.

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His first interest in the theater may have been awakened in the young Corneille by the plays which were probably performed in the "Jeu de Paume", which bordered the courtyard of Corneille's house in the Rue de la Pie. (5) It is known that in later years troupes of actors made use of this inclosure for dramatic representations, and, since it is generally accepted that the companies of Valleran and of Lenoir-Mondory visited Rouen before 1630, it is at least possible that the young Corneille was drawn to the stage by the impressions gathered in the popular theater of his own neighborhood.

There is no evidence that before 1630 Rouen possessed any important literary circles, any "salons" after the fashion of the famous contemporary Parisian drawing-rooms, but the interest in literature was very lively and general. To be convinced of this one has only to examine the accounts of the annual poetic contests the "Puys de l' Immaculée Conception", which mention a great number of the poets of Rouen, authors of weak and edifying verse in honor of the Virgin. Besides this, some of the fellow-citizens of the young Corneille had theatrical ambitions. In this respect Rouen may be said to represent the general state of Normandy in the early decades of the seventeenth century, when this province took the

leadership of France in literary production. Bertaut, Malherbe, Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, Benserade, des Yvetaux, Boisrobert, d'Ouville, St Amand, de Marbeuf, Huet, de Scudéry, Montchrestien, Brebeuf, Pradon were all Normans, as were also some lesser lights as the two Jean Auvrays, J. Behourt, P. Brinon, David Ferrand, du Hamel, Courval-Sonnet, J. Hays, de Méliglosse, Nicolas de Montreux, P. Troterel, and others. At the same time Rouen was an important printing center where all the valuable works of the period were published or republished. This means that Corneille in his early years had a great abundance of reading matter within his reach: plays, novels, popular pamphlets, manuals of gallantry, etc. He himself has left a few indications as to the authors he had read before or about the time of the *Mérite*, but he mentions only "feu Hardy et quelques modernes", and Ronsard, Malherbe and Théophile.

(6) There is, besides, a reference to the Chevalier Marin, in the *Gallerie du Palais*. It is, however, hazardous to conclude, as does Sainte-Beuve, from this paucity of record that "Ronsard, Malherbe Théophile et Hardy composaient donc à peu près toute sa littérature moderne" (*op.cit.* I, 34) It is unlikely that Corneille neglected the nearly complete library of the literature of his time printed in Rouen by Raphael and David du Petit-Val, Abraham Cousturier, Jean Petit, Théodore Reinsart, Jean Osmont, and others. From about 1624 to about 1629, generally considered the formative period of his talent, he must have visited the law courts, although he never tried a case. In the galleries of this building were the booksellers' stalls and hardly any new publication shown there could have escaped

his attention ,the more so since David du Petit-Val,the most important Rouen publisher of plays and verse was his friend and composed a sonnet in his praise. This sonnet is found among the laudatory poems in the first edition of La Veuve:

Saint Amant, ne crains plus d' avouer ta patrie,
Puisque ce Dieu des vers est né dans la Neustrie,
Qui pour se rendre illustre à la posterité,

Accomplit en nos jours l' incroyable merveille
De cet oiseau fameux parmi l' antiquité,
Nous donnât un Phénix sous le nom de Corneille. (7)

Both Raphael and David du Petit-Val devoted much attention to the printing of plays: they became, with Abel Langelier and Toussaint du Bray of Paris, the leading publishers of plays in the early seventeenth century. From their presses came the "recueils" of tragedies, besides works by Larivey, Robert Garnier, Jacques Grévin, Jean de la Péruse, Le Jars ,and others. They published nearly all the works of P.Troterel, sieur d' Aves, some of those of Hardy, and a number of pastoral plays. They also took a leading part in the publication of verse. Besides the volumes of du Bellay, Philippe Desportes, and others, they printed important "recueils" of poems of the best-known authors of the time. In the first edition of the fourth volume of his Théâtre, Hardy praised their care and accuracy, and expressed his discontent at the negligence of his former Parisian publisher , Jacques Quesnel; " Je donne un droit de primogéniture contre l' ordre à ce dernier volume.. ...veu que les précédents me font rougir de la honte des imprimeurs ausquels l' avarice fist trahir ma réputation, estans si pleins de

fautes, tant à l' orthographe qu' aus vers que je voudrois en pouvoir effacer jusques à la mémoire. Au regard du dernier, un imprimeur digne de sa profession te le rend, Amy Lecteur.... aussi correct que le peut souffrir la presse... Car j'acoit que Paris excelle en nombre d' Imprimeurs qui ne le cèdent à aucuns de l' Europe; cela n' empesche que beaucoup de passevolants se rencontrent parmy leurs vieilles bandes. Et de ma part j' aime mieux que mon livre.... soit bien imprimé à Rouen que mal à Paris." (§)

Besides these two excellent publishers—the two du Petit-Vals—A.Cousturier, Jean Petit, Jean Osmont, Claude Le Villain, and others published the young writers and new editions of the older masters. They follow in curious contrast : Remy Belleau and Théophile at the same time as the tragedies of Jean B Behourt; the tragedies and pastorals plays of Nicolas Chrestien, sieur des Croix, together with the translations of Buchanan's tragedies by Pierre de Brinon, Montchrestien's works, the Iris of Coignée de Bourron, the theater of Hardy, and the Guerrier Répent of Jacques Le Clerq. Garnier's works number twenty-one editions at Rouen from 1596 to 1618. Works of Mairet are printed by the side of those of Denis Coppée, "bourgeois de Huy", and of A.Gautier, " Apotiquaire Avranchois".

The Rouen publications from 1600-1630 show a motley confusion of styles and literary tendencies: it was a groping period preparing the classical age. Pastoral plays, tragedies, tragi-comedies, were printed there in greater numbers than anywhere else in France at that time . Abraham Cousturier published a whole series of plays, popular in tone, reminding one of the morality plays,

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without names of authors or dates. They probably constituted the current repertory of the wandering comedians who periodically visited Rouen (9) Popular and farcical literature was abundantly printed. The novels and stories offer us the names of Camus, Jacques Yver, Béroalde de Verville, Marguerite de Navarre, des Escuteaux, de Belleforest, Honore d'Urfé, Bonaventure Desperiers, Sorel, Francois de Rosset, and of a number of lesser lights. Poetry was represented by the important "receuils" of du Petit-Val and by editions of Du Bellay, Louise Labé, Ronsard, Théophile, Regnier, Mellin de Saint Gellais, Desportes, Olénix de Mont Sacré, Courval-Sonnet, and others; and by the local muses of J. Grisel, P. de Marbeuf, J. Auvray and others. Not the least interesting are the manuals of amorous discourse and refined manners in the style of the Précieux. Translations from the Italian, Spanish and Latin, as well as original works in these languages, were found. Works of devotion, historical treatises and descriptions of travels abound, but their number cannot compare with that of the Recueils de Chansons or with the amusing and frequently obscene soliloquies, satirical productions in the grotesque manner of Bruscombille and Gaultier Garguille, in which the sly Normans of the time took delight. (10)

It is not astonishing that, in a city where literature was so abundant and varied, a number of writers, more productive than talented in many cases, should have flourished. Their forgotten labor has not been in vain: their toying with verse or their sincere interest in literature created an atmosphere which stimula-

ted the budding genius of the young Corneille.

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When, in 1634, Corneille published his play La Veuve under the patronage of the well-known Parisian bookseller François Targa, several contemporary poets bestowed upon him high praise in verse: this is printed in the first edition. Clamorous Georges de Scudéry opened this concert of hyperbolic homage with his famous line: " Le soleil s' est levé, retirez vous ,étoiles", a prophetic utterance which he must have regretted a few years later, when, at the time of the Cid, his words came true. Jean de Mairet followed with an epigram, and Rotrou contributed two poems to this collection of conventional parlor-poetry. Boisrobert and his brother d' Ouville sang, more or less sincerely, the praise of their fellow-citizen. (11) Claveret also sent in two gems of his muse in eulogy of his future rival.

Besides these playwrights, the literary celebrities of the day, a few minor and now almost forgotten poets ~~had~~ paid their tribute to the rising glory of the young Corneille: J. Collardeau, du Petit-Val, and de Marbeuf. Since they belong to the personal acquaintances and literary associates of Corneille, some information about them is given here.

J. COLLARDEAU.

Marty-Laveaux (I, 386) remarks: " Julien Collardeau, procureur du roi à Fontenay-le Comte (Poitou), auteur de diverses poésies latines et françaises et notamment de quatre petits poèmes

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~~verses~~ intitulés: Tableaux des victoires du Roi. Paris J. Quesnel. 1630." This information may be supplemented as follows: In 1629 he sent a Pindaric ode to Bertrand de Vignolles, printed in a modern edition of the latter's Mémoires. He published, in 1635, a sonnet in honor of Richelieu, in the anthology Le Sacrifice des Muses au grand Cardinal de Richelieu, and, about 1643, a sonnet La Description de Richelieu: à la Memoire du Cardinal. He was highly praised by Balzac, in 1646, both as a prose writer and as a poet, and by Chapelain, in 1661; with the latter he corresponded at that date about a volume of verse, Les saintes métamorphoses, which was then ready for the printer but does not seem to have been published. He was born at Fontenay-le Comte and died there on March 20, 1669. (12)

PIERRE DE MARBEUF.

Pierre de Marbeuf, sieur de Sahurs et d'Imare, is well known as a minor poet who had his hour of ephemeral celebrity. He was born about 1596, probably near Pont de l'Arche, in Normandy, where his father was for a time "maître des eaux et des forêts". This function may have brought the Marbeufs into relation with the Corneilles. In 1625 his parents resided at Rouen. He seems to have lived for short periods in various parts of France. He left Rouen early for fear of the plague which at that time devastated the city, and established himself in Anjou. Thence he went to Orleans (1619) but must have paid frequent visits to Paris, since at that date he confessed he was in love with a Parisian girl. For her he seems to have given up his studies: "Le desir de luy plaire me fit perdre

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mes premières études", he says. Later he is found in Lorraine and in Savoie. Notwithstanding his travels, he spent a good ~~deal~~ deal of his time at Rouen, for he was crowned at the Palinod in 1617, 1618, and 1620, and he participated in this annual poetic competition in at least two other years. His "stances" entitled Anatomie de l'oeil (1617) brought him great renown. On various occasions he was the guest of the archbishop François de Harlay at his Château de Gaillon. The date of his death is unknown, but it must be placed after 1644, for in that year he contributed a sonnet to the *Mercure de Gaillon ou Recueil de pièces curieuses*, celebrating the magnificence of the archbishop's residence. Some of his publications were: Poems of which some were presented at the Palinod of Rouen and received prizes; *Psalterion chretien*, par Pierre de Marbeuf, sieur d'Imare, 1618, followed by *Poesies meslées du mesme autheur*; *Oeuvres poétiques du sieur de Marbeuf sur l'heureux mariage de leurs altesses de Savoie*, Paris and Rouen, 1619; *Recueil des vers de M. de Marbeuf, sieur de Sahurs*, Rouen 1628, with *Epigrammata Latine*; *Le Portrait de l'Homme d'Estat*, Ode (Paris, 1633), reprinted in the *Sacrifice des Muses au Grand Cardinal de Richelieu*, 1635; a sonnet in the *Mercure de Gaillon*. (1644). (13)

DU PETIT-VAL.

Marty-Laveaux (I, 387) attributes the sonnet of *La Veuve* to Raphael du Petit-Val, printer and poet at Rouen, who composed some verses in praise of Béralde de Verville. But the author of this poem must have been his son David, since Raphael, the father, died on January 5, 1614, and was buried in the "Eglise du Prieuré de St.

LÔ", in the side-chapel reserved for printers and booksellers. The anthology *Le Cabinet des Muses* of 1619 contains an *Épitaphe de Raph. du Petit Val*. His name appeared, however, upon books from his printing shop till about 1624. This is explained by the fact that his son David had not secured his license as "maître imprimeur" before that date.

David du Petit-Val also wrote poetry and was crowned nine times at the *Palinods*, from 1623 to 1633. The poem he sent to Corneille for *La Veuve* is a sonnet, a form which he preferred, as J.A. Guyot testifies in his *Trois Siècles Palinodiques* (II, 160): "Le sonnet paraît être le genre auquel il s'attache et dans lequel il réussit souvent au Puy de la Conception en 1625 et années suivantes." This friend of Corneille was, like his father, versed in Italian and even wrote verses in that language. In 1624 he was crowned by the judges of the *Palinod* for a sonnet in Italian dedicated to the Archbishop de Harlay. (14)

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The first edition of *La Veuve* also contained fourteen poems signed only with initials or by unidentified authors. I will endeavor to identify most of them, with the intention of ~~XX~~ throwing light on the early literary acquaintances of Corneille. ~~7~~ They were his friends at Rouen (15), not Parisian celebrities, and their eulogy must have been more sincere, their sympathy less feigned, their influence upon Corneille more direct. Their compliments were not offered so much in anticipation of reciprocal praise as

was the case with the de Scudéry's and the Claverets, who had been or expected to be praised in their turn by Corneille and compared to the immortal singers of antiquity. The following are the signatures of the several poets by names or initials :

GUÉRENTE.- I.G.A.E.P.- C.B. -L.M.P.- PILLASTRE, avocat en Parlement.- VILLENEUVE.-DE CANON.-L.N.- BURNEL.- MARCEL.- VOILLE BEAULIEU.-A.C.-

GUÉRENTE.

This poet was: Jean Guérente, physician at Rouen, descendant of an old family of this city. He participated in the Palinods from 1617 onward, and from 1623 to 1633, won every ~~year~~ year a prize. The Trois Siècles Palinodiques (I, 54, 233) mention as subjects of his poetry : " Les Noces de Cana.-L'Huile odorante enclose dans la pierre.-Un Marbre flottant sur les Eaux.-" He also sang of a miracle supposed to have been performed by the archbishop de Harlay, who, it is said, quieted a storm on the Seine by the sign of the cross. He acquired some local fame, and, in 1633, became one of the judges of the Puy de l' Immaculée Conception. (16)

I.G.A.E.P.

I explain these initials as : Jacques Goujon, Avocat en Parlement. This lawyer, son of the Rouen merchant Étienne Goujon, had been Corneille's comrade at school and always remained on good terms with him. A letter of July 1, 1641, written by Corneille to Jacques Goujon, who in 1638 was promoted from lawyer by the Parliament to lawyer to the king's private council, has been published by Taschereau. The end of the document touches on details of an intimate nature, which leave no doubt that Jacques Goujon was one

of the most trusted friends of the poet. In 1643 he obtained for Corneille the privilege for Cinna, Polyeucte and La Mort de Pompée and later he took care of his interests as his counsel. (17)

C.B.

These are doubtless the initials of the playwright Charles Beys, famous for his exploits in the cabarets. (1610-59) His bibliography has occasioned no little confusion. I will endeavor here to disentangle and supplement it: In 1629, and not in 1635, as is generally said, he published L' Ospital des Fous, (Paris, Toussaint Quinet.) This play was imitated from the Spanish and was republished in 1653 with a different title, Les Illustres Fous. His other plays are Les Jalcux sans sujet, 1635, and Céline, 1637. He contributed a number of poems to the "receuils" of the time.

The Mazarinade: Les vrais sentiments des bons Francois touchant la Paix: A la Reine Regente (1649), signed C.B., is doubtless by Charles Beys. In the same year he published a heroic poem: Les Triomphes de Louys le Juste XIIIe du nom. These works were followed by Oeuvres poétiques (1652) and by Stances sur le départ de Monseigneur le premier Président. (1652).

Contested Attributions.

The Comédie des Chansons (1640) has been attributed to Beys and to Timothée de Chillac.

The play L' Amant libéral has been ascribed to Beys and to Guerin de Bouscal. The satirical poem Le Gouvernement présent ou Eloge de son Eminence ou la Milliade has been attributed to Beys, to Favereau (a counsellor at the " Cour des aides") and to d' Esté-

lon (son of the Maréchal de Saint Luc.) (18)

L.M.P.

These initials have long been known as those of Louis Mauduit, Parisien. He was probaly the son of the composer Jacques Mauduit (1557-1627), friend of Baïf and founder of the Académie de Musique during the reign of Charles IX. In his youth he was a close friend of Théophile de Viaud, but, frightened by his condemnation, he left the Libertines and was converted to a stricter orthodoxy. In 1626 he contributed to a volume of poetry by various authors ,Le Banquet d' Apolon et des Muses, signing his poems L.M.P

In 1625 and 1628 he praised Nicolas Frénicle in verse preceding the latter's Oeuvres. In 1631 he published a volume of poetry ,Izabelle, Amours de L.M.P. Another publication gave his name in full, Les Dévotions de L.Mauduit, P. (a second edition.1633) (19)

Pillastre, avocat en Parlement.

To the Norman family of this name belonged the abbé Pierre Pillastre, historian. The Pillastre, lawyer at the court of the Parlement, who signed one of the poems for La Veuve , was one of Corneille's colleagues at Rouen.(20)

VILLENEUVE.

Jean Cészar de Villeneuve did not sign his contribution, but he wrote to Corneille:

Reçois ces vers dont VILLENEUVE,
Ravi des beautés de ta Veuve,
A fait hommage à ton savoir.

J.C. de Villeneuve was a Provençal nobleman, belonging to a celebrated and ancient family.. Among his ancestors he counted

Elein de Villeneuve, grandmaster of Rhodes. (died 1346). His oldest brother ,Arnaud de Villeneuve, was made a marquis by Louis XIII in 1612. He himself had the titles of "sieur de la Garde de Freinet" and Sieur de la Motte. He had the reputation of being one of the most cultivated gentlemen of letters of his time.

Malherbe, with whom he was very intimate, praises him in one of his latest odes:

La Garde, tes doctes écrits
Montrent le soin que tu a pris
A savoir toutes belles choses;
Et ta prestance et tes discours
Étalent un heureux concours
De toutes les grâces écloses.....

A letter of Malherbe to Villeneuve mentions " le judicieux Du Vair, notre commun ami". Guillaume Colletet, who dedicated to him his poem Les Bergers, wrote:

Cher Villeneuve, à qui les doctes soeurs,
Ont a l' envie prodigué leurs douceurs,
Gentil esprit, âme la plus polie
D' entre tous ceux dont l' amitié me lie.....

Les Divertissements. 1631.

He was also an intimate of Louis Mauduit (see above), who dedicated to him some of the poetry of his Izabelle. Verses of both are found in the two volumes: L'Impiété des Déistes, Athées et Libertins de ce temp, combattue et renversée, etc;, by Frère Martin Mersenne, 1624; and in the second volume, which appeared at the same time, but with a slight change of title: L'Impiété des Déistes et des plus subtils Libertins découverte et réfutée par raisons de Theologie et de Philosophie, etc;, 1624;

The works of Villeneuve were probably never printed;

Malherbe eulogized his Histoire Sainte and testified that his Car~~n~~-
 naval des honnêtes gens had obtained great success at the court;
 The magistrate, liber^eine, and playwright, Nicolas Frénicle, who was
 praised by Villeneuve in a complimentary poem in his Oeuvres poeti-
 ques 1625), returned the compliment by eulogizing one of Villeneu-
 ve's poems: Le Poème de la Tulippe, which probably does not exist
 in print. (21).

DE CANON.

This poet-lawyer was one of the colleagues of Corneil^L-
 le. He has left ^amanuscript, Mémoires du sieur de Canon, avocat en ~~le~~
 Parlement de Normandie. He ^{was}probably related to the celebrated lawy-
 er, Pierre de Canon, author of the Commentaire sur les coutumes de
 Lorraine (1634), who was ennobled by the Duke of Lorraine in 1626,
 en consideration de sa probité, doctrine et capacité, et de l'esti-
 me et réputation en laquelle il estoit ^{entre}les premiers de sa profes-
 sion. (22).

L. N.

L.N.

These initials probably stand for Martin Le Noir,
 a priest of the order of the Augustins of Rouen, an author and a
 poet. As Corneille's brother, Antoine, entered that order in 1627,
 Le Noir must have been acquainted with the Corneille family. Le
 Noir published: L'Uranoplée ou Navigation du Lict de Mort au port
 de Vie, 1616; Le naif image de l'envie (with stances and sonnets)
 présenté en étrennes à toute la tres noble et antique maison de Ms^s.
 les généreux Martels, 1611; L'Ante-Christ, a poem of which at least
 three editions are in existence; Apologie contre la résolution de

la Sanctification du SainctDimanche et autre festes, Rouen, without date; La franche acceptation du deffly faict a frère Martin Le Noir, prieur des Augustins par certain calomniateur anonyme, without date; Quatorze Sermons prêchés à Rouen, without date; Sermon funèbre prononcé au conduit mortuaire de très haut et puissant Seigneur Messire François Martel, le 4 juillet, 1631, Rouen, 1631. The date of the death of Martin Le Noir has been accepted as 1620 erroneously, for, as shown by the last publication mentioned here, he preached at the burial of François Martel in 1631. (23).

BURNEL

Some of the works of this poet are: Ode présentée à Monseigneur le ^{prince} de Conty en la maison de ville sur son arrivée à Paris. Signed: ~~Burnel, Paris, 1649;~~ a Mazarinade: Les Remerciements de la France pour la Paix, a Monseigneur le Prince de Conty, Paris 1649. (24).

Guillaume Marcel.

This friend of Corneille, whose real name was Masquerel, belonged to the order of the Oratorians and was professor of rhetoric at Rouen at the time of the publication of La Veuve, & In 1641 he ^{was} teaching the same subject at the college founded by the Archbishop de Harlay. Later he became professor of eloquence at the College des Grassins in Paris. He was born about 1610 at Bayeux and died as curate of Basly (Calvados) in 1702. His works are numerous A few are listed her: Pax Promissa, sive pro Perpiniano capto oratio panegyrica, Rouen, 1643; In Eloquentiam curae primae, Paris, 1646; La Seureté catholique ou abrégé de controverse, Caen, 1662; Oraison funèbre de haut et puissant seigneur Odet de Harcourt, Caen 1661;-

La censure de la censure des tièdes ou remarques sur deux sermons de Du Bosc, Caen 1670; Histoire de la solennité de la canonisation de St. François de Borgia, Caen, 1672; Histoire de la suppression du Prêche de Basly, Caen, 1680. (25)

VOILLE.

This poet's full name was Voille de Bruyères, He wrote complimentary verse to Pierre de Ryer. In the Mémoire de Mahelot the stage-setting is given of a play by a "sieur Desbruyères", entitled Le ROMant de Paris. Is not this play, which seems lost, the work of Voille de Bruyères? (26)

Beaulieu.

Alais, sieur de Beaulieu, published in 1634 a volume of poetry, Les Divertissements d' Alais, sieur de Beaulieu, dedicated to Monsieur de l' Orme. He was in relation with Jacques Vallée, sieur de Barreaux, the famous libertine and with the circle of Marion de l' Orme. It is probably this Beaulieu who published the novels : Les Aventures de Polyandre et Théoxène, par le sieur de Beaulieu (1624), and La Solitude Amoureuse. (1631) (27)

A.C.

La Chèvre reads these letters as representing A. Chapelain, but this poet—probably a Parisian printer, publisher of Malherbe's works— is only known through a single poem signed by his full name and by one signed A.C. attributed to him. Is it not much more probable that the poem for La Veuve was written by Antoine Corneille, the brother of Pierre? In 1634 Antdine was twenty three years old. He made his debut as a poet at the Palinod of Rouen, in 1636, with an ode in honor of Saint Martinien. He was crowned

several times at these annual competitions and published in 1647

a volume of Poesies Chrestiennes. (28)

* N *
* n *

Thus we see Corneille in his early period surrounded by not a few literary friends and acquaintances and praised by them: de Marbeuf, J. Collardeau, David du Petit-Val, Jean Guérente, de Canon, Martin Le Noir, Guillaume Marcel, his brother Antoine, all of them living at Rouen or near ~~to~~ that city. To these must be added the celebrated archbishop François de Harlay (1590-1653). The Latin poem which Corneille wrote for the Epinicia Musarum Eminentissimo Cardinali de Richelieu (1634) was an answer to an invitation of the prelate to write verse in honor of Louis XIII and of Richelieu. He was considered one of the most eminent minds of his time: Franciscus de Harlay, vir linguarum dives, doctrin^a et auctoritate stupendus", says Abraham Golnitzzi in his Ulysses Belli-co-Gallico (Leiden. 1631. p. 209) On September 8, 1618, at the age of twenty-eight, he succeeded the Cardinal de Joyeuse as archbishop of Rouen and for many decades protected arts, letters and learning. He was a theologian, controversialist, historian, orator, and ^a writer of Latin poetry (29).

In 1630, ^{he} ~~François de Harlay~~ ^{at Rouen one of} founded the first public library ^{of}

France. ~~at Rouen in 1630~~. Desirous to foster the interest in letters and learning among the clergy and the other inhabitants, he transformed a building belonging to the Cathedral into a library, which counted from forty to fifty thousand ^a volumes. The Diaire du Chan-

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Celier Séguier says: " En la dicte bibliothèque on s' est assez longuement arresté, sans néanmoins en veoir les particularitez; elle a este donnée par le dict archevesque au chapitre de son eglise Cathédrale pour les inciter a l' estude...Il y a assez grand nombre de volumes, que le dict archevesque estime 40 ou 50 mil mal couvertz."(p.127)

In the chateau at Gaillon he assembled the circle called "L'Académie de Saint Victor" which he had founded at Paris. There gathered in erudite meetings the notables of the clergy of Rouen ~~Rouen~~, among other Antoine Gaulde, "vicaire-general" of Rouen, Hellenist and poet, and the canon Robert le Cornier de Ste Helène, "grand-vicaire", occasional poet and protector of letters. But the most important member of the Academy, from the literary point of view, was the prolific writer and witty friend of St. Francis of Sales, Jean-Pierre Camus, bishop of Belley.(1582-1652). He came to Rouen in 1629 as Abbé d' Aulnay and vicar-general to the archbishop. His fame, based upon a hundred novels, stories, and miscellaneous edifying writings, as well as upon his untiring apostolic zeal, eloquence, and wit, made him one of the most prominent literary personalities of the day.

Some other writers stood near Corneille; Pierre de Brinon, for example, a counselor at the Parlement of Rouen, who ~~he~~ died in 1658. It would have been very strange if Corneille had not had relations with a fellow-citizen who belonged to the same social milieu of magistrates as himself and who had published the tragic-comedy L' Ephésienne and other plays translated from Buchanan. ~~See~~

François d' Eudemare of Rouen, judge of the Palinods, after having been crowned many times himself, was certainly not unknown to Corneille. He was a historian and a devotional writer as well as a poet, and lived long enough to see the initial success of Corneille for he died of the plague July, 2, 1635. The learned and poetical society of Corneille's native city counted at the time many other men of science, wit and literary taste. The priest Nicolas Guillebert published eight or nine volumes and was one of the most successful competitors in the Palinods; Jean Titelouse (died 1633) was the most celebrated organ-player of his time and an occasional poet. A Rouen playwright, Le Vert, prided himself on his friendship with his famous compatriot. In the "Avis au Lecteur" of his tragi-comedy, Aricie ou le Mariage de Tite, (1646) he says: Les préfaces, que j' aime quand elles ne sont pas trop longues, ne me semblent point absolument inutiles, particulièrement dans les histoires peu connues.... Je n' ignore pas que cette mienne opinion ne puisse être condamnée de quelques uns; mais je sais bien aussi qu' elle est suivie de beaucoup d' autres, et que j' ai pour modèle et pour partisan (Comme pour ami et pour compatriote, dont je ne tire pas une petite vanité) le grand maître de l' art qui dans Cinna et le Polyeucte n' a pas jugé hors de propos de préparer ses lecteurs par des commencements semblables" (Marty+Lav. III, 367)

Le Vert produced two other plays Le Docteur Amoureux (1632 or 1638) and Aristotime, a tragedy. (1642)

Marty+Lavaux has printed a letter to Corneille from Claude Sarrau (X, 438), who must be counted among the early friends of Corneille.

He was received as counsellor at the Parlement of Normandy on August 4, 1627, and remained at Rouen till about 1636. His successor at the Parlement, Guillaume de la Basoge was appointed on March 3, of the same year. Sarrau had the reputation of being one of the most erudite men of his epoch. His collection of letters, *Claudii Saravii, senatoris Parisiensis, epistolae*, (1654) shows that he was in correspondence with Saumaise, Bochart, Gronovius, Fabricius and others. In 1627 already Hugo Grotius, the celebrated Dutch author and jurist wrote several epistles to him.

Taschereau in his *Histoire de Pierre Corneille* (11, 69) has ~~drawn~~ drawn attention to some of Corneille's friends. Among them some were, or had been, inhabitants of his native city; the Pascals, Lucas, "connu pour habile homme de tout ce qu'il y a d'habiles gens à l'Academie" (Boursault); Voyer d'Argenson, later French ambassador to Venice, and the poet Georges de Brébeuf (1617-61). The important literary friendship which grew up between him and Corneille and his indebtedness to his friend's work have been the object of thoroughgoing study. (30). A passage in Brebeuf's Correspondance sheds light on their personal relations. The plague was a devastating Rouen, as on many previous occasions during the seventeenth century, and Brébeuf wanted to leave the stricken city: "Enfin, il faut tascher de m'en tirer. Je vous ay deja dit que Mm. de Corneille m'offrent une place dans leur carosse. Le mauvais temps et ma mauvaise sante m'obligent à les attendre" (1, 72).

Both poets had great reverence for Madame Laurence de Bellefonds, an aristocratic and cultivated abbess, who reorganized, in 1648, the convent of Notre Dame des Anges at Rouen. She was the

author of various works, among others of a Traduction des hymnes de l'Eglise. It is said that she had a merited reputation as a tasteful judge of verse and that both Corneille and Brébeuf owed much to her enlightened counsel.(31).

As not the least among Corneille's literary acquaintances must be ranked the distinguished Rouen family de Campion. When Alexandre de Campion, diplomat, poet, and mayor of Rouen, published his book Les Hommes illustres (1657), Corneille addressed to him a preliminary sonnet ^{which} contains some proud lines:

J'ai quelqu'art d'arracher les grands noms du tombeau,
De leur rendre un destin plus durable et plus beau,
De faire qu'après moi l'avenir se souviene.

Le mien semble avoir droit a l'immortalité,
Mais ma gloire est autant au-dessous de la tienne
Que la fable, en effet, cède à la vérité.

Corneille must have been acquainted also with the two brothers of this important personage, Henri de Campion, author of interesting Mémoires, and ^{a worshipper of} the Muses. A member of this family, Louis Martainville de Marsilly, married in 1686 a daughter of Thomas Corneille.

Among Pierre Corneille's most devoted friends the satirical poet Louis Petit stands out. In his youth he had been one of the habitués of the Hôtel de Rambouillet and later, when "receveur general des domaines et bois du roy" at Rouen, he remained intimate with some "gentilhommes de lettres" like the Duke of Montausier, later governor of Normandy, and the Marquis de Saint-Aignan. He wrote verses to Corneille under the pastoral disguise of Damon, followed him to Paris in 1662 and after his death published an edition

of his works (32),

We might also touch upon the well-known friendly relations of Corneille with the Jesuits of his native city, in whose school he was educated. Among them he liked especially those who had a taste for literature. To his former teacher, the Jesuit Delidél, author of the *Théologie des Saints* and poet in Latin, he dedicated the poem beginning "Savant et pieux écrivain, Qui jadis de ta propre main, M'as élevé sur le Parnasse." One of his most intimate friends was the Jesuit and playwright Charles de la Rue, whose Latin poems he translated and who was probably the godfather of his third son, Charles Corneille. (33)

It is strange, no doubt, that Corneille never participated in the annual contests in religious poetry at the *Fuy de l'Immaculée Conception* of Rouen, where both his brothers presented verse; he may have been present at various occasions, as in 1640, when he thanked the judges in the name of Jacqueline Pascal. The reasons for his attitude are easy to understand as far as his early years are concerned. At this time he was a rather worldly young man belonging to the "gaie Jeunesse" of Rouen, as is proved by his early poetry, and by the risky and frequently indecent expressions of his *Clitandre* and his *Mélite* (erased from the editions after 1658). The time when he will versify the *Imitation* is as yet far off. But the *Palinods* always interested him, no doubt, as one of the literary activities of his native city.

The names of the authors cited above, although they do not exhaust the list of Corneille's early literary acquaintances, are sufficient to prove the existence at Rouen of a considerable

literary milieu at the time of Corneille's early plays. It is plain that a brisk literary life flourished in Normandy and its capital during the early decades of the seventeenth century, powerfully helped by the local development of printing, by the success in letters of a group of Normans— Malherbe, Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, Bertaut and Boisrobert;— and by the existence at Rouen of a well-furnished public library and of an academy counting among its members Camus, the archbishop de Har^{lay,}~~lay~~, and a number of local celebrities. Rather than as a young man almost ignorant of literature, who , by a stroke of genius was changed from a prosaic lawyer into a poet, we view Corneille in his early years as spurred on by his surroundings and by his friends to the preparation of his life's work. A sympathetic and informed reader of the literature of his times, as well as of antiquity and foreign countries, he associated early with the kindred spirits among the local savants, poets, and playwrights, and enjoyed from the beginning their esteem and their praise. Without yielding to a literary determinism, without pretending to explain Corneille as an artist and a creator solely by the early influences he underwent, it is yet justifiable to consider him as the most perfect interpreter of the literary movement of his native city and of his province.

NOTES.

1.-Portraits Littéraires I,:Pierre Corneille.

2. Histoire de la Littérature française. II,87-88.

3.- Cf. Ratio atque institutio studiorum Societatis Jesu, in G. Compayré's Histoire critique des doctrines de l' éducation en France I (1879),167.

4.-Cf. My article in Modern Philology,XVII,141 : " A Commonplace in Corneille's Méliete."

5.-Régistre du Tabellionage de Rouen. The property of the Corneilles was composed of " plusieurs corps et ténemens de maisons...bornés,d' un bout, par devant, le pavé du Roy en la rue de la Pie, et d' autre bout , par derrière, le jeu de paume de St.Eustache" Cf. Ballin.Extraits d' actes de vente relatifs aux maisons de Pierre et de Thomas Corneille.-Revue de Rouen (1863) p.241; and G.Dubosc, Trois Normands pp.43-44.

6.- Examen de Méliete,1660; Au Lecteur, Méliete, 1633.

7.- Marty-Laveaux,I,386. Du Petit-Val, no doubt, refers to the following verses of saint-Amant:

Cher compatriote de Lâtre,
Humeur que mon âme idolâtre,
Homme à tout faire, esprit charmant,
Pour qui j' avoue estre Normant.(La Vignel.1627)

This de Lâtre , or de Lastre, who published some poems in the Cabinet des Muses of 1619, and was crowned several times at the Palindods, was the maternal grandfather of Pradon.

8.-Oeuvres de Hardy.-Edl.Stengel. IV,Au Lecteur.

9.- Rouen was their "ordinaire séjour" (Bruscambille cited by Rigal, A. Hardy. p. 118) Chappuzeau (Le Théâtre François, p. 112) says of the troupe of the Marais: "Cette troupe alloit quelquefois passer l'Esté à Rouen." On January, 26, 1623, the Parlement forbade a troupe of comedians to play, either in the open air or in private houses, because of the plague. On July 23, 1629, farces played by sellers of medicine were forbidden. Cf. N. Périaux Histoire de la ville de Rouen p. 421. Gaultier Garguille played at Rouen. (Cf. Revue de la Normandie, 30 avril, 1862) In the colleges of Rouen a number of tragedies, pastoral plays and tragi-comedies were staged in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Cf. V. Fournel-Curiosités théâtrales anciennes et modernes p. 75, and Boyssse, Le Théâtre des Jésuites.

10.- Marsan, La Pastorale dramatique p. 275, indicates the importance of the Rouen printing shops at that epoch: "Le catalogue Soleinne nous en donne une preuve matérielle. De 1568 à 1600, sur 64 numeros environ, (Les éditions de Garnier mises à part) 6 seulement étaient imprimés à Rouen, contre 12 à Lyon et 24 à Paris. De 1600 à 1620, sur 104 numeros, Lyon n'en compte plus que 8, Paris que 31, tandis que Rouen s'élève à 48. Ces chiffres, sans doute, n'ont pas une valeur absolue, mais la proportion, au moins, est à retenir. In 1579 there were installed at Rouen 26 "Maîtres imprimeurs et Libraires". In 1601 they numbered 40. On May 16, 1615, the Parlement decreed that printers' apprentices should know Latin. From that date the printers were educated men. Cf. E. Gosselin. - Simples notes sur les libraires et les Imprimeurs Rouennais. Rouen. 1869.

11.- Boisrobert and his brother d' Ouville were residing at Rouen in 1634, when La Veuve was published : they too wrote poems in Corneille's praise. Boisrobert at that time temporarily exiled from the court, was canon of the Cathedral of Rouen. The Mercure de Gaillon (printed at the chateau of the archbishop de Harlay) contains a letter " de l' Eminentissime Cardinal duc de Richelieu au religiosissime archevesque de Rouen", dated January 31, 1634, beginning: " Ayant scue par le sieur de Boisrobert" The document proves that Boisrobert wrote to Richelieu from Rouen. A letter from Balzac (Oeuvres I, 444, (1665) shows that Boisrobert was at Rouen in May 1634. The achevé d' imprimer of La Veuve is dated May , 13, 1634 Cf. also Goujet XVII, 69, and Magné Le plaisant abbé de Boisrobert, Chap. I

12.- Cf. Mémoires de Bertrand de Vignolles " Collection Meridionale I (1869), 27-31; Dreux du Radier, Bibliothèque du poitou III, 473; Goujet XVI, 24; Lachèvre Bibliographie des Recueils collectifs I, 147 Oeuvres de Balzac, I, 147; 530, 552; Lettres de Chapelain III, 122, 231.

13.- Cf. de Duranville , " Le poète Pierre de Marbeuf" Annales de l' Acad. de Rouen, 1873-74; Paul Olivier, Cent poètes lyriques, Précieux et Burlesques au 17e siècle.-p.70; de Beaurepaire, Les Puits de palinod de Rouen et de Caen pp.152-57; A. Guiot, Trois Siècles Palinodiques; Lachèvre op.cit. I, 236, 381; IV, 149; Biogr. Didot, XXXIII.

14.- Cf. Frère Manuel du bibliographe Normand.

15.- Picot, in his Bibliographie Cornélienne, p.51, prints "sous toutes réserves" a note of P. Lacroix on possible identifications of the anonymous authors who contributed poems in praise of La veuve: " 22 pp. sont occupées par des vers que divers auteurs adressent

à Corneille au sujet de sa pièce. Ces hommages sont au nombre de 26. Ils sont signes de Scudéry, Mairet, Guérente, I.G.A.E.P. (Jacques Gaillard, avocat en Parlement), de Rotrou, C.B. (Charles Beys), Du Ryer, Boisrobert, d' Ouville, Claveret, J. Collardeau, L.M.P. (Louis Mauduit, Parisien.) du Petit-Val, Pillastre, de Marbeuf, de Canon, L.N. (Louis Neufgermain ou L.Nondon, auteur de ~~la~~ tragédie de Cyrus) Burnel, Marcel, Voille Beaulieu et A.C. (A. Chappelain ou Adam Campigny, poètes cités en 1633 et 1634!) P. Lacroix has forgotten one of the poems, the one contributed by Villeneuve, He tries to identify only FIVE unknown contributors out of Fifteen and does not prove that Corneille had any relations with the poets whose names he gives. The author of the present thesis agrees with two attributions : C.B. = Charles Beys and L.M.P. = Louis Mauduit, Parisien, identifications made before Lacroix by Goujet. (Bibliothèque Française.)

16.- Cf. J.B. Lecompte, Monseigneur François de Harlay.-Rouen! 1860, also an article by Héron in La Normandie, July, 1898.

17.- Cf. Taschereau. Histoire de Pierre Corneille (3ed.) I, 153, 252; Georges Dubosc, Trois Normands, p. 7.

18.-Cf. Linthilac. Histoire de la Comédie Vol. I; Lachèvre Op.cit. I, 10; II, 150; III, 214; IV, 71; Bibliographie des Mazarinades; de Leris, Dictionnaire p. 399; Goujet XVI, 293; La Vallière Bibl. II, 2 259.

19.- Cf. Goujet XV, 301; Viollet-le Duc. Biblioth! Poétique.

20.- The abbé Pierre Pillastre (1600+1666) was the secretary of Jacques Camus de Pont-Carre, bishop of Séez. He published a De Ecclesia diocesis Sagiensis (1646-52) 5 vol. His manuscript works seem to be lost. Cf. Frère Manuel du bibliographe Normand II.

- 21.- Cf. Dictionnaire des Moréri. VIII;Goujet XVII,27; Lachèvre
Le procès de Théophile II,100,146; Oeuvres de Malherbe..ed.Lalanne
I,285,355.
- 22.- Cf. Flouquet. Histoire du Parlement de Normandie,IV,422n.2;
Biographie Michaud,Suppl. LX,91.
- 23.-Cf. Oursel.- Biographie Normande; Frère.Manuel du bibliographe
Normand.
- 24.-Cf.Bibliographie des Mazarinades; Catalogue des Imprimés de
la bibliothèque Nationale.
- 25.- Cf. Oursel. Biographie Normande.-Lebreton.-Biographie Rouennaise -
Naise; Lecompte;Mgr. de Harlay .1868.
- 26.- Cf. H. Carrington Lancaster -Pierre du Ryer .p.9- Mahelot
cited by Rigal,Le théâtre français avant la période classique.
- 27.- Cf. Lachèvre- Le Procès de Théophile II,209.
- 28.- Cf. Lachèvre.. Bibl. des Recueils coll. I,143 and IV,88.The
Poesies chrestiennes were reprinted in 1877, in the collection of
the Bibliophiles ~~Mahelot~~ Rouennais". The Trois Siècles Palinodiques
give information as to Antoine Corneille's début.
- 29.- He addressed to his academicians a Latin poem , Solatium Musarum,
and collaborated in the Epinicia Musarum of 1634.
- 30.-Harmand;Essai sur la vie et les oeuvres de Georges de Brébeuf..
pp. 77 50,277,400,461.
- 31.-Her dates are from 1622 to 1683. She was the daughter of the
Marquis de Bellefonds " lieutenant-general des armées du roy " Cf.
Bouhours.Vie de Mme de Bellefonds. 1686. parin Histoire de la ville
de Rouen.III (1668),450;R.Harmand,Essai sur Georges de Brébeuf,p.
21; Oursel, Biographie Normande.
- 32.-His works are Discours satyriques et moraux ou Satyres general-

es .Rouen 1685, (republished by Olivier ,1883); Dialogues satyri-
ques et moraux, Rouen 1687, in prose. He left a manuscript Les Oeuv-
res poetiques de Louis Petit 1658. A part of it, in "patois normand"
was published with the title La Muse Normande by Chassau (1853). $\frac{1}{2}$
Louis Petit sent poetry to some of the Recueils of the time and to
the Mercure Galant. Cf. Goujet, Bibl. XVIII; Revue de Rouen, 1850;
Précis de l' Academie de Rouen, 1827; Lebreton, Biographie Rouennaise,
33.- Cf. Picot. Bibliographie Cornélienne ; Marty-Lavaux, X.

THE GENESIS OF THE MELITE.

I.- The Attitude of the Critics.

Pierre Corneille began his career as a writer of comedy and to his comedies was due his first reputation as a dramatic poet.

Rare écrivain de notre France,
Qui le premier des beaux esprits
As fait revivre en tes écrits
L' esprit de Plaute et de Térence;

exclaimed Mairet in 1634, in the complimentary poems of La Yeuve, and Du Petit-Val repeats upon the same occasion :

Ce style familier non encore entrepris,
Ni connu de personne, a de si bonne grâce
Du théâtre françois changé la vieille face,
Que la scène tragique en a perdu le prix.

His early plays acquired the esteem of the court. In the Examen of the Melite he expressly states that his first work " me fit connaître à la cour", and he repeats in the Excuse à Aristote : " Mon vers charma la cour". There exists evidence that some of Corneille's comedies were represented before the court , in 1633, at Forges, in Normandy, when the king, the queen and Richelieu resided there for some time.

But the spectacular success of the Cid and of the tragedies which followed soon, engrossed the attention of his contemporaries, just as they have very largely absorbed the attention of his posterity. His first comedies were almost forgotten, and it became the fashion to date his work from his first tragedies,

especiãlly with the *Médee* of 1635, and to dismiss his early productions with a few disdainful words. La Bruyère asserted :
 Ses premières comédies sont sèches, languissantes et ne laissaient pas espérer qu' il dut ensuite aller si loin. (2) Boileau agreed with him : Tout son mérite pourtant à l' heure qu' il est, ayant été mis par le temps comme dans un creuset, se réduit à huit ou neuf piéces de théâtre, qu' on admire et qui sont, s' il faut ainsi parler, comme le midi de sa poésie dont l' orient et l' occident n' ont rien valu." (3) Their assertions were echoed by Voltaire : " Ses premières comédies... sont à la vérité, indignes de notre siècle, mais elles furent longtemps ce qu' il y avait de moins mauvais en ce genre, tant nous étions loin de la plus légère connaissance des beaux arts..(4) La Harpe showed even less condescension : " On me dispensera, sans doute de parler des premières comédies de Corneille... On se souvient seulement qu' il les a faites et que sans rien valoir, elles valent mieux que toutes celles de son temps (5) According to Nisard they are only to be read through curiosity " (6)

in this way the general perspective of Corneille's work was altered. He was considered almost exclusively as a writer of tragedies of the heroic east. And ,since he was so superior to his many rivals he soon came to stand alone. His was declared to be : Un genie instinctif, aveugle, de propre et de libre mouvement (7) His evolution from the *Mélite* to the *Médee* was neglected. The notion of Corneille's absolute independence from his surroundings and from the literary efforts of his predecessors has been generally accepted. The Abbé d' Olivet exclaims: " Voilà Corneille

qui , sans modèle, sans guide, trouvant l' art en lui-même, tire la tragédie du chaos où elle était ~~tombée~~ parmi nous. (8) For Nisard " an abyss separates Corneille from all what can be called a play before him. (9)

With the publication of Taschereau's Histoire de la vie de P. Corneille (1829), a reaction set in. His first plays were here if not thoroughly studied, at least given some place in his work. But the former attitude of mind toward Corneille remained uppermost in the estimation of the critics. Many of them studied his first productions with the intention of discovering in these works of his youth the unmistakable signs of future greatness. As a natural consequence they were sometimes praised beyond their real merit. This has been especially true of his very first play, of The Mélite. The critics already perceived in this "coup d' essai" the methods, inventions and innovations of an independent writer with almost revolutionary tendencies. The tradition that Corneille was inspired by an actual event in his own life to write the Mélite, was interpreted as meaning that he wrote the play without taking any color from any of his predecessors and contemporaries, without going through the apprenticeship in language and stage-craft which is necessary even to the most original genius of the theater. So, for example, Roger Le Brun: "Mais voici que tout à coup, brusquement sur un ton nouveau ~~l'art / l'art / l'art~~ à la fois moins choquante dans l'esprit et dans la langue, presque épurée, la véritable comédie fait son apparition. Sans bassesse dans les caractères, comme sans outrance, dans l'intrigue, elle reflète assez bien, et d'alerte façon les moeurs de ~~l'~~

l'époque--C'est l'aurore de la comédie moderne; voici en effet, Pierre Corneille qui débute au théâtre, apportant l'art ou il n'y a pas encore que d'informes ébauches de comédie; voici Méliete, première oeuvre qu'ait produite le grand homme. (10) F. Brunetière is ~~not~~ ^{far} from sharing in this opinion: Je crois que dans notre littérature classique elles (les comédies) sont longtemps demeurées sans imitateurs, comme elles étaient à peu près sans modèles. Je crois qu'avec d'autres qualités elles ne sont pas moins originales en leur genre que la comédie de Molière, et que les Plaideurs de Racine. (11) According to these writers, who are spokesmen for more, the form, matter and treatment in Corneille's first comedies are almost exclusively the result of the poet's unaided inspiration. There seems to be no link between them and the literature of the time. In comedy as well as in tragedy he is, according to the expression of Sainte-Beuve, "a genius by instinct, blind and independent".

To test ^{these} affirmations it will be necessary to examine in detail the facts known about the genesis of the Méliete and to study the relation of this "coup d'essai", as Corneille terms it, to the contemporary literature. ^{As} (well with his later comedies as ~~with~~ with the Méliete, ^{Corneille} followed in many points the literary currents of his time.

II THE FIRST PERFORMANCE OF THE MELITE.

Corneille was not precisely ^a young author at his début. His first play was represented when he was twenty-four years old. ~~It~~ It must be surmised from his age alone that he was at that time not devoid of literary culture, that he had had time to study contemporary authors. Unless it is supposed that he was not at all interested in literature, his life's calling, it must be granted

that the flowering of his talent was not as sudden as been deduced from the anecdote of Fontenelle: that Corneille for the first time wrote a sonnet when spurred on by a love-adventure and that he produced the *Mélite* to serve as a frame for that poem. The utterances of Fontenelle will be discussed furtheron. For the present purpose it is sufficient to note that Fontenelle made in his story a very characteristic mistake, indicative of his customary inaccuracy in historical matters. He says " *Mélite* fut jouée en 1625," (12) . This date is false because it has been proved that the play was not represented in Paris till at least four years later. While it is possible and even probable that the poet ~~the poet~~ and the troupe of actors should have " tried out " the play in Rouen, the poet's native city, it can hardly be admitted that so long a period could have elapsed between the home performance and the first one given in the capital. Besides, Corneille, in his later *Examen de Mélite* does not speak of a performance at Rouen, and , while this does not constitute an absolute proof, it makes such a performance very doubtful. From all existing accounts we gather that the *Mélite* was first staged at the capital.

The first account of the way in which the play came to be produced in Paris is given by the Abbe Mervesin, in 1706, without any mention of the source of his information. " Après que Corneille eut fait sa *Mélite*, il la donna aux comédiens de Rouen; Mondory qui en étoit le chef, connut que cette pièce seroit bien recue à Paris, il y vint avec sa Troupe, pour la représenter; il s' établit au Marais. (13)

On the supposition that the utterances of the Abbé de

Mervesin are based upon truth, he manifestly does not represent the facts accurately. He first mentions a troupe of actors existing at Rouen, with Mondory as chief, while it is well-known that Rouen was only occasionally visited by the Mondory-Lenoir troupe. Then he supposes that the Mondory-troupe would have left Rouen definitely to establish itself at Paris, only because Mondory had the intuition that Corneille's *Mélite* would be successful at the capital.

Notwithstanding that the story of the Abbé de Mervesin can hardly be trusted, modern historians have virtually accepted it and even added to it additional embellishments, for which I have not been able to find justification: Taschereau says: Corneille remit son oeuvre à une troupe de comédiens qui se trouvait à Rouen; mais le chef, qui était le célèbre Mondory, la jugeant ^{digne} (d'un autre part) se rendit à Paris pour l'y faire jouer." (14) Marty-Laveaux states: Corneille avait confié sa comédie au célèbre comédien Mondory qui ^{était} de passage à Rouen, qui la fit représenter à Paris, sans apprendre au public qui en était l'auteur. (15) And Roger Le Frun adds some picturesque detail: Il en soumit le manuscrit à Mondory, qui enthousiasmé par sa lecture décida aussitôt de quitter Rouen pour représenter la pièce du débutant à Paris, au théâtre du Marais. (16) We find here a legend in its formation-period: Small and apparently insignificant details which are collecting around the nucleus of a doubtful statement made seventy-five years after the first representation of the *Mélite*. The only facts which are well-established are that troupes of actors made periodical visits to Rouen about the time in question, (17), and that Corneille testifies that the

success of his first play made a second troupe of actors possible at Paris besides the one already existing there. It is then altogether probable that Corneille's play came to Paris in the repertory of the troupes which visited Rouen, and that Mondory was at least a member of that troupe. Not he, but Lenoir was the "chief" of the troupe playing under the name of the "Comédie du Prince d'Orange" which probably made a visit to Rouen in 1629. (18) No evidence ~~and~~ exists of an established troupe of actors at Rouen, and the story of their bringing over of their theater to Paris only to play ~~here~~ "le chef d'oeuvre d'un inconnu" is more than improbable.. About ~~in~~ "les comédiens du Prince d'Orange", 1630, played in Paris at the Jeu de Paume de la Fontaine, rue ~~Michel~~ Michel-le Comte near the cul-de-sac Berthault in the quartier Saint Martin. It was very probably there, and not in the Théâtre du Marais that *Mélite* was first played. Later, in 1634, the troupe leased the ~~jeu~~ jeu de paume du Marais, rue Vieille-du-Temple, and remained there ~~until~~ till the twenty-third of June 1673, date of its fusion with the ~~troupe~~ troupe of Molière.

There has been a great deal of discussion regarding the date of the first performance of the *Mélite* in Paris. The Freres Parfaict, on the basis of certain assertions made by Mairet in the Epistre dédicatoire of the *Gallantries du Duc d'Ossone*, were the first to name the year 1629 (19). Their conclusion was adopted by Marty-Laveaux, editor of Corneille, who sought however to ~~fix~~ fix the date with greater precision by formulating the reasons which had ~~acted~~ influenced them. Mairet had said: 'Il est très vray que si mes premiers ouvrages ne furent guères bons, au moins ne peut-on a

nier qu'ils n'ayent esté l'heureuse semence de beaucoup d'autres meilleurs, produits par les fécondes plumes de Messieurs de Rotrou de Scudéry, Corneille et du Ryer que je nomme icy suivant l'ordre du temps qu'ils ont commencé d'escrire après moy. (20). Now, says M Marty-Laveaux, " si ce témoignage curieux est rigoureusement exact, et il y a tout lieu de le croire, nous arrivons presque a une date précise." (21). That is to say, Corneille's debut came between that of Scudéry and of Du Ryer. Now, Scudéry states that he produced his first play: "en sortant du regiment des gardes," and he was still in service, according to Marty-Laveaux, in March of 1629. Since the ~~pr~~ privilège of Argénis et Poliarque, the earliest published play of ~~S~~ Du Ryer, is dated the 25th of February 1630, it ~~is clear~~ ^{would be necessary to conclude} that the Méliandre must have been produced between March 1629 and February 1630.

Unfortunately the " curious testimony" of Mairet is far from being "rigorously exact". It is demonstrated, for example, that, in his zeal to prove his precocity, he has made himself six years younger than he really was. Again, the Argénis and Poliarque, although the first ~~published~~ published play of Du Ryer, was not his first acted play. It was in fact preceded by two others, Aretophile and Clitophon. (22) Hence his début must have preceded that of de Scudéry, and we have therefore in the statement of Mairet nothing more than a general indication from which no exact results can possibly be derived.

Another bit of evidence of an equally unsatisfactory character was presented by Rigal (23) in support of the year 1629. On the 25th of February 1631, the Confrérie de la Passion brought

a lawsuit against Lenoir-Mondory's troupe for having given one hundred and thirty-five dramatic performances in infringement of the ~~the~~ Confrérie's monopoly. Now, since Moliere gave as a rule three performances a week, Rigal considers it probable that Mondory, laboring under more primitive conditions, would have given only two. And ~~and~~ since the *Mélite* was one of the first offerings of Mondory's troupe, Corneille's first comedy must have first appeared upon the stage in the season of 1629-1630.

A more satisfactory clue is presented by a remark contained in the *Avertissement au Besançonnois Mairat*, one of the documents of the Quarrel of the *Cid*. The author, who has been identified with Corneille himself, in the course of his pamphlet refers to: "cette malheureuse *Silvanire*, que le coup d'essay de Monsieur Corneille terrassa dès sa première représentation." (24). Now the date of the *Silvanire* is quite definitely fixed by a statement contained in the preface of the 3^de edition of another play by the same poet, *Silvie*, reprinted in 1630. In this preface Mairat obviously refers to the *Silvanire* under the term of "Tragi-comédie purement pastorale": "Conte^{te}-toy de cet ouvrage-cy, en attendant que je te donne une tragicomédie purement Pastorale de ma dernière et meilleure façon. Ce que je promets à ta curiosité, je le tiendray dans cette année, 1630." (25).

It appears then that the *Mélite*, "coup d'essay de Monsieur Corneille," was performed soon after the *Silvanire* which Mairat promised for the year 1630. And since this later play was promised in a publication of 1630 the obvious conclusion would be that the ~~the~~ *Mélite* was produced rather late in that year. Such indeed is the

conclusion which Professor Lancaster would be inclined to make.

(26) but, under the influence of Rigal's argument, given above, he was led into setting the first representation of *Méliste* as early as in the year as possible and finally fixed upon the month of February 1630 as the most probable date.

However, since there are so many elements of uncertainty in the Rigal argument, it is safer to adopt the more ^{natural} conclusion that the *Méliste* was played several months later than February 1630. The *Sylvanire*, "que le coup d'essai de Monsieur Corneille terrassa"; was in 1630 PROMISED FOR 1630. Is it not improbable that the appearance of the third edition of the *Sylvie*, the staging of the *Sylvanire* and the staging of the *Méliste* would all have happened consecutively in the five or six first weeks of 1630? Besides, the Lenoir-Mondory troupe would certainly not return to Paris in Mid-winter, but was there, no doubt, since the opening of the winter season, since October 1629. It was customary for actor troupes from the capital to make their tours in the provinces during the summer. It will be recalled that Moliere's troupe, for example, came to Paris by way of Rouen, in October. Now, if the players were in Paris since October why would they have waited till February to bring the *Méliste* on the stage? Corneille insists that the success of the *Méliste* was not immediate, but that, after a difficult beginning, the play was very successful and that it "établit une nouvelle troupe de comédiens à Paris." (27) Of the first performance of the *Méliste* had taken place in February 1630, there would have been ~~but~~ ^{before the end of the season,} hardly much time left for the initial difficulties with the play for its success and for the number of representations which made

the actors so confident of success that they established themselves definitely at the capital. The weight of all the probabilities is, for the reasons enumerated, in favor of the autumn months October-December 1630 as the time when *Mélite* was first performed before the audiences of Paris.

III.-THE PLAY.

To enable the reader to follow the argument further exposed, a résumé of the play is here printed, in accordance with the text of the first edition (1633):

Act I. Sc. 1. *Éraste* confides to *Tircis* how he suffers from the disdain of *Mélite* whom he loves and has "served". *Tircis* talks with cynical irony of love, women and the "burdens" of marriage. *Éraste* defies him to maintain this attitude after having beheld the beauty of *Mélite*. Sc. 2. The two friends visit *Mélite* who treats ironically the love declarations of *Éraste*. Sc. 3. *Tircis* confesses to ~~his~~ *Éraste* that he is not insensible to the charms of *Mélite* but disclaims any intention of paying court to her. Alone, he soliloquizes that in love affairs friendship does not count. Sc. 4. Love scene between *Philandre* and *Cloris*, sister of *Tircis*. Sc. 5. *Tircis* interrupts and rails at their love making.

Act II. Sc. 1. *Éraste* complains of the favor which *Tircis* seems to be receiving from *Mélite*. Sc. 2. *Éraste* meets *Mélite* and reproaches her for her intimacy with *Tircis*. Sc. 3. *Éraste*, in despair, resolves to get *Tircis* out of his way by preparing forged love-letters from *Mélite* to *Philandre*. Sc.4. *Éraste* secures by a gift the aid

of *Clit*

of Cliton, neighbor of Mélite. Sc. 5. Tircis has composed a sonnet

for Mélite which he intends to give to Eraste; he shows it to his ~~the~~ sister Cloris who recognizes his love for the heroine of the play.

Sc. 6. Eraste ^{gives to} Cliton the forged letter of Mélite to Philandre suit-
or of Cloris. Sc. 7. Cliton delivers the letter ^{to Philandre} Philandre; while
he is reading this letter Eraste appears; discloses the love of Tir-
cis for Mélite and encourages Philandre. Sc. 8. Tircis brings his
sonnet on Mélite to Eraste, who refuses to accept it, while Mélite
watches the maneuver from a window. Sc. 9. Mélite confesses to Tir-
cis her love for him.

Act III. Sc. 1. Philandre soliloquizes on his love for Mélite. Sc.

2. Tircis confides his love for Mélite to Philandre who shows him
the forged letters of the heroine as a proof of her infidelity. ~~He~~

Tircis challenges Philandre who ^{refuses} ~~refuses~~ to fight. Sc 3. Tircis so-
liloquizes on the infidelity of Mélite and resolves to commit suici-

de. Sc. 4. Cloris meets him and ~~he~~ shows to her the forged letters

he has taken from Philandre. Sc. 5. Cl^ris resolves to show Mélite

the letters which she has received from her brother, Tircis. Sc. 6

Philandre resolves to get the letters back from Tircis. Sc. 7. Phi-

landre meets Cloris who shows ~~him~~ the letters which she is about ξ

to give to Mélite. Sc. 8. Philandre goes to demand the letters from
Tircis.

Act IV. Sc. 1. The Nurse counsels Mélite on her conduct in love matt-

ters. Sc. 2. Cloris visits Mélite and shows her the letters. Mélite

denies having written them. Sc. 3. Lisis, a friend of Tircis announ-

ces that the latter has ^{died} of grief. Mélite swoons. Sc. 4. Cliton, ~~see~~

Éraste's letter-carrier, arrives; he concludes that Mélite is dead.

Sc. 5. Éraste soliloquizes on the success of his strategy of the forged letters. Sc. 6. Cliton informs him that both Mélite and Tircis are dead. Éraste goes mad; he believes himself in the infernal regions and takes Cliton for Charon. Sc. 7. Philandre seeks Tircis Sc. 8. The mad Éraste thinks he is fighting ghosts and demons. He takes Philandre for Minos and explains his deception of the forged letters. Sc. 9. Ravings of Éraste. Sc. 10. Lisis informs Cloris that her brother Tircis is not dead.

Act. V. Sc. I. Cliton tells the Nurse of the madness of Éraste. Sc. 2. Delirium of Éraste. He takes the nurse for Mélite but finally recognizes her and comes to his senses. Sc. 3. Philandre tries, but unsuccessfully to become reconciled with Cloris. Sc. 4. Tircis and Mélite rejoice over their happiness and resolve upon their marriage. Sc. 5. Cloris announces that she has broken with Philandre. Sc. 6. Éraste appears and confesses his fault. He obtains his pardon and the hand of Cloris. The nurse soliloquizes humourously upon her faded charms.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENT IN THE MELITE.

The autobiographical element in Corneille's Mélite is one of the most discussed questions in Corneille-research. The most general opinion is that his first work is almost entirely inspired by personal experience while his following productions are of a more abstract nature, and his tragedies a creation of the intellect alone without any direct influence from Corneille's personal life. This general theory will be discussed in a following chapter.

As to the *Mélite*, Thomas Corneille, younger brother of our poet testified that the germ of the play was furnished by a love-adventure of Pierre Corneille: Une aventure galante luy fit prendre le dessein de faire une comédie pour y employer un sonnet qu'il ~~est~~ avoit fait pour une Demoiselle qu'il aimoit, cette pièce dans ~~laquelle~~ laquelle est traitée toute l'aventure et qu'il intitula *Mélite* eut un succes extraordinaire. (28).

This passage seems to receive a certain confirmation in verses which Pierre Corneille published in 1637, in the *Excuse à Ariste*:

Ce que j'ai de nom je le dois à l'amour,
 J'adorai donc Philis; et la secrète estime
 Que ce divin esprit faisoit de notre rime
 Me fit devenir poète aussitot qu'amoureux. (29).

On the basis, apparently, of these declarations, Fontenelle, nephew of the poet, produced a statement which was more circumstantial and precise: "Il (Corneille) ne songeoit à rien moins qu'à la poésie, et il ignoroit lui-même le talent extraordinaire qu'il ~~est~~ avoit, lorsqu'il lui arriva une petite aventure de Galanterie dont il s'avisa de faire une pièce de théâtre, en ajoutant quelque chose à la vérité. On donnoit à Rouen le nom de *Mélite* à la Dame qui ~~est~~ avoit fait naître l'aventure qui faisoit le sujet de cette pièce. (30)

The last sentence but one of this passage has acted as a powerful stimulant upon the curiosity of later historians. In 1738, the Abbé Granet, editor of Corneille's works, in a commentary upon the verse of the *Excuse à Ariste*, identifies the lady quite positively although he neglects to offer any proofs: Il (Corneille) avoit aimé très passionnément une dame de Rouen, nommée Mme. Du Pont, femme

d'un maître des comptes de la même ville, parfaitement belle... M. ^P
 Corneille a dit plusieurs fois qu'il lui étoit redevable de plusieurs
 endroits de ses premières pièces. (31) .A field so fertile could
 not fail to bear fruit. Some fifty years later Jos. André Guiot
 in Le Moréri des Normands, introduces Mlle Millet as the prototype
 of Corneille's Méliete: Sans la demoiselle Millet, très jolie Rouen-
 naise, Corneille peut-être ^{n'eût} pas sitôt connu l'amour; sans cette hér-
 oïne, aussi peut-être, la France n'eut jamais connu le talent de
 Corneille... Le plaisir de cette aventure détermina Corneille à
 faire la comédie de Méliete, anagramme du nom de sa maîtresse. (32)
 Fifty years later, (1834) Emmanuel Gaillard improved upon this asser-
 tion which, in its turn, had been presented without any citation
 of proofs: J'ajouterai qu'elle demeurait à Rouen, rue aux Juifs, ~~N~~
 No 15. Le fait m'a été attesté par M. Domme, ancien greffier, et
 par deux demoiselles. (33) . Marty-Laveaux sought to reconcile these
 two identifications; first by supposing that Mlle Millet became M^{me}
 Du Pont through marriage; (34) , then, renouncing this theory he con-
 cluded that Corneille had been inspired by two sweethearts, Mlle.
 Millet, for whom he had felt an ephemeral passion about the time
 of the composition of the Méliete and another, Mme Du Pont, to whom
 he had consecrated the more enduring affection reflected in the Ex-
 cuse à Ariste.

In the fifth volume of his valuable work "Points obscurs et nouveaux de la vie de Pierre Corneille", Mr. Bouquet has expounded a theory of the *Mélite* as an autobiographical document, which is based upon the information supplied by the Abbé Granet, in 1738. Mr. Bouquet rightly rejects the invention of a shadowy miss Millet as the prototype of Corneille's *Mélite* by Jos-André Guiot about 1785, because this theory is manifestly a late development of a Corneille-legend, with little or no basis in fact.

Although the commentary of the Abbé Granet was written more than a century after the first representation of the *Mélite* and no indication is furnished as to the source of his important biographical details, his text served as basis for research about Corneille's early love and his first play. Mr. Gosselin found in the archives of Rouen the maiden name of Madame Dupont, who was, according to the Abbé Granet the lady Corneille had in mind when he wrote the verses about his love in the "Excuse à Ariste"

"Je me sens tout ému quand je l'entends nommer."

She was the daughter of Charles Hue, "receveur des aides en l'élection de Rouen", and of Catherine de Bauquemare. Baptized on the 23 of April 1611, she received the name of her mother: Catherine. (35) From these facts Mr. Bouquet deduced a serie of identifications. *Mélite* is Catherine Hue; *Tircis* is Corneille himself; the mother of *Mélite*, mentioned in the play, altho she does not appear on the scene, is Catherine de Bauquemare, widow of Charles Hue; *Cloris*, in the play the sister of *Tircis* is Corneille's younger sister

Marie Corneille, born in 1609. Éraсте and Philandre remain unidentified. Mr. Bouquet expresses his opinion that they were real persons, like the other characters.

Now, the very basis of the identifications of Mr. Bouquet and Mr. Gosselin, the commentary of the Abbe' Granet, is open to criticism. He laid special stress on the fact that Corneille's love for Madame Du Pont was a very constant one, ^{lasted} for many years and ^{was} only broken off about 1637, the time of the Excuse à Ariste. Here follows his commentary *in full*:

" Il avoit aimé très passionément une dame de Rouen, nommée Mme Du Pont, femme d'un maître des comptes de la même ville, parfaitement belle. Il l'avoit connue TOUTE PETITE FILLE pendant qu'il etudiait à Rouen au collège des Jésuites, et fit pour elle plusieurs petites pièces de galanterie, qu'il n'a jamais voulu rendre publiques, quelques instances que lui aient faites ses amis; il les brûla lui même environ deux ans avant sa mort. Il lui COMMUNIQUE LA PLUPART DE SES PIÈCES AVANT DE LES METTRE AU JOUR, et comme elle avoit beaucoup d'esprit, elle critiquoit fort judicieusement, de sorte que M. Corneille a dit plusieurs fois qu'il lui étoit redevable de plusieurs endroits de ses premières pièces."

(Oeuvres de Corneille. 1738). ^{as early as 1632, Corneille published at the same time}

in which It must be noticed that, ~~where in it~~ as his Clitandre, a poem he speaks of a love-aventure which must be identified with the love-aventure mentioned, in 1637, in the Excuse à Ariste

J'ai fait autrefois de la bête;
J'avois des Philis à la tête:

Soleils, flambeaux, attraits, appas,
Pleurs, désespoirs, tourments, trépas,

Tout ce petit meuble de bouche
Dont un amoureux s'escarmouche
Je savais bien m'en es~~er~~imer;

PAR LÀ JE M'APPRIS À RIMER;

Par là je fis sans autre chose,

Un sot en vers d'un sot en prose; (Marty-Lav. X, 25)

And in the Excuse à Ariste, ⁽¹⁶³⁷⁾ ~~he insists~~ ^{also} that by the love for
a lady he was taught to rime:

" Puisque ce fut par là que j'appris à rimer"

In both poems the name of the lady is given as Philis. Now, if these poems refer to the same love-adventure, as is quite clear from their text, this love-adventure had CEASED in 1632. The poem of 1632 (A Monsieur D.L.T) indicates clearly that ~~at~~ ^{Corneille} at that date ~~he~~ was cured from love-fever. It is very apparent also in the Excuse à Ariste that the adventure referred to happened ~~at~~ some years before the writing of the poem. Corneille says there:

" Aussi n'aimais-je plus et nul objet vainqueur,
n'a possédé depuis ma veine ni mon coeur."

Such a confidence supposes that a rather long time would have elapsed between the end of his love and the composition of the poem; otherwise it would not have had the meaning which the poet manifestly tries to convey to us, to wit that for a long time he was unable to love again.

Now, if the love-adventure of which both poems speak was ended before 1632, the explanations of the Abbé Granet about ~~the~~ ^{made} the corrections which Madame Dupont (in the early plays of Corneille,

to 1636)

from 1630 ~~was~~ cannot be accepted as based in fact. Granet felt that there was a contradiction between his commentary which spoke of a long and constant love and the text ~~of~~ the Excuse à Ariste, which speaks about a love-adventure which had happened long before the publication of the poem. He found no better way out of the difficulty than by CHANGING Corneille's text to make it fit in with his own explanation. The change of a single word in the poem threw quite a different light on the confidences of the poet. Corneille had written:

Elle eut mes premiers vers, elle eut mes DERNIERS feux;
which referred unmistakably to a love-adventure finished a long time before 1637. Granet changed this verse to:

Elle eut mes premiers vers, elle eut mes PREMIERS feux;
~~WV/M444+L444/1/177,~~ (30) (36)

which agreed with his own commentary : " IL l' avait connu toute petite fille ", and diminished the impression ^{made} ~~made~~ by the following verses :

Et bien que maintenant cette belle inhumaine
Traite mon souvenir avec un peu de haine,
Je me sens toujours en état de l' aimer;

Another point wherein the commentary of the Abbé Granet is not in accordance with fact is that he says that Corneille wrote " for his beloved " plusieurs petites pièces de galanterie qu'il ~~avait~~ n'a jamais voulu rendre publiques quelques instances que lui aient faites ses amis". This statement can not refer to the poems Corneille wrote for Melite, for ^{for} (from refusing to print the poems he wrote for her, he prints the well-known sonnet " Après les yeux de Melite

il n'y a rien d'adorable" twice, once in the Poésies, following the Clitandre and once in the play Mélite. Besides the very fact that he wrote a whole play ~~about~~ his love-adventure shows clearly ~~and~~ enough that he was not adverse of publicity about it.

It must be concluded that the commentary of the Abbé Granet does not present a sufficiently reliable ^{clue} to the identity of the real lady hidden behind the ~~name~~ ^{name} Mélite in Corneille's first ~~work~~ work.

When the identifications made by Mr. Gosselin and Bouquet are considered from the point of view of internal evidence, some contradictions are at once perceived. Tircis, said to be Corneille, himself, is indeed a credulous personage. When the false letters, manufactured by Éraсте, fall in his hands, he at once runs away, speaking of suicide instead of ascertaining from his beloved their reality or falseness. And, Cloris, —supposed to be Marie Corneille, —is represented in the play as very free in manners. She has on the scene very intimate love-conversations with her lover, Philandre, and she accepts the falsifier Eraste for husband without showing any notion of moral reserve. Would Corneille have painted his younger sister under such traits? (37).

Corneille's first play concludes with marriages of Tircis with Mélite and of Cloris with Éraсте. The marriages took place the same evening after the action as is proved by various ^{passages} in the first edition which have mostly been erased in the later ones. Verses 1707 and following, for instance, sounded in the early editions:

Tircis:

Tous nos penses sont dus à ces chastes délices
Dont le ciel se prépare à borner nos supplices:
Le terme en est si proche, il n'attend que la nuit.

and the play concluded:

La Nourrice:

Allez, je vais faire à ce soir telle niche,
Qu'au lieu de labourer, vous lairez tout en friche.

The expressions are not elegant but quite clear; the ^Rmariages were set for the same evening that the action was finished.

Now, Corneille's love-adventure, which he is supposed to have brought on the scene with the Mé^lite, was not ended with a marriage.

Après beaucoup de vœux et de submissions,
Un malheur rompt le cours de nos affections.

he said in the Excuse à Ariste, eight years after the time of the Mé^lite. Mr. Bouquet (op. Cit. 58) neglects entirely this point and concludes that by the end of the play Mé^lite had obtained the promise of marriage from her mother and he devotes a page to an hypothesis about the fact why the ~~it did not~~ this promise was not held. The ^Rmariages at the end of the play were entirely conventional ~~and~~ and no autobiographical value can be attached to them.

All that results from the conflicting testimonials of Fontenelle, Thomas Corneille and the Abbé Granet, is that the nucleus of the Mé^lite was furnished by a personal love-adventure of ~~the~~ Corneille, and that to that nucleus, he added various episodes. (38)
It is possible that Madame Du Pont-Catherine Hue has been the ~~her~~ heroin of the Mé^lite, but there is no contemporary evidence to that effect. The statements of the Abbé Granet must only be accepted ~~as~~

with reserve. It is unwarranted to build on the slight foundation of his conflicting commentary a series of identifications as done by Mr. Bouquet.

Until more evidence is presented it seems reasonable not to accept anything more than exactly what Thomas Corneille and Fontenelle said: that the impulse to write the Mélite and the nucleus of the intrigue were both due to a personal adventure of Pierre Corneille.

To clear up the rather entangled theory of the beginning of Corneille it is necessary to make a preliminary distinction: His love for Mélite may have been the occasion for the first blossoming of his talent, it can not be its origin. Corneille, as pointed out in the chapter on his early friends and surroundings, was quite well acquainted with the literature of his times. And it is in the literature of his times that he ~~was~~^{found} motives and scenes for his first play. It is ~~now~~ possible to ~~find~~^{find} counterparts of his characters and of his situations in the novels and the plays of his period. They resemble so closely more or less traditional stage-characters that the question "Where ends the biographical ~~inspiration stage characters that the question~~ "Where ends the biographical ~~graphical~~ inspiration in the Mélite and where begins the purely literary?, seems well nigh insoluble. Some resemblances and counterparts of the heroes and the situations of Corneille's first play will be pointed out in the following pages.

THE NAME MELITE.

The name of Mélite is found in the Greek Anthology,

in one of the thirty-eight epigrams of the Byzantine poet Rufinus.

It occurs too in the late greek novel Clitophon's and Leucippus' Loves by Achilles Tattius, where it designates a wealthy widow. This novel was much in vogue in European countries during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The last four books were translated from Greek into Latin by Annibal della Croce, (39) and then from Latin into French under the title "Les Devis Amoureux (40) by L' Amoureux de la Vertu (Claude Collet) , in 1545. Another translation which ran through three editions was produced some ten years later by Jacques de Roquemare (41) : Les quatre derniers livres des propos amoureux contenant le discours des amours et mariage du seigneur Clitophon et damoiselle Leusippe. Then follows the complete work in French : Les Amours de Clitophon et de Leusippe, escrits en grec par Achilles Stattius, Alexandrin, et nouvellement traduits en françois par B. (Belleforest) Comingeois. There are three editions of this translation. The evident popularity of the novel is further attested by the plays derived from it. A lost play of Alexandre Hardy (42) Leucosie was developed from it as a source and one of its characters probably was named Melite. Pierre du Ryer also found in it the plot of his Clitophon which was played about 1628, and in which Melite is a wealthy widow pursuing the hero Clitophon with her attentions. The name occurs also in other works composed independently of the Greek novel. So , for example, an anonymous novel of 1609 is entitled: Les Amours de Melite et de Statiphile (43). In the pastoral play of Hardy, Corinne ou le silence, Corine et Melite appear as " jeunes bergères, égales

en beauté, qui deviennent éperdument amoureuses de Caliste " ~~The~~
 The name appears further in two other plays which were popular
 about the time when Corneille must have been composing his first
 comedy: Mé^lite is the friend of Amaranthe in the pastoral play of
 that name produced by Gombauld in 1625, and, finally, in the Bague
 d' Oubli of Rotrou Mé^lite appears in the "dramatis personae" as a
 "demoiselle confidente de Liliane " (44)

Since, at the time that Corneille was producing
 his first play, the name Mé^lite was used so frequently to designate
 the heroines of comedy and fiction, there is no reason to seek
 in it a clue for the identity of the heroine in the "aventure
 galante" by which the poet is said to have been inspired. It is
 more natural to look upon it merely as a name considerably less
 banal than that of Philis which Corneille uses in the verses quo-
 ted with reference to the same affair. There is no reason whatever
 for supposing that the name Mé^lite is an anagram.

The Story of the Rival Friends.

Now as to the "adventure" itself. Only the initial
 episode of the play has been looked upon as autobiographical:
 É^raste presents his friend, the women-despizing Tircis to his
 sweetheart Mé^lite. Tircis falls in love with her at sight and soon
 supplants É^raste in the young lady's affections. The rest of the
 story: the false letters, the madness of Eraste and the marriages
 at the end, are the incidents which, following the testimonial of
 Fontenelle, Corneille "added to truth". The alleged autobiographi-

cal part of the play will be studied here first.

While it may well be that Corneille met in real life with a "galant" experience closely akin to the main theme of the *Méliste*, it was yet an adventure which had become long since a common-place in literature. Unless we believe that, in Corneille's case there arose in real life a spontaneous duplication of a traditional situation in the letters of the time, we must assume that his inspiration was literary. But, even granted that the nucleus of the *Méliste* was a personal adventure and a duplication of a favorite literary situation, Corneille's treatment of the story, his arrangement of the scenes, his conception of his heroes ^{and} characters were influenced by the contemporary examples which were numerous enough to constitute a stock theme of the authors of the period.

To illustrate this contention, it is sufficient to turn to a parallel of the story of the rival friends in, for example Lyly's novel *Euphues*. Witty *Euphues* is at first, like *Éraste* a satirical women-hater. (p. ³⁶⁻³⁷ ~~36-37~~ Ed. M. Croll and H. Clemond.) But, being presented by his friend *Philautus* to *Lucilla*, since ~~was~~ three years the latter's sweetheart, he too supplants him in the lady's affections. The story develops, like Corneille's and purports to show "the falsehood in fellowship, the fraud in friendship, the fair words that make fools fain." *Euphues* decides, in a soliloquy that over his friendship, his love must prevail. In a similar way *Tircis* determines:

En matière d'amour rien n'oblige à tenir, Et les
meilleurs amis, lorsque son feu les presse, Font bientôt vanité.

d'oublier leur promesse."

While the beginning of both stories is parallel, the end differs: Euphues is supplanted by a third lover; Tircis marries Melite.

The story of the rival friends in Euphues has been asserted to be autobiographical, even as in Corneille's Melite (45) On the other hand it has been pointed out convincingly that this struggle between friendship and love is a commonplace of literature which probably originated from a lost greek romance; and that Lyly was directly indebted to Boccaccio's "Tito and Gisippo" (Decam. x, 8) for his narrative. (46)

But what about Corneille's Melite? There too are found the same details of plot, the common features of the traditional story of the two rival friends. They can be shortly described as follows: A has been for years in love with a girl, to whom he presents his friend B, generally depicted as a woman-hater^{or} a wit. During the visit to the betrothed B falls in love with her at first sight. An internal struggle follows between his friendship for A and his love. In most stories A gives up his sweetheart to B and helps him to marry her; but in some cases-as, for instance, in Euphues,-a struggle between the two friends follows.

It does not fall within the scope of this study to trace the sources and the origin of the numerous narratives and plays based on the conflict between rival friends, nor even to study the various forms it has taken in literature. For the present purpose it is sufficient to point out that the story was treated so frequen-

tly about the time of Corneille's début, that it can reasonably be supposed that he was acquainted with it: (47) .

The story had become familiar through translations and adaptations of Boccaccio's Tito ^g Gisippo, the eighth Novella of the Tenth day of the Decamerone. The forty-sixth novel in Le Grand parangon des Nouvelles, by Nicolas de Troyes, (48) relates the adventure "D'un compaignon, qui pour l'amour qu'il ~~avoit~~ avoit à ung sien compaignon lui donna et livra sa propre femme pour espouser." Another imitation is contained in "Le Petit Oeuvre d'amour ou gaige d'amitié contenant plusieurs dicts amoureux" (49) . Fillipo Beroaldo translated ~~the~~ the story into Latin Verse and this in its turn was translated into French. (50).

In the literature of the time the Astrée contains at least two versions of this story; first the adventures of Thamyre and Calydon both in love with the fair Celidée, and secondly of Palemon who favors his friend Adraste in his love for his wife, Doris (51). In the ^{play} Isabel of P. Ferry (1610) Calvonte, in love with Clorifée, assists his rival. The same situation occurs in La Diane Françoise of Du Verdier (1624) which Climandre is ready to resign Amarante to his friend Filamon and, finally, in La Clorise of Baro, Eraste gives up his beloved Cloris to Alidor her other lover (52). Alexandre Hardy, to whom Corneille refers as his first model adapted Boccaccio's novel to the stage with his Gésippe ou les deux amis : " Tite, jeune gentilhomme Romain, étudiant à Athènes contracte une étroite amitié avec Gésippe, Athénien de même âge et de même

qualité, qui sur le point d'épouser une des belles d'Athènes en voulut donner la veue à ce sien fidelle amy; l'aspect d'une contagieuse beauté captive Tite d'une telle sorte que réduit au désespoir il projette d'abandonner la ville d'Athènes et sa vie(53) Hardy's treatment of the story differs from Corneille's in that Gésippe yields his sweetheart to his friend and even assists in forming their attachment, whereas in Corneille's comedy Eraste strives to retain Mélite. But the dénouement is identical. Just as Eraste finally marries Cloris, sister of his friend Tircis, so in Hardy's play Gésippe marries Fulvie, sister of his friend and successful rival, Tite. These similarities are the more significant because Corneille must have been acquainted with Hardy's work, for it was published at Rouen by a friend of his, David du Petit-Val, and in the year 1626, that is, only a short time before he must have begun to think of producing his first comedy.

Another play by Hardy, the tragi-comedy, "Dorise", is of even greater interest in this connection. The first scene of this play also presents two friends in love with the same girl and with the same result; the first lover is supplanted by the second who marries the heroine. Furthermore there is a striking resemblance in important details of the plot. A display of letters plays an important part in the Dorise as well as in the Mélite and the supplanted lover, Salmacis, runs away to a hermitage and becomes mad under the influence of a mysterious charm much after the manner of Eraste, in Corneille's comedy. In both plays the supplanted lovers finally recover their senses and both plays end in a double marriage. (54)

This more dramatic element of active rivalry between the two friends and rivals is highly developed in contemporary pastorals and novels. So, for example, in the Clorinde of

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Piérard Paullet(1598), a shepherdess, loved by two shepherds, abandons the first to marry the second and this episode is imitated in La Justice d'Amour of Borée(1627). In Le Boscage d'Amour of Jean Estival(1608) the shepherdess Perline is loved by two princes, Polidor and Arminis. After having preferred Polidor, she abandons him for Arminis. An extremely popular episode of the Astrée dealt with the rivalry of Paris and Sylvandre for the love of Diane(55) This story was transformed by Rayssiguier into a pastoral play; Tragi-comédie pastorale ou les amours d'Astrée et de Céladon sont meslées a celles de Diane, de Silvandre et de Paris avec les inconstances d'Hélas(56)

Without lengthening unduly the list of the imitations of the Rival-Friend story, it is clear that love and friendship brought into rivalry was a common-place in the literature previous to Corneille's début. The beginning of the Mélite:-a lover presents a friend to his sweetheart, and, after a struggle, is supplanted by him — is found, situation for situation, scene for scene, in numerous counterparts. The unavoidable conclusion is that Corneille's first play was a variation upon a stock theme of contemporary romance rather than pure autobiography. And, therefore, identification of the character of the Mélite with living persons is more than hazardous. All that can be gathered from the testimonials of Thomas Corneille and of Fontenelle is that, in the Mélite, fact was mingled to some degree with fiction and truth with make-believe. Yet modern criticism has tended to make the Mélite entirely true, and a realistic autobiography. If Corneille really utilized a personal experience, he followed traditional models in the treatment of his material, in the development and succession of his scenes, in the characterisation of his heroes

Tircis, who, in the *Mélite*, supplants his friend *Eraste* in his sweetheart's affections, has been identified generally with Corneille himself (57). He is depicted as a sceptic in love-matters who becomes a convert to love through the bewitching beauty of *Mélite*.

Such an identification becomes, however, very doubtful when it is remembered that in the early editions, Tircis was guilty of several indecent expressions and allusions. (58) Why would Corneille have depicted himself in such unfavorable light? Would he really have represented himself as a light-hearted sceptic, frequently indecent in his expressions, who betrayed his friend in love? Would he have made the reputation of his beloved *Mélite* who rejected her first lover, an object of public commentary? - Yet, whether Corneille intended to embody his own "self" in Tircis or not, the first audiences of the *Mélite* must have recognized in Tircis a personnage with whom they were already very familiar. There had grown up in the sixteenth century even, in reaction against the hero embodying the Platonic love conception which had spread from Italy, a type which served sometimes as a contrast and sometimes as a foil to these conceptions. It was a type which railed at the flowery language and the absurd actions of the exponents of "l' amour éternel"; it was a literary impersonation of "l'esprit gaulois" which voiced a revolt against the unreal ideals of the pastoral novels and plays, insisted upon the realities of life and love, and claimed the right of lovers to "change"; and even erected inconstancy into a rule of conduct. As such it appears in the person of the cynic *Saffredent*, opponent to the Platonist *Dagoncin* in the *Heptaméron* of *Marguerite of Navarre*. It is easy to trace the character through the litera-

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ture which followed. Estienne Pasquier sketched him in his *Monophile* (1554), the possessor "d'un coeur gay et François, estant adonné a toutes, sans faire estat d' une seule" who believed "que meilleur est faindre l'amour que d'aimer" In *La Pyrénée* of Belleforest (1572) his name is Drion, who brings love back to its natural and materialistic origin and has no patience with the Platonic dreamers: "Quant à moi, j'aime mieux rire à mon aise sentant et savourant un peu de plaisir, qu'extatic et rêveur songer un bonheur qui ne se gagne que par imagination." In the *Bergeries de Juliette* by Ollenix de Mont-Sacré (Nicolas de Montreux) he appears as the cool headed Glaphire and as the woman-hater Belair in *Les Infidèles Fidèles*, fable boscagerre (1603) of the "shepherd Calianthe" (probably G. de Bazire). Many other novels and plays contain this type of the witty sceptic, merry and light-hearted womanhater, lavish with his shrewd materialistic counsels. He appears as Floridan in *L'Heureux Desespéré*, tragi-comedje pastorale (1613) by C.A. Seigneur de C. (Comte Adrien de Cramail?), whose motto is; A tous vents, and who rails at the constancy of Angéralde. Philiris in *l'Isabelle* (1610) of Paul Ferry represents the type when he exclaims: "Moy qui n'aime sinon ce qui m'est profitable".

The most interesting and most highly developed representative of the type is probably Hylas in the *Astrée* (59) the smiling dilettante of love, the theoretician of inconstancy as a rule of conduct. Throughout the novel his capricious and witty attacks upon the apotheosis of woman and the hollow unreality of shepherd love serve as an antidote to the abstract and sublimated theories of Céladon. And in his conduct he puts his theories into practice. For example, in the third book (second volume) where Clorion is in love with Cyrcène, he makes Hylas his confi-

dant. Hylas encourages him and promises to serve as his ambassador and advocate with the lady but, like Tircis in *Mélite*, he betrays the faith of his friend. He falls in love with Cyrcène and adds her to the already formidable number of his amorous conquests. The mental debate on friendship versus love in which Hylas indulges (page 217) is quite in line with the debate portrayed in the monologue of Tircis at the end of the third scene of the first act of the *Mélite* and the conclusion is the same, namely, that in love matters, sentiment of the friend must give way before the passions of the lover. This idea is found more precisely stated in the comedy which Maréchal composed on the basis of Hylas episodes in the *Astrée*, "L'Inconstance^{d'}Hylas (60)

L'amour de Périandre augmente mon ennui,
 Ma flamme de ses feux, tient la force et la vie,
 Montrons-luy qu'en amour tout effort est permis.
 Qu' Hylas pour estre amant, ne connoit point d'amy.

And Tircis in the *Mélite* (I. 3) gives utterance to precisely the same sentiments: En matière d'amour rien n'oblige à tenir,

Et les meilleurs amis, lorsque son feu les presse
 Font bientôt vanité d'oublier leurs promesses. (61)

In 1627 Hon. d'Urfé brought Hylas on the stage in his "Sylvanire" As in the *Mélite*, the play opens with a discussion between two friends about love. Aglante, deeply in love with Sylvanire, is here confronted with the smiling and cynical Hylas in the same way as Eraste and Tircis in the first scene of Corneille's play. The whole dispute, which can be traced to Italian models runs along the same general lines.

And here is found the connecting link between the type of the love-sceptic (Monophile) Dagancin, Euphues, Hylas, Tircis, etc.) and the story of the two Rival Friends. Before Corneille already, as exemplified above, the light-hearted sceptic, in love, had been identified with the faithless friend; Corneille's

Tircis is a counterpart of these well-known fiction-characters, more than his own portrait.

At the end in the *Mélite*, Tircis seems transformed, under the influence of his love for *Mélite* into something like the Celadonesque type of faithful lover. This however, shows only that Corneille's characterisation was as yet inconsistent and obeyed to the necessities of dramatic effect. In 1660 Corneille himself perceived that his Tircis was not altogether "vraysemblable". He said in his *Examen de Mélite* - "Tircis, qui est l'honnête homme de la pièce, n'a pas l'esprit moins léger que les deux autres (Philandre and Eraste)."

In every feature Tircis' character is in perfect harmony with the literary productions and conventions then in vogue. There is every reason, therefore, to conclude that Corneille, composing his first play, should have shown toward these conventions much of that docility which he was to display in after years in matters of far greater moment when his mastery of the art had won enthusiastic recognition. Even granted that he attempted self-portrayal with his Tircis, he only succeeded in reproducing a well-known character of the fiction and the stage of the time, placed in a traditional situation, struggling with the much-exploited "love versus friendship" problems.

The Opening Dialogue Between the Two Friends

The *Mélite* opens with a dialogue between the two friends Eraste and Tircis. The first is love-lorn and complains about the length of his courtship with *Mélite*, the second, as pointed out above, - is a cynic in love-matters. Such a scene was quite general and conventional in the pastoral plays of the time. It is also found in novels. Yet it is more directly reminiscent of the second scene of ~~Tirsi~~ the first act of T. Tasso's *Aminta* where Tirsi consoles his friend Aminta in these terms:

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Tirsi: Sarà corto l'indugio: in breve spazio
s'adira, e in breve spazio anco si placa
Femmina, casa mobil per natura
Più che fraschetta al vento, e più che cima
Di pieghevole spica . . . etc

To Tasso's influence is due the fact that in *Théocris*, a pastorale of P. Tröterel, sieur d' Aves(02) the joyful Néridon gives to his friend *Théocris* the same worldly-wise counsels. Reference has been made to other examples in the preceding part of this chapter. The situation however, is so general that an exhaustive study is hardly necessary.

The Letter-Device.

The plot of *Mélite* contains two other fundamental elements: the use of forged letters and the madness of Eraste. No attempt has ever been made to connect them in any way with the life of *Corneille*; consideration of them may therefore be limited to a search in contemporary literature for the models upon which they were constructed. Reference to the outline given above, shows that Eraste in order to balk his rival, forges letters from *Mélite* to *Philandre*. These letters falling into the hands of *Tircis* are the pivot upon which the plot turns.

The letter-device was very popular with the writers of the period. The *Astrée*, notably, is full of letters and many go to the wrong address. The novel, in fact, begins with an example very similar to the one given by *Corneille*. Alcippe, father of *Céladon*, has a young shepherd *Squilindre* prepare "une lettre contrefaite" in order to produce an estrangement between *Astrée* and his son. Another shepherd plays the same role as *Cliton* in the *Mélite*. And in the fifth volume, eleventh book, *Squilindre* prepares another forged lettre "de *Sigismond* à *Dorinde*", at the behest of king *Gondebaut*. In like manner *Eraste* of the *Francion*

of Sorel forges a letter with the same fraudulent intentions and the father of Florigène in "Les Religieuses Amours de Florigène et de Méléagre," makes use of the same trick in order to create a misunderstanding between his daughter and Méléagre, her lover. In many cases the letters are genuine and come into the possession of the heroine or of her lovers causing jealousy or despair. So, for example, in the fourth book of the first volume of the Astrée, Sémire learns of the love of Céladon and Astrée through a lost letter.

From the novels the use of letters in the interests of the plot passed into the plays. In the Dorise of Hardy, which, as has been shown above, contains many important elements of the Mélite plot, Licanor makes use of a letter to arouse the jealousy of Dorise and thus gain an advantage over his more fortunate rival Salmacis. In the Amaranthe of Gombauld, played 1623 and published 1628, Orante prepares a false letter purporting to come from the goddess Diane, by which he hopes to have his rival condemned to death. That the use of letters to create jealousy was a popular device with playwrights is proved by the fact that it occurs in many plays composed just before or soon after the Mélite: Les Vendanges de Suresne (du Ryer), Célie and L'Heureuse Constance (Rotrou), La Mort des Enfants d'Hérode (La Calprenède) etc.

The forged letters upon which the plot of Corneille's first comedy hinges is then one from that extensive repertory of devices; letters, rendez-vous, oracles, magic mirrors, boasted favors, etc, out of which contemporary writers spun the tangled webs of their novels and plays. They are devoted to the same purpose, triumph over a rival, and they are all used in about the same way and generally with the same outcome. Seeing the result of

these tricks, the perpetrator, overcome by remorse, becomes temporarily insane, while the victim, as a matter of course gives way to his despair and contemplates suicide.

The adventures of the lovers in the *Mélite* follow this course. Having read the letters forged by *Éraste*, which prove the love of *Mélite* for *Philandre*, *Tircis* runs away, his mind intend upon suicide. At least such was the action in the earlier versions in which one reads these lines, removed in later editions: Et mes pieds me porteront sous eux en quelque lieu

désert

En quelque lieu sauvage à peine découvert
Où ma main d'un poignard achevera le reste,
Et pour suivre l'arrêt de mon destin funeste,
Je répandrai mon sang.

Mélite hearing a false report of *Tircis*' death falls in a swoon and, for the moment, is believed to be dying. The carrier of the forged letters hastens to *Éraste* and reproaches him with the death of the lovers. *Éraste*, filled with remorse for his crime, becomes insane. Both the episode and the treatment of it in the *Mélite* are quite in harmony with the literary conventions of the time.

The Madness of *Éraste*

In his *Examen de Mélite* of 1660, *Corneille* confessed that the madness scenes of his first play were not original: "La folie d'*Éraste* n'est pas de meilleure trempe. Je la condamnois dès lors en mon âme; mais comme c'étoit un ornement de théâtre qui ne manquoit jamais de plaire et se faisoit souvent admirer, j'affectai volontiers ces grands égarements." (63)

During the quarrel of the *Cid*, one of *Corneille*'s bitterest opponents, *Claveret*, wrote: "Ceux qui considèrent bien vostre fin de *Mélite*, c'est a dire la frénésie d'*Éraste*, que tout le monde avoue franchement estre de vostre invention, et qui verront le peu de rapport que ces badineries ont avec ce que

vous avez dérobé, jugeront sans doute que le commencement de la Méliete...n'est pas une pièce de vostre invention. (64) This statement is clearly ironical (65) Claveret means that everyone was aware of the imitations of Corneille in the "frénésie d'Eraste" Marty-Laveaux pointed out that three of four verses of the ravings of Eraste bear a certain resemblance to some verses in the pastoral play La Climène of De la Croix (66) and, more recently Ulrich Meier has tried to demonstrate that Corneille took the idea of the madness of his supplanted lover from L'Hypochondriaque of Rotrou (67) In both these plays the resemblances of the madness scenes to Corneille's Eraste run along general lines, so that a direct influence of either one is very problematic, the more ^{so} since similar outbreaks ^{of} madmen on the stage constituted one of the commonplaces of the literature in the time of Corneille's youth. The purpose of this chapter is to show the frequent use of the madness device in the early seventeenth-century literature, and to point out some resemblances between Corneille's mad hero and similar heroes in the pastoral plays and the tragi-comedies of the time.

It was, in fact, the most natural thing in the world for a hero of pastoral or of tragi-comedy to become mad, attempt suicide, rush through the infernal regions, or retire to a far-off desert, when refused by, or separated from, his sweetheart. The episode was so over-worked that it was the source of no little satire, such as, for example, these verses of Les Visionnaire of Desmarets de Saint Sorlin (1637)

Je suis de mille amans sans cesse importuné~~x~~
 Et croy qu'à ce tourment le ciel m'a destinée.
 L'on vient me rapporter: Lysis s'en va mourir;
 L'amour de Lysidas s'est tourné en folie;
 Eurylas s'est plongé dans la mélancolie;
 Si Corylas n'en meurt, il sera bien malade;...
 (Act I, scene 2)

It would be highly repugnant to our modern taste to hear on the

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stage a madman, who, in well-balanced verses, invoked all the deities of the infernal regions and continued his ravings through one or two acts, as it not infrequently happened about the time of Corneille. We would condemn especially the use of madness for comic effect, such as one finds, for example, in the Sylvanire of Honoré d'Urfé, or the Climène of De la Croix. But the writers of pastoral and of tragi-comedy, about 1600-1630 were sanctioned by the taste of their time and authorized by the examples which they found in antiquity and in the tragic poets of the latter part of the sixteenth century. They apparently did not feel the enormous distance which, aesthetically speaking, separates the ravings, for example, of the Hercules of Seneca or the Saul of De la Taille, and those of a love-mad shepherd. The Mélite of Corneille shows this same lack of taste. Eraste is presented as a young Parisian gentleman of about 1630. For three acts we can picture him in his light-green costume à la Céladon, paying to Mélite his exaggerated compliments. But when he has lost his senses, his ravings resemble those of a Greek demigod.

The succession of the incidents in the madness scenes of the Mélite is as follows: (1) Eraste believes that the lightning from Olympus has burst the earth and that he is in the underworld. (2) He inquires of the Styx and of the shades if they have not seen Tircis and Mélite, whom he tries vainly to find in the infernal regions. (3) He takes his helper, Cliton, for Charon and jumps upon his back to be carried over the Styx, and in this posture is carried off the stage. (4) He fights with gods and the ^{sha}~~shades~~; they flee and in their haste the Parques forget their scissors. His appearance has thrown frightened Hades into confusion. (5) He takes Philandre for Minos and confesses his guilt. Finally he believes the old nurse is his

mistress, Mélite, and makes ardent declarations of his love to her before he happily recovers his senses. Corneille, having entitled his play a "pièce comique" (edition of 1633) clearly tried to obtain comic effects from these ravings of Eraste.

For the first part of his madness scenes, Corneille seems to have been influenced more or less by the numerous madness scenes in the contemporary literature, and perhaps more directly by his reminiscences of Hardy's Alcméon ou la Vengeance Féminine. In the latter play Alcméon becomes insane under the influence of a poisoned jewel. The first developments of the ravings of Eraste and of Alcméon are almost identical:

- Alcméon: Dieux, Hé! quelle voix de l'Erèbe m'appelle?
D'où viennent parmy l'air ces flambans tourbillons
(Hardy)
- Eraste: Quel murmure confus! et qu'entends-je hurler!
Que de pointes de feu se perdent parmi l'air?
(Corneille)
- Alcméon: J'oy le choc d'un combat, je voy fondre un tonnerre
Du faite de l'Olympe au centre de la terre.(Hardy)
- Eraste: Les Dieux à mes forfaits ont dénoncé la guerre;
Leur foudre décoché vient de fendre la terre.
(Corneille)
- Alcméon: Mais la terre mugit sous mes pieds se fendant.
(Hardy) (68)
- Eraste: La terre à ce dessein m'ouvre son large flanc.
(Corneille)

Another point of identity between the play of Hardy and that of Corneille is that both Alcméon and Eraste draw their swords and pursue the fleeing spirits. The former, attacking the ghosts with his sword, exclaims:

S'il faut que ma fureur contrainte se redresse
L'épée au poing, je puis, je le puis et le faut,
Soutenir, repousser et vaincre cet assaut.
Donnons, donnons sans crainte à travers de ces ombres
Renvoyons-les, mon bras, en leur cavernes sombres
Couards, vous fuyez donc, vous ne m'attendez pas.
(69)

Eraste, who, in the earlier editions of the Mélite, is represented "l'épée au poing," declaims:

En vain je les rappelle, en vain pour se défendre
La honte et le devoir leur parlant de m'attendre,
Ces laches escadrons de fantômes affreux
Cherchent leur assurance aux cachots les plus creux.

Eraste describes his appearance, which has thrown all the under-world into confusion. The shades and the gods fear him and have fled:

Ma voix met tout en fuite et dans ce vaste effroi,
La peur saisit si bien les ombres et leur roi....
Tisiphone tremblante, Alecton et Mègère,
De leurs flambeaux puants ont éteint la lumière,
Et tiré de leur chef les serpents d'alentour,
De crainte que leurs yeux fissent quelque faux jour....
Eaque épouvanté se croit trop en danger,
Et fuit son criminel au lieu de le juger;
Clothon même et ses soeurs, à l'aspect de ma lame,
De peur de tarder trop, n'osant couper ma trame,
A peine ont eu loisir d'emporter leurs fuseaux,
Si bien qu'en ce desordre oubliant leurs ciseaux.....
(pp. 230-31)

For this part of the poetic madness Corneille did not lack examples in contemporary plays. La Rodomontade, a tragedy by Charles Bautier, i.e. Meliglose(1605) transports its hero to the underworld, where his shadow frightens the spirits and where Charon refuses to take him aboard. This detail is reproduced in other plays, in similar circumstances, and in the Mélite, where Eraste taking Cliton for the infernal ferryman, exclaims:

Quoi! tu veux te sauver à l'autre bord sans moi!

There is, however, no reason for supposing that Corneille would have borrowed directly these details from this play. Charon's refusal to take aboard a soul was a stock theme in the 16th and early 17th century literature. The ferryman of the Inferno is supposed to refuse passage to those who were killed by love, for fear of the almighty Cupido. The popularity of the situation goes back to the well-known sonnet of Olivier de Magny, which, following the testimonial of G. Colletet(Traité du sonnet) was copied and learned by heart by every lover of poetry:

Sonnet 2

Magny

Hola, Charon, Charon, Nautonnier infernal!

Charon

Qui est ce importun qui si pressé m'appelle?

Magny

C'est l'esprit employé d'un amoureux fidèle,
Lequel pour bien aimer n'eust jamais que du mal.

Charon

Que cherches-tu de moy?

Magny
 Le passage fatal
 Charon
 Quel est ton homicide?
 Magny
 O demande cruelle!
 Amour m'a fait mourir.
 Charon
 Jamais dans ma rasselle
 Nul subget à l'amour je ne conduis à val.
 Magny
 Et de grâce, Charon, reçois-moi, dans ta barque
 Charon
 Cherche un autre nocher, car ny moy ny la Parque
 N'entreprenons jamais sur ce maistre des Dieux
 Magny
 J'iray dans maugré toy; car j'ay dedans mon âme
 Tant de traiets amoureux, tant de larmes aux yeux,
 Que je seray le fleuve, et la barque et la rame.

The difference between the presentation of Charon's refusal in the sonnet and on the stage, is that in plays, the hero forces ~~or pretends to force~~ his passage over the Styx.

In La généreuse Allemande of A.Mareschal(1630) a scene is found, also intended as comical, where a similar description is given of the terror which the mad hero pretends to inspire in the infernal regions:

Dieux! tout est en allarme en ces demeures sombres;
 Un Hercule nouveau trouble encore les ombres;
 Les foudres ont trouvé le chemin d'icy bas;
 Les Tytans dechainez font de nouveaux combats;
 Les Parques sont aux mains; le désordre s'augmente;
 Cerbere s'est caché de peur chez Radamante,
 Qui sous un corps fumant de souffre & de vapeur
 Fuit luy-mesme, & se met sous les lois de la peur;
 Icy tombe de crainte Ichare en l'onde noire;
 La Tantale en fuyant passe l'eau sans en boire....
 (Seconde journée, Act III, scene 2)

In the third act of Les travaux d'Ulysse, a tragi-comedy of J.G. Durval, printed at Paris without date in 1630-31, and with date in 1631, Ulysses frightens the underworld in the same way:

Les fantosmes affreux ont secoué leurs fers,
 Et sont tombez de peur dans le fond des enfers....
 Les ombres de tous ceux que Cloton précipite
 Dans le creux Achéron, ou dedans le Cocyte,
 Et les esprits errants sur l'ardent Phlegeton,
 Sont tombez de frayeur en l'Orque de Pluton. ...
 J'ay fait boire Charon, qui dessus le rivage
 De ses fleuves Vouloit m'empescher le passage:

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Et troublant de Cloton l'ordinaire repos,
J'ay rompu de despit le mestier d' Atropos,
J'ay cassé les fuseaux des parques filandières....
(Act III, scene 2)

After the mythological outbursts described above, Corneille's mad hero takes the old nurse for the beautiful Mélite. The eagerness to recognize their mistress, or occasionally another person, in strangers or ghosts is a current trait in the portrayal of love-mad characters on the stage of the time. It is as general as the descent to the underworld in all the plays where madness was introduced as an "ornement de théâtre". Take, for example, the Bergeries of Racan(1618) Alcidor, the insane lover in this play, thinks that he is dead and already among the shades as does Eraste in Mélite; he is frightened by approaching demons or ghosts, one of whom he takes for his mistress; like Eraste he recovers his sanity. The following passage is typical:

Alcidor: En quel lieu m'a conduit la cruauté du sort?
Suis-je en terre ou dans l'eau? suis-je vivant ou mort?.....
Que de phantosmes vains en ces rives s'amassent!
Sont-ce morts ou démons qui s'approchent de moy?
Tout fait peur a mes yeus; Dieu qu'est ce que je voy?
(Takes a ghost for his sweetheart)
Belle âme, le miroir des âmes les plus belles;
Avez-vous donc quitté vos dépouilles mortelles?
Quels tourmens douloureux, quels funestes remors,
Vous ont fait ennuyer dedans un si beau corps?
Quoi! voulez-vous encor, o ma chère infidelle,
Traverser mon repos en la nuict éternelle?....(70)

The similarity of Corneille's method is evident if one reads these lines of the Mélite :

Eraste(seeing the ghosts) ,
Vous donc, esprits legers, qui, manque de tombeaux,
Tournoyez vagabonds a l'entour de ces eaux,
A qui Charon cent ans refuse sa nacelle,
Ne m'en pourriez vous point donner quelques nouvelles?
(He takes the nurse for Mélite)
Je vois deja Mélite. Ah! belle ombre, voici
L'ennemi de votre heur qui vous cherchoit ici....
With both these examples may be compared the following

verses from the fifth act of the Sylvie of Mairet, which is of 1628(privilege of 1627):

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Florisel: Mais n'est-ce pas ici le royaume des morts?
Nos esprits n'ont ils pas abandonné nos corps?
(Takes a ghost for his father)
N'es tu pas satisfait de nos travaux soufferts,
Sans nous venir troubler dans les enfers?
O père sans pitié, ton âme criminelle,
Vient elle icy nous faire une guerre éternelle?
(Oeuvres de Racan, Bib. Elzév., pp. 80-81)

In Hardy's pastoral play Alphée the mad shepherd, Euriale, has a similar vision. In Pichou's Folies de Cardenio (7/), Cardenio maddened by love, takes the barber for his mistress, Luscinde. In the Pirame et Thisbe of Théophile de Viaud, the hero, temporarily bereft of his reason, exclaims:

Tu viens donc, inhumaine, en ces bords malheureux,
Pour espier nos esprits amoureux?

In the Hypocondriaque of Rotrou (played in 1628) the hero, Cloridan, believes he is dead and tries to find his Perside among the souls in the underworld. He takes Cléonice at first for his sweet-heart and later for a dryad. Many more examples of this traditional scene can be found in the literature which was in fashion when the young Corneille wrote his "coup d'essai" Other parts of the Mélite, for example, the recovery of Eraste from madness, follow closely the convention of the stage of the time.

Although scenes of madness are to be found in the French tragedies of the sixteenth century, the fashion seems to have reached its highest point between 1610 and 1635. In the sixteenth-century tragedies, they owed their presence especially to the influence of classic example, and particularly of the Hercules Furens, the Medea, and other plays of Seneca. This theme, with all its opportunities for turgid declamation, made a very strong appeal to the Renaissance poets. Various examples can be pointed out, such as the Saul furieux of De la Taille (performed in 1562) or the Aman of André de Rivaudeau (1561). In 1603, the Rouen printer, Theodore Reinsart, published a tra-

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gedy, Ulysse, by Jacques de Champ-Repus. In the final scenes, Télégon, crazed with remorse over his accidental killing of his father, exclaims:

Su donc, monstres hideux, qui tenez le rivage
De l'enfer Averno, plein d'horreur et de rage,
Vivez, tournez, riblez à mes funestes cris,
Et venez sans tarder des antres plus noircis,
Grondans, jappans, hurlant d'une façon terrible.
.....Accablez-moy ici (Oeuvres (ed. 1864), p. 70)

The tragedy of J. de Schélandre, Tyr et Sidon, in its first form (1608) ends with the madness of the unhappy king, Tiribazé, whose ravings are similar to those in the passage cited above. Other tragedies too are adorned with this "ornement de théâtre."

The writers of tragi-comedies and pastoral plays appropriated quite naïvely these conventional madness scenes from the tragedies. Since by definition their works must end happily, they gave to these scenes a happy dénouement. Whereas the hero of the tragedy, recovering from his attack of frenzy, found around him the bleeding bodies of his victims and immediately turned to thoughts of suicide, in the tragi-comedies and the pastoral plays he suddenly recovered his reason and nothing more fatal than marriage resulted. In 1569, François de Belleforest published his Pastorale amoureuse in which the shepherd, Sylvie's reason is affected by the excessive grief caused by the rejection of his advances on the part of the fair shepherdess, Camille. In 1567 Pierre le Loyer, published his Le Muet insensé, comédie en cinq actes in which a lover receives a charm from a magician, but through a misuse of it becomes mad. He is, in the end, happily cured. Mad lovers are especially prevalent in the plays which appeared about the time that the Mélite was being composed or soon after the representation of the play, so that they may have been acted before Corneille's play. Reference has already been made to the Bergeries of Racan, the Folies de Cardénio of

Pichou, plays of Hardy, the Sylvie of Mairet, the Hypocondriaque of Rotrou, and the Généreuse Allemande of Mareschal. In Sylvanire ou la morte vive of Honoré d'Urfe (privilege dated 1625), the shepherd, Adraste, becomes insane through love for the shepherdess, Doris. The anonymous play La Folie de Silène (1624) shows the servant of the old Polite insane, and, taking his old master for a nymph, pursuing him with ridiculous love declarations. The conventional situation also occurs in a play printed in Rouen in 1625 with the following formidable title: Le Guerrier repenty, pastorale tragique et morale en laquelle les passions de l'homme sont manifestement représentées avec le contentement de la vie solitaire de l'hermite Hysipille; les aventureuses rencontres de la belle nymphe Rosymène, entre lesquelles reluyt le flambeau ^{RADI} radieux de sa chasteté parmi les erreurs du Guerrier Phallacie qui, enfin touché d'un saint remord de ses meurtres sanglans, se réduit à la vie religieuse et solitaire avec Hysipille dans les déserts. Par maistre Jacques le Clerc, prestre indigne, précepteur des lettres Latines à Saint Vallery sur Somme.

In La Carline, comédie pastorale of Antoine Gaillard, Sieur de la Portenille (Paris, 1626) we find a shepherd, Nicot, who is guilty of a crime of the same nature as that of Eraste; this is also followed by scenes of remorse and insanity. Philine ou l'amour contraire, Pastorale par le Sieur de la Morelle, which seems to have been played about 1628 (printed at Paris in 1630) presented the madness of Amaranthe. Liridas is a victim of this same love madness in the Elimene of the Sieur de la Croix (1628) the same thing occurs in the Pastorale tragi-comédie de Caritée. (Paris, 1627) and in Cléonice, ou l'amour téméraire (Paris 1630). According to the Mémoire of Mahelot, the titles of three lost plays of Hardy are: La Folie de Clidamante, La Folie d'Isabelle,

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and La Folie de Turlupin. One might also compare the mad outbursts of Hérode in the Mariamne of Hardy, and those in the Mariamne of Tristan l'Hermitte.

In La Folie du Sage of Tristan(1645) we find another form of madness; the book-and-knowledge madness. In the Hôpital des fous of Charles Beys, various madmen are put on the scene; a philosopher, a musician, an advocate, a soldier, an alchemist, and an astrologer. This play was first published in Paris in 1629, and is the same play as Les Illustres fous of 1652. As a variety we find mad ladies: for example, in La Pélérine amoureuse of Rotrou(printed in 1637) imitated from the Pellegrina of Girolamo Bargogli, Bélie pretends to be mad to escape from a detested marriage. In the third act of the Cléomedon of P. du Ryer(1633 or 1634) Cléomedon, being prevented from marrying Célianire, loses his intelligence, recovers, and marries his sweetheart. In the same way Policandre loses Basilie and his reason and recovers both in the Les Aventures de Policandre et de Basilie, tragédie par le sieur du Vieuget(printed in 1632, played probably in 1630)(72)

Other forms of poetry also felt the influence of this convention. In the Franciade of Ronsard the madness of Clymène is depicted. Learning that Francus has rejected her love she loses her reason and runs, "hurlante par les champs," pursuing a wild boar whom she takes for her lover. Another instance is to be found in Les Changementz de la Bergere Iris by J. de Lingendes (Paris, 1605) where Philène having lost his sweetheart thus narrates his experiences:

Lors m'égarent en mes propos,
Sans nourriture et sans repos,
Et repaissant ma fantaisie
De ce qui l'alloit offensant,
Mon mal tousjours se renforçant
Enfin je tombe en frénaisie.

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Et voyant, mais sans jugement,
Et privé de tout sentiment,
Un vieil Nautonnier passe et sombre,
Je pensay que ce fust Charron,
Qui m'enlevait sur l'Achéron,
Croyant n'estre plus que mon ombre.

These conventional madness-scenes became popular in the novels of which *Astrée* may be taken as a representative. In an episode of the second volume (*Histoire de Doris et Palemon*) Adraeste becomes insane through love and the author, d'Urfé, used the material for his pastoral play *Sylvanire*. In the "*Histoire de Rosanire Céliodante et Rosiléon*" of the fourth volume, Céliodante has the same misfortune. And this episode furnished the material for a lost play of Pichou, Rosiléon, and for the Pléomédon of Du Ryer which was first played under the name of Rossyléon.

(73) In the seventh volume Azahyde makes an unsuccessful attempt to murder Sylvandre. The father of Azahyde dies broken hearted whereupon the latter shuns society and brooding over his sins becomes insane. His description of his experience, which is typical, shows how d'Urfé appropriated the processes which have been noted above in the tragedies, tragi-comedies and pastoral plays of the time: "Ainsi ne trouvant plus de paix dans la société, je recourus à la solitude, et pour cela je me retiray en une maison que j'ay aux champs, mais mon péché qui me suivoit par tout ne me donna pas plus de relasche là qu'ailleurs; au contraire, comme si le ciel eust voulu me punir par moy-mesme, il permit que durant plus d'un mois je n'eux jamais de pensées que celles de ma faute, et de la punition que j'en pouvois encourir. Ce qui me troubla de sorte, que j'y reconnus sensiblement que peu à peu ma raison se perdoit dans la violence de ce ressentiment. Je combattis quelque temps contre la naissance de ce mal; mais les Dieux qui voulurent appesantir leurs mains sur moy, me firent bien tost esprouver qu'ils pouvoient donner aux mortels des peines plus grandes que celles qui proviennent de la perte de la raison,

et de fait, une nuict que j'estois enfermé dans ma chambre, et couché dans mon lit, j'ouys, tout à coup, ouvrir la porte, avec un bruit espouventable, et soudain que j'eud porté curieusement la vue pour apprendre ce que c'estoit, je vis Abariel (his father) couvert de sang en plusieurs endroits tenant dans l'une de ses mains un flambeau allumé, et dans l'autre un coeur percé de trois ou quatre cousteaux; Il avoit devant soy l'une des Furies et les autres deux à ses costez, toutes trois portants un Flambeau comme luy, et armée dans l'autre main de fouets retors, qui se séparoient en diverses pointes....il se retire deux ou trois pas, et faisant un certain signe aux Furies qui l'accompagnoient aussitost elles se saisirent de moy, et cependant que l'une me faisoit dévorer le sein par des serpents, l'autre me brusloit de son flambeau, et la troisieme me déchirant de coups ~~de~~ sans s'^molir, sembloit accroistre sa ^{rage} ~~sa~~ par mes cris et par mes plaintes....Je fus dans ce tourment plus d'une heure, après laquelle un si grand assoupissement me saisit, qu'il dura jusqu'au jour." (74)

Another counterpart of the Situation is found in Du Perier's novel: "La Haine et l'Amour de Arnoul et de Clairemonde"(1600)
 "La guerison fut l'entrée de sa maladie; car ses playes fermées prenant resolution de ne plus vivre, la fièvre le saisit avec une telle violence que perdant le repos, le boire, le manger, et le jugement, le voilà frénétique, avec une resverie et imagination d'estre mort; de sorte que les Medecins, ny personne, ne pouvoit trouver remède pour luy faire perdre ceste fantasie, # sinon un sien valet de chambre, qui par une gentille invention, après avoir tenté une infinité d'autre moyens qui se trouvèrent tous inutiles, s'advisa de se mettre dans un lict, près celuy de son maistre, ^{et} à faire le mort comme luy: ce qu'il sceut si destrement executer, que se faisât apporter de la viande, il

mangea devant son Maistre, qui à l'envy en fit autant, et par ce moyen venant à se fortifier, il n'entra en son bon sens." etc. (p. 10)

These examples show how thoroughly Corneille obeyed the convention of the stage and of the literature of his times with his madness of Eraste. The direct source of it is to be sought neither in Rotrou's Hypochondriaque nor in La Climène of De La Croix. It was nothing more than a common-place "qui se faisoit souvent applaudir" and for which examples were to be found almost everywhere at the time.

The Other Characters of the Mélite

The nurse who plays an important part in the recovery of Eraste also belongs in the list of conventions which had long been presented upon the French stage. It was a traditional character played generally by a masked man. In the comedy of the sixteenth century, to be sure, the nurse-character is rather rare for the reason that the old woman of the play was generally a "femme d'intrigue" of the Celestine type. She plays, however, a small role in the Fidele of Larrivey and a ridiculous one as Marian in L'Escolier. But in the tragedy composed in close imitation of the ancients, she took a more important part in the action, as in the Médée of La Péruse, the Lucrece of Nicolas Filleul (1566), La Carthaginoise of Montchrestien etc. She even pays for her interference in the action with her life sometimes as in the Tyr et Sidon of Schélandre (1608 and 1628)

She appears in the tragi-comedy as a distributor of good counsels, favoring or combatting the love of the hero or heroine. In Théophile de Viaud's Pyrame et Thisbé, the nurse, Bersiane oversees the conduct of Thisbé whom she counsels and reproaches in quite maternal fashion. She appears in the tragi-comedy Clotilde of Jean Prévost (1613), in Jean Auvray's Marsilie (1609),

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published as L'Innocence Découverte, 1628) where she plays an important role and shares the sentence of banishment which has been pronounced against her mistress. In a number of other plays - especially in those of Hardy and in the Heureux Naufrage of Rotrou - she is the counsellor and confidante and, in some cases the entremetteuse. Nowhere does she become a comic character nor is she such in the Mélite except at the very end. Everywhere else she appears as a woman, full of wisdom, counselling Mélite with the solicitude of a mother and in fact taking the place of the heroine's mother who is mentioned two or three times but does not appear upon the stage. She is really Mélite's confidante and when Corneille in the Galerie du Palais metamorphoses the nurse into the suivante, it is more her name that has changed than her conduct.

Fournel (75) attributes to Corneille a transformation of the nurse's role: "C'est encore P. Corneille qui, dans ses premières comédies, a donné à la nourrice le rôle le plus caractérisé. Familière avec Mélite, qu'elle tutoie, sa confidente et son intermédiaire, très prudente" etc. The typical nurse-character as presented by Corneille was however fully sketched by Hardy in his Felismène, Dorise, Frégonde, Gésippe, Alcméon, Panthée etc. In the Dorise, the Frégonde, ^{and the} Gésippe especially is she presented as the sort of maternal confidant who advises and comforts the heroines quite in the fashion of the Nourrice in Mélite. Her counsels to the love-beset young women of the play are all of the same order. In the Gésippe (Act I sc. 2) she admonishes the heroine:

Mais madame, il ne faut qu'une fille en cela
Montre si clairement la passion qu'elle a, etc

and in the Mélite she sounds a similar warning:

Une fille qui voit et que voit la jeunesse
Ne s'y doit gouverner qu'avec beaucoup d'adresse, etc

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The conventional character of the nurse in Corneille's first comedy is made more apparent by the two young women of the play who, compared with her are relatively fresh and realistic creations. Méliste is represented as a true, honest, and reserved though somewhat tenderhearted maiden who has little need of the worldly-wise counsels which the nurse gives her. Her sentimentality is lightened by a shade of irony, she is always ready with a witty answer and she is not at all disposed to be carried away by the flowery compliments of Eraste. Cloris is less reserved and less sentimentally inclined. She is distinguished by a very active practical sense, is capricious, and very positive in her views on lovers and their passion.

When Eraste has sent the forged letters which he claims to have been written by Méliste to Philandre, all the characters of the play vie with one another in credulity. Philandre does not question for a moment the authenticity of these letters brought to him by a messenger whom he does not know, from a young lady whom he has never met. Tircis, having seen the letters, seeks no explanation but immediately begins to contemplate suicide. Méliste waits for no verification of the report of the death of Tircis but promptly faints, while Eraste immediately becomes insane at the news of the double tragedy. Cloris alone remains calm and intelligent enough to do the sensible and obvious thing; she shows the letters to Méliste who denies having written them. In this way she brings the imbroglio to an end and her sound common sense lends probability to her marriage at the end of the play with Eraste after he had been sufficiently punished for his duplicity. Eraste was rich as indicated by different allusions in the play, while she, like her brother (Tircis, was little blessed with worldly goods. Her practical sense enabled her to discard with perfect equanimity her former

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lover Philandre in favor of a more promising establishment. She was manifestly of the opinion formulated by many young ladies of similar type for example by one in l'Amie de Court (La Borderie 1543):

S'il falloût qu'ung sot de bonne race
Riche de biens et pauvre de sçavoir
Me demandast. . . .
D'avis seroys que plus tost on le prit
Qu'ung plus sçavant, qui n'a rien que l'esprit
Car il n' y a chose si misérable.
Que paovreté (p.31)

Different as they are, the two young girls, the romantic and tender Mélite, the practical but capricious Cloris, are both "young girls". Without attempting any very profound psychological analysis, Corneille succeeded in endowing his two heroines with such characteristics and such features of the young girl type that they are enough to clearly differentiate his comedy from that of the sixteenth century. The role is rare in the comedy of the sixteenth century. In most cases there is no place for her in the immoral plots, and when she does appear, she bears few of the characteristics of the modern "young girl" but rather resembles the young women of the Italian stage who show no reserve in love but are apparently ready to receive their lover or lovers immediately upon terms of the greatest intimacy. They have neither delicacy nor even decency. To this type of young women belong, for example, the Genevieve of Les Contens (Odet de Turnebe) Grassette of Les Escoliers (Perrin), Antoinette of La Reconnue (Belleau) etc.

Corneille then, in the Mélite, drew two young women of a more elevated and refined type notwithstanding a few rather dubious scenes which were removed in later editions of the play. However, even here, it is easy to exaggerate his originality for, between the comedies of the sixteenth century and this, his first play, came the pastoral plays and novels, which with all their unreal and verbose sentimentality of shepherd love ~~and~~

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had established a finer conception of the young girl type. The platonic love theories played an important part also in this transformation. Authors like Castiglione in his *Cortegiano*; Leo Hebreo in his *Philosophie d'Amour*; Cornelius Agrippa in his *Declamatio de Nobilitate et Præcellentia feminei sexus*; Herceet in his *Parfaicte Amie*, each in their own way ^{had brought Platonism down from the clear regions of abstract thought} to practical life. They had transformed it into a sort of society-science, a code of rules governing social conduct and conversation. It is the same atmosphere which pervades the pastoral novels and plays; many of the latter in fact present the love affairs of princes and princesses who appear in the guise of shepherds and shepherdesses. In this way these novels and plays took on a certain tinge of reality which, in the course of time, they have completely lost for the ordinary reader. It was a mixture of things real and things ideal, of contemporary "perfect gentlemen" and of imaginary rustics. One of its most characteristic features was the glorification of women. The *Astrée* - essentially a woman's and "courtier's" book - is one long panegyric of the noble qualities of the feminine sex. Their caprices are laws for their lovers who act towards them as a vassal toward his suzerain. They are supernaturally beautiful, finely sensitive, chaste and reserved, superb, capricious, and disdainful. The occasional kisses which they grant their adorers are not the manifestation of ordinary passion. They are the "union of souls" described by Castiglione in his theorizing upon the "chaste kiss" in his treatise of the "P-e-r-f-e-c-t-G-e-n-t-l-e-m-a-n"

The literary conception of the young girl type had thus become fixed in the French pastoral literature. Under the influence of this literature Corneille sketched his sensitive and chaste *Mélite* who resembles many a sentimental and confiding shepherdess of pastoral novels and plays which appeared during

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the period 1600-1630. The capricious and practical Cloris too has her prototype in the great number of shepherdesses who are changeable, capricious and full of daring such as, for example, the Stelle of the Astrée. Their way of loving is far removed from the license of the Italian theater and also from the burning passionate love of the Spanish stage heroine, whose restless jealousy prepares her for every adventure. When Philandre resolves to abandon Cloris for Mélite, Cloris resigns and finally accepts Eraste with apparent equanimity. The love of these young women is dominated by common sense not unmixed with tenderness, but it is at the same time devoid of all passion. It bears no trace of the exaltation of the Spanish nor of the unchastity of the Italian "passion" They are, in short, French shepherdesses transported to the stage from the pages of the French pastoral which was, at that time (1620-1630) in the period of its richest development.

Conclusion

It is reasonably certain that Corneille, in composing his first play, looked about him for material and found it in abundance. The initial story of the two friends in love with the same young woman, the letters forged by the supplanted lover, the madness of Eraste, his subsequent recovery and the resulting double marriage, all that appears repeatedly in the literature of the early seventeenth century. The characters are equally French. A long line of ancestors preceded the love-sceptic Tircis and Eraste does not differ from the ordinary shepherd-rival; the young girls are evidently reflections of shepherdess models and the nurse was a convention of even longer standing. Yet Corneille asserted in another part of his *Examen: La nouveauté de ce genre de comédie dont il n'y a aucun exemple dans*

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aucune langue . . . furent sans doute la cause de ce bonheur surprenant et qui faisoit alors tant de bruit. He must have forgotten many things by 1660. For the plot and development of the *Mélite* is neither original nor is it to any certain degree autobiographical or realistic. At the same time it is no servile imitation. The play was a rather skilful gathering of scenes and situations and types an assembling of *reminiscences* from his reading rather than any direct transcription from the life which he observed and in which he took part.

Nor is it at all likely that Corneille went beyond the French frontiers in search of material for his first play. Martineche (76) who makes an evident effort to give full credit to Spain for what it furnished ^{to the} poets of the *Grand Siècle*, has nothing to say in this connection concerning the *Mélite*; Huszar on the other hand, in his book on "P. Corneille et le Théâtre espagnol," accepts the statement of Claveret quite literally and then proceeds to list as features common to Corneille and the Spanish *Comedia*: the use of forged or false letters (77), the credulity of the lovers; their tendency to give way to despair; to commit suicide; to become insane; the conventional love-sententia and the double marriage as a *dénouement* (78) But he cites no case of definite similarity and in fact, admits: "nous ne pourrions pas toujours citer des traductions, ni même de plus libres adaptations" (p. 220) Granting that these general similarities exist there is not the slightest reason for supposing that Corneille had the Spanish *Comedia* in mind at this period. As a matter of fact, all these things which are to be found in the *Mélite* and in the *Comedia* are to be found, as we have seen, in equal abundance in the French literature of the time. And Corneille's first work resembles the pastoral plays and sentimental novels much more closely in both spirit and detail than it does the

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Spanish models which M. Huszar proposed. The ~~debut~~ ^{débüt} of Corneille appears as a natural outgrowth of the influences by which he was surrounded in his youth, as connected with the literature of his epoch, as inspired by it and developing from it in the way pointed out in this chapter.

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NOTES
for
THE GENESIS OF THE MELITE

- (1) Cf. Bouquet-Points obscurs et ^{no} nouveaux de la vie de Pierre Corneille - Ch. VI - Corneille et la Cour de Louis XIII aux Eaux de Forges
- (2) La Bruyère - Des Ouvrages de l'Esprit - Ed. Servais, 1912, Vol. I, p. 139
- (3) Boileau - Réflexions critiques sur Longin - Réflexion 7 - Ed. Ch. Gidel | tome 3-p. 363-64
- (4) Voltaire - Avis sur les comédies de Corneille. Oeuvres-1785.- vol. 51, p. 447
- (5) La Harpe - Lycée ou Cours de Littérature - ed. Dyon 1820, Vol. 5, p. 195
- (6) Nisard - Histoire de la Littérature Française - 18th ed., vol. 2 p. 96
- (7) Sainte Beuve - Portraits Littéraires - Vol. I, Pierre Corneille
- (8) Abbé d'Olivet - cited by Roger Le Brun - Corneille devant trois siècles.
- (9) Nisard - Histoire de la Littérature française - 18th ed. - II 87
- (10) Roger Le Brun - Corneille devant trois siècles - Introduction p. 11
- (11) F. Brunetière - Histoire de la Littérature Française classique vol. II, p. 173
- (12) Fontenelle - Vie de M. Corneille.
- (13) Histoire de la Poesie Française - 1706 - p. 216 - cfr. V. Fournel Les Contemporains de Molière - p. 13, note 3.
- (14) Taschereau - Vie de Corneille - p. 7
- (15) Marty-Laveaux - Oeuvres de P. Corneille
- (16) Rog. Le Brun - Corneille devant trois siècles p. 12 ----- Sainte Beuve gives another explanation: "Il fit Mélite qu'il envoya au vieux dramaturge Hardy. Celui-ci la trouva "une assez jolie

farce, et le jeune avocat de vingt trois ans, partit de Rouen pour Paris, pour assister au succès de sa piece"(Portraits litt. I, p. 35)

- (17) Cfr. - Chappuzeau - Théâtre françois 1674 p.189----F.Bouquet, La Troupe de Molière et les deux Corneille a Rouen---Bruscambille Rigal - A. Hardy, p.118
- (18) Cfr. E.Linthillac - Histoire du Théâtre en France, Vol. III, p. 6-7; Fournel, Les contemporains de Molière - Vol. III, p.12- Rigal - Hôtel de Bourgogne et Marais
- (19) Fr. Parfaict, Histoire du théâtre françois Vol. IV, p. 462
- (20) Epistre dédicatoire of the Gallantries du Duc d'Ossone, 1636
- (21) Maty-Laveaux, Oeuvres de Corneille, Vol. I, p. 129
- (22) Carr. Lancaster; Pierre du Ryer, dramatisit, p. 34
- (23) Hôtel de Bourgogne et Marais - Esquisse d'une histoire des théâtres de Paris, p. 75-76
- (24) Gasté: La Querelle du Cid, p. 323 - cfr. Dannheisser Zur Chronologie der Dramen Jean de Mairet's. Romanische Forschungen 1890, p. 37-64, and: Zur Geschichte der Einheiten in Frankreich - Zeitschr für Franz. Sprache und Litter, XIV, p. 13 note 3, and p.14
- (25) La Sylvie du sieur Mairet - trag. com. past. - Paris, Fr.Targa 1628(Priv. 17, Sept. 1627) reprinted 1629-1630-1631-1634.

La Sylvanire ou la morte-vive, tragi-com. past. - Paris, Fr. Targa 1631, cfr. - Marsan, La Pastorale dramatique p.375 - Mairet refers here to the coming first representations of the "Sylvanire" ^{as} ~~ad~~ the work was not printed before 1631(Priv. Febr. 1631)

- (26) In "The Dates of Corneille's Early Plays", Modern Language Notes Jan. 1915, The number of 135 representations given by Mondory's troop by February 25, 1631(Referred to in the lawsuit of the confrères) forms no objection against the dating Sept-Oct. 1630 of the Méliete. These 135 performances may have been given

in the winter of 1629-1630 and in the months Sept. 1630 to Feb. 1631. The Mélite was not necessarily the first play staged by the Lenoir-Mondory troop, by its return to Paris.

- (27) Marty-Laveaux, vol. I, p.135
"Etablit" means clearly that the success of the play enabled a struggling troupe to become definitely established in Paris.
- (28) -1708- Dictionnaire Géographique, word Rouen.
- (29) Excuse à Ariste - Marty-Laveaux vol. 10
- (30) "Nouvelles de la république des lettres" - 1685-p. 89 - Eloge de M. Corneille, Marty-Laveaux (Vol I, p. 21 and p. 125) attributes this article to an anonymous writer, U. Meyer in Zeitschrift F. Franz, Sprache und Litt. 1885 (p. 119 note 2) attributes it to Fontenelle
- (31) Edition of Corneille's works by the abbé Granet - 1738.
- (32) Manuscript in the library of Caen, - ab. 1784-1790)
- (33) Emanuel Gaillard-Nouveaux: Details sur Pierre Corneille, 1834
- (34) Oeuvres de Corneille, Vol. I, p. 128
- (35) F. Bouquet - Points obscurs et nouveaux de la vie de Pierre Corneille p. 62.
- (36) Marty-Laveaux, X, 77, note 2.
- (37) Marie Corneille was baptized on November 4, 1609 - cfr. Bouquet, op. cit., p.62; and, for the role of Cloris, the chapter on Decency in Corneille's early plays".
- (38) Thomas Corneille states that the whole adventure is described in the play; Fontenelle says that Pierre Corneille "added something to the truth"

Fontenelle was born at Rouen, in 1657. Pierre Corneille left that city for Paris in 1662, when his nephew was five years old. No regular relation ever existed between him and his uncle. Moreover, Fontenelle himself confessed that his knowledge of the historical facts of his uncle's life was limited and uncertain.

Speaking about the edition of Corneille's works in 1738, by the Abbé Granet, he said: "On ^àrécuilli, avec soin et avec goût, ces différentes pièces, dont on a fait un volume à la suite de son Théâtre, réimprimé en 1738, et je ne puis mieux faire que de renvoyer sur toute cette matière ----qu'à une préface judicieuse et bien-écrite, où l'on trouvera de plus des traits historiques que je ne savais pas. L'auteur y doute d'un fait que j'avais avancé; j'avoue que son doute seul m'ébranle; c'est un fait que j'ai trouvé établi dans ma mémoire comme certain, quoique dépouillé de toutes ses preuves, que j'ai eu tout le loisir d'oublier parfaitement." (Vie de Corneille par Fontenelle, édit de Bérin, p. 348. Histoire de l'Académie Française, par Pellisson et d'Olivet - édition Livet, p. 208)

- (39) For a list of translations see Lee Wolff - The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction. - 1596 - Italian translation of books V-VIII by Lodovico Dolce - 1560 - complete Italian translation by Angelo Coccio - 1597 - English translation by Wm. Burton
- (40) Les Devis amoureux, traduits naguères de ~~grec~~^{grec} en latin et depuis de latin en françois par l'Amoureux de Vertu - Paris G. Corrozet 1545.
- (41) Lyon, G. Marchant 1556 - new edition: Lyon B. Rigaud, 1573.
- (42) Carrington Lancaster - Two last plays by Alex. Hardy - Modern Language Notes, - May 1912.
- (43) G. Reynier - Le Roman sentimental avant l'Astrée, p. 380.
- (44) -1628-
- (45) -A. Feuillerat- John Lyly: Contribution a l'histoire de la Renaissance en Angleterre - Cambridge, 1910, p. 74-75; 274-275.
- (46) -Cf. S. Lee Wolff - A source of Euphues - Modern Philology, April 1910. Also his book "The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction" - 1912 - p. 248.

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(47) - Wilhelm Grimm (Kleinere Schriften, III) Erwin Rohde (Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer, p. 274) and Gaston Paris (La Littérature française au Moyen-Age, p. 51) agree that the probable source of the Rival-Friends story is a lost Greek Romance. The old French Poem "Athis et Prophilias" by Alexander de Bernai seems to be based on it. Rohde and others think it possible that Boccaccio made use of the lost Middle-Greek Romance for his "Tito e Gisippo". A curious hypothesis is set up by M. S. Lee Wolff about Goldsmith's possible knowledge of the Greek source and about the use he made of it for his Rival story. "Septimius and Alcander"; See "The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction, p. 253 - The essential features of the story are found in Petrus Alphonous *Disciplina Clericalis* (circa 1106) and in the *Gesta Romanorum*; in Thomas de "Contempré's *De Proprietatibus Apum*" (after 1251); in Nicolas Pergamenus' *Dialogus Creaturarum* (13th or 14th century) etc.

(48) 1535 f. 211 to 227

(49) By Jean Barbe d'Arge, 1537.

(50) Phillippi Beroaldi Bononiensis Poete Carmen de *Duobus Amantibus* 1530. "L'Histoyre de Titus et Gesippus et autres petiz oeuvres de Béroalde Latin, interpretés en Rime Française par François Habert d'Yssouldun en Berry - 1531 - Cfr. S. Lee Wolff, op. Cit, and "Le ^{via} ~~li~~er des histoires Romaines" (translation of the "*Gesta Romanorum*") - Bibliothèque Elzevirienne - 1858 - p. 392-393.

(51) Vol. III, story 1 and 11; vol V, story 5 and p. 373.

(52) Adapted from the *Astrée*, "Histoire de Célion et de Bellinde (I, story 10) Played about 1631, printed 1634.

(53) -Hardy- Oeuvres, Ed. Stengel.

(54) Hardy's "Dorise" was adapted from a story of de Rosset's "Histoire des Amans volages de ce temps, ou sous des noms empruntez

sont contenus les Amours de plusieurs Princes, seigneurs, gentil-hommes et autres personnages de marque, qui ont trompé leurs maîtresses ou qui ont esté trompés d'elles 1614 - second edition, 1619.

(55) I, 8; II, 1; III, 5, 9, 10.

(56) 1632~~4~~.

(57) Bouquet, Op. Cit, 57-58.

(58) Cf. the chapter on "Decency in Corneille's early plays"

(59) I, 8; II, 3, 4; III, 7, 9, ; V, 1, 12

(60) 1635

(61) Marty-Laveaux, I, 156

(62) 1610 ; Rouen, David du Petit-Val.

(63) Marty-Laveaux, I, 139

(64) Gasté - La Querelle du Cid, p. 309

(65) Marty-Laveaux took this statement literally: "Bien que Claveret ne conteste pas à Corneille l'invention de la frénésie d'Éraste" etc.(I, 227, n.L)

(66) Played in 1627-28; editions, Paris 1629, 1636, 1637. The play was plagiarized from the Isabelle of P.Ferry, 1610.

(67) Über Pierre Corneille's Erstlings drama Méliete - Festschrift des Gymnasiums zu Schneeberg, 1891, pp.54-73.

(68) - Oeuvres de Hardy (Ed. E. Stengel) V, 224-225)

(69) Ibid, p.225

(70) Oeuvres de Racan - Bib. Elzev. pp. 80-81

(71) Privilège of 1625

(72) Other plays with madness scenes are: Stratonice ou le malade d'Amour - Tragi-comédie by de Brosse(1644),- Antiochus loves his mother-in-law Stratonice. He feigns madness to obtain her hand. Mairet's tragedy Roland(1640) imitates the madness of Orlando furioso. The tragedy Arie et Pétus, ou les Amours de Neron by Gilbert(1659) ends with the remorse and madness of Nero.

(73) Cf. Carrington Lancaster, Pierre du Ryer, dramatisant, p.62 -

Fournier - Variétés historiques et littéraires 11, p. 345

(74) Astrée V, story 10. page 816

(75) La Comédie au 17^e siècle, p.32

(76) La Comedia Espagnola en France de Hardy à Racine - 1900

(77) "Les lettres jouent un rôle important dans la comedia, elles provoquent de nombreux malentendus; la crédulité avec laquelle les protagonistes espagnols tiennent pour vraies les lettres fausses ou acceptent celles qui ne leur sont pas adressées, se retrouve chez le Philandre de Corneille, qui est, "bien crédule de se persuader d'être aimé d'une personne qu'il n'a jamais entretenue"; chez Eraste, que le poète lui-même trouvait ridicule de croire à la réussite de sa ruse; chez Tircis, "l'honnête homme de la Pièce" qui est aussi naïf que ses compagnons. On sait que ce lieu commun de comédie, qui consiste à faire croire au héros, dans l'intérêt de l'auteur, les choses les plus singulières, est fréquent dans le théâtre espagnol----Huszar, Op.Cit. 222.

(78) Huszar, Op, Cit, p. 224.

RELATION BETWEEN CORNEILLE'S EARLY PLAYS
AND THE NOVELS OF THE TIME

In a preceding chapter of this thesis the relation from the point of view of plot and characterisation of Corneille's *Méliste* to the contemporary literature has been studied. The results arrived at may be briefly summed up as follows: Corneille found, ready-made, in the pastoral plays and in the novels of his time, the constituent parts of his plot and of his characters. In so far as the construction of his play is concerned, he followed closely the stage-tradition of 1600-1630. It is quite clear that he was strongly under the spell of the pastoral tradition; he depicted "honnêtes gens" who look altogether like shepherds. He began, like most young writers do, by imitation. His power of independent observation was as yet too weak to allow him to take his characters from the life of the Parisian drawing-rooms, with which, on the other hand, he was not at all acquainted at the time of his debut. The reminiscences from his readings then furnished him the greater part of his first play, and I have endeavored to trace origins of counterparts of some of the similitudes which are to be observed in the literature of the time.

However, one characteristic in which *Méliste* differs from the contemporary stage is that the scene of this pastoral love-imbroglio is laid in Paris. "La scène est à Paris." But, notwithstanding this setting, the conventional love-story of the two rivals, -Eraste and Tircis- remained a pastoral intrigue, pervaded by the traditional pastoral gallantry without any Parisian atmosphere. Corneille's characters behave in Paris just as do the happy or love-lorn shepherds in the shady groves of d'Urfé's Forez. They walk along the beaten path of the pastoral in the rivalries which are

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characteristic of this type of fiction; they adopt the customary tricks of disappointed lovers; they fall into the customary madness and end with the no less conventional pairing off at the dénouement.

The mere fact, however, that Corneille laid the scene in the capital suggests that he consciously tried to depict contemporary French life, starting thus at once on the road which would lead him later to more complete and more realistic portrayals with *La Suivante*, *Le Galier du Palais*, and *La Place Royale*.

The young Corneille was in perfect good faith, no doubt, when he called his characters "Parisians". At that time he was a young lawyer of the Province, who had no intimate acquaintance with the refined Parisian drawing-rooms. If his "Parisians" are so closely akin to the Shepherds of the then flourishing pastoral plays and sentimental-pastoral novels, the conclusion must be drawn that he really imagined the Parisians of the cultivated circles to be as they were described in these books.

It was in his native city, Rouen, that he became acquainted with the literature *a la mode*(1). In the works printed or sold there during a few decades preceding his debut, the origin is to be found, not only of the pastoral elements in the *Mélite*, but of Corneille's tendency toward the painting of contemporary life as well. This endeavour - which grows stronger and more balanced in the three plays following the *Clitandre* - was, without doubt, suggested to Corneille by the parallel effort toward contemporaneity which can be traced in a certain category of contemporary novels, those that undertook to depict real life(2) as seen, more or less, through the pastoral atmosphere. These novels present, in this respect, a marked contrast to the development in theatrical composition, which, from 1610 to about 1630, gave little or no place to the French life of the time. The great variety of dramatic forms prevalent at the time

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all remained alien to the portrayal of contemporary life. The tragi-comedy showed a preference for historical or foreign subjects, the farce remained decidedly in the lower regions of life, the pastoral clung to its conventional setting of a shepherds' country, the tragedy reproduced the subject-matter taken from antiquity.

There is no doubt that these novels, — which devoted much attention to contemporary life, — influenced the stage in this direction. It was quite a common practice during the early part of the 17th century to adapt the plot of a novel to the stage, and it has been said that the tragi-comedy, with all its irregularities, was essentially an attempt to condense in a few acts, all the adventures of a long heroic "roman." Examples of such adaptations are numerous. Hardy, for example, took his Dorise from de Rosset's *Amans volages de ce temps*; Gésippe from Boccaccio, etc; Retrou cut a play out of Sorel's *Cléagenor et Doristée*; duRyer took his *Lisandre et Caliste* from a novel of d'Audiguier, and put Barclay's *Argenis* on the stage. The late-greek novel of Tatios inspired his *Clitophon*, and Hardy used the same source for one of his lost plays. Du Hamel imitated in his tragedy *Acoubar*(1603), the novel of du Pérrier, *Les Amours de Pistion*. The *Amours de Dalchmion et de Deflore*, a novel of J. Philippes, is put on the stage as the *Amours de Dalcomeon* of Est. Bellone. Giboin took his tragi-comedy, *Amours de Philandre et de Marizée*, (1619) from de Nervèze's novel of the same title(1598). The *Astrée* was for years the source of plot material for de Scudéry, Rayssiguier, and many others.(3) The playwrights of the time delved with eager hands into the treasures of fiction that the novels opened for them.

The theories and examples of the novelists were thus bound to affect the composition of these plays as well as the literary atmosphere in general. Now, during the 1600-1630 period, the

novelists voiced many times the need of turning to contemporary life for literary subjects and tried to put their theories into practice in creating "real" men and women. Their stories from "real" life, however, continued to be filled with elements taken from the romances of chivalry, from the greek or the pastoral novel. A magician, a wonderful shipwreck, a glorious fight of the hero against overpowering odds, or even a satyr, appear in a tale, pretending to be "entirely true." This curious mixture of "vraysemblable" and "invraysemblable" is characteristic of the chaotic state of the literature of the time. Even in novels, which made a claim to truthfulness, the elements of real life and those of the pastoral or chivalric romance are strangely blended. Guillaume Coste for instance, in his *Bergeries de Vesper*(4) drew a picture- remarkable for the time- of the love adventures of some shepherds, who were, in reality, lovers from the class of the country nobility, with their characteristic customs. These lovers are adorned with shepherds' names, says the writer, "pource qu'il faut qu'ils conduisent et gouvernent leurs pensées amoureuses, qui sont des troupeaux assez souvent malaisez à gouverner." The elements of reality are represented by clearly portrayed meetings and walks in the country, convivial feasts, and serenades, the elements from the pastoral tradition by fights with a satyr, wandering cavaliers, etc.

When a novel of that type was put on the stage, it retained these characteristics and presented the same mixture of the real and the unreal. Hardy's play, *Dorise*, taken from de Rosset's *Amans volages de ce temps*, furnishes an example. The strange names of some of his heroes have no more significance than the shepherd's names of the *Bergeries de Vesper*, for de Rosset claims to picture contemporary noblemen. The incidents are strikingly resemblant to those of Corneille's *Méliste*. Two friends, Salmaces and Licanor, love

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Dorise. During the absence of Salmaces, the rival, Licamor, wins the girl for himself by lying and a letter-trick. Salmaces runs off to the country and lives half-mad in a hermitage, where he is discovered by Sydère, who loves him. The "invraysemblable" elements are then introduced in this alleged "vraysemblable" love-story in the form of a female magician, who discovers that the madness of Salmaces is occasioned by a secret dharm. With her supernatural power, she brings him back to sanity and a double marriage ends the play. This work is relatively more real and "vraysemblable" however, than much of the contemporary and later production. And for this, the influence of its source, — a novel of contemporary life, — is largely responsible.

In the period 1600-1630, when the general tendencies of the theater were either toward the pastoral or toward the extravagant tragi-comedy, these novels imitated thus, in a more or less conventional manner, the life of the time. But they limited themselves to the love between noblemen and refined ladies, for they disdained "ces amours vulgaires qui ne se pratiquent qu'entre des âmes de basse origine" (Timothée de Chillac-Oeuvres, 1599). Princes and princesses appear only by exception. The ordinary characters are exactly those "honnêtes gens" whom Corneille depicted in his first plays. In voicing their theories, in their prefaces, the novelists opposed the enormous influence of antiquity as well as the "foreign country" craze which later sent so many novel-heroes to Turkey or to unknown lands.

The anonymous author of the *Amours du brave Lydamas et de la belle Myrtille*, (Toulouse, 1594) says that he depicts "des Amours françois et non estrangers." And du Souhait in the novel, *Poliphile et Méllonimpe* (1598), argues: "Qu'est il besoin de mendier chez les anciens le tesmoignage des effects de l'amour, puisque nostre siècle

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les faict naistre! Ne croirons nous plustost à nos yeux qu' à nos oreilles? Qui sont ceux tant amis de l'antiquité et ennemis de leur âge, qui donnent vie à des histoires rapportées de nos pères, pour ensevelir celles qui naissent avec nous?" The author of *La Constance d'Alisée et de Diane* opposes the custom of using foreign settings in novels: "Belles âmes que la France a nourries et eslevées dans son sein, pourquoy allez-vous mendiant parmy les estrangers les ruynes d'amour, pour en faire parade, laissant en dépost à l'oubliance les plus remarquables tragédies de ce tyran, advenues entre les François?" While insisting on the necessity of finding inspiration in daily life, some novelists ask for more truth in the painting of love, for more "vraysemblance". The anonymous author of the "*Amours de Vélite et de Statiphile*" (1609), claims his adherence to these principles in these terms: "Helas, qu'il est besoign recourir aux mesures de l'antiquité, remembrer les siecles passées, escheler les cieux comme nouveaux. Prométhées, pour y desrober quelque science d'amour.....pour ne tenir compte des estranges accidens qu'ordinairement nous produit l'excès d'une passion amoureuse, en nos contrées, en l'enclos de nos villes, et de nos maisons.....On ne verra pas dans mon livre, des événemens tragiques, des fictions de Psyché avec son Cupidon, ny les ruses d'une Médée; mais la verité de ma passion, le progres de mes amoureuses recherches et facheux accidens d'icelles, la fidelité d'un serviteur payé d'inconstance." The sieur de la Regnerye in the *Amours de Lintason et de Palinoé* (1601) follows the same theory. He declares that his story was "très veritable", and that he told it "naïvement."

François de Rosset in the "Preface" of his "*Histoires tragiques de nostre Temps*" (2d ed. 1616) exclaimed as so many other novel-writers of the time: "Ce ne sont pas des contes de l'antiquité fabuleuse, que je te donne (O France, mère de tant de beaux Esprits,

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qui font rougir de honte et la Grèce et l'Italie;) Ce sont des Histoires autant véritables que tristes et funestes. Les noms de la plupart des personnages sont seulement desguisez en ce Théâtre, à fin de n'affliger pas tant les familles de ceux qui en ont donné le sujet....."

The last sentence refers to an important element of contemporaneity in the novel of the beginning of the 17th century, the tendency to narrate actual events — sometimes embellished with very improbable incidents — to flatter influential noblemen by making them the disguised heroes of a story. The numerous "Romans à clef" thus created, fitted in with a similar tendency in the pastoral play, which, staged mostly in the castles of the nobles, in many cases pretended to put on the scene, under a disguise, the constant or fickle loves of a noble protector of ~~philosophical~~ letters.

One of the stories of Rosset's "Histoires Tragiques" depicts some incidents from the life of François de Lorraine, de Guise, Lieutenant Général pour le Roy en Provence. In the Dedicace to him, it is said: ".....vous estes l'auteur de la plus belle partie de cest ouvrage. Vostre valeur s'y est dépeinte avec de si vives couleurs, que l'esclat en faict rougir de honte les plus valeureux de ce siècle.....Il n'est pas besoing de reciter en ceste Épitre ce que tout le monde sqit admirer, puisque je l'ay fidellement décrit en l'une de ces Histoires....."

In a similar way, a great number of novel-writers of the beginning of the 17th century described, under assumed names, the adventures of living personages. And this preoccupation was bound to give to their work a certain measure of reality and fidelity in the depicting of contemporary life. To this category of "Romans à clef" belong, for example: Les amours de la belle du Luc of J. Prévost (1597), La Galatée et les adventures du Prince Astiages of A. Remy. (1625)

A. Remy(1625);- Histoire de la vie et de la mort d'Arthemise by Jean de Lannel(1621); -La Caritée of Gomberville(1621); -Le Cléandre d'Amour et de Mars of Pébrac de Montpesat(1620);- L'Arcadie Françoise of Ollérix de Mont Sacré(1625);- Le Roman des chevaliers de la Gloire of de Rosset(1612); (9) Romant royal ou histoire de nostre temps of Piloust(1621);- Théâtre d'Histoires de Phil. de Belleville(1610); - Cléodante et Hermeline ou Histoire de la Cour of A. Humbert(1629); Endymion of Combault(1624); -Histoire des Amans volages de ce temps of de Rosset(1614)- Roman de la Cour de Bruxelles of Puget de la Serre(1628) and other novels or collections of stories.

Some authors claim that their stories are entirely true and even add in some cases, that they were actually copied from real life. Rézé calls his Desesperé contentement d'Amour(1599) an "Histoire véritable et advenue." So does du Souhait for his Amours de Poliphile et Mellonimpe(1599) and his Les Proprietes d'Amour(1601). The novel L'Erocaligenesi^e ou la naissance d'un bel amour(1602) was said to be "véritable and advenue" as well as the anonymous work "Tragiques amours du fidèle Irion et de la belle Pasithée(1601) Faure says of La vivante Filonie(1605) that his narration is founded "sur une verité que ses yeux et son ouye peuvent tesmoigner." To the same class belong: Les amours d'Amisidore et de Chrysolite, "histoire véritable ou est descrite l'inconstance des amoureux de ce temps" of du Bail(1623);- L'Olympe d'amour, histoire non feinte of Henri du Lisdam(1609);- Les fidelles et constantes amours de Lisdamus et de Cléonympe of Henri du Lisdam(1615), where the hero is clearly the writer himself;- the Histoire tragi-comique de nostre temps sous les noms de Lysandre et de Caliste of d'Audiguier(1615);- Les agreeables diversitez d'Amour of N. Le Moulinet(1613);- Le tableau des déserts enchantés of N. Piloust(1614) containing stories "aussi pitoyables que véritables"- Marechal's La Chrysolite ou le

secret des romans(1627) - Les Amours de Philandre gentilhomme Bourguignon, of Des Escuteaux(1621) - La Mort de l'Amour, où se list la véritable et nouvelle histoire des amours Calianthe et Florifile of Pr. Gauthier(1616), - L'Histoire des amours tragiques de ce temps of Isaac de Laffemas(1607) - and a number of other novels and collections of stories whose pretension to depict contemporary life is more or less justified.

Men of greater renown than most of these now-forgotten novel-writers, acclaimed the theory. The pious and prolific bishop Camus reproached the novel-writers of his time for disguising in ancient frocks, the incidents of daily life and love. He ventured his criticism as follows in the Préface of his Cleopreste, "histoire françoise-espagnolle, representant le tableau d'une parfaite amitié (1626)-vous à qui un evenement arrivé en des lieux voysins, ou que vous frequentez d'ordinaire, faut plaisir, aurez sans doute plus de plaisir d'ouir ce qui s'est passé auprès de vostre demeure, que si ce succès estoit venu en des endroits plus esloignez..... Et cependant il y a des esprits je ne scay comment faicts, qui ne peuvent ^{se} contenter que par le récit des histoires anciennes, encore que ce soient des choux cuits et recuits a tant de fois qu'ils excitent un desgoust plustost qu'ils ne donnent de l'appetit; ou si elles sont modernes, qui les veulent des pais si esloignez de leur connoissance qu'on n'en puisse avoir de certitude asseurée... ..De moy, j'ay tousjours estimé que nous ne devions point aller chercher si loing de nous ce qui estoit proche, soit pour les lieux, soit pour le temps, et qu'il ne falloit point emprunter des livres escrits ce que l'on peut pescher dans les événements qui tombent devant nos yeux, et dont nous sommes temoins irréprochables. Cependant plusieurs escrivains ignorans ce secret.....pour multiplier leurs fautes en pensant ^b rien faire.....desguisent à l'antique

ce qui est moderne, habillent a l'etranger ce qui est domestique, mauvais tailleurs et cuisiniers. Mais aussi de releguer en Asie, en Affrique, ou en l'Amerique ce qui est avvenu parmi nous, et feindre des religions profanes, ou des lieux que les Cosmographes ont de la peine a trouver dans leurs cartes, c'est une extremité qui ne peut estre approuvée." (5) The heroes of the devout novelist, as a matter of fact, frequently belong to the middle-class of the time. Their adventures, however, have too strong a flavour of the romanesque to be a real picture of daily incidents truthfully observed. And frequently his confessed intention to prove in his tales the superiority of the religious vocation distorts his point of view. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, his numerous works were relatively more "vraysemblable" than a great part of the contemporary literature and they increased, in this way, the growing tendency toward more truth in literary art. He was as much an outspoken enemy of the exaggerations of the "roman d'aventure" and of the pastoral novel, as Sorel or Mareschal. He even claimed that he wrote his works with the intention of combating their nefarious influence. "Or, pour terrasser tant de livres fabuleux, je n'entreprends pas mon combat de droit front, comme si je refutais des hérésies. Car il n'est point besoin de se mettre en peine déprouver l'obscurité des ténèbres, ni de montrer la fausseté de ces romans, bergeries, aventures, chevaleries et autres fatras, qui se confessent fabuleux en leurs préfaces, et dont la lecture pleine de caprice, de vers, de feintes, d'impossibilités, d'absurdités, d'enchantelements, d'extravagances, et pareilles bagatelles, fait assez connaitre l'impertinence. Ce serait, comme dit l'apôtre, combattre contre l'air et courir sans but, ou tout au plus imiter cet empereur fainéant qui ne faisait la guerre qu'aux mouches. De quelle façon est-ce donc que je tache de defaire mes adversaires? C'est par diversion et comme

Jacob fit à Esau, par supplantation, mettant des révélations chrétiennes, véritables et utiles à la place de celles qui sont profanes, fabuleuses, et non seulement inutiles, mais, pour la plus grande part pernicieuses" (6) Among his contemporary novels may be mentioned: Petronille, accident pitoyable de nos jours(1610), La Mémoire de Darie(1620), Elise, événement tragique de nostre temps(1621), Dorothee(1625), Flaminio et Calman(1626), Aloph ou le Parastre malheureux, histoire française(1626), Honorat et Aurelio(1628), Marianne (1629), Les spectacles d'horreur, où se decouvrent plusieurs tragiques effets de nostre siècle(1630), L'Amphithéâtre sanglant(1630), etc. In 1629 Camus went to Rouen as vicer to the archbishop François de Harlay for whom, in 1633, Corneille wrote his "Excusatio". It is thus very likely that the poet knew Camus and his works at the very time that he was writing his Mélite.

Among the novels taking inspiration from contemporary life, a number are found which tell the adventures of lovers of the capital and of the court, and introduce certain parts of Paris as a setting. In view of Corneille's portrayal on the stage of the same category of lovers in the same milieu, they may be styled forerunners in prose of his endeavour in verse. The anonymous "Marianne de Filomèle(1596) is called "histoire advenue, il n'y a longtemps en ceste ville de Paris." Camus designates his "Marianne ou l'innocente victime" as an Evenement tragique, arrivé au faubourg St. Germain, and his La pieuse Julie(1625) as an "histoire parisienne". A number of novels relate incidents which occurred at the court, and sketch living courtiers under assumed names. The more psychological novels furnish, for instance, Les diverses Affections de Minerve of d'Audiguier(1625), an interesting study of a young woman, an artful coquette, surrounded by her various suitors, like Corneille's *Veux*. The scene is laid in Paris, as it is for La Floride of du Verdier

(1625) which presents a similar subject. These two books lead us to that other study of a coquette, Chrysolite ou le secret des romans of A. Harasch (1627) in which "Athens" is a transparent mask for Paris. In his Preface he defends strongly the "vray-semblable" and the contemporaneity of material. He finds in the novels of his time, "rien de solide, rien de vraysemblable, ni qui se puisse rapporter aux mœurs et à la naissance des hommes, ou du véritable cours du temps et des siècles... Voyant... que jusques ici tous ceux qui se sont piquez en ce Genre d'~~ed~~crire nous ont rendu le fard pour le vray teint, et ont donné une face à leurs livres, qui pour estre pleine de piperles, de mensonges et d'impossibilités, a pu entretenir et abuser beaucoup d'esprits... J'ai voulu réduire à nostre portée ce faste menteur, et oet orgueil qui ne sert que pour faire une pompe au dessus des nues. Aux autres tu ne verras que des ballons enflés parmy l'air qui crèvent en atomes, ~~des mon-~~stres composer de mille contradictions, un quadren qui n'a ni de Soleil, ni d'esguille, et des choses qui n'auroient de place dans le monde, s'il ne se faisoit une réformation Générale pour l'Imagination des hommes... Toi je n'ay rien mis qu'un homme ne peust faire, je me suis tenu dans les termes d'une vie privée, afin que chacun se peust mouler sur les actions que je descry; et je ne me suis mis de l'antiquité que pour donner une couleur estrangère au bien ou au mal de nostre temps.... Sorel, who exercised a very potent influence in the direction of contemporaneity of material had attempted the portrayal of contemporary life in romanesque forms, before illustrating his theories in a satirical way with his Berger extravagant. His Palais d'Angélie (1622) is composed of a number of love-stories, told by girls and young men, and each tale starts or finishes by an abduction. In his Preface he says: "Je me suis esloigné du tout de ces histoires monstrueuses qui n'ont aucune

vraysemblance. Je ne raconte que des actions qui se peuvent faire selon le temps." One of the stories, Olymthe, (T) takes us to the fair of St. Germain, to the Gallerie du Palais, etc. His observations of the higher bourgeoisie are interesting in view of the appearance of these types on the stage a few years later. With Les Nouvelles Françoises (1623) he preserves to a certain extent the modernity of the subject, although he introduces too many "invraysemblable" adventures, atrocious fights with Turkish pirates, hidden treasures, shipwrecks, etc. Notwithstanding this concession to the tastes of the time, some stories of the book take place in Paris, in the Tuilleries or the Bois de Vincennes, as for example, Les Trois Amans. Sorel, like the others, insists upon the necessity of turning to contemporary subjects, and he uses the identical terms of Camus, ~~Worm~~: "Beautez...vous aurez sans doute plus de plaisir d'entendre une histoire qui s'est passée en des lieux que vous fréquentez ordinairement, qu'une autre, dont tous les succes seroient réservés en d'autres endroits. Cependant plusieurs qui ignorent ce secret, ne vous donnent que des histoires des plus esloignez, lesquelles ne vous scauroient si bien toucher l'âme, et commettent une faute en pensant bien faire, desguisent le plus souvent ce qui est venu en nostre contrée en l'habillant a l'estrangère. Bien qu'ils ayent acquis du renom, je ne les veux pas suivre en cela, croyant que la gloire ne leur a pas esté donnée judicieusement." (Page 555) In his Françon (1622) Sorel repeats, in satirical form, the demand for contemporary material and greater "vraysemblance". He speaks of a shepherd-novel in the following terms: "Les bergers y sont philosophes et font l'amour de la même sorte que le plus gallant homme du monde. A quel propos tout ceci? Que l'auteur ne donne-t-il à ces personnages la qualité de chevaliers bien nourris? Leur

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fit il, en cet état, faire des miracles de prudence et de bien dire, l'on ne s'en étonneroit point comme d'un prodige. L'histoire véritable ou feinte, doit représenter les choses au plus près du naturel; autrement c'est une fable qui ne sert qu'à entretenir les enfants au coin du feu, non pas les esprits murs, dont la vivacité pénètre partout." And later on in his Bibliothèque Française (8) he repeats while passing judgment on his own early novels: "Ce ne sont point de ces grands sujets qu'on appelle Heroïques, où il ne paroist que des Roys et des Conquerans sur la scène: Ce sont des aventures de quelques personnes de mediocre condition, mais on y trouvera possible de la vray-semblance, et le stile est accommodé au sujet."

The theory of the description of contemporary life in fiction had thus been voiced and exemplified abundantly in many novels which were in favour at the time of Corneille's youth. This constant demand for contemporaneity and truth in literary art—also reiterated by Theophile de Viau—hardly could remain without influence upon the stage of the time. Yet, as far as is known, it was only around 1630 that, rather suddenly, French contemporary life appeared on the stage. It is quite probable that before that date, Hardy treated in some of his lost plays subject matter taken from the life of the times. If rediscovered, they would illuminate fully the meaning of Corneille's words, that he began to write following the example of "feu Hardy". Since Hardy constantly took subjects from novels and novelettes, it would be difficult to conceive that in his restless hunt for subjects to be staged in his 600 or 700 plays, he would have left untouched the rich and inviting source of inspiration to be found in the novel of contemporary tendencies. Among his known plays some are derived from novels and stories, from Cervantes, Greene, de Rosset, etc. Particularly

significant is it that Hardy's Doris^e-as pointed out above- adapt-
 ed from a novel, is very similar in characterisation, construction,
 and atmosphere to Corneille's Mélite. And all of Corneille's early
 plays have a common trait: they all stage a pastoral love-imbroglio
 more or less independent from or interwoven with a realistic set-
 ting. Exactly in this, lies their striking resemblance to a num-
 ber of contemporary novels which show the same method of composition.

The problem which Corneille, at his début, had to solve
 was, to combine a certain measure of contemporary truth with an
 artificial pastoral love-imbroglio. He solved it, ^{as before him novel-writers} ~~by dropping the~~ ^{had done}
 most unreal scenes of the pastoral plots, the echoes, the satyrs,
 the magicians, and by transposing the remaining love-story into a
 well-known setting. That his sense of the "real" was, at first,
 not always sure, is shown by his introduction into the plot of his
 Mélite, such hackneyed and mythological scenes as those of the mad-
 ness of Eraste (10) Yet we cannot doubt that he was helped in his
 attempt to depict contemporary life by examples of similar tenden-
 cies in the "quelque modernes" which he confessed to have read at
 the time of his Mélite (11)

For even the pastoral literature of the times was not
 altogether artificial and unrealistically imaginative. Under the
 impulse toward the vraysemblable and toward more fidelity to nature
 which grows stronger in the first decades of the 17th century, all
 that was actual and living in the pastoral plays of the time was
 brought to the foreground and disengaged from the unessential and
 traditional episodes of Spanish and Italian origin. After all,
 the pastoral plays of the time were more real than we now suppose.
 They had a certain bearing upon the life of the period which time
 has dimmed for us and made difficult to estimate.

To us, no relation at all seems to exist between those

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traditional satyrs, echoes, sighing shepherds, and capricious shepherdesses, and the real men and women of the epoch. Yet, many writers of pastorals had symbolical intentions and brought on the stage real characters disguised as shepherds. They wrote for court-circles and affected to represent "les aventures de quelques grands princes" (R) under the transparent veil of the shepherd's tale then in vogue. In the introduction of the *Astrée*, Honoré d'Urfé says that nobody ought to wonder at the refined language of his shepherds as they are no real rustics, but well-bred noblemen and women, who only took on this disguise to enable them to lead a more varied and interesting life. He defends his symbolical attitude by pointing to the theater of the time, where, he says, the shepherds were dressed in lace and silk, and carried a gilded shepherd's crook. La Mesnardière, in his *Poétique* (1640), holds that the poets should lend only fine feelings and sublime discourse to the shepherds. He takes the point of view that the pastorale is a description of the court, where it is impossible to find "des dames laides et stupides."

For the courtier of 1600-1630, the dreamland of Arcadia, the realm of love, was not blossoming "somewhere out of the world". It was the country dreamed of by every perfect lover. a country of eternal flowers, clear streams, mysterious woods, and glorious evenings, through which a sublimated love would lead them. It had ~~was~~ for them the reality of a poetic fancy, gilding the cold facts of daily life. They adopted this disguise, these names, and these manners, half through fashion, half through sympathy for its artificial but refined poetry. Half sincere, half make-believe in play, they identified themselves with the shepherds of the pastorals, who were all "perfect courtiers" in pseudo-rustic disguise. They named their sweethearts after these shepherdesses of their favorite stories. Circles and academies were founded where the fictitious shepherd's

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existence passed from the stage into actual life. "Tous étaient frappés". Court-circles became a sort of continuous masquerade, in which poets and men of learning, the rich bourgeoisie and officials, and even grave theologians and dashing generals took part. All followed the vogue. The influence of the *Astrée* on the Hôtel de Rambouillet is well known. The German princes offered to d'Urfé the presidency of their shepherds' circle, while Vauquelin des Yveteaux lived in the park of his hotel, in shepherd's dress, wearing a splendid straw-hat with an inside of red satin, and guided through the well-kept alleys, an herd of imaginary sheep. (13) There was, in a word, a perpetual reaction from the pastoral plays and novels upon the elegant life, and from this upon the literature. The real lovers tried to model themselves upon the elegant shepherd and the distinguished shepherdess who wore such fine apparel as to shame the "honnêtes gens" and the "nobles dames". Balzac alluded to their outward appearance in his "Discours de la Comédie: "N'avons nous pas vu chez les poètes courtisans des villageoises coquettes et affectées, des bergères chargées de pierreries et de toile d'or, peintes de tout le blanc et de tout le rouge de nos voisins? Dans la plupart des fables que nous avons veues, nous n'avons rien vu

qui leur fust propre, rien qui fust pur, rien qui fust reconnoissable

The costumes of the *Arimène* (14) were equally showy and exquisite. "Ces acteurs estoient habillez à la forme des pasteurs d'Arcadie, tout de satin de diverses couleurs enrichiz de clincamp, la panetière de clincamp, les botines de la couleur de leurs habits, semées de roses de clincamp, leurs chapeaux de meame et la houlette en la main, les habits fort esclatants, riches et bien faits." In the beginning of the *Berger Extravagant*, Ch. Sorel describes the handsome garments of Bellerose in the *Pastor Fido*. He was dressed as finely as any gentleman of the court. In outward appearance the

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courtier and the shepherd were almost identical. Their psychological relationship has been described above. The fusion of the shepherd type and the courtier type, as illustrated, for example by the *Astrée*, can thus be easily understood. The general tendency to the rustic disguise was not exclusively an absurd and paradoxical fashion. It corresponded to a certain reality in the mind of the spectators. It had a symbolical bearing on real life, and the love-stories represented seemed not so absurdly unreal as they now seem to us. The audience often felt, no doubt, that a real love-story was being told under the pastoral mask. And it was precisely this love-story which acquired a greater directness and reality as 1630 is approached.

It is this tendency toward actuality and verisimilitude, toward stressing the love-story in the pastoral play more than the conventional accessories which, no doubt, was fostered by the novels of the time which depicted, more or less successfully, the actual life of the times.

Some hesitating realism appears already here and there in the pastoral plays before Corneille's *Mélite*, and just before 1630 some of them announce the coming change by some of their scenes or by their general spirit. A few examples may be given: the pastoral play *Aristhène* of P. Troterel (1626) - a writer whose publisher was usually Corneille's friend David du Petit-Val - almost attained an imitation of reality in the scene of a trial where no solemn druid priest pronounces a heaven-sent sentence, as in the pastoral plays, but where a real judge appears surrounded by his court. The cross-examination which ensues is in real comedy-style.

The sieur de la Morelle in his *Phylis ou l'amour contraire* (1627-28) paints the conflicting aspirations of a prudent father and a liberty-loving daughter in a way denoting a closer observation of reality than was the custom generally on the stage of the period.

And Marechal, who with his novel Chrysolite had already entered a plea for vraysemblance, - derived from the adventures of light-hearted Hylas in the Astrée, a pastorale which approaches the style of the comedy l'Instance d'Hylas(1629-30) (15) The chorus and the echoes disappear from the plays before or around that time(16) The satyr already humanized by Hardy, has no role at all in some tragi-comédie pastorales(17).

Thus we perceive how the fundamental love-story of the pastoral play disengaged itself from the superfluous and unreal embellishments and episodes. This can be explained by the greater demand for realism fostered by the novel of contemporary tendencies, by the ironical attacks upon the invraysemblable of the pastoral literature by Sorel, Mareschal, and Camus, while it was no doubt greatly fostered by the Ballets wherein types of the real life of the time appeared.(18) When the exaggerated and unreal episodes were dropped, there remained the eternal story of a true love -- as treated in Corneille's early plays-- crossed by an envious rival or by avaricious parents or by the accidents of fate, ending with a general triumph for the lovers and with the traditional marriages of all the parties concerned. But they remain true to the characteristics of the gentleman-shepherd of the pastoral and the pastoral or sentimental novel; the lovers are still adorned with shepherd names; they still speak the affected language; they are easily deceived with false reports or by a letter; they write poetry and complain in melodious verse; they are tender-hearted, elegant, and brave, constant and extremely susceptible to love. Their love and sorrows are deep and violent. Suicide and madness are the ordinary effects of a real or supposed infidelity. But the consequences of their acts of despair are rarely tragic. Those who jump in the rivers are rescued, those who retire to the desert are brought back

those who go mad, recover; and the rustic pipes play the dance hymns of the happy couples at the long expected day of happiness. If these influences are taken into account, the connection of Corneille's early plays with the literary evolution of the times will be less problematic.

If the current in French literature of 1600-1630 toward the painting of contemporary life and toward more truthfulness in characterisation had affected the young Corneille alone among the playwrights around 1630, it might be called an individual case, wherefrom no general principle could be deduced. But the same phenomenon is to be observed about this same time, in the work of other playwrights, influenced by the same general literary tendencies. They attempted to bring contemporary life on the stage without the *Mérite* having exerted any influence upon their work. Corneille's bitter rival and opponent in the *Cid* quarrel, Claveret, gave at the time of the *Mérite* his play *Angélie ou l'esprit fort* (1629-1630) (19) in which he shows really closer and more critical observation of contemporary humanity than Corneille in the *Mérite*. The plot of the play is weak, though Claveret was very proud of having observed all the rules. It consists chiefly in the amusing courtship paid by suitors of various kinds to the three bewitching daughters of Cloridan. Two of the wooers are especially interesting from the point of view of the characterisation of contemporary life; Criton, *l'esprit fort*, and his satellite, Nicandre, *l'esprit doux*. The sharp-witted *Angélie*, one of the daughters of Cloridan depicts *l'esprit fort*:

Ce raffiné Criton est un homme à la mode,
Dont le seul entretien vaut bien qu'on s'incommode!
Affecter en parlant un ton impérieux;
Blamer le feu d'amour mais en feindre en tous lieux;
En effet n'aimer rien, vouloir qu'une maîtresse,

Admire leurs discours et leur fesse caresse;
 Publier des faveurs que jamais ils n'ont eues....
 Parle-t-on de l'état, faire les politiques,
 Tantôt paraître froids, rêveurs, mélancholiques,
 Et puis se réveillant de ce profond sommeil,
 Soutenir qu'ils ont vu des taches au soleil.
 Pester contre le sort, le destin, la fortune,
 Et ne suivre jamais la créance commune.....
 Dire un mot des bons vers, puis y faire une glose,
 Jurer que Saint Martin fait mieux que Bellerose;
 Lorsqu'on les contredit, faire les mutinés:
 Un collet en désordre, un manteau sur le nez....
 Etre au bal sans cordon, danser négligemment.....

This style resembles more Corneille's manner in the *Veuve*, the *Galerie du Palais*, and *La Place Royale* than the *Mélite*. The Satire is less pronounced in the *Mélite* than in the later plays with the exception of the character of a fop, *Philandre*, who talks "en style Nervèze." Claveret manifestly had read the satirical writers of the time *Regnier Courval-Sonnet*, *Jean Auvraye* and others, and he betrayed their influence in the sketch of his *Esprit Fort*. And for the plays following the *Clitandre*, Corneille also seems to have borrowed some ~~traits~~ ^{traits} from and imitated the tone of the satyrists. (20) Even as Corneille's characters, for instance, in the *Galerie du Palais*, the *Esprit Fort* gives his opinions about the literature of the day:-

"Ah! J'oublie à vous dire une plaisante chose:
 Criton dit que l'*Astrée* est un sot livre en prose,
 Que Malherbe en son temps n'entendait rien aux vers.
 Comme il porte toujours son manteau de travers.
 Figurez vous, Monsieur qu'il a l'esprit de même.....

Claveret's chief defect in his play is that it remains too much

a literary satire, that the plot and the characterisation have not been melted together into one unit. Corneille's Mélite, less happy and thorough in characterisation, surpasses it by its lively action, by its clever arrangement and succession of scenes, qualities which reveal the born playwright.

Another common feature of both plays is their satire of preciseness and exaggerated compliments à la mode...One of the girls makes fun of the fine-mannered lover who, in his verses, had called her a "soleil incendiaire" much after the fashion of Corneille's heroines in the Mélite and the Veuve. She says: "Je crains en m'arrestant de vous réduire en cendre...." and about his verses: "Je vais les rendre au feu, puisqu'ils sont tout de flamme..." And when Criton indulges in "parler Phébus", Angelie does not show any more enthusiasm than Corneille's Mélite and Veuve for his far fetched compliments and conventional flattery:

Qui se pourrait résoudre à ne pas vous aimer,
Puisque aux beautés d'esprit celles du corps sont jointes?
Vos cheveux seulement savent faire des pointes,
Vos boucles des prisons, les plus petits des traits,
Amour sur votre front met un arc tout exprès.

Angelie: Monsieur, je suis d'humeur à rever aujourd'hui

In view of the dates, the similarities between Claveret's play and Corneille's early works cannot be explained by influence of the ^{one} ~~two~~ upon the other. They point clearly to a parallel development from common sources of inspiration. And these common sources we perceive in the novels of contemporary life, with additional color from the satirical literature and probably from the ballet.

Another play represented around 1630, Lisandre et Caliste, of P. du Ryer, a tragi-comedy, of which the scene is laid in ~~modern~~ France, was directly inspired by a novel, the Histoire-tragi-comique

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de nostre temps by d'Audiguier(1615). This is another example of the influence of the novel in the direction of contemporaneity of material discussed in this chapter. The play is too overloaded with Romantic incident, murder, duels, disappearances, and heroic fights to suggest a direct transcript from actual life. In the second act, however, a scene is found between a butcher and his wife, which was realistically staged in the Paris of the time as the *Mémoire de Mahelot* shows: "Il faut au milieu du théâtre le petit chastelet de la Rue de Saint Jacques et faire paroistre une rue où sont les bouchers etc." (21)

In 1633, Rayssiguier publishes his *La Bourgeoise ou la Promenade de Saint-Cloud*, which may have been played in 1630, and preceded Corneille's *Gallerie du Palais*(played probably in 1632). At least, it may be considered as having appeared at the same time. It is built upon a complicated intrigue, engineered by the "bourgeoise" who desires to marry either one of the two suitors of her two friends. The stage scenery is specifically Parisian. A tendency to introduce contemporary stage-setting and, in a number of cases, Parisian stage-setting as a surrounding for contemporary characters, developed in the thirties of the 17th century. A lost play by La Pinelière was called *La Foire de Saint Germain*; P. du Ryer gave his *Vendanges de Suresnes*; Mareschal his *Raillleur*. Claveret's *Eaux de Forges* was not played following the *Réponse a l'Amy du Cid* "par la discrète crainte qu'ils (les comediens) eurent de facher quelques personnes de condition qui pouvaient reconnoitre leurs aventures dans la représentation de cette pièce." (22)

Another play of Claveret, *a Place Royale*, was represented in June or July 1633(23). Balt. Baro sketched the characters of a lawyer and painter in his lost work *La Force du Destin*(24) The anonymous play *Le matois Mary ou la Courtizane attrapée*(Com. prose. 1634) contains details about the Parisian life of the time. *Discret*(s *Alizone* depicts the lower bourgeoisie-class; Gillet de la Tessonnerie derived a very

indecent comedy from the satirical novel *Françon*, of Sorel, while Desmarets Saint Sorlin in his *Les Visionnaires* (1637) makes sport of the special forms of literary affectation of some fops and précieuses, Raysiguier used the Tuileries as stage-setting as well as the Cinq Auteurs who desired to please Richelieu. Corneille's *Mélite* was one of the first examples of this tendency toward contemporaneity. Since we may reasonably accept that he was acquainted with the literature of his times, (25) the numerous novels of contemporary life could not have escaped his attention. From their example and from the theories expounded in their prefaces he derived his tendency toward actuality in his first plays, more than from a direct copy of the existing society of his times. The influence which they exerted upon the young Corneille as well as upon other playwrights of the time consisted in inspiring them with a desire of bringing in their pastoral plots an element of reality and to have more respect for verisimilitude. And Corneille, with his rather positive sense of life— even positive and affirmative in his heroic tragedies— merely followed more consistently this impulse than his fellow playwrights from 1630 to 1636.

NOTES
for
RELATION BETWEEN CORNEILLE'S EARLY PLAYS AND
THE NOVELS OF THE TIME

- (1) See the preceding chapter on Corneille's early Friends and Surroundings.
- (2) The expression "real life" is not taken here as a synonym for "realism". It means that the characters of the novel or of the play are taken from the humanity of the time, and not from legend history or mythology.
- (3) The following plays are inspired by the Astrée: 1. Rayssiguier, Tragi-comedie pastorale où les amours d'Ast^rée et de Céladon sont meslées a celles de Diane, de Silvandre et de Paris. 2. Mareschal - L'Inconstance d'Hylas. 3. La prise de Marcilly de M.(Durval?) cited by the "Mémoire de Mahelot (fol.41). The play is lost. 4. Auvray; La Dorinde 5. Baro; La Clarise 6. Rayssiguier: Palinice, Circene et Florice 7. de Scudéry; Ligdamon et Lidias 8. Cotignon: Madante 9. Auvray: Madante 10. Pichou: Rosiléon (mentioned by Isnard) lost play. 11. Du Ryer: Rossyléon (same play as the "Cléomédon" cf. Carrington Lancaster: P.Du Ryer, p.62-63.) 12. Mairet: Chriséide et Arimant 13. de Scudery: Orante 14. de Scudery: Eudexe 15. Abel de Sainte Marthe: Isidore ou la pudicité vengée 16. Gillet de la Tessonnerie: La Mort de Valentinien et d'Isidore 17. Rayssiguier: Alidor et Orante ou la Célidée ou la Calirie 18. d'Urfé: La Sylvanie 19. Mairet: La Sylvanire 20. de Scudéry: Le Vassal généreux 21. de Scudéry: Le Trompeur puny ou l'histoire septentrionale.
- (4) "Les Bergeries de Vesper ou les amours d'Antonin, Florelle et autres Bergers et Bergères de Placemont et Beauséjour, par le sieur Guillaume Caste, Gentilhomme provençal. A Paris - Rolin Baragnes - J.Bouillerot 1618." Description of the Mass: (p.27) "Voilà le dernier coup de la grande Messe qui sonne.

Monsieur le curé et Monsieur son Vicaire commencent à chanter au tour du lutrin avec un tas de marmaille du village, qui étaient capables de rompre les oreilles aux sourds à cause qu'ils faisoient une musique un peu rude. Il y avoit déjà dans l'Eglise force belles filles, ce village en étoit assés bien pourveu; mais tout cela n'étoit rien a l'égal de Florelle et ses compagnes et particulièrement Florelle qui paroissoit par dessus toute autre beauté un Soleil parmy les Estoiles; aussi ceux de Beausejour l'appelloient la belle fleur. Voila la triade de nos Bergers qui entre; Antonin les vit premier que tous, il fit signe à ses compagnons, chacun d'eus regarde prendre de l'eau bénite a sa Bergère" etc.

- (5) Cléoreste, II, 191f
- (6) Preface of "Les Exenems singuliers" 1628.
- (7) pp. 305, 462, 758. Not without importance too, is the influence of works as Fancan's Tombeau des Romans 1626; the "Berger Extravagant" and Barclay's Euphormion"(1607) cfr. Livre II, chap. 3...Tu verras comme l'auteur se moque de quelques uns qui estiment si fort ce que les anciens ont fait qu'ils ne peuvent s'imaginer que ceux d'apresent puissent mieux faire ou mieux dire(Translation of Natl. 1626)
- (8) 1664
- (9) Reprinted as "Histoire du Palais de la Félicité" 1613.
- (10) Cf. the preceding chapter on the Méлите.
- (11) Examen de Méлите - Marty-Laveaux I, 138
- (12) P.Troterel: L'Amour triomphant, 1615
- (13) Tallemant: Historiettes - Vigneul - ~~M~~arville, Mélanges d'Histoire et de Littérature, 1725, I, 177
- (14) The costumes for the "Arimène" of Olle ~~Nix~~ de Mont Sacré(1597) are described as follows:(J. ^{arsan}Murray, La past.dramatique p.447) "Ces acteurs estoient habillé à la forme des pasteurs d'Arcadie

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tout de satin de diverses couleurs, enriches de clincamp, la panetière de clincamp, les botines de la couleur de leurs habits, semées de roses de clincamp, leurs chapeaux de mesme et la houlette argentée en la main, les habits fort esclatans, riches et bien faicts" etc.

In the beginning of the "Berger Extravagant" Ch. Sorel describes the costume of his hero as similar to that of Bellerose in the "Pastor Fido": "Son habit estoit si leste... que l'on voyoit bien que c'estoit la un Berger de réputation. Il avoit un chapeau de paille dont le bord estoit retroussé, une roupille et un haut de chausse de tabis blanc, un bas de soye, gris de perle, et des soulliers blancs avec des noeuds de taffetas verd. Il portait en escharpe une panetière de peau de fayne et tenoit une houlette aussi bien peinte que le baston d'un maistre de cérémonie de sorte qu'avec tout cet équipage, il estoit fait à peu pres comme Bellerose, lorsqu'il va représenter Myrtil à la pastoralle du Berger fidelle"

- (15) This play was printed in 1635, but played in 1629 or 1630 as shown by the "Avis au Lecteur" where the author refers to the applause which his play "a receus sur un théâtre de cinq ans" In the dedice^{ca} to Henry de Lorraine, he says about Hylas: "Qu'il vienne paré de ses grâces naturelles qui l'ont fait souvent admirer sur le théâtre afin de vous aborder plus honorablement des applaudissements qu'il a reçus de tout Paris et d'une vieille réputation continuée de cinq à six ans."

(16) Cfr. Marsan - La Pastorale dramatique, Chapter VII

(17) Ibid, Ch. VI and VII

(18) Cf. Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV - published by Paul Lacroix, 1870, 6 volumes, Henry Prunières; Le Ballet de cour en France avant Benserade et Lully, 1914. H. Carrington Lancaster: Relations between French Plays and Ballets

from 1581 to 1650 - Publications of the Modern Language Association, XXXI, no.3.

(19) This play was printed in 1636, according to the Frères Parfaict. They state that the author said in his preface: "Il est sorti de ma plume, il y a plus de sept ans." M.Linthillac testifies that he does not know of any edition earlier than 1637 (Paris Targa) The text referred to higher reads there: "Il est sorti de ma plume il y a près de sept ans." The play must therefore be dated 1629 or 1630 - Cf Linthillac: Histoire de la Comedie au XVII^e Siècle.

(20) H. Carrington Lancaster: Relations between French plays and Ballets from 1581 to 1650, Publications of the Mod. Lang. Assoc., XXXI, No 3.

(22) Gasté: La Querelle du Cid, p. 304

(23) Corneille was accused by Claveret of having begun his "Place Royale": "Dès que vous sâtes que j'y travaillois" Cfr. Lettre du Sieur Claveret a Corneille - Gasté, Op cit., 305

(24) Cf. Carrington Lancaster, Op. Cit p.386.

(25) See the Chapter "Corneille's Early Friends and Surroundings"

CORNEILLE'S EARLY THEORIES.

A reflective and even theoretical mind like Corneille's would hardly be dealing for any considerable length of time with the practical problems of the stage and with play-writing without deriving from his experience some theories or general rules, more or less consciously worked out and applied. Yet Corneille's early utterances about his literary principles are not numerous; and what general esthetic opinions he had evolved at the time of the *Mérite* and the *Clitandre*, remains largely a matter of speculation and deduction. To understand rightly the significance of his early theoretical utterances and to perceive their implications, it is necessary to place them in a chronological order.

They are divided in two classes: those which are found in the early editions of the plays, in the "Au Lecteur" or in the "Prefaces"; and those which he wrote in 1660, the "Examens", which have been added to his early plays from that date on. While his early utterances may be taken as reliable landmarks in his evolutions, the "Examens" of 1660 can not be considered altogether as unbiassed and sincere self-criticism. During the twenty-five years which separate the "Examens" from the publication of his early plays, Corneille had undergone a considerable evolution. He had surrendered to a great extent to the Rules against which he had fought a rather half-hearted battle for many years. He wrote these "Examens" at the occasion of a collected edition of his works, together with the three *Discours sur l'art dramatique*, as a definite plea prodromic. He explained the rules of Aristotle somewhat

according to his own conceptions and broadened the narrow rules in a number of cases but with the intention of destroying the very basis of the criticism of the Cid by the French Academy. In a letter to the Abbé de Pure he confessed his intentions: (August, 25, 1660). "Je suis à la fin d'un travail fort pénible sur une matiere fort délicate. J'ay traité en trois préfaces les principales questions de l'art poétique sur mes trois volumes de Comédies. J'y ay fait quelques explications nouvelles d'Aristote, et avancé quelques propositions, et quelques maximes inconnues à nos Anciens. J'y refuté celles sur lesquelles l'Académie a fondé la condamnation du Cid, et ne suis pas d'accord avec M. d'Aubignac de tout le bien mesme qu'il a dit de moy." (Marty-Laveaux X, 486) And the text betrays clearly his apologetic intentions. Nearly everywhere after having pointed out a shortcoming in his early plays from the point of view of classicist rule, Corneille adds an explanation or offers a justification for them.

He did not follow all the rules in the Melite, but it was simply for the reason that he did not know that such rules existed. Yet, guided alone by his inborn good sense, he applied unconsciously the rule of the unity of action and to a great extent the unity of place. (1) In the "Clitandre", -- his second play, -- his commendable "good sense" did not prevent him from dropping his self-found unity of action and place. But now he introduced the unity of time, to show "that he knew the rule", he explains. In 1660, Clitandre with its enormous number of incidents, its confused and complicated construction, its risky expressions and immoral scenes, its extravagant preciosity seemed to him a real sin of his youth. (2) In his Examen of the play he found an explanation which is, if not true, at least picturesque: he pretends that he wrote

the play as a bravado, to show the defenders of the rule of the 24 hours that it was possible to write a perfectly worthless play even in accordance with this rule. (2) In 1660 Corneille had apparently forgotten that, in 1632, when *Clitandre* was published, he added at the end of the book several poems (*Meslanges poétiques du mesme.*) and said there: "Je ne crois PAS CETTE TRAGI-COMÉDIE SI MAUVAISE que je me tienne obligé de te recompenser par trois ou quatre bon sonnets----" (4)

One has only to read the *Examens* of 1660 to notice that they constitute a ^{plea} ~~plea~~ for attenuating circumstances, an attempt to prove that, after all, the plays of his youth had some outstanding merits, although they did not always follow all the rules, which came to be observed later. Besides, a fact which must not be lost out of sight is that Corneille's point of view as to his early plays was changing as the years went by. In 1644, for instance, he wrote in the "Au Lecteur" of a collected edition of his works about his early plays: "Pour la conduite, je me dédirois de peu de chose si j'avais à les refaire." And, in 1660, most of his self-criticism was directed exactly against this "conquête", against the linking of the scenes *etc.*

The *Discours sur l'art dramatique* of 1660 are the fruit of years of meditation, of compromise with the "doctes" and of experience acquired long after his début, the end of an evolution of his principles of dramatic art. The views he expounds there are only useful for the determination of his early opinions, only in so far as they contain accidental confidences about his point of view at the beginning of his career. For a sketch of Corneille's early theories I will then only make use of the prefaces and the dedicaces ~~et etc~~

of the first editions of his early plays and refer to his practice, more than ^{to} the theories, which he expounded later in his "Examens".

Corneille has not always clearly stated the views he held at the beginning of his career; and nowhere at that time, has he formulated them as an eternal rule for himself and for the literature in general. There was in the years following his début, considerable hesitation in his mind. He was in a period of evolution and changes which are mirrored in the contrasted features of his plays: *Mélite* was followed by the *Clitandre*; *Medée* by the *Illusion Comique*; and this last play by the *Cid*. His other early works follow and develop the type laid down with *Mélite*.

Yet the dominating tendency of his early work is clearly the portrayal of contemporary life. The three exceptions are *Clitandre*, *Medée* and the *Illusion Comique*. The *Clitandre* is a sacrifice to the tragi-comedy style of that time; the *Medée* is derived from the traditional classical themes; the *Illusion Comique* is a strange mixture, "un etrange monstre" as Corneille called it. And Corneille's early theories were in accordance with his practice. He held the side of the "moderns" more than the side of the classicist "doctes". In the Préface of the *Clitandre* (1632) he said about the rules of the Ancients: "Je me donne ici quelque sorte de liberté de choquer les anciens, d'autant plus qu'ils ne sont plus en état de me repondre---Puisque les sciences et les arts ne sont jamais à leur periode, il m'est permis de croire qu'ils n'ont pas tout su, et que de leurs instructions on peut tirer des lumières qu'ils n'ont pas eues. Je leur porte respect comme à des gens qui nous ont frayé le chemin, et qui après avoir defriché un pays fort rude nous ont

laisse à le cultiver."

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This passage clearly shows that Corneille adhered to the theory that the Ancients represent a first stage of human evolution, instead of the golden age of the world, and a state of miraculous perfection in art which can never be equalled and therefore must be imitated more or less freely. He believes, on the contrary, that human evolution goes up and down in successive waves and never attains a state of perfection. Therefore changes are justified; ~~because~~ they are the necessary condition of progress. And modern times have an equal right upon artistic recognition as ancient times. It is clear from Corneille's text and from the opinions which we can deduce from it, that he held the same convictions as those proclaimed by the moderns of his times, who opposed the "Doctes", the partisans of the predomination of Antiquity, in which they believed to find the beginning and the end of literature, the perfection of art and philosophy.

Suggested as they are by the opinions of some of his contemporaries, Corneille's early theories cannot be conceived as independent, as a set of personal opinions evolved freely and spontaneously and without reference to his surroundings. During the first decades of the seventeenth century the novels had voiced in their prefaces their preference for contemporaneity and their disdain of classical example and subject-matter. (5) Other writers than novelists had expounded the opinions which at the beginning of his career, Corneille accepted in theory and applied in his practice. Montaigne, inspired here by the theories of progress of the Pleiade and of a number of authors of the sixteenth century formulated the law of the solidarity of all human effort. Art and sciences, he explains, are no God-sent revelation, made to the Greeks, but the product of

a slow evolution. Handed over from generation to generation, they slowly acquire an increasing value and completeness, the result of the combined efforts of the succeeding centuries. Art and sciences are perfectible. Therefore the moderns are obliged to join their labor to the work of the ancients to evolve new and better knowledge, new and superior forms of art. Montaigne expresses these thoughts in his queer but effective way: (Essais IV, 13) "-- Que les sciences et les arts ne se jettent pas en moule, ains se forment et figurent peu à peu en les maniant et pollissant à plusieurs fois, comme les ours faonnent leurs petits en les léchant à loisir."

Ambroise Paré in his Oeuvres (Au Lecteur, 8) had phrased the same ideas as Corneille's in terms which resemble singularly those used by the playwright in the Preface of the "Clitandre" "Car les arts ne sont encore si accomplis qu'on n'y puisse faire addition ----- C'est lacheté trop reprochable de s'arrester à l'invention des premiers, en les imitant seulement, à la facon des paresseux, sans rien adjouster et accroistre à l'héritage qu'ils nous ont laissé, non pour le laisser devenir en ffiche; mais pour le cultiver et embellir: leur demeurant comme à peres et autheurs, l'honneur de la première invention, mais à nous ^{revient} quelque petite proportion de gloire, pour l'enrichissement et illustration: restant à la verité plus de choses à chercher qu'il n'y en a de trouvées. Parquoy ne soyons si simples de nous reposer et endormir sur le labour des anciens, comme s'ils avoient tout sceu, ou tout dit sans rien laisser à excogiter et à dire à ceux qui viendront après eux."

Reenforced by the utterances of Bernard de Palissy, who rejected the authority of the Ancients in science and those of the philosopher Giordano Bruno, who professed that the

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antiquity of a system is no sufficient guaranty of its value ,
the movement in favor of the reliance on modern originality
had become very general before 1630.

Vauquelin de la Fresnaye in his well-known "Art Poétique"
had preconized that the literature of his times should find
inspiration in the christian religion rather than in the
impious fables of antiquity; (6)

Laudun d'Aigaliers in his Art Poétique (1597) borrows
a great deal from the Art Poétique of Jacques Peletier du
Mans. (1555) In the 1Vth Book he expounds again the same
theories to which Corneille alluded in the "Au Lecteur"
of Clitandre. "Or ce que je traicteray icy, est afin de
mieux animer l'esprit du poète, et qu'il faut, pour estre bon
poète, estre versé es langue grecque et latine, pour avoir
tousjours recours aux poetes anciens, comme à Homère, Pindare,
Hésiode, à Virgile, Catule, et autres poètes qui ont excellé,
lesquels il est requis d'imiter en ce qu'ils ont bien fait
pour se façonner, et d'ailleurs il ne les faut pas aussi tant
imiter qu'après il ne soit besoin d'adjouster quelque chose
de son esprit au surplus, et ne se contenter pas d'estre
égal, ou de faire aussi bien qu'ils ont fait, mais il faut
tacher, si l'on peut, à faire mieux, et considerer que toutes
choses tendent à leur centre de perfection. Or il faut estimer
que la poésie n'y est pas encores venue, et qu'il n'y a pas
de poetes qui ayent esté parfaict. Par quoy avec le travail,
le naturel, et le plaisir, l'on en peut espérer un parfaict.
Il faut croire que d'estre pareil, ce n'est guères, mais
qu'il est aysé d'estre supérieur à un qui peut estre pareil,
et que jamais l'estre ne tient les natures en pareil estre,
comme disent les philosophes, mais il faut qu'il y en ait

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tousjours une superieure et d'ailleurs que pour imiter seulement on ne peut rien parvenir: car celui qui suit est tousjours le dernier. Par quoy un poète qui a l'esprit bon, le courage vertueux, la hardiesse grande, et l'entreprise bonne, ne peut qu'il ne'excelle, et ne face dire de la France ce qu'on a dict de la Grèce." (7)

Before ~~him~~ ^{Laudun,} Jacques Peletier ^{plus mauvais} had written: "Le ciel peut faire un poète parfait, mais il n'en a point encore fait".

(ibid. p. 130) These ideas had spread to the novels, (8) and to the poetry. They were thus bound to affect the literary opinions of Corneille at the outset of his career. Théophile, whose works were read by Corneille and whose name he mentioned in the preface of the *Mélite*, had in his turn, formulated the theory of modernity in his "Fragments d'une histoire comique".

"Ces larcins qu'on appelle imitations des auteurs anciens se doivent dire des ornements qui ne sont point à nostre mode Il faut escrire à la moderne; Demosthène et Virgile n'ont point excrit en nostre temps, et nous ne scaurions escrire en leur siècle; leurs livres, quand ils les firent, estoient nouveaux, et nous en faisons tous les jours de vieux."

And in his poetry he attacks the Ancients for their lack of verisimilitude:

"La sottise antiquité nous a laissé des fables
Qu'un homme de bon sens ne croit pas recevables,
Et jamais mon esprit ne trouvera bien sain
Celuy-la qui se paist d'un fantosme si vain,
Qui se laisse emporter à de honteux mensagnes
Et vient, mesme en veillant, s'embarasser de songes.
Le vulgaire qui n'est qu'erreur, qu'illusion,
Trouve du sens caché dans la confusion;
Mesme des plus scavans, mais non pas des plus sages,
Expliquent aujourd'huy ces fauleux ombrages.
Autresfois les mortels parloient avec les Dieux,
L'on en voyoit pleuvoir à toute heure des cieux;
Quelques-fois on a veu prophétiser des bestes;
Les arbres de Dodone estoient aussi prophètes.
Ces comptes sont fascheux, à des esprits hardés,
Qui sentent autrement qu'on ne faisoit jadis.

(A Monsieur du Fargis, I, 239)

In the decades preceding Corneille's debut a constantly growing tendency existed in literature towards inspiration drawn from the national life of the times, towards a preference of modern themes to ancient and traditional ones. M. Lemopnier studying the art of the same period, notes that "l'on tend à ressaisir le sentiment de soi-même, de son époque, de son pays." (L'Art français sous Richelieu. p.35)

Under the influence of this tendency towards a preference for contemporary subject-matter, Corneille gave his early plays and voiced his early esthetical convictions. And in this he exemplified once more his sensitiveness to the influences of his surroundings. His adherence to the principle of modernity explains why such a temperamental tragedy-writer began with writing comedies. The tragedy seemed to him more of a direct inheritance from the Ancients, than the comedy and the tragedy-comedy. It showed too marked a preference for subjects taken from ancient history and legend to fit in with the esthetic and intellectual opinions which Corneille held at the very beginning of his career.

His theory of the necessity of portraying contemporary life had as a consequence an increased truthfulness on the stage. And, by the exception of the "Clitandre" and the "Illusion Comique" all of Corneille's early plays obey to the "vraysemblable". He does not introduce wonderful adventures, no chivalric fights, no supernatural wonders, no magicians, no shipwrecks, but remains inside the limits of verisimilitude. He was, of course, no realist faithfully copying sad or joyful reality, because it is reality. His art is not like a mirror, portraying indiscriminately and coolly human pain and happiness. He saw contemporary life after a literary fashion, and in the light which some of the contemporary fiction, —the pastoral

plays and the novels of contemporary life--had thrown upon it. But his "good sense", like he terms it, kept him away, in general, from the exaggerations which were triumphing in the literature of the time.

Corneille was in a sense predisposed to this esthetic attitude by his rather positive turn of mind. He always was more inclined to the analysis of human nature and human motives than to a delight in brilliant and fancyful adventures, which appealed more to Rotrou. His temperament, logical and argumentative to the casuistic, was doubtless influenced in this direction by these masters of moral casuistry, the Jesuits, in whose school at Rouen he received his early training, from 1615 till 1622. His law-studies too could not fail to develop his positive turn of mind and his tendency toward the analysis of motives of action. Besides--without exaggerating the influence of the "terroir"--he showed some of the traits of the positive Norman mind, as revealed, for instance, in the work of his compatriots, Malherbe and Saint Amand. His earliest poetry, written before or at the time of the *Mérite*, reveals, here and there, an ironic and positive strain, which can also be followed through his early plays, for instance, there where he makes sport of the exaggerations of the Preciosity, or of the inconstancy of lovers.

With his "*Mérite*", Corneille's inspiration remains largely literary. More independence from examples and sharper observation of reality he shows in "*La Veuve*", "*La Galerie du Palais*" and "*La Suivante*". Although he does not introduce much change in the construction of his plots, his setting acquires more definiteness, his background more reality. At the same time he drops in these plays the hackneyed episodes or scenes which still appeared in the "*Mérite*" and the "*Clitandre*", for

instance, the madness of Eraste or the disguise of women ~~as~~ men. His early theory of preference for contemporaneity of material is further developed and more consistently applied. In the "Au Lecteur" of "La Veuve" (1634), he described as follows his ideal of the comedy: " La comédie n'est qu'un portrait de nos actions et de nos discours, et la perfection des portraits consiste en la ressemblance. Sur cette maxime je tâche de ne mettre en la bouche de mes acteurs que ce que diroient vraisemblablement en leur place ceux qu'ils représentent."

Yet, after having attained fame with his plays of contemporary life and love, Corneille comes to a period of ~~search~~ ^{search} for a renewal of subject-matter and form. His serious, analytical and theoretical intelligence gains slowly the upperhand over the brilliant playfulness of his early youth. In his "Place Royale" appears that strange character of Alidor, for whom love is an act of the will:

"Comptes-tu mon esprit entre les ordinaires?
 Penses-tu qu'il s'arrête aux sentiments vulgaires?
 Les règles que je suis ont un air tout divers:
 Je veux la liberté dans le milieu des fers.
 Il ne faut point servir l'object qui nous possède;
 Il ne faut point nourrir d'amour qui ne nous cède:
 Je le hais, s'il me force, et quand j'aime, je veux
 Que de ma volonté depende tous mes voeux,
 Que mon feu m'obéisse au lieu de me contraindre,
 Que je puisse à mon gré l'enflammer et l'éteindre,
 Et toujours en état de disposer de moi,
 Donner quand il me plait et retirer ma foi.
 Pour vivre de la sorte, Angélique est trop belle;
 Mes pensers ne sauraient m'entretenir que d'elle—
 J'ai honte de souffrir les maux dont je me plains,
 Et d'éprouver ses yeux plus forts que mes desseins.
 Je n'ai que trop languì sous de si rudes gênes:
 A tel prix que ce soit, il faut rompre mes chaînes,
 De crainte qu'un hymen m'en ôtant le pouvoir
 Fit d'un amour par force un amour par devoir."

At the time that this preoccupation with intellectual values in the games of love and hasard, began in Corneille, he became, no doubt, aware that the main theme of his comedies had been exhausted. Notwithstanding that his contemporary setting increased in definiteness with "La Veuve" and

"La Place Royale", his love-imbroglios had remained of the same type, influenced by the stories of crossed loves, taken from the pastorals. And even a great variety in contemporary setting could not save these love-stories from monotony. He had arranged the old theme and re-arranged it in various ways, yet without succeeding in renewing it: He had to use over again the tricks of disappointed lovers and the various ways in which two, three or more pairs of lovers could become entangled in their own stratagems. That he was looking for a renewal of inspiration is sufficiently evidenced by the fact that he successively produced plays of such varied type as the "Medée", the "Illusion Comique" and the "Cid". Now, his tendency toward analysis of character increased as he grew older and he had come into contact with the court, with the courtly type and courtly ideals.

All of these reasons spurred him on to a change in the direction of the tragedy of the heroic cast, beginning with the "Cid".

Corneille's early theories were dominated in the first place by a modernist tendency, related to the theories expounded before and about the time of his *début* by other "modernes"; in the second place by a kind of opposition to the strict interpretation of the rules, as favored by the "doctes", the partisans of the ancients; in the third place, by a sense of reality which kept him away from exaggerated Preciosity.

And all these theories had been voiced before him, by various authors. Here again Corneille was influenced by current literary theories of about 1630.

NOTES

for

CORNEILLE'S EARLY THEORIES.

(1) Cf. Examen de "Mélite"--1660. "Cette pièce fut mon coup d'essai, et elle n'a garde d'être dans les règles, puis-que je ne savois pas alors qu'il y en eut.-----Ce sens commun, qui étoit toute ma règle, m'avoit fait trouver l'unité d'action pour brouiller quatre amants par un seul intrigue et m'avoit donné assez d'aversion de cet horrible dérèglement qui mettoit Paris, Rome et Constantinople sur le meme théâtre, pour réduire le mien dans une seule ville." (Marty-Laveau. I, 137-138)

(2) In 1660 Corneille pleads that the "Clitandre" possessed a certain "unity of place": "Pour le lieu, il a encore plus d'étendue, ou, si vous voulez souffrir ce mot, plus de libertinage ici que dans "Mélite", (where unity of place was represented by a whole city. See note I) Il comprend un château du roi avec une forêt voisine, comme pourroit être celui de Saint Germain, et est bien éloigné de l'exactitude que les sévères critiques y demandent." But we are introduced not only to the castel of the king and to a forest, but to the prison of Clitandre (Acte III and IV), a grotto (Editions 1632-57. Acte IV, sc.I), ~~and~~ the bedroom of Rosidor (Ed. 1632-57. Marty-Lav. I. 365), and to other places.

(3) Examen de Clitandre: "Un voyage que je fis à Paris pour voir le succès de "Mélite" m'apprit qu'elle n'étoit pas dans les vingt-et-quatre heures: c'étoit l'unique règle que l'on connut de ce temps-là. J'entendis que ceux du métier la blamoient de peu d'effets, et de ce que le style en étoit trop familier. Pour la justifier contre cette censure par une

espèce de bravade, et montrer que ce genre de pièces avait les vraies beautés du théâtre, j'entrepris d'en faire une régulière, (c'est-à-dire dans ces vingt et quatre heures), pleine d'incidents, et d'un style plus élevé, mais qui ne vaudrait rien du tout: en quoi je réussis parfaitement."

(M.-L. I. 270)

(4) Marty-Lav. X, 24.

(5) Cf. The preceding chapter on Corneille's early Plays and the Novels.

(6) 1574-1605.

(7) p. 129.

(8) Cf. The preceding chapter on Corneille's early Plays and the Novels.

DECENCY IN CORNEILLE'S EARLY PLAYS

In the first decades of the 17th century the French theater evolved toward a greater decency, a more delicate reserve in expression and situations on the stage. Plays became more and more the daily amusement of the select, of the refined ladies no less than of the "honnêtes gens". This change of public — a public, on the other hand, which had the means and the desire to pay — forced the actors and the authors to submit to its more sensitive taste, to abandon the rollicking and crude farces which were the ^{de}light of the lower strata of their former uncultivated patrons. It must not be lost sight of that the pastoral plays of the time, were, in nearly all cases, represented in the mansions of the nobles. Their relative reserve and refinement is thus easily explained. The plays for "le grand public" on the contrary, frequently displayed a crudity of morals which, no doubt, contributed much to the low esteem in which the actors and the actresses of that period were held.

A theatrical performance was generally introduced by a scurrilous "prologue", the work of one of the actors, and followed by an obscene comic song or by a risqué farce. The most celebrated purveyor of these obscenities was Brusca^mbille (Des Lauriers) and the large number of editions of his works proves how enormous was his success. At the same time Estienne Bellone's "Chansons folastres et Prologues" enjoyed a tremendous popularity, equalled, however, if not outdistanced, by the immoral songs for playgoers of Gaultier Garguille (Hugues Garu). It is probable that Corneille's early plays^{were} introduced by one of these prologues and followed by a licentious farce.

The plays of the period were frequently disfigured by improper jokes or by daring situations. In 1614 Vauquelin de la Fresnaye protested against their scurrility in his "Art Poétique" :

Le comic tout ainsi sur l'etage fera
Conter ce qu'au couvert l'amoureux fait aura,
Ne decouvrant a tous la honteuse besogne,
Qu'a Paris on fait voir a l'Hostel de Bourgogne."

Immoral scenes were not unfrequent in Hardy, for instance in his play "Scédase ou l'Hospitalité violée". For many years no censors arose to forbid the lovers kissing in public, to prevent married women on the stage from making appointments with their lovers. Open display of passion, of course, did not affect the public of the time in the same way as it does ours. Even the "Lettrés" were less sensitive than one would expect, to what would now be considered sheer vulgarity on the stage. Garnier, who wrote for them, introduced the shameless discourse of Béatrix to her daughter Bradamante in the play of that name. Even in the relatively pure pastorals it was a common-place, as in Tasso and Guarini, that characters would regret the Golden Age when passion was free and not held in bounds by convention and authority. The authors of the beginning of the 17th century indulged in a moral license which no "poète de l'amour" of the 18th has equalled. Novels like Sorel's Francion contain scenes which would bring an author of our days before the Court. The risqué situations of the late-Greek novels were imitated with a great deal of false naiveté in the Astrée, where, for instance, Céladon disguised in girl's attire shares the bed of his beloved Astrée. More daring scenes are found in a number of novels as, for instance, in Les Amours de Floris et de Cléonthe par Nic. Moulinet, sr. du Parc (1663)

Still greater license dominated in the satirical poetry. It will be remembered that it was at that time that appeared these recueils of satirical and libertine verse; Les Muses Galantes; Le Parnasse Érotique, and Le Cabinet Satyrique. Even Rouen authors were incredibly outspoken in their works. Les Satyres of Courval-Sonnet contain numerous objectionable passages (Rouen 1627) as well as Le

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Banquet des Muses of Jean Auvray(Rouen 1623). And the works of Théophile, Saint Pavin, Mesnard, Petit and others are sufficiently known to lend color to the statement that morality and refined taste were not exactly in favor with the poets of the beginning of the 17th century.

Pierre Troterel, sieur d'Aves, a Normand whose works were published at Rouen, gave in 1612 his Les Corrivaux and in 1620 his Gillette, both filled with undecent expressions and situations. His "Tragédie de Sainte Agnès"(1615) plays partly in a brothel. In the tragedy "Sichem ravisseur ou la circoncision des incirconsis"(1606) Francois Perrin shows great license of speech as well as Jean de Virey in his "Tragédie de la Victoire des Machabées"(1611) The pastoral "L'Union d'Amour et de Chastité" of A.Gautier(1606) was so licentious that a copy exists wherein the actors, ordinarily not sensitive in these matters, changed many verses.(/) The same looseness of morals and license of diction reigns in the anonymous "Tragi-comédie des inimitables amours du seigneur Alexandre et d'Annette"(1619) and in Le Duelliste Malheureux, tragi-com. of Guillaume de la Gays(1636) but they are overshadowed by the shamelessness of "Les passions esgarées, ou le Roman du Temps"(Tragi-com.1632) by de Riche-
mont Banchereau. In 1634 a sieur Veroneau published a scandalous play "L'Impuissante"(tragi-com.) The rather general indecency of the stage in Corneille's time is further exemplified by works such as the Mercier inventif(Past. 1632); the Cydippe(past. 1633) by de Baussays, ending with a very audacious situation; the L'Eromène(past. 1633) of Marcassus; the well-known "Gallanteries du Duc d'Ossone" of Mairret with its daring bedroom scenes, etc.

In comparison with the laxity of many plays of the time Corneille's Méliete was ~~xxx~~ relatively pure. But the work does not merit the praise which has sometimes been bestowed upon it as the first really chaste play of the time. In the first place, a number of

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pastorals of the preceding period were, from a moral point of view, irreproachable; while, in the second place, the *Mélite* was not at all free from indecent scenes and expressions. The early plays of Corneille acquired their reputation for purity by the fact that in the editions from about 1650 on, the objectionable passages and expressions were all erased or replaced by verses more commendable morally. Corneille was not a leader in the evolution of the theater toward more reserve and greater decency, as some historians repeat. He rather followed the example and opinions of others in this matter and adapted his plays later to the changed taste of the public.

In the *Mélite* are found the following lines changed or erased for reasons of decency after 1657.

In the first act - 1st scene, Tirces said, in the first editions: La beauté, les attrait, le port, la bonne mine.
Echauffent bien les draps, mais non pas la cuisine.

This passage, in latter editions, reads:

La beauté, les attrait, le port, la bonne mine.
échauffent bien le coeur, mais non pas la cuisine.

and:

Et l'hymen qui succède à ces folles amours,
Pour quelques bonnes nuits a bien de mauvais jours

was changed to:

Et l'hymen qui succède à ces folles amours,
après quelques douceurs, a bien de mauvais jours.

Act. I - Scene IV and V

Philandre: Cependant un baiser accordé par avance ~~sera~~
soulageroit beaucoup ma pénible souffrance:

Clôris: Prends-le sans demander, potlron pour un
baiser. Crois-tu que ta Gloris te voulût refuser?

Tirris: Voilà traiter l'amour, justement bouche à
bouche; C'est par où vous alliez commencer l'esca-
mouche? Encore n'est ce pas trop mal passer son temps.

This was changed to:

Philandre: Cependant en faveur de ma longue souffrance

Gloris. Tais-toi, mon frère vient.....

Tirris: (Mon arrivée ici fait quelque contretemps.
Si j'en crois l'apparence.

Farther on in the same scene V:-

Tircis: Je pense ne pouvoir vous être qu'importun
Vous feriez mieux un tiers que d'en accepter un.

was replaced by:

De moins sorciers que moi pourraient bien deviner
Qu'un troisième ne fait que vous importuner

and: Tircis(speaking to his sister about her projected marriage)

Ou je te connois mal, ou son heure tardive
Te désoblige fort de ce qu'elle n'arrive
Cette légère amorce, irritant tes désirs,
Fait que l'illusion d'autres meilleurs plaisirs
Vient la nuit chatouiller ton espérance avide,
Mal satisfaite après de tant mâcher à vide.

The four last verses were erased after 1657. Another suppressed passage was:

Cloris: Philandre, d'un baiser scelle encor tes adieux.

Philandre: Ainsi vienne bientôt cette herueuse journée
Qui nous donne le reste en faveur d'Hyménée

Tircis: La nuit est bien plutôt ce que vous attendez
Pour vous récompenser du temps que vous perdez.

Act III scene III.A dialogue between Tircis et Philandre:

Philandre:achève et conte-moi
Les douceurs que la belle, à tout autre farouch
T'a laissé dérober sur ses yeux, sur sa bouche
Sur sa gorge, où, que sais-je? etc

This imagery is replaced after 1657 by:

Philandre:achève, et conte moi
Les petites douceurs, les aimables tendresses
Qu'elle se plait à joindre à de telles promesses,
etc.

Acte V scene VI

La Nourrice: Allez, je vais vous faire à ce soir telle nich
Qu'au lieu de labourer, vous laissez tout en
friche.

Changed after 1648 to: Allez, quelle que soit d'ardeur qui vous
emporte,
On ne se moque point des femmes de ma sorte,
Et je ferai bien voir à vos feux empressés
Que vous n'en êtes pas encore où vous pensez.

In the Clitandre Corneille showed much less reserve still than in his Méliste. Some of the scènes of his second play were frankly licentious. The following passages, suppressed or changed latey after 1657, will illustrate this point. It must be noticed that

Clitandre was the first play that Corneille PUBLISHED. He probably changed some more rather risqué lines in his *Méliste* before giving the manuscript to the printer.

II.- CLITANDRE.

In the editions from 1632 to 1657 the following passages are found which Corneille suppressed or changed later for reasons of decency:

Act I. Sc.1.

Et toi, pere du jour, dont le flambeau naissant
Va chasser mon erreur avecque le croissant,
S'il est vrai que Thétis te reçoit dans sa couche
Prends, soleil, prends encor deux baisers sur sa bouche.

These lines were erased in later editions.

Act I. Sc.III

Lysarque says about a platonic love:
Bien que vous en ayez une entière assurance,
Vous pouvez vous lasser de vivre d'espérance,
Et tandis que l'attente amuse vos desirs,
Prendre ailleurs quelquefois de solides plaisirs.

Suppressed after 1657.

Act I. Sc.IX

Rosidor kisses Caliste who has fainted:
Belle âme, viens aider à sortir à mon âme;
Reçois-la sur les bords de ce pâle coral;
Fais qu'en dépit des Dieux, qui nous traitent si mal,
Nos esprits rassemblés hors de leur tyrannie,
Goutent la-bas un bien qu'ici l'on nous denie.
Tristes, embrassements, baisers mal répondus,
Pour la première fois donnés et non rendus,
Hélas! quand mes douleurs me l'ont presque ravie,
Tous glacés et tous morts, vous me rendez la vie.
Cruels, n'abusez plus de l'absolu pouvoir
Que dessus tous mes sens l'amour vous fait avoir, etc.

Suppressed after 1657.

Same scene:

Rosidor to Caliste who has come back to her senses:
Puisqu'un si doux appas se treuve en tes rudesses,
Que feront tes faveurs, que feront tes caresses?
Tu me fais un outrage à force de m'aimer,
Dont la douce rigueur ne sert qu'à m'enflammer.

Suppressed after 1657.

Act. IV Sc.I

Pymante: Il me faut un baiser malgré vos cruautés.

Changed to(1657): Il me faut des faveurs malgré vos cruautés.

Act V Sc. II

Rosidor: Les flammes de Caliste à mes flammes répondent,
Je ne fais point de vœux que les siens ne secondent;
Il n'est point de souhaits qui ne me soient permis,
Ni de contentements qui ne me soient permis,

Suppressed after 1657

Act III Sc. V

Pymante: Que d'heur! Je tiens ici captive ma maîtresse.
{Il lui prend les mains et les baise)
Elle reçoit mes lois, et je puis disposer
De ses mains qu'à mon aise on me laisse baiser.

.....
Enfin nos cris aigus nous pourroient décéler;
Voici tout proche un lieu plus commode à parler;
Belle Dorise, entrons dedans cette caverne,
Qu'un peu plus a loisir Pymante vous gouverne.

Dorise: Que plutôt ce moment puisse achever mes jours!

Pymante: (Il l'enlève dans la caverne)

Non, non, il faut venir.

Very significant for the change of Corneille from a rather licentious treatment of moral situations to a more reserved elegance is the following scene, which, after 1657, was thoroughly remodelled and shortened. In its first form it conformed to the general freedom of the stage in Corneille's youth and reminds of the scurrility of Mairet's "Duc d'Ossoné".

Act. V Sc. II

Rosidor: Ainsi nos feux secrets n'avoient point de jaloux
Tant que leur sainte ardeur, plus forte devenue
Voulut un peu de mal à tant de retenue,
Lors on nous vit quitter ces ridicules soins,
Et nos petits larcins souffrirent les témoins.
Si je voulois baiser ou tes yeux ou ta bouche,
Tu savois dextrement faire un peu la farouche
Et me laissant toujours de quoi me prévaloir,
Montrer également le craindre et le vouloir
Depuis avec le temps l'amour s'est fait le maître;
Sans aucune contrainte il a voulu paraître:
Si bien que plus nos coeurs perdoient de liberté,
Et plus on en voyoit en notre privauté.
Ainsi dorénavant, après la foi donnée
Nous ne respirons plus qu'un heureux hymenée,
Et ne touchant encore ses droits que du penser,
Nos feux à tout le reste osent se dispenser;
Hors ce point, tout est libre à l'ardeur qui nous presse.

Act. 5 Scene III

Caliste, Rosidor

CAL. Que diras-tu, mon coeur, de voir que ta maîtresse,

Te vient éffrontement trouver jusques au lit?

ROS. Que dirai-je, sinon que pour un tel délit,
 On ne m'échappe à moins de trois baisers d'amende?
 CAL. La gentille façon d'en faire la demande!
 ROS. Mon regret, dans ce lit qu'on m'oblige à garder,
 C'est de ne pouvoir plus prendre sans demander:
 Autrement mon souei, tu sais comme j'en use.
 CAL. En effet, il est vrai, de peur qu'on te refuse,
 Sans rien dire souvent et par force tu prends.
 ROS. Ce que, forcée ou non, de bon coeur tu me rends,
 CAL. Tout beau: si quelquefois je souffre et je pardonne
 Le trop de liberté que ta flamme se donne,
 C'est sous condition de n'y plus revenir.
 ROS. Si tu me rencontres d'humeur à la tenir,
 Tu chercherois bientôt moyen de t'en dedire
 Ton sexe, qui defend ce que plus il désire,
 Voit fort à contre-coeur...CAL. Qu'on lui désobeit,
 Et que notre foiblesse au plus fort le tait.
 ROS. Ne dissimulons point: est-il quelque avantage
 Qu'avec nous au baiser ton sexe ne partage?
 CAL. Vos importunités le font assez juger.
 ROS. Nous ne nous en servons que pour vous obliger:
 C'est par ou notre ardeur supplée a votre honte;
 Mais l'un et l'autre y trouve également son conte
 Et toutes vous dussiez prendre en un jeu si doux,
 Comme même plaisir, même intérêt que nous.
 CAL. Ne pouvant le gagner contre toi de paroles,
 J'opposerai l'effet à tes raisons frivoles,
 Et saurai désormais si bien te refuser,
 Que tu verras le goût que je prends à baiser:
 Aussi bien ton orgueil en devient trop extrême.

CAL. Lorsque tu te verras ces privautés permises,
 Tu pourras t'assurer que nos contentements
 Ne redouteront plus aucuns empêchements.
 ROS. Vienne eet heureux jour! mais jusque-la, mauvaise,
 N'avoir point de baisers à rafraichir ma braise!
 Dussai-je être impudent autant comme importun,
 A tel prix que ce soit, sache qu'il m'en faut un.
 Degoutée, ainsi donc ta menace s'exerce?

ROS. C'est trop peu d'un baiser. CAL. Et pour moi c'est
 assez.
 ROS. Ils n'en sont que plus doux étant un peu forcés.
 Je ne m'étonne plus de te voir si privée,
 Te mettre sur mon lit aussitot qu'arrivée;
 Tu prends possession déjà de la moitié,
 Comme étant toute acquise a ta chaste amitié.
 Mais à quand ce beau jour qui nousdoit tout permettre?

CAL. Ce n'est pas pour un jour que je veux un mari.
 Tout beau: j'aurois regret, ta santé hasardée,
 Si tu m'allois quitter sitôt que possédée.
 Retiens un peu la bride à tes bouillants desirs,
 Et pour les mieux goûter assure nos plaisirs.

ROS. Que le sort a pour moi de subtiles malices!
Ce lit doit être un jour le champ de mes délices,
Et recule lui seul ce qu'il me doit donner.

CAL. L'attente n'est pas longue et son peu de durée.....
ROS. N'augmente que la soif de mon âme altérée.

Suppressed after 1657

.....

"LA Veuve" was published two years after the Clitandre(1634) and in the meantime Corneille had become increasingly aware of the demand for decency on the stage which was growing at that time. This play is comparatively free from the improper passages found so abundantly in the one preceding it by two years. His corrections around 1657 show how much more sensitive still he had grown to the slightest reference to kissing or to love-making on the stage at the time that he translated the Imitation of Jesus Christ into French verse.

La Veuve

Act I Sc. 1

Nos vœux, quoique muets, s'entendent aisément,
Et quand quelques baisers sont dûs par compliment....

Alcidon: Je m'imagine alors qu'elle ne t'en dénie?

Philiste: Mais il tiennent bien peu de la cérémonie:
Parmi la bienséance, il m'est aisé de voir
Que l'amour me les donne autant que le devoir.
En cette occasion, c'est un plaisir extrême,
Lorsque de part et d'autre un couple qui s'entr'aime
Abuse dextrement de cette liberté
Que permettent les lois de la civilité
Et que le peu souvent que ce bonheur arrive,
Piquant notre appétit, rend sa pointe plus vive;
Notre flamme irritée en croit de jour en jour.

After 1657 this passage was toned down to:

Des coups d'oeil languissants, des souris ajustés,
Des penchements de tête a demi concertés,
Et mille autres douceurs aux seuls amants connues
Nous font voir chaque jour nos âmes toutes nues,
Nous sont de bons garants d'un feu qui chaque jour....

In the early editions of La Veuve, the following rather innocent line occurs: (Act II Sc. V)

Qu'un baiser de nouveau t'en donne l'assurance.

After 1657 it was changed to:

En veux-tu par écrit une entière assurance?

Corneille clearly wanted to erase all reference to kissing as is also proved by a number of passages cited in this chapter. In the same scene another line was suppressed for the same reason:

Alcidon: Quoi donc sans un baiser? Je m'en passerai bien(1634-57

Act V Sc. VI

Two lines seemed undecent to Corneille here:

Et jamais le retour ne lui fut accordé
Qu'ils ne vissent mon lit d'Acaste possédé.

After 1657 they are changed to:

Et son père jamais ne souffrit son retour
Que ma foi n'eut ailleurs engagé mon amour.

La Galerie du Palais, La Plac_e Royale, La Suivante, were published in 1637 and Corneille had by that time become very cautious and very attentive to the suffrage of the "belles dames" The improper passages are rare now in these comedies of love. Only three of them were changed by Corneille in the Galerie du Palais: one sentence and two references to kissing. The same can be said of the following plays: GALERIE DU PALAIS, one passage(verse 768) changed from: Prêt a la caresser?.....to (1657) Prêt a lui temoigner?.....

Verse 840 "S'il m'êchappe un baiser, ne t'en offense pas" becomes in 1657 "Si j'en dis un peu trop, ne t'en offense pas." Another reference to "un baiser" is erased.

In this evolution from the rather free jocosity to a greater reserve, Corneille was led by the reaction against the immorxality of the stage which made its way during the first years following his début. In 1630 Camus, in the beginning of his "Les Spectacles" d'horreur" où se découvrent plusieurs tragiques point de difficulté de se trouver aux lieux où se représentent les comédies." It may be gathered, however, from a passage of Sorel that the refined ladies left the room before the final crude farce was staged: "Autrefois toutes les femmes se rétiraiient quand on allait commencer la farce"

*effets de notre siècle" states that
ces plus délicates dames ne for*

(De la Connaissance des bons livres 1671-p. 240) The women of light conduct do not seem to have followed this rule, for Bruscombille refers to their presence in one of the songs of a farce.

It must be noted, however, in this connection, that later testimonials insist that before 1630 an "honnête femme" did not go to the theatre at all. Tallemant des Réaux (VII 171) says: "La comédie n'a été en honneur que depuis que le cardinal de Richelieu en a pris soin. Avant cela les honnêtes femmes n'y allaient point" and, around 1666, d'Aubignac wrote "Il y a cinquante ans une honnête femme n'osait pas aller au théâtre" (2)

But the statement of Tallemant des Réaux is vague and d'Aubignac's utterance clearly points to the very beginning of the 17th century, to 1610-1615, since he says, "Il y a cinquante ans". Various testimonials and documents of the time prove the fact that around 1630 ladies of good social standing began to attend the representations of plays in greater numbers than before. At the same time noblemen showed an increasing interest in stage-matters, spurred on as they were by the numerous theatrical ballets in which they danced and acted. The actors themselves preferred to the noisy and impecunious ordinary public the more select gathering of "honestes gens" who had the means of paying richly for their amusements.

The unruly and vulgar crowd which filled the theater of the times was an obstacle to the presence of ladies of refinement. As early as 1631 the actors desired to take measures for the protection of lady visitors. They proposed to the King to abolish the exclusive rights of the Confreres as proprietors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne and demanded that the theater should be left entirely at their disposal in order that ladies might attend the performances without running the risk of offending the proprietaries: "En cas qu'il leur fust adjugé, ils s'engageaient à le ~~laisser à leur disposition~~

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rebâtir à la façon des bâtiments qui sont en Italie, afin qu'en toute liberté les honnetes gens, et principalement les dames, y pussent jouir des divertissements des comedies sans apprehension des volontaires et des mauvais esprits qui se portent aux insolences."

In 1634 the actors claimed in the "Ouverture des jours gras" that their plays were "autant d'aimants attractifs pour y faire venir, non seulement les plus graves d'entre les hommes, mais les femmes les plus chastes et modestes, qui ne veulent plus faire autre chose maintenant que d'y aller; ce qui fait qu'on ne s'étonne pas si les maris, par un long temps, avaient défendu et interdit l'entrée de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne a leurs femmes" etc. ("Ouverture des jours gras, reprinted by Fournel)

And in the same year, Mairet testifies that the "honnestes dames" went to the Hôtel de Bourgogne "avec aussi peu de scrupule et de scandale qu'elles feraient celui du Luxembourg." (3) In 1635 Rotrou wrote to the King, in the Preface of La Bague de l'Oubli: "Puisqu' enfin la comédie est en un point où les plus honnêtes recreations ne peuvent plus luy causer d'envie, ou elle peut se vanter d'être la passion de toute la France...." And, speaking of his play, he added: "J'ay travaillé à la rendre capable de plaire, je l'ay rendue si modeste et j'ay pris tant de peine à polir ses moeurs, que, si elle n'est belle, au moins elle est sage, et que d'une profane, j'en ay fait une religieuse."

In the same year the King authorized the opening of a theater in the Faubourg Saint Germain, Renaudot in the "Gazette" of the 6th of January 1635 enumerated the reasons for this action: "Sachant que la comédie, depuis qu'on a banni des théâtres tout ce qui pouvoit souiller les oreilles les plus délicates, est l'un des plus innocents divertissements, et le plus agréable à sa bonne ville de Paris."

~~In 1636 Balzac writes () that the stage at that date was~~

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In 1636 Balzac writes (4) that the stage at that date was "nestoyée de toutes sortes d'ordures" and in 1639 de Scudéry in his L'Apologie du Théâtre writes proudly that the comedy of his time "n'est que pudeur et modestie" These statements must, of course not be taken too literally. Occasionally a play was staged which was far from being so extremely saintly and moral as the boast of the playwrights might induce us to believe. In 1642 still, Gillet de la Tessonnerie, published his comedie of Françon adapted to the stage from the well-known novel of the same name by Sorel. He chose some of the most scurrilous episodes of this audacious work. The main theme is "l'impuissance" of the old Valentin and the love-adventures of his bewitching wife. Yet, the current toward greater reserve gained impetus every year and it soon became a general pre-occupation with the playwrights not to shock the most sensitive moral disposition of their feminine admirers and religious patrons. In 1646 La Brosse wrote in the Épitre of "Les Songes des hommes esveillez" "qu'une jeune fille la peut voir avec moins de scandale qu'elle ne parleroit à un capucin à la porte de son couvent."

Corneille followed rather than led, at least at first, this current toward a greater decency on the stage. In order of their dates his plays become more and more free from improper passages. This impulse was increased during the religious crisis of Corneille's life which seems to have begun around the time of the Polyeucte probably after his serious sickness and resulted in his translating the Imitation de Jésus-Christ and the Louanges de la Sainte Vierge. In 1651 he wrote in the introduction of the twenty first chapters of the Imitation that having read the Latin verse of Pope Alexandre VII meditations, on death brought him to serious reflection "qu'il fallait comparaître devant Dieu et lui rendre compte du talent dont il l'avait favorisé." He gave there an expression to his belief that

he had contributed much to the refinement of morals on the stage. "Je considerai, ensuite que ce n'était pas assez de l'avoir si heureusement réduit à purger notre theatre des ordures que les premiers siecles y avaient comme incorporées, et des licenses que les derniers y avaient souffertes; qu'il ne me devait pas suffire d'ay avoir fait regner en leur place les vertus morales et politiques, et quelques mêmes des chrétiennes..."; but that he had to translate the Imitation to the further edification of the reader.

These principles made it imperious that, on the first occasion he should erase the moral blemishes from his early plays to which he objected on the part of moral grounds and for reasons of a change of taste on the public. This occasion was found in the republication of his early works from 1657 on, in which he carefully erased or changed every objectionable allusion, scene, or expression.

The early plays of Corneille, *Mérite*, *Clitandre*, *La Galerie du Palais*, *La Suivante*, etc, are love-imbroglios and, as such, are sprinkled with the flowery compliments in which consisted the wooing of refined lovers at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Love-making seemed to be an art of forced word-play, a game of wit. In Corneille's work, from 1630 to 1637, and even later in his tragedies, glitter here and there the false diamonds of pretentious conceits, as for example, the insipid address of Pymante to Dorise's hairpin, with which this tenderhearted lady has just destroyed his eye:

"Bourreau qui, secondant son courage inhumain,
 Au lieu d'orner son poil, déshonorez sa main,
 Exécrable instrument de sa brutalité,
 Tu devois pour le moins respecter son image;
 Ce portrait accompli d'un chef d'oeuvre des cieux
 Imprimé dans mon coeur, exprimé dans m^{es} yeux," etc
 (*Clitandre*, IV, 2)

The questions it is proposed to treat here can be formulated as follows: Are the embellished discourses in the early plays of Corneille a direct copy of the current language of the *Précieux*, an echo of the compliments which were the delight of the Parisian "ruelles" of the time? Was Corneille's attitude toward Preciousness sympathetic? Was the general style of Corneille's early plays typically précieux? Or did he use a style RELATIVELY simpler and saner than the general production of the first decades of the seventeenth century?

The historians of literature generally hold that Corneille copied the "précieux" speech of his heroes directly from living models; that in his early years, he was in sympathy with the *Précieux* whose manners and affected phrases he naively imitated; that the style of most of his early plays is more complicated than the average style of the time. According to Lottheissen, Corneille imitated the love-speech which he daily heard in Rouen,

his native city. "Corneille versucht es ein bild des franzosischen Gesellschaft zu geben und lässt seine personen reden, wie er sie in seinem kreise wirklich sich unterhalten hörte. (/)

For F. Brun^etière, the preciosity in the early plays is an imitation of the artificial compliments current in the Parisian drawing-rooms. "Il tient à bon droit, dans le grand "Dictionnaire des Précieuses" de Bodeau de Somaize, une place considérable, une place d'honneur et il y est appelé "le plus grand homme qui ait jamais écrit des jeux de cirque." C'est la note juste; et que l'on l'étudie dans les comédies de sa jeunesse: Méli^ete, La Veuve, La Galérie du Palais, ou dans les chefs d'oeuvre de sa maturité, la plus grande préoccupation de Corneille a été de gagner le suffrage des précieuses"(2) And he adds: "La galanterie dans les comédies de Corneille...et qu'elle y est une parfaite imitation du langage des ruelles"(3) Mr. Gustave Lanson is of the same opinion: "Dans les comédies de Corneille vit le grand monde du temps de Louis XIII. Ses originaux sont les précieux et d'est pour cela que le dialogue est précieux: il l'est naïvement, parce que c'est vrai....Ces honnêtes gens traitent l'amour comme on faisait dans les ruelles; et c'est pour cela qu'un reflet de l'Astrée éclaire leurs propos; c'est dans la vie que Corneille l'a saisi."(4)

The theory that Corneille gave in the "Méli^ete" and some later plays an exact picture of the language of the "précieux" copied from real life, finds its origin in a too literally interpreted passage of the "Examen de Méli^ete"(1660) Corneille, speaking there about the success of his first play, says: "...le style naïf, qui faisoit une peinture de la conversation des honnêtes gens(fut) sans doute cause de ce bonheur surprenant" The expression "La conversation des honnêtes gens" has been taken as a synonym of "le langage des ruelles" of Paris, and this, in its

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turn, evoked naturally the idea of a complicated style, in which the whole play was supposed to be written(5)

This conclusion, however, contradicts the very words of Corneille in the same sentence, where he calls his manner "le style naïf". He clearly pointed to the fact that he wrote in a simpler and less complicated style than was the literary fashion at the time. Other utterances of Corneille confirm this explanation. In the "Examen" of the "Clitandre" he says about the same play, (Mélite): "J'entendis que ceux du métier la blâmoient du peu d'effets et de ce que le style en étoit trop familier" And, in the "Avis au Lecteur" of the "Mélite" he repeats: "Vu que ma façon d'écrire étant simple et familiere fera prendre mes naïvetés pour des bassesses."

And, among those who praised Corneille, in the complimentary poems preceding the "Veuve" some lay stress on his simplicity and naïveté:

"Je vois que ton esprit unique de son art,
A des naïvetés plus belles que la fard," said

Rotrou, and Du Petit-Val joins him in this eulogy:

"Ce style familier non encore entrepris,
Ni connu de personne, a de si bonne grâce
Du théâtre françois changé la vieille face
Que la scène tragique en a perdu le pris."

Villeneuve congratulated him for avoiding the violent action and the exaggerations of the tragi-comedy:

"Toi que le Parnasse idolâtre,
Et dont le vers doux et coulant
Ne fait point voir sur le théâtre
Les effets d'un bras violent..!"(6)

The style of Corneille's early plays appeared, at the time, to everyone as simple and familiar. For this, he was blamed by "ceux du métier", ^{and} praised by his friends. Yet, strange reversal of roles - he has been transformed by some historians into a typical exponent of preciosity, and in our days, his early style is frequently cited as an example of intricacy!

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To judge which of these contradictory conceptions is justified we have to attempt an unbiased comparison of his early manner with what was reputed "great art" at the time of his youth, ^{and} with the style of his immediate predecessors and of some of his fellow poets.

This comparison, if worked out completely and systematically would involve a study far too extensive and too complex for the scope of the present chapter. All that can be done is to illustrate the kind of Preciosity which the young Corneille found in the books of his early period, by gathering a few examples of it, in works esteemed at the time. A difficulty arises from the embarrassment of riches, from the wealth of material; but there is, in fact, no need for nice selection. The Preciosity of the early seventeenth century is rather impersonal; and the numerous examples offer but little variation in their choice of imagery and in their preference for antithetical conceits. The following fairly illustrate the "estilo culto" with which Corneille was acquainted. At the end of this chapter more representative illustrations are given in an Appendix.

De Nervèze, the great stylist of the beginning of the seventeenth century cries out in "Les religieuses Amours de Florigène et de Méléagre(1601)

Mes vœux vont costoyant les rives de la mort,
Sur la mer de mes pleurs, tes yeux servant d'estoilles
Et pour pousser ma nef à ce ténébreux port,
Mon deuil fournit les vents et ton voile les voiles.

Si en vivant tu meurs, je veux vivre en mourant,
Et ne voir qu'en tes yeux qui m'ont l'âme ravie,
Afin qu'en ces soupirs je n'aïlle respirant,
Qu'une vivante mort, qu'une mourante vie"

And the once celebrated Du Souhait sings in "Les Amours de Poliphile et de Méllonimphe"(1599):

Vous estes toute de feu, et je suis tout de glace
Comme glace je fonds aux rayons de vos yeux,
Mais vous avez ainsi que le soleil des cieux,
La glace dans le coeur, et les feux à la face."

Berthaut in his "Recueil de quelques vers amoureux"(1602) gave numerous examples of a preciosity of expression, quite in the style of De Nervèze:

"Ne vous offensez point, belle âme de mon âme,
De voir qu'en vous aymant j'ose plus qu'il ne faut;
C'est bien trop haut voller, mais estant tout de flame
Ce n'est rien de nouveau si je m'élève si haut"

When his sweetheart traveled to Lyon, he ended a sonnet:

"Mais que ma tristesse^{VIE} en me quittant la suive;
Et que chacun de nous en mesme temps arrive;
Elle dedans Lyon, moy dedans le tombeau,"~~arriver~~

The preciosity in France was not originated by the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Its influence dates from about 1618 when the "beau monde de l'esprit" began to gather there. Decades before the Hôtel de Rambouillet, preciosity was general in the works of the authors of the end of the sixteenth and of the beginning of the 17th century. It was an evolution of the "art de Petrarquiser" against which Joachim du Bellay already protested in one of his poems. This early preciosity explains how even provincial authors who never were ac^{qu}ainted with the Parisian drawing-rooms, could write in a manner wimilar to the style of the Précieux. Take, for example, a poem of P.de Marbeuf, a poet of Rouen with whom Corneille was acquainted; and it will be clear that he did not have to look to Paris for examples of Preciosity. The following poem of de Marbeuf was presented at the Puy des Palinads of 1617:

ANATOMIE DE L'OEIL

"L'oeil est dans un chasteau que ceignent les frontières
De ce petit vallon clos de deux boulevards;
Il a pour pont-levis ses mouvantes paupières,
Le Ciel pour garde-corps, les sourcils pour remparts.

Il comprend trois humeurs; l'aqueuse, et la vitrée,
Et le crystal nageant au milieu de ces deux;
Lequel a pour miroir l'iris jointe à l'urée,
Pour objet les couleurs qu'il présente à nos yeux.

Les tuniques, tenant ce corps en consistance,
L'empêchent de glisser dedans ses mouvements;
Et ses tendons poreux apportent la substance
Qui garde et nourrit l'oeil et ses compartiments.

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Quatre muscles sont droits, et puis deux sont obliques,
Communicant à l'oeil sa prompte agilité;
Mais en développant les petits nerfs optiques
Les tient fermes toujours en leur mobilité.

Bref, l'oeil mesurant tout d'une même mesure,
A soi-même inconnu cognoit tout l'Univers;
Et conçoit dans l'enclos de sa ronde figure
Le rond et le quaré, le droit et le travers.

Toutefois ce flambeau qui conduit nostre vie,
De l'obscur de ce corps emprunte sa clarté;
Nous serons donc le corps, vous serez l'oeil, Marie,
Qui prenez votre jour de nostre obscurité.

The next example is taken from a novel: "Les Amours de Floris et de Cléonthe" (1613) by the Norman author Nic. Moulinet, sieur du Parc. Its style is as mellifluous as the manner of any of the poets of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. The shepherd Doralis finds the shepherdess Floris asleep: "Enfin fasché du larcin que le sommeil luy faisoit, luy desrobant le jour que luy donnoit ses beaux yeux, il luy disoit tout bas: Reveillez-vous Floris, reveillez, ouvrez ces beaux yeux, ces deux lumières d'Amour que Morphée tient un trop long-temps fermez, et songez un peu au larcin que vous me faictes en me privant de leurs clartez, ouvrez les donc, et me rendez ce que vous m'avez injustement desrobé Mais, non, ne les ouvrez pas encor, de peur que leurs brillans éclairs ne causent l'aveuglement des miens, oune foudroyent mon âme par la violence de leurs feux, ou pour le mains attendez que je les aye preparez pour recevoir leur lumière, mais quoy? Puis je rester si longtemps en des tenèbres si fascheuses, et au milieu d'un jour serein parmy tant de noires obscuritez, ouvrez-les Floris, ouvrez ces beaux boute-feux de mon âme, desquels j'attens non seulement la lumière, mais aussi de la vie à ma vie." (p.25-26)

In "La Driade Amoureuse" a pastoral of B. Troterel, printed at Rouen, in 1606, we find a common-place of the love-speech of the time, derived from the Astrée, in most cases (7) which Corneille has ridiculed in his Veuve (I, 3):

"Il m'aborde en tremblant, avec ce compliment;
 Vous m'attirez à vous ainsi que fait l'aimant;
 (Il pensoit m'avoir dit le meilleur mot du monde)
 Entendant ce haut style, aussitôt je secoude,
 Et réponds brusquement, sans beaucoup m'emouvoir;
 'Vous êtes donc de fer, à ce que je puis voir'
 Ce grand mot étouffa tout ce qu'il vouloit dire...."

"La Driade Amoureuse":

"Or ainsi que le fer baisé d'un fin aimant
 Se retourne vers lui comme à son cher amant;
 Tout de mesme vostre oeil, calamité des âmes,
 Ayant touché mon coeur de l'esclair de ses flames," etc

Since Corneille was acquainted with the literature of his times, it is more logical to suppose that he found the précieux expressions of some of the characters of his early plays in the books of that epoch, and especially in those printed in his native city. It has also been generally overlooked that Corneille had never been in Paris before 1630 or 1631 when his "Mélite" was represented there, and that he was not introduced into the "Ruelles" until considerably later.

Now in the Mélite, as much Preciosity is already found as in the Veuve or the Galerie du Palais. How could Corneille have noted for dramatic purposes, the style of conversation of a society ^{with} which he was not acquainted? How could he have been the exponent of a refined speech with which he came only later in contact? Between 1629 and 1635 when his early plays were written, his native city, Rouen was still largely provincial. Although an important printing-center, where the interest ⁱⁿ ~~was~~ poetry was general, it remained outside of the contemporary "Preciosity" movement. It possessed, in Corneille's youth, no rooms where the provincial nobleman or bourgeois of good standing could make daily exercises in conceits, following the pattern of the Parisian "Salon". It is only some decades later that Preciosity spread to the provinces. The speech of Rouen was at that time so provincial that Corneille complained of its influence.

upon him: "Ainsi étant demeuré provincial, ce n'est pas merveille si mon élocution en conserve quelquefois le caractère" (8) About his verses he spoke in the same way: "Je vous avouerai franchement que pour les vers, outre la faiblesse d'un homme qui commençoit à en faire, il est malaisé qu'ils ne sentent la province ou je suis né." (9) Other evidence corroborated the fact that the poet suffered all his life from the influence of the unrefined speech of his compatriots. Vigneul Marville testifies: "Il n'a jamais parlé bien correctement la langue française; peut-être ne se mettait-il pas en peine de cette exactitude." (10)

If then neither Paris nor Rouen supplied the young Corneille with examples of preciosity, for his very early plays, it must be assumed that he drew his inspiration from books. The "précieux" expressions in his early works are manifestly gleanings from his readings. He himself indicated the origin of his acquaintance with this kind of literary jargon in the first scene of the *Mélite*, where he calls it "discours de livre":

Ces visages d'éclat sont bons à cajoler;
C'est là qu'un jeune oiseau doit s'apprendre à parler
J'aime à remplir de feux ma bouche en leur présence;
La mode nous oblige à cette complaisance;
Tous ces DISCOURS DE LIVRE alors sont de saison"

And in "*La Veuve*" he insists upon the bookish flavor of the preciosity laid in the mouth of his personages. Géron says about the extravagant speeches of one of the lovers:

"C'est un homme tout neuf; que voulez-vous qu'il fasse
IL DIT CE QU'IL A LU....(I, 4)

Discours de livre! This expression must be taken literally. The novels and the poetry of the time were full of a Preciosity which, as in the instance of the *Astrée*, influenced the speech of the "*Honnête Homme*" But it was not exclusively the privilege of fiction and verse to teach refined language and graceful manners. There existed a number of manuals of Preciosity which taught the art of speaking in the style of the shepherds of

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d'Urfé. Some of them were printed at Rouen and might have been read by Corneille, who, in his youth, did not disdain merry gatherings as his early verses testify (//) In 1604, a Rouen edition was printed of the "Discours de la langue et le trésor de bien dire" of Claude Le Gris. In 1614, Guillaume de la Haye published "Le Printemps des Lettres amoureuses" of Pierre de Deimier. The "Marguerites Françoyes ou trésor des fleurs de bien dire" of François Desrués had at least four editions at Rouen from 1608 till 1624. In 1625 appeared that other manuel of préciosity, "Le Bréviaire des Amoureux ou Tableaux du Tombeau d'Amour" (par le sr. D.) Besides these books treating of love-making following the rules of "précieux" galantry, one can point to a few other Rouen-publications, treating of love-problems as: (1587) "LIII Arrests d'amour" of Martial d'Auvergues; (1610-1617) "Questions diverses et reponses d'icelles, divisées en trois livres, sçavoir: Questions d'amour," etc. (1627) "Playdoyers et Arrests d'amour, donnez en la cour et parquet de Cupidon" etc. Anyone of these books — and an exhaustive study of the Rouen publications during Corneille's youth would, no doubt, reveal more of them — may have supplied him with all the précieux expressions he used in his early plays. Yet he could in fact, have found it everywhere, for this high-flown rhetoric was quite general in the literature of the time.

It is commonly said that Corneille's attitude toward Preciosity was sympathetic; that his picture of it, if realistic, was no mockery and no caricature. Brunetière says that Corneille even at the very outset of his career, was striving to gain the approval of the Précieuses. Yet his early works do not show any trace of this supposed acquiescence in their exaggerations. On the contrary, it is quite evident that he treats the extravagant discourse of his heroes with a smiling coolness and even with a slighting irony.

One of Corneille's earliest literary opinions was a dislike of conventional and over-wrought imagery. And, with his positive temperament, he experienced early too, a parallel feeling of dislike for the cold frenzy of imaginary passion. In the poetry published in 1632, with the Clitandre, a light-hearted confession of his youthful and ridiculous "schwärmerei", of which he pretends to be happily cured. Incidentally he derides, with satirical banter, the masquerade of unreal feeling and stilted expression which is the essence of préciosité:

"J'ai fait autrefois de la bête;
 J'avois des Philis a la tête
 J'epicis les occasions;
 J'epilogois mes passions;
 Je paraphrasois un visage;

 Soleils, flambeaux, attraits, appas,
 Pleurs, désespoirs, tourments, trespas,
 Tout ce petit meuble de bouche
 Dont un amoureux s'escarmouche,
 Je savois bien m'en escrimer.
 Par la je m'appris à rimer;
 Par la je fis sans autre chose
 Un sot en vers d'un sot en prose; (12)
 Et Dieu sait alors si les feux,
 Les flammes, les soupirs, les voeux,
 Et tout ce menu badinage,
 Servoit de rime et de remplage, etc (12)

In some passages of Corneille's early plays a critical attitude toward "precieux" galantry is very evident; he makes sport of their empty witticisms. In the first scene of the Mélite, Tircis considers his own exercises in Preciosité as but an artificial game of wit, a ridiculous, yet obligatory convention in love-making:

"Tous ces discours de livre alors sont de saison;
 Il faut feindre du mal, demander guérison,
 Donner sur le Phebus, promettre des miracles;
 Jurer qu'on brisera toute sorte d'obstacles;
 Mais du vent et cela doivent etre tout un."

Mélite, farther makes fun of the love complaints then in fashion:

Mélite: "Supplice imaginaire et qui sent son moqueur,
 Eraste: "Supplice qui déchire et mon âme et mon coeur.
 Mélite: "D'ordinaire on n'a pas avec si bon visage,
 Ni l'âme, ni le coeur en un tel équipage."

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All through the *Mélite* the précieux expressions are attributed to a supplanted lover, Eraste, and to a credulous fop, Philandre. The latter is the most clear-cut caricature in the play. There is not a single redeeming feature about him. He is cheated by means of false love-letters, refuses to fight a duel, and is forced to confessed that he is afraid. In the last scenes of the play he loses his sweetheart and is told to marry the old nurse. It is not without significance that Corneille attributes, with sly irony, most of the hyperbolical verbiage of his *Mélite* to this pitiful "élegant". An example of his ornamental preciousity is:

Philandre: "Regarde dans mes yeux, et reconnais qu'en moi
On peut voir quelque chose aussi beau comme toi".
Cloris: "C'est sans difficulté, m'y voyant exprimée".
Philandre: "Quite ce vain orgueil dont ta vue est charmée.
Tu n'y vois que mon coeur, qui n'a plus un
seul trait
Que ceux qu'il a reçus de ton divin portrait,
Et qui tout aussitôt que tu te fais paraître
Afin de te mieux voir se met à la fenêtre."

Cloris answers him with a good deal of common sense and not at all as a précieuse:

Cloris: "A travers tes discours si remplis d'artifice,
Je découvre le but de ton intention:
C'est que, te défiant de mon affection,
Tu la veux acquérir par une flatterie.
Philandre, ces propos sentent la moquerie."
(Editions 1633-57)

An ample harvest of précieux sentences could be gathered from the early works of Corneille. He treated them with an amused smile which shows how vividly he was aware of the ridiculousness of the glittering periphrases of his heroes. "Que dit-il de ma fille?" asks Chrysante in "La Veuve"

Geron: "Ah Madame il l'adora!
Il n'a point encore vu de miracles pareils;
Ses yeux, à son avis, sont autant de soleils;
L'enfleure de son sein un double petit monde;
C'est le seul ornement de la machine ronde.
L'amour à ses regards allume son flambeau
Et souvent pour la voir il ôte son bandeau
Diane n'eut jamais une si belle taille;

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Aupres d'elle Venus ne seroit rien qui vaille;
Ce ne sont rien que lis et roses que son teint;
Enfin de ses beautés il est si fort attent.....".

Chrysante: "Atteint! Ah! mon ami, ce sont des rêveries
Il s'en moque en disant de telles niaiseries"

Geron: "Madame, je vous jure, il pêche innocemment,
Et s'il savoit mieux dire, il dirait autrement.

Clarice, the widow has only a limited admiration for the wits
of the time:

"Avec ces bons esprits je n'étois qu'en martyre
Leur discours m'assassine, et n'a qu'un certain jeu
Qui m'étourdit beaucoup, et qui me plaît fort peu."

Corneille felt how far from the realities of life and love were
the finely polished compliments of the stances and sonnets of
the time. Lysandre says in the "Galerie du Palais":

"Et je n'ai jamais vu de cervelles bien faites
Qui traitassent l'amour à la façon des poètes
C'est tout un autre jeu. Le style d'un sonnet
Est fort extravagant dedans un cabinet;
Il y faut bien louer la beauté qu'on adore,
Sans mépriser Venus, sans médire de Flore,
Sans que l'éclat des lis, des roses, d'un beau jour,
Ait rien à démêler avecque notre amour."

A young dandy's courtship is humorously depicted:

"Mon baladin muet se retranche en un coin,
Pour faire mieux jouer la prunelle de loin;
Après m'avoir de la longtemps considérée
Après m'avoir des yeux mille fois mesurée,
Il m'aborde en tremblant, avec ce compliment;
Vous m'attirez à vous ainsi que fait l'aimant"
(Il pensoit avoir dit le meilleur mot du monde)

The half-earnest, half-satirical picture of the *Précieux* of the
time, the thrusts at their manners and compliments were, with
the clever imbroglio in which the characters become entangled
and the bewildering rapidity of the changes in the situations
on the stage, the comic elements in Corneille's early plays.
At the time of his début, he was perfectly conscious of the
tawdriness of the précieux jargon. He smiles or grumbles at its
excesses, and, if his satire is good-humored, it remains never-
theless a satire. Far from trying to merit the applause of the
"Précieuses" he treats them in fact, half seriously, sometimes,

and sometimes with derision.

In his discontent with the exaggerations of Préciosité Corneille had both literary predecessors and sympathizers. The very extravagance of the showy conceits of the authors of the first decades of the seventeenth century awoke opposition. Corneille was acquainted with the works of the opponents of Préciosité for he uses a peculiar expression "Donner sur le Phébus" (to speak high-flown language) which they had coined to ridicule the general ostentatious display of Préciosité. Théophile, - who probably had at that moment, forgotten his "Pyrame et Thisbé" - rhymes:

"Il voudrait que son front fut aux astres pareils,
Que je la fisse ensemble et l'aube et le soleil,
Que j'escrive comment ses regards sont des armes,
Comme il verse pour elle un océan de larmes.
Ses termes esgarez offencent mon humeur,
Et ne viennent qu'au sens d'un novice rimeur
Qui reclame Phébus. quant à moy, je l'abjure
Et ne recognois rien pour tout que ma nature!"
(Oeuvres, I, 235-236)

Corneille who had read Théophile (14) sides with him in the denunciation of this affected poetry, which triumphed in the works of all the shining lights of the French Parnassus of 1600-30 when de Nervèze, Du Souhait and Bertaud were still celebrated, the very authors against whom Malherbe had declared a wholly justified war. The satirist Regnier, who escaped préciosité by the very nature of his talent, uses also the expression in his Xth satire:

"Je vous laisse en repos jusques à quelques jours,
Que sans parler Phebus, je feray le discours..." etc

We find it, with the same ironical connotation in Sorel's Françon: "...Néanmoins je recommandai bien à Laurette de luy témoigner toujours une petite. rigueur invincible, jusqu'à tant qu'il répandit dans ses mains force écus d'or, que je lui disais être des astres qui donnent la qualité de dieux en terre à ceux qui les ont en maniemment, ainsi que les planètes, qui sont au

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ciel, donnent ce même honneur aux intelligences qui les régissent. Je suis scavante, oui, vous ne le croyez pas; je veux vous montrer que j'ai lu quelquefois les bons livres, ou j'ai appris A PARLER PHEBUS," and (p.218) "Il (Melibée-Boisrobert) lui PARLOIT TOUJOURS PHEBUS dans son transport et lui disait: Que je baise ces belles mains, ma belle! Mais, Las! Quel prodigieux effet, elles sont de neige et pourtant elles me brulent; si je baise ces belles roses de vos joues, ne serai-je point piqué, vu que les roses ne sont point sans épines?" etc.

These citations point to the fact that a certain number of writers of the time of Corneille's youth, had inaugurated an anti-préciosity movement. The extreme artificiality of the "Précieux" gave birth to no little satire, and Corneille's critical attitude against it bears a close resemblance to the attacks of the contemporary opponents of flowery verse. In 1605 we find already a "Ballet en langage forézien, de trois bergers et trois bergères se gaussant des amoureux qui nomment leurs maitresses leur doux souvenir, leur belle pensée, leur lis, leur rose, leur osuillet, etc... In 1609 the novel "Les milles Imaginations de Cypille" imitated ironically the effeminate style of the chevalier Ostande: "Elle se retire pour lire ces quatre mots à l'antiquaille amadigaulisez que le paladin desireux lui transmettoit: "Ostande sans ostentation vaine, généreux aventurier, damoisel d'eslite, le parangon des plus braves, l'outrepasse des mieux formés et bref fleur de chevalerie, a vous, Cyrénée de Zélande, Régeante de ses afflictions, salut..." The letter is signed, "Le vassal fidèle des pieds de votre puissance"

Sorel makes fun of the flowery speeches of the "pedant Hortensius" (15) "Mademoiselle, lui dit il, je gagne en perdant et je perds en gagnant, à raison qu'en perdant la fréquentation de monsieur votre père, je gagne la votre, qui

me fait perdre encore d'une autre façon, car je perds ma franchise en vous oyant discourir. Les incomparables charmes de vos incomparables perfections, que l'on ne peut assez magnifier, se tiennent si bien sur leurs pieds en assaillant, que ce seroit être hors de raison que de croire de pouvoir s'en defendre; parquoy ce sera toujours la cause par laquelle je me dirai votre incomparable serviteur" And (p.147) "Il lui fit cette docte harangue: 'Comme ainsi soit que vos attraits prodigieux aient deprehendé mon esprit, qui avoit auparavant blasphemé contre les empanons des fleches de Cupidon, je dois non-seulement implorer les autels de votre douceur, ains encor essayer de transplanter cette incomparable influence du ciel, où séjourne votre divinité en la terre caduque ou m'attachent mes défauts" etc.

Préciosity was exposed about 1629-30 to cutting criticism in books which followed the "Francion", such as "Le Tombeau des Romans" of Francon(1606) and the "Berger extravagant"(1627-28), while the translations of the "Don Quixote" may not have been without influence. This tendency was intimately connected with the tendency toward the "vraysemblable" which is growing stronger as the middle of the seventeenth century approaches.

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A few volumes wherein we find criticism of Preciosity in the same fashion as in Corneille's early plays, were printed at Rouen at the time that Corneille began writing verse. In 1623 appears "Le Dédain de l'amour, contenant la description des amoureux et des dames de ce temps" by "mademoiselle H.D.B." In this book the ladies of the time are depicted as taking exactly the same critical attitude against hyperbolic love-speech as most of the heroines of Corneille's early works. They pretend to be tired of all this verbose galantry of all these stereotyped compliments, quite in the fashion of the ironical Méliete and the

quick-witted Clarice. The Rouen edition of "Les Satyres du sieur de Courxal" (1627) contains a regular attack upon the poets of the time. The following verses describe the ravages of the preciosity among court-poets:

"L'autre suyvant l'erreur du siècle fantastique,
Sans doctrine rendra sa Muse une boutique
Pleine de mots dorez; propres à ces Muguets,
Ces Courtisans frisez, ces Mignons Perroquets,
Ces Damerets musquez qui courtisent le Louvre,
Dont le fardé babil, la vanité descouvre.
Car la gloire, et le prix des vanteurs courtisans
C'est farder leurs discours, par des mots complaisans;
Parquoy les vers du temps ils tiennent comme Oracles,
Et les mots bien peignez leur semblent des Miracles;
Aussi pour leur complaire on void plusieurs Autheurs
Leur stile ravaler, pour se rendre flateurs;
Et pour trop rechercher les disertes paroles,
Ils descharnent leurs vers et en font des idoles,
Sans muscles, sang et nerfs; Abus ou je pretens
Censurer la plupart des Poetes de ce tens!" (16)

In 1623, the Rouen lawyer, Jean Auvray, publishes in his native city a volume of miscellaneous verse, "Le Banquet des Muses" One of the poems called "Amoureuse Poursuite ou la Chasteté victorieuse" depicts a battle^{of} wit between a courtier and a lady, in the same style as similar debates in Corneille's early works. The courtier is complimentary and absurd, "donne sur le Phébus" while his beloved pretends to see nothing else than mockery in his high-flown discourse:

Le Courtisan: "Mais l'âme qui est bien assise
N'estreint qu'en bon lieu sa franchise;
Elle n'a point de passion
Si non pour la perfection,
Et si la cire de ses aisles
Se fond aux vives estincelles
D'une rare et grande beauté,
Benissant sa temerité
Elle fait sa gloire et son lucre
D'un si honorable sépulchre,
Bien heureuse de s'abîmer
En si grande et fameuse mer.

"Ne vous estonnez donc, madame,
Si la vive et charmeuse flâme
Qui sort de vos yeux, mes soleils,
M'embrasant de feux nonpareils,
Je cherche au mal qui me possède
En vous mon unique remède,
Et si au fort de mes douleurs
J'implore vos rares faveurs."

La Dame: "Monsieur, ces facondes merveilles
 Dont vous repaissez mes oreilles
 Ne me touchent point jusqu'au coeur,
 Je croy que d'un stile mocqueur,
 Passant de l'honneur la barrière,
 Vostre esprit se donne carrière,
 Et que toutes ces passions,
 Ces beautez, ces perfections,
 Ces feux, cet amour, ce martire,
 Sont fragments de vostre bien dire,
 Et l'ornement de vos discours." (17)

These ironical verses are in the same style as Corneille's early productions. He found, in the literature of the time abundant examples of Preciosity, and inspiration for his critical attitude towards it. Speaking relatively and bearing in mind the poetic conventions of the time, we can state that Corneille showed himself, in his early works, a lover of verisimilitude, more interested in the books which sketched — ironically or seriously — contemporary life, than in the pale abstractions of the pastoral plays so highly in favor at the time of his début. His preciosity of thought and expression is comparatively moderate. His style is, on the whole, simple and sane, without too glaring exaggerations, saved by a flavor of irony, which renewed those antiquated and stereotyped compliments and conceits which were the poetical stock phrases of the epoch, the "rime et remplace" of all the "novices rimeurs" of 1630.

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APPENDIX

A few examples of the kind of Preciosity which Corneille found in the books in favor when he was a young man of twenty to twenty-four years of age, are listed here. From before 1600 to about 1639 a period of affected elegance of expression had its hour of triumph in France. Neither J.B. Marino, nor the Hôtel de Rambouillet introduced Preciosity in France; it existed before them.

Des Yveteaux sings in 1603:- Stances pour le Roy a Mme la Duchesse:-

"Astre plein de bonheur nécessaire à nostre age
La gloire de ton sexe, et le des-avantage,
Qui fait noircir les lis de toute autre beauté
Tu sçais que rien n'avoit mon âme surmontée,
En amour, comme en guerre, elle estoit indomptée,
Et tomba du Triomphe en la captivité.

Il n'est point de couronne égale à ta conquête;
Si tu ne la faisois des cheveux de ta teste,
Dont les chastes liens emprisonnent mon coeur."
(Les Muses ralliées, 1603)

Nic. Rapin:(Les Muses ralliées, 1603) speaks about his beloved,

Ariadne:

"Ses esprits agitez des flots de son désastre
Vouloient noyer ses yeux dans une mer de pleurs,
En despitant Amour, Amour impiteux astre
Qui pour port luy monstroit un gouffre de malheurs.
De même vostre coeur flottant parmi l'orage
D'un coupçon importun, pour estre tourmenté,
Veut croire que ma foy s'en va faire naufrage
Dans le faible vaisseau de la légèreté.

The novels even surpassed, at the very beginning of the seventeenth century the exaggerations of the poets. In his "Le Roman sentimental avant l'Astrée" Mr. G.Reynier has given twenty pages of examples of Preciosity, covering a period from 1595 till 1610. A few may be recalled here: "Martyre d'Amour" of J. Corbin (1603): "Ces deux amants firent naistre du choquement de leurs oeillades les flammes qui consumerent leurs âmes." "Bréviaire des

Amoureux"(1604) The author addresses his paper: "Papier, afin que les restes de vostre blanc ne rougissent de ma honte, souffrez que je les noircisse de ma douleur."

"Le Portraict de la vraie Amante"(1604): "Au bruit de cet air chanté comme par un serène céleste, toute la rue sortait aux fenêtres pour aller au-devant de ceste melodie, mesme les pierres pour n'estre pas sans courtoisie envers un si doux et angélique accord quittèrent leur surdité pour avoir des oreilles à lui offrir."

"Martyre d'Amour"of J. Corbin(1603): "Voilà nos deux amants qui voguent maintenant en deux mers différentes dont l'une est salée, et l'autre est douce; ils voguent sur la mer Adriatique et dans la mer de leur aise."

"Les travaux sans travail" od P. Davity(1599): "Les premières lettres d'Ésippe estoient violentes, c'est a dire subjectes à ne durer point. Il y avait trop de morts au papier pour laisser la vie aux désirs. L'amour estoit presque toute coulé par le tuyau d'une plume. Et sur cette plume il vola au ciel pour se rafraîchir."

"La Vivante Filonie"(1605) mixes verse and prose of an equally "precieux" tendency. The author M.Faure writes like one of the wits ridiculed by Molière:

Vos feux sont différents aux feux de l'eau de vie,
Qui bruslant nous fait voir une flamme accomplie;
Sans consommer pourtant, vous consommez les coeurs
(F 44a)

From "Le Bouquet de la Feintise"(1610) by B. Astier, the following passage is taken: "Les greffes de nos desirs entées jadis en l'arbre de nos amours de qui les branches portoient les beaux bouquets de nos esperances...(p.278)

In the play "Marfilie" of the Rouen lawyer Jean Auvray (1600), republished as "L'Innocence Decouverte"(1628), Marfilie says

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Playe, non, ains un feu ^{qui} brusle incessamment,
Un feu, non, un vautour me livre ce tourment,
Un vautour, non, je faux, une rage amoureuse,
Rage, non, ains plustost une vie ennuyeuse,
Vie, non ains plustost une cruelle mort,
Mort, non, elle ne peut, son dard n'est assez fort
Pour faire tant de mal, ou bien c'est ce me semble
Playe, vautour, feu, rage et vie et mort ensemble."

In the same play, the Nurse says:

Madame, le flambeau de ce grand univers,
Trace l'oblique enceinte de ses globes divers
Pour la fois quarantieme, et Cérés la féconde
Par quatre fois dix ans panche sa tresse blonde,
Depuis qu'à l'oeil du ciel vos yeux ont emprunté
Les éclairs foudroyants de leur vive clarté,
Et qu'avez attiré de vos levres jumelles
Le nectar nourricier de mes jeunes mamelles."

Roland de Marcé in his tragedy "Achab" (printed 1601). Jesabel has
learned that Achab is dead and speaks about his eyes:

"....Je crains d'apercevoir
Ces deux logis d'amours clos de nuicts eternelles
Jadis douces prisons des belles demoiselles"

"Le Boscage d'amour, ou les rets d'une bergère sont inévitables" -
pastoral play by J. Estival (1698):

"Hélas! Aflin, serviras-tu toujours
De girouette aux orages d'amour?
Car elle (the shepherdess) est bien si facheuse à brescher
Lorsque le coup d'une amoureuse attaincte,
Luy est porte du canon de ma plainte!"

In Ménard's "Pastorale" (1613):

"Possible ce berger entre ses bras la presse,
Hume le doux nectar de son corail jumeau" (lips)

In Du Ryer's "Clitophon" the hero, finding Lucippe alive in a coffin,
exclaims: ".....Ha que je suis ravi,
de trouver au cerceuil une seconde vie"

Hardy's lovers follow the fashion:

"Adieu, ma chère vie, un pluvieux présage
Me fasche, ternissant le Ciel de ce visage" (Dorise)

In the "Sylvie" of Mairet:

"Je croy que ces rochers ne sont point assez sours
Pour n'avoir pas ouy nos folâtres discours
Que ce petit ruisseau tacitement en gronde,
Qu'il grave nos baisers sur le front de son onde;
Que ces feuilles enfin et ces fleurs que je vois
Sont pour nous découvrir autant d'yeux et de voix."

One more example: "La généreuse Allemande" of Mareschal (printed 1630).

182.

Camille is sleeping under a tree. Aristandre "devient jaloux de cet arbre":

"Est-ce pour la couvrir, ou bien pour la baiser?
Dort-elle pour luy plaire, ou bien pour reposer?....
Mais quoy? s'il en faut croire et mes sens et mes yeux,
Voy-je pas que Zephir la caresse en ces lieux?
Il se joue aux cheveux et se perd dans la robe;
Ce rayon tout tremblant la baise, et se dérobe;
C'est trop languir enfin, je vay les quereller."

NOTES
for
PRECIOUSITY IN CORNEILLE'S EARLY PLAYS

- (1) Geschichte der Fr. Lit. im 17th Jah^{hrh.}ek, I, p.223
- (2) Epoques du Théâtre Fr. p. 35
- (3) Hist. de la Lit. Fr. pp., 128-129
- (4) Corneille - p. 51
- (5) Marty-Lav. I, p. 137
- (6) Ibid I, p.379
- (7) Astrée, Part I, Book 10, p. 697: Sylvandre the platonist says:

"Quand le grand Dieu forma toutes nos âmes, il les touche chacune avec une pièce d'aimant, ^{et} ~~and~~ qu'après il mit toutes ces pièces dans un lieu à part; ^{et} ~~and~~ que de mesme celles des femmes, ^{après} les avoir touchées, il les serra en un autre magasin séparé: Depuis quand il envoie les âmes dans les corps, il meine celles des femmes, ou sont les pierres d'aimant qui fait prendre une a chacune... Il advient de la qu'aussi tost que l'âme est dans le corps and qu'elle rencontre celle qui a son aimant, il lui est impossible qu'elle ne l'aime, and d'icy procedent tous les effets de l'Amour." It is not my intention to claim that Corneille had exactly the verses of P. Troterel in mind when he ridiculed this common-place. He could have found it everywhere. But he had not to search for it outside of his native city as exemplified by Troterel's play, and by the editions of the Astrée at Rouen.

- (8) Oeuvres de Corneille, Edition of 1644, Préface.
- (9) Marty-Laveaux - Oeuvres de Corneille X, Lettres
- (10) Vigneul - Marville - Mélanges 1701
- (11) Marty-Laveaux, X
- (12) Cf. Joschim Du Bellay, her Regrets, CXLIX

"Nous sommes fols en ^{vers} ~~vies~~ et vous l'êtes en prose,
C'est le seul différent qu'est entre vous et nous."

- (13) Marty-Laveaux, X, 27
 (14) He cites Théophile in the "Au Lecteur" of the "Mélite"
 (15) Histoire comique de Francion- 1623, p. 144
 (16) p. 103, Le Poète.
 (17) p.241 - Amoureuse Poursuite ou la Chasteté victorieuse.

Mr. E. Roy says in his Charles Sorel, 309, note 3:

Ou plutôt sa valeur en cet état réduite,
 Me parlait par sa plaie et hâtaît ma poursuite
 Et pour se faire entendre au plus juste des rois,
 Par cette triste bouche, elle empruntait ma voix.

Comparer ces vers du Cid, qui paraissent trop hardis, trop métaphoriques aux contemporains (Corneille, edit. Maty-Laveaux, tome XII, p. 593) à la Dedicace de Bouclier d'honneur a Louis XIII, par François Bening, 1616. L'auteur appelle les vingt-deux blessures du brave Crillon "les oriflammes du courage; ce sont vingt-deux presidents en robe rouge, vingt-deux bouches pourprines, qui proclament bien haut sa vertu"

On the early preciosity in France see this book Chapter X.

Since the "Observations sur le Cid" of de Scudéry, the literary indebtedness of Corneille's Cid to Guillen de Castro's "Las Mocedades del Cid" has been minutely traced by an international host of critics. In accordance with their preferences for classical or for more romantic forms of art, or with their national sympathies they have entered wearisome pleas for the superiority of the Spanish or the French poet. In the estimation of many German and Spanish critics and of a few modern de Scudérys, Corneille is only an imitator, hardly more than the translator of "Las Mocedades del Cid" while to most French critics he remains a genius who did de Castro the honor of transforming his inflated and digressive play into a restrained and classical masterpiece.

In one respect, however, both schools of critics agree: that Corneille has markedly intensified the dramatic effect of the play by concentrating upon the moral problem of Chimène — upon the strife between desire for vengeance (the duty of vengeance, it is sometimes styled) — and her love for the man who has killed her father in a duel for honor's sake. It is common knowledge that the comparison of both texts confirms this view. Corneille has markedly diminished the number of incidents to allow of the development of the internal drama.

Mr. Merimée says in the Préface to his edition of the first part of "Las Mocedades del Cid": Le principal mérite de Corneille n'est certainement ni dans l'invention, ni même dans la perfection de chaque partie, mais dans ce fait qu'il a mis en une lumière plus vive encore que n'avait fait Castro ce qui fait le fond et l'intérêt éternel du drame: la lutte de la passion et du devoir, de l'amour et de l'honneur, chez Rodrigue et chez Chimène." (1)

Corneille's Cid is generally considered the first imitation in France of the "Mocedades del Cid" and, indirectly, of the Spanish Cid legends. In this connection it is of historical interest to call attention to a forgotten French novel, "La Hayne et l'Amour" de Arnoul et de Clairemonde" (1600) by a sieur du Périer, manifestly inspired by the Spanish Cid-literature. And - what is more important - in this novel is found already the same tendency toward psychological analysis, the same relentless struggle, in the heart of Clairemonde, between love, honor, and desire for revenge, the eternal wavering between those opposite impulses which conflict so painfully in the heart of Chimène in Corneille's Cid. The problem of love versus honor was thus already treated in French literature, thirty-six years before Corneille's celebrated play. The hero of the novel, Arnoul, is certainly not outdistanced by Don Roderigo in generosity, love of honor and nobility of character, and like him he is invincible in duels. Finally, certain scenes of the Hayne et Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde are strikingly duplicated in both the "Mocedades del Cid" of Guillen de Castro" (1618) and in Corneille's Cid (1637).

The novel of Du Périer is the earliest example known of the influence of the Cid-literature in France. The first edition bears the title LA HAYNE ET L'AMOUR D'ARNOUL ET DE CLAIREMONDE PAR P.B.S.D.P. 3 PARIS Du Breuil-1600. The second edition is dated: Paris A. du Breuil, 1609. The third edition - on which this chapter is based - has a different title: LA HAYNE ET L'AMOUR D'ARNOUL ET DE CLAYREMONDE. HISTOIRE PROVENCALE ARRIVÉE DE NOSTRE TEMPS. PAR LE SIEUR DU PÉRIER. A PARIS. CHEZ JEAN CORROZET AU HLAIS SUR LE PERRON DE LA SAYNCTE CHAPELLE. M.DC.XXVII.

The full name of the author is Antoine du Périer, sieur de la Salargue (2) Hewas a Gascon, a "gentilhomme bordelais" probably related to the family of the du Périers, to François du Périer

of Aix-en-Provence, gentilhomme de la Chambre du Roy, to whom Malherbe addressed his famous poem: "Ta douleur, du Périer, sera donc éternelle"; to his son, Scipion du Périer(.588-1607) occasional poet; to Charles du Périer, the latter's cousin(died 1692) called by his friend Ménage "le prince des poètes ^{sat} lyriques" and attacked by Boileau.

Besides the novel above mentioned he published: 1. Les Amours de Pistion et de Fortunie en leur voyage de Canada, par Ant. du Périer sieur de la Salargue. Gentilhomme Bordelois - ~~1603~~ Paris Th. de la Ruelle 1601. This book soon found its way to Rouen, Corneille's native city. Jacques du Hamel, avocat au Parlement(died 1610) transformed it into a tragedy with chorus: "Acoubar ou la Loyauté trahie" Rouen R. du Petit-Val. 1603 and 1611. ⁽³⁾ 2. -Les Amours de Lozie. Paris J. Gesselin 1599. We may attribute to du Périer the poems which appeared in the "Receuil" called Les Muses ralliées - 1603 and Le Temple d'Apollon 1611 - which Lachèvre ascribes hesitatingly to the sieur de Porchères-Laugier(4)

The fact that, from 1600 to 1627 the La Hayne et l'Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde reached a third edition proves that it had a certain popularity. The legendary incidents of the Cidcyclus were disguised under modern frocks. The pitiful adventures of the brave Arnoul and of the beautiful Clairemonde are "arrivées de nostre temps" says the author, and he claims that they did not happen so long ago as not to leave some remembrance with his compatriots. It would be naive to take his statement too literally. At the beginning of the XVIIth century, a number of novelists used this device to increase the interest in their ephemeral productions, without, for all that, renouncing their preference for tales twice-told.

Their "modern" stories contain — repeated and re-repeated under different disguises — the customary thrilling situations, sentimental discourse borrowed from the pastoral novels, or the traditional chivalry of the heroic romances. Even while pretending to

depict real life they borrowed color from the continual pageant of the pastoral plays, from the heroism of the chivalry romances or from the late Greek novels. In accordance with this fashion, du Perier told the story of the Provençal lovers of his day, but, at the same time, he introduced into it the incidents of the Cid tradition still lingering in his memory.

A few examples of this preference for contemporaneity may be cited here: Rezé called his "Deseespéré Contentement d'Amour" (1599) an "histoire véritable et advenue"; Du Souhait likewise called his "Amours de Poliphile et de Mellonimpe" (1599) and his "Les propriétés d'Amour" (1601) contemporary stories. The novel "L'Écocaligénésie ou la naissance d'un bel Amour" (1602) claimed to tell a true story as well as the anonymous work "Tragiques Amours du Fidèle Irion et de la belle Pasithée" (1601) Fauve said of "La vivante Filonie" (1605) that his narration is founded "sur une vérité que ses yeux et son ouye peuvent tesmoyner". Through all the period 1600-1635 there was a continual stream of novels, which, although full of improbabilities, traditional situations, and even of witchcraft and metamorphosis, claimed to be "véritables" and "de nostre temps" and were only in a measure mirrors of their time.

"La Hayne et l'Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde" unquestionably belongs to this category. While it may have been based partially upon certain actual incidents, it unhesitatingly reproduced the conventional "scenes à faire" of the literature of the period and was deeply influenced by time-honored themes.

The Hayne et Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde opens with the description of the hatred which made the two fathers, the sieurs du Rosier and de Précourt mortal enemies. The sieur du Rosier has a son "lequel ne promettoit pas de vouloir un jour rien devoir à la vertu de son pere." A disastrous duel results in the death of the sieur

du Précourt, slain by du Rosier, who himself dies later from his wounds. The wife of du Précourt dies of grief and her daughter, Clairemonde, vows to revenge her father upon Arnoul du Rosier "qu'elle tenoit l'un des homicides de son père, destinant sa vie à ceste seule action pour mourir plus contente après."

She proclaims that her hand is promised to any knight who will kill Arnoul - a situation which is reproduced in Corneille's Cid where Chimène says:

A tous vos chevaliers, je demande sa tête;
Cui, qu'un d'eux me l'apporte, et je suis sa conquête;
Qu'ils le combattent, sire, et le combat fini
J'épouse le vainqueur, si Rodrigue est puni."

Three of her suitors fight Arnoul but are vanquished and, at last, Clairemonde resolves to take revenge herself. She and her servant Allonne, disguised as men, present themselves at Arnoul's castle as lute-players, under the assumed names of Herman(Clairemonde) and Fourbin(Allonne). They are well received and almost instantly Clairemonde(Herman) falls in love with Arnoul.

Now begins in her heart the struggle between love and hatred and what was considered the duty of revenge. Arnoul applies the same code of honor which we find in the "Mocedades" and in the "Cid":

Chimene: Ah! Rodrigue, il est vrai, quoique ton ennemie
Je ne puis te blamer d'avoir fui l'infamie.....
Je fais ce que l'honneur après un tel outrage,
Demandait à l'ardeur d'un genereux courage;
Tu n'as fait le devoir que d'un homme de bien;
(Acte III, scene IV)

So Arnoul says to excuse Clairemonde, whose presence in disguise is unknown to him: "Ce sont de fortes obligations pour émouvoir une âme courageuse à la vengeance et excuser l'opiniastreté à quoy elle se porte pour en avoir raison. A la vérité je ne puis que l'en estimer, et priser sa générosité, et vous proteste que si ce n'estoit la crainte qu'on ne fist jugement, que l'apprehension du combat de deux qui doivent venir de sa part, me fissent prendre ceste resolution, je m'en irois presenter à elle pour appaiser,

si je pouvois, sa rigueur, ou recevoir le traitement dont elle jugeroit mon offence digne.(P.6)

The duel is excused if undertaken in an honorable way and for honor's sake "Quelle offence a elle(Clairemonde) receu de vous? La mort de son père, et de tous ceux qui sont treshuchez devant vous, est-elle arrivée par supercherie, ou autrement qu'il n'est approuvé et estimé entre Cavaliers qui font profession de l'honneur? (P. 60) Both Clairemonde and Chimène evoke in themselves the continual remembrance of their father's death to incite themselves to vengeance: x

"Quoi mon père étant mort, et presque entre mes bras,
"Son sang criera vengeance, et je ne l'orraï pas!
"Mon coeur, honteusement surpris par d'autres charmes,
"Croira ne lui devoir que d'impuissantes larmes!
"Et je pourrai souffrir qu'un amour suborneur
"Sous un lâche silence étouffe mon honneur!
(Act III, scene III)

Clairemonde:"Et quoy, disoit-il (Herman-Clairemonde) quelquefois en soy mesme, suis-je party pou venir faire estime des vertus et mérites d'Arnoul, et non pour venger la mort de ceux qui me touchent de si pres? De quoi ay-je receu la vie? Pour qui suis je tenu le l'employer, sinon pour ceux de qui je la tiens?.....Non, non, Clairemonde, souviens toy que tu es fille du sieur de Précourt, la valeur duquel ne t'a point appris qu'une exécution de telle importance, pour la satisfaction du sang des tiens, et de ton honneur se doive différer par de belles paroles, ny par les beaux yeux de celui qui t'a tant faict recevoir d'injures. Il faut, il faut que ceste main face sentir que si elle est douce pour les plaisirs, elle est rude pour la vengeance(66)

The continual wavering between love, desire for vengeance and honor, the tragical problem of the high-born soul of Chimene, is found depicted in the painful opposition of contrary feelings struggling in Clairemonde: "Quelle contrariété, disoit elle, sens-

je maintenant en moy? Quel estrange combat, il semble que le destin veuille rendre cet homme invincible en toutes choses, et que rien ne le puisse surmonter....Que scay je si ma passion qui a recherché ceste vengeance trop opiniastrement a point irrité le ciel, pour me rendre un jour moy-mesme punie de ma faute, par les mains propres de celuy de qui je cherche la ruine?" (p. 67)...."Ainsi nostre Clairemonde discouroit diversement, ne scachant quel party prendre: c'est comme un vaisseau agité d'une forte tourmente entre deux esceulls et ne pouvant esviter l'un sans hurter l'autre, ne scait duquel il peut avoir meilleur marché"(p. 68)

The moral struggle of Clairemonde is narrated at greater length in various passages which depict her as a character resembling a first sketch of Corneille's Chimène. No doubt, she lacks the glowing intensity of the Cid-character, but the same psychological problem is expounded here with clear insight and, sometimes, the style acquires a sort of Cornelian antithetical concision. Sharp contrasts of feeling are sometimes expressed in one sentence by means of a single image, as, for instance; "Il faut, il faut que ceste main face sentir que si elle est douce pour les plaisirs, elle est rude pour la vengeance."(p. 66) In other passages the expression is colored with preciousness: "Quel avantage luy sera-ce de recevoir la vie du lieu dont il n'attendoit que la mort? Quel contentement de voir par la mort d'une haine extrême naistre un extrême amour? (p. 90)

Like Chimène who said: "Ma mort suivra la sienne et je le veux punir", Clairemonde expresses her desire to perish after the death of Arnoul, whom she hates and loves with equal force: "C'est une pauvre victoire que de surmonter un petit ennemy, aussi le triomphe n'en sera pas grand ny de longue durée: Car si mes yeux n'ont assez de force pour refuser la subjection ou je suis tombée contre mon gré, mes mains en auront assez pour m'en delivrer quand

je voudray; tu ne peux bien empêcher de vivre heureusement, mais tu ne me saurois garder de mourir Généreusement." (p. 110) "quel remède se peut trouver plus propre à l'abry de ceste tourmente? Que tarde-je? Manqueray-je de courage à ce besoyn? Non, non, Arnoul, vos merites ont bien le pouvoir de me lier les mains pour m'empescher d'entreprendre sur vous, mais elles sont libres pour punir ma légèreté." (p. 85)

Another passage illustrates Clairmonde's anxiety and shows still more the close relationship between her and Cornéille's heroine: "Il (Clairmonde-Herman) fait protestation de ne se plus laisser emporter à ces charmes; mais en vain, ils sont trop puissans pour recevoir ceste defense; c'est comme un esclave qui voit bien que la liberté luy est meilleure que la servitude, ayant quelque-fois permission de sortir, mais c'est tousjours avec les marques de sa prison, qui l'empeschent de se pouvoir sauver. Agite donc de mille inquietudes qui le rendoient tout pensif, Il ayroit la solitude, & souvent se devoit pour s'en aller au parc du chasteau avec Grand pour se promener, mais trop petit pour contenir toutes ses reserves, & faisoient ces plaintes à soy mesme, disoit: Je croy que dès ma naissance j'ay esté destiné pour servir de butte à la douleur, & aux afflictions; Les tristes & funestes accidens dont ma maison a esté battue.....m'ayans jusques icy fait sentir que la douleur & la tristesse luy ont esté donnez par partage; leur violence & le desespoir m'avoient monstre le chemin pour en sortir sous le passe-port de la vengeance, & après de la mort; mais ma résolution se trouve à ceste heure retenue & empeschée par ce nouvel accident qui m'arreste & veut augmenter mon mal par une nouvelle peine. Comment Arnoul, vous ne vous contentez pas de m'avoir si cruellement offensée par la mort des miens, si vous n'adjoustez encore à vostre triomphe ma servitude, dont vous voulez faire un nouveau trophée: Vous tenez

en vos mains celle qui a si opiniatremment poursuivy vostre mort, que la vengeance qu'elle cherchoit vous livre, pour en prendre la vengeance. Ne me faites point d'avantage languir dans les flammes de vostre amour, faictes moy plustot sentir la rigueur de vostre haine, & le juste chastiment de ma temerité car vostre trop grande douceur m'est une trop grande cruauté."(p. 138)

Clairemonde's lamentations have the same plaintive sound and indulge in the same metaphorical and urbane antithesis of conflicting sentiment as the complaints of Corneille's characters: "Y eust-il jamais, disoit-elle, une affliction approchant de la mienne. La fortune a elle jamais monstré sa fureur, et sa rage comme elle monstre contre moy? Je me suis trouvé enveloppée de la Haine, puis de l'Amour et à ceste heure tous les deux conspirent contre mon desir, et s'arment pour ma ruyne. Malheur estrange, que je ne puis desadvouer celuy qui s'aide de mon nom, et luy faire congnoistre que la volonté qu'il a de me guérir est celle qui me tue." (p. 139-140)

In some cases Du Périer stumbles into mere conceits and foregoes his analysis of feeling for mere superficial toying with glittering phrases:(p. 113)".....Voilà une bonne tromperie Arnoul, de recevoir tant de plaisir du lieu d'ou vous n'attendez que de la douleur. Ce ne sont point icy des fruicts ordinaires de l'amour, dont souvent une petite douleur couvre une grande amertume: ce ne sont point icy des esperances incertaines, ce sont des effects trop assurez, ce ne sont point des promesses à venir, ce sont des dons présens: Mais quels dons! Du plaisir pour la douleur; de l'amour pour la haine, de la vie pour la mort. A qui confesserez vous avoir cette grande obligation, Arnoul, d'estre tiré d'un si profond abisme de malheur pour vous porter sur le comble d'une si haute félicité? Si vous dictes que c'est à vous mesme, & que vos perfections ont mérité ce prix, vous serez accusé de presumption; si vous l'attribuez

à la fortune vous faictes tort a vostre mérite: Il faut confesser que c'est a vostre ennemie à qui vous devez la reconnaissance de ceste Grace; son bel esprit vous a faict digne de la recevoir, & vostre vertu connue, & chérie de la sienne luy a tiré des mains le cousteau vangeur de la mort de son pere, & de ses parens; vos Graces ont obtenu vostre Grace ^{pour} tous ces homicides, & sont aujourd'hui les bourreaux qui tyrannisent son cœur lié des chaînes de vostre amour. (p. 114-115)

The Don Rodrigue of Corneille is contrasted with the Cid of Guillen de Castro in that he possesses a more courtly urbanity, a more polished Gallantry, a reflection of the "Perfect Courtier" which made his lofty heroism fit into the atmosphere of the mannered times of Louis XIII. The character of Arnoul in the novel of Du Perier is endowed with the same Gallantry in virtue and in the execution of the duty of revenge. To Clairmonde his merits seem superhuman and her admiration forces her to love him, notwithstanding the blood that lies between them; "Mais que vous semble de son humeur diot Herman(Clairmonde). ne recongnaissez vous point parmy tant de belles qualitez, dont le ciel a esté liberal envers luy, qu'il luy a donné eeste Grace particulière, d'esteindre la haine, & de commander les volontez à l'aymer? Quant à moy je ne puis plus nier que la mienne n'ait esté violente à recevoir un changement si extrême. Combien j'aye faict toute la resistance que la douleur de la perte des miens, & la réputation que j'evols prise de m'en venger, m'ont voulu conseiller, le destin, & ses mérites se (sont) opposés à l'exécution. (p. 80)

"Ha! Clairmonde, vostre courage devoit tout renverser, & il se laisse vaincre à la première veue de vostre ennemy: Comment! Avez vous si tost peu chasser la haine pour recevoir l'amour? Certes je recongnois qu'Arnoul a tant de belles parties & tant de Grace en ses

actions, que ce sont bien de fortes chaines pour lier, & assujettir les coeurs de ceux qui le frequentent: Mais de penser qu'en si peu de temps il eust peu faire de si grande efforts en vostre poitrine que d'en deraciner une haine si envenimée, pour y mettre des fondemens d'amour si puissans, je ne l'eusse jamais creu, ne me pouvant persuader qu'il n'y ait quelque plus grand mystere que ce qui se peut humainement considerer: car à bien prendre garde à ce qui s'est passé jusques icy tant à l'avantage d'Arnoul, il semble que le destin l'ait fait invulnérable contre la main des hommes. (p. 75)

"Si Herman avoit estimé Arnoul, il l'admireroit alors, si il l'aimoit, il l'adoreroit, ne le tenant plus pour une créature simplement mais ayant opinion que le ciel l'avoit fait naistre avec des qualitez plus excellentes que les hommes, le reconnoissoit pour un oeuvre surpassant la nature, participant de la divinité, et mis sous sa protection sur la terre pour estre craint et reveré de tout le monde, avec ceste grace particuliere que tout ce qui estoit projetté pour sa ruine, ne servoit qu'a l'augmentation de son bien, de la gloire et de sa réputation, qui luy avoit rendu tributaires tous ses ennemis, dont les plus malheureux avoient plustost esprouvé la force de ses bras que celle de sa douceur; de laquelle les autres avoient esté vaincus, despouillez de toute souvenance de haine pour reprendre les marques de l'amitié et du respect." (p. 159)

The situations in the novel are similar to those in *Commeille's Cid* and in the *Mocedades*, although additional embellishments lead us far away from both these plays; such are, for instance, the disguise of Clairemonde and of her "confidente" in men's clothing and the love which the disguised Clairemonde inspires in Arnoul's niece, Berenice. These disguises and the consequent ridiculous loves with which Du Périer adorned his story are mere commonplaces in the Spanish Comedia and in the novels of the time.

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The consolations of Clairemonde's "confidente", Allonne, are parallel with those of Elvire to Chimène (Act III, Sc. III) They also show a preciousness in the analysis of feeling which has heretofore been ascribed only to works of a later date than 1600. We remember that in Corneille's *Cid*, Chimène reveals to her confidente Elvire, her intention to die after the punishment of Don Rodrigue (Act. III Sc. III)

Elvire: "Quittez, quittez, Madame, un dessein si tragique
In the same way Herman (Clairemonde) tells to her servant that only death will end her sorrow "...que toutes les considérations qu'il se pouvoit représenter luy enseignoient que le meilleur chemin pour se délivrer de toutes peines estoit la mort.

"Les conseils violens & desesperes, respond Fourbin, ne se doivent jamais recevoir par personne de bon jugement; ce n'est pas la raison Herman, comme vous dites, qui vous enseigne à prendre ce remède pour sortir de vostre mal, c'est la passion & la fureur qui vous y veulent précipiter. Si les vertus & les belles qualitez d'Arnoul vous ont fait oublier la vengeance, & vous contraignent à l'aimer, vous faictes cognoistre QUE VOSTRE VERTU SCAIT ESTIMER LA
^{IE}
SAINNE, en quoy vous estes d'autant plus excusable qu'il est difficile que le vice puisse chérir la vertu."

"La crainte du blasme de légèreté ne vous doit mettre en peine: car ce n'est point d'aujourd'huy qu'une grande haine a donne entrée à un grand amour; le sujet qui vous meut vous excuse, dont les mérites sont si recommandables, qu'il n'y a que les ames stupides ou du tout sordides qui ne les chérissent, & estiment; la vostre est trop belle pour les voir sans les cognoistre; ce n'est pas légèreté d'aymer ce qui en est digne, encore qu'on l'ait hay; mais c'est presumption & sottise de n'en tenir compte, & ne le point estimer, estant beaucoup plus séant de quitter la haine pour l'amour que l'amour pour la haine.

(p. 86-88)

The crisis of love versus hatred in the soul of Chimène is

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brought to its height and drawn to its solution by the projected duel of Don Rodrigue and Don Sanche. In the novel a similar crisis with similar consequences is brought about in Clairemonde when Arnoul is challenged by one of her suitors, so that she fears for his life. The duel, however, ends with the disarming of Arnoul's opponent.

The most striking similitude is the celebrated scene, found in both the "Mocedades" and in Corneille's Cid, wherein Don Rodrigue offers Chimène his dagger or his sword and implores her to kill him. In the novel, as Corneille's Cid, the scene occurs twice, but only once in the Mocedades. It is first fore-shadowed in a dream which Clairemonde has during a swoon: "(Clairemonde awakens from her swoon) Comment donc, dit Fourbin, ou pensiez vous estre? Il me sembloit, respond Herman(Clairemonde) qu'Arnoul avoit esté adverti de nostre entreprise, & que m'en ayant parlé, je ne luy avois peu nier la verité, laquelle ayant sceu, au lieu d'user de la rigueur, a quoy un juste courroux le pouvoit porter, il me presentoit luy mesme son espée, & son estomac pour recevoir la mort, à quoy mon désir l'avoit condamné; & moy indigne de sa grande honte, & me ^{RE}accoignoissant indigne de toute grace, le suppliois de chastier ma volonté coupable & de mettre fin à mon tourment par la fin de ma vie." (p. 78)

In the "Mocedades del Cid" Don Rodrigo offers Ximena his dagger to kill him, while in Corneille's play—as well as in the novel—this weapon is replaced by a sword. The dramatic effect is intensified by this change, for now Corneille's Chimène can exclaim at the sight of the sword: "Quoy? Du sang de mon père encore toute tré^epée!"

In the plays and in the novel Chimène refuses her lover's demand and a similarity of expression is found which leaves no doubt as to the common source of the scene:

Las Mocedades: Justo fuera sin ayte
que la muerte hiziera darte;
mas soy parte
para solo perseguirte,
pero ne para matarte. (verses 1177-1181)

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Corneille's Cid: Va, je suis ta part^{ie}, et non pas ton bourreau.

Du Perier: "Il n'est pas raisonnable, Arnoul, que vous fassiez office de Juge et de partie, que vous accusiez et condamnerez tout ensemble, etc."

Here follows for comparison, the scene from "La Hayne et l'Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde." Elle voit qu'Arnoul se lève d'aupres d'elle et tirant son espée, la baise, et la luy présente, usant de ces termes: Je scay bien Clairemonde, que je n'ay point d'excuse, qui ose parler en ma faveur pour obtenir pardon des offenses que je vous ay faictes; Je reçoignoys qu'elles sont grandes pour esperer aucune grace de vous, de quoy je me sens indigne et puisque le Ciel m'a livré en vos mains pour recevoir par vos mains propres la punition que j'ay meritée, laquelle je ne pouvois accepter d'autre que de vous, il est raisonnable que vous jouyssiez du droict qui vous est acquis sur ma vie, que ^{je} te présente icy à vos pieds plus content ^{de} la sacrifier à la vengeance, que vous de la recevoir.

Ceux qui reconnoissent leur faute, respond Clairemonde, meritent pardon, et l'offre que vous faictes d'en souffrir la punition me contraint à vous refuser votre demande que vous avez par ce moyen rendue injuste, vous liez les mains à ma vengeance, autresfois affamée de vostre sang, autant qu'elle en est maintenant degoutée. Ce m'est assez Arnoul, de recevoir vostre repentir pour vostre chastiment ne voulant autre chose de vous sinon de vous voir prendre du déplaisir de m'avoir offensée.

Arnoul: "Ce n'a jamais este mon intention d'offencer personne de vostre qualité et mérite, ny de violer les loix du respect que j'ay toujours gardée fort religieusement; mais si le malheur de la haine de nos maisons, et ma conservation particulière, m'ont contraint de faire chose qui vous ait pu desplaire, ma volonte n'y a jamais consenty et neanmoins je ne veux pas tant favoriser mon innocence que je ne confesse ma vie estre coupable. C'est elle seule qui ^à failly

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ayant cherché son salut dans la ruine de ceux qui poursuivoient sa ruine : ma volonté l'accuse devant vous, et la condamne pour être envoyée au supplice, qui ne peut être moindre que d'un exil perpétuel.

Clairemonde: -Il n'est pas raisonnable, Arnoul, que vous fassiez office de Juge et de partie, que vous accusiez et condamnerez tout ensemble; les jugemens sont iniques et nuls, qui sont donnés par ceux qui y ont intérêt, mêmes quand ils adjugent plus qu'on ne demande; Vous m'adjugez votre mort, et je ne vous la demande pas. Je suis votre partie civile, c'est à moi à qui vous devez satisfaire, et non à vous mêmes; je ne vous veux pas peut être quitter à si bon marché que la perte de votre vie, qui est le remède et la fin de tous les maux; ainsi si vous desirez me contenter et réparer le tort que vous confessez m'avoir fait, il faut que vous suiviez ma volonté et non votre désir.

Arnoul: J'ay souhaité recevoir la mort de vos mains pour le contentement que j'ay ^{et} creu que vous prendriez d'obtenir vous même ce que le Ciel a refusé à tant d'autres qui le poursuivoient sous votre nom, et par votre commandement; Mais n'estant guidé que du seul désir de vous complaire, je seray aussi prest de vivre quand vous me le commanderez que je le suis de mourir si vous l'avez agréable; et n'ayant point d'autre but en mes actions que l'observation de votre volonté qui est la loi inviolable sous laquelle je veux vivre et mourir, toutes mes pensées ne regarderont plus qu'à suivre ce chemin duquel elles ne se peuvent jamais esgarer. (p. 192)

In both the novel (1600) and Corneille's Cid (1637) this scene contains more specious argumentation about Chimène's right or Clairemonde's right to kill Rodrigue or Arnoul and more considerations about honor and love than the corresponding one in the "Mocedades del Cid" (1618) Corneille's direct source. The tendency of both

French adaptations lies thus in the direction of the reasoning about and commenting on the motives of action, in the direction of subtle and analytical debate about the relation to the acts of the characters of certain intellectual values: Honor, love based on merit, duty of vengeance; while in the Spanish text the voice of passion sounds loudest. Without risky generalisation it is justifiable to see in this tendency to the argumentative and the intellectual the special addition which the French interpretators made to the sources. It has not been sufficiently noted ^{ie} that the analytical and even casuistical subtlety which Corneille displays in the characterisation of his heroes had been voiced in many novels of the early part of the 17th century, in the endless discussions about love in the pastoral novels, in the half-pastoral, half-chivalry romances which flourished at the time and, especially, in some sentimental novels with psychological tendencies as for instance in "La Floride of Du Verdier(1625) or Marechal's Chrysolite.(1627)

It is this preoccupation with intellectual values, this belief that love must be based on merit and controlled by honor and reason, that we find in the words with which Clairemonde finally concludes the arduous courtship: "Si j'ay autresfois désiré et poursuivy vostre ruine, les effects que vous me faisiez sentir de vostre haine m'y pousoient, vostre repentir a depuis desarmé ma vengeance et à ceste heure vostre amour, s'il se contient dans les lois de l'honneur et de la raison ^{sera} tousjours reconnu selon les effects que vous en feray paroistre, ne voulant rien retenir de ce qui sera deu à vos mérites." (p, 210)

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The invention of the scene wherein Don Rodrigue presents to Ximena his dagger and asks her to kill him, has been attributed to Guillen de Castro. Unless we suppose that an unknown edition of his

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play existed before 1600 ~~the~~ the novel of Du Pérrier proves that it was worked out before him with similar incidents and phrases.

Since it seems well established that *La Mocedades del Cid* was not written before 1613-14⁽⁵⁾ we are placed before these two alternatives:

1. - Guillen de Castro has found his inspiration in the French novel of Du Pérrier which antedates his work by fourteen years. He reproduced the scene which in its turn inspired Corneille, or:

2. - There exists a common source — probably a Spanish source — for both the *Haine et l'Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde* and *Las Mocedades del Cid*.

The weight of probability inclines in favour of the second alternative. It is improbable that Guillen de Castro knew French and that he would have read a comparatively unknown French novel. But, Du Pérrier, a Gascon, no doubt read Spanish and could have found inspiration for his novel — which is so clearly an adaptation of the Spanish *Cid* legends — in various Spanish sources before 1600. He calls it a Provençal story and this title points to the Pyrenées whence came those legends which he manifestly embodied in his "histoire contemporaine".

I am, however, not here occupied with the probable source of the novel "*La Haine et l'Amour d'Arnoul et de Clairemonde*" and of the dagger-scene in Guillen de Castro's play. In a later study I will endeavour to throw light on this subject. For the present purpose it is sufficient to point out that Du Pérrier's romance is the earliest example known of the influence of the *Cid* literature in France and that the psychology of its heroine Clairemonde, her struggle between love and the impulse toward revenge as well as her fondness for "précieux" introspection are worked out more at length in the novel than in the *Mocedades* and the *Romancero*, a ~~novel~~ ^{novel} ~~by~~ ^{by} Corneille's

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direct sources.

Had Corneille read this novel when he wrote his "Cid"? Easily it could have found its way to Rouen. It has been pointed out in this chapter that ~~this~~ ^{du Perier's} earlier book: "Les Amours de Pistion et de Fortunie" was transformed into a play by J. du Hamel, a Rouen lawyer. Du Perier's works were thus not unknown in Corneille's native city. It can hardly be doubted, on the other hand, that Corneille was well acquainted with the literature of his times. Quite early in his career he cites various celebrities of the day, and it is more than probable that he read the works of those of his fellow-poets who sang his praise in *La Veuve*, besides a number of the books printed at Rouen. And, as pointed out in a preceding chapter, in the Palais de Justice, of that city, where Corneille as a young lawyer made frequent visits, were the stalls of the booksellers and printers where all publications — of Paris, Lyon, Rouen, or any other printing center, — were exposed for sale. One of the three editions of *La Hayne et l'Amour de l'Arnoul et de Clairemonde* may thus easily have fallen into his hands.

The outstanding fact that we find in the novel and in Corneille's *Cid* tragi-comedy a more minute and "precieux" analysis of the problem of love versus hatred than in *Las Mocedades* or in the *Romancer*, as well as the other corroborating similitudes collated above, justify the belief that Corneille took color for his *Cid* from Du Perier's forgotten novel. As far as such problems of influences allow of definite affirmation it is plausible to state that it helped him in transposing the real interest of the drama from the breathless and complicated action of his Spanish model to the woeful internal strife and conflict in *Chimene* and in *Rodrigue*, in which consists the highest value of his epoch-making play.

But, even as simply a counterpart of Corneille's *Cid*, dependent on the same ultimate sources, the novel of Du Perier

remains highly interesting, not only as the earliest example of the Cid-literature in France, but also because it shows that the two French adaptations have similar tendencies towards analysis of character and toward intellectualisation of passion.

For

AN UNKNOWN SOURCE OF THE CID.

(1) E. Merimée--Première partie des Mucedades del Cid.

Intr. CXIII.

(2) Garnier acclaims Antoine Du Perier as the discoverer
of Canada:

"Quel renom, Du Perier, quelle gloire ennoblie,
Te doivent les destins, quelle éternelle vie,
Distillant à longs traits dans les plus beaux esprits,

Le nectar enfante des voyages de pris,
Que tous pleins de labeurs et de peines diverses
Ta personne accomplit par de longues traverses,
Soit au sein d'Amphitrite, au soit dans les désers.
De Sauvages crineus et de bestes couvers?"

And "Fredericus Morel, interpretes regius" says:

"Famam Du Perier dedit Canadoe,
A mortalibus insuloe remotoe,"

On Du Perier's fame and novel "Les Amours de Pistion",

see G. Chinard--L'Amérique et le Rêve exotique dans la
Littérature Française, p. 60.

M. G. Chinard says: "On peut se demander quelle est
cette expedition au Canada dont aurait fait partie Du Périer.
M. Reynier constate tres justement que "Les Amours de Pistion"
sont anterieurs aux "Sauvages" de Champlain qui ne paraissent
qu'en 1603; ils sont meme anterieurs au voyage de Champlain;
il me semble probable que Du Perier a fait partie de l'expédition
du marquis de la Roche----qui, étant de 1598, est le seul voyage
important que nous trouvions entre les voyages de Jagues Cartier
et ceux de Champlain." (Op. cit. 62. n. 1)

(3) About the date of "Les Amours de Pistion" and of
"Acoubar ou la Loyauté trahie", M. G. Chinard, (Op. cit. 61, note1)
gives the following footnote: "Les Amours de Pistion, par

Ant. du Périer, sieur de Sarlagues, gentilhomme Bourdelois, à Paris, chez Thomas de la Ruelle, M D C I. Le privilege est du 20 octobre 1601. Il semble donc que ce soit la premiere edition. Or, toutes les bibliothèques et histoires du théâtre du XVIIe siecle donnent comme date de la premiere representation d'"Acoubar ou La Loyauté trahie", tragedie tirée des Amours de Pistion et Fortunie, en leur Voyage de Canada, l'annee 1586. Cette date a été acceptée par M. Faguet, La Tragedie française au XVIe siecle, Paris, 1883, et par M. Rigal, Littérature de Petit de Julleville, III, 315. Seuls M. Lanson, "Manuel de Bibliographie, et M. G. Reynier donnent comme date de premiere publication pour Acoubar l'année 1603; (G. Reymier, le Roman sentimental avant l'Astrée, Paris 1908, p. 183). L'exemplaire de la Bibliothèque Nationale que j'ai consulté est de 1611; c'est le seul que je connaisse".

(4) F. Lachèvre--Bibliographie des Recueils Collectifs; I, 310.

(5) Hämel--Der Cid im Spanischen Drama p.7. The first known edition (1618) was disavowed by de Castro in the Preface of the 1621 edition of his early plays. It has been asserted that an earlier edition than 1618 exists. Guillen de Castro wrote verse long before this date. On the 17th of March 1592 he read verse in a literary Academy at Valencia, called the "Nocturnos", He remained an active member of this poetical society for three years and presented 25 poems at the meetings.

With the present chapter it is not expected to arrive at a final conclusion, but rather to point out a neglected element in Corneille's *Cid* which, it is hoped, will stimulate further research in this direction. It is an attempt to throw light on the connection between the *Cid* and the contemporary life, and, as such, it is in accordance with the trend of the latest Corneille-studies. Modern critics are not inclined to accept the century old dogma of Corneille's aloofness from life. His early plays have been praised for their portrayal of the 17th century "élégants" and this praise, if not merited altogether for the *Mélite* the *Clitandre* and the *Illusion comique*, is, no doubt, more deserved for *La Veuve*, *La Galerie du Palais*, and *La Place Royale*. In fact, Corneille's work is not static. His methods and outlook evolve continually. While his two first plays and the *Illusion comique* are almost entirely of literary inspiration, with the *Veuve* and the works of the same nature, he evolves to a sharper and more real observation of the life of the times. Although his plots remain, in each case, somewhat traditional and in accordance with the customary themes of the pastoral plays, his setting becomes increasingly realistic, and his portrayal of the actual life of the time more convincing and direct. Nowhere in his *Place Royale*, his *Veuve* or his *Galerie du Palais* does he introduce such conventional and improbable scenes as the madness scenes of the *Mélite*.

With his comedies he had taken delight especially in the picturesque aspects of contemporary society, in its way of living and loving in an actual setting; with his tragedies his interest in contemporary life grows deeper. He perceives beyond that moving and multi-colored life, the great political events

of the day. Under the frivolity of the brilliant society he perceives a serious moral problems. Various writers have called attention to certain unmistakable traces in his tragedies of the moral and political preoccupations of his epoch and of his personal life. Levallois in his "Corneille inconnu" pointed out that both "Sertorius" and "Pulcherie" were influenced by Corneille's love for Mlle Du Parc; and furthermore, that his tragedies contain a number of allusions to the political events of the time. Lanson goes farther and brings forward an ingenious theory(1)

For him, Corneille's plays are true mirrors of the France of Richelieu. The Cornelian hero is no abstraction, not the splendid dream of a passionate soul, but an historical reality. He was the true image of these courtly heroes, dashing and generous lovers as well as strong-willed dictators:— Richelieu, Condé, Montmorency, Turenne, or the unhappy Cinq-Mars. (2) M. Lanson's theory has been happily supplemented by a study of Professor Nitze(3) on the influence of the Cortegiano and the courtly ideal of the time upon Corneille's conception of character. Corneille's tragical hero was, no doubt, inspired by the aristocratic type of the seventeenth century; yet he is an idealization of this type. He is the seventeenth century aristocrat viewed through his own ideal; magnified according to his own conception of heroic life.

Refer to study in Nitze's "Pulcherie" pp. 3-4. See also Corneille's "Sertorius"

For the present purpose it is sufficient to insist that Corneille's work has been brought into closer contact with the life of his times.

And, in fact, the creation of every outstanding work of art is a complex process. Even when the subject-matter is historical, fabulous, or even mythological, the poet necessarily incarnates in his heroes his own thoughts and feelings, his own

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sorrow and joy. That is why the work of the genius is superior to that of a mediocre author, irrespective of whether the subject-matter is identical. The Faust of Goethe is superior to the traditional Faust play for this very reason. Corneille's historical personages reveal thus, in a measure, his own internal life as well as the life of the time. It is self-evident that he never copied directly any of the events^{or} of the types of his times; but he is inspired by them. He transposes them into the region of ideal conceptions. "Il ne faudrait pas croire," says Lanson, "que Corneille travaillait sur l'actualité comme un romancier ou un dramaturge d'aujourd'hui qui exploite le scandale récent ou le fait-divers sensationnel. Sa tragédie n'est jamais un reportage, c'est évident, mais la vie contemporaine l'enveloppe, l'assiège, le pénètre; elle dépose en lui mille impressions qui se retrouvent lorsqu'il aborde un sujet, qui, à son insu, dirigent son choix, et dans quelques lignes indifférentes d'un historien médiocre lui font découvrir une tragédie puissante. Elle lui fournit la représentation précise qui réalisé dans son esprit les vagues et abstraites données de l'histoire. Il pense le passé dans les formes et les conditions du présent." (4)

It is obvious that Corneille, in his heroic plays, did not copy reality as a modern realist, who holds that the very essence of his art consists in reproduction, scrupulously exact, of closely observed facts and individuals. With the Cid the purely realistic tendencies disappear almost entirely from his work and their place is taken by the heroic interpretation of character. Even as Mlle de Scudery idealized, in the "Grand Cyrus" the heroic figure of Condé, Corneille idealized and exalted his impression of the men and the life of his time, and transformed this humbler material into the lofty situations and the dauntless heroes of his plays.

One can perceive now, in a glimpse, the essential importance of studying Corneille's surroundings, the external influences, in order to arrive at a true and adequate conception of his works. His daily life is the soil producing and nourishing the rare flowers of his ideal concepts, the root of his art.

The question is proposed to elucidate in the present chapter is: "What facts of Corneille's experience brought him to the conception of the Cid?"

I. The Problem.

Every historian has noted the fact that, from the esthetic point of view, the Cid constituted a sudden break, an almost absolute change in Corneille's work. It was an unexpected blossoming of higher art after a period of estimable work, superior without doubt, to much of the contemporary production, yet far inferior to the Cid. The earlier plays of Corneille, however interesting in parts, did not promise the superior performance of the Cid. Yet here and there one catches a glimpse of the coming change in Corneille's characterization: Angélique of la Place Royal already presents a first outline of Chimène; the ridiculous captain of the Illusion Comique has been regarded as a boisterous caricature of the heroic Don Rodrigue; the strange Alidor of the Place Royale and Medée both stress their overgrown will-power and exalt their Ego. But all of these characters lack the intensity of feeling and the relief of Corneille's later heroes. Before the Cid, many characters of the stage and of the novel had shown the same general resemblances with the Cornelian hero, for these general resemblances were part and parcel of the spirit and the atmosphere of the time. They only show that slowly Corneille was evolving to another and a more aristocratic conception of character; they do not explain how

the Cid came to be a higher work of art. This production of his thirtieth year reveals a finer ripeness of expression, a deeper insight into human nature, and a more constant glow of beauty than any of his preceding plays. And the development of these qualities is all the more striking in that it was written immediately after the Illusion Comique, which together with the Clitandre, is the most impersonal play Corneille ever produced.

Can its esthetical excellence and psychological depth be attributed to the vivifying influence of Guillen de Castro upon Corneille's art? But nearly all critics agree that Corneille has gone far beyond his model in a deeper comprehension of the dramatic struggle which torments the soul of Chimène and of Don Rodrigue. Whatever external incidents he may have borrowed from the play of his Spanish predecessor, whatever color he may have taken from its clash of violent action, he made the essential addition of the deeper insight into character and of the sharper analysis of feeling which stamp his play as a masterpiece. And this addition, all-important from the esthetical point of view, remains quite apart from de Castro's influence and fully his own.

Auguste Dorchain (5) has suggested a possible if somewhat romantic explanation: he thinks that Corneille's genius has been quickened about the time of the Cid by sorrow for a disappointed love. Catherine Hue, who rightly or erroneously has been identified with the Mélite of his first play, married around that period, and Mr. Dorchain supposes that the sharp disappointment of Corneille might have produced an intensity of feeling which made the creation possible not only of the Cid but also of the other masterpieces which followed it soon. This explanation, however, rests on too slender evidence to be as historically convincing. ~~It is~~ It is not at all proved that

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Catherine Hue can really be identified with Mélite, with Philis and with the woman about whom Corneille wrote in his Excuse à Ariste:

"Je me trouve toujours en état de l'aimer.....
Je me sens tout ému quand je l'entends nommer.....
(6)

This reduction of Corneille's love-adventures to a single one makes him, indeed, too much of a "Constant Celadon" after the style of the Astrée. There is no ground for believing that Corneille would have played the role of dismissed but ever constant lover for eight or nine years. In his early poems, he called himself "inconstant comme la lune" and stressed his light-hearted disdain of the charms of woman. Besides, why would pains of love, which, after so many years, were no new experience for Corneille, have increased his dramatic powers in the direction of the portrayal of heroic character? Woman as woman plays but a subordinate role in Corneille's tragedies, while very real studies of women are found in his early works, before the marriage of Catherine Hue. Nowhere in his tragedies, from the Cid to Polyeucte, is found an allusion to unfaithful love, while in his early productions love in all its forms is the main theme. It would be very strange that the very feeling of disappointment and jealousy which is supposed to have aroused his poetical powers to such an extraordinary degree should not have left a trace in his tragic masterpieces, while at the time when his love is supposed to have been successful, these feelings are described and analyzed with care and minuteness. Insufficient external, and lack of external evidence make the solution proposed by Dorchain very improbable.

The "Why?" of ^{Corneille's} ~~his~~ sudden rise to superior art with the Cid is to be found less in the realm of pure document than through psychological appreciation and understanding. And the

present state of our knowledge of Corneille's early years does not permit a consistent attempt at a Corneille psychology. As long as the external events which, no doubt, spurred on and guided his internal evolution, remain dim and mysterious, no satisfactory explanation can be advanced of the deepening of his art with the Cid and the following tragedies. It is by following ~~the~~^{is} line of thought that Jules Lemaître calls the Cid: "Inexplicable par sa soudaine, éblouissante, immense supériorité....un de ces phénomènes qui montrent le mieux qu'aux grandes révolutions littéraires, après qu'on a bien déterminé les préparations, les conditions, le moment, il y a encore une cause mystérieuse, imprévisible, irréductible, providentielle si vous voulez, et sans qui tout aurait avorté; Le génie d'un homme"(7)

II. If it seems as yet too early, in the present state of knowledge about Corneille, to answer the ultimate problems, the problems of the esthetic and spiritual evolution of Corneille, nevertheless light may be thrown upon the historical circumstances which surrounded the birth of the epoch-making tragedy, the Cid. Through an accumulation of external evidence and by seeking in the play allusions to contemporary historical events, part of its genesis may be revealed.

From the historical point of view the appearance of Corneille's Cid raises a number of problems which the work of the scholars of past century, has rather complicated than simplified. They can be reduced to seven principal points: 1.) The Cid celebrated a Spanish hero and a Spanish heroine at a time that France was at war with Spain. Was it the custom of submissive and success-seeking Corneille to court disfavor of the public or of the court by the choice of any subject by which he would run a risk of arousing hatred and misunderstanding? Why

did he choose just then to glorify the high conception of honor in a hero of a nation with which his country was at war?

2) Corneille's *Cid* had an enormous success at Paris. This of course, can partly be explained by the literary excellence of the play. But why were a Spanish hero and a Spanish heroine so loudly acclaimed at the Capital when patriotism had risen to a high pitch and when the enemy was still near enough to be a constant danger?

3) What has been the role of M. de Châlons, identified by M. de Beaurepaire as a secretary of Anne of Austria, in Corneille's choice of the *Cid* as a subject?

4) It is certainly remarkable that the ennoblement of Corneille's father followed almost immediately the first representation of the *Cid*, the more so because he had resigned several years before from his position as a minor government official. Why exactly at that moment this sudden remembrance of the humble services which he had rendered as *Maître des eaux et des forêts*?

5) The attitude of Richelieu toward the *Cid* is still a riddle. Pelisson's narration of the *Cid-quarrel*, accepted for a long time without challenge, affirms that the Cardinal was jealous of the literary success of the *Cid* and that, since he himself had literary ambitions, he inspired the *Cid-quarrel*. But it is certain that his attitude toward the *Cid* underwent changes. At first he was not inimical toward the play. Later however, he insisted with the Academicians that the *Cid* should be condemned. Why?

6) It has not been sufficiently noticed that de Scudery's "*Amour Tirannique*" highly protected and favored by the Cardinal in 1638 constitutes in certain parts an intentional contrast and counterpart of the *Cid*. It must be regarded as a document of the *Cid* quarrel.

7) With the Cid, Corneille decidedly renounced the portrayal of contemporary characters, an object which had been uppermost in his artistic endeavours until that date. All his early plays with the exception of the classical tragedy, Médée, are alien to the heroic characterisation which from then on he adopted. "Si c'était rencontre ou hasard dans le Cid, c'est de parti-pris maintenant qu'il va rompre avec l'imitation de la vie commune; et dans le dessein des caracteres, il ne se laissera plus désormais guider que par la recherche, de l'illustre et de l'extraordinaire."

Now these several problems can be solved by a single historical identification which fits equally well the Various aspects of the complex question; by the identification of an allusion to the queen of France, Anne of Austria in the Chimène of Corneille's play.

Nowhere in the existing documents is it expressly and openly stated that Corneille's Chimène is to be connected with the queen; but contemporary utterances clearly allude to that fact, and without it, the various historical data known about the Cid remain unconnected and unexplained.

The theory to be elucidated can be resuméd as follows:
 The queen of France, Anne of Austria was the daughter of Philippe ^(III) king of Spain (8) The anti-Spanish politics of Richelieu and the suspicion of Louis XIII had made her position at the Court a difficult one, before the Franco-Spanish war of 1635-1638. When that war was declared, she had to choose between her father, the king of Spain, and her husband, the king of France, in the same way as Chimène in Corneille's Cid has to choose between her father and her husband-elect. In Chimène filial love has to give way to her love and admiration for the young hero, Don Rodrigue. And Anne of Austria was supposed to have given up her love for her father and for Spain in favor of the heroic Louis

XIII and of France.

This analogy of the Cid and the moral problem of the queen would have been easily understood by the audience of the time, trained to discover allusions to actual events in literary works. Was it not at that time that the *Romans à clef* abounded and that the Grand Cyrus portrayed, under the pretext of a historical novel, the whole learned and précieux society of the epoch? Various allusions to contemporary events are known to exist in the plays written more or less under the inspiration of the cardinal de Richelieu. Any symbolical meaning in the Cid, would thus easily have been understood, and it is because of this allusion to a contemporary event and a well-known personage that the Cid was successful notwithstanding its presentation of a Spanish hero and a Spanish heroine at a time that French patriotism was exalted by the war with Spain.

Corneille always preoccupied with "pleasing the public" must have had a reason for choosing Spanish heroism as a subject at such a time. Probably through Alphonse-Rodrigue de Châlons secretary of the queen, and a relative of Corneille, the subject of the Cid-play was suggested to the poet. And, in fact, the Cid can be interpreted as an apology for the queen, who, like Chimène, preferred her husband and lover, covered with glory and honor, to her father. Chimène's character in the play is put in a favorable light, and the opponents of the Cid who sometimes claim to be "bons Français" and oppose everything Spanish, will call her "une fille dénaturée". On the other hand, the pro-Spanish Court-party formed the nucleus of the admiring public, and one unidentified courtier thought it necessary, in 1638 to write a cryptic "L'Innocence et le Véritable Amour de Chymène" which in its exalted tone seems rather a defense of the Queen, than of Corneille's Chimène. These circumstances must

have played an important role in the success of the Cid, fully merited, on the other hand, by its literary excellency.

Very soon after the first representation of the Cid, Corneille was ~~en-nobled~~, through his father's en-noblement. This honor was due, according to contemporary testimonials, to the queen's influence. It was, no doubt, a direct recompense of his defense of the moral attitude of the queen by his play..

Richelieu's behavior towards the Cid does not show any real animosity toward Corneille. To point only to three important facts in this connection, it must be remembered that he continued Corneille's pension; that he did not oppose the en-noblement of the poet's father, himself and his family; that the Cid was dedicated to his niece. Later, however, he insists with the Academy that the play should be condemned. It will be endeavored here to show that his early attitude toward the Cid was modified by certain political reasons, and especially by new difficulties between him and the queen. At first, when the fortunes of war were not favorable to France, he treated the queen discreetly; she might be a welcome pawn in the diplomatic game, whereupon ^{at that moment,} rather than upon comedies, his attention was concentrated. Once the triumph of France was assured, the old animosity reappeared and besides, about the time of his most decided change in attitude toward the Cid, Richelieu discovered that the queen had been keeping up a secret correspondence with her Spanish relatives.

The question can be raised: Was the position of the queen of such a nature that a veiled defense would have been needed or wanted? Anne of Austria was suspected of being in sympathy and in secret correspondence with the court of Spain. L. Battifol says about her situation from this point of view before the war of 1635-37: "We have her letters; they are small

notes without great importance; her father, who loved her much gave her news about himself, sent money to her; she wrote also to her brother, the future Philippe IV; to the duke de Lerme; to the duke of Olivares; she had special messengers. Uneasy about this correspondence, Louis XIII suspected his wife of being in connivance with his enemies. It happened that he said so. Anne protested. At the moment when the court of Spain became untrue to its engagements about the Valteline, Louis XIII said to the queen, "Write to the king your father and tell the Spanish ambassador that I am resolved to demand the execution of the treaty of Madrid, or that otherwise, I will make use of all my power"; and the queen, astonished, replied that since His Majesty had commanded her to write, she would write to the king of Spain and speak to the ambassador, but that she begged him to believe that she was not Spanish, that she was altogether French(9)

"Is it believed, she said to her confidants, that because I am born in Spain, I am Spanish? This is a mistake, I am French and I do not want to be anything else." To Luynes she repeated: "Nothing in the world is so conjoined as are my interests and those of the king."(10)

During the years 1620-35 the misunderstandings between Louis XIII and queen Anne multiplied. Mention must be made here especially of the "Conspiration des Dames" of 1626 directed against Richelieu and against the King's project of marrying Mlle de Montpensier to his brother Gaston d'Orléans. During the trial of the conspirators, the queen was more or less implicated in the accusations of plotting against the safety of the state and the life of Louis XIII. The Père G. Daniel says:(11)

"Il paroît qu'il y eut encore d'autres dépositions, qui furent tenues plus secretes; car on ajoute que Chalais, soit par la force de la vérité, soit par l'esperance d'arrêter les procé-

dures, en nommant parmi ses complices une reine, que l'on ne pouvoit s'empêcher de ménager, avoit déposé, qu'il s'étoit agi parmi les conjurés de faire déclarer le roi impuissant et incapable de régner; de lui ôter la couronne; de faire casser son mariage avec Anne d'Autriche, qui auroit ensuite épousé Monsieur (Gaston d'Orléans) et que cette princesse étroitement liée avec la duchesse de Chevreuse, et par elle avec la plupart des conjurés, ayant eu connoissance de ce projet y avoit donné les mains; mais cette déposition ne fut point rendue publique, et c'est ce que le cardinal de Richelieu paroît insinuer dans son testament politique, lorsque parlant de la conspiration de Chalais, il adresse ces paroles au roi. "Étant contraint de dire a mon grand regret, qu'une personne de la première considération s'y trouva insensiblement engagée avec plusieurs autres, qui fomentoient et suivoient des passions, je ne puis omettre de mérite que vous acquitez devant Dieu, et devant les hommes, en supprimant l'éclat qu'eût ^{eu} sa conduite imprudente, si vous n'eussiez sagement dissimulé ce que vous pouviez réprimer avec autant de sévérité que de raison." Comme on n'a jamais su le détail de l'accusation qui fut entendée contre elle, et que l'on n'est point en état de juger du poids et de la force des preuves il est impossible de dire au juste si elle fut reconnue coupable il est certain que Louis XIII conçut dès-lors une aversion pour elle qui dura jusqu'à sa mort, et que l'idée de cette accusation demeura si profondément gravée dans son esprit et dans son coeur qu'étant au lit de la mort. lorsque la reine lui fit dire par monsieur de Chavigny, qu'elle n'avoit jamais pensé a ce qu'on lui avoit imputé dans l'affaire de Chalais; il répondit: En l'état ou je suis, je me crois obligé de lui pardonner, mais je n'en suis, pas obligé de la croire.

Madame de Motteville raconte que le roi la fit venir au conseil, qu'il lui reprocha en face qu'elle avait conspiré contre sa vie, pour, avoir un autre mari; et que la reine, outrée de cette accusation, lui répondit avec fermeté, qu'elle auroit trop peu gagné au change, pour vouloir commettre un si grand crime pour un si petit intérêt. Elle conta elle-même cette particularité à madame de Motteville"

Now, in 1636 when the war with Spain had been under way for a year, the position of the queen at the court and with the people was not improved. On the contrary, as a Spanish princess, she was of course, more than ever attacked by the Richelieu party and defended by the pro-Spanish partisans and by all the malcontents, who desired rather the fall of Richelieu through an unsuccessful war than the triumph of the French arms and the strengthening of the Cardinal's tyranny. It may be safely asserted that the enemies of Richelieu loudly acclaimed the Cid. Even if they had not guessed the relation between the moral problem of Chimene and the moral problem of the queen — a supposition entirely devoid of probability to anyone knowing the preference of the times for allusion and allegory — still they would have acclaimed a Spanish play with Spanish heroes were it only to oppose by this manifestation the anti-Spanish politics of the Cardinal.

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A Passage of Ch. Sorel.

An argument against this theory of the Cid might be drawn from what the historians call the "argument of silence" And in this case, it would ~~be~~ sound! If such a relation between the moral problem of the queen and the moral problem of Chimène had been perceived at the time, why does there not exist a clear

and undubitable statement of that fact in the Mémoires of the time

But the argument of silence is not justified in this case because there does exist an important testimonial which refers to the queen's relations with her husband as the reason for the adversity of Richelieu for the Cid. In a cryptic passage in his Bibliothèque françoise, Sorel makes a direct allusion to the role of the queen and of Richelieu in the Cid-quarrel. After having told the well-known facts, he says "Mais il y a des mémoires de ce temps-là qui ne sont pas imprimés, lesquels trouvent une cause plus fine de l'aversion que le Cardinal concevoit pour le Cid, et de l'inclination qu'il témoignoit pour l'Amour tyrannique. C'est que dans le premier il y avoit quelques paroles qui choquoient les grands Ministres, et dans l'autre il y en avoit qui exaltoient le pouvoir absolu des Roys, mesmes sur leurs plus proches." (p.187) (12)

M. Taschereau has dismissed this testimonial on the ground that the "Amour Tyrannique" is considerably posterior to the Cid, and that, therefore, the Cardinal could not have preferred the one to the other. He dates it from 1639. But although the Privilege of the play was given on February 2, 1639, according to the Achevé d'Imprimer of the first edition. Now, since the Amour Tyrannique had been represented a number of times, it must be dated from 1638.

On the other hand, it must be observed that the utterance of Sorel does not imply that the Cardinal praised loudly the Amour Tirannique exactly AT THE TIME of the early representations of the Cid. All that he says is that there existed a common reason for the aversion and the sympathy of the Cardinal for the Cid and for the work of de Scudéry. And he hints that that common reason was that the Cid contained allusions to relatives of the king, which did not please Richelieu, while the Amour Tirannique manifestly written under the inspiration of the

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Cardinal, defended the right of a king to treat even those most near to him - his mother or wife, for instance - with all the severity and all the authority which the "raison d'état" might dictate to him. The fact that the "Amour tyrannique" followed the Cid by a year or more, does therefore not infirm Sorel's argument.

Sorel was placed in a very favorable position to be aware of all that was connected with both the literary and the historical events of his time; as a voluminous author he was intimately acquainted with all those who wrote at this time; as historiographer to the king all the historical events of the time and a great number of documents necessary for his work, were naturally brought to his notice. He was a contemporary of the Cid-quarrel wherein he seems to have participated. Mr. Gaste' attributes to him the pamphlet entitled "Le Jugement du Cid, composé par un bourgeois de Paris, marguillier de sa paroisse" (La Querelle du Cid - p.230) He had uncommon insight into the secret back-ground of the life of the times and a temperamental delight in discovering and exposing the weak side of the heroes of the day. His impressions about contemporary theatre merit confidence: "Non seulement il disait son mot, le mot du bon sens, dans toutes les querelles littéraires, mais il suivait assidûment toutes les représentations dramatiques, et il consignait au jour le jour ses impressions, dans des cahiers qu'il avait commencés a l'âge de dix-huit ans, et qu'il continuait encore en 1666, au témoignage de Furetière" (13) In his "Bibliothèque Française" he refutes the narration of Pelisson, who attributes the opposition of Richelieu entirely to jealousy; and documents published in our times confirm that his criticism of Pelisson was justified. He had a very positive sense of life and history; little idealism, but an aspiration to truth, unparalleled among early seventeenth

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century authors. His attempts toward the transformation of the methods of writing history are a clear testimonial as to his aspiration to present only the truth (14) From all this it must be concluded that Sorel's information was accurate and trustworthy.

Besides we can test Sorel's passage, relating to the Cid quarrel, by means of the evidence still within our reach. His first affirmation that the Cardinal was not favorable to the Cid is born out by fact. That he preferred the *Amour Tirannique* is equally sure. The introduction to this play by Sarasin lays great stress on the high praise with which Richelieu overwhelmed it: "...nous jugeons que cette Tragedie est au dessus des attaques de l'^{no}Evnie, et par son propre mérite, et par une protection qu'on seroit plus que sacrilège de violer, puis que c'est celle d'Armand, le Dieu Tutélaire des Lettres."

"C'est de la voix de cet Oracle, que sont sorties ces propres paroles: Que l'Amour Tyrannique estoit un Ouvrage qui n'avoit point besoin d'Apologie, et qui se défendoit assez de soy-mesme (15)" De Scudéry's dedicace of the play to Madame la duchesse d'Aiguillon is equally explicit: "Car après la gloire qu'il a eu d'estre représenté quatre fois devant Mons^{et}igneur ~~and~~ devant vous; après les choses que S.E. en a dites en présence de toute la Cour; après l'honneur qu'elle m'a fait, de vouloir avoir ce poème en manuscrit dans son cabinet; ~~et~~ ^{et} après le rang que vous luy avez donné tout haut, parmy ceux de cette nature; (This refers of course, to the Cid) ma plus ardents ambition est tellement assouvie, qu'elle ne trouve rien à desirer"

Now as to the play itself. The text makes it perfectly clear that the mémoires, from which Sorel drew his information, meant that Richelieu condemned the Cid and praised the "Amour Tirannique" because of the allusions which these plays contain

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to the relations between the queen Anne of Austria and the King Louis XIII. Sorel's expression "qui exaltoient le pouvoir absolu des Roys, mesme SUR LEURS PLUS PROCHES" does not refer to the queen mother Marie de Medici with whom Louis XIII had the well-known difficulties and with whom he struggled for power. In the Amour Tirannique no conflict is described between a mother and her son, the king, but a conflict between a wife with her husband the king.

The character which stands out in the play is that of the queen Ormène. It is certainly no accident and no coincidence that she is placed exactly in the same situation as Chimène in the Cid and as the queen Anne of Austria. She is the daughter of Orosmane, Roy de Capadoce and married to Tyridate, roy du Pont Her husband had declared war on ^{her} father and her brother, and Ormène has to choose between her father and husband exactly in the same way as Chimène in the Cid and Anne of Austria in reality. Now Ormène, although her husband, the king Tyridate, is unjust and even cruel to her, and her family, never revolts against him, but carries her submission indeed to the extreme and protests on various occasions that the royal dignity has conferred upon her husband the right of acting according to the interests of the state. She exclaims:

"Quelque injuste rigueur qu'il exerce envers moy,
Je me souviens qu'il est mon époux et mon Roy"

and:

"Je me dois souvenir au milieu de mes maux,
Et du pouvoir d'un prince, et du peu que je vaux."
il n'appartient qu'aux Dieux de conseiller les Rois"

The case could not be stronger if de Scudery had intended Ormène to serve as a direct example of submissive conduct preached to the queen. She even consents to a separation from the King Tyridate. It must be remembered that the question had been

secretly considered whether it would not be in favor of the state to remarry Louis XIII with another princess, because the queen Anne of Austria, after many years of marriage had not born a successor to the throne. This situation was changed shortly after the representation of the *Amour Tirannique* by the birth of Louis XIV (September 1638) Ormène speaks about her possible divorce in the tones of a patient Griseldis:

"Je reçois ma disgrâce avec submission,
Et mon respect s'oppose à mon affliction"

and in Act IV, sc. 4

La loy de nos pays luy permet ce divorce:
Et que ne peuvent point les armes et la force?

It can hardly be supposed that de Scudéry in writing down these verses and Richelieu in praising them, would have been unaware of their bearing on the situation of the queen of France at the court. The analogies are too close to allow us to dismiss them as mere coincidences.

The *Amour Tirannique* ends with the triumph of the patient and submissive queen Ormène. After many incidents she regains her husband's heart and reigns happily afterward. And, in 1638, when the play was represented, Anne of Austria was reconciled with Louis XIII. Her child, the later Louis XIV, was born on September 7, 1638. That de Scudéry paid much attention to that event is proved by the fact that he dedicated in 1638 his play "*L'Amant Liberal*" to the queen and referred in that dedicace to the birth of the heir to the throne.

In the "*Amour Tyrannique*" the pompous king Tyridate pronounces the maxims to which Sorel ascribes Richelieu's favorable attitude to the play. Yet it must be noticed that the political principles of Tyridate are not approved of in the tragic-comedy. On the contrary, they are constantly and sharply criticized by the wise Pharnabaze, the former governor of the king,

who does not fear to point out that his pride is leading him astray. It is not possible to identify Louis XIII with the Tyrant Tyridate. This boastful, heartless, and unintelligent tyrant was not a portrait which any playwright would have dared to draw of the king. Nothing more can then be accepted than exactly what Sorel said, that some of the allusions in the play pleased Richelieu extremely. And these allusions referred obviously to the queen.

The following verses declaimed by Tyridate aim manifestly at the difficulties ^{which existed} (formerly between the royal couple:

Act, I, Scene 2

Tiridate: Ceux qui tiennent un rang de puissance infinie,
Sont instruits seulement par un divin Génie,
Qui fait toujours céder au coeur d'un potentat,
Cette raison commune, à la raison d'Etat.

Ne jugez point des Rois, âme vulgaire et basse;
Ne les mesurez pas avec une autre race;
Pour les y comprer, ils sont trop différens,
Les Rois ont des sujets, et n'ont point de parens.

Acte II, Ormène pleads in favor of her imprisoned brother;

Tiridate answers:

Enfin je voy vostre âme, and je remarque en elle
Cette lasche pitié qui la rend criminelle
L'intérest d'un mary qui vous devoit toucher
Cède à celui d'un frère, infidelle, *et* plus cher;
Et par cette requeste, à bon droit *rejetée*,
Vous oubliez le rang ou vous estes montée;
Mais bien que vostre esprit, soit pour luy contre moy
Si suis-je vostre *espoux*, si suis-je vostre Roy.

Ormene: Seigneur, ces noms sacrez, sont gravez en mon âme;
Mais quoy, je suis sa soeur!

Tiridate: Mais vous estes ma femme.

Ormene: La Nature me parle, elle a bien du pouvoir

Tiridate: Contre ce que je suis, rien n'en devoit avoir

Ormene: Ce n'est qu'avec respect que je vous sollicite

Tiridate: La fausse humilité vient d'un coeur hypoerite.

Ormene: Hélas! dois-je oublier

Tiridate: Tout pour n'oublier pas
Que la rebellion mérite le trespas

Acte III, scene 3
Pharnabase:

Ha! Seigneur, oubliez vous son rang?
Et le respect du Trosne, et le respect du sang?
Quoy? N'escoutez vous plus, dedans cette aventure
La voix de la raison, la voix de la Nature,
Elles de qui la terre, observe, et suit les loix?

Tiridate: Il n'est point d'autre Loy que la voulôir des Rois;
C'est de nous qu'elle dépend, tout puissants que nous
sommes;
C'est nous qui sommes Dieux, qui la donnons aux
hommes;
qu'elle vient.

Acte IV, Scene 2

Tiridate: Les Roys sont au dessus des crimes,
Toutes choses sont légitimes
Pour les princes qui peuvent tout,
Et quelque aversion qu'ait la personne aimée
Il y va de leur gloire et de leur renommée,
Si leur pouvoir n'~~avient~~ en vient à bout.

The passage of Sorel, although short and obscure, is confirmed by the preceding examination of the Amour Tyrannique. The absolute power of a king even upon his near relatives is glorified in it. And the happy results are shown of a queen's submissiveness. If to these facts is added that the play was intentionally a study of a character similar to Chimène's in Corneille's Cid, it is clear that the play must have had a bearing upon actual events in the kingly household, and upon their happy solution.

Now the Amour Tyrannique was opposed at the time to the Cid. It has been pointed out above that Richelieu openly said that he preferred it to others of "a similar nature" - by which, of course, Corneille's work was meant - and that it presented a similar internal conflict in *Thémire*, as Corneille in his *Chimène*. The probability that allusions to Anne of Austria's situation at the time were read into the Cid is enhanced when the historical circumstances which surrounded the first representation of Corneille's work are recalled.

III The War with Spain

1. The Cid was played in the last days of December 1636. The work, therefore, must have been written during the year 1636. Now, when Corneille was making in his masterpiece, the eulogy of Spanish honor and Spanish glory, France had been at war with Spain for eighteen months. Fighting had begun on the 29th of May 1635 and, at certain stages of the struggle, France had seemed near to ruin. Patriotism was burning high and fiercely, and yet while the enemy was still near enough to be a constant danger, all Paris went to acclaim a play which after all, sang the praise of the enemy's ancestry and of its sense of ^{ho}onor and chivalry.

This enthusiasm is all the more extraordinary when the fluctuations of the fortunes of war in that year are recalled. After the declaration of war, in 1635, the French armies invaded Belgium, at that time a Spanish possession. The Spaniards were defeated in the plain of Aven, but soon, having ⁸received heavy reinforcements from Austria, they turned on their victors and forced them to retreat. In 1636 when Corneille began to write the Cid, the Spaniards invaded France from the North and drove the French back in the direction of Paris. In August 1636, they took the fortified town of Corbiè and, having passed the Somme, menaced Paris. Dareste (Hist. de France, V, 18) describes as follows the effect on the population of the capital: "The agitation was extreme in Paris. The people stood in the streets, excited, waiting for news, accusing the Cardinal of having brought the enemy to the very heart of the kingdom. Many already fled; the roads toward Chartres and Orléans were obstructed with carriages and vehicles. Fortifications were constructed rapidly at St. Denis and at the points where the new city-quarters had been built outside of the walls of the old fortifications. In the midst of the agitation and of the diversity of

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feelings shown, the patriotic ardor was very keen..." Richelieu testifies in his Mémoires that the seven associations of merchants and artisans of Paris were called before the king and that they put at his disposal their goods and their lives. The Mémoires of the chief-justice Molé and the Gazette of Renaudot confirm that the patriotic fervor was general and enthusiastic. "Le 5 aout le Roi se rendit au Louvre, dans la galerie, dite des rois....Tous les corps de métier vinrent saluer Sa Majesté et lui faire offre de leurs personnes et de leurs biens...Ils se présenterent à genoux aux pieds de sa Majesté, qui leur fit l'honneur de les saluer et leur temoigner combien elle avoit agréable leur bonne volonté, dont ils donnèrent toutes les preuves imaginables, plusieurs d'eux baisant la terre et embrasant les pieds de Sa Majesté....Les Parisiens, au sortir de là, fendirent l'air de tant d'acclamations de joie et de tant de cris redoublés de Vive le Roi! qu'il y a fort longtemps qu'il s'en est point oui de plus grands...." (16^{B-}) Loans were concluded, soldiers called, and many extraordinary measures taken. The prospect of a siege and the outburst of patriotism assured the king of hearty co-operation. On the first of September, the king left Paris at the head of 30,000 footmen and 12,000 cavalry, a large army for the time. The Spaniards retired over the Somme. For months heavy fighting continued on French soil until the end of 1636 and the first month of 1637. The danger of a siege was scarcely removed, the Spanish armies were still devastating the northern provinces of France, when all Paris acclaimed the Cid, an apotheosis of a Spanish hero and of a Spanish heroine.

How are these apparent contradictions to be understood? By a certain indifference of the population toward the war with Spain? But all the contemporaries agree that patriotism rose

to a very high pitch. By the influence of the Spanish court-party, which certainly could not have failed to acclaim this homage to the country of their sympathies? This enthusiasm may have been a factor in the success of the Cid, but by itself alone it is not sufficient to explain it. The Spanish court party was a minority and the success of the Cid has been described as general "Tout Paris pour Chimène a les yeux de Rodrigue"

Now, around the time when the Cid was staged, public sympathy for the Cardinal was at a low ebb. Those who favored the play not only for its literary excellence and dramatic effectiveness, but also for political preoccupations, saw momentarily their ranks increased by many who accused the Cardinal of having brought France to the brink of disaster merely to satisfy his measureless ambition. Aubery says in his "Histoire du Cardinal Duc de Richelieu"(Paris, 1660, p. 290) : "Murmures contre le Cardinal - "Ils ne l'acusoient pas de moins que de trahison, et se plaignoient hautement, que sous prétexte d'agrandir Paris du costé du faux-bourg Saint Honoré, il en avoit fait abatre les rempars et les murs afin d'exposer la Ville, qui restoit sans deffenses aussi bien que sans munitions, à la mercy des Espagnols et au pillage." The Cardinal found it necessary to make a bid for popularity: "L'on remarque particulièrement du Cardinal, qu'il se faisoit voir exprez au peuple, et qu'en plus fort de l'émotion et du trouble il fut sans ses gardes ordinaires depuis son Palais jusque à l'Hôtel de Ville et à l'Arseⁿal; afin de témoigner de la confiance aux Parisiens, et de leur apprendre a mépriser les discours de ceux qui faisoient le mal beaucoup plus grand qu'il n'estoit"(Aubery, Op. cit, p. 293)

It was in such an atmosphere that the rehearsals and the first representation of the Cid took place. The almost general triumph of the play can hardly be explained on the score

solely of its literary qualities for they would not have blinded the people at such a moment of national danger and exalted patriotism, to the fact that it glorified the enemy. Its success no doubt, was magnified and powerfully helped by the political circumstances of the moment and by the allusions to the queen which the exercised interpretation of the time discovered in Chimène's problem and triumph.

IV The Role of M. de Châlons

A question which has not been answered in the preceding divisions of this chapter is: Why did Corneille choose, in 1636, during the war with Spain a Spanish play as a model? Why did he glorify a Spanish hero and a Spanish heroine at exactly that time? Accident can not be invoked, because all the evidence which exists about Corneille's character points to the fact that he was always anxiously striving for success, and that he was submissive — if not altogether to the French Academy — at least to the taste of the public and to civil and royal authority. And not the slightest doubt exists about his patriotism. He was, on the other hand, at Rouen very well aware of all the incidents of the war with Spain. The duc de Longueville, to whom he dedicated his Clitandre, was fighting in the French army with a number of the poet's fellow-citizens. Besides, the province of Normandy was oppressed and devastated by the great number of soldiers quartered everywhere (16)

It is then probable that Corneille in choosing the *Modades del Cid* for a model followed some incentive, some influential counsel or some important considerations of a practical nature. Beauchamps in his "Recherches sur les Théâtres de France" (II, 157) reports a story which, in the form it is found there, has inspired but little confidence in historians.. Yet, and this

is important, Beauchamps says that he knew these facts from a very good source, from the jesuit "ournemine, "régent aux jesuites de Rouen," where Corneille had been educated and in whose cloister he always had very good and intimate friends, for instance Father dela Rue and the other Jesuit cited in the chapter about Corneille's early friends.

"M. de Châlon, secrétaire des commandements de la reine mère, avait quitté la cour et s'était retiré a Rouen dans sa vieillesse; Corneille, qui flattait le succès de ses premières pièces, le vint voir. "Monsieur" lui dit M. de Châlon après l'avoir loué sur son esprit et sur ses talents "le genre de comique que vous embrassez ne peut vous procurer, qu'une gloire passagère. Vous trouverez dans les Espagnols des sujets qui, traités dans notre gout par des mains comme les vôtres, produiront de grands effets; apprenez leur langue, elle est aisée; je m'offre de vous montrer ce que j'en sais, et, jusqu'à ce que vous soyez en état de lire par vous-même, de vous traduire quelques endroits de Guillen de Castro."

The full name of the M. de Châlon referred to by Beauchamps was Alphonse-Rodrigue de Châlon, born at Rouen in 1615, and hence twenty-three years old at the time of the Cid. It is altogether probable that he knew Spanish and Spanish literature intimately, for he belonged to a Rouen family of Spanish descent, to the Jalons, the name de Châlon being a French form for Jalon. Now, the family de Châlon was related to the Corneille's by marriage, from two or three sides, so that no doubt can be entertained about the fact that he knew the poet Pierre Corneille(17)

In one important point modern historians have misunderstood Beauchamps' text. He calls M. de Chalons, "secrétaire des commandements de la Reine Mère." This has been taken to mean

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secretary of the queen mother of 1637, i.e. of Marie de Médici, mother of Louis XIII. Now Beauchamps writing at the beginning of the eighteenth century referred to the latest "Reine Mère" he knew himself, to Anne of Austria. That such is Beauchamps' meaning cannot be doubted since M. de Beaurepaire has identified ~~him~~ ^{de Châlons} as born in 1615, and as a secretary of Anne of Austria. Now if this Alphonse-Rodrigue de Châlons was in close contact with both the queen of France and with Corneille in 1636, and suggested to Corneille at that moment the subject of the Cid, a possible link at least is found between the queen or at all events her entourage, and the poet of Rouen. ⁽¹⁸⁾ And is it hazardous to see in the counsel of de Châlons, a suggestion coming if not from the queen herself, from her pro-Spanish intimates? Such a suggestion coming from high-placed personages would have been for Corneille a powerful incentive to treat material which he would naturally have avoided during a war with Spain. Besides there seems to have been a powerful practical reason for Corneille to side with the queen at that moment, the en-noblement of his father and of himself ^{which} was decreed in January 1637.

V The En-noblement of Corneille.

At the very moment when the Spanish hero of the Cid was reaping laurels in Paris, the father of Corneille was en-nobled at Rouen, and by that fact Pierre Corneille himself was elevated to the nobility. The letters of the king conferring the title of Ecuyer upon all the male members of the family is dated "Donnée à Paris, au mois de janvier, l'an de grâce mil six cent trente," They were registered by the Parlement at Rouen (at the Cour des Aides) on the 24th of March 1637, and at the "Chambre des Comptes three days later.

The text lays stress upon the merits of Corneille's father as a servant of the state: "Et d'autant que, par le témoignage de nos plus spéciaux serviteurs, nous sommes dûment informé que notre amé et féal Pierre Corneille, issu de bonne et honorable race et famille, a toujours eu en bonne et singulière recommandation le bien de cet État et le nôtre en divers emplois qu'il a eus par notre commandement et pour le bien de notre service et du public et particulièrement en l'exercice de l'office de maître de nos eaux et forêts en la vicomté de Rouen, durant plus de vingt ans, dont il s'est acquitté avec un extrême soin et fidélité pour la conservation de nos dites forêts et en plusieurs autres occasions ou il s'est porté avec tel zèle et affection, que ses services rendus et ceux que nous espérons de lui à l'avenir nous donnent sujet de reconnaître sa vertu et mérites, et les décorer de ce degré d'honneur pour marque et mémoire à sa posterité."

It has been remarked that this honor was less intended for the father of Corneille than for the son, who, exactly as that moment had distinguished himself as the author of the immortal Cid. Indeed, Corneille's father had been a loyal and even rigid and stainless "maître des eaux et des forêts." In various occasions he had given evidence of an unflinching devotion to duty even at the peril of his life. But, on the other hand, he had "les défauts de ses vertus"...He was punctilious and rather quarrelsome and, at various times, he resigned from his position as a protest against what he considered an encroachment upon his exclusive rights.(14) Besides, in 1637, he had been out of the king's service for seventeen years. His last resignation was the end of his troubles with his inferiors and his neighbors. Why then was he suddenly ennobled at the exact moment that his son was acclaimed as the author of the Cid? Why this sudden revival of interest in the services of a forgotten and, after all, a humble servant of the State?

Corneille's contemporaries saw in the title given to the father a recompense for the son. Mairet exclaims: "Vous nous avez autrefois apporté la Méliete, La Veuve, La Suivante, La Galerie du Palais, et, de fraîche mémoire, le Cid, qui d'abord vous a valu l'argent et LA NOBLESSE"(24) And, at Rouen, the same opinion was accepted for Faucon de Ris, sieur de Charleval, of Rouen, says in another document of the Cid-quarrèk: "...et certes il est bien difficile qu'il peust rendre ses Acteurs plus vaillans puisque luy-mesme n'a pas si tost la permission de prendre un~~e~~ espée qu'ils se déclare par une lettre imprimée, indigne de la porter et qu'à peine a-t-il reçu celles de noblesse qu'il faict une action assez infâme pour l'en dégrader."(21)

Claveret refers to him as a "nouveau noble" and scoffs at him for that his letters of nobility "sont encore si fraîches qu'elles se peuvent aisément effacer"(Lettre du Sr. Claveret au sr. Corneille - Gaste', 190) And, finally, Corneille himself, testifies that the ennoblement was due to his work:

"La noblesse, grand roi, manquoit à ma naissance,
 Ton père en a daigné gratifier mes vers"
 (1657 Oeuvres X, 135)

The fact then stands quite clear that for the contemporaries of Corneille, as well as for Corneille himself, ^{that} the elevation of his father and his family to the nobility was the direct result of the success of his theatrical productions, and that the Cid was the occasion, at least, for the recognition of his merit. The following citation still confirms this view and reveals another aspect of the ennoblement of Corneille's father which is of importance in the present argumentation. The pro-Corneille pamphlet "Le Souhait de Cid en faveur de Scudéri"(Gaste', 186) says: "On me connoitra assez si je dis que je suis celui qui ne taille point sa plume qu'avec le tranchant de son epée, qui hait ceux qui

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n'aiment pas Chimène, et honore infiniment celle qui l'a autorisée par son jugement, procurant à son gendre LA NOBLESSE qu'il n'avoit pas de naissance".

There is no doubt that "Celle qui l'a autorisé par son jugement" means the Queen, for she was the only one who could have been instrumental in having the title granted, who had the power of "procuring" nobility. That the queen looked favorably upon the *Cid* is already evidenced by the passages presented above. Besides Corneille himself says in his *Lettre Apologétique* (Gasté, p.148) "quand vous avez traité la pauvre Chimène d'impudique, de prostituée, de parricide, de monstre; ne vous estes-vous pas souvenu, que la Reyne, les Princesses, et les plus vertueuses Dames de la Cour et de Paris l'ont reçue et caressée en fille d'honneur?"

Not less an authority than Gustave Lanson doubts that the title given to the *Corneilles* was a recompense of the *Cid*. He explains in his "*Corneille*" (12): On a voulu que le fils ait plus que le père contribué à cette élévation de la famille. C'est possible, à la condition qu'on n'en fasse pas la récompense du *Cid*. Comment Richelieu se fut-il déjugé au point de gratifier ainsi l'auteur de la pièce qu'il allait si obstinément poursuivre? Puis le *Cid* ayant paru au plus tôt dans les derniers jours de décembre 1636, il eût fallu, au premier éclat du succès, bien de la hâte à demander chez le poète, bien de l'empressement à accorder chez Richelieu pour qu'en moins d'un mois l'ordonnance fût préparée, signée et publiée. La faveur dut être sollicitée avant le *Cid*, donnée au succès encore supportable des dernières oeuvres, et, quand le *Cid* fit courir tout Paris, les lettres d'anoblissement étaient prêtes: il n'y avait pas moyen de les révoquer."

And indeed, it is not to be explained with the actual conception of the *Cid* and its relation to the all-powerful Cardinal that the letters of nobility were so soon given, although

Richelieu is represented as, if not at first inimical, at least luke-warm in his admiration for that play. It is quite clear that the letters of nobility were asked and accorded, if not before the first representation of the *Cid*, at least simultaneously with that representation. But the problem is solved if one takes into consideration that Corneille owed his ennoblement to the queen; that the queen, through her secretary de Châlons was directly concerned in the genesis and the production of the play. The queen used her influence for the ennoblement of Corneille and, since it was not openly to be confessed that a Spanish play had been asked from the one of the most successful of the French playwrights, the services rendered by Corneille's father years previously, were used as a pretext, which as pointed out above, was not believed by anyone.

In this connection it must be remembered that Corneille was protected his whole life long by the queen, Anne of Austria. In 1637 she had been instrumental in the ennoblement of his father, The seventeenth of February ¹⁶⁵⁰ he ~~was~~ ^{was} made Procureur-syndic des Etats de Normandie ~~(1650)~~ replacing "le sieur Baudry," a partisan of the duc de Longueville... But soon the duc of Longueville was reconciled with Mazarin. On the 23d of March 1651 Baudry is reinstalled in his position.

The letter, ^{by which Corneille was made Procureur-syndic,} is instructive in regard to the queen's opinion of Corneille: "Sa Majeste ayant, pour des considerations importantes, à son service, destituée par son ordonnance d'aujourd'hui le sieur Baudry de la charge de procureur des États de Normandie, et étant nécessaire de la remplir de quelque personne capable et dont la fidélité et affection soit connue, Sdite Majeste a fait choix du sieur Corneille, lequel, par l'avis de la reine régente, Elle a commis et commet à ladite charge, au lieu et place dudit sieur Baudry....(15 février 1650)

It is upon her desire that he pursues in 1652 the paraphrase of the Imitation. Even at the time of her mourning for Louis XIII she did not give up seeing the plays of Corneille. Madame de Motteville her confidente says: "Elle alloit à la comédie, à demi cachée par une de nous qu'elle faisait asseoir auprès d'elle dans une tribune où elle se mettait, ne voulant pas pendant son deuil paraître publiquement à la place qu'elle devait occuper dans un autre temps. Corneille, cet illustre poete de notre siècle, avait enrichi le théâtre de belles pièces dont la morale pouvait servir de leçon à corriger le déreglement des passions humaines; et parmi les occupations vaines et dangereuses de la Cour, celle-là du moins pouvait n'être point des pires." (Dorchain 282)

In the various pamphlets which were published at the time of the Cid-quarrel here and there allusions are found to the queen of France, which constitute additional evidence that she was in some way associated with Corneille's tragedy. Some of them — those who refer to the ennoblement of the Corneille family by the queen — have been cited in a preceding division. Others are listed here: de Scudéry wrote in his "Observations sur le Cid" (Gasté, 85) after having accused Corneille of having drawn with his Don Rodrigue a caricature of a Spaniard, instead of a Spanish hero: "Les Espagnols sont nos ennemis (il est vray) mais on n'en est pas moins bon François, pour ne les croire pas tous hipochondriaques. Et nous avons parmi nous un Exemple si illustre et qui nous fait si bien voir que la profonde sagesse et la haute vertu peuvent naistre en Espagne, qu'on n'en scauroit douter sans crime. Je parlerois plus clairement de cette divine Personne, si je ne craignois de prophaner son nom sacré, et si je n'avois peur de commettre un sacrilège, en pensant faire un acte d'adoration."

Such a "sacrilège en pensant faire un acte d'adoration" was exactly what, according to his argument, Corneille had done. He accused him indirectly of having tried to flatter the queen by bringing Spanish heroism on the scene, and of having committed "sacrilège" in depicting the Spaniards as vain and boastful. For him Corneille had offended the queen instead of defending her.

Corneille's answer to this allusion clearly shows that he understood de Scudéry's insinuation. He replied with the "Lettre Apologétique de sieur Corneille" (Gasté, 147): "Je n'ay pas si peu de bon sens que d'offencer une personne de si haute condition, dont je n'ay pas l'honneur d'être cogneu, et de craindre moins ses ressentiments que les vôtres."

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It must be noted here that when Corneille states that he had not "l'honneur d'être cogneu" by the queen, he manifestly meant that he was not personally acquainted with her. For the next page of his "Lettre" shows that the queen had applauded the Cid: "Ne vous estes vous pas souvenu que le Cid a esté représenté trois fois au Louvre, et deux fois a l'Hostel de Richelieu, Quand vous avez traisté la pauvre Chimène d'impudique, de prostituée, de paricide, de monstre; Ne vous estes vous pas souvenu que la Reyne, les princesses, et les plus vertueuses dames de la Cour et de Paris, l'ont receüe et caressée en fille d'honneur?"

That, in certain circles, the Cid was opposed because it was a Spanish play may be gathered from a passage from another document of the Cid-quarrel; "La voix publique à Monsieur de Scudery sur les observations du Cid" (Author unknown): "Monsieur - c'est trop faire le bon François que de vouloir perdre le Cid, parce qu'il est Espagnol; il faut estre plus généreux, et puisqu'il est en France, donnés luy la vie si vous le pouvés faire à celui que son Autheur a desja fait immortel, et le traittant en prisonnier de guerre, souffrez que nous luy donnions nos cabinets pour prison." (Gasté, 152) (22)

It may be concluded that the circumstances of the ennoblement of Corneille's father and of Corneille point to the interference of the queen. And by what other reason could the queen ^{have} ~~be~~ been moved than by the desire to reward the poet for a service rendered her by his tragedy, the Cid?

THE ATTITUDE OF RICHELIEU TOWARD THE "CID".

I--The principal source of information about the attitude of Richelieu toward Corneille's Cid is the "Histoire de l'Académie Française" by Pellisson, which dates of 1652. He is not altogether affirmative about the Cardinal's role in the dispute: "Il ne faut pas demander si la gloire de cet auteur ^(Corneille) donna de la jalousie à ses concurrents; plusieurs ont voulu croire que le Cardinal lui-même n'en avoit pas été exempt, et qu'encore qu'il estimât fort M. Corneille, et qu'il lui donnât pension, il vit avec déplaisir les reste des travaux de cette nature, et surtout ceux ou il avoit quelque part, entièrement effacés par celui-là. Pour moi, sans examiner si cette âme, toute grande qu'elle étoit, n'a point été capable de cette foiblesse, je rapporterai fidèlement ce qui s'est passé sur ce sujet, laissant à chacun la liberté d'en croire ce qu'il voudra, et de suivre ses propres conjectures.

Entre ceux qui ne purent souffrir l'approbation qu'on donnoit, au Cid, et qui crurent qu'il ne l'avoit pas méritée M. de Scudéry parut le premier, en publiant ses Observations contre cet ouvrage, ou pour se satisfaire lui-même, ou, comme quelques-uns disent, pour plaire au Cardinal, ou pour tous les deux ensemble. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est bien certain qu'en ce différend, qui partagea toute la cour, le Cardinal sembla pencher du côté de M. de Scudéry, et fut bien aise qu'il écrivit, comme il fit, à l'Académie française, pour s'en remettre à son jugement. On voyoit assez le désir du Cardinal, qui étoit qu'elle prononcât sur cette matière; mais les plus judicieux de ce corps témoignèrent beaucoup de répugnance pour ce dessein. Ils disoient "que l'Académie, qui ne faisoit que de naître, ne devoit point se rendre odieuse par un

jugement, qui peut-être déplairoit aux deux partis, et qui ne pouvoit manquer d'en désobliger pour le moins un c'est a dire une grande partie de la France; qu'à peine la pouvoit-on souffrir sur la simple imagination qu'on avoit qu'elle pretendoit quelque empire en notre langue: que seroit-ce si elle temoignoit de l'affecter, et si elle entreprenoit de l'exercer sur un ouvrage qui avoit contenté le grand nombre et gagné l'approbation du peuple? que ce seroit d'ailleurs un retardement à son principal dessein, dont l'execution ne devoit être que trop longue d'elle-même; qu'enfin M. Corneille ne demandoit point ce jugement; et que par les statuts de l'Académie, et par les Lettres de son érection, elle ne pouvoit juger d'un ouvrage que du consentement et à la priere de l'auteur." Mais le Cardinal avoit ce dessein en tête, et ces raisons lui paroissoient peu importantes, si vous en exceptez la dernière, qu'on pouvoit détruire en obtenant le consentement de Corneille." (23)

Pellisson narrates then how Corneille at first refused to submit to the demand that his play be examined by the Academy and how, after having learned that Richelieu desired that it should be done, he replied: "Messieurs de l'Académie peuvent faire ce qu'il leur plaira; puisque vous m'crivez que Monseigneur seroit bien aise d'en voir le jugement et que cela doit divertir son Eminence, je n'ai rien à dire."

"Il n'en falloit pas davantage, au moins suivant l'opinion du Cardinal, pour fonder la juridiction de l'Académie, qui pourtant se défendoit toujours d'entreprendre ce travail; mais enfin il s'en expliqua ouvertement, disant à un de ses domestiques: "Faites savoir à ces Messieurs que je le désire, et que je les aimerai comme ils m'aimeront."

According to Pellisson the Academy began the examination of the Cid in its assembly of June 16, 1637.

Although Pellisson speaks with much reticence about Richelieu's attitude in the Cid-quarrel and does not affirm that he was really jealous of Corneille's reputation as an author, the succeeding generations of historians have found in his envy of a literary nature the origin of the Cid-quarrel. Among those who have charged the Cardinal with a regular persecution of Corneille, Voltaire stands out. He, for the first time, narrates the anecdotes of the conflict between the poet and the minister, about the "Comédie des Tuileries." Corneille would have dared to change the third act of that play, for which he, as one of the "cinq auteurs" had to supply the verses. This act of independance would have brought him the disfavor of the Cardinal, who angrily would have remarked: "Il faut avoir un esprit de suite." And the Cid-quarrel would have been an occasion for Richelieu to take revenge upon the independent lawyer-author of Rouen.

Now, this anecdote, told on uncertain authority and for the first time by Voltaire, more than a century after its supposed utterance has been proved to be apocryphical by Ulrich Meier, (24) and by Professor Cablerst Searles (Revue d'Hist. Litt. 1914) (25)

In the last article the assertion of Pellisson that the Academicians would have opposed the examination of the Cid is criticised. Professor Searles points out that the clause in the statutes of the Academy, forbidding the examination of the works of any author without his consent, which, according to Pellisson, the Academicians would have opposed to Richelieu's desire before the 10th of June 1637, was only approved and inserted in the statutes on the 9th of July 1637.

And further: (Op. cit. 353):

"Mais la Relation fournit d'autres faux renseignements dont la tendance donne une idée très fautive sur quelques-unes des phases principales de l'affaire. Pellisson affirme, dans les pages citées plus haut, que "l'Académie ne commença ses délibérations sur le Cid que le 16 juin, après que ses membres eurent écouté la lecture d'une lettre que le poète aurait écrite le 13 juin contre son gré, pour consentir à leur entremise dans la cause." Il le réaffirme avec emphase quelques pages plus loin (p.97): "Je sais par les registres de l'Académie, qui sont fort fidèles et fort exacts en ce temps-là, qu'on ne commença d'y parler du Cid que le 16 juin 1637; que ce fut après qu'on y eut lu une lettre de M. Corneille." Or ce renseignement est faux, comme on peut le voir d'après la lettre que Chapelain écrivit à Balzac le 13 juin 1637:

"Vous ne pourrez manquer au premier jour a souscrire l'arrest que le Corps doit prononcer la dessus, si tost que Corneille nous aura fait, la mesme sous_mission (que Scudéry), et ne croyez pas que je me moque: l'affaire est passée en Procés ordinaire et moy qui vous parle en ay esté le rapporteur et en dois encore parler a la première séance. (Lettres, I, p. 156)

Other evidence is furnished to prove that the Academy had already begun the examination of the Cid, before Corneille consented to it. In a letter of December, 23, 1637, Corneille wrote to Boisrobert: "Tout ce qui m'a fache c'est que ces Messieurs de l'Académie, s'estant résolus de juger de ce différend, avant qu'ils sussent si j'y consentois ou non, et leurs sentiments etant deja sous la presse, à ce que vous m'avez écrit, avant que vous eussiez ^{VEU} ~~vu~~ ce temoignage de moi.

(Pellisson. Op. cit. p. 96).

Pellisson has also advanced the date of Richelieu's direct command to the Academy to publish a criticism of the Cid.

"Faites savoir à ces messieurs que je le désire, et que je les aimer^{ai} ~~ai~~ ^{comme ils m'aimeront}" (to create the impression that the hesitating Academy was absolutely forced into action by Richelieu. (26)

It is clear that Pellisson's narration was not altogether unbiased. He presents the incidents of the Cid-quarrel in a most favorable light for the Academicians and loads the blame, if prudently, yet as much as possible on the Cardinal de Richelieu. What reasons moved Pellisson to compose in 1652 this narration favorable to a number of the judges of the Cid still living and members of the Academy by that time? It must be noted that Pellisson read his history before the Academy in December 1652. Whether Corneille agreed with his narration is impossible to know, since the records of the meetings, prior to 1672, are lost. Pellisson was recompensed by the Academicians. He was promised the first vacant place in the Assembly and, in the meantime, he was allowed to attend its meetings as a supernumerary with all the rights of a regular Academician. This procedure was so extraordinary that a formal declaration was made that the entrance of Pellisson in the Academy should not form a precedent and that a similar privilege, to be accepted as a supernumerary member, should never again be accorded. The Academicians had manifestly certain reasons for being grateful to Pellisson. Now, in the light of the facts studied in the preceding divisions of this chapter, it seems likely that some of them wanted to reward him for his defence of their attitude in the Cid-quarrel, which he manifestly treated with the greatest possible leniency. And if it can be accepted that the Cid contained an allusion to the queen Anne of Austria,

their desire of seeing their role in the Cid-quarrel favorably interpreted, is easily explained by the fact that they, no doubt, desired to prove to Anne of Austria, then in power, that they had been forced to action against their will, by the indomitable Cardinal.

Richelieu was at first not unfavorable to the Cid. He did not suppress Corneille's pension; he allowed his niece, Madame de Combalet to accept the dedicace; he did not oppose the ennoblement of Corneille's family; he had the play staged twice in his own "Palais Cardinal". Not too much importance must be attached to the anecdote reporting that Bois-robot played before him a parody of the Cid. The "plaisant abbé" in his capacity of official "amuseur" had the custom of giving parodies of all the successful plays of the day.

It must be concluded that Richelieu, at first, was rather favorably disposed toward the Cid. If he had seen in the play any attack on its politics toward the duel or any danger for the state, then at war with Spain, he would certainly not have asked the Academy to condemn the play. He had at his disposition much more efficacious means of disposing of the play and the poet. He could have simply forbidden the representations, and, in case of opposition, he could have sent the author to the Bastille. And, considering his imperious character, he would not have hesitated to imprison a ^uRowen lawyer, when he did not hesitate to lay hands on the most powerful princes and noblemen. And, if he was suffering from a deep-seated literary jealousy, why would he not have taken advantage of the pretext that in the Cid an enemy country was glorified to forbid the play?

Instead of taking any such action, logical in the circumstances and with his character, he allows the work to be staged

in his own palace and the author to be ennobled. And it must be observed that his attitude towards the play in the months of January to March 1637 was parallel with his attitude towards the queen Anne of Austria.

So long as the fate of arms was not altogether favorable to ~~France~~ ^{France} and so long as his own popularity was at a low ebb, he treated the Queen discreetly. He must have welcomed, at first, the political allusion to the Queen in the Cid, because it showed openly how the queen preferred France to Spain, the enemy. Such an affirmation of perfect accord in the kingly household was needed and welcome after the well-known difficulties which had arisen in previous years, for instance, at the time of the "Conspiration des dames". It reenforced the prestige of the throne, which he was trying to affirm, for political reasons.

Later, the Cardinal's attitude seems to have undergone a change. In June 1637 de Scudéry submitted himself to the judgment of the "Academy", and at that time Richelieu seems to have only mildly insisted upon the trial of Corneille's work before the court of the Academicians. And the Academicians seemed to lose their inclination for the work. Chapelain, who, on the 13th of June, had written to Balzac with enthusiasm about the examination of the Cid, wrote in quite the opposite spirit to him, on the 22nd. of August:

"Ce qui m'embarasse, et avec beaucoup de fondement, est d'avoir à choquer et la cour et la ville, les grands et les petites, l'une et l'autre des parties ^{confestantes,} contes ~~tantes~~, et en un mot tout le monde, en me choquant moymesme sur un sujet qui ne devoit point estre traitte par nous; et, croyez-moy, Monsieur, qu'il n'ya rien, de si odieux, et qu'un

honneste homme doive eviter davantage que de reprendre publiquement un ouvrage que la réputation de son auteur ou la bonne fortune de la pièce a fait approuver de ^{chacun.} ~~l'Académie.~~"

And about the same time Gombauld wrote to Boisrobert:

"C'est une fascheuse aventure pour l'Academie qu'il faille que le premier ouvrage qu'elle met au jour soit la censure d'un autre, et ce n'est pas le moyen d'attirer les suffrages du public que de blasmer ce qu'il approuve." (Lettres I, p. 164) (27)

Professor Searles concludes his study of the role of Richelieu in the Cid-quarrel as follows: (Op. Cit. 360). C'est bien à cette etape de l'affaire qu'appartient le message de Richelieu dont Pellisson fait le point de départ de l'action de l'Academie: "Faites savoir à ces messieurs que je le desire, ~~et savoir de ces messieurs que je le desire~~ et que je les aimerai comme ils m'aimeront."

En tout cas ce n'est que vers la fin de juillet que Richelieu semble avoir montré un véritable intérêt du travail de l'Academie."

Now, at the end of July and during the month of August 1637, there arose between the King and the Cardinal, on one side, and the Queen Anne of Austria, on the other, a new series of difficulties, which gave the Cardinal absolute ^{pl}supremacy in their struggle. If the Cardinal had perceived in the "Cid" an allusion to the Queen, his attitude toward the play would thereby have been influenced at this date. In any case, he knew that Corneille had been ennobled on the instances of Anne of Austria as a recompense for his play. (28). And it is quite natural that in turning against the Queen, he would more or less have turned against the play and the author she patronized.

By the end of July 1637 Richelieu made a discovery which confirmed certain suspicions which he had entertained about the Queen's correspondence with her native country, Spain, with which France was at war. In a bundle of intercepted letters he found an answer by the Marquis de Mirabel, the former Spanish ambassador at Paris, upon a letter of the Queen. On the 11th of August, the messenger of the Queen, a certain La Porte, was arrested and it became soon apparent that she had been secretly in correspondence not only with the Marquis de Mirabel, but also with her brother, the Cardinal-Infant of Spain, governor of the Spanish Netherlands, and with Madame de Chevreuse, exiled at Tours. She did not write only to complain about her fate at the Court of Louis XIII, but betrayed certain secrets which regarded the safety of the state. She warned the ministers of Madrid that a certain monk was a French spy; she deplored the intentions of the court of England to break off the alliance with Spain; she mentioned that Richelieu had begun secret negotiations with the Duke of Lorraine. This compromising correspondence was carried on from the Cloister of Notre Dame de Val-de-Grâce, where she retired from time to time under pretext of devotion. The prioress of that convent, Louise de Mili, was devoted to the Spanish cause. (29)

When La Porte was arrested, the Chancellor Seguier and the archbishop of Paris, Jean-Francois de Gondi, went to Val-de-Grâce to interrogate the prioress, who, although menaced with excommunication, did not reveal anything about the Queen's correspondence. She was banished, with three other sisters, to the Abbaye de la ^{cha} ~~the~~ ^{rite} and deprived of her rank.

Then the Queen was interrogated:

"Le chancelier étant venu à Chantilli, pour rendre compte au roi de ce qui s'etoit passé au Val-de-Grâce, reçut ordre d'aller interroger la reine. Elle répondit d'abord qu'elle n'avoit jamais eu aucune mauvaise intelligence avec les ennemis de l'Etat. Le chancelier lui ayant présenté la copie de la lettre qu'elle avoit recue du Marquis de Mirabel, elle avoua qu'elle avoit écrit dans les pays étrangers, et qu'elle en avoit reçu des lettres; Mais elle nia constamment qu'il eut jamais été question des affaires d'état dans celles qu'on lui écrivait, ni dans ses réponses. "La-dessus, dit M. de Brienne, on lui exagéra la grandeur de sa faute, en lui disant que l'on repudioit les reines en Espagne pour un moindre sujet." Elle tacha de s'excuser en versant beaucoup de larmes. Les ennemis du cardinal affectoient de dire que la reine étoit innocente, et que le cardinal ne la persequoit que parce que l'ayant recontrée au cours, elle n'avoit pas fait arrêter son carrosse devant le sien; que ce n'étoit pas la première calomnie qu'il eut inventée pour la chagriner, puisqu'il lui avoit déjà suscitée une pareille affaire à l'occasion des prétendues lettres de madame du Fargis, qui étoient supposées." (Père G. Daniel-- Histoire de France XIII, 48)

La Porte, imprisoned in the Bastille, obstinately refused to make any further revelations about the Queen's letters. But Anne of Austria soon confessed:

"La reine de son côté, ayant appris du sieur le Gras, que le cardinal en savoit beaucoup plus qu'elle n'en avoit dit, résolut de s'ouvrir davantage, Elle avoua d'abord au sieur le Gras une partie des faits, niant toujours les principaux, et elle le chargea de dire au cardinal qu'elle vouloit lui parler, pour lui dire tout ce qu'elle savoit.

Richelieu se rendit chez elle par ordre du roi, le matin, avant qu'elle fut levée, avec le père Caussin, le père Fauce, les sieurs de Chavigni, Desnoyers et madame de Senécé. Il commença par lui déclarer que le roi étoit fort en colère de ce qu'elle avoit écrit plusieurs lettres dans les pays étrangers, sans sa permission, pendant que la reine d'Espagne n'avoit pas la liberté d'écrire en France. Il ajouta qu'elle n'ignoroit pas que ses frères ~~soient~~^{étaient} en guerre avec le roi, et qu'il étoit étroitement défendu d'entretenir aucun commerce avec les ennemis de l'État; qu'il importoit extrêmement au roi de savoir ce que contenoient les lettres qu'elle leur avoit adressées, et celles qu'elle en avoit reçues, et qu'il lui répondoit que si elle vouloit lui dire dans le plus grand détail et dans la plus exacte vérité le contenu de ces lettres, dont elle avoit fait jusqu'alors un si grand mystère, le roi oublieroit tout ce qui s'étoit passé, et lui rendroit infailliblement ses bonnes grâces. La reine qui n'étoit pas disposée à faire une déclaration si ample et si détaillée, répondit qu'il étoit vrai qu'elle avoit écrit en Flandre, à M. le cardinal infant des lettres qui n'avoient point passé par les voies ordinaires: mais qu'elles ne contenoient que des compliments et des choses indifférentes, qui n'avoient aucun rapport aux affaires d'État. Le cardinal lui repliqua qu'elle ne disoit là qu'une partie de la vérité; que le roi en savoit davantage; que si elle desiroit se servir de lui, il pouvoit l'assurer qu'en avouant tout, elle rentreroit sans peine dans les bonnes grâces du roi; mais qu'il la supplioit de le dispenser d'intercéder pour elle, si elle vouloit user de dissimulation, qu'il n'étoit venu que pour pacifier, et que si elle continuoit

à déguiser la vérité, il falloit se retirer. Elle le pria de rester, et lui promit de lui dire tout, pourvu que ce ne fut pas en présence de madame de Senécé, et des deux secretaïres d'état, qui estoient venus avec lui. Ils sortirent aussitôt, et la reine lui avoua tous les faits qu'elle avoit niés jusqu' alors. Elle temoigna par ses larmes beaucoup de déplaisir et de confusion, d'avoir fait tant de protestations contraires à la vérité. Le cardinal tacha de la consoler, en lui faisant espérer un parfait retour de la part du roi; il lui parloit avec tant de douceur, qu'elle s'écria plusieurs fois: Quelle bonte faut^{il} que vous ayez, M. le cardinal! Elle l'assura qu'elle lui auroit une obligation éternelle, s'il employoit son crédit pour la tirer d'une si mauvaise affaire. Elle lui promit de ne plus commettre de pareilles fautes à l'avenir, et lui dit: Donnez-moi la main, M. le cardinal, en lui presentant la sienne. Le cardinal la refusa par respect, et il affecta même de s'éloigner de quelques pas. (Père Daniel. Op. cit. p. 50 according to the "Mémoires de Richelieu".)

After this interview, Richelieu and the King asked Anne of Austria to sign a declaration, wherein the various points of her confession were mentioned, and which ended with a promise of submissive conduct in the future. (30)

After that the Queen was reconciled with her husband.

"La reine ayant dit tout ce qu'elle vouloit dire, le cardinal l'alla dire au Røoy qui trouva bon qu'elle l'escrivit, et promit de l'oublier entièrement. Ensuite de quoi Sa Majesté monta dans la chambre de la reine qui lui demanda pardon, ce que le Røoy lui accorda volontiers, s'embrassant tous deux à la supplication du cardinal." (Mémoires de Richelieu. cf. V. Cousin--Madame de Chèvreuse. p.252)

Although de Richelieu presents in his "Memoires" his own conduct in the difficulties with the Queen in a favorable light, it may be safely asserted that his old animosity towards her was rather increased than diminished by them. It is remarkable that his opposition to the Cid becomes more marked at the same date as his enmity toward Anne of Austria. By insisting with the Academicians that the play should be condemned, he tried to diminish the prestige of a play, highly esteemed by the Queen, and of an author protected by her. This alone would be sufficient to make Richelieu's attitude less problematic. And, if he had perceived in the play, according to Sorel, something, "shocking to great ministers", or if he had been aware of an allusion to the position of the Queen of France in Corneille's Chimène, his action in the Cid-quarrel ^{would} ~~would~~ be far better understood. For, he acts toward the Cid as toward the Queen. He dislikes both, yet treats them discreetly enough. The play was not forbidden, Corneille kept. "Les bonnes graces de son maître" and his pension. The Queen, after a confession is reconciled with her husband. (31)

When the various facts pointed out in this chapter are brought into relation with one another, they acquire a higher degree of probability. Corneille is seen to have been in friendly relations with M. de Châlons, a secretary of Queen Anne of Austria, who, according to tradition, suggested the Cid-subject to the poet. Because of a suggestion coming directly or indirectly from the pro-Spanish court-circles Corneille wrote, at a time of war with Spain, a play of Spanish heroism. Chimène in the Cid was placed between her husband and her father in a way similar to the position of the Queen of France. Corneille seems to have worked out here a kind of

allusion to her. Almost at the same moment that the Cid was represented Corneille was ennobled, through his father, and the contemporaries attribute his ennoblement to the influence of the Queen. Richelieu's attitude toward the Cid runs in a parallel with his attitude toward the Queen. Soon after the Cid, he protects ostentatiously the "Amour Tirannique" of de Scudéry, where a character, the Queen Ormène, is placed in the same circumstances as Chimène in the Cid and Anne of Austria in reality, to wit, between her struggling father and husband. But the solution given to the problem is in the "Amour Tirannique", the opposite of the Cid. Nowhere does Ormène call for vengeance; she remains submissive and is recompensed for it at the end.

NOTES

for

THEORY OF THE CID.

(1) Levallois--Corneille Inconnu. pp. 143-146.

(2) Lanson--Pierre Corneille. p. 170.

(3) Lanson--Idem.

(4) A. Dorchain--Pierre Corneille, p. 167.

(5) See the preceding chapter on Corneille's *Mérite*.

(6) F. Brunetiere--Hist. de la litt. franc. classique II, 187.

(7) After two years of negotiations her marriage with Louis XIII was at last decided and announced on March 25, 1612, and celebrated on October 18, 1615. She was the daughter of Philippe III of Spain. Her dates are from 1605 to January 20, 1666.

(8) *Dépeche de Pisaro* of February 10, 1623. Bibliothèque Nationale. Ms. Ital. 1779 (p. 221)

(9) Chaulnes--Relation exacte p.484; Lettre d'Anne d'Autriche à Luynes of July 26, 1620.

Archives du château de Dampierre. cf. L. Batiffol--Le Roi Louis XIII à vingt ans.

(10) Histoire de France, 1756, XIII, 515.

(11) The words "quelques paroles qui choquoient: les grands ministres", do not refer to the duel. Richelieu did not disapprove of the duel of Don Rodrigue: In the *Mérite* and in the *Clitandre* duels are proposed or fought without that Corneille lost therefore the favor of the Cardinal. Besides, in the *Aveugle de Smyrne*; a play inspired by Richelieu, a character, Philarque says in the first scene: "Il s'attend que par un lasche effort, sans me battre avec luy, je luy donne la mort", and further: "Je veux bien voir Philiste en un juste duel."--(Cf. Meyer--Beiträge zur Kenntnis Pierre Corneilles,

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vornehmlich in den Jahren von Melite bis zum Cid. 1911--p. 39)

The Cardinal was not the first minister to forbid the duels in France. Henry IV gave edicts against this custom in 1602, and 1610. In 1617 and 1623, before the reign of Richelieu these edicts were promulgated again by Louis XIII. In 1626 and 1634 the prohibitions are repeated. In the former year Richelieu proposed to the assembly of the Notables to moderate the penalties for the duel. Richelieu asks Mescot, his confessor, "s'il ne peut donner aucun cas où les roys puissent permettre les duels eu querelle particulière; en cas qu'il ne se puisse pas, comment on peut sauver les permissions qu'on en a données autrefois en France et autres Etats, permissions autorisées des Eglises en divers lieux----- Il ya a grande apparence que par cette permission on viendroit a bout de la multitude de duels, ou qu'en promettant la licence de se battre, à ceux qui en auront juste cause, chacun se soumettrait au juge deputé à cet effet, esperant avoir la permission.----- "

In 1638 and in 1640, Richelieu obtained a general amnesty for all the nobles concerned in duel-affairs. "On se rappelle que Richelieu s'efforçait en ce temps-là de mettre fin au duel. Il aurait été mécontent de la défense du duel que le poète semblait mettre dans la bouche de quelques-uns des personnages de sa tragédie. (N. A ce propos on oublie généralement les passages qui condamnent le duel (surtout les vers 1406 et suiv.). Ce qui prouve la fausseté de cette explication c'est que "Les Sentiments de l'Académie Française sur le Cid" écrits sous la surveillance de Richelieu lui-même, une surveillance attestée par ses apostilles, sanctionnent expressement l'idéal de l'honneur personnel que représente Rodrigue. "Elle estoit excellente dans la bouche de Rodrigue." (C. Searles, Op. cit. 348)

- (12) Em. Roy--La Vie et les Oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 301
- (13) See the division about Pellisson's Histoire de L'Academie française in the same chapter.
- (14) Avertissement sur l'histoire de la Monarchie française. 1628.
- (15) Les Oeuvres de monsieur Sarasin--1663. p.342
- (16) N. Periaux--Histoire de la Ville de Rouen:

1636 On fit le 13 aout, des enrôlements à Rouen pour aller, avec le duc de Longueville, combattre les Espagnols en Picardie. Cette levée necessita la création de subsides extraordinaires. La foule des soldats repandait en même temps la désolation dans les compagnes. Des plaintes ayant été portées au Parlement "contre les ravages, désordres, brulements, violences et inhumanités que commettaient les gens de guerre en logement dans les provinces"--Ordre de les persecuter rigoureusement.)

(17) Cf. Le Verdier and E. Pelay--Additions à la Bibliographie Cornélienne. no. 9.-----
de Beaurepaire--Bull. de la société de l'Histoire de Normandie, 131-134--year 1906.

G. Dubosc--Trois Normands, p.7 --- I - Guillaume Corneille, unclé of the poet had a son, Noel Corneille, whose daughter Catherine married Daniel de Châlon, sieur de Dequey, son of Mathieu de Châlon, sieur du Hamel, and of Suzanne Le Claustier--

Guillaume Corneille, sieur de Saucuisine.
(uncle of Corneille)

Noël Corneille, sieur de Saucuisine
marries Genevieve de Surmont.

Guillaume Corneille

Catherine Corneille marries
Daniel de Châlon, sieur de Dequey.

3. Louis-Francois de Châlons, son of Francois de Châlons, sieur de Canleon, and "maître des comptes" at Rouen in 1644, was married to Fleurimonde Le Pesant, related to Corneille's

mother.

3. In 1655, Alphonse-Rodrigue de Châlons, referred to by Beauchamps married Catherine Briffault, related to Anne Briffault, wife of Pierre Corneille's uncle, François Corneille.

(18) The statements of Beauchamps are manifestly at fault in one respect. He says that, in 1636, when M. de Châlons made his suggestion to Corneille, he had "quitté la cour et s'était retiré à Rouen dans sa vieillesse". Now, Rodrigue de Chalons did not retire to Rouen than around 1650. He was born in 1615 and married in 1655, at Rouen. The confusion in the statement of Beauchamp, probably arose from the fact that Rodrigue de Châlons lived at Rouen in his old age, after 1650.

(19) See E. Gosselin--Pierre Corneille (le père), maître des Eaux et des Forêts-Rouen--1864.

(20) Epître familière du Sieur Mairet-Gasté, 283.

(21) Lettre à xxx, sous le nom d'Ariste, Gasté, 202.

(22) Another of Corneille's partisans, probably Sirmond, answered de Scudéry with the pamphlet: "Le Souhait du Cid en faveur de Scudéri--~~Une~~ ^{Une} paire de Lunettes pour faire mieux ses observations." What he says about the queen adds but little to the present study: "

"On trouvera plutôt un Singe sans malice, un oiseau sans plumes, un poisson sans écailles qu'un Espagnol sans vanité. L'exemple d'une Princesse ^Nourrie dans un climat plus doux n'est pas à propos, c'est dans les crimes d'autrui luy reprocher sa naissance, où par ses vertus vouloir effacer toutes les imperfections qu'elle a laissées en son pays avec des compliments indiscrets, l'ayant nommée divine personne,

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Scudéri a peur de commettre un sacrilège en faisant un acte d'adoration, il ne falloit pas se servir du terme de divin s'il ne vouloit pas en rendre les soubmissions, partout ou le mot de divin se rencontre à moins que d'adorer on se rend coupable."

Another pamphlet of the Cid-quarrel, the latest to appear, is singular in tone and defends Chimène with lyrical enthusiasm. Its author dedicates his work "Aux Dames"-----"L'estime que je fais de votre mérite m'a obligé de défendre votre honneur, defendant celui de Chimène." (Gasté, 477) And: "Pouvez-vous bien souffrir, Mes-dames, que celle qui a paru comme un soleil au Ciel de vos Beutez, et qui a été adorée comme une Divinité dans le Temple de vos Vertus, ou vous confessiez à genoux, qu'au seul Autel de ses perfections les mortels devoient apporter toutes leurs offrandes de respect et de service, soit aujourd'huy obscurcie et prophanée par des blasphèmes insupportables.

Les Hommes qui doivent aux Dames toute sorte de services et de devoirs, ont mauvaise grâce d'offenser l'innocence, et vouloir ternir la perle des Beutez du monde, Chymène, par une tache noire de calomnie: mais comme les foibles nuages ne servent que pour augmenter la lumière du Soleil et luy donner des nouveaux charmes: ainsi ces vapeurs de calomnie feront briller avec plus d'éclat la splendeur de sa vertu." (L'Innocence et le véritable ^{ble} Amour de Chymène. Gasté -466)

Would one not think that the author is speaking about a living person, instead of about a heroine of the stage?

(23) Edition of Ch. L. Livet, pp. 86-88

(24) Beiträge zur Kenntnis Pierre Corneilles vornehmlich in den Jahren von Melite bis zum Cid--1629. p. 16--Schneeberg 1911.

(25) L'Académie Française et le "Cid"--Revue d'Histoire Litteraire --1914. p.345.

(26) Cf. C. Searles--Op. cit. p. 360.

(27) Cf. Searles--Op. cit. 359.

(28) See the preceding division on the Ennoblement of Corneille.

(29) G. Daniel--Histoire de France, XIII. p. 42.

(30) Déclaration de la Reine Anne du 17 Aoust 1637: (Cf. V. Cousin--Mme. De Chèvreuse p. 253) Among other things the queen confessed: "Qu'entre autres choses nous avons

quelques fois tesmoigné du mecontentement de l'estat auquel nous estions, et avons reçu et escrit des lettres au marquis de Mirabel qui estoient en des termes qui devoient déplaire au Roy; "Que nous avons donné advis du voyage d'un Minime en Espagne pour que l'on eust l'oeil ouvert à prendre garde à quel dessein on l'envoyoit:

"Que nous avons donné advis audit marquis de Mirabel que l'on parloit ici de l'accommodement de M. de Lorraine avec Le Roy, et que l'on y prit garde:

"Que nous avons tesmoigné estre en peine de ce que l'on disoit que les Anglois s'accommodoient avec la France au lieu de demeurer unis avec l'Espagne:

"Et que la lettre dont La Porte a esté trouvé chargé devoit estre portée à Mme. de Chèvreuse par le sieur de la Thibaudière et que la dite lettre fait mention d'un voyage que la dite dame de Chèvreuse vouloit faire incogneuë devers nous.

"Advouons ingenuement tout ce que dessus comme choses que nous reconnoissons franchement et volontairement estre véritables. Nous promettons de ne retourner jamais à pareilles fautes, et de vivre avec le Roy nostre tres Honoré seigneur et espoux

comme une personne qui ne veut autres intérêts que ceux de sa
 personne et de son Estat. En tesmoing de quoi nous avons sign^e
 signé la présente de nostre propre main, et icelle faict
 contresigner par nostres conseillets et secrétaire de nos
 commandements et finances. Fait à Chantilly, ce dix--septième
 aoust 1637; signé Anne. Et plus bas, Legras: "Et audessous
 est encore escrit de la main de Roy:

"Après avoir veu la franche confession que la reyne nostre^e
 très chère espouse a faite de ce qui a pu nous desplaire
 depuis quelque temps en sa conduite, et l'assurance qu'elle
 nous a donnée de sa conduite à l'advenir selon son devoir
 envers nous et nostre Estat, nous lui declarons que nous
 oublions entièrement tout ce qui s'est passé, n'en voulons
 jamais avoir souvenance, ains voulons vivre avec elle comme
 un bon roy et un bon mary doit faire avec sa femme. En
 tesmoing de quoi j'ay signé la présente et icelle faict
 contresigner par l'un de nos conseillers et secrétaires d'Estat.
 Fait à Chantilly, ce dix septième jour d'aoust, 1637. Signé
 de la propre main du roy, Louis. Et plus bas: Bouthillier."

(31) Richelieu:--Relation de ce qui s'est passé en
 l'affaire de la Reyne au mois d'^{Août}~~avril~~ 1637 sur le sujet de la
 Porte et de l'abbesse du Val-de-grâce. -Bibliothèque nationale-
 Manuscrit 4068--Cf. V. Cousin--Madame de Chevreuse, p.250.

"Le Roy ayant divers avis qu'un nommé La Porte, porte-manteau
 de la reyne sa femme, faisoit divers voyages dont on ne savoit
 pas la cause et estoit en confiance assez étroite pour un
 valet avec la reyne, se résolut de le faire prendre lorsqu'il
 pourroit souçonner apparemment qu'il auroit des lettres de la
 reyne.

"Pour cet effect, le 11^e aoust, Sa Majesté donna charge que
 la reyne estant partie pour aller à Chantilly trouver sa dite

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Majesté, le dit La Porte fut arrêté par le sieur Goulart, enseigne des mousquetaires du Roy.

"En le prenant on le trouva saisi d'une lettre de la reyne pour Mme de Chèvreuse, qui faisoit cognoistre que la dite dame de Chèvreuse vouloit venir trouver la reyne deguisée, à quoi Sa Majesté n'inclinoit pas trop.

"Au mesme temps le Roy commanda à M. le chancelier d'aller avec M. de Paris au Val-de-Grâce, ou le procès-verbal qui y fut fait, fait foi de ce qui s'y passa.

"D'abord que la reyne scit la prise de La Porte, elle envoya le sieur Le Gras, son secrétaire, vers le cardinal de Richelieu pour scavoir ce qu c'estoit, et l'assurer cependant qu'elle ne s'estoit servie du dit La Porte que pour escrire à Mme de Chèvreuse, protestant n'avoir escrit en aucune facon ni en Flandres ni en Espagne, soit par son moyen au par quelque autre voye que ce put estre.

"Le jour de l'Assomption estant arrivé, la reyne ayant communiqué fit appeler le dit sieur Le Gras, et lui jura de nouveau sur le Saint Sacrement qu'elle avoit ^{Reçu} ~~scu~~ qu'elle n'avait point escrit en pays estrange, et lui commanda d'en assurer de nouveau le dit cardinal sur les sermens, qu'elle avoit faits. Elle envoya mesme quérir le père Caussin pour lui parler de toutes ces affaires là et lui fit les mesmes sermens qu'elle avoit faits au sieur Le Gras: en sorte que le bon père qui ne scavoit pas ce que le Roy scavoit en demeura persuadé par raison.

"Deux jours après, la reyne estant assurée par le sieur Le Gras qu'on scavoit davantage qu'elle ne disoit, commença à parler audit sieur Le Gras, et lui en avoua une partie, niant toujours le principal, et commanda au dit sieur Le Gras de dire au cardinal qu'elle desiroit lui parler et lui dire ce qu'elle

scavoit.

"Le lendemain le cardinal la fut trouver par l'ordre de Sa Majesté: D'abord apres lui avoir rendu plus de temoignages de sa bonne volonté, qu'il n'en osoit, attendre, elle lui dit qu'il estoit vrai qu'elle avoit escrit en Flandres à M. le cardinal infant, mais que ce n'estoit que de choses indifferentes pour scavoir de sa santé, et autres choses de pareille nature. Le cardinal lui disant qu'a son avis il y avoit plus, et que si elle se vouloit servir de lui il l'assuroit que pourvu qu'elle lui dit tout le roi oublieroit tout ce qui s'estoit passé, mais qu'il la supplioit de ne l'employer point si elle vouloit user de dissimulation. Estant pressée par sa bonté et par sa conscience, elle dit lors à Mme. de Senécé, M. M. de Chavigny et de Noyers, qui estoient présens et avoient esté appelez par le cardinal pour estre temoins de l'offre qu'il lui faisoit de la part du Roy d'oublier tout le passé; qu'ils se retirassent, pour lui donner lieu de dire en particulier au cardinal ce qu'elle lui vouloit dire. Alors elle confessa au cardinal tout ce qui est dans le papier qu'elle a signé depuis, avec beaucoup de desplaisir et de confusion d'avoir fait les sermens contraires a ce qu'elle confessoit.

"Pendant qu'elle fit la dite confession au cardinal, sa bonté fut telle qu'elle s'escria plusieurs fois: Quelle bonté faut-il que vous ayez, M. le cardinal! Et protestant qu'elle auroit toute sa vie la reconnaissance de l'obligation qu'elle pensoit avoir à ceux qui la tiroient de cette affaire, elle fit l'honneur de dire au cardinal: donnez-moi la main, présentant la sienne pour marque de la fidélité avec laquelle elle vouloit garder ce qu'elle promettoit; ce que le cardinal refusa par respect, se retirant par le mesme motif au lieu de s'approcher.

After the quarrel of the Cid, Corneille seems to have been discouraged for some time and refrained from writing for the stage. He remained in Rouen and was probably studying poetical treatises to find suitable arguments and authorities against the theories of his critics and against the Academy. In a letter to Balzac of the 15th. of January 1639, Chapelain related that the great tragedy-writer came to visit him in Paris and told him that he had no new tragedy in preparation:

"Corneille est ici depuis trois jours, et d'abord m'est venu faire un éclaircissement sur le livre de l'Académie pour ou plutôt contre le Cid, m'accusant, et non sans raison, d'en être le principal auteur. Il ne fait plus rien, et Scudéry a du moins gagné cela, en le querellant, qu'il lui a tari sa veine. Je l'ai autant que j'ai pu réchauffé et encouragé à se venger et de Scudéry et de sa protectrice en faisant quelque nouveau Cid qui attire encore les suffrages de tout le monde, et qui montre que l'art n'est pas ce qui fait la beauté; mais il n'y a pas moyen de l'y résoudre et il ne parle plus que de règles et que des choses qu'il eut pu répondre aux académiciens, s'il n'eut point craint de choquer les puissances, mettant au reste Aristote entre les auteurs apocryphes lorsqu'ils ne s'accommode pas à ses imaginations" (/)

As Corneille's next play, the Horace, was not represented before March 1640, it seems very probable that Corneille spoke the truth when on the 15th. of January 1639, he pretended that he was too discouraged to work. Nor is it very likely that he would have begun writing, in February, two or three weeks later, for at this time he experienced one of the greatest

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sorrows of his life. On the 12th of February 16³49, his father died. The date of the composition of the Horace may therefore be placed after the death of his father, between March and December 1639.

Corneille's father was a man of strong character, wholly devoted to his country and to his office. On the 5th. of May 1599 he obtained the post of "Maître particulier des eaux et forêts en la vicomte de Rouen." This proves that his character, honesty and ability stood above suspicion, for the King Louis XIII had given the order that every candidate to this office should be examined with the greatest care as to these qualifications. (2) He reformed the forestry regulations in favor of the public treasury and took measures to conserve the forests, triumphing over considerable resistance from the side of the people and of his own employees, helped by interested wood merchants. In 1600, assisted by "arquebusiers", he drove bands of robbers from the forests of La Valette, Lessart and Moulineaux. The Parlement recognized his services and he was charged at various times with important and difficult missions. He was a man of fearless zeal and of great devotion to duty. On the other hand he was of imperious disposition, and defended strenuously his interests, his privileges and authority in various law suits. His rigid character and his rigorous application of the law, made him many enemies. He persecuted rich noblemen, as Bigard de Lalonde, for unlawful acts and imposed his authority as master of the forests upon the "verdiers", (3) after a law suit "en style normand", lasting eight years. He opposed, on various occasions, almost alone, bands of rebellious peasants and robbers, who infested the woods committed to his care. He tendered his resignation in 1620, and, as mentioned in the preceding chapter,

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was ennobled by special act of the king in the month of January 1637. The writ puts great stress on his devotion to his country as a public servant and refers in particular to the generous acts in which he served the interests of the king "au risque et péril de (ses) biens et incommodités de (sa) personne." (4)

While Corneille was mourning his father, when sorrow made his image all the more vivid in his soul, he wrote the Horace. And, is it nothing more than an accident that the most striking character in the play is the "Viell Horace", the sublime father? Corneille's father possessed, especially in his son's eyes, -in the rigidity and the strong-willed steadfastness of his character, in his firmness and fearless patriotism, qualities, which reminded Corneille of those virtuous and resolute Roman fathers, who followed stoically their duty to the bitter end. Not that Corneille would have copied directly any of the characteristics of his father, but the incentive to the creation of his "ideal father", the old Horace, in 1639, is doubtless to be found in this fact of his personal life: his reverence for his own father, heightened by his sorrow for his death. By a psychological process of transposition, -common to poets, - he created the ideal Roman father- stoic, inflexible and unrelenting, but fearless, patriotic and sublime, - as a kind of offering to the memory of his own father.

Cinna ou la Clemence d'Auguste, which followed Horace, will be fully discussed in the next chapter.

After the Cinna, Corneille wrote the tragedy Polyeucte, which was represented 1643, since Polyeucte was related to Corneille's personal life in a similar way as the Horace,

both plays are here considered together.

Between Cinna and Polyeucte a breach of almost two years occurs in Corneille's dramatic production. This is explained by a dangerous sickness and by his marriage which soon followed his recovery.

The influence of Corneille's marriage upon his conception of Polyeucte is obvious enough. Some lines refer to marriage:

Polyeucte: "Mais vous ne savez pas ce que c'est qu'une
femme,
Vous ignorez quels droits elle a sur toute l'âme
Quand, après un long temps qu'elle a su nous
charmer,
Les flambeaux de l'hymen viennent de s'allumer."
(I. sc. I)

And Pauline: "Tu vois, ma Stratonice, en quel siècle nous sommes.
Voilà notre pouvoir sur les esprits des hommes,
Voilà ce qui nous reste, et l'ordinaire effet
De l'amour qu'on nous offre, et des vœux qu'on
nous fait.

Tant qu'ils ne sont qu'amants nous sommes
souveraines,
Et jusqu'a la conquête ils nous traitent de
reines,
Mais après l'hymenée ils sont Rois à leur tour."
Stratonice: "Il est bon qu'un mari nous cache quelque chose,
Qu'il soit quelquefois libre, et ne s'abaisse
pas
A nous rendre toujours compte de tous ses pas;
On n'a tous deux qu'un coeur qui sent mêmes
traverses;
Mais ce coeur a pourtant ses fonctions diverses,
Et la loi de l'hymen qui vous tient assemblées
N'ordonne pas qu'il tremble alors que vous
tremblez;"
(I. sc.3)

Not only are there found, for the first time in Corneille's work, some lines referring to domestic happiness, but the very moral problem presented by the play is a conflict between religion and the love of a husband for his wife. Polyeucte, the exalted martyr, married to Pauline, has to choose between love and happiness or a martyr's death. He is inspired to seek the end of a saint in destroying the idols of a temple of Melitena. Finally, through his constancy and faith in Christ, Pauline

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is converted. Regarded from the point of view of every day morals and obligations we will find fault with the conduct of Polyeucte, who ruins the earthly happiness of his young wife by his uncontrolled desire for the martyr's palm. But Corneille's heroes move in loftier spheres. The morals of christian heroism prescribe to the husband the duty of giving his wife the highest and most exalted happiness: the eternal joy of heaven, -even at the expense of her happiness on earth. He has to save her soul and in doing so he will give her inconceivably more than he takes away from her. The sacrifice of his own life is for Polyeucte not too high a price to pay for the eternal felicity of Pauline. Would they not be reunited for ever in the glory of God, if Pauline can be converted, and what matter domestic joys and pleasures in comparison with such a price? His conduct, measured by the standards of Corneille's conceptions, was not dictated by lack of love for her, by disdain or by fanaticism, but by the noblest and most unselfish form of love to be found in actual life. The tragedy, Polyeucte, seen in this light is the tragedy of the highest matrimonial fidelity. From a personal problem: his marriage, Corneille evolved an eternal and sublime conflict of noble souls. Many critics, who did not perceive the intense idealism of the play, have singularly misunderstood the motives of Polyeucte. Some have called him a fanatic, others stress his "coolness", his lack of real love for his wife. (5) Voltaire, who could scarcely be expected to appreciate the mystical conception of happiness and fidelity beyond the grave, finds him uninteresting. (6)

An American critic says:

"This play verges on the ridiculous in the emphasis the author gives to what he is pleased to call "reason" as

opposed to feeling yet he manages after all so well in keeping within bounds, though for the last time, that the drama is in many respects his best----- . The defect of the play to the modern reader lies in the mostruosity of the will power of Polyeucte and Pauline----- . The Cornelian grandeur and self-abnegation of Polyeucte's character make him in the face of martyrdom not only crave death but turn over his wife to his rival. Pauline is so constantly harping on her GLOIRE and ringing the changes on the phrase "sur mes passions ma raison souveraine" that one does not blame the dauphiness for saying: "Voilà une tres honnête femme qui n'aime pas son mari." (S. Wright.--- History of French Lit. pp. 313-314)

These critics betray a misunderstanding of the Cornelian hero, whom they judge by standards other than those which Corneille held. It is above all necessary to adopt in imagination the poet's point of view, his whole moral outlook in order to understand the real significance of his work.

Polyeucte has the misfortune of being a tragedy of faith and as such, it has been the object of attacks of sceptical minds who considered less its purely artistic value than its glorification of martyrdom. And their condemnation of the spiritual tendencies of the play has, in many cases, blinded them for its outstanding esthetic merit. Yet, it is not more necessary to believe in all the theories of Polyeucte or even to share his faith and aspirations to appreciate the beauty of Corneille's work, than it is necessary to serve Jove to appreciate Homer's poems. Christian heroism, too, can be one of the highest themes of art, even for the Buddhist or for the unbeliever.

HORACE AND POLYEUCTE.

NOTES.

- (1) Marty-Laveaux. III, 249
- (2) E.Gosselin--Pierre Corneille, le père, et sa maison de
Campagne--Revue de la Normandie 1864-p.400.
- (3) In charge of wood sales.
- (4) Marty-Laveaux I, p. LXIX.
- (5) Levallois--Corneille Inconnu p.74
- (6) Oeuvres de Corneille--Edition Voltaire--Polyeucte.

Lanson's theory that the life of the times penetrated Corneille's tragedies; that it suggested the choice of certain subjects of which he found the nucleus in Latin authors; that it vivified these historical sources in his mind so that he perceived in a few ordinary lines all the possibilities of a powerful tragedy, is again exemplified in the genesis of the *Cinna* ou la *Clémence d'Auguste*. With this play Corneille followed the same method as with the *Cid* and the *Horace*. The love and sorrows of *Chimène* corresponded in a kind of symbolical way to the moral problems of the queen of France; the death of Corneille's father was the impulse to the creation of the ideal father in the *Horace*; and *Cinna* was suggested by certain events which happened at Rouen.

These connections between facts of Corneille's own life and tragedies apparently so abstract and so remote from reality and actuality, give us a glimpse of the process of creation in Corneille; an event in contemporary politics or in his surroundings, powerfully draws his attention to a certain theme, and in that theme he perceives a moral problem which will lend force and pathos to his dramatic conception. At the time of the conception of the *Cid*, as expounded in the preceding chapter, Corneille found a moral problem - the struggle between love for a father and love for a husband - in the position of Queen Anne of Austria, and he discovered the same moral problem in the historical *Cid*-theme.

After this first stage of his conception he chooses a story from classical antiquity or from medieval times which presents sufficient analogy with the events and the moral problem furnished by his own experience; and it is this story from

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antiquity which he brings on the stage. But in the theme from antiquity he reads the psychological problem which is duplicated more or less in his own times and surroundings; he sees antiquity with modern eyes; he animates his classical heroes with the moral conceptions and the ideals of his own period.

It had been a very general practice in oratory, panegyrics and lyrics since the 16th century to compare a contemporary event or a contemporary personage to a classical event of a classical hero. Every conqueror say^w the analogy pointed out between his deeds and those of Alexander or Scipio or Cyrus; many political situations of the time were linked up with an analogous situation in history. How fond the 17th century authors were of mixing classical history with contemporary fact is evident from the numerous "Romans à clef" of the time. The Grand Cyrus, to cite the best known example, under the pretext of telling the story of the conquests of that Asiatic conqueror, narrated the victories of Condé and the life of the court. Some of that mingling of a half-classical and of a half-modern spirit is found in Corneille's works. He too, conceived history as a sublime school for the high-born souls of his time, where they could glean memorable examples of exalted and heroic life. And when he stages a theme from Antiquity or from the Middle Ages, this preoccupation with his own period remains visible in his tragedies.

It is from his surroundings and from his own experience that comes the impulse which dictates the choice of such or such a theme of antiquity. He treats of Seventeenth century moral problems, and the solution which he gives to them is in accordance with the tenets of his age. In a sense, he transposes the events of his times and surroundings into the realm

of the heroic and the historic; he magnifies the facts of his own existence by projecting them, in more grandiose dimensions, into his dramatic conceptions.

His heroes, to be sure, are no true portraits, as has been claimed, of de Retz, Richelieu, and Bussy-Rabutin; they are more ideal, less intriguing; less slaves of petty ambitions than even the strong rulers and daring "frondeurs" of the seventeenth century. Yet they show some traits of the "honnête homme" and of the ambitious nobleman of the period, because they are the magnified image of what is best in them; the idealized projection of their higher qualities. They follow an ideal standard of aristocratic heroism; they solve moral problems according to the laws of the "souverain bien"; they enforce the solution arrived at by means of an indomitable will. Yet the Cornelian heroes are not entirely and exclusively images of the Cortegiano-like ideal of the 17th century aristocracy. In them there appears some antique stoicism; some traits which the 17th century attributed to the Roman, as exemplified in Balzac's "Le Romain"; who "estime plus un jour employé à la Vertu qu'une longue vie délicieuse; un moment de Gloire qu'un siècle de Volupté."

Now, these twofold characteristics are explained by the way Corneille approached his subject. The 17th century element is due to his sensitiveness to the suggestions of his environment; the classical element to his search for analogy and parallels with contemporary problems in the history of antiquity. Cinna again exemplifies both this inspiration drawn from the actual events of his day and of his surroundings and the historical transposition explained in the preceding paragraphs.

The events of the time which focused Corneille's attention upon the moral problem of the Cinna, the problem of magnanimity

and forgiveness, will first be succinctly narrated:

"Cinna ou la Clémence d'Auguste" was written in 1640 and was produced by the end of the same year. To understand the genesis of this play, it is necessary to turn to the local history of Corneille's native city, Rouen. The years 1639 and 1640 were for his compatriots very disturbed and even tragic. For decades the people of Normandy had suffered from excessive taxes, hunger, and the plague. Many revolts had flamed up in various parts of the country, fostered by English intrigue and complicated by religious strife. The poor people had fled to the woods and formed an army, pathetically called "l'armée de la souffrance". The mysterious Jean-Nu-Pieds was their chief. Manifestos in verse and prose incited the people to open revolt against the oppression of Richelieu and against the "intendante" and "commissaires du Roy" who were detailed to receive the taxes. The two intendants in Rouen were Paris and Pascal, the father of the immortal author of the "Pensées". When, in 1639, new taxes were announced, the revolt spread at once over Normandy (1). The houses of the "commissaires du Roy" were burned and some of the tax receivers were killed. The "Armée de la Souffrance" marched throughout the country, plundering and burning. The misery was great in Upper-Normandy and in Rouen. The contemporary "Mémoires" draw a pitiful picture of the distress which prevailed:

"Ce n'estoit que misère et calamitez, povreté, impotz, empruntz, sur le povre monde. C'est une horreur et une misère, que d'entendre les povres gens des champs, qui abandonnent leurs maisons et se retirent dans les bois, ne pouvant plus subvenir à la volonté du roy" (2). On the 29th of August, 1639, the revolt burst out in Rouen. The house of Hugot "receveur général des francs-fiefs" was burned and the Hotel du Luxembourg pillaged

punishment, foreshadowed in the words of Séguier, fell heavily upon all classes of the Rouen population. All the public bodies, the law courts, the city council, and the Parlement itself were accused of being accomplices in the revolt. The Parlement, the Cour des Aides, the Bureau des finances, and the authorities of the townhall, were revoked. The burgomaster, Godard du Becquet was dismissed. All the privileges of the city were abolished, the city hall closed, and the suspended authorities brought to Paris to be judged by the Upper Court. The inhabitants of Rouen were terror stricken. Hundreds of them, led by their priests, threw themselves on their knees before Séguier, crying for forgiveness. Five leaders of the rebellion were executed without any form of trial. All the suspects of Rouen were arrested and for three weeks the counsellors of state worked without ceasing on the trials of the real or supposed rebels. Some were condemned to death, others banished to the galleys, a great number were flogged in public and chased from the city, till the prisons were at last empty. The city of Rouen was condemned to a fine of one million eighty five thousands livres.

During this reign of terror and lamentation, Corneille wrote his "Cinna ou la Clémence d'Auguste". In the midst of the distress of his city, and while many of his friends were being banished, he sung the praise of the beauty of forgiveness and mercy, and pointed to the example of the great emperor August, who pardoned the conspirators whom he held in his power. In doing so he echoed the sentiment of his fellow-citizens, who begged for the leniency of Richelieu. The very atmosphere of that year of blood and persecution suggested his subject to him.

The connection between the harsh suppression of the revolt in Rouen and the theme of Corneille's play did not escape the attention of his biographers. M. Ed. Fournier in the intro-

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ductory study "Notes sur la vie de Corneille" preceding his play "Corneille à la Butte Saint Roch"(4) was the first to call attention to the connection of the theme of the Cinna with the history of Rouen in 1639. He narrated the events and concludes: "En sa qualité d'avocat aux sièges généraux de l'amirauté, Corneille faisait partie du parlement; il comptait parmi les proscrits, des amis, des parents peut-être, et devait avoir à coeur de calmer les ressentiments de Richelieu. Est-ce à dire que nous ne voyions dans Cinna qu'un eloquent plaidoyer? Dieu nous en garde! A coup sur, Corneille voulait avant tout faire une belle tragédie; mais reconstrant dans Sénèque le magnifique exemple de clémence qu'il a si bien mis en scène, ne peut-il point, par un retour bien naturel sur son temps, avoir souhaité pour sa ville natale un souverain aussi magnanime qu'Auguste? S'il a eu cette idee, la Rome antique s'est tout à coup animée à ses yeux, et l'emotion que lui avoient causée les troubles dont il venait d'être témoin, fut la source de cette inspiration passionnée avec laquelle il peignit en contemporain, en spectateur fidèle, les agitations qui accompagnèrent l'établissement de l'empire."(5) Marty-Laveaux adopts the thesis of Fournier, and adds that Corneille's appeal for mercy had no effect. "La tragédie eut donc un grand succès; mais l'eloquente et indirecte supplication quis'y trouvait contenue, fut loin d'en avoir autant. Aucun des Rouennais proscrits ne fut rappelé et les rigueurs ordonnées suivirent leur cours"(6) Marty-Laveaux's comment is based on an error of date. The Cinna was represented after the Horace, probably by the end of 1640. Months before this date, on January 28, 1640 the suppression of the revolt in Rouen was ended. The executions and banishment of the plunderers were accomplished facts before the Cinna was staged or

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probably even written. In that case, Corneille's supposed plea for the rebels would have come before Richelieu months after their execution. Besides, nearly every one of the executed or banished rebels were of the lowest classes of the population(7) Corneille, on the other hand, belonged to the nobility since 1637 and was consequently not obliged to pay the crushing taxes which started the revolt. Besides this, he was a confirmed partisan of the court(8) and the friend of one of Richelieu's tax receivers, the pere Pascal. And - as Picot remarks -(9) would Corneille, who all his life showed a great deference for authority have dared to give so openly a lesson of humanity and mercy to Richelieu? It is also beyond all doubt that exactly at the time that Corneille is supposed to have criticized the political cruelty of Richelieu, he was anxiously striving to merit the favor of the powerful cardinal. When, in 1641, he published his *Horace*, he dedicated this play to him and the Dedicaca even surpasses the ordinary submissive style of such productions. Would Richelieu have consented to receive, in 1641, a Dedicace from a poet who had openly criticized his political conduct a few months earlier, by the end of 1640?

The thesis of Mr. Fournier has also been attacked sharply by the painstaking biographer of Corneille, Mr. Taschereau(10) "Par le plus charmant rapprochement, il nous montre, Corneille faisant *Cinna*, comme il aurait fait un placet impromptu pour obtenir de Richelieu la grâce de quelques mutins normands. Voilà comme avec un homme d'esprit, de grands effets doivent toujours avoir tenu à de toutes petites causes.....d'après la correspondance de Chapelain, qui ne permet pas de doute à cet égard, *Cinna* n'a été représenté que fort avant dans l'année 1640. Or les émeutes des environs de Rouen, les jugements du parlement de Normandie, les mesures edictées à la suite, étaient du commence-

ment de 1639; une tragedie-placet, glorifiant la clémence et n'arrivant que longtemps apres les rigoureuses executions consommées, ne pouvait plus avoir ni a propos ni efficacité, et ne devenait plus necessairement qu'une fort inutile et fort perilleuse épigramme. Il n'y a donc à cette fable aucune vraisemblance et c'est ce qui précisément aura séduit M. Ed. Fournier, mais aussi ce qui devait avertir et prémunir sa victime (= Marty-Laveaux)"

Sound criticism and error are ^{mingled} strongly mixed in these statements. Taschereau, no doubt, judges rightly in saying that Corneille would not have dared to criticize openly the cruelty of the all-powerful cardinal. On the contrary, he was at that time trying hard to merit and keep his good graces. And he was indeed too submissive and too respectful of authority to embark upon an adventure which might have landed him in the Bastille. Since the Cid-quarrel he had scrupulously avoided everything which might cause him further trouble. Did he not write to Boisrobert on December 23, 1637: "Je suis un peu plus de ce monde qu'Heliodore, qui aime mieux perdre son évêché que son lèvre, et j'aime mieux les bonnes grâces de mon maitre que toutes les reputations de la terre: je me tairai donc, non point par mépris mais par respect..."(11)

It is also true that the executions of the lower class rebels were finished almost a year before the representation of the Cinna - in January 1640 - and that, if the play had been a plea for mercy for them, it would have come too late. But M. Taschereau loses sight of the fact that the Parlement of Rouen and the city authorities were suppressed and banished by Richelieu and that Corneille's play was more closely related to their case than to the fate of some poor plunderers, the more so because he himself was through their banishment reduced to the impossibility of exercising his functions. And since the full power and independence of the Parlement was not restored till March 1641, Cinna

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played by the end of 1640 was still timely.

The Parlement and the other civil authorities of Rouen were accused of serious delinquencies, of complicity in the revolt and of misuse of authority even with the intention of shielding the murderers of the king's agents. Séguier's "Mémoire touchant la Révolte de Rouen" (12) formulates a regular act of accusation. It gives the following reasons among others, for the interdiction of the Parlement: (p.382) "Au lieu que le Parlement devoit faire justice exemplaire de toutes ces séditions, lorsqu'ils ont informé du pillage qui avoit esté fait dans les bureaux du roy ilz n'ont trouvé preuves contre aucun et n'ont pas mesme fait le procès à Estienne Poncet, designé par les tesmoins, quoy qu'il soit prisonnier dans leurs prisons, et quand ils ont informé de ce qu'il s'est passé ès maisons des bourgeois, ils ont trouvé preuves entières, et néanmoins n'ont point voulu juger quatre personnes, auxquels le procès est fait, entre lesquels est Gorin chef des séditieux, de l'exécution duquel ilz eussent appris l'origine de la sédition et ceux qui estoient complices. Toutes les informations qui ont esté faictes, de l'ordonnance du Parlement semblent avoir esté faictes pour excuser la sédition et l'imputer aux commis dont les bureaux ont esté pillés, d'autant que les tesmoins qui ont esté ouys ne déposent autre chose sinon que les bureaux ont esté pillés parce que les commis s'en estoient allez, et avoient emporté les meubles sans payer leurs debtes."

And yet no magistrates were tried before the military court presided by Séguier. Some of the judges were inclined to leniency and believed that the revolt had been exaggerated by interested persons at the capital. The author of the *Diaire du Chancelier Séguier* says (p.226): "Mr- Le Tellier, l'un des commissaires, m'a dict que le motif des avis de douceur que Mr. Talon et luy ont pris, a esté principalement sur ce que, dans la confrontation

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des témoins, ilz ont veu, à leur maintien, que c'estoit gentz appostez par les partizants, lesquels, à Paris, avoient mis en avant des faictz estranges, mesmes contre les principaux de la ville; et, cependant, lors des preuves, il s'y en estoit trouvé fort peu; en sorte qu'il disoit en avoir cete sorte de gentz en horreur; et l'ayant pressé; si donc on ne leur feroit point cognoistre le tort qu'ilz ont d'avoir excité si légèrement la cholère du roy, il m'a dict que ce n'est pas le temps." On the 11th of February 1640, Séguier and his troops had left Rouen. Committees of trustworthy citizens were put in charge of the city and made responsible for the public order. In May 1640 the members of the Parlement of Normandy were already allowed to return to their country-homes near Rouen, although the entrance of the city itself was still forbidden them. Shortly after the re-representation of the Cinna in January 1641 the Parlement was partly reestablished in its functions and, by "lettres-patentes" of the 31st of ~~March~~ March 1641, Rouen recovered its self-government and all its privileges. The conduct of Richelieu was thus far from being as unmerciful as believed by M. Fournier and ^{M.} Maréchal-Laveaux.

Now in view of the fact that these inhabitants in whom Corneille was primarily interested: the members of the parlement the officials of the town and of the law-courts, his friends and colleagues, were treated with as much leniency as the case allowed, and in view of the fact that Corneille was at that time anxiously striving to keep the good graces of the Cardinal, it seems impossible that Cinna was intended as a criticism of the Cardinal's conduct. On the contrary, the play was a praise, a panegyric of the greatness of soul which the Cardinal had shown to the official world of Rouen.

The internal evidence of the Cinna is in accordance with

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this view: Auguste, whose conduct had a bearing upon Richelieu's attitude, plays a beautiful role. In what way could a comparison between Auguste's action against the conspirators and Richelieu's action have been a criticism of the Cardinal? The magnanimity and mercifulness of Auguste was an indirect flattery addressed to him.

To complete the chain of historical evidence about the genesis of the Cinna, and to substantiate what was said above — that Cinna was intended as a panegyric of the Cardinal — I shall try here to prove that Corneille did not take his subject-matter at random, but alluded with the clemency of August to an episode of Richelieu's own life, well-known at the epoch, and of which he could not have been ignorant.

The episode belongs to the conspiracy known as the "conspiration des dames" It is not necessary for the present purpose to narrate the starting point of the intrigue which centered around Richelieu and Gaston d'Orléans, the weak and irresponsible brother of Louis XIII. It is sufficient to recall that the king and Richelieu approved of the projected marriage of Gaston — who was the heir to the throne, since Anne of Austria had no children at that date — with the rich Mlle de Montpensier. For various reasons, a powerful coalition was formed against this marriage. Most of the participants had ambitions of their own which they tried to realize by fostering a marriage of Monsieur, the brother of the king, with a person of their choice. Gaston d'Orléans was absolutely under the power of the marechal Ornano, who had great obligations to Richelieu, but was brought in line against him by the beautiful Princesse de Condé. Around the 18 year old Gaston stood the natural sons of Henry IV, the Grand Prieur de France, Alexandre de Bourbon, and the duke de Vendôme, César de Bourbon; the duke de Longueville; the count de Soissons; the duke d'Elbeuf;

the duke d'Epéron; the marquis de la Valette; the count de Candale; the Abbe Scaglia, ambassador of Savoie; My Lord Montaigne; de Marsillac; Louvigny; Le Cougneux, de Puy-Laurens, La Louvière; Chaudebonne and other noblemen of lesser rank and importance, (13) But the real soul of the conspiracy was Madame de Chevreuse, the arch-intriguer, who held complete sway over the young, brilliant and ambitious Henry de Talleyrand, count de Chalais.

The conspirators were united in their opposition against the projected marriage of Gaston d'Orleans with Mlle de Montpensier. Many entered it with divers ends in view. Foreign intrigue was carried on through the Abbe de Scaglia and through Madame de Chevreuse. Spain, England, and Holland welcomed any effort to break down the influence of Richelieu, and promised aid in case of revolt. The first step of the revolters would have been to kill Richelieu. It is said also that they contemplated the marriage of the queen Anne of Austria with Gaston, the brother of the king, but some Memoires of the time call this an invention of Richelieu to frighten the king and to force him to act in his favor. Anne of Austria always emphatically denied such plans (14) When some of these projects became known to Richelieu, he assured the consent of the king to arrest the count Ornano, governor of Gaston; and this action incited some young noblemen to vengeance. The Grand Prieur Alexandre de Bourbon, the count de Chalais, the duke de Longueville and other young conspirators, under the direction of Madame de Chevreuse evolved a plan, according to which Gaston should feign a reconciliation with Richelieu. The conspirators were to go to the Cardinal's Maison de Campagne at Fleury (15) under the pretext of being delayed during a hunting party. They would ask him to entertain them at dinner and during the meal a quarrel was to be started by the guests, who were armed with hidden poignards. Chalais was to deal the first blow and

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the others were to assist in finishing the wounded cardinal.

Chalais told the whole story to the Commandeur de Valanc^ay whom he believed to be antagonistic to Richelieu. But instead of helping them with their project, Valancais told him that he should go and reveal the whole conspiracy to the cardinal; or that, otherwise he himself would reveal the secret. Chalais was then forced to acquaint the Cardinal with the project. He stipulated that no one would be persecuted for having taken part in it. Richelieu assured him of his gratitude and gave him his word that for this affair no one of the conspirators would be punished. Bassompierre narrates as follows the subsequent defeat of the conspirators (16):

(1626) Peu de jours après il courut un bruit que l'on avait tenu un conseil dont il y avoit neuf personnes, l'une desquelles l'avoit décélé, auquel il avoit été résolu que l'on iroit tuer M. le Cardinal dans Fleury. Il s'est dit que ce fut M. de Chalais lequel s'en étant confié au commandeur de Valencai, ledit commandeur lui reprocha sa trahison, étant domestique du Roi, d'oser entreprendre sur son premier ministre; qu'il l'en devoit avertir, et qu'en cas qu'il ne le voulut faire, que lui-même le déclareroit; dont Chalais intimidé y consentit; et que tous deux partirent à l'heure même, pour aller à Fleury en avertir M. le Cardinal qui les remercia, et pria d'aller porter ce même avis au Roi; ce qu'ils firent; et le roi, à onze heures du soir, envoya commander à trente de ses gendarmes et autant de cheveu-legers d'aller à l'heure même à Fleury. La Reine-mère pareillement y dépêcha toute sa noblesse. Il arriva, comme Chalais avoit dit, que sur les trois heures du matin les officiers de Monsieur arrivèrent à Fleury, envoyés pour lui apprêter son dîner. M. le Cardinal leur cèda le logis, et s'en vint à Fontainebleau, et vint droit à la chambre de Monsieur *qui se levait, et fut assez étonné de le voir. Il fit reproche à Monsieur* de ne lui avoir pas voulu faire l'honneur de lui commander de lui donner à dîner; ce qu'il eut fait le mieux

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qu'il eut pu, et qu'il avoit à la même heure résigné la maison à ses gens.....On ne se pouvoit imaginer d'où étoit venue la déclaration de ce conseil, jusques à ce que, la cour étant revenue à Paris, Chalais confessa à la Reine et à Madame de Chévreuse que la crainte d'être décelé par le commandeur de Valencai, auquel il s'étoit confié, et la menace qu'il fit d'avertir M. le Cardinal l'avoit porté à cela; mais qu'à l'avenir il seroit fidèle, et leur donnoit cette libre reconnoissance de sa faute, qu'il leur faisoit pour marque de sa sincérité."(17)

On this occasion Richelieu made a great display of clemency. (18) He asked ^{Louis} ~~Henry~~ XIII to be indulgent to the conspirators who had only desired to take his life, without having plotted against the king and against France. He added however, that the law ought to be applied with the utmost vigor to those who conspired against the state. This magnanimity and abnegation - whether real or assumed - made a great impression upon the King. No one was persecuted directly for the plot against Richelieu's life and the promise to de Chalais was fulfilled. Yet, various members of the conspiracy were soon arrested, not for plotting against Richelieu but for attacking the state. Chalais himself fell soon again under the domination of Madame de Chévreuse and ended his life on the scaffold (19)

The analogy between these incidents of Richelieu's life and the theme of the Cinna is clear. The Cardinal had mercifully forgiven those who desired to kill him like Auguste in a similar circumstance. It can hardly be doubted that Corneille was acquainted with these facts. Among his early protectors was one of the conspirators, who benefited by Richelieu's clemency, the Duke of Longueville (20) That he knew him personally is proved by the Dédicace of the ^Clitandre where it is said that he read to him the play, when half finished. "C'est le même (Clitandre) qui

par vos commandements, vous fut conter, il y a quelque temps, une partie de ses aventures, autant que'on pouvaient contenir deux actes de ce poëme, encore tout informes et qui n'estoient qu'à peine ébauches." C211

The Count Ornano who played a prominent role in the conspiracy des dames" gave, in 1620, a prize to Corneille. The poet had also seen Madame de Chévreuse, since in 1618, she presided as the wife of the favorite of Louis XIII, Charles Albert de Luynes together with her husband over another distribution of prizes at the College of the Jesuits at Rouen. He must have followed with interest their adventures in the political life of the times.

In writing Cinna as an indirect praise of the Cardinal, Corneille was no doubt aware of the great amount of favorable interpretation which he gave to Richelieu's conduct, Yet, Richelieu himself always stressed his own mercifulness and clemency. And he himself willingly hinted of comparisons between his conduct and that of Roman heroes. He says in his Mémoires about the conspiracies against his life: "Et, pource qu'ils savoient bien qu'ils ne pourroient jamais venir à bout de ces malheureux desseins tandis que le cardinal vivroit, ils étoient résolus de le perdre. Ceux qui conspirerent contre César délibèrerent quant et quant de se défaire de Marc-Antoine qu'ils savoient être homme de coeur et lui être fidèle: leur cruauté n'alla pas jusque-la, mais ils se contentèrent de l'amuser cependant qu'ils exécutoient leur exécrationnable dessein dont mal leur prit, car Antoine venge la mort de César. Ceux-^{ci} qui croiaient bien ne pouvoir amuser le cardinal, qui avoit l'oeil trop ouvert pour se laisser endormir, firent complot de s'en défaire, soit en le disgraciant, soit en usant de violence en son endroit."(Vol. XXIII 49)

In another passage of his "Mémoires", (XXIII 114) he declares that he asked the King to forgive those who conspired against his

own life: "La conspiration était si générale, que le connétable de Lesdiguières, étant au lit de la mort, dit a Bullion qu'il avertit le cardinal, qu'il avoit su une grande entreprise sur sa personne; qu'il avoit attendu jusque-la d'en mander les particularités, parce que ^{Bullion} ~~Polissier~~ lui avait promis de retourner après qu'il aurait reçu un courrier de Monsieur, et un autre de M. LeComte qu'il attendoit. L'affaire alloit, en effet, à tuer le cardinal, pour venir à bout de leurs mauvais desseins, estimant être la seul qui y apportoit obstacle.

Mais le cardinal, ayant pour maxime, que tous les hommes, en tant que créatures, sont sujets à faillir, et que leur malignité bien souvent n'est pas si opiniâtre qu'elle ne puisse être corrigée, conseilla au Roi de n'étendre pas généralement la punition sur tous les coupables, et d'essayer de les rectifier et ramener au droit chemin par bienfaits, puisqu'aussi bien, demeurant en leur malice, ne pourroient-ils pas, destitués de secours des autres produire aucun effet, joint qu'un bon prince ne doit jamais punir que quand la nécessité l'y oblige, et qu'on ne peut autrement éviter un grand mal."

In 1626 the very year of the "Conspiracy des Dames" he proposed to the Assemblée des Notables, composed of deputies ^{of the clergy, the nobility and the parlements} to modify and to lighten the penalties for conspirators. Modern historians have thrown doubt upon his motives. They accuse him of parading his clemency for political reasons. But the intricacies of Richelieu's politics were not so visible at the time. It is only long after his death that documents have revealed more or less the complicated methods of his diplomacy. His ostentation of clemency was accepted as a fact by his partisans at the time and for our purpose it is sufficient to point out that Corneille knew that nothing would please the Cardinal more than a delicate

if transparent allusion to his mercifulness: (22)

The analogy between the conduct of Richelieu and of the historical clemency of Auguste was so apparent that Corneille, whose attention was drawn to the theme of mercy by the events of 1639-40 in Rouen might well have found in it an incentive to the choice of the Cinna-subject. He made the eulogy of the Cardinal's magnanimity not without the hope perhaps of seeing the Parlement and the civil authorities soon fully re-established since Richelieu had already shown more than leniency to his friends, the accused magistrates.

Corneille found the subject of the Cinna in Seneca (De Clemention -IX) and in Montaigne's Essais (Chap. XXIII) He chose it because of its almost symbolical bearing upon the political events in his native city and upon an episode of the life of Richelieu, whom at that time, he had all reasons to please.

In his treatment of the story he has followed rather closely his sources, yet he has added one character, that of Emilie who incites the conspirators to vengeance. She is the real enemy of Auguste and her love is the prize which she holds out for his death. While it is quite clear that Corneille needed Emilie to strengthen the motivation of his play, it must yet be noticed how closely her role in the Cinna resembles that played by Madame de Chévreuse in the "Conspiration des Dames" According to Richelieu, "elle faisoit plus de mal que personne" (Mémoires III, 105) It was for love of her that de Chalais engaged himself so deeply in the conspiracies against Richelieu.

The "Mémoires de Richelieu" depict her rôle as follows: Chalais l'avoit accusée pour être celle qui avoit le dessein d'empêcher ce mariage (de Gaston)...elle faisoit l'union de tous les

princes et des huguenots mêmes par madame de Rohan; et étoit la principale qui avoit porté Monsieur(Gaston) d'aller, depuis la prise du colonel(Ornano)...à Fleury où étoit le Cardinal pour lui faire un mauvais parti"(XLV, 105)

De Chalais accused her during the course of the hearings of having been the soul of the conspiracy and of having openly incited him and others to stab Richelieu: "Le dessein de madame de Chévreuse, qu'elle ne découvrirait pas à la Reine, était, à ce que dit Monsieur(Gaston) à Nantes, afin que, le Roi venant à mourir la Reine put épouser Monsieur. Ladite dame de Chévreuse avoit une telle passion à cela, qu'autrefois, par le grand-prieur, par Chalais, et maintenant par elle-même, elle incitait Monsieur à user de violence contre le Cardinal, ayant, comme dit Chalais à son interrogatoire, accoutumé avec Monsieur et les siens de lui dire: "Ne vous souviendrez-vous jamais du colonel?"(d'Ornano, imprisoné) pour donner à entendre: ne vous déférez-vous jamais du cardinal? (Op.Cit.107)

When de Chalais tried to make his peace with Richelieu "Mme de Chévreuse lui en fit tant de reproches et le pressa si fort que rien n'étant quasi impossible à une femme aussi belle et avec autant d'esprit que celle-la, il n'y put résister, et il aimait mieux manquer au cardinal de Richelieu et à lui même qu'à elle, de sorte qu'ayant aussitôt fait changer Monsieur, il le rendit plus révolté que jamais"(23)

Cinna in the tragedy is a conspirator for love's sake exactly like de Chalais; Emilie uses her lover to attempt the murder of Auguste, like Madame de Chévreuse Chalais; Auguste forgives the conspirators like Richelieu forgave those who desired to take his life at Fleury. No doubt Corneille perceived these analogies between the historical episode narrated by Seneca and Montaigne

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and the political events of his own time. His Romans were in a measure 17th century personages, his play a mixture of idealized antiquity and idealized actuality.

The characters are transposed and magnified: Emilie is an ideal Roman Virgin, with some traits of the 17th century lady-conspirator; Cinna was impelled more by a point of honor in love than by hostility against Auguste; The emperor's magnanimity was of a kind which Richelieu would have liked to see ascribed to him and which, merited or not, he ostentatiously displayed.

Through the study of these connections, one realizes once more that Corneille's work was ^{not} exclusively the result of abstract reflection or of his interest in history. If his heroes are not cold and hieratic like figures on historical frescos, but live and struggle, love and, and act like living beings, it is because some of the flame of his own life and of his own feeling glows in them; because they were for him no historical abstraction but intense reality.

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NOTES
for
CINNA AND THE "CONSPIRATION DES DAMES"

- (1) Cf. Floquet - Histoire du Parlement de Rouen - Ch. Normand - La Bourgeoisie française du XVII^e siècle - A Floquet's edition of the *Diaire* du Chancelier Séguier - A. Héron - Documents concernant la Normandie, and various historical works.
- (2) Journal manuscrit de l'abbé de la Rue de Rouen - cf. Floquet Histoire du Parlement, IV, 592
- (3) De Rouen, 12 decembre 1639. Lettre du religieuxissime archevesque de Rouen, primat de Normandie à l'Eminentissime Cardinal Duc de Richelieu; en faveur de la Province durant la désolation en suite du tumulte de Rouen - see, *Mercur* de Gaillan - Société Rouenaise de bibliophile - 1876.
- (4) Part of the text reproduced in Marty-Laveaux edition of Corneille's works, III, 361.
- (5) Marty, -Laveaux, III, 363
- (6) Ibid, III, 364
- (7) Lists of their names are given in the Journal du Chancelier Séguier, p. 112, 179, 183, 211, 218.
- (8) During the Fronde he replaced temporarily "le sieur Bauldry" as "procureur des Etats de Normandie. The letter mentions that it was necessary to nominate "quelque personne capable, et dont la fidélité et affection sont connues" for the cause of the court
- (9) Bibliographie Cornélienne, p.27
- (10) Histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de P. Corneille. Third edition, I, 188.
- (11) Marty-Laveaux, X, 432
- (12) Manuscript 500 de Colbert, Vol. XLVI. Published by A. Floquet. *Diaire* du Chancelier Séguier - p.378.
- (13) Anquetil - L'Intrigue du Cabinet sous Henri IV et Louis XIII,

II, 193 - Pere Daniel, Histoire de France, XIII, and various historians.

- (14) Mémoires de Larocheffoucauld, 339, Mémoires de Fontenay - Mar-
euil - Collection Petitot - LI, 23.
- (15) North-west of the Forest of Fontainebleau, in the direction
of Barbizon.
- (16) Mémoires de Bassompierre - Collection Petitot, XXI, 51.

The attempt to murder the Cardinal ^{at} Fleury happened in May 1626, between May 4, date of the arrest of d'Ornano and May 23, when the court came back to Paris. On June 1, Richelieu presented letters to the king and also made him understand that he was ready to leave his post. On the 9th of June the king replied with a letter which, as an historian remarks, can be considered as an oath of fidelity. "Je ne connaîtraî jamais qu'aucun ait quelque pensée contre vous que je ne vous le dise.....Monsieur et beaucoup de grands vous en veulent à mon occasion; mais assurez vous que je vous protégerai contre qui que ce soit.... Assurez vous que je ne changerai jamais, et quiconque vous ataquera, vous m'aurez pour second." H.Martin - Histoire de France XI, 236, Histoire de Louis XIII par le père Griffet.

The Jesuit Daniel narrates as follows the circumstances of that phase of the "Conspiration des Dames" (Histoire de France 1756, XIII, pp. 494-495-496): Une conduite si ferme et si soutenue irrita les conjurés, dont la faction n'étoit pas encore éteinte. Les plus echauffés tinrent entre eux une espèce de conseil, où il fut resolu du tuer le cardinal ou du moins de se saisir de sa personne, afin qu'il répondit sur sa tête de celle du maréchal d'Ornano. Il avoit coutume de se retirer de temps en temps dans une maison de campagne située à Fleury; c'etoit là que l'on comptoit pouvoir aisément se rendre maître de sa personne et de sa vie, d'autant plus que Monsieur devoit

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s'y trouver avec ses gardes, pour autoriser cette action par sa présence. Le comte de Chalais de la maison de Taleyran, issue des anciens comtes de Perigord, jeune homme vif et emporté qui avoit été élevé avec le roi en qualité d'enfant d'honneur, fit part de ce projet au commandeur de Valencai. Celui-ci n'envisagea qu'avec horreur les suites d'une pareille entreprise, et il déclara nettement au comte de Chalais, que le secret qu'il venoit de lui confier, lui paroissoit un trop pesant fardeau pour qu'il voulût en demeurer plus longtemps chargé et qu'il alloit de ce pas le découvrir au cardinal, à moins qu'il ne consentit à y aller lui-même. Chalais effrayé du mauvais pas où l'avoit engagé son indiscretion fut obligé de suivre, le commandeur à Fleury où le cardinal étoit alors et de lui faire part de ce qui se tramoit contre lui..

Le cardinal reçut avec beaucoup de satisfaction cette marque de confiance, et il les pria d'aller sur champ raconter au roi tout ce qu'ils venoient de lui dire. Le roi envoya aussitôt à Fleury trente gendarmes et trente cheveauxlegers de sa garde afin que le cardinal y fut en sûreté. La reine-mere y envoya de son côté. Marillac avec tous les gentilshommes qui étoient auprès d'elle. Chalais avoit dit que le lendemain les officiers de Monsieur viendroient à Fleury des la pointe du jour sous pretexte de lui preparer à dîner. Ils y arrivèrent en effet sur les trois heures du matin; le cardinal qui les attendoit leur cèda sa maison, et il vint à Fontainebleau. Il alla droit à la chambre de Monsieur qui se levoit et qui fut fort surpris de le voir. Il se plaignit à ce prince de ce qu'il ne lui avoit pas fait l'honneur de lui demander a dîner ajoutant qu'il auroit tâché de traiter son altesse de son mieux, et après lui avoir donné la chemise il alla trouver le roi et la reine-mere. En route, il se rendit à la maison rouge, où il demeura

jusques à ce que le roi fût de retour à Paris. Il sembloit affecter en ce temps-la de s'éloigner de la cour pour laisser en apparence le roi et la reine mère plus maitres de prendre les résolutions qu'ils jugeroient les plus convenables au milieu des orages dont on étoit menacé. La cour revint à Paris le 23 de Mai. On ne savoit point encore comment le cardinal avoit pu découvrir le complot formé pour l'assassiner à Fleury. La duchesse de Chevreuse étoit amie de Chalais; elle connoissoit la légereté de son esprit, et l'avoit toujours soupçonné d'avoir trahi le secret de la conspiration; elle lui parla, lui fit part de ses soupçons, et enfin il lui avoua en présence de la reine régnante que c'étoit lui qui l'avoit découvert. Bassompierre assure positivement que la reine fut témoin de cet aven; ce qui montre à quel point cette princesse qui avoit donné toute sa conscience à la duchesse de Chevreuse étoit dans ces intrigues. On ne manqua pas de reprocher au comte de Chalais son indiscretion et sa foiblesse et l'on lui fit promettre qu'il ne cesseroit jamais de travailler à la ruine du cardinal. Mais on peut dire que la duchesse de Chevreuse en tirant de lui cette promesse causa la perte d'un homme qui lui étoit attaché, sans rendre un fort grand service au parti qu'elle vouloit soutenir. Le cardinal avoit deux objets en vûe, le premier d'engager Monsieur à épouser l'héritiere de Montpensier et le second de le faire consentir à la perte de ses propres confidens qui s'opposoient ^{à ce mariage, des deux points paraissoient} difficiles à concilier, et il eut besoin de toute sa prudence et de toute sa capacité pour y parvenir.

(17) Chalois devoit porter le premier coup, et fuir en Hollande, jusqu'à ce qu'on eut obtenu du roi son pardon....Louis, fatigué de la tyrannie du prélat ne savoit pas fâché qu'on l'eut débarassé et s'en appaiseroit aisément....Sous prétexte de vouloir dîner à Limours, dit-il au prelat, Monsieur enverra ses officiers, qui

s'empareront de la maison; quand il sera arrivé lui-même, on élèvera une querelle, dont on profitera pour consommer l'entreprise. Richelieu eut peine à croire à ce projet; mais il n'en douta plus, quand il vit arriver, dès le matin, l'espèce le garnison, annoncé. Aussitôt le Cardinal monte en carrosse, court à Fontainebleau, où étoit Gaston, pénètre jusqu'à lui, se présente hardiment, et lui dit que, dans le dessein où étoit son altesse royale de prendre un divertissement dans sa maison, il auroit été flatté qu'elle lui eut accordé la satisfaction d'en faire les honneurs; mais que, puisqu'elle veut y être libre il la lui cède."(Anquetil - Op.cit, 193, etc.)

(18) The measures which Richelieu soon took against the plotters were not a punishment for the attempt to murder him but for conspiring against the state and the king. On the 12th of June 1626, the two half-brothers of Louis XIII the duke de Vendôme and the grand Prieur were imprisoned. De Chalais soon came again under the fatal influence of Madame de Chévreuse. He was accused by the count de Louvigny because of love-rivalry, it is said, of having the intention of murdering the king and of having sponsored a new conspiracy for an insurrection which was to receive aid from England and the Huguenots. He was arrested on July 8, and executed on August 19, 1626. Gaston d'Orleans turned in his customary cowardly way against de Chalais and against Ornano. He received a few tax-paying provinces and married Mlle de Montpensier on the 5th of August 1626. Ornano died in prison. - See Rocca. Op. cit.

(19) Emile Rocca - Le Règne de Richelieu, pp.164-165 - Numerous historians have treated of the trial of de Chalais.

(20) Later the Duke of Longueville became governor of Normandy. He married in 1642 Anne Geneviève, the sister of Candé, who became the celebrated Madame de Longueville, and played a

leading role during the Fronde.

(21) Marty-Laveauz, Ip.250.

(22) Les Intrigués du Cabinet sous Henri IV et Louis XIII, by Anquetil, II, 193, says:(The assembly of the Notables) "discuta tout selon le desir du Cardinal, excepté un article, sur lequel on jugea qu'il ne serait pas fâché d'être octredit. Richelieu proposa de modérer les peines establies contre les criminels d'état, et de les réduire à la seule privation de leurs charges, après la seconde désobeissance: mais l'assemblée, sans égard aux remonstrances du ministre pria le roi de tenir en rigueur les anciennes ordonnances. On pense que dans cette ostentation d'indulgence, le ^epriat eut deux choses en vue: la premiere de faire croire que e'étoit malgré lui qu'il avait laissé périr Chalais, victime de la rigueur des lois; la seconde, d'espouvanter ceux qui voudroient courir les mêmes risques en leur montrant le glaive de la justice toujours levés sur leurs têtes."

(23) Fontenay-Mareuil-Mémoires-24-La Rochefoucauld-Mémoires- p.339: "Chalais étoit maître de la garde-robe; sa personne et son esprit etoient agréables et il avoit un attachement extraordinaire pour Mme de Chevreuse. " Fontenay Mareuil, Mémoires, -coll. Petitot L.I. 23: "M. de Chalais étoit jeune, bien fait, fort adroit à toute sorte d'exercices, mais surtout d'agréable compagnie, ce qui le rendoit bien venu parmi les femmes qui le perdirent enfin"-)

CORNEILLE'S PERSONALITY AND EVOLUTION.

Although with the present thesis no attempt is made at a biography of Corneille, here and there in the studies presented a few glimpses have been caught of his personality. And, since his personal character has not been sufficiently studied, no justification need be claimed for devoting a few pages to some conclusions, based on the facts presented in the preceding chapters, and which, it is hoped, will enhance our understanding of Corneille's spiritual and esthetic evolution.

His personal cast of mind and his personal view of life remain after all a subtle secret as much for us as for his contemporaries, a problem far removed as yet from even a moderately satisfactory solution. In looking for documents to fill this lacuna in his biography we must be on guard against the fallacy which consists in reading the psychology of a dramatic author in his works. The production of every dramatist is impersonal to a degree; and in Corneille's case, since there is no sufficient evidence to identify him with Tircis of the *Mélie*, or with that strange Alidor of the *Gallerie du Palais*, this impersonality is as clearly pronounced as in any other author of the same type. The utterances of Corneille's characters—however suggestive they may seem,—cannot be treated as intentional self-revelation. Yet it is impossible to refuse to them all documentary value for biographical purposes. A portrait, however impersonal, still reveals something of the painter's opinion of the sitter and of the painter's conception of beauty. In the same way, even the impersonal art of the dramatist reveals to us something of his intellectual preoccupations by the choice of his subjects

and by his way of treating them. Sometimes, but more rarely, his moral conceptions may be illustrated by the solution he gives to the moral problems of his heroes, on the condition that such solutions are really his own, and not dictated by the source of his work, by theatrical exigencies, or by convention.

Yet, no sure method has ever been devised to detect in the impersonal utterances of dramatist the element which is personal and the result of private introspection, and the feelings which are assumed for dramatic purpose by that Protean instinct which makes the playwright. The theory of recurrences may sometimes yield results on the condition of being applied cautiously. If the same themes are treated at various times by a dramatist, or if the same themes, thoughts, or phrases recur in his work, can this be interpreted as a sign that these themes and these strains of thought have a certain bearing upon his own internal life, that they reveal part of his personal feelings? In some cases these repetitions may be taken as indicative of a mental preoccupation in an author with the recurrent thought and the recurrent theme, but it is also possible that they were dictated by other reasons. It would, for instance, force us in this case to the conclusion that, before 1637, Corneille was fickle and light-hearted in love-matters, for in his early plays inconstancy in love is the most common and recurrent theme; while after that date constancy would have been his ideal in love, because most of the great tragedies treat of problems of constancy fought out in the hearts of lovers. But, in fact, neither of these recurrences are really due to an inner impulse, but simply to the exigencies of the genre. The early plays are comedies of love and inconstancy; while in the tragedies the whole conflict was conditioned upon

the intensity of and the constancy of the love, for instance, of Chimène for Rodrigue and of Pauline for Polyeucte. Recurrent themes and strains of thought therefore can only be used as additional evidence to illustrate what was known of the poet's life and personality through facts more positively established; from them alone no facts can be surmised and adopted as biographical data.

Even Corneille's lyrical poems must only then be accepted as revealing the internal secrets of Corneille himself when it is quite clear that they were intended as self-revelation; when they are not merely variations upon conventional lyrical themes. To illustrate this by an example, the Dialogue between Tirsis and Caliste, printed among the poems following the Clitandre, has been taken to be an autobiographical document of the first importance for the life of Corneille, — because parts of it are reproduced in the *Mélite*. The words "Tu t'en peux assurer" ^{are found} reoccur various times in the poem and also in the *Mélite*, and, from this Marty-Lavaux surmises that these were the very words which Mlle. *Mélite*, — here baptized Caliste — pronounced when she gave her faith to Corneille. But an attentive reading of the poem shows readily that the whole dialogue was only a commonplace imitated from the pastoral literature of the time, a conventional and impersonal lyric, found in the works of every poet of the time. All sighing shepherds assured, in a similar way, their beloved swains of their eternal faithfulness; all the heroines and the heroes of the pastoral plays of the day ended their love-story with such a canticle of mutual faith.

It is therefore necessary to study first what is positively known about Corneille as a man; and, after that to see in ~~what~~ what way this knowledge is confirmed by the text of his poems

and his plays.

We know little of Corneille personally and, considering his great contemporary fame, and the great number of contemporary records and Memoires, this paucity of record of a personal nature is astonishing. In vain one searches for a poetical strain in the family Corneille before Pierre Corneille, the poet, and his two brothers, Antoine and Thomas. The family originates from Conches, a small town of Upper-Normandy. All the older sons received the first name of Pierre. The trade of the family was the tanning of hides; the great-grand-father of Pierre was merchant-tanner at Conches. His son Pierre was in 1578 clerk in the registry of the Parlement of Rouen. Later he became counsellor referendary of the office of the privy seal. His son became ^{as} Maitre des Eaux et des Forêts, ^{as is} well-known, and his son is Pierre, the great tragedy-writer, ~~playwright~~ and ^{unsuccessful} lawyer. In this generation one does not perceive any poetical strain ^{neither from the paternal nor} from the maternal side. The surroundings must have played a great role in the literary inclinations of the three brothers.

Pierre Corneille

A couple of 17th and 18th century utterances depict ~~him~~ as shy, awkward in manners, provincial in speech and slightly uncouth habitually. La Bruyère states that he was "Simple, timide, d'une ennuyeuse conversation; il prend un mot pour l'autre, et il ne juge de la bonté de sa pièce que par l'argent qui lui en revient; il ne sait pas la réciter, ni lire son écriture." (Des Jugements, II, 101) And Vigneul-Marville adds "A voir M. de Corneille, on ne l'auroit pas pris pour un homme qui faisoit si bien parler les Grecs et les Romains et qui donnoit un si grand relief aux sentiments et aux pensées des heroes. La ^{un si grand relief aux sentimet} première fois que je le vis, je le pris pour un marchand de Rouen. Son extérieur n'avoit rien qui parlât pour son esprit;

et sa conversation étoit si pesante qu'elle devenoit à charge
dès qu'elle duroit un peu. Une grande princesse qui avoit désiré
de le voir et de l'entretenir, disoit fort bien qu'il ne
falloit point l'écouter ailleurs qu'à l'Hotel de Bourgogne.

Certainement M. de Corneille se negligoit trop, ou pour mieux
dire, la nature, qui lui avoit été si liberale en des choses
extraordinaires, l'avoit comme oublié dans les plus communes.

Quand ses familiers amis, qui auroient souhaité le voir parfait
en tout, lui faisoient remarquer ses légers défauts, il sourioit
et disoit: "Je n'en suis pas moins pour cela Pierre Corneille."

Il n'a jamais bien correctement parlé la langue françoise;
peut-être ne se mettoit-il pas en peine de cette exactitude,
mais peut-être aussi n'avoit-il pas assez de force pour s'y sou-
mettre." (Mélanges d'Histoire et de Litterature, I, 167-168).

His nephew, Fontenelle, confirms: "Corneille étoit assez grand
et assez plein, l'air fort simple et fort commun, toujours negligé,
et peu curieux de son extérieur. Il avoit le visage assez
agréable, un grand nez, la bouche belle, les yeux pleins de feu,
la physionomie vive, des traits fort marqués et propres à être
transmis à la posterité dans une médaille ou dans un buste.
Sa prononciation n'étoit pas tout à fait nette; il lisoit ses
vers avec force, mais sans grâce." (Oeuvres III, 124-125)

One of the documents of the Cid-quarrel alluded to his
stammering: "Advertissement en forme de Prédiction à très
brédouillant Poete comique Messire Mathurin Corneille, surnomme
le Noble à la Rose." And Claveret in his "Lettre du sieur
Claveret au sieur Corneille, soy disant Autheur du Cid" (Gasté, p. 187)
reproaches him also with his lack of charm in conversation:
"Mais reconnoissez--que vous estes en prose le plus impertinent
de ceux qui scavent parler, que la froideur et la stupidité
de votre esprit sont telles, que vostre entretien fait pitié

à ceux qui souffrent vos visites, et que pour le regard des belles lettres vous passez dans le beau monde, pour le plus ridicule de tous les hommes. Ce sont des veritez qui seront tousjours confirmées parmy les plus honnestes gens de Paris, de l'un et de l'autre sexe, ou l'on débite des Histoires de vostre mauvaise grace, à faire rire la mélancholie mesme, et pour lesquelles vous avez raison de vous enfuir dès que vous avez vendu vos déréées Poétiques."

And Corneille's own verses confirm these descriptions of his personal appearance and manner:

"L'on peut rarement m'écouter sans ennue,^{ue,}
 Que quand je me produis par la bouche d'autrui."
 (Marty-Lav. X, 477)

These realistic pictures of Corneille may be indeed truthful, but they are superficial and do not reveal much of the more interesting side of Corneille's nature. It is sure that he was not exactly an ornament of a Precieux drawing-room. He had nothing of the superficial brilliancy and ready wit of the fluent rhymers of pleasing trifles like Voiture and Godeau, who were placed on the pinnacle of a dilettante society. The admirers of the burlesque Scarron, must have thought him extremely serious and heavy. It is easily understood that some of his superficial shortcomings in speech and dress engrossed the attention of his contemporaries, rather than his qualities of mind and feeling. "Nul n'est héro pour son valet de chambre"; and, in Corneille's case the contrast between the creator of noble and heroic characters on the scene and the man was marked and striking.

His rather undistinguished appearance, "bourgeois" and even somewhat plebeian manners, was in accordance with a part of his being. His was a bourgeois cleverness in the handling

of money-matters, or, if you like, a bourgeois solidity and astuteness in commercial transactions. He is reproached by his contemporaries with "selling " his works:

"Corneille est excellent, mais il vend ses ouvrages", said, already in 1634, the sieur Gaillard; (Oeuvres du sieur Gaillard. 1634 p. 33) and Segrais (Oeuvres diverses de M. de Segrais. 1723, I. pp. 155-156) reports that Mlle de Beaupré, who played at the period of Corneille's début, stated: "Monsieur Corneille nous a fait un grant tort; nous avions ci-devant des pièces de théâtre pour trois écus, que l'on nous faisoit en une nuit; on y étoit accoutumé, et nous gagnions beaucoup; présentement les pièces de Monsieur de Corneille nous coûtent bien de l'argent, et nous gagnons peu de chose."

Corneille's pecuniary prudence is alluded to by Vigneul-Marville and confirmed by others. One anecdote represents him as "fatigué d'honneurs et assoifé d'argent". As against some apocryphical anecdotes of the 18th century, M. Bouquet. (Pointe obscurs et nouveaux de la vie de Pierre Corneille.) has definitely settled the problem of Corneille's resources. At no time of his life has the poet suffered from actual want; most of the time he was in possession of a fortune considerable enough for a provincial nobleman, just risen from the bourgeois-class to higher social standing. If he had financial difficulties, it were only the difficulties of a bourgeois, whose fortune is somewhat burdened by the expenses for the upkeep of his recent nobility. Yet his income was large enough at all times to make him a man at his ease. He increased it constantly by successful transactions; by the sale of his plays to actors and printers; by various editions of his collected works; by gratifications and pensions which he knew how to solicit.

It must, however, be observed that Corneille did not obey any motives of low order in trying to acquire good financial results from his poetic activity. He goes constantly to the very end of his resources for the establishment of his children and especially of his sons. His slyness in obtaining money was stimulated by a fine desire of raising the social standing of his family. And, in acting thus, Corneille obeyed the tradition of his ancestors. The Corneilles can be traced to a humble family of tanners from Conches, a small town of Normandy. Some of its members settled in Rouen and slowly forced themselves upward from the lower ranks of the population to which they originally belonged. Pierre Corneille's grandfather became a clerk at the Court of the Parliament and, later, a lawyer. His son, as "maitre des eaux et des Forêts," entered the service of the state. In 1637 the family was ennobled and belonged to the "noblesse de robe". The next step was to rise from the "noblesse de robe" to the "noblesse d'epée", and Pierre Corneille, the poet, did his full duty in this direction. He sacrificed nobly for his country. His oldest son, Pierre, became in 1664, an officer in the army, and P. Corneille bought for him a company of which he became captain. This occasioned him an expense of about ten thousand "livres", while the upkeep of the company taxed his fortune continually. That Corneille was not avaricious, but desired money because he had to face the expenses of his sons in the king's service, can be seen in the letter he wrote, in 1678, to Colbert, when his pension was suppressed: "Cette disgrâce me met hors d'état de faire encore longtemps, subsister ce fils dans le service ou il a consumé la plupart de mon peu de bien pour remplir avec honneur le poste qu'il y occupe." At forty his son was still a captain, because his father, the poet, was not rich enough to buy him a regiment and the rank of

colonel.

His second son, whose first name is unknown, was wounded in 1667, at the siege of Douai, and killed in 1674 while defending with his company the Dutch town of Grave against Rauenhaupt, a general of the Prince of Orange.

His son-in-law, Felix Guénebaud de Bois-le-Comte, sieur du Buat, first husband of Marie Corneille, participated in a kind of chivalrous crusade to rescue the city of Candie (Creta) assieged by the Turcs. He was killed with one hundred and twenty noblemen in a temerary attack on December 16, 1670.

Corneille's sole motive was certainly not to enrich himself; ^{or} ~~but~~ to place advantageously his sons and to marry off his daughters; he desired to exercise rightly and fully his duty as a noble. And if he brought some slyness and aggressiveness into his method of acquiring a fortune, he possessed at the same time the estimable qualities of the bourgeois-spirit, --care, honesty, and patience. Corneille appears thus as gifted with a rather positive sense of life, pursuing with the means at his disposal a positive ideal of advancement for his family, in which, no doubt, he took great pride.

"Corneille avait l'âme fière et indépendante", said Fontenelle (Vie de M. Corneille, l'ainé). And he describes his ordinary mood as follows: "Il savoit les belles-lettres, l'histoire, la politique, mais il les prenoit principalement du côté qu'elles ont rapport au théâtre. Il n'avoit pour toutes les autres connoissances, ni loisir, ni curiosité, ni beaucoup d'estime. Il parloit peu, même sur la matière qu'il entendoit si parfaitement. Il n'ornoit pas ce qu'il disoit, et pour trouver le grand Corneille, il le falloit lire.

Il étoit mélancolique. Il lui falloit des sujets plus

solides pour espérer et pour se réjouir, que pour se chagriner ou pour craindre. Il avoit l'humeur brusque et quelquefois rude en apparence; au fond il étoit très aisé, à vivre, bon père, bon mari, bon parent, tendre et plein d'amitié. Son tempérament le portoit assez à l'amour, mais jamais au libertinage, et rarement aux grands attachements." (Idem.)

It must be observed that Fontenelle knew his uncle in his old age and that Corneille's melancholy may have been more marked at that time, than in his youth, when he wrote the "Veuve" and the "Gallerie du Palais".

At the time he wrote, Corneille was already almost exclusively considered as an author of tragedies of the heroic cast. After Fontenelle this tendency even increased. His early plays were forgotten and most of the collected editions of his works started out with either the *Médée* or the *Cid*. And through his tragedies a conception of the man was formed at the image of his strong-willed heroes. Draped in a Roman toga he seemed to live upon the lofty heights of a cool and unapproachable superiority. His tragedies were conceived as purely intellectual and without link with his own existence or with the actual life of his times. Prof. Strachey says: "His tragic personages (stand) forth without mystery, without atmosphere, without local color, but simply in the clear, white light of reason." And their creator was supposed to have evolved these creatures of his brain in aloofness and isolation. His method appeared as purely intellectual: he wrote a tragedy to illustrate the struggle of two or more abstract notions: love versus honor, for instance, or faith versus marital love. (*Cid* and *Polyeucte*).

Now, it must be noted that a line of evolution can be followed through Corneille's art and conception of life. At his debut his temperament and his mentality were not at all

conspicuous for intellectual depth or philosophical seriousness. He was rather a light-hearted joyful young lawyer who did not shrink back from the reading of daring epigrams, as shown by his translation from the Latin of some epigrams of the English poet, Owen. (Marty-Lav. X, 46), who wrote ironical poems about love and professed unconcerned delight in inconstancy with women and in love. He pretends to be: "Plus inconstant que la lune." and exclaims:

"Si je perds bien des maîtresses,
 J'en fais encor plus souvent,
 Et mes voeux et mes promesses
 Ne sont que feintes caresses,
 Et mes voeux et mes promesses
 Ne sont jamais que du vent."

It may well be that Corneille here exaggerated his inconstancy for the sake of writing a song. But, since other of his poems, published at the same time, in an appendix to the Clitandre, stress constancy in love and have been taken for autobiographical revelations, it seems necessary to stress the fact that Corneille wrote also, for the same collection, various poems on the theme of inconstancy, to which however, all autobiographical value is refused. And, it must be observed that his early mood was not that of a constant, sensitive and melancholic Céladon, but more boyant, free and easy, jocose with a strain of irony,-- very different from that sternness and high-principled, uncompromising moral austerity which is found later in his tragedies. He wrote about 1632, poems for a Rouen masquerade and for the Ballet du Château de Bicêtre; ^{which was} ~~he~~ danced at the Louvre on March 12, 1632; ^{These poems} ~~and this~~ may be taken as fairly indicative of the trend of his thought at that period.

From the beginning one perceives in his work a preoccupation with the psychology of love: rather conventional at first, it grows sharper and more analytic in the measure that the time

of the Cid approaches. Although he had finished his first poem by exclaiming: "Que l'amour n'est qu'une sottise", he continues with an "Ode sur un prompt Amour", in which he gathers a good number of the common-places of the amorous poetry of the time:

"Regards brillants, clartés divines,
Qui m'avez tellement surpris;
Ocellades qui sur les esprits
~~Exercez si bien vos rapines;~~
Tyrans secrets, auteurs puissants
D'un esclavage où je consens:
Chers ennemis de ma franchise,
Beaux yeux, mes aimables vainqueurs,
Dites-moi qui vous autorise
A dérober ainsi les cœurs.

These sugared common-places were found everywhere in the literature of the times; and it is unnecessary to look for a direct inspiration. Very little, indeed, can be deduced from them to help in the determination of the biography of Corneille, or even to shed light on his real state of mind at the time. But the general inspiration of these poems points strongly toward the gay youth which Corneille was at the time.

His tendency toward the psychology of love is further exemplified with the Chanson XIII (Marty-Lav. X, 53)

"Toi qui près d'un beau visage
Ne veux que feindre l'amour,
Tu pourrois bien quelque jour
Eprouver à ton dommage
Que souvent la fiction
Se change en affection.

Sache enfin que cette flamme
Que tu veux feindre au dehors,
Par des inconnus ressorts
Entrera bien dans ton âme;
Car souvent la fiction
Se change en affection."

Chanson XIV, of which some verses have been cited earlier, contrasts singularly with the preceding song, and with professions of eternal constancy in other verses:

"Quand je vois un beau visage,
Soudain je me fais de feu;

Mais longtemps lui faire hommage,
Ce n'est pas bien mon usage;
Mais longtemps lui faire hommage,
Ce n'est pas bien là mon jeu.

J'entre bien en complaisance
Tant que dure une heure ou deux;
Mais en perdant sa présence
Adieu toute souvenance;
Mais en perdant sa présence
Adieu soudain tous mes feux."

Marty-Laveaux, led astray by a "parti-pris" of biographical interpretation, considers this song as the one which Corneille wrote to the lady, who—according to the *Excuse à Ariste*,—asked him to compose songs for her. This lady has been identified as Catherine Hue and it is supposed that to her Corneille adressed his vows for years. But the text of the poem makes this very doubtful. Corneille would never have adressed a song of this nature to the sweetheart he is said to have loved to the exclusion of any other, during six or seven years. By doing so he would have defeated his own purpose: to gain or to retain the love of the girl, for it is not by a profession of inconstancy and amorous hypocrisy that he would have retained her favor.

As pointed out in the preceding chapter on "Mélite", the identification of the Phyllis, of the Mélite, and the Hippolyte of Corneille's early verses with a single lady is at fault, among other reasons, in that it accepts all verses of Corneille' in which constancy is praised, as documents about his own life,—while other poems, of the same date, are rejected as mere poetic fancy and imitations of well-known models. In fact, both kinds of Corneille's early poems are impersonal and can hardly be relied upon for biographical data. They are only useful in that they show that he, at the outset of his career, was already preoccupied with the psychology of love; and in that their predominating strain clearly points to the rather

light-hearted disposition of Corneille in his early years.

They also show that Corneille, at his ¹début, was versed in the literature of his times. And this betrays the influence of his native city, Rouen, upon him. Growing up in a milieu, where poetry was highly esteemed, where printing was extensively practiced, where a public library and an Academy existed, he was stimulated by his surroundings in his early poetic endeavors. His friendship with some authors and amateurs in poetry of the town also must have helped him in his interest in contemporary literature. Through his studies at the Jesuits' school at Rouen, he had become acquainted with the writings of the Ancients. Yet, for his tragedies, he does not lose sight of Amyot's translations of Plutarch, but cites his paraphrase along with the original Latin sources of his play. At college he excelled in Latin verse; French versification and style he taught to himself by his readings of modern works.

See also articles by Molyneux

But in the literature of his times he discerns quite early what is valuable and what is exaggeration. And he is not a man of exaggerations. Although a modern in his literary opinions, he is an enemy of extravagant preciosity. He tries to write a rather simple and naive style, and depicts preciosity with a rather amused smile.

No doubt he sometimes will write as a "précieux" himself, but he tries to be and is in fact relatively more simple and sane than most of his contemporaries. When he learns about the three unities and the rules of the classicists he adopts parts of them, but without giving up altogether his former opinions. His early comedies remain, with few exceptions, distant from all what was exaggeration in the pastoral plays: echoes, magicians, druid priests and satyrs; from all what was extravagant

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in the tragi-comedy: disguises, chivalric fights, bloody intrigues; from all that was stereotyped and imitative in the 16th century comedy: valets, immoral young girls, misers, capitans. Exceptions must be made here, of course, for the madness of Eraste in the *Mélite*, the *Clitandre* and the *Illusion Comique*.

From the beginning he exhibited a rather calculating desire of success and a sound practical sense in the handling of the commercial side of his calling. He chooses titles for his plays which will awaken the curiosity of the audience, "*La Suivante*", "*La Galerie du Palais*", "*La Place Royale*", etc. All persons or places well-known to the "honnêtes gens" whom he tries to please.

What can be followed through Corneille's early plays is the gradual growth of a conception of Will-power as the fundamental principle of action. Alidor of the "*Place Royale*" was, according to Corneille, more or less a portrait of an unknown "honnête homme", to whom he dedicated the play: He says in the Dedicace: "C'est de vous que j'ai appris que l'amour d'un honnête homme doit être toujours volontaire; qu'on ne doit jamais aimer en un point qu'on ne puisse n'aimer pas." (Marty-Lav II, 220) And his *Medée* stresses her "Moi" and her Will. These conceptions will grow stronger and more tyrannical in later tragedies. On the other hand, although philosophical preoccupations slowly become more apparent in his work, he loses little of his adaptability in practical matters. He occasions himself difficulties by giving direct utterance to his internal pride, by saying in 1634, (*Excusatio*), about his own plays:

"Me pauci hic fecere parem, nullus que secundum,
Nec speranda fuit gloria pone sequi."
(Verses 71-72)

And in his "*Excuse à Ariste*" (1637)? Meyer says 1634

"Je ne dois qu'à moi seul toute ma renommée,
Et pense toutefois n'avoir point de rival
A qui je fasse tort en le traitant d'égal."

cf. Article
in Neo-
Philologie

But, he knows also how to avoid criticism. Although a modern with rather definite literary opinions, he remains flexible and submissive enough to adopt slowly and slyly most of the rules and theories of the "doctes", when their power becomes every day more imposing. It is also said by contemporaries that he was careful to forestall criticism by changes in the criticized parts of his plays, before they were printed. That he had an ear always in the direction of the changes in taste of the court can be seen in the fact that he erased the indecent expressions in the editions of his early plays after about 1650, when such expressions or scenes were out of fashion.

Yet, these changes must not entirely be attributed to his sense of what was popular. His conception of the theater, as well as his intellectual outlook evolve and change, and he may have obeyed in good faith to ^{his modified} ~~his~~ convictions.

At first his inspiration is derived very largely from literature; with some of his best comedies, "La Veuve" or "La Suivante", he comes nearer to a more direct and more realistic observation of contemporary life. But, once the theme of these love-imbroglios almost exhausted, he looks for other sources of inspiration. And, his intellectual outlook has, in the meantime becomes more serious. He tries his hand at a classical tragedy with the Medée, and writes, after that play, an irregular and composite work, the "Illusion comique". Then, at last, he finds his way with the "Cid."

As he advanced in years his mood in relation to the world changed. From his first phase of rather light-hearted preference for problems of love,—love, however, without the depth and the violence of passion—he evolves to his second phase of dominant intellectuality. With his thirtieth year he reveals a deepening of insight into human nature and into the motives

of passion. He gives, with the Cid, a deeper analysis of feeling than in any preceding play. His youthful daring and effervescence has died out, and has given place to a riper and sterner view of life. In his art too he turns more and more to the psychological. From the external and the pleasing he is gradually ripening into the internal and the intensive. A psychologist from the start, if not obtrusively so, he has broadened with experience his innate faculty for analysis of soul.

And, in throwing off the first phase of his constitution, he attains at once a tragical power and depth which reveal that his character was at bottom of a Pascal-like passion and seriousness, but with an element of sternness, alien to the philosopher. The name of Pascal is significant in this connection. About the time of these psychological changes Corneille was in relation with him and his family at Rouen, where Pascal's father was tax-receiver.

At the same time Corneille comes into closer relation with the Court. Some of his plays are staged for the royal household at Forges, in 1634; he becomes, for a time, one of the "five authors" of Richelieu; and he seems to have received his impulse for the creation of the Cid, indirectly from the circle of the queen. In his earlier plays he was somewhat of an observer, portraying with half-serious delight interesting and characteristic scenes from his surroundings; with his tragedies he comes nearer to the political life of his times. The Cornelian hero, if idealized reality, shows some traits of the seventeenth century "honnête homme", something of the Cortegiano-type, the courtly ideal of the time.

Corneille's tragedies must not be conceived as the work solely of an artist, cloistered in a kind of aloofness from the

life of his times, choosing a subject in Roman history by way of an excuse for writing a masterpiece. He did not work out his historical themes in isolation, coolly and abstractly as a painter does with a study which happened to strike his fancy for no other reason than its picturesqueness.

His tragedies are attached with subtle roots to his own life and to the life of his times. They are not directly autobiographical therefore; but they reflect part of the life of his surroundings and of his epoch. This influence of his environment can be exemplified with his choice of subject. When the war with Spain was going on, he choose the Cid; after the death of his father, he sketched the stoic and admirable "vieil Horace"; when all Rouen begged for mercy, he treated the theme of forgiveness in the Cinna; after his marriage, he wrote Polyucte. Actual events of his own life stimulate his imagination and animate for him the pageant of history.

From about 1616, when as a boy he must have begun to hear about the political events of the day, what a kaleidoscopic succession of dramatic historical facts! They could not have escaped his notice. Some of the actors he had seen himself; Madame de Luynes, ^{the} later madame de Chevreuse, and Luynes himself presided at a distribution of prizes in his College, as well as d'Ornano, who, in 1626, died in prison. And the other actors and events were sufficiently public to have forced Corneille to pay attention to them. The struggle between the queen-mother and the young Louis XIII, the Spanish marriages and the intrigues and revolts against them, the high fortune and the murder of the favorite Concini; the interminable wars with the Princes and the Protestants; the raise to power of Richelieu and the execution of high-place rebels; the reign of the favorite Luynes; the "Conspiration des dames" against

Letter of Courart - of May 23, 1655.
Revue d'histoire littéraire: 1920 - n. 23. p. 448.

"Pour M. de Corneille, il s'est jetté dans les compositions pieuses, et a laissé le soin du théâtre à un de ses frères. Vous ne devez pas vous étonner s'il n'est point soigneux de vous écrire, puis-qu'il n'écrit pas seulement à ses amis d'icy, dont il n'est éloigné que de trente lieues. Je ne le verray, pourtant, jamais, que je ne luy face reproche de sa négligence en votre endroit, et que je me l'assure, toutefois, en mesme temps, de la continuation de votre estime et de votre amitié, puis-que vous m'avez chargé de l'un et de l'autre."

~~Lettre adressée~~

the marriage of Gaston d'Orléans; the various attempts to murder de Richelieu—all of these events and more of them were crowded in the space of a decade. And, after 1636, when Corneille began writing, these events follow one another with the same rapidity: The conquest of La Rochelle and the down-fall of the Protestants, the execution of Montmorency; the flight of Marie of Medicis to the Netherlands; the thirty years' war; and other historical facts, which must have drawn Corneille's attention to the politics of his time. They created a medium of public circumstance, suggestive of political thoughts and preferences; they constituted an unceasing demand for assent and admiration, or an invitation to discussion and dislike. Yet, Corneille was hardly a partisan. For that he was altogether too prudent, although he united in his mental make-up the combined traits of the politician, the courtier and the hero.

The references in Corneille's plays to the politics of the day are not open and fearless. Publishing his opinions on the affairs of the state would have been a dangerous undertaking. Besides Corneille always was respectful of authority. At a couple of occasions when he took a rather decided stand in the politics of his times, he was to a certain extent, the victim of his daring; and this, of course, increased his natural circumspection. When he wrote the Cid, at the time of the war with Spain, his defense of Spanish honor and heroism, among other things, brought him into quarrels and difficulties. In 1650, during an insurrection of the Fronde, he was made "Syndic de Normandie" by the queen, but he was dispossessed again of his dignity by the former "Syndic", at a turn of political fortunes. In the meantime he had sold his place as "avocat à la table de marbre"; and he suffered in this way

some financial loss. Neither his character, nor his experiences were conducive to exceptional political zeal. He never transgressed the borders of what was considered by authors the right to political allusion, as exercised, for instance, by Mlle de Scudéry with the "Grand Cyrus".

Corneille, of course, did not preach any personal political doctrine with his plays. His observation of political facts was vigilant enough; but it was all mental and to be woven into the fabric of his artistic conceptions. His political opinions and observations do not constitute a theory; they are not used for open attacks against opponents nor for state-propaganda. They furnish, rather, the impulse which dictates his choice of subject-matter; the emotion which sets his mind working on a particular problem; the enthusiasm which animates, for him, the hieratic frescos of history. His own experience--as Lanson expresses it,--"made him perceive in a few indifferent lines of a Latin historian the nucleus of a powerful tragedy."

In a measure all art is an artistic response to the experience and the observations of the surroundings in which an author moves. But, it is not solely that. His work is transformed by the peculiar influence of his philosophy, by his outlook upon the world, by the tendencies of his moral character. And during the period from 1637-1643, Corneille's mental attitude is dominated by intellectuality. His conception and valuation of existence is an intellectual one: Reason, and Will predominate, tyrannize over all other passions, including love. Lanson notes (Histoire, 420): "Il a et il exprime une nature plus rude et plus forte, qui a longtemps été la nature française, ~~une nature française,~~ une nature intellectuelle et

volontaire, consciente et active----Il a peint des femmes toujours viriles, parce que toujours elle agissent par volonté, par intelligence, plutôt que par instinct ou par sentiment."

This is true for Corneille's tragedies and tragical heroines, but it cannot be applied to his early productions and characters. And this distinction between the types of his comedies and those of his early tragedies sufficiently illuminates the distance between his first and his second phase.

The Polyeucte is still a tragedy of the Will, but with this tragedy another element begins to enter into Corneille's work. The Cornelian hero had exhibited rather Classic-Pagan traits, a "virtu" of the Italian Renaissance, but no Christian humility. His self-affirmation, his reliance on his "Ego", his "vertu âpre" was essentially un-Christian. His ideal is both pagan and Italian. With the Polyeucte a change becomes noticeable in Corneille's psychology. He pursues there Christian glory, instead of pagan glory, although the same indomitable Will is used as means of attaining the "Souverain Bien". And from then on the tendency towards Christianity and meekness gains strength. His translation of the "Imitation of J.--Ch." is not without significance. What ideal could be more opposed to the Cornelian hero than the ideal of submissiveness, humility, laxity of will, and "poverty of mind" expounded by Thomas à Kempis? That a religious experience was the origin of Corneille's resolution to translate the work, is proved by the Dedicace, placed, in 1656, at the beginning of the completed work. He says that he read a volume of pious Latin verse by Pope Alexander VII, and that "Ils me plongèrent dans une reflexion sérieuse qu'il fallait comparaître devant Dieu, et lui rendre compte du talent dont il m'avait favorisée. Je considerai ensuite que ce

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n'était pas assez de l'avoir si heureusement réduit à purger notre théâtre des ordures que les premiers siècles y avaient comme incorporées et des licences que les derniers y avaient comme souffertes; qu'il ne devait pas suffire d'y avoir fait regner en leur place les vertus morales et politiques, et quelques unes même des chrétiennes; qu'il fallait porter ma reconnaissance plus loin, et appliquer toute l'ardeur du génie à quelque nouvel essai de ses forces qui n'eut point d'autre but que le service de ce grand maître et l'utilité du prochain. C'est ce qui m'a fait choisir la traduction de cette sainte morale, qui, par la simplicité de son style, ferme la porte aux plus beaux ornements de la poésie, et, bien loin d'augmenter ma réputation, semble sacrifier à la gloire du Souverain auteur tout ce que j'ai pu acquérir en ce genre d'écrire."

More than for Pascal, "Le moi est haïssable" for the author of the "Imitation of J.--Ch". The appearance of the "Polyeucte", the "Théodore" and the translation of the "Imitation" point to a third period in Corneille's evolution, a phase dominated by Christian feeling and a certain meekness, at least in spirit.

We are not here occupied with the later phases of Corneille's personal and artistic evolution. It seems justified to claim that neither Corneille's work nor his psychology are static, but constantly in a process of evolution and transformation. He appears as very sanely related to life, to his surroundings and the times; and not exclusively as an abstract thinker who delights in the conflict on the scene of abstract values disguised as characters. No doubt he believed in these values, but his inspiration is rooted in his own experience and in contemporary life. There is in his nature a certain sensitiveness to the currents in thought and in literature of his time; a

certain plasticity, too, revealed in his absorption of literary examples and in his use for dramatic purposes of facts and events from his surroundings. In other respects, as, for instance, in his relation to the rules and to authority, he gives proof of yieldingness and "esprit de finesse".

Yet, if he was submissive sometimes in external circumstances, he was carried through life by an internal pride. He was conscious of his own exceptional value, and impatient of the criticism of many whom he deemed inferior, for instance, of the meddling of Claveret with the Cid-quarrel. Somewhat heavy in rebuff, he sometimes alienated affection by his superiority and his haughty opinions about his work and his own value. To his contemporaries much of his soul was hidden by some small shortcomings: his mind was not sparkling, his conversation far from a firework of glittering wit, his manners lacked the refinement of the habitués of the salons. But,—to repeat his own words,—he remained nevertheless, for all that, Pierre Corneille. The two sides of his nature can be understood by a single example: He was careful of his monetary situation to the extent of gaining a reputation as a miser; yet he sacrifices all for his sons who under the great generals of Louis XIV planted the white banner with the golden lilies upon all the fortresses of the enemy. A sly and patient Norman in his daily life, in the lower strata of his nature, he was generous and highminded in all actions in which loftier principles were involved. He had a heroic soul.

His life is an active destruction of the common theory of genius—formulated, for instance, by Lombroso and the vulgarizer, or Max Nordau—according to whom genius is at the same time sublime and insane, superhuman and inferior. The entire tenor of the records about Corneille's life and work

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show him to be a remarkably sane and poised man, in whom genius was the expression of his whole superior and well-balanced intelligence; ~~and~~ not a kind of mysterious gift co-existing with general mental inferiority.

APPENDIX.

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THE DEDICACE OF CORNEILLE'S "THEODORE"

Corneille's tragedy Théodore, Vierge et Martyre, was played in 1645 and printed 1646. The play, therefore, must have been written in 1644-1645. It had no success on the stage, as Corneille himself testifies: "La représentation de cette tragédie n'a pas eu grand éclat, et sans chercher des couleurs à la justifier, je veux bien ne m'en prendre qu'à ses défauts, et la croire mal faite, puisqu'elle a été mal suivie. J'aurais tort de m'opposer au jugement public." (Examen de Théodore. M--L. V. 10)

"Théodore" is dedicated "A Monsieur L. P. C. B." Marty-Laveaux remarks in this connection: "Il est probable que Corneille, découragé par le mauvais succès de Théodore, n'a présenté cette pièce à personne, et qu'il n'a écrit cette sorte d'épître dédicatoire que pour tenir lieu d'un avis au lecteur."

No convincing reason is given to explain this subterfuge on the part of Corneille. If he had felt the need of prefacing his "Théodore" with an "Avis au Lecteur", it is more than probable that he simply would have written it instead of addressing a fictitious dedicace to a supposed patron. For his "Nicomède"; for instance, he wrote an "Au Lecteur", but no dedicace.

Besides, the introductory sentence of the dedicace of the "Théodore" clearly refers to a real person: "Monsieur, je n'abuserai point de votre absence de la cour pour vous imposer touchant cette tragédie: sa représentation n'a pas eu grand éclat." (M-L. V. 8)

This sentence, in fact, gives a clue as to the identity of the patron hidden behind the initials L. P. C. B. The expression "votre absence de la cour" must, of course not

be taken to mean, according to its modern sense, that Corneille's patron was ordinarily at the court, but accidentally absent when "Theodore" was represented there. In Corneille's vocabulary the word absence is an equivalent for éloignement, remoteness, separation or disconnection. (word "absence" M-L XI)

The following verses exemplify this:

"Quelque ravage affreux qu'étale ici la peste;
L'absence aux vrais amants est encore plus funeste."
(M-L VI. 135 Oedipe VI)

"Un esprit amoureux absent de ce qu'il aime."
(Veuve, 346)

"Quoi qu'absent de ses yeux il me faille endurer."
(Cid, 1835)

It must therefore be concluded that "Monsieur L. P. C.B.", to whom the "Theodore" is dedicated, lived at a place remote from the court and the capital.

Now, in 1644-45, when the play was written Corneille resided still at Rouen, and during that very year the Prieur of the merchants of that city was a Claude Boudard. (/) It will be observed that both the date and the initials of Corneille's dedicace fit this personage. It may be, therefore, safely accepted that "A Monsieur L. P. C. B." means "A Monsieur le Prieur Claude Boudard."

The historian Farin (Op. cit. 350) gives the following information about the dignigy of Prieur des Marchands de Rouen: "La ville de Rouen estant devenue extrêmement marchande,----- il a esté nécessaire, afin que le trafic allât de mieux en mieux, d'exempter les marchands des longues procédures qui se font aujourd'huy par devant les magistrats et les juges ordinaires pour ce qui regarde seulement le trafic. C'est pourquoy l'an de grace 1556, ils obtinrent lettres de..."

du Roy Henry II portant l'établissement de la jurisdiction des
Prieur et Consuls, qui auroient pouvoir d'entendre les raisons
des parties, et de vuider les differens qui arrivent dans
le commerce."

Claude Boudard was chief judge in a kind of commercial
court. His function, distinguished enough for a merchant,
was yet not comparable with the lofty rank of the high-placed
personages to whom Corneille had dedicated some of his pre-
ceding plays, --Richelieu, the queen Anne of Austria, the
Duke of Longueville, Mazavin, the Duke of ^NEughien and others.
This probably moved Corneille to substitute the initials
of Claude Boudard to his full name.

In no country of Europe did Corneille ever enjoy such lasting fame as in Holland. He had personal relations with the influential Dutch statesman and poet, Constantyn Huyghens, heer van Zuylichem, who came to visit him at Rouen(2) To Huyghens he dedicated "Don Sanche" and the remains of their correspondence attest that Corneille was held in high esteem by the Dutch statesman-poet. (3) These friendly relations with the renowned secretary of the reigning Prince of Orange gave Corneille from the beginning of his career in the eyes of the Dutch literary world a decided advantage upon his fellow-poets. Besides, the savant Claude Sarrau, a friend of Corneille from his early years, was one of the best acquaintances of Hugo Grotius,(4)

In 1645 there appeared at Leyden(Holland) a French edition of *Le Menteur*, which contained a Latin and a French poem by Constantyn Huyghens in honor of Corneille:

Et bien ce beau Menteur, ceste pièce fameuse,
 Qui estonne le Rhin et faict rougir la Meuse,
 Et le Tage et le Pô, et le Tibre Romain,
 De n'avoir rien produit d'egal à ceste main,
 A ce Plaute rené, à ce nouveau Terence,
 La trouve-on si loing ou de l'indifference
 Ou du juste mépris des scavants d'aujourd'huy....

Holland is far in the lead of all the other European countries in the number of translations of Corneille's plays published before 1810, as appears from the following table:

Number of editions of translations before 1810:	
In Holland	82
In Italy	47
In Germany	28
In England	21
In Spain	7
In Russia	5
In Portugal	4
In Sweden	4
In Denmark	3

Fontenelle relates that Corneille possessed in his library translations of the *Cid* in various languages, and, among others, a

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translation in Flemish in which "par une exactitude toute flamonde on avait rendu la pièce vers par vers." (5)

This translation is, no doubt, the one which Van Heemskerck published in 1641 with the title: De Cid, Bly-eindend treurspel In Franse vaersen gestelt door d'heer Corneille. Nu in Nederlandsche rymen vertaald" (Amsterdam, 1641) The same year two other editions of the same translation were published by two other printers, an undeniable sign of success. (6) This translation, of which Corneille praised the exactitude, was no mere literary hack-work as such translations frequently are. On the contrary, Van Heemskerck made a careful study of the life of the Cid, following Spanish sources. He added to his translation an appendix, a sketch of fifty-five pages: "Het leven van Don Rodriguo Diaz de Bivar, toe-genaemt de Cid" Slowly I passed, he writes, from fiction on the scene to true events, and I have gathered from Spanish chronicles the whole life and all the deeds of the famous Cid; and I did it the more willingly because I seemed to find a Dutch heart in a Spanish breast; a staunch defender of the freedom of his fatherland and a feared opponent of all foreign domination; fighting against that thirst for power which possesses the Spaniards of today and which the Cid rejects with words worthy of a free Hollander."

In 1650 there was published at Amsterdam a new edition of this translation (Two editions in 1662, others in 1608, 1670, 1683, 1697, 1732, 1736, 1760)

A Flemish poet of repute, Michiel de Swaen, published, in 1694, at Duykercke, a new translation of the Cid: "Den Cid, blyen-digh treurspel" - He was a prominent member of the Chamber of Rhetoric of Duykercke and enjoyed considerable reputation for his epic: "Het Leven en het lyden van onzen Heer Jezus-Christus." He also trans-

lated the Andronic of Campigstron and wrote a play himself on the abdication of Charles V.

In 1771 J. Nomaz translates anew the Cid with the notes of Voltaire. A second edition appeared in 1772. But previous to these translations the Cid had already been printed in 1638 at Leyden in French. The publisher says in a dedicace to the "Amateurs de la Langue Françoise" - Le soin où m'engage le désir que j'ay de satisfaire à vos curiosités (m'ayant fait decouvrir cette excellente et ravissante pièce entre les nouveaux ouvrages de nos écrivains) m'a porté dans le dessein de la faire ^{ici} mettre souz la presse, pour vous en rendre participans. Je m'y suis de plus senti provoqué par le peu d'exemplaires qui s'en est trouvé en ces pays, et qui sembloit témoigner que la France fut jalouse, que cet oeuvre admirable tombat en la main des estrangers.

Horace was translated in 1648 by the renowned Groot-Pensionaris of Holland Jan De Wit. He signed: J. J. Z. D. W. D. J. (Jan Jans' Zoon De Wit, Doctor Juris) (Republished in 1649, 1679, 1680, 1699 1700) In 1709 a new translation was offered to the Dutch public by Jan Shroder, followed, in 1751, by a very weak one by the Brussels poet, J. Cammaert. The next translation was from the hand of J. Van Stamhorst, in verse, published at Amsterdam in 1753 a second edition in 1768.

In 1684, Simon Van der Cruyssen translated the Illusion Comique under the title of "De waarschynlyke Toovery" (The probable Sorcery) He transfered the scenes of the action to Holland and ascribed Dutch names to the characters (New editions in 1691 and 1729)

Cinna ou la Clémence ^{d'Auguste was} translated by Michiel de Swaen of Duinkercke at the end of the seventeenth century, about the same time of his translation of the Cid, but his work remained in manuscript until 1774, when it was published at Ypres, in Belgium.

under the title: "Gebod des Liefde ons door Christus gegeven, te veel door de Christen verzuymt, door Cezar Octavianus, Romsch Keizer en afgoden dienaar gepleegt aan hen die hem moorden wilden. Meesterstuk van den grooten Corneille."

In 1677 appeared at Amsterdam a translation by Andreas Pels (Republished in 1683, 1707, 1716, 1720, 1836) Andreas Pels was an influential member of the well-known literary society Nil Volentibus Arduum, founded in 1668 by what was the younger generation of the period.

The next translator(1809) of Cinna was no less a personage than the celebrated Dutch poet Willem Bilderdijk.(New edition in 1824 and reprinted in the editions of his works)

Polyeucte was translated by Frans Ryk in 1696(New ed. 1707, 1724, about 1750, 1754)

La Mort de Pompée was translated by Bidloo in 1684 (Reprinted 1719) In August 1685 appeared a pamphlet criticizing the work of Bidloo: "Dichtkundig Onderzoek op het vertaald Treurspel Pompejus door het Konstgenootschap In Magnio voluisse sat est." Various members of this society collaborated in this volume, which also contains satires and epigrams against the translator, who is accused furthermore of not knowing French and of not understanding the rules of Dutch Syntax and prosody.

In 1728 a new translation by Charles Sébille, saw the light. (Republished 1737) The translator echoes the opinion of many of his compatriots when he says in his introduction that he considers Corneille as the greatest of all French poets. Yet he has introduced some noticeable changes in the play: "One has always and rightly criticised the first four verses of Pompée. I have removed, I believe, the incoherences which have been noticed in them. In the same way, and notwithstanding my high esteem for the French author, here and there I have changed or even entirely suppressed

some passages; I have ventured to slip into the tragedy some verses of my own composition and especially four which I have laid into the mouth of Cornélie(Act III, sc.IV)"

Le Menteur was translated early, in 1658, by one of the most outstanding admirers of Corneille, by Lodewijk Meyer. The names of the characters were changed to more familiar Dutch names. (Republication in 1699 and 1721)

One of the most active members of In Magnis Voluisse and a translator of Racine and other French poets, Frans Rijk, was responsible for a translation of Rodogune.(1687 Republished in 1721 and 1744) In 1715 Jan Van Doesburg translated Théodore.

Three years after the publication of Corneille's Héraclius, a Brussel bookseller, translated it in Flemish as his own play. This act of plagiarism seems to have escaped notice at the time; "Claudii de Grieks' Heraklius" - Brussel - 1650. Corneille's name is not cited in the introduction or in the Dedicatory Epistle.

The next translator of Heraklius, Frans Rijk, does not give credit to Corneille, although he admits, in the preface, that the play is not his own. He has "costumed this French Byzantine after a Dutch fashion"(Amsterdam, 1695. Republications: 1735, 1737, 1762)

The same De Rijk translated Andromède in 1699. (New editions: 1715, 1730, 1739) A woman who holds an honorable rank in Dutch letters, Katarÿne Lescailje, called "the modern Sapho" by Vondel translated, in 1684, Nicomède(7) - Republished 1692 and 1734.

Pertharite was translated by Sybrand Feitama in 1723(Republished in 1735, 1756, 1773) Oedipe was translated by Balthasar Huydecoper, in 1720(8) In the preface of the first edition, written by the famous professor P.Burman of Leiden, some interesting material is found for the history of Corneille's fortune

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in Holland; "He, who, overestimating his own forces, ^{and} dares to contest with the Great French poet for the crown which is his due, is worthy of the torment of Marsyas. Like the sun in full noon-glory, illuminates the field over which it shines, so Corneille appeared formerly. Another poet (Voltaire) appears as a pale moon at midnight and dares to measure himself with him; he is like Diane who dared defy her brother,

But the sun breaks through the clouds and shows itself in its splendor; and the disc of the moon at once grows dim and fades away. In the same way Corneille shall lift his head again when everyone shall have seen all the tinsel which dazzled them, tarnished and consumed by time and rust." The rest of the preface is devoted to a criticism of Voltaire's Oedipe. This attack on Voltaire and this defense of Corneille could, in 1720, hardly remain without an answer. In the month of May of that year Huydecoper and Burman were attacked in the "Gazette de Hollande" Huydecoper wrote a pamphlet in reply: Corneille verdedigd (Corneille defended). Yet Voltaire's Oedipe took the place of Corneille's on the Dutch stage. (9) Othon was translated in 1695 by S. Van der Cruyssen and in 1721 by Jacob Zeeus; Attila, by M. Elias in 1685. (Republished in 1728 and 1743) Sybrand Feitama, who also translated Pertharite, prepared in 1714, Tite et Bérénice for the Dutch scene as Titus Vespasianus (New editions 1724 and 1735) (10) Surena was translated by Frans Ryk and published in 1738. To close this long list of translations of plays we can mention too, the translation of Corneille's paraphrase of the Imitation of Jesus-Christ, published in 1707. (Second edition 1716), Another translation appeared at Gouda in 1710, and in 1730 the literary society, Nature et Arte, published in Dutch, part of the book.

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To estimate at its right value Corneille's influence

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in Holland, it is necessary to consider the state of Dutch letters at the middle of the seventeenth century. A period of magnificent vitality had just passed, the "golden century" of the Dutch. Their theater had been brought to a high state of development by Vondel and Brederod, by Hooft and Coster. In the third quarter of the century a period of decadence set in, after the greatest voices had grown silent and weaker artists had become the rulers of Parnassus. A group of the younger authors professed disdain for their own theater, with the exception of the classic Vondel, and began to look in foreign countries for a renewal of inspiration. And, since France stood at the zenith, of the European literature of that time, they adopted classicist rules and restrictions which were at that time triumphant in that country. Their illusion was that by transplanting French esthetic conceptions they would equal French literary art. But they only succeeded in applying the external recipes. The spirit of French classicism remained alien to them. In imitation of the French Academy, Andries Pels and Lodewijk Meyer founded in 1669 at Amsterdam, the society, Nil Volentibus Arduum, to which reference was made above, with the intention of reforming the Dutch language and poetry and introducing reforms in Dutch dramatic art.

The members of that society thought so highly of the three "Discours sur l'art dramatique" which Corneille published in 1660, that they imitated him, not only in their tragedies, but also by prefacing their works with long theoretical considerations about the art of the stage. And in most cases their theories took the place of personal achievements. During the early decades of the Seventeenth century the influence of the Ancients, of Aristotle and Horatius was predominant in Dutch literary criticism. Yet these ancient theorists lacked practical experience

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of the stage. But around 1670 it looked to the Dutch critics as if the revered precepts of the Ancients needed to be supplemented and controlled by the principles of the modern masters, who were not merely theorizing from abstract principles, but stood with both feet upon the boards of the stage. It is because of his experience as a practical playwright that Lodewyk Meyer, in the Preface of his "Verloofde Koningsbruidt" calls Corneille the highest authority among the moderns and prefers him to Scaliger and Heinsius.

Another secret of Corneille's influence in Holland can be discovered in the fact that he reconciled two schools of critics, who, for decades, had been looking askance at one another; the followers of Horatius and those of Aristotle. Horatius taught that art, in its highest form, unites pleasure and usefulness: "Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit *utile dulci*" (Ars Poet. 343)

For Aristoteles, on the contrary, taught that the end of art was simply imitation and its role to please through imitation. Beauty has no immediate usefulness, no direct moral application. Two parties were formed among the commentators. The great Scaliger, who revered the Romans more than the Greeks, took the side of Horatius: "neque enim eo tantum spectandum est, ut spectatores uel admirentur vel percellantur, id quod Aeschylum factitasse ajunt critici: sed et docendi, monendi et delectandi." (Poet III, 97)

Castelvetro, on the other hand, the leader of the Italian estheticists, declared himself in his Poetica (1570) in favor of the doctrine of art as pure delectation. In France, Italy, and England both these doctrines had found numerous defenders, and were fought for and against in numerous battles. What is the end of art? To furnish pleasure or instruction according to

rule? In most countries the esthetic theories wavered between Horatius and Castelvetro and also in Holland until Corneille tried to reconcile them by assigning to art the end of "plaire, selon les règles" - because, he argued, it is by respecting the rules of the ancients, interpreted in the broadest fashion, that we will best please and instruct.

Corneille believed that Aristotle had left a great number of practical problems of the stage without conclusive answer and he proposed to ~~answer~~ ^{solve} them in his three Discours. He took an independent attitude, for which however, as Professor Searles has demonstrated(//) he was largely indebted to the Italian theorists, Minturno, Robertelli, and Castelvetro himself. He inquires in what manner exactly the unity of action must be understood by "vraisemblance" and he treats of various minor problems besides. He falls back upon the old argument that Reason, the Sens commun, is of more lasting value than the rules evolved by the Ancients. Aristotle's authority can only be accepted as far as his precepts coincide with the dictates of reason. This way of reasoning did not solve the problems in hand, but only transposed them into another realm. For the classicists, Chapelain, for instance, held that Reason and the Rules were absolute synonyms, while the "moderns" always opposed Reason to the Rules. Corneille thinks that in most cases, reason sanctions the precepts of the ancients; but that here and there, we have to supplement them by modern and freer interpretations. In the "Discours des trois Unités" he says of the unity of time "Beaucoup réclament contre cette règle, qu'ils nomment tyrannique, et auraient raison si elle n'était fondé que sur l'autorité d'Aristotle; mais ce qui doit la faire accepter, c'est la raison naturelle qui lui sert d'appui." On the other hand he evolves

as the expositor and interpreter of Aristotle, a number of new doctrines on stage-craft and playwriting, all based, he says, on reason and common sense. Poetic decorum, the linking of the scenes; the doctrines of "pleasing according to rule" ; the rejections of monologues; the theory of Possibility versus Verisimilitude, were among his more or less original innovations enthusiastically acclaimed in Holland.

No theorist, not even the Dutch Latinist Heinsius, ever had such a deep-going influence in Holland during the seventeenth century as Corneille. He, in fact, replaced for the members of Nil Volentibus Arduum and for others, the ancients themselves. His precepts and his example were sufficient justification for the novelties which the Dutch dramatists introduced in their plays. Lodewijk Meyer called Seneca and Corneille "the two great masters of dramatic art" B.W. Haps claimed that Corneille, Racine and Quinault had attained "perfection" It is especially from Corneille that the Dutch playwrights learn "de prendre quelques libertés avec les Anciens" In the preface of his Jan van Leiden en Barendt Knipperdoling(1662) Joan Dullaert stated: "In my judgment(and although many are opposed to this) I cannot find it absurd that the stage-laws of the Greeks and Latins are now sometimes changed according to the character of the various countries Everyone is free to choose without submission to the usage of the ancients. Such is the practice of the illustrious Italians the witty Spaniards, the eloquent Frenchmen, and the learned Englishmen in their tragedies and comedies...." And Lodewijk Meyer, in the preface of the Ghulde Vlies commended Corneille for having dared to interpret freely the tyrannical rules of the ancient theorists. Instead of the rules of the Ancients, Corneille's rules and precepts were now strictly followed. The members of Nil Valentibus Arduum - in the preface of "De wan-

hebbelyke Liefde" - censured the author of the play because he repeated the same rhyme inside of sixty lines, which was forbidden by Corneille. Bernagie, in the preface of his "Paris en Helene" defended the appropriation of traditional themes by a citation from Corneille and excused the fact that the villain of his play remained unpunished, by pointing out that, according to Corneille, poetic justice was no essential rule of tragic art. (12)

In 1668 Lodewyk Meyer gave the most extensive exposition of Corneille's theories in Holland and probably in any European country during the seventeenth century. Important parts of the preface of his "Verloofde Koningsbruidt" are a paraphrase of the "Discours sur l'utilité et sur les parties du poème dramatique" Upon Corneille's authority he declared that verisimilitude is not necessary in a play if only the impossible is avoided. Nowhere in his plays has he given a definite indication of time or place because Corneille did not approve of these definite indications. And he stated that his object is "behaaghen volghens de reghelen der kunst" - a translation of Corneille's famous sentence "plaire selon les règles"

Corneille had said (op.cit) "Je voudrois donc que le premier acte contint le fondement de toutes les actions, et fermât la porte à tout ce qu'on voudroit introduire d'ailleurs dans le reste du poeme."

Meyer repeats: The first act must "Opening doen van den inhoudt des tooneelspels, en den aanschouweren onderrichten van alles, wat geschiedt is voor den Handel, welke men toeleght te vertoonen; en vereischt wordt tot verstand derzelve, en tot het volghende den weg baant" (13)

Meyer desires that all the acts shall be of about the same length and that the play would not count more than two thousand verses, in imitation of Corneille who declares in his "Discours

du poeme dramatique" that a comedy should contain 2000 and a tragedy 1800 verses. (14)

Corneille held that suspense might be increased in a tragedy by deferring the catastrophe as much as possible: "Il faut s'il se peut lui (au cinquieme acte) reserver toute la catastrophe, et même la reculer vers la fin, autant qu'il est possible Plus on la diffère, plus les esprits demeurent suspendus, et l'impatience qu'ils ont de savoir de quel coté elle tournera est cause qu'ils la reçoivent avec plus de plaisir (Discours sur le poeme dram.)

Nil Volentibus arduum, found in this interpretation of the rule of the catastrophe, sufficient reason for correcting Plautus himself. In 1670 this society published an adaptation of his "Menaechmi" under the title of "De gelyke Tweelingen" The translators prided themselves on having deferred the catastrophe much longer than their classic example. Other corrections are made according to Corneille's opinions, some new characters are introduced because he held that it was necessary to bring on the scene in the first act, all the characters playing an important role in the play.

Corneille in his "Discours des trois unités" says about the linking of the scenes: "La liaison des scènes, qui unit toutes les actions particulières de chaque acte l'une avec l'autre, est un grand ornement dans un poème, et qui sert beaucoup à former une continuité d'action par la continuité de la représentation; mais enfin ce n'est qu'un ornement et non pas une règle." The "liaison des scènes" becomes also in Holland a desirable accomplishment and a source of beauty. Lodewijk Meyer in regard to the third act of his "Ghulde Vlies" excuses himself for having made the action somewhat longer than strict probability would allow, by pointing out that he acted thus "to add another orne-

ment to the play as is here the linking of the separate scenes." He expounds the same point of view in the preface of the "Verloofde Koningsbruidt" Dirk Buysero says that in his "Aarete of Strijd tusschen de Plicht en Min" (1692); the end of each scene is connected with the following "In such a way that by my knowledge no gap exists anywhere" And Andries Pels in his Gebruik en misbruik des Tooneels (175) made a law of the "Liaison des scenes":

"Leer voorders, Dichter, dat ge uw Spel zo moet verdeelen
In vyf bedrijven, dat geen gaaping uw Tooneelen
Van een scheid, en aldus maake één Bedryf tot twe."

(Learn further, Poet, that you must divide
your play in five acts and in such way
that no gap separates your scenes and
thus makes your one act into two.)

Corneille had taught that in certain cases it could be justified to allow a certain freedom, a certain deviation from Verisimilitude but that nowhere ought one to sin against Possibility. The very laws of unity of time and place might, he thinks, endanger Verisimilitude. Various characters might be forced, for instance, through the unity of place to meet at a certain spot where their presence is not at all probable. Again it might happen that the action, because of the unity of time, should be so condensed that the very crowding of so much incident in the span of twenty-four hours would seem an impossibility. In the preface of his Sertorius he said that in such cases verisimilitude may be sacrificed in order to save the unities.

In the prefaces of his "Verloofde Koningsbruidt" and of his Ghulde Vlies, Lodewyk Meyer follows Corneille's lead and imitates the Discours almost verbally. Largely through him Corneille's opinions came to be accepted as rules in Dutch literature.

"But if one gathers the various acts (of the play het Ghulde Vlies - 1667) and submits them to the test, it must be

admitted that it is improbable that so many actions as there are accomplished in my play, could happen in a single day.... But if this conflicts with Verisimilitude, it does not with Possibility; and this acquits us from the accusation of sinning against the laws and rules of art, which allow the dramatic poet to condense and shorten the main events of his plot somewhat more than when they follow one another in the ordinary course of events, if only he takes care not to be shipwrecked on the reefs of impossibility. For (as Mr. Corneille says very well) in the history of mankind few stories are found, which are worthy of being put on the stage, and of which the deliberations and principal events could be finished in a single day and in a single place without doing some violence to the natural order of things. There exist magnificent and pregnant themes which cannot be allowed to slip away; and a too particular or a too conscientious dramatic artist would forego fine occasions of acquiring great honor and of giving great pleasure to the world if he dared not bring these on the stage for fear of having to speed up the action more than verisimilitude allows. In this we have then not violated the laws of the stage and we have in our favor the intercession of such an excellent master in the art, who, furthermore, gives to the dramatic poet a sound counsel, to wit, of never designating either a fixed place or a fixed time in his play.... The mind of the auditor has, without these landmarks freer play; and his imagination is more easily carried away by what is being represented, so that, probably he would not notice the speeding up of the action, if they (the poets) did not remind him of it.... against his will."

And further; "I would wish, with M. Corneille, that what is represented in three hours might ^{happen,} happen, in reality in three hours, so as not to give the auditors any shock at all;

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and, also, that which is shown to them upon a single stage, could in reality, happen in one single room or hall; etc." - The rest of Meyer's opinions follow closely Corneille's Discours, tragedy finishes in a single day; the matter of each act within the time that it takes to play it, three hours together. The rest of the twenty-four hours is supposed to fall in the pauses between acts.

Corneille rejects monologues in plays unless they are justified by a great passion. He explains in the Discours sur le Poème Dramatique: - Ce n'est pas que je veuille dire, que quand un acteur parle seul, il ne puisse instruire l'auditeur de beaucoup de choses; mais il faut que ce soit par les sentiments d'une passion qui l'agite, et non pas par une simple narration." And Jan Vos in the Preface of his Medea says in 1667 that the monologue must be banished. "Daarom moet men sig wagen van imand alleen te laten uitkomen om met sig self te spreken, of hy moet van Een dolle yver gedreven worden, of van andre hartstochten, het sy van liefde of wraak, of onverwagte veurvallen of aanroepingen van goden en godinnen..."

The Dutch playwrights of the seventeenth century - unable to rise to the height of a Vondel - took from the French classicists especially external laws, and an uncontrolled desire for theorizing instead of producing original work. A time of reflection, uncertainty, doubt and reliance upon externalities, alien to the national temper had succeeded the flourishing period of the beginning of the century. And the great number of editions of Corneille's plays in Holland and the inspiration which the Dutch playwrights derived from his theories bear witness to the predominant role played by Corneille in the classicist trend in Dutch literature toward the end of the seventeenth century.

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NOTES
for
CORNEILLE IN HOLLAND

This Appendix is based on:

- (1) Souriau - *Le vers français au 17^e siècle* - Van Hamel - Zeventiende eeuwse opvattingen en Theorieën over Litteratuur in Nederland's Gravenhage - 1918 - Picot - Bibliographie Cornélienne - Du Verdier and Pelay: Additions à la Bibliographie Cornélienne Worp - Geschiedenis van het drama en van het Tooneel in Nederland - 1904.
- (2) Souriau - *Le Vers français au 17^e siècle*.
- (3) Marty-Laveaux - V.404 - Worp - Briefwisseling van C. Huygens - 1911-14. Huyghens tried, in the letter published by Worp, to convince Corneille of his theory of the French verse. Since he considered the poetic rhythm as essentially musical, he did not allow for the distinctions between various languages and desired to impose the same kinds of meter to all tongues.
- (4) Cf. Marty-Laveaux X, and the preceding chapter on Corneille's early friends and surroundings.
- (5) Fontenelle: *Vie de M. Corneille l'ainé* - cf. Pelisson and d'Olivet - *Histoire de l'Academie Française*, II, 189.
- (6) Johan Van Heemskerck (1597-1656) was for some time alderman of his native city Amsterdam, and died a member of the High Council at the Hague. He was well acquainted with the European literature of his epoch, and, before 1637, translated parts of Sidney's *Arcadia* and of d'Urfé's *Astrée*. His own pastoral novel "*Batavische Arcadia*" (1637) was inspired by these examples.
- (7) Katarÿne Lescaillje was at the head of a well-known firm of booksellers. Her dates are from 1649 to 1711.
- (8) 1699-1778 He belonged to a patrician family of Amsterdam of high consideration in the Republic of Netherlands.
- (9) "Corneille verdedigd. Behelzende een dichtkundig enderzack

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van het Bijverdichtsel ~~van~~ ^{VAN} Thezen~~e~~ en Dirce in het treurspel van den heer P. Corneille, benevens een Onderzoek en Wederlegging van verscheiden Beschuldigingen tegen dat zelfde spel, opgemaakt door den heer ^{ouet} ~~Arault~~ de Voltaire, en anderen. Amsterdam, 1720. In 1724 appears a "Onderzoek over de Nederduitsche Tooneelpoëzie" wherein is found a translation of the three "Discours" of Corneille on dramatic art.

- (10) Feitama produced a number of original plays and made translations in verse of the Henriade and of the Télémaque.
- (11) Corneille and the Italian Doctrinaires - Modern Philology, July 1915.
- (12) Corneille: Discours sur le Poème Dramatique. - C'est cet intérêt qu'on aime à prendre pour les vertueux qui a obligé d'en venir à cette autre manière de finir le poème dramatique par la punition des mauvaises actions et la récompense des bonnes, qui n'est pas un précepte de l'art, mais un usage qui nous avons embrassé dont chacun peut se départir à ses perils."

Bernagie - Paris en Helene (1685) - Preface: "Andere belgen zick, dat Paris en Helene, ^{NIET} ~~met~~ tegenstaande hunn overspel, ongestraft blijven. Zy meenen; de deugd behoort in een Spel altijd vergelding, en het kwaad altijd straffe te ontfangen. Ik vinde wel, dat zulks in veele Tooneelstukken geschied, maar Nergens dat dit noodsaakelijk moEt volgen. Corneille zegt uitdrukkelijk dit geen Regel van de konst te sijn. De vreeze, die zy hebben, dat de menschen niet de deugd, voor de ondengd, en de ondengd, voor de deugd neemen, is ydele ^{en} grypt maar alleen plaats by zulke die de ^{deugd} ~~ding~~ zo sierlik en de ondeugd zo gruwelik ^{niet} ~~mit~~ konnen schilderen; dat deese, ook ivolle voorspofd, afschriklik, geene, self in't midden der ^{en} ~~zw~~arste Rampen, bemind ^{niet} ~~ii~~ blijft. De meeste spellen van de wyze oudheid eindigen op deese wyze. Britannicus, Bajaset, Pirus en Thisbe, ~~en~~, betuygen klaar, wat

Racine, Pradon, en anderen hier van gevoelen. Ook konden de menschen zich nift inbeelden, dat Paris ongestraft bleef. Enone ~~erinnert~~ ^{erinnert} hem de schrikkelyke voorsegginge van Cassandra; de ondergang van Troje is genoeg bekend; dit Treurspel werd vertoondt op ~~een~~ ^{een} Tooneel, daar de Ifigenien, de Andromache, de Agamemnons, en de Didoos doen ~~hooren~~ ^{hooren}, wat straffen ~~de~~ ^{de} Trojaanen, en deese schaa-king leeden."

(13) Verloofde Koningsbruidt, Preface:- "Show the contents of the play and acquaint the spectators with all that happened before the action, which is going to be represented; and which all that is necessary to its comprehension; and which all that clears the road for what is going to follow"

(14) 1678.

(15) Corneille - "Discours des trois unités - Surtout je voudrais laisser cette durée à l'imagination des auditeurs et ne déterminer jamais le temps qu'elle emporte.

NOTES FOR

Decency in Corneille's Early Plays, (Cf. p. 149)

- (1) Cf. the Catalogue Soleinne. by the Bibliophile Jacob. - Nr. 905
- (2) Arnaud. - L' Abbe d' Ambignac. p. 191
- (3) - Preface of La Sylvie. -
- (4) - Discours de la Comedie.