Volume 2

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PART V

THE MATURE PHILOSOPHY; EXOTERIC PRESENTATION OF IDEAS

CHAPTER I METHODS OF PRESENTATION

Je prétens instruire le Lecteur, & un simple Recueil de faits historiques ne serviroit qu'à l'amuser. Il lui faut certaines matieres choisies, où les réflexions se présentent d'elles-mêmes. C'est alors que l'esprit se réveille...(Réflexions sur les grands hommes &c, ed. 1732, p. 47).

Imitons Erasme, & répétons avec lui: non amo seditiosam veritatem (H.c., IV, 126).

a) "External" Contradictions and the Double Doctrine

A first reading of the entire philosophic work of Deslandes leaves an uncomfortable feeling of confusion, produced by some glaring inconsistencies of thought and opinion. To explain what is meant by this statement, it will be helpful to submit examples drawn from the Histoire critique de la philosophie, on the one hand, and the Réflexions sur les grands hommes &c, Pirmalion, ou la statue animée and La Fortune, histoire critique, on the other.

The first illustration concerns the question as to whether suicide is justifiable as a natural right. In the Réflexions and at a moment when the author has just remarked that the tragedian, Seneca, established the permissibility of taking one's own life, we learn that. "...nous acquérons ce droit en naissant, & c'est le seul qui nous met [sic] au-dessus de la Nature même" (ed. 1732, p. 125). In the Histoire critique, however, Deslandes condemns Antisthenes for contemplating such an act, and adds: "...la vie n'est qu'un dépôt, &...tout dépôt deamnde à être conservé avec soin..." (II, 183). Again, in 1737 we are told that the idea of death being "le plus grand de tous les biens" is "un paradoxe...révoltant" (II, 176); yet in the Réflexions there is a chapter headed: "La Mort est plus à souhaiter qu'à craindre".

Were these the only examples proposed, the reader would

very rightly point out that the two works were separated by an interval of a quarter of a century, which is time enough for any man to change his opinions. To meet this objection, our next examples are taken solely from the mature writings of Deslandes. In the Histoire critique we come across this comment: "Pline insinuoit que Dieu, la Nature, le Sort, le Hazard ne sont qu'une même chose...Pour moi, je corrigerai ces erreurs frivoles..." (I, 85): a mere four years later, we find Pygmalion telling his statue: "...tous ces êtres n'en composent qu'un seul, qui est le Tout, qu'on appelle Dieu, la Nature, l'Univers" (Pigmalion &c, ed. 1742, pp. 66-67). Thus what we are led to reject in 1737, we are encouraged (by the hero of the story) to accept in 1741 - the date of the first edition.

The third case concerns La Fortune of 1751. Putting the two parts of our comparison in chronological order, we choose this passage from Deslandes's critical history of philosophy:

> J'ai avancé que les Stoïciens n'avoient aucune crainte ni aucune espérance pour l'autre vie, & cela fondé sur deux raisons décisives. La première, qu'il croyoient que tout arrive par un entrainement nécessaire, que les événemens se succédent les uns aux autres sans que rien puisse changer l'étroite chaîne qu'ils forment entre eux...De pareils discours se réfutent d'eux-mêmes (II, 408-409).

Now it is significant that the Bibliothèque raisonnée felt that the author should not have left such sentiments to "refute themselves"; (Vol. XXI, p. 417) for the exposition of fatalism in La Fortune shows that doctrine to have much in common with that which, in 1737, Deslandes airily dismissed as self-condemnatory. In fact, it sometimes uses almost the same expressions:

> Tout arrive, parce qu'il doit arriver; & l'ordre dans lequel il doit arriver, ne peut souffrir aucune altération ni aucun délai. Le Livre des Destinées contient & ce qui a été, & ce qui est, & ce qui sera. Jupiter y voit l'avenir, qui est enchaîné au présent, comme le présent est enchaîné au passé... Les événemens se succedent à point nommé les uns aux autres... (ed. 1751, p. 19).

These three series of comparisons supply contradictions which we call "external", since they occur between different works. Nor, as we have seen, can the unorthodox opinions be explained

away as belonging to a period other than that of the critical history of philosophy, for we have been careful to select them from the beginning, middle and end of his literary career.

The key to the mystery is provided by Deslandes himself. It will be remembered that our second set of examples were drawn from the Histoire Critique and Pigmalion. Now each of these works has a sort of preface; and in that of the former we come upon this important statement of aim: "Puissé-je, en publiant cet Ouvrage, exciter tout le monde à rechercher la sagesse...!" (I, xl). From this we conclude that he wishes his work to reach a wide public. How different, however, is the request he makes in the Dédicace to the conte philosophique of 1741: "En finissant, Madame, je vous demande une grace, c'est de ne montrer cette bagatelle qu'à peu de personnes. Il y a un certain ton qui fait passer la vérité; mais ce ton n'est pas entendu de tout le monde, & même il ne doit pas l'être. Piscis hic non est omnium" (ed. 1742, pp. xiv-xv). Though clearly these two works stand at opposite "poles", or at different ends of the scale, there are in the fourth volume of the first of them some additional pieces, in one of which we discover a wish expressed by the author: "Puissé-je à peu d'amis discrets,/ De ma Philosophie/ Transmettre en mourant les secrets!" (Mon Cabinet, in H.c., IV, 199). We may well ask: what were these secrets and how did he pass them on? Now, in this same fourth volume, there is another additional piece entitled Discours où l'on examine ce que les anciens Philosophes pensoient de la Divinité. It is headed by this quotation from Pliny: "Ego enim non populum advocare, sed certos electosque soleo, quos intuear, quibus credam, quos denique & tanquam singulos observem, & tanquam non singulos timeam"; and it reaches a conclusion that is worthy of the most careful consideration:

> Pour finir ce Discours...il me semble à propos de répéter ce que j'ai dit en plusieurs endroits de mon ouvrage, sçavoir, que les anciens Philosophes avoient deux sortes de Doctrines, l'une pour le dedans de leur Cabinet & l'autre pour le dehors, la première ouverte & publique, accommodée aux préjugés du Vulgaire, la seconde particuliere & secrete qui ne se communiquoit qu'à un petit nombre de Personnes intelligentes, aux Amis, aux Confidens (in H.c., IV, 44-45).

Shortly after this we read:

Non seulement les Philosophes déguisoient la vérité dans leurs discours, ils composoient encore deux sortes d'ouvrages qu'ils distinguoient en exoteriques & esoteriques. Les uns étoient faits pour le Peuple à qui on en doit qu'une instruction commune: les autres pour les amis & les confidens qui entendoient à demi-mot (ibid, p. 49).

This conclusion raises all sorts of important issues. The writer says that he is repeating "ce que j'ai dit en plusieurs endroits de mon ouvrage". This is very true; for this allusion to the "double doctrine" is but one of some eighty references to it that we have counted in the Histoire critique! That fact alone is proof of his pre-occupation - almost his obsession. Again, this end of the Discours is most valuable testimony, since it is the most explicit exposition of what he calls elsewhere the "double système" (H.c., II, 161), and since it stresses the division into exoteric and esoteric. As we see from Deslandes's remarks, this division rests upon a certain view of the common people, who, not being fit to receive the full truth, are to have a course of "instruction commune" more adapted to their needs. This, in its turn, directs our attention to questions of education.

The separation of exoteric and esoteric doctrines implies the availability of solutions to metaphysical and other problems away from the orthodox view. Such solutions were often provided by thinkers like the Ancient Stoics, by Seneca, by Pliny - in other words, by pagan authors studied in college by the budding writer. Consequently, it is in his education that we shall find one source of our author's "obsession". "On s'occupera des belles-lettres, afin d'arriver plus aisément à mieux connaître et à mieux servir Dieu", said the Constitutions of the Jesuit order(cit. Compayré, Hist. crit. des doctr. de l'éduc. en Fr., ed. 1879, I, 190). In this we perceive the two main elements of the curriculum, namely literature (principally the classics) and divinity, the intention being that the former should be the hand-maid of the latter! The effect of this sort of instruction was that, when he reached

the age of doubt and inquiry, the young man was inclined to reverse the order and prefer the classics. Thus deviation from the orthodox opinion found expression in the most natural of refuges, paganism. Nor did the matter necessarily end there: this deviation was not always corrected after adolescence. The result was that a sub-stratum of paganism remained with the college-educated man during the rest of his life, often to produce what Pintard (referring to Gassendi) calls "un esprit païen dans une âme chrétienne" (Le Lib. erud., I, 154). This fact is of vital importance as a clue to the prevalence in the eighteenth century of the "double système"; and it goes far towards explaining why Deslandes's esoteric writings (of which Pigmalion is the extreme case) convey doctrines that are partly pagan, and, at the same time, why his exoteric works (the outstanding example of which is the Histoire critique) aim at a very gradual emancipation of the wider reading-public. For we do not forget that the Jesuits made no secret of the fact that they did not favour rapid education of the masses (Compayré, op. cit, I, 171); and this view had certainly some effect on Voltaire, Diderot and Deslandes who attended their schools.

In his History of Western Philosophy (ed. 1947, p. 604), Russell spoke of the "two systems of philosophy which may be regarded as representing Leibnitz..."; yet already in the article Bien (Tout est) of the Dictionnaire philosophique Voltaire had had this to say of the philosopher and his friends: "Que deviendra le péché originel?"lui criait-on. - Il deviendra ce qu'il pourra, disaient Leibnitz et ses amis; mais, en public, il écrivait que le péché originel entrait nécessairement dans le meilleur des mondes." In addition, we recall the many remarks Voltaire himself made on the subject of concealing "advanced" ideas from the common people[2] - a precept which he himself put into practice by composing, at about the same time in his career, the Lettres philosophiques and the Traité de métaphysique, which, had it not been kept unpublished for many years, would have proved even more inflammatory than

the highly combustible Lettres philosophiques.

And what of Diderot? Surely it is no mere coincidence that the Encyclopédie (which was to borrow more than a little from the Histoire critique) should stress the "double doctrine" in some of its articles? Nor is it really strange that, in both cases, the origin of the subterfuge should have been traced back partly to Egypt (v. H.c., I, 146-147). We have perhaps been surprised that the Encyclopédie, composed in French, should have urged the retention of Latin as a philosophic language: one reason for this is now clear - Latin would help to guarantee the intellectual "free-masonry" of the enlightened few. Indeed, in Free-masonry itself (introduced into France between 1720 and 1725, banished from Court in 1737 and proscribed by the Pope in the following year) we find another support for the esotericism of the Philosophes.[3] How close indeed was the ideal of these writers (many of whom were in fact Free-masons) to "cette religion générale sur laquelle tous les hommes sont d'accord", and to this "soif de la liberté politique", of which Hazard speaks (La Pens. eur. au XVIIIe s., ed. 1946, I, 365-366)! How close too to the ethic favoured by the historian whom Diderot plagiarized is this image of the Free-mason's way of life: "Sur un chemin couvert de mille fleurs/ La Franc-Maçon parcourt la vie/ En cherchant le plaisir, en fuyant les douleurs./ De la morale d'Epicure/ Il suit toujours les douces lois..." (ibid, I, 365)! Surely the movement in which Newton's friend, Desaguliers was so prominent in England (Gould, Hist. of Freem., ed. 1887, III, 138), must be held partly responsible for Deslandes's obsession, as it must also be held responsible for articles like Multitude in the Encyclopédie.

Indeed, the chief Encyclopedist is for ever employing the device afforded by the "double système":

> Il ne se contente pas de se taire; il se condamne à se mentir à lui-même. Il a écrit que "le premier pas vers la philosophie, c'est l'incrédulité"; il enregistre maintenant les définitions et s'incline devant l'autorité de l'Eglise. Il est l'ennemi personnel de la religion chrétienne, qu'il appelle, dans ses lettres, avec une violence d'iconoclaste, "la plus absurde et

la plus atroce dans ses dogmes, la plus funeste à la tranquillité publique, la plus dangereuse pour les souverains, la plus inintelligente et la plus gothique"; mais il proclamera dans l'Encyclopédie, et d'Alembert professe avec lui que "seule la religion révélée peut nous instruire de notre existence présente ou future, de l'essence de l'Etre auquel nous la devons et du genre de culte qu'il exige de nous" (Reinach, Diderot, ed. 1894, p. 56).

Thus the writer who is found to deny free-will in his correspondence is none the less critical of this aspect of Spinozism in the article Liberté of the Encyclopédie. Yet, as Reinach points out (op. cit, p. 57), it is clear that, in this "defence" of free-will, Diderot is supremely concerned about the effects of determinism upon public morals. Here, then, is a compelling reason for the two-faced attitude we have been discussing; and it is clear that, like the author of the Histoire critique, Diderot and his colleagues have understood full well that a work composed for public enlightenment would be rendering a disservice to society if it unleashed the anarchistic forces of wide-spread free-thinking.[4]

None the less, both Deslandes and Diderot hope that the enlightened ones of the future will see through their deception. In 1737, Deslandes expresses this hope: "...un Philosophe, quelque habile qu'il soit, laisse toûjours beaucoup de choses à deviner. Je le trouve heureux, quand on ne renonce point à sa succession" (III, 284); and, in a letter to Voltaire, Diderot writes: "Le temps fera distinguer ce que nous avons pensé de ce que nous avons écrit" (cit. Reinach, op. cit., p. 59). As if to make certain of this, in a note to the article Jésus-Christ, Naigeon (who is probably more reliable in this than in some other matters) discloses Diderot's guile. Declaring that, since the only way to examine a religion which may in future be dismissed as a "conte absurde" is to "se transporter tout à coup à sept ou huit cents ans plus ou moins du siècle où l'on écrit, de consulter alors les lignes impartiales de l'histoire et d'en parler comme elle", he goes on to describe Diderot's article as merely the expression of an exoteric doctrine:

C'est dans ces idées que nous allons exposer ici historiquement ce que les chrétiens pensaient encore, au XVIIIe siècle,

de la personne et de la religion instituée par Jésus-Christ. Tel est l'objet que Diderot s'est proposé dans cet article de doctrine exotérique. On ne doit donc pas s'attendre à trouver ici ses vrais sentiments, d'ailleurs très-connus, mais seulement ceux qu'il était prudent d'énoncer sur un sujet aussi délicat, et qu'il n'aurait pu traiter dans ces principes, sans renverser des opinions très-ridicules, il est vrai, mais qu'il était alors dangereux d'attaquer ouvertement. En un mot, c'est ici un de ces articles où, à l'exemple de Leibnitz, dans sa Théodicée, et pour les mêmes raisons, il a eu soin de tout diriger à l'édification...(Oeuvres, ed. Assézat, XV, 286-287, n.).

This article is therefore an excellent illustration of the "double doctrine" subterfuge, which - if we may believe Deslandes - was common in Antiquity, and which was certainly favoured by some of the Philosophes, who had tacitly assumed the responsibilities of the high priests of old:[5]

Si la double doctrine est universellement répandue, si elle se retrouve chez la plupart des peuples de l'antiquité, Egyptiens, Chaldéens, Grecs, Celtes, aussi bien que chez les nations sauvages de l'Amérique, chez les Hindous et chez les Chinois, c'est qu'elle répond à une nécessité sociale...Le plus souvent, les prêtres ont usé de mystère pour confirmer leurs impostures. Mais il est arrivé également qu'ils s'en sont servi pour travailler au progrés de la science et au bien de la société, et à maintes reprises les philosophes, qui aspirent manifestement à se substituer au clergé dans sa fonction spirituelle, politique et morale, laissent entendre qu'ils ne verront aucun inconvénient à pratiquer eux-mêmes un système si favorable à l'intérêt public, et susceptible tout au moins de les mettre à l'abri des accusations de leurs adversaires (Hubert, Les Sciences soc. dans l'Encycl., ed. 1923, pp. 242-243).

This passage has been quoted at some length for the very good reason that it gives the historical, social and psychological background to "philosophic" esotericism. It explains how the age-old conspiracy of the few against the many, largely to keep the latter in subjection, was transformed by eighteenth-century thinkers into a conclave of "philosophers", devoted to the very gradual enlightenment of the multitude, for their own good rather than for the good of the initiated élite. Moreover, hinting as it does at the other advantages (such as evading censure), it show how similar were these considerations and motives to those of the author of the Histoire critique.

In that work, Deslandes mentions fear of censorship and official censure: "Peu de gens ont la hardiesse de découvrir le fond de leurs pensées, sur-tout quand ces pensées ne s'accommodent avec les préjugés. On biaise alors, on craint les reproches" (III, 324). In the same volume, he discloses

his mistrust of the popular mind: "Il n'y a point d'opinion, quelque ridicule, quelque absurde que ce soit, qui ne puisse espérer de devenir l'opinion dominante, comme en revanche, il n'y en a point de si raisonnable, de laquelle on ne puisse dire que les hommes ne la suivront jamais" (III, 289). And, again in the same volume of the Histoire critique, he upbraids Lucretius for denying Providence and thus of threatening the peace of society:

> O homme, qui parlez ainsi, ignorez-vous combien cette Religion est nécessaire pour entretenir la paix & le bonheur des Societés; combien elle console dans les disgraces & les malheurs inséparables de la vie, combien elle a de force & de puissance sur ces esprits rebelles & intraitables, que l'impunité porteroit encore au crime. Quand même ce que vous osez dire seroit vrai, nous devrions, & pour notre repos & pour l'intérêt du genre humain, nous devrions, tous unanimement souhaiter le contraire (III, 26-27).

Could there be a clearer proof of unanimity on this point between Deslandes and the Philosophes described in Hubert's book?

We have seen that, like Diderot, Deslandes hoped that the intelligent minority would pierce the camouflage and understand the truth concealed behind it. In 1758, Helvétius was certainly to do this, for amongst several references to Deslandes's critical history,[6] we find this quotation in one of the foot-notes:

> Quelque Stoïcien décidé que fût Sénéque, il n'étoit pas trop assuré de la spiritualité de l'ame...Une preuve, dit Mr. Deslandes dans son Histoire critique de la philosophie, qu'autrefois on ne croyoit ni à l'immortalité, ni à l'immatérialité de l'ame, c'est que, du temps de Néron, l'on se plaignoit à Rome que la doctrine de l'autre monde, nouvellement introduite, énervoit le courage des soldats, les rendoit plus timides, ôtoit la principale consolation des malheureux, & doubloit enfin la mort, en menaçant de nouvelles souffrances après cette vie" (Oeuvr. compl., ed. 1781, I, 5-6, n. 2:v. H.c., I, 353 and 358).

Now it is particularly significant that here Helvétius has taken merely the esoteric or anti-orthodox elements, and has ignored completely the second half of the paragraph on pp. 358-359 of Deslandes's volume - the part that supplies the corrective to the above views in the form of a list of peoples inspired to bravery by belief in "une sorte d'immortalité de l'âme". In other words, he has understood the trick, but re-

fused to adopt it himself. History justifies Deslandes in this issue; for, without looking ahead to the excesses of 1792-94, since De l'Esprit aroused storms of protest that threatened to engulf the whole Philosophic Party, we must surely judge that its author would have done better generally to exercise more restraint and be guided by motives of prudence, than to reveal what Madame du Deffand rather inaccurately called "le secret de tout le monde" (Biog. Univ., art. Helvétius).

Camouflage was necessary, therefore, if the "philosopher" were to proceed beyond the common-place, enjoying the freedom to think for himself and yet be of service to the community at large. All the same, as we have just seen in this illustration from Helvétius, it would be wrong to assume that a "separation" of doctrines excludes the possibility of employing gentle and persuasive suggestion in exoteric writings. For, in the esoteric, ideas are but thinly veiled and often blatantly unorthodox: on the exoteric, on the other hand, they are conveyed in a manner more subtle and varied - so much so, in fact, that it is only partly true to say that "il est facile de voir que ses protestations de respect pour les dogmes révélés ont pour but de cacher, ou plutôt d'exprimer, sous une forme décente, son scepticisme en métaphysique et ses principes sensualistes en morale" (Dict. des sc. ph., art. Deslandes). In reality it is not so easy to see these things, precisely because Deslandes was careful to delude the superficial reader; and what is easy for the teacher of philosophy is not so easy for the ordinary literate person.

The technique our author has evolved by the year 1737 is, as we have had cause to observe, one that has exorcised his mind for some time. For he has long been facing up gradually to the problem of the writer's relationship with his "public". In the Réflexions sur les grands hommes &c, for example, we find that he has already considered the demands of popular taste as related to a presentation of the lives of philosophers:

Le Public s'imagine que la vie des Philosophes doit être remplie d'évenement [sic] rares & extraordinaires: Il se donne une peine infinie pour rencontrer du merveilleux dans toutes leurs actions: la fable même lui plaît au défaut de la vérité...Il y a sur ce pieds-là [sic] beaucoup de mensonges dans Diogene Laërce, & dans les autres Ecrivains de l'Histoire Philosophique: mais cela ne m'étonne point, il est assez difficile d'aller exactement à la verité, lorsqu'on est sûr de plaire en la déguisant (ed. 1732, pp. 37-38).

(As all this occurs as a preliminary to a discussion of the character and death of Democritus, it is interesting to note that, in 1737, it is with considerable sceptical comment that he relates the self-blinding of this philosopher (H.c., II, 327).) Furthermore, we beg leave to requote another passage from the Réflexions, which must now appear as the statement of a problem he was to solve in 1737: "...c'est quelquefois le plus grand des malheurs que de penser, & sur-tout de parler autrement que le vulgaire..." (p. 114).

This problem is solved in the Histoire critique by mingling the common-place and the accepted with the unconventional and the unorthodox, conveyed in special and rather complicated ways. In order, therefore, to pick out the author's own opinions in that major work, it is essential that we should next study the critical methods employed by Deslandes in the most important of his exoteric writings.

b) Critical Methods in Exoteric Writings

Speaking in 1748 of the "light of knowledge" that the "philosopher" must shed around him, Deslandes claims: "J'en ai donné quelques étincelles dans l'Histoire critique de la philosophie: & si des mains ennemies ont cherché à faire mourir ces étincelles sous la cendre, il paroît qu'on ne désire pas moins que la suite de cette Histoire se public" (Essay sur la marine des Anciens, ed. 1768, p. xviii). These sparks of truth can only be properly perceived if we are familiar with the author's critical devices.

Perhaps the most obvious of these is to be found in his selection of material, in the stress he places upon certain aspects and elements of his history, in the repetitions that betray his "obsessions" or favourite ideas. Immediately we think of the eighty references to the "double doctrine"; the pre-occupation with death and with the immortality of the soul; the interest he takes in the origin and nature of evil - "la plus dure & la plus épineuse question qui se présente à l'esprit humain" (I, 266) - that is so evident for instance in his lengthy examination of the doctrine of the "Two Principles". Conversely, we are aware of the lack of criticism that is apparent in his review of the philosophy of Epicurus or of Valla; and, at the same time, we observe that he does not spend much time on what is called "Catholic philosophy". Thus the amount of space and the amount of criticism allotted in each instance is a rough guide to his own inclinations. In proceeding thus, Deslandes is in fact following his expressed intention to "démêler ce prodigieux amas de vérités & d'erreurs, qui sont parvenues jusqu'à nous" (I, vii). It is thus a two-fold intention of commending and reproving (or virtually ignoring), which is made clear to us in a paragraph from the publisher's Dédicace to the Burgomaster Regent of Amsterdam[7] (found only in the first edition, of 1737): "...cet Ouvrage combat sagement & avec douceur, les Erreurs des Particuliers & des Nations, inspire l'Humanité & une parfaite Tolérance de Sentimens". And, of course, these "private and national errors", this humanity and respect for the opinions of others" are defined by Deslandes in his own manner. How indeed should it be otherwise, since he is writing a critical history "de l'esprit & du coeur humain, traitée [as he tells us] suivant mon goût & mes idées particulieres" (H.c., IV, Avert.)?

But there are more precise techniques of composition which allow our author to be critical without at first sight appearing so. These critical devices fall roughly into three groups: first, the use of a single idea, conveyed by someone

other than the author himself; secondly, the use of two ideas, combined or positioned in certain ways to produce a desired effect; thirdly, the use of a comparison, one term of which is to be added by the reader himself.

Examples of the use of the single idea, conveyed indirectly, are to be found in Deslandes's criticism by quotation or by proxy. For instance, in the second volume of the Histoire critique, we may well suspect that the views of Stilpon regarding priests who make a profitable business out of "insurance" of places in the Hereafter are those of the writer himself (pp. 161-162); and the same might be said in that volume of the reported speech in which Plutarch reproaches intelligent courtiers with pandering to royal errors instead of fulfilling their true function by steering the sovereign towards wiser counsels (p. 437). Similarly, in the fourth volume, the critical historian conjures his own opinions out of the mouths of Francis Bacon and of Erasmus: on the author's behalf, the former is heard to prefer atheism to superstition (p. 43), and, in a long passage, the latter is made to follow the Voltairian habit of praising England and, in particular, of pursuing this line of argument:"Le goût des Sciences s'est introduit à la Cour, & a pénétré dans les maisons des grands Seigneurs. J'ose même dire qu'aucune Ecole ni aucun Monastère n'ont jamais produit tant de personnes studieuses & d'une raison ferme, qu'il y en a dans la Ville de Londres & à la Cour" (p. 137). There is not much doubt about the strictures implied in such remarks, which are however made by a person other than the historian himself.

This last observation does not apply to our second category, which concerns two ideas placed in such a manner as to arouse the critical faculties of the alert reader. The clearest case is "criticism by juxtaposition". This means that the ideas are deliberately brought together to serve our writer's purposes. For example, in the section dealing with the Seven Sages, we learn that "Pittacus se distingua dans tout le cours de son âge, par une conduite également soutenue: ce qui fait,

à mon avis le plus bel éloge". There follows a quotation from Cicero to support this opinion; and then we read: "Fier par goût, & plus généreux encore quand les obstacles le traversoient, Pittacus tua le Tyran qui opprimoit sa patrie..." (I, 323-324). By reason of this rapprochement, a number of conclusions may be drawn: first, that killing an oppressor is an act consistent with a noble and virtuous character, and that there may indeed be connections between the two; that, in the second place, since we are dealing here with no hot-headed, impulsive hero, but rather with a stable and balanced person, the act in question was not the outcome of fanaticism. These ideas are provoked by the juxtaposition of the two sentences.[8] A second illustration of the device is to be found in the same volume. The Seven Sages, we are told, applied themselves to "la Science des moeurs", in which pursuit "ils tâchoient par des sous-entendus de réveiller beaucoup plus d'idées qu'ils n'en offroient effectivement par leurs discours...". He continues: "...ce qui est bien le caractère des personnes qui pensent" (I, 334-335). Already then we are being told that thinking men [for example, the author of the Histoire critique] convey many additional ideas by insinuation and implication. If we wonder which ideas he has in mind, the subsequent example gives the answer; for immediately thereafter Pittacus is reported to have regarded as the most dangerous of "animals" a flattering servant and a monarch who abuses his power. So, reading between the two ideas, we may perhaps assume that our author's opinions about absolutism and the obsequious courtiers who maintain it are, and will be conveyed in this same indirect fashion.

Sometimes the two ideas are more widely separated. Consequently we have to bring them together from distant parts of the work in order to comprehend the full significance.[9] Indeed, the process may be compared to the fitting together of two pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, chosen from a mass of irregular shapes because they have visibly something in

common. Or this there is an example on pp. 36 and 75 of the first volume. The first of these passages tells us that modern Frenchmen do not achieve the standards of probity, virtue and politeness set by their Celtic ancestors: the second, dealing once more with the Celts, informs us that this people refused to obey dissolute princes, who "dégénéroient de l'austere probité de la Nation". Now, when these two passages are aligned, a singular deduction may be made by the astute reader.----It will be noted that the common factors-- are "the Celts" and the use of the word "probity"; and, whilst the first passage merely criticizes contemporary French social values, the second - because, we repeat, of the two connecting links - assigns a reason for current degeneracy and lays the blame at the door of the dissolute sovereign. Here we may say that it was wiser that Deslandes did not express his view in a single statement!

Analogous with this is a device, for the discovery of which credit must be given to the Bibliothèque raisonnée of 1738 (XXI, pp. 413-414), which points out that Deslandes has softened the harsh impact of deistic sentiments attributed to Isaac Newton (II, 264-265) by expressing them somewhat differently when he speaks of the Stoic notion of international fraternity at the end of the same volume (II, 407). This "corrective", which could be shown to critics of the more outspoken opinion, is in itself illustrative of a slightly-different subterfuge - that of cushioning the impact of a statement about to be made or very recently made. For instance, on p. 166 of the third volume, he discusses the "dangerous" topic of doctrines of the immortality and immateriality of the soul, as understood by the Fathers of the Church. Now, in order to ensure his own safety, the author begins by denying something he is perpetually doing :"Sans vouloir affoiblir ni décréditer l'empire de la Tradition...". Similarly, whenever he starts the sentence with such words as "A les entendre parler...", we may be sure that we are about to listen to some seditious or impious talk. Here is an

example: "A les entendre parler, il paroissoit que la foi n'étoit qu'une explication, ou plutôt qu'un accroissement d'une doctrine plus ancienne, & répanduë même parmi les Payens"(III, 145). Thus, "innocently" and with anonymity, he is able to leave in the reader's mind a basic notion of natural religion, namely that Christianity is but a modern phase of a phenomenon as old as belief. But (it might be argued), Deslandes is here refuting this deistic idea. To which we reply that it is more often the unorthodox that leaves the deepest impression; more often the doctrine denied - as Boulainvilliers very well knew when he wrote a treatise to "contradict" Spinoza! On some occasions the "safety-clause" is to be discovered in a foot-note. For example, on p. 323 of the first volume, our author waxes exceedingly enthusiastic in presenting the ethic of Thales, which is in fact nothing more than a kind of rational and cosmopolitan morality. Apparently realizing later that he has overstepped the mark, the historian hastens to add this hypocritical note: "Tout ce discours, qui seroit blâmable dans la bouche d'un Chrétien, mérite, ce me semble, d'être excusé dans celle d'un Payen tel qu'étoit Thalès". It is a wise precaution, but it would hardly have been necessary if our historian himself had not been an admirer of the same cosmopolitan and rational ethic.

Another version of this critical method (and one which has some affinity with the device of criticism by proxy) is the merging of another's and the author's own opinions to a point where it is often difficult to separate the two. Of this there are so many instances in the Histoire critique that we shall limit ourselves to one. In the section headed "Détail de son système sur les atômes", Deslandes deals with the Epicurean attitude to good and evil, and, either purposely or because he is carried along by the persuasiveness of the argument, fails to distinguish between his own ideas and those of Epicurus. The passage begins:

Le bien & le mal, ajoutoit Epicure, ne sont point des choses vaines & chimériques, que l'opinion a introduites. Le bien

est ce qui augmente réellement le pouvoir qu'on a d'agir, ce qui fait passer à une plus grande perfection: le mal au contraire est ce qui diminue, ce qui affoiblit le même pouvoir, ce qui fait sentir quelque altération dans son être (II, 348).

Thus far we are certainly hearing the words of the pagan author.

But to whom are we to attribute the following interrogation:

Or que pouvoit offrir la Nature de plus convenable à ces différentes vues, qu'y pouvoit-elle attacher de plus propre, que le plaisir? N'est-ce pas lui qui incline l'ame vers le bien, & qui l'incline avec d'autant plus de force, que ce bien est plus souhaitable? Que les hommes abusent du plaisir, qu'ils y courent en aveugles & sans aucun ménagement: c'est-là leur crime. Mais la Nature n'est-elle pas assez vengée de cet abus, par les peines cuisantes qui en naissent, & par les remords encore plus cuisans que les peines? (II, 348-349)?

We suspect that the historian has carried on the initial argument drawn from Epicurus, and that he has done so because he is sympathetically inclined towards the hedonistic and sensualist ethic embodied in the original. But he has done so in such a way that it is difficult categorically to state how much is reported speech.

Commonest and most effective of all proceedures, however, is criticism by analogy; for here only one term of the comparison needs to be stated, the other being formed by a process of immediate suggestion in the mind of the intelligent reader. In the Histoire critique examples of this device fall into four classes: historical, pagan, oriental, Early Christian analogies; and we shall study them in that order.

As the epithet suggests, the historical analogy depends upon an unstated comparison between past and present time. Two illustrations are furnished by the third volume of the critical history. In the first of these cases, Deslandes has purposely extracted from Tacitus the information that, under the early Roman emperors, books were burned and philosophers exiled, in the vain hope that such persecutions and suppressions would silence the legitimate claims of the people and stifle the freedom of the Senate (III, 52-53). Surely here the parallel the reader is expected to make is between the situation in Ancient Rome and the state of contemporary France, where such outrages were not unknown. In the second case, a Roman emperor is upbraided by a philosopher for being soft and effeminate,

and devoting too much time to idle diversions (III, 94-95). One has only to think of the weak character of the French king who loved nothing so much as hunting to realize how far the author of the critical history identifies himself with the Roman philosopher.

The pagan analogy is naturally similar, but it is usually concerned with religion rather than state-craft. In the section devoted to Aristotle, there is a good example of the point at issue:

...il osoit soutenir que les offrandes & les sacrifices sont tout-à-fait inutiles; que les Dieux font peu d'attention à la pompe extérieure qui brille dans leurs temples, à moins que cette pompe ne soit accompagnée du culte intérieur. En faloit-il davantage pour armer contre lui les Prêtres intéressés du Paganisme? Ils pardonnoient rarement, & surtout à ceux qui vouloient diminuer de leurs droits & de leurs prérogatives (II, 270).

Is there anything here (with the obvious exception of the phrase "du Paganisme") which would not apply equally well to the Catholic clergy of eighteenth-century France? We note moreover the pointed choice of detail supporting the pleas for sincerity in worship and the disdain of ostentation. Our second example is equally concerned with pagan priests, and perhaps even more applicable to contemporary France. Silently the reader is asked to carry the following into the present tense: "Pour en imposer davantage, les Prêtres Payens toûjours fourbes & imposteurs, entretenoient ce feu secretement, & faisoient accroire au Peuple qu'il étoit inaltérable & se nourissoit de lui-même" (I, 116). Here the insinuation about the Catholic clergy is the more pointed by virtue of the reference to the "eternal flame"; and the mere elimination of the adjective Payens gives our author's opinion of the priests of his own time.

The oriental analogy has comparable uses; and much is made in the third volume of the virtuous lives led by Moslems - which is tantamount to saying that, from the point of view of ensuring the good conduct of citizens, the infidel religion is as effective a deterrent to crime and licence as the religion of Western Europe (v. III, 237). The Chinese furnish another

half-parallel, which the intelligent reader has no difficulty in completing. For having spoken thus of the religion of Strato: "Il admit la Nature pour toute Divinité; & sans trop éclaircir ce que peut être au fondque cette Nature, il la regardoit comme une force répandue par-tout, & essentielle à la Matiere..." - a doctrine close to that of the hylozoists and Spinozists - he continues:

> La plûpart des Athées qui sont venus après Straton, éblouis par des discours dont le détail est séduisant, quoique frivole, ont embrassé son système; & encore aujourd'hui la nombreuse Secte des Lettrés à la Chine n'en a point d'autre, & elle y rapporte, non-seulement la Religion, mais encore la Politique de ce vaste Royaume (II, 296-297).10

Now, the interesting features of these passages are first, the suggestion that such "advanced" notions are the beliefs of the educated in China - a suggestion that we may extend indefinitely to include the enlightened persons in France, or Britain or anywhere else; secondly, that, as in passages dealing with Spinoza himself,11 there is a mild and conventional refutation represented this time in the word "frivole" and continued somewhat half-heartedly in the next paragraph, where Deslandes prudently recommends Cartesian definitions of matter as the best bulwark against materialism.

Finally, we find analogies, which are incomplete in a text that tells of the Early Christians. This is exemplified by a part of the second volume of the Histoire critique, which to the eighteenth-century reader would surely awaken memories of religious persecution visited upon Protestants and Jansenists in fairly recent times:

> Ainsi parloient les premiers Chrétienr [sic]. Ils ne cessoient de répéter d'une voix ferme à leurs persécuteurs & à leurs bourreaux: Sommes-nous ou meurtriers [sic] ou parjures, ou incendiaires? Ne payons-nous pas à César ce qui lui est dû? Ne remplissons-nous pas toutes les charges qui nous sont imposées? Etes-vous en droit de punir des gens qui vivent comme les autres, quoiqu'ils pensent autrement que les autres? N'est-il pas permis à chacun de suivre les opinions qu'il juge les meilleurés...? (II, 135-136).

Here indeed we find a highly convincing plea in favour of all those who were ever persecuted for conscience's sake. We note moreover that, without naming the modern counter-parts of these Early Christians, Deslandes has been able to arouse

our indignation on behalf of the victims of religious oppression.

Summing up, therefore, what we have discovered in this review of our author's methods of criticism in his exoteric Histoire critique de la philosophie, we may say that such criticism is not limited to technical judgements of the various philosophic systems under discussion, but is extended to form a wide plan of indoctrination concerned chiefly with religion and politics. We have seen that the degree of our penetration of such ideas depends on our ability to perceive what lies behind the "surface" text; yet, though subtler suggestions and insinuations will perhaps be lost on those who are not fully alert, almost any reader will find within the pages of the critical history something to counteract orthodox beliefs and challenge conventional notions. For any reader will find himself exposed to some amount of propaganda. In particular, we recall that it is often the doctrine ostensibly refuted that will be retained more surely than the refutation. This indeed may have been Deslandes's intention in laying before us the views of some heretical sects. Above all, we may now assert that the student of our author's esoteric philosophy must expect to find it lurking behind each quotation from the Ancients; that he must be most attentive when the author is disarming and careful to remember allusions that may be repeated later. Only in this way can he hope to grasp the full significance of the critical historian's own views.

CHAPTER II MODERN PHILOSOPHIC PREDILECTIONS

Puissé-je à peu d'amis discrets,
De ma Philosophie
Transmettre en mourant les secrets (Mon Cabinet, in H.c., IV, 199).

Depuis le regne de Henri VII, l'Angleterre a été fertile en hommes excellens & versés dans presque toutes les sciences (H.c., IV, 136).

Jusqu'ici Aristote avoit triomphé; lui & la raison passoient pour la même chose. Mais enfin sa réputation commença à décheoir par les attaques réitérées de Gassendi, de Descartes, & des autres grands Philosophes qui parurent depuis le milieu du XVII [sic] siécle. Il sembloit que sous eux, l'esprit humain alloit prendre une nouvelle vie, & une nouvelle forme (H.c., III, 294).

a) Keys to Essential Doctrines and Favourite Authorities

Grudgingly in 1757, Grimm pays this tribute to Deslandes's originality as author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie: "c'est la meilleure que nous ayons, parce que c'est la seule" (Corr. litt., III, 374). It was original because it was without precedent. It was original also because it was ... intended to appeal to a wider public than was usual in such undertakings; and this very conception of the history of philosophy presented a difficult problem to the author who had constantly to keep in mind three different classes of reader: the public -"Si le Public daigne m'encourager par son approbation..." (I, xl) - who needed some concessions to orthodoxy to keep them in check, and who were not sufficiently enlightened to digest "advanced" notions; the Church and the censor, who, in view of the use of the pseudonym "Mr. D***" and the fact that "anonymous" authors were usually quickly unmasked (as indeed Deslandes was), were almost bound to discover the author's identity; the initiated, who, whilst recognizing the need for caution, would not expect the historian to be blatantly untrue to his real opinions, and who, if the occasion arose, would begin to disdain him as they did

in another circumstance mentioned in the Poésies diverses: "On fit courir le bruit qu'étant fort malade, j'avois consulté je ne sçai quel Charlatan, qui prétendoit avec de simples paroles guerir les plus cruelles maladies" (in Réflex., ed. 1732, p. 161, n.). So he had to find some method of revealing, at the same time as concealing, the "secrets" to which he refers in Mon Cabinet. We have seen how he contrived to do this - how, by a liberal provision of tributes to revealed religion, by performing what Wade calls the "apostolic bow", and by generally balancing orthodox and unorthodox sentiments, he hoped to serve all three masters. In addition, we have said that the enlightened minority were expected to "read between the lines". However, just in case this last operation proved rather difficult, the historian provided (in the same volume that we find the allusion to the "secrets of my philosophy") three keys to the ideas and authors he favoured at the time of composing his history. First, in the Avertissement to this important fourth volume, he gave a series of quotations from the Ancients under the general heading: De quelques pensées & de quelques axiomes propres à découvrir le fond de la Philosophie des Anciens. We contend that this selection is intended to reveal, not so much the fundamental philosophy of the Ancients, as the author's own preferences. Secondly, in the same volume he printed the Discours, où l'on examine ce que les anciens Philosophes pensoient de la Divinité, to which we have already drawn attention, and which can be interpreted as disclosing Deslandes's own thoughts about the nature of God and a number of allied subjects. Thirdly, at the end of the fourth volume and bound with it in order to "marquer quels étoient les sentimens d'esprit dans lesquels je me trouvois, lorsque j'ai composé cette Histoire de la Philosophie" (H.c., IV, 187), we have the poem, Mon Cabinet, which, besides being a precious autobiographical document, serves to indicate our author's favourite authorities. We warn the reader in advance that the interpretation of the additional pieces in question has been undertaken only after

considerable reflection upon Deslandes's philosophic work as a whole, and after coming to the conclusion that the author of the Histoire critique himself is to be regarded much as he asks us to regard the Ancients (in the Discours to which we have just referred):

> Car il ne faut point juger d'eux, ni de leur doctrine, sur quelques passages pris au hazard dans leurs Ouvrages. Souvent ces passages se contredisent les uns les autres: plus souvent encore ils sont enveloppés d'expressions métaphoriques, qui séduisent & trompent au premier abord. Il faut, pour n'en être point la dupe, apporter à leur examen de bons yeux... (H.c., IV, 3-4).

If therefore we discover - as indeed we have discovered - passages that contradict each other in the works of Deslandes, we must not be dismayed. For it is all part of a plan, the understanding of which will be granted only to those who can penetrate the "surface" doctrines.

We begin, then, with the two prose pièces liminaires, considering first that part of the Avertissement which consists of eight series of extracts or paraphrases from some Ancient philosophers, carefully chosen to stress the following points:

1. "By using intelligence and reason alone, man can discover enough about religion for his needs; for he can discover enough to allow him to fit into God's moral scheme." This plea for reason suggests an attitude similar to that of the English deists, and it throws light on some obscurities and contradictions in the Histoire critique, particularly involving the apparent subordination of reason to faith. The notion of convenance morale (as he calls it elsewhere) points to the influence of Bolingbroke and of Newton's friend, Samuel Clarke, who held that immorality is untidy, since it violates eternal ratios.

2. "God obviously desired plurality of religions, and His benevolence extends to all peoples." In this we find the basis of toleration; and we may now dispel any doubts regarding Deslandes's approval of the deistic internationalism

expressed by Newton in the toast proposed at his dinner-party in London. We shall see that this toleration is to be extended to all except the fanatics who would disturb the peace of society.

3. "God did not make us reasonable creatures, and then ask us to believe things contrary to reason". Again we suspect the influence of the English deists, and we note that the opinion implicit in this section accords with that of № 1, above.

4. "The Deity is not free to act in an arbitrary manner, but must conform to the general demands of 'moral fitness'." Here the view of Samuel Clarke overlaps with those of Spinoza, Pope and Leibnitz: though a free cause, God is obliged to act in accordance with His own moral nature. It is therefore a limited form of divine determinism.

5. "We should respect God's moral system and consequently cultivate virtue". This follows logically from № 4.

6. "God is not a tyrant, but a benevolent Father." Here we have another corollary of № 4.

7. "Man is ruled by Destiny; but Fortune blinds him to its sway." We may suspect in this the influence of Hobbesian fatalism and of Spinoza who maintains that the more a man comprehends the nature of God, the more he realizes that he cannot be free to choose what he shall do. As Stuart Hampshire says (Spinoza, ed. 1951, pp. 141-144), this idea anticipates those of psychoanalysts if the Freudian school.

8. "Superstition is a greater evil than atheism, for it seeks to obscure and destroy, whereas atheism is a private and peaceful cult, harmless therefore to society." This opinion is to be found in Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico-Politicus and in Bayle and Voltaire and many other "philosophic" writers.

We suggest, therefore, that the historian who inserted these quotations in his Avertissement inclined towards determinism, the doctrine of the "eternal fitness of things", towards deism and rationalism, and toleration of all except superstition.

We pass on to an interpretation of the Discours, the meaning of which is admittedly often more difficult to discover. First, the introductory passage, part of which we have already quoted: Deslandes appears to be saying: "In the first three volumes of my work I have not been able to make my opinions sufficiently clear. Do not judge me, therefore, by isolated passages, but try to perceive the true basis of my thought." And, if we continue to equate Deslandes to the Ancients, the following insinuations emerge from the rest of the Discours:

1. "I have studied Nature, and have refused to be influenced by authority. In this way I hope that I have been able to separate the essential from the incidental. My method has consisted in examining evidence and being guided by notions of credibility" [a note to p. 6 shows that here he is alluding not only to philosophy but also to religion, and we may therefore suspect that this remark applies equally well to the Bible7. Here, then, in the religious sphere, the author appears once more deistic; in the philosophic, eclectic and rationalist.

2-3. "To avoid the hatred of the populace, who would not thank a writer for giving them the unvarnished truth, I have employed the ancient device of the 'double doctrine'. In this manner I hope also to elude the civil and religious censors who would persecute a man who dared to speak entirely as he felt. The public can therefore have its idolatrous cult: for the élite there will always be a natural religion, which, stripped of fables, is simple, true and fruitful of human happiness. This natural religion requires that we should love the Deity, do good to our neighbour, dispense with priests and churches, and outlaw fanaticism." This is clearly a development of the deistic ideas announced in the series of quotations and in the first section of the Discours; and it represents a definite statement of our author's obsession with the obligation to disguise one's real opinions from the masses, from the censor and from the ecclesiastical authorities.

4. "The Supreme Intelligence is united with matter through Nature. Thus there is a single substance, the All. Within this single substance there is continual change of "forms" - coming into existence, being re-born, and appearing to pass into nothingness. But nothing is ever destroyed in Nature, and everything is merely renewed in another form. The Divine Art makes pleasure the universal motive." It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that this is very close to the philosophy of Spinoza, which in the classic form does distinguish between natura naturans and natura naturata, and therefore establishes some difference between Creator and creation within the single system. We may also suspect the influence of Newton's near-pantheist conception of God and Nature, as expressed in the celebrated phrase from the Principia, "durationem et spatium constituit". Indeed, it is Deslandes himself who establishes for us the link with Newton. For in the section under review we read: "Tout se meut: mais tout tend au repos, & tout y parviendroit enfin, sans l'art de Dieu qui réveille incessament la Nature, & qui remet chaque partie de l'Univers dans la place où elle doit être, pour y conserver l'ordre & la simétrie" (IV, 16-17). Now, in another part of the Histoire critique, we come upon this explanation: "Qu'on répéte enfin d'après quelques Philosophes Anglois, disciples de l'illustre Mr. Newton, que Dieu a besoin de tems en tems de porter la main à ses ouvrages pour les empêcher de se décomposer; à combien de reproches ne sera-t-il point sujet, si l'on n'explique d'après les mêmes Philosophes ce que c'est que l'inertie des corps, la tendance qu'ils ont au repos, tendance qui les porteroit tous à s'arrêter enfin, si Dieu ne réveilloit la Nature par des mouvemens propres & successifs, qui marquent évidemment que toute action consiste à donner sans cesse une nouvelle force aux choses, qu'elle veut entretenir & conserver!" (II, 41-42). To this notion we must return at a later stage: at present we shall be content with attaching to it the label of pantheistic or deistic hylozoism.

We note finally in this fourth section some traces of Locke's notion that it is the quest of happiness that "moves desire" - a notion to be found in the Essay concerning Human Understanding in such remarks as "For we love, desire, rejoice, and hope, only in respect of pleasure..." (Bk. II, Ch. XX, parag. 14: Works, ed. 1823, I, 234).

5. "God is not confused with matter, but is active in matter, which is therefore not inanimate:

> Elle est au contraire vivante & pénétrée d'une force interne, d'une vigueur secrete & à nous inconnuë, qui la rend capable de passer par toutes les formes possibles, suivant les diverses loix de gravité, d'attraction, d'électricité, de magnétisme, de simpatie ou d'affinité &c (IV, 18).

There is a general life in the Universe, made up of individual lives and constituting individual souls. Since space and time are eternal like God Himself, the All is eternal too". This is reminiscent of the near-pantheism we found in the previous section. We note, however, the notion bordering on Newton's conception of God in the Principia, and the silent tribute to the English mathematician in the list of "laws".

6. " Life is a chain of ideas, or actions, or movements. Death is but a temporary breaking of that chain; for the being lives again in a different form." Here we find a view of "immortality" that we shall have occasion to discuss at some length in the next part of our study - that devoted to the esoteric writings of Deslandes, where we shall consider it under the name of metamorphosis or palingenesis. It is an idea that springs logically from the previous section (five), and which, though it originated in the Ancients, was favoured by Moderns" like Leibnitz. It is a naturalist doctrine, opposed to metamorphosis, which has theological connections.

7. "The All - the Universe composed of God and matter - is infinite. There are many worlds, and elsewhere in the Universe there are probably many varieties of creatures. The All is balanced by Nature on God's behalf." Once again the esoteric doctrines proper are announced here: once again the influences of pantheists and of Leibnitz are to be perceived.

8-9. "I disapprove of those pantheists who exclude the divinity, for they are nothing more than materialists. But there are other forms of naturalism - for example, that form of pantheism that associates the Divinity with matter - which I do not condemn." And, in the next section, Deslandes proceeds to show that a modern philosopher has renewed this form of pantheism.

10. "Spinoza's doctrine is very ancient, and it is even favoured in the Orient, where the philosopher of Amsterdam is unknown. It has never been successfully refuted, since those who set out ostensibly to do so [e.g. Boulainvilliers] did not always act in good faith". After this exordium concerning the almost universal appeal of the doctrine and the apparent difficulties attached to its refutation, Deslandes then proceeds to give a fairly full and accurate account of the main principles of Spinozism, and a very conventional "criticism" of their "obscurity". It is also significant that he ends by stressing the virtuous life led by the Jew of Amsterdam, who almost appears to be the very image of Deslandes's own ideal in Mon Cabinet! On the philosophic level, we hardly need to stress the connection between this concealed eulogy and the Mazarine MSS and the influences we discussed at the beginning of that part of our study.

11-15. "Atheism is not a doctrine that should appeal to the intelligent, who can see God's handiwork in Nature and the Universe. Yet it must be admitted that God's infinitude is not proved by the mere design of the Universe: I consider (and Scripture acknowledges the fact) that God exists through the energy and intensity of His nature. I do not agree with those atomists and hylozoists who separate God from His energy; neither do I agree with "modern atheists" like Cudworth, who speak of "Plastic Natures", for it is God Himself who works in Nature. Yet atheists are often virtuous and harmless, and superstitious persons are not, since they create discord and confusion by flinging their beliefs in the face of humanity in general. I repeat what I have said many times: philosophers

do well to have a secret doctrine - an esoteric as well as an exoteric system of ideas. Early Christianity itself believed in concealing certain aspects of dogma and observances from the pagans: 'Cette coûtume s'appelloit disciplina arcani, & il y a grande apparence qu'elle avoit Jesus-Christ lui-même pour Auteur' (IV, 48). I am therefore in good company when, like Pomponazzi, I claim the right to believe as a Christian and doubt as a philosopher." We observe once more the apology for virtuous atheism (attached here to the name of Bayle), which is, au fond, a further plea for toleration of those who do not trouble society. Deslandes is never tired of stressing this. For instance, in the third volume of the critical history, the pagan Themistes is introduced to condemn (on Deslandes's behalf) the discord that reigned amongst Christians at the height of the Arian controversy. As it is not a crime to differ in opinion, all views must be tolerated, except "les superstitions qui peuvent troubler le bon ordre & le repos des Sociétés" (III, 178). A few lines later, the text continues:

> Au reste, disoit-il, si tous les hommes suivoient la droite raison, il n'y auroit entre eux aucune différence de setimens [sic], parce qu'au fond ils ne desireroient tous qu'une seule chose, qui est de vivre dans ce monde-ci avec sagesse, avec ménagement, pour se rendre heureux dans l'autre: mais comme on peut se persuader qu'on arrivera au même bonheur par différens chemins, & qu'en effet on se le persuade, je ne voudrois point pour cette différence blâmer les hommes, encore moins les punir (ibid).

It is pure English deism, happily discovered in a pagan writer! Finally, we cannot but feel the sincerity of his objections to the atheism he is prepared to defend on other accounts, and we note that the Newtonian idea of God acting in matter prevails once more.

Reviewing the two pièces liminaires in more general terms, we cannot therefore escape the conclusion that, if these be accepted as keys to the secret opinions of the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie, then those secret opinions lie in the direction of deism, pantheistic hylozoism, determinism, eclectic rationalism, esotericism, hedonism and

liberalism. Nor do we forget that some of the doctrines listed here bear the imprint of English influences. To some extent confirmation of this can be found in the third additional piece, which serves as a clue to some of our author's philosophic predilections.

In the poem Mon Cabinet, composed about the year 1736 and reprinted in this final volume of the Histoirecritique, Deslandes tells his reader about his study in Rochefort, where he had very recently taken up residence. In the course of a "philosophic" voyage autour de ma chambre, which gives a description of the appointments of his study and of his delight at the refuge this room afforded him, he refers to some of the portraits that adorned its walls. Who, then, were these "grands Philosophes" to whom he paid this singular tribute (IV, 191) ? In one of the prose interpolations we read: "De l'autre côté, sont des Tableaux d'une excellente main, entremêlés d'Estampes qui représentent plusieurs grands Philosophes, tels que Descartes, Le Chevalier Newton, Locke, le Pere Mallebranche, Hobbés, Clarcke, Gassendi & Halley" (ibid). Thus the prints in question included portraits of eight silent companions of his labours, five of whom are Englishmen and three Frenchmen. (Although, for the sake of prudence, he does not mention Spinoza, it is not unlikely that his portrait too adorned the study at Rochefort.) We shall deal first with his English portraits, considering them in the order in which they are listed. The first two are so important that we must return to them appropriately at a later stage; but at this point we can sum up what we have discovered about our author's regard for two outstanding and three important English thinkers.

Of Isaac Newton, our poet says on the next page (IV, 192): "Depuis qu'on l'a vû naître,/ La nuit s'efface, tout est jour". This supreme enlightener has been the source of many of Des-

landes's ideas, not only in science but also (we already suspect) in religion. In the year before the publication of the first edition of the Histoire critique, our author has popularized Newtonianism by rendering into French the work of Musschenbroek; and the critical history itself contains several references to Newton's philosophy. The most striking of these concerns a sort of cosmopolitan deism, apparently expressed by Newton during a private dinner-party. This reminds us that Newton's influence on Deslandes was partly personal, since it was effective during the latter's visit to Britain and is confirmed in a Latin poem to Newton composed some time later.

Locke presents a more difficult proposition, since references to him are few indeed in the works of Deslandes. Yet Locke was undoubtedly the starting-point of much eighteenth-century speculation about sensationalism and about "thinking-matter", which become immensely important once we study our author's esoteric writings. Like Newton, Locke had some private sympathies with deism and he was an apostle of a posteriorism in philosophic method. For it is in Locke's Essay that speculation tends to give place to observation; metaphysics are subordinated to objective study; innate ideas ~~are preferred~~ yield to empiricism; and reliable principles for assessing the validity of evidence are established. For these things our author must surely have appreciated Locke, who had been so much esteemed by his own tutor and friend, Claude Buffier. The reservation he makes in the case of Locke and the English deists is that he calls their religious ideas "dangerous" (H.c., III, 297). By now, however, we begin to recognize the meaning of such comments: these notions are "dangerous" to the multitude. There is, moreover, more than a suggestion that (inspired by Newton) Locke may be envisaged in a comment in the Histoire critique (II, 36), to the effect that the "plus judicieux Philosophes de notre Age, ...sont persuadés qu'il y a des substances primordiales répandues dans tous les mixtes, lesquelles, quoiqu'il arrive

à ces mixtes, gardent leur figure déterminée ainsi que des élémens inaltérables, & sont invincibles à tous les chocs & à toutes les attaques du dehors...Outre ces substances primordiales, dont la solidité ou la force intérieure est proportionnée à la quantité de mouvement qui subsiste dans l'Univers, il y a une matiere indifférente à tout & répandue - par tout...". For this theory is certainly close to Locke's view (reported by Pierre Coste) that "Dieu a défendu que rien ne pénètre dans certaines parties de l'espace et non dans d'autres" (v. Bloch, La Philosophie de Newton, ed. 1908, p. 501, n. 2).

Than Newton and Locke only slightly less important are the other three Englishmen: Hobbes, Clarke and Halley. In the critical history Hobbes is accused of atheism and yet of being occasionally superstitious (III, 339), and we may be sure that the second charge was accounted more serious than the first. Hobbes was an atheist, because he was a materialistic hylozoist, and because he did not (as Newton did) take into account the difficulties that arise from "loss of energy" in the Universe(IV, 145). His political theories are partially valid, especially when he proposes a powerful monarchy to which is subjected ecclesiastical authority; yet, unless monarchs learn to use their reason - unless they become "philosophic" monarchs - absolutism can only lead to tyranny (IV, 144). Moreover Hobbesian notions of the "state of Nature" were unacceptable to Deslandes, since they did not take into account (as Locke's and Newton's did) either man's aspirations to give concrete expression to that "natural law" that is "engraven on the heart of every man" (I, 7), or his instinctive sociability (IV, 144-145). Why, then, the portrait? The English philosopher had much to commend him to the author of the Histoire critique. Although he envisaged a sovereign good different from the Epicureans, he was in many respects a disciple of the founder of this sect. He was also something of a free-thinker and determinist, and a fore-runner of Spinoza; and it is probably for these reasons that he is honoured in

the way we have seen.

When we come to consider Samuel Clarke and Halley, the presence of their portraits in Deslandes's study is less surprising. For they were both friends of the great Newton; and, in the second case, we are dealing with a person whom Deslandes actually met in London. Clarke was to a great extent the mouthpiece of the great English mathematician, and, though he figures hardly at all in our author's writings, we have already had cause to suspect his influence in respect of the doctrine of "moral fitness". Although an ordained minister of religion, Dr. Clarke was far from orthodox in his views; and the doctrine to which we have just referred, when it appeared in the famous Evidences, aroused much protest, just as his later Arian tendencies involved him in much controversy after 1712 and particularly after 1714. Clarke's method of demonstrating the existence of God (in the Being and Attributes) is not unlike Spinoza's apriorist reasoning, against which it was directed; yet he differed from Spinoza in asserting that the eternal and necessary substance, of which duration and extension are attributes, is an immaterial being. Consequently he was somewhat Spinozist without realizing the fact, and without carrying his arguments to logical conclusions. We suggest, however, that it is as a rebel, as an "original", and as a close friend of Newton that he is appreciated by Deslandes.

The influence of Halley is two-fold. First, his sceptical approach to the Bible cost him the Savilian chair at Oxford, and this fact would certainly commend him to the author of the Mazarine MSS. Secondly, he was to some extent a model for the author of the first Recueil de différens traités, and was present at what we must assume to have been the birth of our critical historian's enthusiasm for natural science. In short, he was a man whom Deslandes was proud to have known personally and to have followed in his scientific writings.

Such are the various and many reason why Deslandes chose to hang these engravings in his study, and why he referred to

the persons represented as "grands Philosophes". He was neither wholeheartedly nor indeed equally enamoured of the opinions of these men; yet each had some claim to his esteem, whether by notions of sound scientific method, by inclination towards empiricism and a posteriorism, by unorthodox religious views (and in particular Unitarianism), or by Epicurean and determinist leanings. Three very important names remain; and, in order to locate our author's position vis-à-vis these French philosophers, we must now examine Deslandes's attitude to~~wards~~ Cartesianism.

b) Descartes and Gassendi

"Gassendi, renouvelant les antiques atomistes et profitant des expériences de Galilée et Torricelli, a rétabli contre Descartes l'hypothèse du vide, avec raison, semble-t-il, car les plus célèbres mathématiciens l'ont suivi...", explains Delvolvé in his study of Bayle (Rel. crit. et phil. etc., p.351). Since Isaac Newton was one of the mathematicians referred to, it is not surprising that Gassendi's portrait should hang beside his on the wall of Deslandes's study. We recall other reasons why Gassendi should have been there. In the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant, the writer had called Gassendi "le Philosophe moderne que j'estime le plus". He had then proceeded to supply an elucidation: "il a plus insisté sur la Morale", which he defined as "l'art de vivre agréablement" (ed. 1732, pp. 95-96). Thus, by the author's own admission, Gassendi, because he taught the art of gentle living, was his favourite philosopher of the modern era. Indeed, the clearest token of this is the subject of the Réflexions, based on the Gassendist notion that, since death is merely the privation of sense, it is not to be feared. This theme, treated with unseemly flippancy, became that of Deslandes's first prose writing. It is established, then, that Gassendi was his first love.

This predilection for "le Philosophe qui a mis dans un plus beau jour des sentimens d'Epicure" (Réflex., pp. 95-96) was strengthened by English influences, and this for two reasons: first, Locke's empiricism is broadly speaking in the same philosophic stream as Gassendism; secondly, the experimental method of Boyle and Newton accords with Gassendi's notions that the true basis of knowledge is experience and that the atomist philosophy explains observed facts most completely. Indeed, long before Bayle and Deslandes, Gassendi had favoured the Ionics, Eleatics and Epicureans in Greek thought. Already, therefore, in Deslandes's attachment to Gassendism there existed potentially the two judging-points from which he composed his second volume of the history of philosophy - the supremacy of ethics over metaphysics and the validity of a posteriorism.

It follows, then, that, although in volumes three and four of that work he gives Descartes his due as the destroyer of Scholasticism and founder of rationalist method in France, we may expect him to lean towards Gassendi. But he must not do so too obviously in an exoteric writing, and, in fact, Descartes is featured in its pages more often than his opponent in philosophic debate. To explain this we must remember that Gassendi continued to be appreciated by the enlightened élite, and that the reverse was true of Descartes, who, thanks to popularization of his ideas by Malebranche and Port Royal and thanks to the favour of many theologians, was by 1737 holding a position of honour amongst many orthodox Catholics. How, then, did the historian indicate his preferences, without at the same time offending the memory of the thinker who had now become "respectable"? It will not escape the notice of anyone who reads the Histoire critique that Cartesianism is given most prominence at the moment when the soul and its immortality is being discussed. This is intentional; for it is one thing to use Cartesian orthodoxy as a "surface" doctrine, but it would have been quite another to imply its adequacy.[12] It

is for this reason that Deslandes hands over to the Cartesians precisely upon the most thorny of their problems, the interaction of body and soul. Rationally Descartes had been able to separate the two substances (if we leave aside God), but he had had to resort to faith to explain their connexion. That (we contend) is the point Deslandes is intent upon making, and it is a point overlooked, for instance, by La Mettrie, who says: "Assurément, dans ces Méditations Métaphysiques dont M. Deslandes admire la profondeur, ou plutôt l'obscurité, Descartes ne sçait ce qu'il cherche, ni où il veut aller..." (Traité de l'âme, in Oeuvr. phil., ed. 1752, p. 126; v. H.c., I, 367-368). An apologist would hardly have acted as Deslandes did on this occasion; and the conte philosophique (Pigmalion) that appeared only four years later explains why. Deslandes did not really believe in this separation of extension and thought: on the contrary he inclined towards a belief in "thinking-matter", which Locke had postulated as a hypothesis, and which, long before the publication of the famous Essay, could have been discovered in Gassendist thought.

This immediately establishes an important distinction between Cartesians and Gassendists. For instance, it was Descartes who said: "Davantage, je trouve en moy des facultez de penser toutes particulieres, & distinctes de moy, à sçavoir les facultez d'imaginer & de sentir, sans lesquelles ie puis bien me concevoir clairement & distinctement tout entier..." (Oeuvres, ed. A & T., IX, 62; and (in the second Méditation): "Car d'avoir en soy la puissance de se mouvoir, de sentir & de penser, ie ne croyois aucunement que l'on deust attribuer ces avantages à la nature corporelle; au contraire, ie m'estonnois plutost de voir que de semblables facultez se rencontroient en certains corps" (ibid, pp. 20-21). But it was Gassendi who made these objections: "Repeto autem difficultatem non esse, sisne separabilis, annon, ab hoc corpore...; sed de corpore, quod ipsamet sis: quasi possis ipsa esse tenue corpus, intra crassum istud diffusum, aut in ejus parte sedem

obtinens" (ibid, VII, 336), and: "Id verò abnuendum non est; sed probandum superest tibi, vim cogitandi ita esse supra naturam corpoream, ut neque spiritus, neque aliud corpus agile, purum, tenûe, ullâ dispositione parabile sit, quod cogitationis efficiatur capax. Probandum simul animas brutorum esse incorporeas, videlicet quae cogitent, seu, praeter functiones sensuum externorum, aliquid interne, non vigilando modo, sed somniando etiam, cognoscant. Probandum rursus crassum hoc corpus ad cogitationem tuam nihil prorsus conferre..." (ibid, p. 262). We may therefore further test our author's philosophic allegiance to Descartes and to Gassendi by considering his attitudes to the question of "substances" and to the allied problem of animal automatism.

Secretly Deslandes is opposed to the Cartesian view of substance, and this fact may be discerned in a revealing fragment from the fourth volume of the Histoire critique:

> L'erreur de la Reine de Navarre [who thought she might see and hear the soul leave a body] est encore aujourd'hui celle de presque tous les Philosophes qui ne sont point Cartesiens. Ils soutiennent que l'ame est physiquement présente dans tous les organes du corps humain, & que, sans être matérielle, elle est coëtendue à la portion de matiere qu'elle anime. Il suit de là qu'à la mort, elle cesse d'occuper ce lieu, & passe réellement dans un autre: d'où il n'est pas étonnant qu'on ait crû & regardé l'esprit de l'homme comme un être qui se sépare physiquement du corps au moment qu'on expire. Cette opinion s'enseignoit dans les écoles plus durement alors; mais elle s'y enseigne encore aujourd'hui avec plus de ménagement (p. 159).

This notion of the co-extension of body and spirit, so familiar and dear to Epicureans (who, after all, did not make the absurd error alluded to here) is "taught to-day with circumspection". By whom, then, if not by persons inclining towards the materialism of Epicurus? Despite the initial word "error", therefore, we may well suspect that Deslandes is to be numbered amongst the non-Cartesians, especially as the doctrine "taught with circumspection" is openly promoted in an esoteric work of 1741.

As an important fragment of the philosophy of Gassendi, Pintard quotes: "J'attribue, déclare-t-il, la vie aux semences; je restitue la raison aux bêtes..." (Le Lib. érud., I, 489). We must therefore expect Gassendi's disciple to reject animal automatism, which in fact (Deslandes declares) "révolte

l'imagination & souffre de grandes difficultés..." (H.c, I, 149). Of course, in this exoteric history, we equally expect to read that the notion of the "beast-machine" has "dispelled many errors", for such a statement harmonizes with the "surface" approval of Cartesian proofs of the immortality of the human soul. Yet we cannot overlook another comment to the effect that such a theory appears "absurd" if it is detached from Cartesian "proofs" bearing on the spirituality of the soul and on divine justice in a future state (II, 41). But, since we have already doubted our author's acceptance of the Cartesian view of the soul's immateriality, it is reasonable to assume that this epithet "absurd" in fact represents his own opinion of the notion of the "beast-machine". It is also reasonable to assume that he comes to this conclusion for the same reason as Bayle: "Malheureusement l'automatisme est en butte à de grands inconvénients dès qu'on se place au point de vue de l'observation des faits: comment admettre que l'analogie extérieure si frappante de la sensibilité humaine et de la sensibilité animale corresponde à une différence aussi absolue que celle de la spiritualité à l'automatisme?" (Delvolvé, Rel., crit. et phil. &c, p. 368). Thus Cartesianism does not fit in with modern scientific method - with that technique of observing before theorizing which Deslandes himself preached in 1736:- man and beast, who appear to have been gifted with similar senses, cannot be divided categorically and arbitrarily into spiritual creature and automaton. It is the judgement of Bayle (Dict. crit., art. Charron, Rem. O), of Locke (Essay &c., Bk II, ch. XI, parags. 10-11, ed. 1823, I, 149), of Fontenelle who "rejette la théorie des animaux machines comme une débauche de raisonnement..." (Carré, La Philos. de Font., p. 342). Thus Deslandes is in good, and familiar company.

Moreover, if Deslandes must reject the "beast-machine" on scientific grounds, he must also for the same reason turn his back upon Cartesian physics - as indeed he has already done in 1736. The Discours that precedes the Recueil of that year amply demonstrates our author's attachment to the notion

of the void; and the whole critical bias in his presentation of Hellenic scientific notions in the Histoire critique is a proof of his regard for the atomists and hylozoists. In these respects too, then, he inclined towards Gassendi who was "conduit ...à reconnaître l'existence du vide et à admettre l'hypothèse des atomes..." (Gérando, Hist. comp. des syst. de ph.,ed. 1847, II, 104-105). Futhermore, this bias establishes one more parallel between Bayle and Deslandes. The former considered that Huyghens and Newton had improved upon Cartesian theories of vortices, of the plenum and of "subtle matter", because they had renewed some Gassendist ideas (Dict. crit., art. Leucippe, Rem. G), and Delvolvé asserts that, whilst outwardly prepared to accept the Cartesian view, he secretly found atomism superior (op. cit., p. 356). Similarly, though at one moment Deslandes appears to present on equal terms Newtonian gravitation and the Cartesian idea of centripetal and centrifugal forces (H.c., II. 249), he none the less refers to the modern version of the corpuscular and mechanical philosophy - the one adopted by Boyle and Newton, and admitting only the void and atoms (II, 318) - as "la seule vraye" (I, 171).

Finally, we would draw attention to one more aspect of Gassendi's influence - one to which we alluded in our chapter dealing with the Réflexions and the French poems. To a considerable extent, the author of the Histoire critique is indebted to the théologal de Digne for the device that serves him so well in that history: "...utiliser la méthode dualiste,... justifier par la foi ce qu'il condamne par la raison, soit en traçant une ligne de démarcation entre elles, soit en superposant, sans essayer de les concilier, leurs affirmations contraires" (Pintard, Le Lib. érud., I, 153). This summary of Gassendi's exoteric method would apply equally well to that of Deslandes. Although in the critical history he is disposed to pay lip-service to Cartesianism - as he is to Catholicism - his sympathies are on the side of Descartes's redoubtable opponent.

c) Malebranche

It was as natural that Malebranche should grace the wall of the polygraph's sanctum as that Newton should be there; for both were philosophers whom Deslandes was proud to have known personally. Yet, whilst he never once criticized Newtonianism, he was not at all uncritical of Malebranchism in the c1737-56 history. In our biographical part, we quoted a Latin poem in which Deslandes deplored the Oratorian's death, and we cited four quatrains from Mon Cabinet with the revealing and informative foot-note alluding to the philosopher's efforts to persuade the young man to join the order to which he himself belonged. We also referred briefly to the contradiction between our author's attitude to the man and the metaphysician; and it is to this subject that we must now return.

Let us then requote two of the four stanzas from the autobiographical poem:

De la vertu sincere,
Dans ton sein je puisai le goût,
Sublime caractere!
Mallebranche, je te dois tout.

Par ta main repoussée,
Se cache la prévention,
Et l'erreur méprisée
Ne nous fait plus d'illusion. (in H.c., IV, 192).

It will be observed that, in the second of these stanzas, subjective appreciation gives way to an estimate of the value of Malebranche, the Cartesian - a tribute similar to those which our author pays to Descartes himself in the third and fourth volumes of the history. The Cartesian war which Malebranche waged against prejudice and error, and especially against the continuing authority of the Schoolmen, is recognized here for its true worth. On behalf of his generation, Deslandes pays his respects to one who promoted intellectual independence. This, then, is an important result of his personal contact with the aged Oratorian, and nothing he says in the Histoire critique in any way depreciates this estimate of Malebranche, the emancipator of human reason - this honest man who, taking

his cue from the last Principle of the fourth part of Descartes's famous work (Oeuvres, ed. A.& T., IX, 325), wrote in the Preface to the Recherche de la vérité: "Etant aussi persuadés que nous le commes que les hommes ne se peuvent enseigner les uns les autres...nous nous trouverons encore obligés d'avertir ceux qui voudront bien lire cet ouvrage de ne point nous croire sur notre parole par inclination, ni s'opposer à ce que nous disons par aversion..." (Oeuvres, ed. 1846, II, p.11). The influence upon the young Deslandes of such sentiments cannot be overstated. For example, in the Poésies diverses there are verses addressed to "Monsieur B***", who may have been either the Abbé de Bragelongne, who was sitting at the feet of the Oratorian sage about the same time as Deslandes was, or perhaps that unrepentant Cartesian and former Jesuit, the Abbé de Belbgarde, whose influence upon the author of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer we have already presumed. However, such speculations are mentioned at this point only because they lead to a more important identification. In this poem we read:

> Conduit par un guide fidéle,
> Mon premier maître & mon modéle,
> J'ai voulu de la verité
> Suivre la douce autorité.
> Sans dépendre d'aucun système,
> Hardi, j'ai pensé par moi-même. (in Réflex, &c, ed.1732, p. 162).

We suggest that this probably refers to Malebranche, to whom consequently Deslandes owes the important precept: "Think for yourself". It is therefore perhaps in this sense that we must interpret the extravagant expression: "Mallebranche, je te dois tout". In science and in philosophy Deslandes repeats the affirmation of philosophic independence. The Recueil de différens traités of 1753 provides a particularly pertinent illustration; for the writer, deploring once more the "systematic" attitude to science (i.e. being blind to anything outside one school of thought) and condemning "ces Romans de Philosophie qu'on honore du titre de Systêmes" (p. 97), proceeds to quote Malebranche to justify his reproof.

As a Cartesian upholding rational principles, Malebranche is therefore to be esteemed. As a theologian, too, he may have been of service to Deslandes, who, in the "surface" doctrines of the Histoire critique, is ostensibly submissive to Catholic dogma. Thus, when our historian speaks of "l'ordre de la Grace" (as contrasted with the "order of Nature") (I, 136), he is employing terms that we find in Malebranche: "Le péché de l'homme a bien été l'occasion de cette volonté de Dieu qui fait l'ordre de la grâce...La volonté de Dieu qui fait l'ordre de la grâce est donc ajoutée à la volonté qui fait l'ordre de la nature..." (Oeuvres, II, 435). Similarly, both speak of the "mysteries" associated with these two "orders". Malebranche writes: "...les mystères de la foi n'ont été établis que par l'ordre de la grâce qui, selon notre manière ordinaire de concevoir, est un décret postérieur à cet ordre de la nature. Il faut donc distinguer les mystères de la foi des choses de la nature. Il faut se soumettre également à la foi et à l'évidence..." (ibid, pp. 32-33); and in 1737 Deslandes asks who can rescue man from his fallen state: "Qui lui présentera une main prompte & secourable? Dieu, & encore Dieu seul. C'est-là...l'unique dénouement des mysteres de la Grace & de la Nature" (H.c., II, 412). Again, in respect of the claims of reason and faith, Deslandes appears to agree with the philosopher he knew in his youth. Thus in Malebranche we read: "Il faut se soumettre à l'autorité de l'Eglise, parce qu'elle ne peut jamais se tromper; mais il ne faut jamais se soumettre aveuglément à l'autorité des hommes, parce qu'ils peuvent toujours se tromper. Ce que l'Eglise nous apprend est infiniment au-dessus des forces de la raison..." (Oeuvres, II, 360); and - admittedly with less stress upon the authority of the Church - we read in the critical history: "Un Philosophe ne doit nous proposer que des choses qui sont à la portée de notre raison, parce qu'il n'a que cette seule voye pour acquérir des connoissances. Mais un Dieu peut & doit nous proposer des choses incroyables. Il suffit que je me sois persuadé qu'il les a proposées: le reste m'est inutile, & je me soûmets avec respect" (IV, 98-99).

Against these minor points of relative agreement, however, must be set at least three major points of divergence: proofs of God's existence, the doctrine of occasional causes and the Malebranchist theory of ideas. In these matters, we are dealing not with the virtuous Christian, the revered theologian, the dispeller of error, but rather with "le plus grand Métaphysicien de notre siécle", as Deslandes calls him in the critical history (II, 41); and in that very title, magniloquent as it may appear, lies the reason why Deslandes cannot accept some of the abstruse notions of his former friend and mentor.

The few proofs of God's existence advanced in the Histoire critique (which, after all, is not a treatise on theology or metaphysics) lead one to suppose that he ignores ontological and innate proofs. Instead we find a preference for the familiar "argument from design", favoured by a posteriorists and empiricists. For instance, in the Discours at the head of the fourth volume, Deslandes insinuates that this proof is incapable of establishing divine infinitude and infinite perfections; yet, far from lamenting this fact, he proceeds to conclude in favour of the "physico-theological" argument, for which he finds support even in Scripture: "Dieu existe par l'énergie, par l'intensité de sa Nature. N'est-ce pas moi, dit-il lui-même dans l'Ecriture Sainte, qui remplis toutes choses, qui remplis le Ciel & la Terre?" (IV, 35). This bias distinguishes Deslandes from the Cartesians.

And what of the celebrated theory of "occasional causes", which, to explain the interaction of mind and matter, advanced the supposition that God takes an act of will as the occasion of producing a corresponding movement in the body, and a state of body as the occasion of producing a corresponding mental state? We refer the reader to the end of the first volume of our author's major work, where, after paying his due to Malebranche, the Cartesian who had truly entered into the spirit of his master on the question of the immortality of the soul, the writer goes on to reject the limitations of extreme theocentricity:

...je ne veux point qu'on donne dans l'extrêmité opposée, qui est de croire que toutes les créatures n'ont aucune force ni aucune activité; qu'il n'y a que Dieu seul qui puisse agir en elles & par elles; que si un esprit a la perception d'un objet, c'est Dieu qui la lui donne; que si ce même esprit a une volonté ou un amour invincible pour le bien, c'est Dieu qui l'y porte; que s'il reçoit des sensations, c'est Dieu qui le modifie de telle ou telle maniere: enfin, qu'il ne se trouve dans le monde que des causes occasionnelles, & point de Physiques (I, 371).

Now, as a disciple of Fontenelle, Deslandes naturally considers that "La nature est un enchaînement de causes réelles et non occasionnelles" (Carré, La Phil. de Font., p. 370), and as a scientist of the Newtonian school, he clearly cannot contemplate outlawing physical causes. But the reasons he gives for rejection are at first sight perplexing. It is Malebranche who professes to believe in the "liberty of indifference" (by which, before the choice is made, the action of the will is undetermined as to acting or not acting); and it is Deslandes who already appears to incline towards determinism. Yet the critical historian reproaches Malebranche's "occasionalism" with leading to a denial of free-will. The explanation lies in the phrase "si ce même esprit a une volonté ou un amour invincible pour le bien, c'est Dieu qui l'y porte..."; for wide-spread acceptance of this view would deter mankind from making an effort to be virtuous and law-abiding. It is for this reason that, having concluded (as Mairan did) that Malebranchism would lead logically to determinism, he opposes the theory of "occasional causes" in the exoteric history.

As we may see from the passage quoted above, closely connected with the theory we have just discussed is the notion of "vision in God", so essential in the philosophy of Malebranche. It is on this point that (in the course of one of his interminable disgressions) Deslandes calls the great metaphysician "trop sublime":

Je néglige ici le dogme si intellectuel & si délié, que nous voyons toutes choses en Dieu. Le trop sublime Philosophe qui a exposé ce dogme dans le Livre de la Recherche de la Vérité, s'étoit élevé à une certaine région d'idées où peu de Philosophes mêmes osoient le suivre. Ils s'y seroient bien-tôt égarés, la Métaphysique n'ayant de prise que sur les esprits tournés d'une certaine maniere (II, 358).

If such a dogma be beyond the reach of the majority of men,

of what use can it be in promoting the morality to which our historian is so attached in 1737? It is clear that it is precisely because Malebranche is such an accomplished metaphysician - a metaphysician even beyond the comprehension of some philosophers - that Deslandes looks askance upon the "vision in God". By this time, the "sublime caractere" of the personal tribute has truly become "le trop sublime Philosophe" of the critical history! Proof of the real basis of Deslandes's judgement of Malebranche on this issue is immediately furnished by the historian himself. Chaotic as this may appear, the paragraph we have just quoted is followed by a highly favourable review of the ethical principles of Epicurus. How different (he says, by virtue of this juxtaposition) was the morality fostered by this remarkable Greek thinker! For he started with the notion that the body is not essentially evil: "C'est pourquoi il conseilloit toujours d'allier les satisfactions de l'esprit avec les plaisirs des sens..." (II, 358-359); he considered that man should, with dignity and restraint, seek happiness "de maniere qu'on goûte les biens aussi délicieusement qu'il est possible, & qu'on s'accommode patiemment aux maux qu'on ne peut ni fuir, ni éloigner" (II, 359). Our historian then lists some important ethical precepts of Epicurus: to view the gods alike in sickness and health; to familiarize one's self with the fact of death, awaiting it with tranquillity and detachment; to enjoy the present time, without endeavouring to look too far ahead; to follow at all times "le fil de la Nature", and to ward off the evil effects of maladies and uncontrolled passions. These indeed are principles that our author is for ever stressing in his own works. We conclude that he does so partly because they are capable of being understood by most men. They supply a reasonable view of body and soul and a common-sense ethic of universal application: consequently Deslandes comes to this conclusion in 1737: "Un Maître qui a sçû inspirer tant d'amour pour les vertus douces & bienfaisantes, ne

pouvoit manquer d'être un grand Homme" (II, 361).

Further confirmation of what we assert comes from a passage not specifically connected with Malebranche, but none the less offering a number of parallels with the judgements already recorded. In the second volume of the Histoire critique some Pythagorean and Platonic ideas are shown to present a number of similarities: "L'un & l'autre soutenoit que Dieu a dans sa main le commencement, le milieu, la fin de toutes choses, qu'il va rapidement d'un bout à l'autre;...que Dieu a été appellé la souveraine Intelligence, l'Entendement universel, parce qu'il renferme en lui-même toutes ces idées..." (II, 69). It is important to note the reasons given for criticizing these ideas:

> Voilà des principes bien relevés, bien métaphysiques: & par cela même qu'ils sont hors de l'usage ordinaire des hommes, Saint Augustin décide qu'ils sont inutiles aux hommes...Aussi les Disciples de Pythagore s'humaniserent-ils plus que leur-maitre. Loin de se tenir dans une certaine région d'idées dont l'accès est si difficile à ceux mêmes qui ne craignent point de s'y égarer...(II, 69-70).

Here, then, in a passage which coincides with the one in which Malebranche is judged "trop sublime" (for instance we note such words as "métaphysiques", "une certaine région d'idées", "égarer"), we find once more that the deciding factor is moral utility. We are thus back to our starting-point: the apparent contradiction mentioned at the beginning is explained by different attitudes to the practising Christian and the abstruse metaphysician. The former had a moral influence on Deslandes himself: the latter was too obscure even for some philosophers. It is a point of view very similar to that of Pierre Bayle, who considered that many metaphysicians were to be spurned because they indulged in "des spéculations sur l'absolu où la raison inévitablement s'égare" (Delvolvé, op. cit., p. 405). Both Deslandes and Voltaire (Dict. phil. arts. Idée, Cartésianisme) were to judge Malebranche and his fore-runner, Descartes, in this way, for they decided that these philosophers had been untrue to their first principles: having decided to campaign against

obscurity, they had plunged into speculations divorced from proof. Yet Deslandes judged these first principles to be sufficient to justify the inclusion of portraits of Descartes and Malebranche amongst his small display of engravings.

CHAPTER III THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Rendre une justice exacte à chacun, ne calomnier personne; dissiper avec bonté les nuages qui font quelquefois chanceler les plus fermes: voilà le véritable caractère du Chrétien (Lettre à M. le Trésorier, 1748, p. 13).

We have already referred to the three masters Deslandes was obliged to serve in composing his exoteric Histoire critique de la philosophie: the general public, the Church and the secular censorship, and the enlightened minority of free-thinkers. His complex presentation of the Christian religion depends on this three-fold necessity. For the majority he provided liberal Christian doctrines, largely inspired by Grotius and his own former tutor, Buffier; for the Church and the censor he feigned respect for the dogma of Christianity, and in this connection probably found the language of Malebranche useful - yet, at the same time, admiring methods employed by his precursor, Bayle, he continued to envelop these doctrines in contradiction. Finally, under the influence of Newton and some English deists, he supplied a sub-stratum of unorthodox notions directed to the intellectual élite, who would not expect him to be untrue to his private opinions.

a) Liberal Christianity and the Influence of Grotius and Buffier

The "surface" doctrines of the critical history are to be found mainly in passages inserted to render the work acceptable to the ordinary reader and to the censor; for it would have been utterly foolish to invite the public burning of a work intended for public enlightenment. Hence the author is careful to present a form of Christianity which, without being dogmatic or theological, is calculated not to show disrespect towards God or Christ. Indeed, when the

historian is critical in dealing with these issues, it is the Church that is his usual target. In general, the Church is accused of two things: of destroying the simplicity that characterized primitive Christianity; and of seeking to discourage the use of God's gift to man - the reason. Consequently this liberal conception of the Christian religion (which sometimes comes close indeed to Christian deism) demands ethical simplicity and the exercise of common-sense. In these respects, the two main sources of the "surface" doctrine are Grotius and Buffier.

Surely one of the most delicate problems that faced the historian who had decided not to exclude Christianity from his philosophic survey was how, in the third volume, he should evaluate the coming of Christ. To adopt the judgements of some ardent Catholic churchman would have produced some strange disharmony: on the other hand, this was certainly not the — place to give vent to his own subversive opinions on the subject. Prudence consequently counselled recourse to a fairly broad-minded Christian apologist: here, as later in the exoteric brochure composed in self-defence against the Jesuit, Valois, Deslandes turned to that ally of the tolerationist, Barneveldt, in the struggle against the Gomerites and the Dutch States-General, and that associate of Casaubon in the project of Christian unity - the author of De Veritate Religionis Christianae, which had been translated into French by Mézerai in 1644. In Grotius, he found a sincere Christian, whose book was probably the more acceptable to the naval Commissaire since it was written for the enlightenment of sailors.

It is interesting, however, to see how far Deslandes is prepared to accompany Grotius. We have said that it is particularly on the question of the historical and philosophic importance of the advent of Christ that our historian consults the Dutch writer. Two passages in the third volume testify to this. First, we examine pp. 75-77: here Grotius, "l'Auteur le plus exact & le plus modéré, qui ait jamis écrit sur ce sujet", is quoted with full acknowledgement, but under a

wide reference to Bks. I-III of the apology. In fact, comparison of texts reveals that the borrowing appears to be confined chiefly to Bk. II, sections IX, and XVII-XVIII. At times his imitation is close indeed: for example, Grotius affirms: "The Authors of the Graecian Wisdom and Knowledge, themselves confessed that they alledged scarce any Thing for Certainty, because Truth was sunk, as it were, to the Bottom of a Well..." (De Veritate &c, tr. Clarke, 1743, p. 126). In the same edition we read: "The Greeks, who derived their Learning from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and who had some Hope of another Life after this, spoke very doubtfully concerning it...And tho' they searched diligently for Arguments to prove it, they could offer nothing of Certainty" (ibid, pp. 102-103); and, on the following page, we come upon this statement: "In so many Doubts and Uncertainties did Mankind at that time wander, till Christ discovered the true Knowledge of their End, promising to his Disciples and Followers another Life after this, in which there should be no more Death, Pain, or Sorrow, but accompanied with the highest Joy..." (ibid, p. 104). Now, apart altogether from the fact that, on the philosophic plane, this agrees with what our critical historian says regarding the sources of Hellenic thought, it has become the basis for the following passage in the Histoire critique:

Ma premiere réfléxion regarde ce prodigieux & funeste égarement, où le genre-humain étoit plongé avant la naissance de Jésus-Christ. Que de variations & d'incertitudes sur les points les plus importans! Quel desordre d'opinions sur l'existence de Dieu, sur l'immortalité de l'ame, sur la nature du souverain bien! La Philosophie n'en parloit que d'une maniére foible & chancelante. Elle se contredisoit sans cesse; & même à force de raisonnemens subtils & captieux, en jettant un voile obscur sur les premieres notions, elle réduisit toutes choses à de simples conjectures. On apprenoit à douter avec les anciens Philosophes; mais ce n'étoit point un doute sage & réfléchi, qui aidât à trouver la vérité...Jésus-Christ est donc le premier qui ait établi des connoissances sûres & invariables.. Ma seconde réfléxion donnera plus de poids & de clarté à la premiere. Parmi les Anciens & principalement dans la Gréce, les Philosophes, les gens d'esprit, reconnoissoient que tout étoit si dépravé, si mêlé de vrai & de faux, qu'ils ne pouvoient se conduire par leurs seules lumiéres (III, 75-77).

In this acknowledged imitation, then, we perceive fairly faithful reproduction of the ideas of Grotius regarding the importance of the impact of Jesus Christ upon philosophy. We also note,

however, that immediately thereafter Deslandes does not follow Grotius in describing the "joys" of body and soul to be experienced in the After-Life, or in rejecting Jewish and Moslem views on the same subject. Can it be, therefore, that our critical historian has not fully accepted Christ's promise of future felicity; and, would a reproduction of Grotius' enthusiastic description have sounded too "pious" in the Histoire critique?

We turn on a few pages in the critical history, to pp. 116-117. This time, without admitting the fact, Deslandes appears to have derived from Grotius views regarding the validity of Christian miracles. The subject-matter is often identical. For example, in the Dutch work we find the passage:

> ...neither Celsus, nor Julian, when they wrote against the Christians, dared to deny that some Miracles were done by Christ; the Hebrews also confess it openly in the Books of the Talmud. That they were not performed by any natural Power, sufficiently appears from hence, that they are called Wonders or Miracles; nor can it ever be, that grievous Distempers should be healed immediately, only by a Word speaking, or a Touch, by the Power of Nature. If those Works could have been accounted for by any natural Efficacy, it would have been said so at first by those, who either professed themselves Enemies of Christ when he was upon Earth, or of his Gospel. By the like Argument we gather, that they were not juggling Tricks, because very many of the Works were done openly, the People looking on...(op.cit., p. 91).

These opinions are reproduced with some fidelity in the following sentences from the third volume:

> ...je ne remarque point que les plus grands ennemis du Christianisme naissant, un Celse...un Julien l'Apostat, les Juifs enfin dont la haine étoit encore plus envenimée que celles des Païens, ayent jamais contesté les miracles de Jésus-Christ...Mais en même tems ils disoient à leurs adversaires: Ne vous prévalez point de l'aveu que nous vous faisons. Tous les miracles que vous vantez, sont réels & effectifs. Nous reconnoissons avec ingénuité que Jesus-Christ a guéri les boiteux les aveugles & ceux qu'agitoit un Esprit malfaisant. Mais nous nions que ce soient-là des preuves suffisantes de la divinité de votre Religion...Les Juifs mêmes, du moins les plus sensés & ceux qui rendoient justice à la vérité, convenoient des miracles de Jesus-Christ...Le Talmud en a lui-même rapporté quelques-uns, qui devoient être bien répandus alors (pp. 116-117).

Moreover, on p. 77 of the same volume of the Histoire critique, we read that these miracles were "exposés à tous les yeux". Factually, therefore, the imitation is almost complete. But that is certainly all we are able to assert: in Grotius we do not find three insinuations that are to be discovered in the same part of the critical history: that pagan miracles would

have died a natural death, had it not been for the competition presented by Christian "wonders"; that pagans had equally astonishing and convincing "miracles" to offer; that miracles are no proof of divinity. The astute reader must surely conclude that, under the influence of men like Van Dale and Fontenelle, Deslandes is anxious to suggest that the "miraculous" in Christianity is but feeble support for its claims. Of course, simulating horror, our historian exclaims: "Quelle extravagance, de mettre en regard avec Jesus-Christ de simples Philosophes! Est-il possible de leur trouver aucun trait de ressemblance?" (III, 115-116), but we may well wonder if the exclamation represents what he so often does himself in these pages, and the interrogation is intended to suggest something detrimental to Christianity! If this be doubted, it is advisable to take into account the considerable space he gives to pagan objections and the reasonable light in which they appear at this point. Furthermore, he virtually neglects Grotius' substantial defence of Christian miracles, and omits discussion of the reality of the Resurrection, which, in De Veritate, immediately succeeds the lines we have cited and effectively becomes the crowning argument of this part of the apology. Thus, although basic facts are more or less identical, the "tone" of the presentation is singularly different in the two works.

This conclusion is supported by divergences to be discovered elsewhere. First, there is the question of Mohammedanism. As a Christian apologist, Grotius is anxious to depict the Moslems as brutal and morally perverted (op. cit. pp. 113, 127-128, 272); but Deslandes finds sound ethical principles in their religion (III, 237).[13] Consider, in the second place, their respective attitudes towards divine Providence: in the Histoire critique we do not find the notion of the providential direction of empires (De. Ver., p. 19) or the proof of Providence in prediction (ibid, p. 71). Consider, thirdly, their views on the question of good and evil: Deslandes does not summarily dismiss as contradictory and nonsensical the doctrine

of "Two Principles" (De Ver., p. 17). On the contrary, he gives a long exposition of this reasonable pagan explanation of a difficult problem, and asserts elsewhere that "Les grandes vertus naissent ordinairement dans les mêmes terroirs où naissent aussi les grands vices..." (H.c., I, 257-277; II, 146). For him, good and evil are part of life and equally essential.

Consider, lastly, their views on free-will: Deslandes does not find, with Grotius (De. Ver., pp. 76-77), the existence of evil sufficiently explained by the fact of human freedom. On the contrary, in this exoteric work, he prefers to leave the problem somewhat unsolved (I, 372). These divergences are to be accounted for by our author's secret beliefs, which will become clearer when we approach the esoteric writings. For the moment, however, we may add that, as an exponent of natural religion, he judges Mohammedanism by its ethical standards and not by the fact that it is non-Christian; that to the providential direction of human affairs he probably already prefers the rule of Fortune; that he holds the view that evil is necessary to this mundane drama; and that, as one who is probably inclining to determinism, he prefers to be non-committal regarding man's liberty.

None the less, we may conclude that the critical historian found the name of Grotius a convenient peg on which to hang one of the most important parts of this exoteric writing - that concerned with Christ's advent and the validity of his miracles. The peg was convenient, in that, without being blatantly heretical, the ideas of the Dutch apologist were sufficiently liberal to harmonize with the whole "surface" -- doctrine of the critical history. Nor do we forget that, in 1748, when (again in an exoteric work, we insist) he wished to counter Valois's narrow proselytism, it was to the sincere and tolerant Netherlander that he appealed once more:

O, que l'illustre Grotius mérite d'éloges! Que son Traité de la vérité de la Religion Chrétienne donne une idée avantageuse de son esprit & de son coeur. Il avoit lû prodigieusement: mais un goût exquis avoit présidé à ses lectures. Il ne citoit point, soit à tort, soit à droit, des Livres dont il

ignoroit le contenu, & dont il n'avoit fait que copier rapidement les titres dans les Journaux Littéraires. Il ménageoit les Auteurs sans les qualifier, avec une insolence brutale, d'Athées & de Déistes. Il croyoit, en un mot, que si la Religion exige le sacrifice de l'esprit, elle n'exige pas moins la politesse des moeurs (Lettre à M. le Tr., pp. 12-13).

In method, Grotius was neither tedious nor superficial. Moreover, he showed the true Christian spirit. He was sincere in his beliefs, yet fair-minded enough to tolerate the opinions of others. Stressing the positive, moral aspects of his religion, he sought to enlighten rather than to vilify - so much so in fact that when, in 1673, Robert Boyle had wished to undertake some good works, he had not been able to think of a better book to dispatch to the Middle East than De Veritate (in Pococke's Arabic translation). How fitting, therefore, that Deslandes should have turned to this work at the moment when the impact of primitive Christianity came under review!

From a Protestant we turn next to a Catholic apologist. That Deslandes knew and conversed with Claude Buffier we have documentary proof (Letter of 7 August 1713 to Desmaizeaux, Birch MSS of B. Mus. № 4283); and we also know that the Jesuit father was on the staff of the Collège Louis-le-Grand during the period of our author's education. Now Buffier was in many ways an anomaly amongst the members of his order. Voltaire, who was for a time a contemporary of Deslandes in the famous college, describes the priest as: "le seul jésuite qui ait mis une philosophie raisonnable dans ses ouvrages" (Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XIV, 48), and his school-fellow clearly judged him in the same way. For, whilst, like Deslandes, Buffier "reconnaît à Descartes le mérite d'avoir renversé les doctrines de l'école, d'avoir enseigné à philosopher avec plus de circonspection,...d'avoir accoutumé à mieux analyser les idées, d'avoir, par sa célèbre maxime, fondé sur la clarté l'assentiment au vrai, et, par sa méthode, fait entrer plus sûrement dans la voie de la vérité", he shows a distinct sympathy for Gassendi and Locke (Gérando, Hist. comp. des syst.,

III, 253). If, then, as Gérando observes, "Le caractère à peu près général et constant de l'éclectisme français, au XVIIIe siècle, est la combinaison de la philosophie de Descartes avec celle de Gassendi et de Locke" (ibid, p. 239), we may still more suppose the influence of the Jesuit teacher upon our eclectic historian of philosophy. Moreover, Buffier was a person of wide interests, who, at one time or another, showed his skill as a journalist, scientist, grammarian, philosopher, geographer and historian - in short, precisely the sort of mentor our author would be most likely to appreciate.

The essential principle which the Jesuit applied to philosophy was common-sense; and the Traité des premières vérités shows how well he followed his own precept. In addition to this work of 1724, we must mention the Exposition des preuves les plus sensibles de la véritable religion (1732), which demonstrates how closely his religious opinions accorded with his philosophic views. Gabriel Bonno also studied Buffier's MSS annotation of Locke's celebrated Essay, and it is from these three sources that we draw information regarding some of the more important tenets of Buffier's philosophy (v. Bonno, La Cult. & la civln. brit. &c., ed. 1948, pp. 89-91).

We consider first his views on the universal standard of truth and the importance of ethics. In the Avertissement to his Preuves (ed. 1732), Buffier stresses the practical value of those elements in religion best suited to guide human conduct and to assist in the attainment of what he calls "véritez solides & pratiques". That there is such a thing as universal truth, dependent neither upon experience nor upon observation, but upon the common opinion of men and upon the universality of the Deity, is a principle which he opposes to Locke, who did not admit such primary truths. Essentially it is a moral principle upheld at all times and in all places by the majority of men, since it is the real fruit of common-sense. Like Deslandes, he considers that, compared with ethics, metaphysics are useless. For the study of metaphysics

is beyond the average man: ethics are not; for God would not expect us to achieve things that are practically impossible (Pr. parag. 266). For this reason, like Deslandes, Buffier inclines towards the Epicurean morality, which is essentially practical and accessible. As Gérando explains: "...il donne son approbation aux principes de morale que Gassendi a tirés d'Epicure" (op. cit., III, 254) - a fact which indirectly helps to explain our author's affection for "the sweet ethic" of Gassendi in his earliest prose work. Indeed, in respect of the notions we have already outlined, Deslandes's critical history also reveals the influence of the Jesuit teacher: we have often noted the ethical bias which conditions his judgement of all the systems under review; we have had cause to observe that, inspired by a notion of universal, lay morality, he is prepared to do justice to Christian, Moslem and atheist alike. We would also cite in evidence such passages as the following:

> Je remarque qu'à l'égard de certaines vérités qu'on doit nommer primitives & fondamentales, tous les Peuples du monde semblent mutuellement se prêter la main; soit que ces vérités fussent d'abord très-faciles à découvrir, & qu'elles se présentassent d'elles-mêmes à l'esprit; soit qu'il y ait un point fixe par où doivent commencer nos pensées, & que ce point soit quelque chose d'indépendant de nos caprices & de nos incertitudes...L'esprit humain est de la même trempe; par conséquent il peut avoir les mêmes sentimens sur les choses qui le touchent de plus près, comme sur les principaux attributs de Dieu...(H.c., I, 46-47).

The historian is faithful again when he makes this distinction between ethics and metaphysics: "La Morale est seche & infructueuse, quand elle n'offre que des vûes générales & des propositions métaphysiques, plus propres à orner l'esprit & à charger la mémoire, qu'à toucher le coeur & à changer la volonté. On oublie alors que la vertu est un bien d'usage, un mérite de tous les jours" (II, 273), and when he opposes to Malebranchist metaphysics the ethic of Epicurus, which the latter "rappelloit à quatre articles principaux, exprimés briévement pour les rendre plus intéressans" (ibid, 358-359).

How readily again does he agree in 1737 to apply common-sense standards to such questions as the existence of spirits intermediary between God and ourselves! In Buffier's Traité

we read: "...je crois n'avoir rien vu ni rien entendu qui dût engager un esprit raisonnablement critique, à juger, par les seules lumières naturelles et indépendamment des faits révélés, qu'aucun esprit ou intelligence mitoyenne se soit clairement manifesté" (Oeuvres, ed. Bouillier, 1843, p. 198). This is how his former pupil concludes a discussion of the same topic: "Ainsi, il n'y a qu'un seul Etre dans l'Univers, qui fait tout, qui regle tout, qui a soin de tout; & si l'on admet d'autres Etres agissans comme lui, il faut leur supposer un dégré [sic] de science peu différent de celui qui est en Dieu" (H.c., II, 222). In both cases, the judgement is based upon common sense and nothing else.

Let us now turn to another matter: the nature of the soul and its immortality. Whilst both Deslandes and his teacher agree to assign to Malebranche "le rang le plus distingué parmi les philosophes" (Gérando, Hist. comp. des syst., III, 254; H.c., II, 41), both equally dismiss as unacceptable the Malebranchist "vision in God", principally on the grounds of its abstruseness and obscurity (Traité, parag. 451, Oeuvres, pp. 186-187; H.c., II, 358). Neither, therefore, considers that the Oratorian supplies a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between body and soul. Similarly, under Locke's influence, Buffier concludes that it is unreasonable to presume that the mind thinks all the time, and consequently detaches himself from Cartesianism on this matter. And Deslandes, who appears to find Descartes unconvincing on the crucial matter of the connexion between substances, seems to incline towards the opinion of some Ancient philosophers, who thought that body and soul are dissimilar only in respect of their textures (I, 366). On the apposite issue of immortality, Buffier and Deslandes both suggest that divine justice can be understood only if we assume a life in the Hereafter, in which rewards and punishments willbe dispensed; but the younger writer does not agree with his teacher about the general desire that the soul should be immortal, and mentions peoples who face death happily because they regard it as the end of all things (Traité,

parags. 463-464, in Oeuvres, pp. 190-191: H.c., III, 82-83, V, 115).

This is not the only point of disagreement between Buffier and the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie. Indeed, the most outstanding difference lies in their respective attitudes to Spinoza. We suspect that Buffier is sincerely opposed to Spinozism, because it does not meet the requirements of common sense. Twice in the Preuves (parags. 26-29 and 1st Dissn. at end of vol.) he sets out to refute it, claiming that he has adopted, and improved upon Bayle's reductio ad absurdum. Whether the second claim be substantiated or not, the first cannot be denied, for the influence of the Dictionnaire critique is very evident - as, for instance, when he uses Bayle's argument regarding the absurdity of supposing the identity of killer and victim and when, in more general terms, he attacks the notion that there is no reality outside the Deity. Remembering our analysis of the Mazarine MSS, the reader will soon perceive why Deslandes, under the influence of French Spinozists, could not share the opinion of either his otherwise firm favourite, Bayle or his friend and tutor, Buffier. In 1737, he is secretly admiring the Spinozist philosophy; yet he is careful not to be too visibly enamoured of the anathmetized system.

There are two substantial expositions of Spinozist doctrines in the critical history. The first, which appeared in 1737 (I, 178-180), begins by dubbing the philosopher "dangereusement célèbre" and by speaking of his "impiétés". It goes on to explain that Spinoza considered that a substance cannot produce another substance; that nothing can be created out of nothing, since it would be a manifest contradiction to suppose that being was made out of non-being; that there is consequently but one substance in the Universe (causa sui), eternal, independent of any superior cause, and existing of itself and of necessity - which in fact is God Himself; that this indivisible substance is not only endowed with an infinite number of per-

fections or attributes, but is capable of being modified in an infinity of ways and more especially in extension and thought; that the All (Deus sive Natura) is immobile and loses nothing of its essence in these modifications; and that man remains essentially the same, whether asleep or awake, in a state of repose or activity. In other words, the total amount of energy is constant, whether we consider the Universe or that part of the All called "man". Finally, he gives no refutation of the ideas here advanced, apart from the conventional criticism implied in the phrase "un système si absurde" which we find at the end.

The second exposition is to be found at the beginning of the fourth volume (pp. 29-33), and this we have already examined very briefly in our analysis and interpretation of the Discours, où l'on examine ce que les anciens Philosophes pensoient de la Divinité. We now give fuller details of the text in question. Again our author begins by dismissing Spinozism, which is "de la dernière absurdité, aussi faux dans ses principes que dans ses conséquences...". We recall, however, that he claims that it has not been successfully refuted, "soit que ceux qui l'ont voulu faire, ne l'ayent pas bien entendu, soit qu'ils ayent agi de mauvaise foi...". Admitting, however, the difficulty involved in trying to contradict Spinoza, Deslandes gives two examples. First, the attributes of the single substance: Deslandes does no more than give the explanation supplied by the apologists of Spinozism. Secondly, the notion that the human mind is part of the divine understanding and that the body is a mode of the essence of God, considered as extension: once again we are treated chiefly to Spinozist apology, and the only criticism that follows is concerned with the "obscurity" in which Spinoza enveloped his doctrines; and, even in this, the philosopher is half-excused with the phrase: "l'art qu'il a employé pour éclaircir cet obscur de son mieux". Finally our critical historian appears desperately anxious to discount the stupid charge of immorality levelled at the Jewish thinker and his disciples: "Ses moeurs

était [sic] austéres, & sa conduite exacte". The expositions we have discussed here reveal not only an understanding of the Ethics, but acquaintance with Spinozist arguments in defence of that work. What is more, it achieves precisely the result he appears to complain of at the beginning of the second exposition: it spreads Spinozist ideas without offering any serious, reasoned objection to them. And, although in a foot-note to p. 27 of the fourth volume he mentions the article Spinoza of the Dictionnaire critique, he does not copy his friend Buffier in citing the reductio ad absurdum of Bayle. A sincere opponent of Spinozism would hardly have been able to resist this temptation; and confirmation of the fact that he was certainly not a sincere opponent is provided by the esoteric works published between the dates of the two expositions in question.

We have suggested that Buffier's objections bear the stamp of sincerity, and his attitude to free-will only serves to underline this suggestion. For, whilst both Buffier and Deslandes appear to assert the fact of divine liberty (by which, if he pleases, God can change the course of Nature), they do not speak with the same voice on the question of human freedom (Traité, parag. 350, in Oeuvres, p. 152; Preuves, parags. 229 and 244; H.c., I, 135-136). In the Traité (parag. 58, in Oeuvres, pp. 25-26), Buffier finds that the notion of free-will is generally accepted, and considers that, without the freedom to choose, man could not love virtue and would be merely a machine. As we have already said, Deslandes prefers to leave the matter unsettled and suggests that it is beset with the most complex difficulties (I, 372). In contrast to Buffier, however, he repeatedly makes it clear in the Histoire critique that determinism is associated with moral rectitude (e.g. I, 202, II, 411-412), and, though he omits discussion of the dangerous topic of Spinozist fatalism, he certainly lays stress upon the moral austerity of the philosopher of Amsterdam. Such is his oblique and carefully concealed apology for Spinozism

in the critical history.

Although Buffier and Deslandes disagree on this important matter, we have seen, however, that they hold similar views about some other vital issues. Particularly it is to the Jesuit father that Deslandes is indebted for his common-sense approach to some matters concerning the Christian religion. For, ~~in a sense~~ like his pupil, Buffier was independent of all "systems"; and, though he has been depicted as mid-way between Descartes and Locke, he did not accept without reservation the philosophies of either - in the former case, because Cartesianism tended to make dogmatic statements impossible to verify; in the latter, because the disciples of Locke were too harsh upon faith and revelation. This view is adopted by the author of the Histoire critique who, in his "surface" doctrine, tells us that both these philosophers did harm to religion - Descartes, because he oversimplified some of the problems; Locke, because " Il y a du danger à vouloir que la Religion soit trop peu mystérieuse" (III, 297).

Our conclusions must be that from Buffier our author adopted a rational approach to Catholicism, and yet an approach that did not suggest impiety. For, despite his "advanced" and unconventional opinions, Buffier was still "approuvé par son ordre" (Oeuvres, ed. Bouillier, Introd., p, iv); and it was certainly prudent on the part of Deslandes to imitate some of the attitudes of this semi-empiricist, this almost deistic Jesuit, whose creed is summed up by Bouillier in these significant phrases: "Sans doute elle est catholique en ce sens qu'elle n'est pas contraire aux dogmes du catholicisme; mais elle ne l'est pas, en ce sens qu'elle se déduise des dogmes et des textes sacrés" (ibid, pp. ii-iii).

b) "Internal" Contradictions and Ecclesiastical Dogma

If Grotius and Buffier (and to a lesser degree, Malebranche) provided our author with "surface" doctrines of liberal Christianity, Pierre Bayle showed him how to speak to two classes of reader at the same time. In other words, he taught (by example) how to be "two-faced" in relation to some important religious issues - issues to which we must return several times (but from different angles) precisely because they are so important. We have studied contradictions that arise between different types of composition, and have sought to explain these by a division into exoteric and esoteric writings. Such contradictions were referred to as "external", since they do not imply incongruity within the covers of a single work. But, in the Histoire critique, we come across "internal" discrepancies which, as we shall endeavour to show, amount to nothing less than calculated and deliberate inconsistency.

An important point of similarity between Bayle and Deslandes lies in the way in which they manage to convey concurrently two different levels of ideas to two different types of reader. The process can be called apparent contradiction, and it was chosen partly from motives of prudence. Consider, for instance, Bayle's critical dictionary:

> Dans la bigarrure du Dictionnaire il glisse, dissimule en laissant voir aux yeux avertis les vérités qu'il tient à établir et à faire entendre; il fait porter sa critique sur les questions qui n'ont pas cessé de le passionner.
>
> Mais il le fait avec une prudence que les circonstances justifient bien: et il est aisé de noyer dans une quantité de matières, qui ne sont que des sujets indifférents de recherches historiques, les points dont la discussion, odieuse à beaucoup, donnerait prise à ses ennemis.
>
> Ces points mêmes il les traite désormais avec la circonspection la plus grande: c'est une caractéristique du Dictionnaire que nulle part la pensée de Bayle n'est plus enveloppée, plus masquée d'affirmation contradictoires (Delvolve, op. cit. p. 233).

Noting the expressions "aux yeux avertis", "des sujets indifférents de recherches historiques" (as so many of Deslandes's digressions are), "avec la circonspection la plus grande" and "masquée d'affirmations contradictoires", we pass to an example from the Dictionnaire itself.

How does Bayle approach the question of the validity of reason? First, in a note to the article Lucrèce (Rem. F), he appears to criticize the dogma of Providence on the grounds that it does not explain the unequal dispensation of good and evil; and he adds: "Je sais bien qu'on peut inventer mille raisons contre les difficultés; mais aussi on ne peut éviter mille répliques: l'esprit de l'homme est encore plus fécond en objections qu'en solutions; de sorte qu'il faut avouer que, sans les lumières de la révélation, la philosophie ne se peut débarrasser des doutes qui se tirent de l'histoire humaine". Here, then, there is apparent submission to Revelation, as the only solution to difficulties which reason cannot solve. Now, in isolation, this note would be misleading; for Bayle has partly contradicted himself at the very beginning of note B to the article Pyrrhon, where we read: "Il importe peu qu'on dise que l'esprit de l'homme est trop borné pour rien découvrir dans les vérités naturelles...Il nous doit suffire qu'on s'exerce à chercher des hypothèses probables et à recueillir des expériences...". That is the "contradiction" technique. The initiated know full well that the second note is more representative of Bayle's own opinion; but, in light of the first, it is difficult to prove anything against him.

There are so many cases of this sort in the Histoire critique that we are obliged to limit discussion to three very important ones: Providence, mysteries and miracles, and the immortality of the soul. Let us begin, then, with the subject immediately related to the example we have just quoted from Bayle (art. Lucrèce). We remember that, as Malebranche did, Deslandes sometimes speaks of "l'ordre de la grâce", and sees therein the hand of Providence; and we quoted, as an example of "surface" doctrine, part of the following passage:

> Tout ce qui arrive dans la Nature, n'arrive-t-il point par l'enchaînement, par la suite des Loix générales que Dieu a établies? Peut-on penser qu'il les changera en faveur de quelques particuliers qui ignorent même ce qu'ils demandent?[14] Et quand il le fait par rapport à l'ordre de la Grace, n'y reconnoît-on point cette Providence éclairée, qui se manifeste d'autant plus que ses oeuvres sont moins communes...? (I, 135-136).

Yet, just as he so often insinuates that good morals can be

fostered without Revelation, in the third volume he makes a remark (which we have already quoted in another connection as a link between the principles of Deslandes and the Encyclopedists) implying that belief in divine Providence is necessary chiefly to keep the multitudes in check:

> Comme Lucréce sa fait honneur de marcher sur les traces d'Epicure, il commence, à l'exemple de son Maître, par nier la Providence divine...O homme qui parlez ainsi, ignorez-vous combien cette Religion est nécessaire pour entretenir la paix & le bonheur des Societés...; combien elle a de force & de puissance sur ces esprits rebelles & intraitables, que l'impunité porteroit encore au crime (III, 26-27)

Thus religion is depicted almost as a "moral policeman"; and, especially when we recall the many remarks our author makes regarding the advisability of having a "double system", the reason he advances here for maintaining belief in Providence appears to invalidate the tribute paid in the earlier passage.

Consider, secondly, the question of mysteries and miracles. Once more we are faced with contradictions. At one moment, for instance, we are assured that the Deity can indeed manifest Himself in a supernatural manner (but we are warned to apply a crucial test before deciding that we have to do with a genuine miracle):

> Car il est évident que lorsqu'elle [la Divinité] se détourne de l'ordre purement naturel, qu'elle se manifeste aux hommes avec plus d'éclat qu'à son ordinaire, ce ne peut être que pour leur témoigner sa puissance ou sa bonté infinie: & la marque essentielle d'un miracle, c'est quelque avantage utilement procuré à la Terre, c'est quelque bien qui tourne à l'accroissement de la Religion (I, 44).

In another place, however, we meet the insinuation that what we at present consider to be supernatural may in fact be something perfectly natural but hitherto not understood:

> Les effets les plus ordinaires, les choses les plus miraculeuses, partent également de sa main; & en ce sens on peut dire avec le même Saint Augustin, que tout est naturel; c'est-à-dire, que tout provient de la puissance supérieure & vivifiante de Dieu, & que le surnaturel n'est autre chose que les merveilles qu'il produit de tems en tems contre ce qui nous est connu des Loix de la Nature,.. (I, 86)

Here, the phrase "ce qui nous est connu" is all-important. Nor is this all he has to say on the subject of miracles. Discussing Roman philosophy, corrupted by theurgy imported from Egypt, he refers to the case of Arnûphis who, in the reign of

Marcus Aurelius, was reputed to have saved the Roman army when it was dying of thirst, by causing torrential rain to fall on the troops. Now, in disdaining uncritical and superstitious explanations of this event, our historian does not quite spare the Christians (and indeed the reader may be inclined to let his mind run on to Old Testament stories about the Escape from Egypt): "Mais ce fait avancé par les Païens ne mérite pas plus de créance que le fait substitué par les Chrétiens; que c'est à la douziéme Légion, pour cela même nommée la Fulminante, que le prodige est dû. Il y avoit long-tems que cette Légion étoit ainsi nommée, & la pluie qui tomba avec abondance fut plus utile que miraculeuse" (III, 114). And, as we have mentioned already, he then goes on to suggest that Christianity with its "infinité de prodiges inexpliquables à la raison humaine", helped to maintain superstition and magic amongst pagans (III, 115). The mysteries of religion are equally a subject of inconsistency in the Histoire critique. Sometimes he allows that they really are valid, but considers that, in order to minimize sectarian differences (very much the preoccupation of liberal Christians), mysteries should be put forward simply and in general terms (III, 274 and 317). Yet, if we remember the implication of the word "danger" in this now familiar passage, we shall conclude that he views mysteries in the same way as he views Providence: "Il y a du danger à vouloir que la Religion soit trop peu mystérieuse" (III, 297). Moreover, if we wish to see the absolute counter-part of his apparent acceptance of mysteries of religion, we should turn to this remark which he slips unobtrusively into the first volume of his history: "...car de tout tems le Mystere a été l'appanage de l'ignorance & de la crédulité" (p. 119). That is a supremely good example of the Baylian technique in Deslandes.

We pass on to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, noting that, at the end of the first volume, he seems to approve most warmly of the submission to Revelation of Descartes:

"Quelle qu'ait été cependant la pénétration de M. Descartes, il convient avec cet air de modestie qui sied si bien aux plus grands Philosophes, que sans la Révélation il seroit toûjours demeuré dans l'incertitude" (I, 368); and, that in the same volume, he thanks God for having revealed through Christ the essential truth about man, that "s'il est exposé à mille peines devenues inséparables de sa condition pendant cette vie, elles ne font que le préparer à une autre où il sera récompensé plus libéralement" (I, 276). Observe, however, the manner in which, some pages later, he insinuates once more that this doctrine is to be maintained because it is useful to social tranquillity:

> Il y avoit en Egypte une longue suite de Cérémonies mystérieuses. Elles frapperent Homere, Hésiode, Orphée, qui les travestirent d'abord en Fables...& qui pour rendre ensuite ces Fables utiles aux moeurs corrompues des hommes, pour les contraindre à mener une vie plus réguliere, leur firent entrevoir après cette vie des récompenses pour les uns & des peines pour les autres (I, 357).

If we but see in euhemerism the natural forbear of the "double doctrine" technique, so much favoured by Deslandes and his fellows of the "philosophic" tradition, the point of that insinuation will not escape us. Again, in the third volume, we note how he reinforces the point by showing, in true Bayllan style, that an intelligent man, whilst rejecting the notion of the immortality of the soul and the hope of rewards and punishments in the Hereafter, was quite capable of leading a virtuous life:

> Pline croyoit outre celà que l'homme meurt tout entier, & qu'il n'y a après cette vie, ni châtimens à craindre, ni récompenses à espérer. Une pareille doctrine pousse ordinairement au libertinage. Mais je ne le dissimulerai point: Pline étoit irréprochable du côté des moeurs...(pp. 62-63).

Furthermore, whilst, in the same volume, he declares that the soul is immaterial, he does not fail to make it clear that some early Fathers of the Church did not need to consider it so (p. 166); and, in the fourth volume, the opinions of Donat of Verona on this question of the immateriality and immortality of the soul are passed on to the reader, accompanied by some significant reasons: "...il ajoute qu'un Philosophe persuadé

que l'ame périt avec le corps, ne doit pourtant point l'avoüer en public à cause des conséquences dangereuses, & qu'il doit plutôt tromper le monde qui n'est fait que pour être trompé, que de chercher à l'éclairer..."(p. 112). A few pages later we are treated to one of the most memorable passages in the whole critical history. What does our author insinuate? He suggests first that Aristotle believed in the ancient theory that matter is intrinsically animated and that there is no need to speak of a spiritual substance; that there is no Aristotelean notion of immortality, because participation in the universal force "qui comme un flambeau éclaire tout ce qui vit" (v. the theory of the âme ignée in Spink, Libertinage et 'Spinozisme'", Fr. Stud., July, 1947, pp. 218-231) excludes personal survival. Moreover, although we are informed that the notion of immortality and spirituality depends on religion (since it cannot be demonstrated rationally), it is pointed out that peoples who do not have the benefit of "religion" meet death courageously and even joyfully.

In these pages the private views of the historian are thinly veiled; and we retain the idea that the philosopher, although rationally unconvinced, must pretend to believe in the immateriality and immortality of the soul; and yet that such a belief is not really necessary to facing death in the way our author himself recommended in the Réflexions. His position in 1756 is the height of free-thinking. Who tells us so? Deslandes himself makes the point a few pages before the passages quoted above: "Sous le Pontificat de Leon X la liberté de philosopher fut poussée à l'extrême. Les uns nioient l'immortalité de l'ame, ou disoient du moins qu'on ne pouvoit la prouver par les lumieres naturelles" (IV, 101).

Thus far we have seen that, having realized the potential advantages of the Baylian device of "internal" contradiction, Deslandes makes use of it to qualify his apparent acceptance of certain Christian doctrines; for, finding contrary opinions about identical topics within the covers of one book,

the watchful reader discovers that superficial orthodoxy is virtually cancelled out. Let us now consider two crucial problems that are dealt with in a special manner by both Bayle and Deslandes: the origin of evil, and the question of grace. In the first case, we have to do with a heretical explanation of the origin and prevalence of evil; and we shall see that the proceedure here is to place beside the orthodox doctrine (secretly considered invalid) a rationally convincing answer to the problem. The second topic could not have been treated more differently. On the question of grace, both authors, not content with restraining their critical inclinations, actually insist that this doctrine is the key factor in Christianity.

Consider first, then, how our two writers deal with the Manichean heresy, the topicality of which in the case of the author of the Histoire critique is revealed by the fact that Beausobre's considerable study was published between 1734 and 1739. Of course, all three ~~writers~~ are at pains to make it clear that they do not intend to promote the Manicheist doctrine: in note D of the article Manichéens, Bayle declares that, on a priori grounds, the Manichean explanation of evil is absurd, since it conflicts with our clear notion of a self-existent Being, who is necessary and eternal and therefore unique; in his Discours préliminaire, Beausobre is careful to deny allegiance to Bayle, whom he accuses of favouring the unorthodox cause, and to inform his reader that he is above all interested in producing an impartial survey of the subject he has undertaken; in the first volume of the critical history,[15] Deslandes begins by stating that faith alone can explain the problem of evil and ends a lengthy exposition (which, like his expositions of Spinozism, is thus sandwiched between protestations of conformity, and which, for that reason, does not deceive us) with these words:

> J'ai fait tout ce détail d'autant plus volontiers, que j'ai eu lieu d'excuser les Philosophes barbares, dont les pensées, comme dit Saint Hilaire, étoient incapables de comprendre les oeuvres de Dieu...Sans insulter à leur égarement, sans nous en

orgueillir mal à propos contre leurs erreurs, rendons seulement graces à la bonté divine qui nous a si bien convaincus que l'homme étoit né pour vivre heureux; mais que son orgueil, source de tous ses maux, l'a fait déchoir de ce premier état... Beni soyez vous, ô mon Dieu, qui nous avez révélé cette importante vérité...(p. 276).

Despite these concessions to prudence, it is an undeniable fact that all three authors contributed to eighteenth-century knowledge of, and interest in Manicheism. But, whereas there is little similarity between the highly detailed treatment accorded to the subject by Beausobre and the less scholarly and more generalized method of Deslandes, we shall see that the parallels between Deslandes and Bayle are striking indeed.

We turn, therefore, to the Dictionnaire critique, in which the article Manichéens, devoted principally to the more modern sect, takes into account the older doctrine of the "Two Principles", which indeed concerns us more than the other in this study. It is particularly in note C that we learn of the ancient expressions of this dualistic view. Deriving much information from Plutarch, who himself was attracted to the opinion, Bayle tells us that it came from Pythagoras and that the Persians taught it before the Egyptians. But he does not agree wholeheartedly with Plutarch, who was apparently anxious to demonstrate the quasi-universality of the doctrine. The Greeks and the Romans, argues Bayle, do not seem to have accepted the notion so unanimously as Plutarch would have us believe. True, there was Vejovis ("not-Jove") and Diespiter ("good Jupiter"); but it was the latter who sent down thunder-bolts and Jupiter himself was often regarded as the source of good and evil. Indeed, some poets (and particularly Homer) depict the Almighty of ancient times as dispensing them from an urn (Iliad, tr. Pope. ed. 1857, Bk. XXIV, ll. 663-672). Bayle does agree, however, that in certain parts of the Orient the doctrine still holds sway.

It is however when we reach note D that we come to the core of the analysis. Bayle begins, prudently enough, by admitting (as we have seen) that, transcendentally speaking,

Manicheism is "absurd". Approached, however, from a posteriori positions, it is much more attractive and more difficult to refute; for, from experience, we know that there is a dualism about life, and the opposites of cold and heat, light and darkness offer themselves as evidence in support of the doctrine of "Two Principles". There are even more important factors that experience brings to bear on the matter. Assuming an omnipotent and benevolent Deity, how do we explain the manifold miseries of the human race? What have we to say about prisons, gibbets, poverty and the like? History, asserts Bayle, "n'est à proprement parler qu'un recueil des crimes, et des infortunes du genre humain". By this time, having presented the problems arising from experience, Bayle feels that he has gone far enough. It is therefore at this juncture that he passes the argument to Molissus and Zoroaster, in order that the latter may be able to give the heretical opinion on such delicate questions as the use man is expected to make of the divine gift of free-will, and man's misuse of that gift (producing miseries just listed) viewed beside his relationship to an omniscient God ("Dieu a-t-il prévu que l'homme se servirait mal de son franc arbitre?"). The arguments of Zoroaster are so convincing that, again for the sake of prudence, Bayle draws his discussion to a close with the remark that, if a thousand dirficulties were to be put forward, the partisans of the doctrine of "Two Principles" would furnish replies to each one. The only "sound" reply, therefore, is to appeal to Revelation: that is the only way we can be sure, as Christians, of not being worsted in argument with these heretics.

How damaging is all this for Christianity that would satisfy common-sense! In order, therefore, to cater for those of little faith, he prints at the end of the second and subsequent editions of the dictionary an Eclaircissement sur les Manichéens (ed. 1820, XV, pp. 279-309), in which he professes to refute the errors of this sect. Once again, however, the refutation does not carry conviction. Of course, he

points out that to suppose that evil is an eternal principle is to admit its necessity and therefore to discourage the pursuit of virtue; that order is best served by postulating a single principle; that without good reason we must not "multiply" principles. Yet, with all this, he is obliged to apologize for having omitted to refute all the objections which he has listed as made by Manicheans against the orthodox view. To sum up then: consulting Bayle on the topic of the "Two Principles" and Manicheism, we are surely led to the conclusion that he is anxious not to confound them with compelling reasons, and that, despite his protestations that faith is the real arbiter in the dispute, he is secretly attracted to the Manicheist doctrine, because it faces the facts and seeks to explain them in a reasonable manner.

Deslandes's method is not dissimilar from that of Bayle, which indeed appears to have served as his model. As we have said, he first safeguards himself by stating that the orthodox doctrine alone is valid. Yet immediately he undertakes a convincing explication of the doctrine of "Two Principles" found in Pagan authors, whom he excuses on the grounds that they could not have known any better solution to the difficult problem of good and evil, and that it is their explanation which is most readily evolved by rational processes. To drive home this point, Deslandes re-states the tremendous perplexities presented by the obvious prevalence of evil in a world supposedly created by a benevolent Deity - particularly one that it ever uppermost in his mind after 1737: why do the innocent suffer and the wicked prosper? With clear intention, he stresses that the solution afforded by the doctrine of "Two Principles" was widely accepted in pagan times; and, like Bayle, he proceeds to list the miseries that man must endure on Earth. Indeed, this part of his exposition is submitted as an excuse for those pagans who, observing the unsuitability for habitation of much of the surface of the globe, the inclemency of so many climates, and (above all) the unforseeable and apparently unavoidable natural disasters,

were driven to the conclusion that they were ruled partly by a cruel and tyrannical power. Thus his apology for Manicheism, masquerading as a discussion of the pre-Christian doctrine, is even more openly enthusiastic than was Bayle's, and we cannot escape the strong feeling that he finds this explanation of good and evil more satisfying than the Christian. And, whilst in another place he dismisses the Manicheans (mentioned by name on this occasion) as "fanatics", he discloses the fact that he regards "error" as essential to the regulation of world (I, 172-173).

In broad outline and method, then, Deslandes's examination of the doctrine of "Two Principles" is very like that of Bayle in the article Manichéens. If, however, we make a more detailed comparison, the similarity goes far beyond even that, and we would ask the reader to consider if the following comparison of sequences does not in fact prove that Deslandes composed his chapter with notes C and D of Bayle's article before him:

Bayle (consecutively)	Deslandes (consecutively)
Note C	Universality of doctrine. Plutarch (I, 259)
C	Except in Greece and Rome. "Véjoves" (I, 262-263)
C	Poets. Homer and the "urns" (I, 266)
D	Intellectual difficulties: therefore need of Revelation (I, 266)
D	Miseries of man difficult to reconcile with God of justice & goodness (I, 267)
D	List of calamities &c (I, 267 sqq)
D	Final submission to Revelation, whilst admitting strength of unorthodox view (I, 276-277).

Our general conclusion must be that neither Bayle nor his disciple believed a word of the orthodox teachings regarding the Fall of Man and the Redemption. Consequently, we can state with some degree of certainty that our author was insincere when he had this to say about "l'origine du mal physique & du mal moral":

> C'est aussi la plus dure & la plus épineuse question qui se présente à l'esprit humain, celle dont il ne peut se tirer que par le moyen de la foi, qui lui apprend la chute volontaire du premier homme, d'où s'ensuivirent & sa perte & celle de toute sa postérité (I, 266).

This extract from the Histoire critique highlights the one significant difference between Bayle and Deslandes - a difference of degree rather than of opinion. In discussing the problem of good and evil, Bayle confines himself chiefly to moral evil, and his catalogue of human miseries is largely composed of evils that proceed from the heart of man. But Deslandes dwells much more on natural factors over which man can have -- little or no control: the climate, locusts, earthquakes, hurricanes and the like; and his discussion revolves very much around the two-fold problem of "l'origine du mal physique & du mal moral". It is a view closer to determinism and to pessimism, and also closer to that of Voltaire, who, in 1759, was to give a further demonstration of the Manicheist arguments in Candide with considerable stress upon earthquakes and other "acts of God".

We move on to our second special topic, the question of grace. In speaking of the influence of Malebranche upon the terminology of our historian, we noted that the latter spoke quite respectfully of "l'ordre de la grâce", using the second noun in a sense related to the doctrine of divine Providence - that is, to the care or intervention of God, -- manifested in acts or events. We now consider another meaning of the word "grace", the doctrine according to which salvation or the benefits involved in a disposition to yield obedience to divine laws are bestowed on man by the Almighty or the Redeemer. It is the one ecclesiastical dogma that our critical historian does not dispute or confuse with contradictory remarks of the kind that we have studied in this part of our thesis. This is intentional, for this doctrine was the one most disputed amongst Catholics, and moreover the one that is least amenable to justification on rational grounds. It is also one which clashes with natural notions of divine justice; and yet, if other dogmas are effectively weakened by contradiction or insinuation, this is the last orthodox foot-hold to which the reader is driven. Once there, the reader is told that he is on the bed-rock of

Christianity; and, if that rock be now discovered to be insecure, the whole orthodox position is placed in jeopardy. The trick is clever but not original: it has already been performed by Bayle:

> Voilà donc le dernier mot sur le fondement de la foi: la grâce. La grâce, le plus incompréhensible, le plus antirationnel de tous les dogmes; celui qui donne prise aux plus victorieux assauts de la raison et de la conscience, celui sur lequel les sectes chrétiennes se sont le plus divisées. C'est la révélation qui seule résout les difficultés inextricables de la grâce, et c'est la grâce qui seule fonde la certitude de la révélation. Voilà le système apologétique qu'en dernière analyse, Bayle, marchant dans les pas de l'orthodoxie réformée, offre aux chrétiens (Delvolvé, op. cit., p. 343).

Such is the significance of this submission to grace - a submission that is absolute and superficially convincing. For instance, we read in the Histoire critique (when the author is referring to theology):

> Une pareille Science tient nécessairement à la vraie Religion, à celle qui est révélée de Dieu, & elle ne peut subsister sans son secours immédiat. En effet, quelques efforts que nous fassions, un poids invincible nous ramene toujours vers la terre. Nous languissons tristement; & nos chaines, déja si pesantes par elles-mêmes, s'appesantissent encore chaque jour. Il faut une grace particuliere, une sagesse plus qu'humaine, pour nous élever vers les choses intellectuelles, vers cette Cité permanente où tout est lumière & clarté (II, 397).

Two pages further on, we find the word "Revelation" used in more or less the same sense as the word "grace": "...la Révélation n'est due à personne, & elle appartient seulement à ceux que Dieu en a voulu gratifier". Thus grace is necessary if we are to "see the light": revelation is given only to those whom God wishes to honour with his grace. We are in the Baylian impasse! And, incidentally, we are face to face with the doctrine of "special grace", which the English writer, Chubb, defines in the following way:

> By grace is here meant that power, which God is supposed secretly, imperceptibly, and supernaturally to communicate to man; which power is called special grace, in distinction from, and in opposition to, that power, and those favours vouchsafed to men, by the Deity, in and through the common and ordinary course of nature, thereby to enable men to perform their respective duties, and render themselves acceptable to their Maker, which otherwise, or without such special aid, they are not able, by their natural powers or inherent ability, to do and perform (Author's Farewell, in Post. Works, ed. 1748, I, 119).

Isolate from the Histoire critique the two passages we have quoted above, or search in vain for contradiction of

their validity or for restriction upon their sense, and the conclusion will naturally be that here at last is sincerity. But that is a hasty conclusion; for, like Bayle, Deslandes has left unopposed the most illogical and the most rationally indefensible of all Church doctrines, and he has done so to show its absurdity.

Other examples will show more clearly the point we are trying to make. Using almost identical terms, in two passages of the critical history Deslandes comes to conclusions different only in that the second is more enlightening than the first. In the first volume, Deslandes, having spoken of the moral rectitude and strict determinism of the Essenes, concludes thus:

> Cette conclusion en attire une autre plus générale, & qui n'est pas moins vraye. Ceux qui ont jusqu'ici outré les principes de la Morale, accréditant leurs discours par leurs actions, ont tous dégradé la liberté, & l'ont réduite à une espèce de servitude. Ceux au contraire dont les opinions se sont trouvées plus douces, plus accommodées aux différens besoins de la Société, ont tous favorisé l'homme, & relevé le pouvoir qu'il a de se déterminer. Ils ont même étendu ce pouvoir jusqu'à dire que les efforts naturels ne sont jamais sans quelque fruit, & dès-là sans quelque récompense. J'ai toujours trouvé dans ce contraste quelque chose qui m'a frappé (I, 202).

Thus we have the "contrast", but no solution or substantial comment. In the second passage, Deslandes, having told his reader about Stoic fatalism, concludes thus:

> Je ferai ici une remarque importante, & qui peut s'appliquer à toutes les Religions. Ceux qui outrent la Morale, & se parent d'une grande exactitude de conduite, dégradent insensiblement la Liberté, & exagérent la dépendance où la créature est de Dieu, dépendance qu'ils portent jusqu'à la servitude. Ceux au contraire qui ont des opinions plus douces & plus modérées, favorisent l'homme, & releve [sic] le pouvoir qu'il a de se déterminer. Ils étendent même trop un pouvoir si glorieux, persuadés que les efforts naturels ne sont jamais sans quelque fruit, & de-là, sans quelque récompense (II, 411-412).

Up to this point our author appears merely to have utilized in two different places some notes scribbled down by way of personal observation about religions in general. But, on the second occasion he does not let the matter rest there. He goes on to assert that we are all naturally Pelagian, in that we think that by our own efforts we can avoid error. From birth we assume that, if man is not to be accounted a slave, he must have within him the power to take the right path. That,

he appears to say, is the natural, instinctive view about free-will. In what position, then, is the man who has learned Christian dogma? Deslandes passes the whole matter over to the Church; and for a second time we find that there is more in a passage than Malebranchist terminology:

> Mais le langage de la Religion est bien différent. Elle nous enseigne que depuis le péché, tout l'homme s'est corrompu; que toutes ses perfections se sont affoiblies; que toutes ses pensées, tous ses désirs le portent au mal; enfin, qu'il tombe d'abîmes en abîmes sans pouvoir se relever. Qui lui présentera une main prompte & secourable? Dieu, & encore Dieu seul. C'est-là tout le Christianisme: c'est-là l'unique dénouement des mystères de la Grace & de la Nature (II, 412).

"C'est-là tout le Christianisme..." - thus he implies that the whole Christian position proceeds from original sin to grace, upon which depends, therefore, the solution to moral problems. He does not finish even now. The pagans, he continues, were restricted to the use of reason, and logically should therefore have been Pelagian, as we all are by nature. For the Stoics to adopt a doctrine similar to that of some Catholics was to fly in the face of human nature, for the Christian doctrine is neither rational nor natural, since it depends upon Revelation. Thus the Christians are obliged to admit the doctrine of grace; for, once original sin is accepted, God alone can extricate man from the tangle in which he finds himself. And since (we repeat) this is the whole of Christianity, Christians should be in agreement about it. Is there, however, general consent? Not at all. True the Jesuits of Louis-le-Grand were almost Pelagian; but what about Arminius and Calvin and Jansenius? What about the longstanding religious warfare in France on this very issue of grace? What about Quesnel and the Unigenitus? If, therefore, we claim that Christianity rests upon Revelation, and Revelation is a question of grace, why cannot the theologicans agree about a matter of central importance? Surely, we must conclude, here is absurdity.

Once more, then, Deslandes has copied the methods of Bayle, and, on this occasion, has driven the Christians to the most vulnerable position of all. As we said, the trick had already

been performed many times by the precursor:

Dans un acte de foi, le chrétien n'a nul égard aux lumières de la nature; il ne se fonde que sur la véracité de Dieu, et comment est-il sûr de la véracité de Dieu? Comment est-il sûr que Dieu lui parle? Parce que Dieu lui-même lui fait la grâce de l'en rendre certain. La raison, l'évidence, en dépit des assurances de Bayle, est bannie du fondement comme du contenu de la foi. La foi, "c'est un voile épais et impénétrable à toutes les injures de l'air, c'est-à-dire à tous les assauts de la raison naturelle". Bayle en enveloppe le chrétien, l'en bâillonne: il croit! il a la foi! il a la grâce! mais qu'il ne cherche pas à faire entendre un seul mot pour démontrer sa foi! qu'il demeure dans la nuit et le silence! (Delvolvé, op. cit., p. 343).

There is very little in the above that could not equally be said of the author of the passages from the Histoire critique we have quoted in this part of our study. We can almost hear the two authors exclaiming with glee: "Force them back to Revelation and to grace! Show them that the linch-pin of their religion is rationally insecure! Then sit back and reflect that there is no need to contradict them: they are busy enough contradicting each other on a matter that does not stand up to rational scrutiny!"

c) God and Isaac Newton

By this time we have discovered that much of the Christian belief has been secretly rejected by the author of the Histoire critique: indeed, we are in danger of concluding that one who doubted the validity of miracles, the Fall of Man, the immateriality and immortality of the soul, the doctrine of special grace etc. was in fact little more than an atheist. It remains therefore to study his attitude towards the Deity and attempt to discern the extent of his sincerity in that connection. It is already perceptible, however, that the view of Deslandes on many important matters resembles that of "radical" Unitarians, who are in fact not unlike some deists, since they hold that Christ was merely a holy man of great genius, that the Bible is a work of singular merit but nothing else, that miracles were the results of natural causes not

properly understood, that accounts of miracles are largely mythical and legendary, that it is to education and gradual enlightenment rather than to Atonement that we must look for "salvation". Nor in some respects is it different from the Socinian opinion that rejects special grace, that regards the Holy Spirit as manifested in energy, and the authority of Scripture as subordinate to the authority of reason. Particularly the tendencies we have indicated here invite us to investigate our author's attitude to the Trinity and some English influences that may account for it.

We begin by reading over some pages (154-160) in the third volume of our history of philosophy. Already Deslandes has insinuated that the "miraculous" in Christianity led to strife and confusion (III, 126) and perhaps prevented pagans from divesting themselves of theurgic nonsense (ibid, 115). Now, in these pages, our historian draws attention to a way in which Christianity lost its essential moral simplicity; for he shows how Neoplatonism introduced into that religion allegory and metaphysical jargon for the persuasion of intellectual pagans (cf. II, 242). Selecting an advantageous firing-point, he concentrates his attack upon the doctrine of the Trinity, insinuating that it gave an entirely new complexion to the original Christian message. Influenced at long range by Orphics, Pythagoreans and Platonists, Plotinus and Origen superimposed a mystical metaphysic, in which Christ, from being a sound moralist, became henceforth associated with notions of the "Second God" and "le monde intelligible". For, just as angels themselves were derived from Platonic sources, so Christ was now regarded as the "Word" - a sort of highly superior intermediary or angel.[16]

So much then for the origins of the Trinity as far as Christianity is concerned. But there were other manifestations of the same notion; and in the second volume our author has already referred to the Chinese doctrine of Li-Lao Kiun, and here we may discern some indirect criticism. On p. 234 he calls the notion "sublime" and "impénétrable à l'esprit humain". What

do these adjectives usually imply in the Histoire critique? It will be remembered that, when he discusses the Malebranchist "vision in God", this word "sublime" is almost synonymous with "inutile"; and that, in another passage, a Pythagorean doctrine that is "beyond human understanding" is likewise represented as "useless" (II, 358 and 69-70). Surely this helps to explain our historian's secret view of the dogma; for we have seen that it is often only by making this distant comparison that we can discover his true opinions. Indeed, he proceeds, as Voltaire so often does, to show that there is obscurity in, and disagreement about various notions considered by some to anticipate the Trinity of Christian theology - whether such notions be located in early books of the Old Testament, in Philo or in the Platonists; and, before insinuating that secretly Plato believed in a single God, he suggests that the triple person arises from conceptions of divine goodness, wisdom and power. Moreover, since these attributes are those of God Himself, he points the uselessness of the doctrine of the Trinity, because "Ces trois perfections épuisent tout l'idée de Dieu, par rapport à la création" (II, 237). He adds: "Et c'est dans cette triple connoissance que Galien faisoit consister le véritable culte, que Dieu exige de nous: Culte de raison, disoit-il, & qui est plus propre à l'honorer que la graisse des animaux ou la fumée de l'encens" (II, 238). Thus, cautiously representing the doctrine as involved and obscure, he leads us to a position which is Unitarian and deistic. For Deslandes sees no reason why Christians should subscribe to the doctrine or be burdened with the "nous" of Plotinus or the "logos" of Saint John. Once more, we observe, he judges ethically and pragmatically. Christianity is to be accorded a high place in the history of ethics - a distinction due to the initiator of a much-needed revolution;[17] but the divinity of Christ appears to have been deduced from premises not inherent in the facts and betraying the zealous efforts of Neoplatonist apologists.

Does he sometimes appear to capitulate in the face of

possible persecution? Of course he does; yet he hopes that the alert reader will not be deceived into thinking that these are genuine recantations. Moreover he tells us something about the "apostolic bow", and, as it were, apologizes for a somewhat "two-faced" treatment of his theme. In a sentence, located amid the pages from the third volume devoted to the doctrine of the Trinity, our critical historian explains: "Quand on traite avec le Public, on doit conformer son langage aux hypothèses reçuës, & ce langage ne paroîtra jamais une chose indifférente pour le succès" (III, 159).

We have already suggested that Deslandes's attitude to the doctrine we have just discussed may well be the consequence of English influences. For example, Dr. Samuel Clarke, whose effects upon aspects of our author's thought we suspected a short time ago, was often in trouble because of his Arianism. He was also the friend and mouth-piece of Newton; and, in view of this fact, we recall the remark of Pérelle (reported at the beginning of our chapter on natural science) regarding the English mathematician's private opinions: "He believe [sic] that J-C was a man, not God's son, who hath given us a very good Morale...". Now, as we suspect that the private views of the author of the Histoire critique were somewhat similar, it is fitting that we should investigate the influence of Newton's religious beliefs upon Deslandes.

The crucial factor in such a study is certainly the latter's conception of the Deity, to which we must now return and examine in greater detail. The existence of God he finds proved by two arguments only: the "argument from design" and the cosmological argument.[18] As we said before, nowhere does he openly favour ontological proofs or the argument from eternal truths. True, on one occasion (IV, 34-35), he mentions "metaphysical" proofs and the "argument from design"; but immediately he ignores the former in favour of the latter. And, on many occasions, he advances physico-theological proofs in the Histoire critique (e.g., I, 82, 111, 289). So far,

then, he behaves as we should expect him to behave. Already he has staked his claim as a Newtonian scientist, and, if they acknowledge any divinity at all, scientists are apt to see the hand of God in the arrangement of the Universe and in the wonders of Nature. It is true, of course, that Deslandes slips into the Discours at the head of his fourth volume a sly suggestion from Cicero that, amongst the enlightened élite, it is possible to sustain in debate the non-existence of God (IV, 37-38), but, since, immediately before this quotation, he has been at pains to show that this kind of intellectual atheism leads the philosopher into an issueless labyrinth of objections, we may suppose that he does not find this esoteric godlessness satisfying, principally as he himself adheres to the cosmological argument regarding the necessity of postulating a "Cause des causes" (I, 287). The existence of a Deity is therefore established as a general principle.

But what sort of God does he admit? It is upon this matter that we find a dualism in the Histoire critique. In the first place, there are many instances of his according to the Deity attributes generally acknowledged by orthodox Christians. To the atheist, Melissus, he protests that God is generous and bountiful (II, 313); to the notion of a divine tyrant or severe judge he opposes the notion that God is an infinitely benevolent Father and beneficent King (IV, Avert.); to the materialist, Strato, he declares that God is free from ends outside Himself (II, 297-298). This, then, is the "surface" doctrine: God exists, and is good, benevolent and free. This view implies distaste for the Old Testament portrayal of a God of vengeance and for representations of a Deity possessing human passions and limitations (III, 51; II, 303-304). Thus, whilst Deslandes ostensibly admits that kind of anthropomorphism which endows God with human virtues, he professes to reject the kind which attributes to the Divinity human vices. Inconsistent as this may appear, it is in fact the belief of many Christians, and will therefore serve very well as an expression of superficial orthodoxy; and, in any case,

his own concealed apology for the doctrine of "Two Principles" supplies an alternative explanation of the existence of evil in the world. If Christians prefer to talk of the Fall of Man, the Serpent in the Garden, the machinations of Satan, they are at liberty to do so. For, after all, if the majority are satisfied to credit God with virtues very like their own and yet deny Him vices and defects like their own, they are justified in accepting ecclesiastical solutions regarding the origin of evil.

But, in fact, the enlightened minority does not envisage either a God of wrath or a God of love. Listen how Deslandes insidiously contrasts the "Jupiter of the People" with the "Jupiter of the Philosophers":

> Sénéque fait connoître agréablement que le Jupiter du Peuple est celui qui est armé de la foudre, & dont on voit la statue au milieu du Capitole; mais que le véritable Jupiter, celui des Philosophes, est un Etre invisible, l'Ame & l'Esprit universel, le Maître & le Conservateur de toutes choses, la Cause des causes, dont la Nature emprunte sa force, & pour ainsi dire, sa vie (I, 287-288).

Thus, against an anthropomorphic Deity (unlike the Christian only in the fact that he is a God of wrath like Jawe) Deslandes (by the device of quotation) sets an invisible force, conserving, causing all things, and vitalizing Nature.[19] He does so (we believe) because it suits his purposes to do so. We observe that this God is not possessed of human qualities or defects, but is a Supreme Being - the Divinity of the deists. Consistent with this view of the Deity, then, is our author's rejection of the atheistic hylozoism of Thomas Hobbes (IV, 145) and of this doctrine in general (IV, 36). For, though deism may regard superstition as a greater enemy than atheism, it still does not condone the latter.

There is another, and more important conclusion to be drawn from this extract from the first volume that we have just read. Surely it reminds us forcibly of another passage - the one for which our author appears to have been censured. For it is in the description of Newton's dinner-party that Deslandes comes closest to revealing his sympathies for the cult of the Supreme Being and for a kind of cosmopolitan deism:

...Monsieur Newton plus judicieux me porta la santé de tous les honnêtes gens, de quelque pays qu'ils fussent. "Nous sommes tous amis, m'ajouta-t-il, parce que nous tendons unanimement au seul but digne de l'homme, qui est la connoissance de la vérité: nous sommes encore tous de la même Religion, parce que menant une vie simple, & nous conformant aux bienséances, nous tâchons sincérement de rendre à l'Etre suprême le culte que nos foibles lumières nous persuadent lui devoir plaire davantage." Les témoins de ce discours furent Mr. Halley, Mr. de Moivre & Mr. C..... tous Mathématiciens du premier ordre (II, 264-265).

In proposing the toast in question, Newton was undoubtedly aware that he was addressing the enlightened minority - men like Halley, De Moivre and Mr. C.....[20] - and it was to this select gathering that he disclosed his thoughts on natural religion. In fact, Deslandes is here suggesting that the great Newton was little more than a deist, who believed that English and French scientists alike, Anglicans and Protestant refugees on the one hand and Catholics on the other, were of the same religion, because by simple living and observation of moral proprieties, they all subscribed to the rational worship of the God of the deists.

We remember with interest at this point that, in order to safeguard his escape-route, Deslandes made remarks later in the same volume which can be regarded as a corrective to the bad impression such sentiments would probably make in ecclesiastical circles in France. This time he put a different construction on the meaning of the word "religion", as professed by men of good will. The Stoics averred that there is a "correspondence" between men of learning: "tous les Sages se soutiennent & s'étayent les uns les autres". Yet these same Stoics "la poussent même jusqu'à dire que, si un Sage ressent quelque plaisir, tous les autres Sages y participent..." (II, 407). Our critic then comments:

Je consentirois volontiers...s'ils s'étoient contentés de dire que tous les gens de bien sont amis, parce que la vertu leur sert de premier mobile; que tous les gens de bien s'estiment, parce qu'il y a de l'impossibilité que ce qui est conforme à la droite raison ne soit estimé, aussitôt qu'il est connu; encore, que tous les gens de bien sont de la même Religion, quoiqu'ils paroissent de différens sentimens, parce qu'ils sont tous dévoués à la vérité, & ne demandent qu'à la connoître pour la suivre sincerement (II, 407).

Now, roughly speaking, this is an inversion of what he reported

from Newton's speech. Then, friendship was associated with the quest of truth. Now, it is related to a common motive force, virtue. Then, religion was equated to simple living. Now, it is made synonymous with the quest of truth, and consequently is to be understood in a much less formal sense. In other words, the writer removes the discussion from the ground of religion to that of science and philosophy, and the reference to "la droite raison" helps to provide the nuance of meaning he desires to impart. But, knowing Deslandes's habit of covering his tracks, we shall not be mislead by the safety-clause intended for the censor. Indeed, it is highly probable that Newton said what he is reported to have said--- (if not a great deal more in like vein), and that the meaning of the remarks is exactly what it appears to be.

Certainly these opinions gave offence.[21] It was soon guessed who was the author of the Histoire critique; and the Bibliothèque raisonnée (clearly anxious to excuse Deslandes, who, on this evidence, might well be suspected of sympathy with Le Courayer or the Protestants) draws attention to the later comment as being an elucidation of the real sense of the earlier one: "Elle servira de correctif, ou au moins d'explication au compliment que cet Historien Critique a mis ci-dessus dans la bouche de l'illustre Chevalier Newton, & dont quelques personnes ont été choqués" (XXI (Oct. Dec. 1738), pp. 413-414). And, having cited the extenuating paragraph, the journalist adds:

> On voit là, ce me semble, assez clairement ce qu'il faut entendre par cette unité de Religion, que l'Auteur conçoit entre les Sages qui professent des Religions différentes. Surement sa pensée n'est pas, qu'aux yeux des gens de bien, tous les Cultes doivent paroître également assortis à la majesté du Dieu qu'on adore, & aux règles de l'obéissance qui lui est dûe (ibid, p. 414).

Either the journalist in question is eager to "pour oil on troubled waters", or he refuses to regard Newton as having beliefs different from those conventionally attributed to him: "Il faudroit d'ailleurs qu'il eût bien mal connu le grand & pieux Newton, pour lui prêter ces sentimens d'indifférence & d'hypocrisie, que sa conduite, toujours digne d'un vrai Chré-

tien Réformé [he writes from Amsterdam], démentit toujours hautement" (ibid). Thus the writer does not appear to acknowledge that Newton's public utterances and public behaviour on the one hand, and his private opinions on the other, could be different, or that, if that were so, it would certainly not be regarded as "hypocrisy" amongst the intelligent élite of Europe.

Similarly, in the following century, Villemain is indignantly opposed to Voltaire for having attributed unorthodox views to Newton.[22] From the Eléments de la philosophie de Newton he prints this sentence: "...plusieurs personnes qui ont beaucoup vécu avec Locke m'ont assuré que Newton avait avoué à Locke — que nous n'avons pas assez de connaissance de la nature pour oser prononcer qu'il soit impossible à Dieu d'ajouter le don de la pensée à un être étendu quelconque (Tableau de la Litt. au XVIIIe s., ed. 1859, II, 95-96; Volt., Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XXII, 422); and, disregarding the possibility of Locke and Newton holding opinions that they had the good sense to keep very much to themselves, Villemain protests: "Mais cette prétendue confidence de Newton à Locke n'est-elle pas démentie par tous les ouvrages du premier...Quoi! Newton, presque mystique, n'aurait pas même été spiritualiste?" (II, 96). This is absurdly naïve on the part of the nineteenth-century critic. Newton may indeed have appeared, in some of his published works, "le plus religieux des philosophes" (II, 96), but there is no reason to believe that either he or the "staunch Anglican", Locke, exchanged orthodox opinions behind closed doors. For we cannot ignore the fact that both Deslandes and Voltaire, who had come into contact either with Newton or with his closest associates, portray a person very different from the "Newton, presque mystique" of Villemain's protest. It is from Dr. Clarke, for instance, that Voltaire claims to have drawn information about Newton's religious views and opinions on metaphysical issues. What exactly does Voltaire claim to have learned? That Newton was devoted to Gassendism and atomism in general, particularly in considering problems of God's rela-

tionship to space and time; that he was a most convinced follower of natural religion and "les principes de Morale communs au genre humain". Three more important items of information are to be found in the parts of the Elémens added after 1741 - concerning God, the World, and man. What is God? He is the Creator, Master, Supreme Artisan and Conserver of life, whose attributes are eternity, infinitude, omnipotence and therefore freedom.. That is as far as Newton would go. There is nothing anthropomorphic about Newton's God, who is little more than a supreme and incomprehensible symbol, constituting space and time, but not perhaps synonymous with them. What, then, of the World and of matter? The World is finite; and its vital force, exemplified in attraction, proceeds from the Divinity, yet loses something all the time. The Universe consists of indifferent matter, and there are atoms and a void. Beyond this we know nothing. And what, finally, did Newton think about man? He regards man as free, but cannot explain how man's free-will accords with divine liberty. He regards human definitions of good and evil as betraying human limitations; and he considers that the good of the whole system is what matters to the Deity. Though man has no innate ideas, he is none the less possessed of senses, which provide him with common notions of natural law. The union of soul and body Newton considers to be an incomprehensible mystery. There is nothing in this report to suggest that Newton was a devout Anglican (an "omission" ~~a fact~~ which Villemain underlines with disgust); and there is a good deal to suggest (as Voltaire states) that Newton was a deist with distinct Epicurean leanings.

Another piece of evidence is supplied by the writings of Maupertuis; for he too came to England and mixed freely and deliberately with Newtonians (1727). On his return to France, he composed and published in 1732 the Discours sur la figure des astres, to which Deslandes refers in 1750 (Rec. de diff. tr., p. xxvii) with the remark: "Jamais on n'a dit tant de choses excellentes & en si peu de paroles...". Amongst these "ex-

cellent things" we find the suggestion that it is metaphysically possible that there should be more primordial properties of matter than have hitherto been recognized, and that one of these could easily be the force of attraction, which could therefore be regarded as inherent in Nature. Of course, Maupertuis does not exclude God from his "Discours métaphysique sur l'attraction" (Ch. II of the work), but he does insinuate that God's rôle is perhaps limited to establishing the law upon which attraction works, and that the action of the Deity is unnecessary to the motion of bodies at any particular moment. This is because bodies have perhaps "une force impulsive", and can therefore move each other at a distance as well as by contact. This argument is so close to hylozoism that it must surely have encouraged bolder speculators to suppose that, if we do not know the inherent properties of matter, we cannot absolutely deny that matter may also be capable of the power of thought. One such bold speculator was Deslandes who, in the Dédicace to Pigmalion was to ask:

> Qu'est-ce que la Matière? En quoi consiste son essence? Avouons-le de bonne foi: nous n'en sçavons rien. Un voile obscur couvre nos yeux, & les couvrira, selon les apparences, longtems. Il est vrai que nous connoissons quelques proprietés de la Matière; mais ces proprietés sont-elles les seules qui lui appartiennent? N'y en a-t-il point d'autres, & même d'un rang supérieur?
>
> Déjà quelques Philosophes tombent d'accord que l'impénétrabilité, que la pesanteur ou la tendance vers un centre, ne sont point essentielles à la Matière: témoin le Feu, & peut-être l'Air. Qu'est-ce donc qui lui est essentiel? Encore une fois, Madame, nous n'en sçavons rien; & le peu qui nous est connu, le peu qu'apperçoivent nos foibles regards, n'exclud point la Pensée (ed. 1742, pp. viii-xii).

Clearly Deslandes (in an esoteric passage) has gone much further than Maupertuis, whose suggestions regarding the inconclusive nature of our knowledge of matter have here been carried to an extreme, and whose speculations about an inherent impulsive force have been extended to embrace thought. In these phrases, then, we suspect the converging of Newtonian and Spinozist lines of argument, for we are brought near to the notion of "single substance".

It is legitimate to wonder if indeed any great effort was needed to reconcile the two; and, with this in mind, we turn to a modern writer. In a very full chapter of his book,

La Philosophie de Newton (ed. 1908), Léon Bloch speaks about "Les Idées métaphysiques de Newton" (Ch. IX). He shows that Newton conceived a substance (ether) which "penetrated" bodies, and which Bloch calls an "esprit très subtil qui pénètre à travers tous les corps solides..." (p. 497). This, the medium by which attraction is exerted, is crucial to Newton's explanation of the nature of things. Now, it is of the greatest significance that the twentieth-century writer sees in this notion something akin to pantheism:

> Comme on le voit, Newton est très près d'un transformisme physico-biologique, où l'éther, considéré comme agent universel, jouerait le rôle principal. Cet éther ou esprit devient par là même une réalité plus substantielle que toutes les autres, et il suffira qu'on efface la nuance qui sépare cet esprit universel d'un esprit pensant, pour qu'on ouvre la porte à un panthéisme unissant la physique et la métaphysique (p. 498)

Thus in Newton's thought there was an idea that bordered on transformism, and there was much that would easily harmonize with Spinozism. These things we shall remember when we come to study Pigmalion in detail.

Bloch then proceeds to demonstrate how the notion of an intelligent Creator comes into Newton's system, since such a postulate is essential to account for the stability of the Universe and for the continuity of its energy. This is of concern to the student of Dealandes, since the idea is to be found in the Histoire critique:

> Qu'on répéte enfin d'après quelques Philosophes Anglois, disciples de l'illustre Mr. Newton, que Dieu a besoin de tems en tems de porter la main à ses ouvrages pour les empêcher de se decomposer; à combien de reproches ne sera-t-on point sujet, si l'on n'explique d'après les mêmes Philosophes ce que c'est que l'inertie des corps, la tendance qu'ils ont au repos, tendance qui les porteroit tous à s'arrêter enfin, si Dieu ne réveilloit la Nature par des mouvemens propres & successifs, qui marquent évidemment que toute action consiste à donner sans cesse une nouvelle force aux choses, qu'elle veut entretenir & conserver! (II, 41-42).

It is not a very far cry from this theory to the bolder view that we find later in La Fortune, where irregularity is an essential feature of the great machine and in fact the principle and internal motive-force of its movement (ed. 1751, pp. 178-179). It is merely a question of divine intervention or non-intervention; and in view of remarks of critics more astute than Villemain, it would appear credible that the

the Newton who flirted with pantheism was as much the inspiration of the 1751 passage as of that of 1737. Did in fact Newton consider that God's hand was necessary to the conservation of energy? We consult once more the Elémente de la philosophie de Newton. There Voltaire presents the English mathematician's view of the problem in this way. Motion is certainly lost, just as it is produced in the Universe; and more motion is lost than produced. Different methods of estimating the forces involved have therefore been suggested by men like Leibnitz and Gravesande, and Europe ~~became~~ is divided on this issue. But (Voltaire concludes) "Il faut que tout le monde convienne, que l'effet est toujours proportionnel à la cause; or, s'il périt du mouvement dans l'univers, donc la force qui en est cause périt aussi. Voilà ce que pensait Newton sur la plupart des questions qui tiennent à la métaphysique: c'est à vous à juger entre lui et Leibnitz" (Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XXII, 437).

As we have seen from the second volume of the critical history, Deslandes apparently judges in favour of Newton, since it is his solution that he puts forward. Newton, who could not forsee what Mohr was to state in 1837 (that every gain or loss in one form of energy corresponds to gain or loss in some other form of energy) was obviously on dangerous ground in asserting the loss of energy, that suggested a running-down of the Cause. Indeed, as a modern writer says: "In Newtonian physics...the material world is regarded as an order closed in itself...", and for that reason "it was evidently harder for the Newtonian man to escape from this closed order...and to reach out to God who stands outside it, than it was for St. Thomas to lead up to God through the open order of Aristotelean physics..." (Whittaker, Space and Spirit, 1946, pp. 85-86). Newton was aware of this, and therefore hesitated publically to pursue his theories on this matter to logical conclusions. He therefore fell back on a metaphysical solution (Bloch. op. cit. p. 506), asserting that it was God who corrected the apparent loss of energy. But did he really and privately need to bring God into the affair? Did he not rather

incline to the view that the Deity who "durationem et spatium constituit" was involved in Nature, and that this same Nature, who (even in Deslandes's exposition) "veut entretenir & conserver", was capable of redressing the balance herself? Once more it is pantheism that appears to be the neatest solution to the problem.

We wonder, in consequence, whether the "agnosticism" that Bloch finds in Newton's religious views (op. cit., p. 518), did not go further than many people imagine. Time and again Bloch, with a more or less traditional view of Newton, returns to the theme: "A vrai dire, il est fort difficile, même avec les explications que fournit Newton, de décider s'il échappe complètement au panthéisme, ou s'il n'admet pas, malgré ses réserves, une doctrine très voisine du panthéisme" (p. 510). Again, four pages later we read: " Maintenant comment prétendre que Dieu reste un tout en participant à l'essence de toutes choses? Newton se heurte ici, malgré ses efforts, au même obstacle que les panthéistes, dont il se rapproche à son insu". Was it, however, completely the unforseen consequence of a difficult struggle? Was Newton so incapable of extricating himself, or even of realizing that he was caught up in the pantheist net? Surely one who was so attached to Gassendism could view Spinozism with some regard? Yet, after suggesting such intriguing possibilities, Bloch comes to the "orthodox" conclusion: "Ce Dieu-destin, ce Dieu-nature, qui répugne si fort à l'esprit orthodoxe de Newton, sera du goût d'un grand nombre de philosophes du XVIIIe siècle" (p. 520).

We have stressed the possibilities of Newtonian esoteric thought, because they constitute an effective link between the Histoire critique and the contes philosophiques that we must examine next. However, before we end our present chapter we shall bear in mind this "Dieu-destin" and "Dieu-nature" which we shall find to have the taste of Deslandes's ~~taste~~ amongst the "grand nombre de philosophes du XVIIIe siècle". In 1737, like Newton, Deslandes rejects atheism, because he prefers to discover God everywhere rather than no-where. Beyond this universal force,

working (we suspect) in Nature rather than upon it, it is very doubtful if Deslandes had any religious beliefs.[23] In fact, when we consider that he went out of his way in 1737 to display a sort of international deism that he had heard about in London, we may wonder if he was not already in secret one of those followers df Spinoza, who - to use Deslandes's own words - "se prêtent à l'extérieur de toutes les Religions sans en embrasser aucune..." (H.c., I, 178). One thing is quite certain, by 1741 (if Bloch will lend us the expression) our author will certainly have "obliterated the nuance separating universal spirit from thinking spirit" and plunged into pantheism.

PART V NOTES

1. Partly in support of this we find in the pages of the H.c. alone 89 refs. to Cicero, 39 to Plato, 21 to Pliny the naturalist, 65 to Plutarch, 39 to Seneca. He is well read in ecclesiastical history too: there are 21 refs. to Clement of Alexandria, 22 to Eusebius, & 17 to Tertullian.

2. v. Pellissier, Volt. phil., p. 175: "Qu'il s'agisse du libre arbitre, de l'âme, ou de Dieu rémunérateur et vengeur, Voltaire se préoccupe beaucoup moins de ce qui est vrai que de ce qui est socialement utile...". We can easily confirm this. In a letter of Sept. 1738 (Oeuv., XXXIV, 577), we read: "...j'en suis revenu à dire que le bien de la société exige que l'homme se croie libre"; explaining that the honnêtes-gens have to deal with "force fripons qui ont peu réfléchi", (art. Enfer), the author of the Dict. phil. declares (art. Athéisme): "L'objet intéressant pour l'univers entier est de savoir s'il ne vaut pas mieux, pour le bien de tous les hommes, admettre un Dieu...qui récompense les bonnes actions et qui punit les crimes secrets..."; and in a note to the Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne (Oeuv., IX, 478, n. 1) we learn that, after the open denial of the soul's immortality by the Romans, the desire for solace and "le bien de la société" prevailed in favour of restoring the belief.

3. v. Gould, Hist. of Freemasonry, ed. 1887, III, 37 (tr. of Ramsay's speech of Mar. 21 1737): "All the Grand Masters of Germany, England, Italy and elsewhere, exhort all the learned men and all the artisans of the Fraternity to unite to furnish the materials for a Universal Dictionary of the liberal arts and useful sciences, excepting only theology and politics...Not only are technical words and their etymology explained, but the history of each art and science, its principles and operations, are described".

4. The "double doctrine" becomes a part of the professional code - almost an article of etiquette amongst the fraternity of the "philosophes". About the mid-century, however, there comes upon the scene a man who is a rebel against many things, not the least important of which is this philosophic code to which we have just referred. He has received no formal college education. In the early 1750s he is opposed to the artistic-and-cultural aspects of civilization to which, in the main, members of the Philosophic Party are attached. In the middle 1750s, cutting himself off from the Party, he is ever more afflicted with the dangerous mania for outspokenness which he regards as the expression of sincerity and a proof that he is following the dictates of heart and conscience. Swayed by emotion himself, he soon finds he has the power to sway the emotions of others. To discretion and tact he prefers confession of innermost thoughts and feelings. This man was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the apostle of equality and fraternity; and those who wonder why the writers who were so insistent upon gradual enlightenment and emancipation should be blamed by some for the excesses of 1792-93 would do well to consider the part played by the "black-leg" who rejected rules observed by the majority of his fellows, and which he himself does not appear to have understood. For instance, in the Confessions - and at a moment when he is referring to Grimm - he has this to say: "Je me rappelai le sommaire de sa morale, que Madame d'Epinay m'avoit dit, et qu'elle avoit adopté. Ce sommaire consistoit en un seul article; savoir, que l'unique devoir de l'homme est de suivre les penchants de son coeur...C'est la doctrine intérieure dont Diderot m'a tant parlé, mais qu'il ne m'a jamais expliquée" (Oeuv., ed. 1817, XIV, 317: Conf., Pt. II, Livre IX). Incidentally, Bayle uses this very expression "doctrine intérieure" in a quoted passage relating to the Chinese atheistic sect of Foé (Dict. crit., art. Spinoza n. B).

5. One of the great ideals of John Knox's reform of the Scottish Church hinged on the fact that hitherto reading of Scripture in the native tongue had been frowned upon by ecclesiastical authorities, and that consequently clandestine copies in English translation had had to be smuggled into Scotland - principally by sea. Thus the Church had been observing the customary obligation of preventing the naked truth from being diffused far and wide throughout all classes of society.

6. Oeuvr. comol. , ed. 1781, II, 149, n. 2 & 3 (Themistes and the Persians); 184, n. I (Plutarch); 216, n. 1 (Caesar); 223, n. 1 (Stonehenge - this time no acknowledgement).

7. As this is found only in the 1737 ed., we beg leave to reproduce it in entirety:

A Monsieur Henri Bicker, Bourguemaitre de la Ville d' Amsterdam, Lieutenant-Grand-Maitre des forets et chasses du Goyland, Directeur de la compagnie des indes orientales, Sur-intendant des digues de Graveland,&c. &c. &c.

Monsieur,

L'Avantage inestimable dont je jouis, d'être citoyen de la Ville la plus florissante & la plus libre du Monde, me fait prendre la liberté de m'élever jusqu'à un de mes Souverains, qui se fait un honneur & un délice de cultiver & de protéger les Belles-Lettres; & de lui présenter l'Histoire Critique de la Philosophie.

Ce n'est point, MONSIEUR, un de ces Ouvrages que l'oisiveté, la nécessité, ou l'esprit de Parti enfantent: celui-ci contient des réflexions solides, tirées du sein de la Nature & de la Religion, par un Philosophe Chrétien, illustre par ses Talens & par ses Emplois.

La Matière en est véritablement digne de l'attention des Souverains, des Grands-Hommes, & des Restaurateurs de la Patrie: elle embrasse la Religion, les Moeurs, & la Conduite de celui qui commande, comme de celui qui obéit; & cet Ouvrage combat sagement & avec douceur, les Erreurs des Particuliers & des Nations, inspire l'Humanité & une parfaite Tolérance de Sentimens.

A qui, MONSIEUR, ces réflexions peuvent-elles mieux convenir, qu'à un Protecteur, à un Père de la Ville d'Amsterdam; cette Tyr moderne, que la douceur & la Tolérance ont rendu la Merveille des Nations, en y attirant le Commerce & les Arts, & les portant à leur comble? A qui peuvent-elles, dis-je, mieux convenir qu'à vous, MONSIEUR, dont les Ancêtres , sacrifiant leurs intérêts particuliers au Bien public, ont par leur sage fermeté sauvé du naufrage la Liberté expirante de leur Patrie; vous qui, sortant d'un Emploi aussi pénible qu'utile à l'Etat, êtes parfaitement instruit que c'est de cette aimable Liberté que dépendent le succès de la Navigation & du Commerce, les deux Nerfs de la République?

Puissez-vous, MONSIEUR, jouir longtems du glorieux avantage de protéger des citoyens fidèles; & après une brillante carrière, nous laisser un Rejetton digne imitateur de vos Talens & de votre capacité!

Je suis avec le plus profond respect, MONSIEUR,
Votre très humble & très obéissant
Serviteur,
FRANCOIS CHANGUION

The fourth parag. of the above is interesting to the student of Desl.'s Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce of 1743.

8. We note, for example, differences between this treatment of the regicide of Pittacus, and that of Fénelon in his Abrégé (v. Pt. IV of our study, n. 6), which is objective and factual by comparison (Fén. Oeuv., XXII, 34). We note, moreover, how abruptly our author dismisses the tyrant Periander, to whom Fénelon devotes a lengthy section of the same work (v. H.c., I, 311). v. Pt. IV, n. 6 of present work.

9. Referring to the article Aristotélisme of the Encyclopédie, Grosclaude (Un Audacieux Message &c., ed. 1951, p. 220) mentions the fact that the Journal de Trévoux reproaches Diderot with having plagiarized the H.c., and that it accuses the Encyclopedist of bringing together two passages separated in the original text, and which, when brought together in this way, present Aristotle as denying Providence and as having been persecuted on this account by pagan priests. In fact the plagiarist has only been through the subterfuge of the author of the H.c., and has made the rapprochement expected of the intelligent reader.

10. A more lavish tribute to the modern Chinese is to be found in the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce (pp. 14-15) v. Pt. VII, Ch. I of our study.

11. e.g. H.c., I, 178-180, which are reproduced with some degree of fidelity in La Mettrie's Abr. des syst., pp. 40-41, in Oeuv. phil. 1752.

12. La Mettrie misunderstands this. In the Abr. des syst., pp. 8-9, he complains: "...si M. Deslandes...eût aussi solidement réfléchi, qu'il a coutume de faire, il n'eût pas avancé témérairement, que Descartes est le prémier /sic/ qui ait bien éclairci les preuves de ce Dogme...il ne s'en seroit fié aux quatre propositions qu'il rapporte, & qui loin de rien éclaircir, sont aussi obscures que la question même".

13. cf. Voltaire, Sermon du rabbin Akkib (Oeuvr. XXIV, 281), and Dict. phil., art. Tolérance.

14. Voltaire too was opposed to the notion of particular Providence (v. Pellissier, Volt. phil. p. 43).

15. "Notons ici qu'en 1742 /he overlooks ed. of 1737/, l'Histoire critique de la philosophie de Deslandes pose avec clarté la question de l'origine du bien et du mal, donne un exposé vigoureux du 'système des deux principes', et reconnaît, avant le manichéen Martin, 'qu'au défaut de la révélation, on ne pouvait mieux expliquer que par ce dogme l'origine du bien et du mal'" (Morize, ed. of Candide, 1913, Intr. pp. xxiv-xxv, n.) [6]

16. Voltaire, Dict. phil, art. Trinité, pours scorn on the obscurities involved in this doctrine of the Trinity. In Dieu et les hommes of 1769 (Oeuv. XXVIII, 223), he points out that it was in Alexandria, and thanks to Platonic influences, that the doctrine of the Trinity and the idea of the Word crept into Christianity to render it more mysterious and allegorical.

17. Voltaire too was determined to "étudier l'histoire sacrée en y appliquant la même méthode qu'à l'histoire profane..." (Pellissier, op. cit., p. 76).

18. These are precisely the "proofs" favoured by Deslandes's contemporary, Voltaire.

19. v. Pellissier, op. cit., p. 175: "Ainsi cette religion, qu'il recommande au point de vue du bien public, lui-même, pour son compte, n'y croit pas; il n'en retient du moins que la croyance en une Cause suprême, en un Démiurge sans lequel ne saurait s'expliquer le monde". Here is one more point of similarity between Deslandes and Voltaire.

20. This is almost certainly Cotes or Clarke, both of whom were particular friends of Newton in 1713, and both of whom had some considerable knowledge of mathematics.

21. For motives of prudence (and perhaps in some trepidation) Deslandes inserted this Avertissement in the Gazette française

d'Amsterdam of Nov. 8 1737: "Mr. Doslandes ayant appris que des Personnes très-eclairées & très-judicieuses condamnoient dans l'Histoire Critique de la Philosophie, plusieurs traits hardis & des Reflexions plus hardies encore, il declare hautement qu 'il n'y prend aucun intérêt, & qu'il condamne sans restriction tout ce que ces Personnes éclairées & judicieuses y trouvent de repréhensible"; and he sent this letter to the Observations sur les écrits modernes (XI (1737), 165-166): "Vous sçavez, Messieurs, qu'il a paru cette année à Amsterdam, un Ouvrage imprimé chez François Changuion, en trois volumes in-8º qui a pour titre: Histoire Critique de la Philosophie, où l'on traite de son Origine, de ses Progrès, & des diverses Révolutions qui lui sont arrivées jusqu'à notre tems. Cet Ouvrage m'a été attribué, je ne sçai sur quel fondement. Mais je n'ai garde de le reconnoître, en l'état où il est aujourd'hui, pour une production de ma plume. On y a ajoûté en Hollande quelques traits hardis, & des réflexions plus hardies encore, que je condamne, avec toutes les personnes éclairées & judicieuses. Souffrez donc, Messieurs, que cet éclaircissement paroisse dans l'Ouvrage que vous donnez toutes les Semaines au Public, & que par votre moyen je détrompe & désabuse ceux qui croyant me connoître, ne connoissent cependant ni ma manière de penser, ni les sentimens de mon coeur. Je suis, &c". We need hardly add that we cannot take these half-denials seriously, for we are well aware that the "apostolic bow" was a necessary precaution. There are other reasons: first, we are familiar with "éclaircissements" which Bayle gave in the Dict. crit.- again for motives of prudence; secondly, we cannot but observe the possible ambiguity of the phrase "qu'il condamne, avec toutes les personnes éclairées & judicieuses"; thirdly, we discover no attempt to excise these "traits" and "réflexions" in later editions of the work; finally, we find the real motive clearly expressed in the Avertissement of 1756: "...j'ai craint de nouvelles contradictions de la part de ceux que blesse toute vérité dite hardiment". So the critics of "hardiesse" are treated to bitterness, rather than to pacifying deference, in 1756.

22. v. Voltaire, Oeuvr., XXVI, 206, in which he retails Newton's speculation that Samuel was the true author of the Pentateuch; and Briggs, art. cit. for Pérelle's suggestion that Newton was really far from orthodox in his religious views (v. Pt. III of this study, Ch. III, beginning of a)).

23. v. n. 19 above, and Pellissier, op. cit. p. 37: "Tout ce que Voltaire affirme en métaphysique, c'est l'existence de Dieu. Encore ne la donne-t-il pas toujours comme certaine". cf. Oeuvr. ed. Mol. XXXIV, 249.

PART VI

THE MATURE PHILOSOPHY: ESOTERIC PRESENTATION OF IDEAS

CHAPTER I THE CONTES PHILOSOPHIQUES AND THEIR GENERAL IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Je veux qu'un conte soit fondé sur la vraisemblance, et qu'il ne ressemble pas toujours à un rêve. Je désire qu'il n'ait rien de trivial ni d'extravagant. Je voudrais surtout que, sous le voile de la fable, il laissât entrevoir aux yeux exercés quelque vérité fine qui échappe au vulgaire (Voltaire, Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XXI, 506).

...les Disciples adroits de Spinoza répliquent que ces attributs sont les parties de cet Univers, ou les Etres déterminés à représenter Dieu de telle ou telle maniere, c'est-à-dire, la Nature comme un Tout dans lequel ils sont & ils existent, & où ils ne peuvent cesser d'être & d'exister (H.c., IV, 31).

a) Deslandes's Contes Defined

Deriving most of her facts from the bibliography provided in the first volume of Mornet's edition of La Nouvelle Héloïse, Dorothy Mc Ghee has demonstrated the vogue enjoyed by the conte philosophique between 1740 and 1755. She has shown how regard for realism, for the spirit of scrutiny and for brevity in analysis, helped the evolution of the genre from the end of the seventeenth century till the time when Voltaire adopted a literary form in which he was to be so outstandingly successful. She has shown too how social criticism became associated with the new genre, and how this aspect owes much to the Lettres persanes, to Gil Blas and to Hamilton's Mémoires. These, however, were not short philosophic tales, and, as she explains, "The real 'genre pimpant, léger, spirituel, impertinent, frivole' was inaugurated slightly before the middle of the century" (Voltairian Narrative Devices, ed. 1933, p. 24). In the list(covering in all 1730-78) derived from Mornet, it is clear that Deslandes's Pigmalion, ou la statue animée (1741) is a very early example, being preceded in that list only by Hamilton (who was largely inspired by the Thousand and One Nights that awakened so much interest in orientalism).[1]

As a conteur, then, our author is far from negligible, even if we only take account of dates of composition.

In fact, between 1741 and 1751 he published four stories which might at first sight deserve the classification as contes philosophiques were it not soon apparent that the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat of 1749 is a "philosophic" history, with an important Preface exposing the author's principles of historical method. How far, then, do the remaining three meet Mc Ghee's requirements? These requirements are: a mixture of fantasy and realism, with enough realism to make the philosophic message convincing and enough fantasy to deny to characters in the story the sympathy extended to heroes and heroines of novels; criticism of society, which is nearly always an ingredient of such tales; philosophic truth, often conveyed in a facetious manner but always with a strictly serious motive. On the basis of this triple criterion, let us look at tales that appeared in 1741, 1742 and 1751.

In Pigmalion fantasy is provided, in that the story is obviously mythological and partly allegorical, and this is sufficient to preclude sympathy for Pygmalion, who so obviously represents more than a human being, and for the statue, who is the embodiment of unattainable perfections of womanhood and beauty. Of social criticism there is little; but we do not overlook references to state recognition of men of talent and to "les ennemis nés du Public", the priesthood (ed. 1742, p. 17). The third ingredient is present in profusion, and we shall see that the real motive behind this story is to be found in the author's display, before a limited public, of his own "advanced" opinions on philosophic matters. The Optique des moeurs, opposée à l'optique des couleurs, printed in 1742 with the second edition of Pigmalion is different from its partner. Unlike the other tale, it is in the form of a letter, and is therefore to a great extent composed in the first person. Moreover, it is much more personal in its strictures; and indeed we have found it of biographical interest to record the author's derisive remark about the Académie des Sciences at the end. This is hardly a feature of

the authentic conte philosophique, in which criticism should be of a more general importance. True the characters are colourless symbols; true some aspects of the wider social critique are to be discerned in the author's sarcasm about ecclesiastics, doctors, high society ladies and statesmen; true the letter is intended to impugn Castel's Cartesianism in scientific matters - yet it is still a fact that there is little attempt at imparting recognizable doctrines to the reader, and that the general atmosphere is rather one of private grievance. Certainly, if we compare it with Pigmalion, we immediately perceive the relative shallowness of the Optique des moeurs; and for that reason we shall accord it briefer treatment. Like that of Pigmalion, the story of La Fortune, histoire critique takes us back to Antiquity, and is even more obviously allegorical. Consequently it contains more of the fantastic than the realistic; and (since it is set in Antiquity) it is even more removed from reality than the comparable conte of Voltaire, the Eloge historique de la Raison, where the journey of the two principal allegorical characters - takes us through modern Europe and even into France. Another consequence is that we have little sympathy for any of the characters - even for the unhappy Iphises, the unwilling priest-ess. Indeed, the true motive underlying the petitions submitted by this priestess is social criticism, of which we find a co-pious supply in this tale. And, if we add to this the strong philosophic strain that runs throughout, we shall be driven to the conclusion that this is indeed a conte philosophique.

From this brief analysis it is clear that it is upon Pigmalion and La Fortune that we must concentrate in our study of our author's esoteric doctrines. Before doing so, however, we must say a word or two about the third conte, which is also to be classed amongst Deslandes's "limited" writings. For, although on the title-page we read M. D***", the publisher's Preface states enigmatically: "Il nous est seulement permis

de le désigner sous l'idée générale de savant Homme, aussi bien que l'Auteur de Pigmalion, qui, en ne nous laissant pas plus de liberté, s'est pareillement envié les justes louanges qui lui sont dues". We have said that the work takes the form of a letter within a letter, the crucial material being supplied from Venice by a certain "Abbé Ziani". The introductory passages tell of the excitement which has recently reigned in the Italian city; and having "tickled the palate" by mentioning doctors who profess to cure by odours, by poudres sympathiques and by music, Deslandes proceeds to an extract from Ziani's communication.

Two Arab doctors, whose lives (unlike those of most medical practitioners) are models of simplicity, disinterestedness and scholarship, have arrived in Venice to treat patients by means of mirrors, magnifying glasses, spectacles and microscopes. Since they are concerned with physical and moral disorders, Deslandes deals with their activities in this order. In pages prophetic of modern radiography, he tells how a certain lady's organic complaint was diagnozed when "un Miroir à facette lui mit sous les yeux une infinité de petits ulcères qu'elle avoit dans l'estomac..." (with Pigm., ed. 1742, pp. 152-153). Four pages later, turning to mental and moral derangements, he arrives at the main section of his work:

"Ces maladies plus dangereuses que toutes les autres, sont les vapeurs ou quelques espèces de vapeurs singulières, la mélancolie, les accès d'une imagination déréglée; enfin, toutes ces passions qui tiennent de la fureur & qui empêchent de distinguer le vrai du faux" (pp. 157-158). (Reading such things, we can well believe that they were written by one who composed a treatise on the art of dispelling that "maladie de l'âme", boredom, and who in the Recueil of 1736 and the Histoire critique of 1737 had shown interest in the problem of allergies.)

Who are the patients whose mental and moral conditions are to be subjected to optical diagnosis? First, psychotics in general; and here once more our author is well ahead of his times, for the treatment prescribed is "presenter...au malade,

comme l'Histoire & quelquefois le Roman de sa vie; ce qui lui procure d'ordinaire une heureuse guérison" (pp. 160-161). Secondly, two Sénateurs, statesmen whom success has passed by: the first is shown (by means of ingenious microscopes) that his foolish self-esteem has deluded him into assuming that he is worthy of greater consideration; the second is presented with the spectacle of the ignoble proceedures he has employed to secure advancement. Thirdly, priests, monks and nuns, and members of the bourgeoisie; fourthly ladies and gentlemen of high society - all of whom are shown their true characters and potentialities - and a society abbé who "prétendoit aux premieres Dignités de l'Eglise Romaine" (p. 180), and who, by means of a pair of remarkable spectacles, is allowed a foretaste of the realization of his ambition. The author comments that such spectacles would be useful if distributed to "ceux qu'ils veulent amuser de quelque espoir de récompense, sans les vouloir récompenser en effet", by ministers of state (pp. 183-184)! Fifthly, we are introduced to two hermits, who, having expressed approval of Newton's colour optics, and who, by means of a double-faced mirror, having seen themselves both as they think they are and as they really are, retire in haste and confusion. We are told that the Inquisitors took a lenient view of the Arabs' pretentions, especially as they and the Senators received handsome lorgnettes as gifts; and that the optical devices which made the faults of others appear greater and their own shortcomings less, became popular with statesmen and with young persons who preferred to be amused rather than encouraged to think.

The Abbé Ziani's letter finishes here, but Deslandes writes a few pages of conclusion. Learning that the Arab doctors wish to visit Paris, he hints that Castel and the Académie des Sciences may perhaps offer some opposition, and asks "L** B****" (to whom the work is addressed) to predict what sort of reception the oriental visitors will receive.

The brief work we have been summarizing offers a number of interesting points. First, by its title, it is a riposte

delivered against the Cartesian Father Castel's Optique des couleurs. This eccentric ecclesiastic, who also produced a fantastic schedule of correspondences between sounds and colours and invented a famous "ocular organ" with lamps to show the colour of each note (v. p. 147 of Desl. Op. des m.), had accused Newton of basing his colour optics on laboratory experiments and of treating hypotheses as facts. The prism he considered a fashionable play-thing, too small usually to be accurate: in consequence, he considered Newton's measurement of refractions to be unsound. He also thought that Newton's notions of colour were absurd: the English scientist's colours were (in his opinion) pure abstractions, for black and white are not colours at all, but absence of colour. So, said Castel, Newton would have done better to seek the advice of those engaged in dyeing and painting; for in that way he would have been tapping "historic" and "natural" sources of information on a specialized subject. It is against a background of such nonsensical and ill-informed comment, then, that we must view such passages as this in the conte of 1742: "On examina le Systême des Couleurs de Newton, qui parut admirable dans tous ses points: on rendit justice à ce grand Homme qui, au moyen de son Prisme, avoit, pour ainsi dire, décomposé les rayons du Soleil & fait l'anatomie des Couleurs mêmes" (p. 186).

As we have seen, there is more than this in the work, which is also partly a satire upon some members of the medical profession, upon the moral laxity of the Church, and upon the ignoble standards of society. But it must remain a spurious composition that is neither a pamphlet nor yet a conte philosophique in the proper sense of the term. For there is not much of a story and very little positive philosophy in this brief satire that helps to confirm our author's Newtonianism and to indicate his hostility towards the Academy after the quarrel concerned with the techniques of Réaumur and the early inugeage affair. One point of interest, however, remains to be discussed: where did Deslandes get the idea for this work?

There are perhaps two sources, a very ancient one and a very recent one. Seneca's Quaestiones Naturales contain a passage, summarized by Deslandes himself in the Histoire critique: "... il nous aprend [sic] que les Romains avoient des Miroirs qui grossissoient extrêmement les objets; des Miroirs qui multiplioient un même objet plusieurs fois; d'autres qui enlaidissoient, jusqu'à ne pouvoir se souffrir..." (H.c., III, 58). A more immediate source, however, is to be discerned in the Fables of Jacques Vergier (the naval executive who was also a member of the Temple Society), one of which, Le Miroir, is set in Venice. In this fable we learn of an attempt to satisfy Senators of that city by means of curious optical devices. In particular, the mirror referred to in the title first multiplies objects of beauty, and later exaggerates the vices and diminishes the virtues of the Senators. Moreover, as in 1742, complaint is made by the clients that the mirror is capable of reflecting both beauty and ugliness, and disappointment is expressed when the true facts are disclosed. This is not the first time that the name of Jacques Vergier has been mentioned in our study, and we shall see that he is to be mentioned in other connections during our examination of the contes philosophiques proper.

b) British Philosophies leading up to Pope

An essential preliminary to a study of the two important tales that remain is to make a survey of some ideas that link Spinoza with Pope and Leibnitz. Our first concern will be with the stream that leads to the Essay on Man.

When the third Earl of Shaftesbury went to Holland in 1698, he must surely have heard a good deal about Spinozism which was favoured by several philosophers of that country about the turn of the century. And, if the various off-shoots of Spinozism were insufficient for his curiosity, he could have discovered all he wished to know from his friend Bayle, who was

naturally conversant with such systems. Back in England, Shaftesbury expressed many of his newly acquired ideas in the famous Moralists of 1709, though it is significant that the Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit (which also shows some influence of the system) was published by Toland, and without the author's consent, but one year after Shaftesbury's return. Looking upon Shaftesbury's philosophy as a whole, it is easy to see that it is more practical, more good-humoured and less mathematically precise than that of Spinoza. Yet the similarities are equally striking. There is the same disregard of Revelation, the same disdain of the orthodox point of view regarding the origin and existence of evil, since in both cases the theological doctrine of the Fall gives way to the notion that the All is good - which means that a cosmic view of things would show that nothing is evil except our own limited understanding of the general arrangement. In both, God appears to be the "soul" of the Universe, absolute, infinite and perfect. In both, there is more than a suggestion that free-will is a human fancy, since the will is moved without our own specific activity. Both hesitate about the immortality of the soul, concluding that it is possible but not proven. On the other hand, the conception of the supreme good is different in the two philosophies: the logical moralist places the summum bonum in deeper and more perfect knowledge of the Deity; the apostle of good humour, good taste and of beauty sees it in that kind of benevolence that brings happiness to mankind.

In an attempt to provide an alternative to the Manicheism which Bayle had resuscitated, in 1702 a minor British thinker, Archbishop William King, published De Origine Mali, which was to run into several editions (including English translations) and which is sometimes regarded as having helped to mould the ideas of Leibnitz (v. Bonno, La Cult et la civln. brit., pp. 112-113). King concurs with Spinoza in the opinion that God is free, but not in the view that He acts necessarily (Hampshire, Spin., p. 50). Indeed King would make God independent of

the obligation to create this particular world, since it is certain that in that case he would have created more perfect creatures. Man too is free in King's system, and man's free-will is the advantage he draws from a world in which sin exists and which God could not abolish without destroying man's liberty. King appears to have a better knowledge of Spinozism than many people of his time, for he argues that it is the idea of extension that exists absolutely in the Deity, and that, even if space itself were annihilated, the idea or essence of space would continue in God. The doctrine of chain of causation discovered in Spinoza becomes in King's thought the mutual dependence of all things upon the All (or the Whole), which is considered good. Here, however, another notion creeps in - a notion that in extreme form and in a more libertine guise is to recur in Mandeville: private vices can be envisaged as contributing to general good. This does not mean that a particular evil is to be encouraged. It is an attempt to take the widest possible view of God's world and to meet the argument of those who maintain that the Universe must be ruled by Two Principles of equal importance and power. In King's Universe, the good certainly predominates, and moral evil is permitted only for the sake of natural evils that arise from the fact of Nature being subject to change and decay. Reason, chimes King with Spinoza, will choose the lesser evil. His summum bonum is closer to that of Spinoza than was Shaftesbury's, for it is defined as that which is universally agreeable to the whole scheme of things. The principal distinction between King and the Dutch philosopher lies, as we have said, in their conception of divine and human freedom. In King's view God was not (as Leibnitz asserted) obliged to choose the best possible world. Indeed, better possible worlds can be conceived even by man. That does not however give man superiority over or equality with God, who alone knows what is "best", who foresaw that the evils of the world would be implicit in His choice, which was made advisedly and without restriction.

King's "intricate" conception of human freedom, opposed as it is to "the common notion of liberty", is criticized in 1715 by Anthony Collins in the Inquiry concerning Human Liberty (soon to be translated into French and to affect eighteenth-century thought across the Channel) on the grounds that "This could not happen, if matter of fact was clear for liberty" (ed. 1735, p. 25), and that "he is so far from thinking that there is the least foundation from Experience, for the said notion of Liberty, that he treats it as a chimera..." (ibid, pp. 30-31). In place of such complexities, Collins offers a clearly determinist thesis, which surely betrays considerable but only in respect of human freedom. Spinozist influence. Man, he says, is conditioned in his "choice" of opinions, prejudices, temper, habit and circumstance, and, although he has freedom to do as he pleases, is not free from necessity, for, if he were, he would be omnipotent. This doctrine was to tip the scales with Voltaire around the year 1737. Another crucial influence on Volhirian thought is more difficult to pin down. The ideas of Bolingbroke were not evident to any but his intimate friends until the publication of the Essay on Man - ostensibly the expression of the joint philosophy of Bolingbroke and Pope, but in fact embodying a number of the ideas of Shaftesbury as well. Bolingbroke was versed in the doctrines of Shaftesbury, but he also drew directly upon continental sources, for during his stays in France he frequented libertine and Spinozist circles. These influences are evident in his thought. Once more we find doubts regarding the immortality of the soul - an agnostic view that arises from lack of proofs from Nature. As the all-perfect and self-existent First Cause, God rules the world by general laws, and, as in Spinoza's system, God is impersonal. Furthermore, just as Spinoza postulates the existence of attributes of the Deity unknown to man, Bolingbroke speaks of God's physical and moral attributes as undiscernible by the imperfect intelligence of human beings. For Bolingbroke, as for Spinoza, Nature is a uniform system; but he does not say

that there is but one substance in the Universe. From God's general laws and from Nature's uniformity he arrives at a notion familiar in eighteenth-century thought, namely that of natural balance. This in its turn has bearing on the question of human free-will, which in Bolingbroke's system is only relative, since it depends upon our following the eternal "fitness of things", an idea that we have already discussed in relation to Samuel Clarke and to Deslandes's critical history. Thus we have freedom to follow general laws - a degree of liberty that some would not find inconsistent with determinism. Once more, as in Shaftesbury, we find that benevolence is the golden rule of conduct, since it leads to contentment rather than to pleasure. The doctrine of "final causes" is as repugnant to Bolingbroke as it was to Spinoza, for he finds it out of keeping with the basic notion of God's general laws. It is from this basic notion too that springs his conception of good and evil. Notions of good and evil arise from social contexts, and are therefore relative to the particular society under discussion. He holds, however, that the laws of Nature are generally good, and that errors and irregularities are (when viewed from afar) conducive to the good of the Whole. There is much of the Stoic about Bolingbroke, as there is about Spinoza; and, in both cases, whilst passions are not necessarily regarded as bad, there is a tendency to stress the virtues of resignation. Finally, there is to be discovered in the philosophy of Bolingbroke a doctrine that we find in French Spinozists - the scale of beings, ascending from the lowest creature to God - although it is also to be found in the Ancient Stoics, and was probably revived in the eighteenth-century because it accorded with current scientific theories.

This notion, and indeed most of those that we have discovered in Bolingbroke, recurs in Pope's Essay on Man,[2] which, because of controversies it aroused on both sides of the Channel, became the point of concentration of pseudo-Spinozist evolutions in England and France. The God of Pope's Essay is also a Universal First Cause who governs by general laws,

which, because they are general and therefore do not admit of particular Providence,[3] account for what we consider "evil" in the world. There is no point in denying the fact that man is a mixture of good and evil; but what matters to God is the general, cosmic good. He has therefore arranged things so that from private evil may proceed public good. Not so very unlike Spinoza, who distinguishes natura naturans from natura naturata, Pope conceives God as the soul of the Universe and Nature as the body; yet Pope's God is more distinct from his Creation than the God of Spinoza, who appears merely to postulate active and passive substance within the single substance, Nature or God. However, a feature of Pope's system that is closer to Spinoza is the virtual denial of free-will. There is no such thing as chance, says Pope, and events are really directed from on high. Thus for Pope the summum bonum consists in seeking the sort of happiness which arises from increasing conformity with General Providence, with the good of the All, which is the supreme good for God Himself. Similarly divine freedom is restricted in Pope's system, for God's possibilities of action are determined by His own perfection and infinite wisdom. Thus, although at the time of composing his Essay he claimed to be ignorant of the ideas of Leibnitz, Pope came close indeed to the conclusion that the Deity had been obliged to choose the best possible world for his human creatures. Since, therefore, the Universe tends towards the perfection of the Whole or the All, what we detect as discord is really a sort of harmony beyond our comprehension. Though not explicitly proclaimed, pre-established harmony is thus implicit in Pope's system. Moreover, as in the philosophy of Bolingbroke, we find two Stoic notions: that we should resign ourselves to our lot, and that our lot consists in belonging to a chain of beings stretching up to God Himself.

From this short survey of some English thinkers of the first half of the eighteenth century, it becomes clear that in every case there is some degree of indebtedness to Spinoza, though the stream flows in a direction close to the Leibnitz-

ian current and finally almost merges with it in the philosophy of Bolingbroke and Pope, which in so many respects resembles that of the profounder continental thinker. We do not think that it would be precipitate to assume that the starting-point of the chain is to be found in Spinozism, sometimes imperfectly comprehended, and that by the 1730s, when Pope's Essay appeared, continental philosophy had - at least in free-thinking circles - evolved in a direction that would allow it to embrace the philosophy of Pope as one embraces the twin-brother of a familiar friend.

c) Pope and Leibnitz in France before the Half-Century

In a foot-note to La Fortune of 1751, Deslandes speaks of Pope's Ethic Epistles, translated by Silhouette.[4] It is therefore more than likely that he was also familiar with the same man's translation of the Essay on Man; and he would certainly be aware of the storm that it aroused on the Continent. The essential dates of the controversy may be given as follows:

1732-34	Essay on Man
1736	Silhouette's translation
1738	Hostile commentary of De Crousaz
1739-40	Warburton defends the Essay in six letters, published in the Works of the Learned. About the same time Bolingbroke disowns Pope.
1742	Silhouette justifies Pope

It is to the last of these publications that we turn, since it naturally embodies the arguments for and against the Essay. And we shall use the text that is printed in two volumes of the Mélanges de littérature & de philosophie (La Haye, Moetjen, 1742), the first volume of which contains Etienne de Silhouette's renderings of the Essay on Man and the Ethic Epistles, with a Discours "sur le goût des traductions" by the translator himself; and the second, the Lettres philosophiques & morales, giving an explanation of Pope's system in the Essay -

an explanation based largely on Warburton's reply to the commentary of De Crousaz. In the Discours (or translator's preface) to which we have just referred, mention is made of the battles that have raged around Pope's ideas, in justification of which Silhouette quotes from a letter he has received from Father Tournemine (who, incidentally, taught at Louis-le-Grand during Deslandes's schooldays) describing the English poet as "un Philosophe profond, et un Poëte vraîment sublime". Certainly the Jesuit father does not consider Pope an evil genius at all: "Cet ouvrage ne peut nuire qu'aux esprits corrompus qui tournent tout en venin. Un esprit droit en tirera un bon suc, de grandes vues & des maximes utiles" (Mél. de litt., I, 92). And, having quoted this fine tribute to the Essay on Man, Silhouette points out that the objections made by De Crousaz have, more than anything else, contributed to the popularity of the Essay! "Sans l'ataque- [sic], le Public eût été privé de la réponse; & c'est ainsi que le mal devient la source du bien", says the translator, facetiously employing Pope's celebrated principle to ridicule the Swiss professor.

As we have said, the second volume of the Mélanges provides the main body of Silhouette's defence, which appears under the title Lettres philosophiques & morales and, by the author's admission, borrows a great deal from William Warburton. He begins by affirming that Pope's aim was to justify Providence, and by claiming that, since it is an obvious fact that evils and accidents are bestowed by Chance on all mankind, it is folly to assume that Pope considered happiness could be attained by vice or unhappiness by virtue. On the contrary, Pope has provided a firmer proof of the soul's immortality, since his system implies that it is only in a future existence that injustices can be redressed. He next turns to De Crousaz's accusation that, like Leibnitz, Pope limits divine freedom: in reply to this, he advances Warburton's argument that it is surely more fitting that, by virtue of His nature, God should

be obliged to choose the highest perfection, than that an all-perfect being should hesitate between good and evil. Against the Swiss professor's objections levelled at the notion of the "chain of beings", Silhouette advances Warburton's reply to the effect that, if this were not admitted, we should have to conclude that God's Universe was subject to pure caprice; and, in support of this view, Silhouette himself points out that the theory of natural balance, of the mutual dependence of the components of the Universe and of the "gradation sensible de leurs qualités", was favoured by Locke, who spoke of the sumptuous harmony of the cosmic arrangement, with a gradation from the Supreme Being down to nothingness. Moreover, to vindicate divine Providence against the charge that it is responsible for the existence of evil in the world, Silhouette maintains that Pope has made the abuse of free-will the source of moral evil and has been at pains to make it plain that what we judge to be natural evil is really good in relation to the Whole or the All. In other words: in accordance with a divine plan that humans cannot understand, general Providence has made certain that the total effect is good; and this is the sanction for Pope's recommendation that man should resign himself to his lot, and to his place in the grand scheme - an attitude that alone befits a creature who cannot expect to achieve God's perfection.

The apologist next passes to the question of God and Nature. The main difference between God and Nature is that, like man, Nature is subject to irregularities. This is because Nature is an inanimate system, which obeys divine laws — but is none the less liable to error. In the same way, we cannot expect that man should be more "regular" than Nature. Thus, whilst answering the charge that God created evil in man, he simultaneously refutes the assertion that Pope's philosophy is pantheistic. Again, the French translator maintains that Pope's ideas on the origin and existence of evil are essentially different from those of Mandeville, whose Fable of the Bees postulated that vice is necessary to the well-being of society. Admittedly, in both there is an

acknowledgement that evil exists of necessity; yet Pope, speaking as he does of "Th'Eternal Art, educing good from ill" (Works, ed. 1871, Essay on Man, Ep. II, l. 175), envisages God's plan as intended to save mankind from the full consequences of the abuse of liberty. Therefore, we must assume that Pope believed in a beneficent and benevolent Deity, who allows what we define as "evil", but, on the universal plane, works against its full effects. Indeed, Silhouette (who, we repeat, is producing an apology) sees in Pope's system a rejection of the extremism of both Shaftesbury and Mandeville; for, in the former, we find virtue without religion and ,in the latter, religion without virtue [a nice paradox, which is open to some qualification]. On the other hand, he agrees that, from Shaftesbury, Pope accepted the notion that virtue is worth cultivating--even as an end in itself, and, from Mandeville, the idea that "evil" can be turned to social benefits. ---

From Shaftesbury and Mandeville, Silhouette turns to another philosopher. De Crousaz has accused Pope of Spinozism, on the grounds that the English thinker makes God the author of each substance throughout the scale of beings, and therefore, as it were, a single unifying substance. Faced with evidence of the parallels, Silhouette does not attempt to deny that "Un Spinosiste s'exprimeroit ainsi"; rather he seeks to prove that the doctrine in question is not confined to the Spinozists: "Je le crois, & je crois qu'un Spinosiste s'exprimeroit également comme St. Paul dans le discours qu'il fit aux Athéniens en leur annonçant le Dieu inconnu qu'ils adoroient. C'est en lui, dit l'Apôtre, que nous avons la vie, le mouvement, & l'être" (Mél. de litt., II, 26). After this rather lame reply, Silhouette then passes to a further point in the same accusation, asserting against the Swiss controversialist that Spinoza did not, like Pope, envisage God as a supreme spirit directing things from above, but as a single, universal, blind substance. Forgetting, therefore, the Spinozist distinction between natura naturans and natura naturata, he submits that Pope's line "The worker from the work distinct was known" (Ep. III, l. 229) "renverse

tout le Spinosisme par ses fondemens" (II, 27). By this time Silhouette appears to realize that he is not presenting a very convincing proof that Pope was not influenced by Spinoza, so, instead of trying to distinguish between the ideas of the two, he concentrates upon showing that they were different in spirit:

> Or si M. Pope s'étoit servi de ces expressions dans le même esprit que les Spinosistes, il auroit lui-même renversé à la fin de son Epitre, tout ce qui'il auroit eu dessein d'y établir: ... Car le Spinosisme n'admet point d'univers, où toutes les parties, par une prévoyance méditée & réfléchie, tendent à la perfection du tout (II, 27).

[Yet Spinoza's explanation of the Universe in terms of an infinite, eternal and self-creating substance, which is the Supreme Intelligence Himself and therefore infinitely all-perfect, is not so very unlike the doctrine here advanced from Pope's work; and if "Spinozists" shewed eagerness to make precise doctrines out of their master's deliberately abstract generalization, then it is still untrue to say that "Spinozism" is at fault.]

In the second letter, Silhouette sets out to explain what Pope was not anxious to do; and he begins by asserting that, though similar in some respects to Leibnitz, Pope had not read that philosopher's work at the time of writing the Essay. It may well be that Pope's system implies pre-established harmony, which is however not mentioned explicitly in the Essay. And, to those who would affirm that pre-established harmony is essentially fatalistic, Silhouette replies that Pope was essentially optimistic; and that the theory of the best possible world means that all evil is particular, since the Universe tends to general perfection - an idea which (he claims) comes to Pope from Plato via Shaftesbury, and not from Leibnitz. None could say that Plato was a fatalist, for his ideas have been adopted by the most devout theologians; and, if Leibnitz treated Platonic notions in a spirit of fatalism [how he plays on this word "spirit"!], it is unfair to assume that Pope did likewise: "Platon dit, Dieu a choisi ce qui étoit le mieux. Leibnitz dit, Dieu n'a pu choisir que ce qui étoit le mieux" (II, 37). It was therefore the denial of divine freedom that led Leibnitz to interpret in this manner an innocent Platonic doctrine.[5]

Against the Lausanne critic's assertion that Pope envisaged a Deity concealing the future from his creatures, Silhouette advances his belief that Pope intended to convey the exact opposite, namely that God positively reveals the future to us, yet in such a way that man is allowed to hope and fear and thus to establish his superiority over other creatures. Beasts see nothing of the future, man a little and spirits most of all: it is in this sense, then, that Pope implies that man can see little of what lies ahead. Another aspect of God's relationship with mankind is discussed later, when Silhouette takes up De Crousaz's objection to the expression "Man's imperial race", which, in the opinion of the antagonist, makes human beings too important. Silhouette maintains that, if De Crousaz had been conversant with the poem as a whole, he would have remembered other lines in which the author abases man's pride.

The third letter is taken up with complaints regarding the faultiness of Du Resnel's verse translation of the Essay - a subject that does not concern us here. The fourth, however, returns to De Crousaz, and begins with a discussion of Pope's attitude to the passions, which, in the view of the apologist, the Swiss professor has misunderstood. Once more he draws a distinction between Pope and Mandeville, who did not, like Pope, provide a nice balance between self-love and reason or regard reason as the guiding principle in the realm of passion. For Mandeville constantly stressed self-interest, and Pope did not. At the same time, it would be a mistake to imagine that Pope was inclined towards Ancient Stoicism: "Par là le Poëte fait voir la folie des Stoïciens, qui voudroient déraciner & détruire des passions, qui ne sont pas moins nécessaires au bien de chaque individu, qu'à celui des autres" (II, 103-104). Indeed, Pope finds God even in moments of extreme passion: "Nor God alone in the still calm we find,/ He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind" (Ep. II, ll. 109-110). In Pope's philosophy (he argues), passions are necessary to the formation of moral character. This, he claims, is the basis of his conception of natural law - a doctrine drawn from

Saint Paul and Locke, and which leads to a belief in revealed religion, for, on the occasionswhen reason is helpless to control passion, we are obliged to turn to faith. Thus Silhouette seeks to disprove that Pope inclined to deism.

The fifth letter, which speaks first of the "chain of love" ("Look around our world, behold the chain of love/ Combining all below and all above" (Ep. III, ll. 7-8)), seeks finally to disprove two other things: first, that Pope is a Spinozist - he returns to this because it is an objection so often made - and, secondly, that Pope is a Manicheist. Now, of course, this is "Morton's fork" with a vengeance! Clearly in refuting suggestions fromone side that Pope was a partisan of "Single Substance", and from the other that Pope was favouring the doctrine of "Two Principles", Silhouete was in something of a dilemma. Yet he continued undismayed his defence of the Essay on Man, maintaining that the thinker who explained evil within the framework of a single principle of divinity could not be accused of being infected by these heretical Manichean opinions that Bayle had done a great deal to bring into prominence and little to condemn.

The other charge was, however, more serious, and was not really to be dismissed (as Silhouette tried to do) with the argument that Pope distinguished God from his Creation. For there is little doubt that there is much in the Essay that could be attributed to Spinozist influences, however remote or indirect. Indeed, some critics do not seem to have been satisfied with the Warburton-Silhouette defence on this point, for, after 1742, they still continued to suggest that there is Spinozism in the Essay. This is particularly evident in reactions to Montesquieu's Esprit des lois: for instance, the Amsterdam edition of the second volume of the 1750 (April) issue of the Journal des savants prints this revealing passage:

> Il ne faut pas beaucoup de pénétration pour appercevoir que le Livre de l'Esprit des Loix est fondé sur le Système de la Religion Naturelle: Système impie, que l'on affecte de répandre dans des Livres de toute espéce, & que déjà des personnes de tout état, & en très-grand nombre, ont le malheur d'avoir embrassé. On a montré dans les Lettres contre le Poëme de Pope,

intitulé Essai sur l'Homme, que le Système de la Religion Naturelle rentre dans celui de Spinoza. C'en est assez pour inspirer à un Chrétien l'horreur qu'il doit avoir du nouveau Livre que nous annonçons...Ecoutez les promoteurs & les partisans de ce Système, ils n'ont pas la moindre pensée d'attaquer la Religion. Dans le fond ils n'écrivent que pour la combattre. Chez eux toutes les Religions, sans en excepter la Religion Chrétienne, ne sont regardées que comme choses de Police. Reconnoître en général un premier Etre; élever de tems en tems son coeur vers lui; s'abstenir des actions qui deshonorent dans le Climat que l'on habite, & remplir certains devoirs par rapport à la Société; voilà l'unique nécessaire, tout le reste n'est qu'accidental...Selon le nouveau Système, il y a entre tous les Etres qui forment ce que Pope appelle le grand tout, un enchaînement si nécessaire, que le moindre dérangement porteroit la confusion jusqu'au trône du premier Etre. C'est ce qui fait dire à Pope, que les choses n'ont pu être autrement qu'elles ne sont, & que tout est bien comme il est (pp. 529-531).

We have quoted this criticism at some length because it reveals that in 1750 Pope's system was still regarded as Spinozist and redolent of current versions of deism. It is all there: the basic recognition of the Supreme Being, the lay morality that teaches duty to one's fellows and to society, universal determinism, the chain of beings, the All, the theory that "Whatever is, is right" (Ep. I, l. 294). This system is "now very popular"; and it is not surprising that the man who composed the critical history of philosophy should have taken note of the current interpretations of Spinozism or that he should have shown a regard for Pope's ideas in the contes philosophiques. But neither Spinoza nor Pope invented these notions, which for the most part are to be discovered in Antiquity:

...la Secte Stoicienne a de si grands charmes pour un Sectateur de la Religion Naturelle, que l'on ne doit pas être surpris de l'enthousiasme avec lequel l'Auteur en parle. Les Stoïciens n'admettoient qu'un Dieu, mais ce Dieu n'étoit autre chose que l'Ame du Monde. Ils vouloient que tous les Etres depuis le premier fussent nécessairement enchaînés les uns avec les autres. Une nécessité fatale entraînoit tout. Ils nioient l'immortalité de l'Ame, & faisoient consister le souverain Bonheur à vivre conformément à la Nature. C'est le fond du Système de la Religion Naturelle (J. des sav., ed. cit., pp. 553-554).

These remarks lead us once again to Deslandes. We have already noted that, in his early prose writings, "Stoicism" is linked with an Epicurean ethic. This "Stoicism" (like his Gassendism) helps to explain his secret affection for Spinoza (and, as we shall see, for Pope). But it is as "Stoicism" profounder and more authentic that comes upon him in middle-age. Instead of the shallow "Stoicism" that facetiously dissociates itself from the severity of the Ancients, our author inclines towards

a metaphysic that is apparently almost synonymous with deism. As such, it becomes part of the doctrine for the select few, for the enlightened élite who dispense with the "police" of Revelation. Consequently we shall find it again in the doctrines of the philosophic contes of 1741-51.

Finally we must devote a little space to a philosopher we have mentioned several times already. In the contes of 1741 and 1751, there is also evidence of the influence of Leibnitzian ideas. It is not difficult to see why this should be so, first, because of the affinity of the Leibnitzian doctrine with some elements of Spinozism; secondly, because, thanks to the interest taken in France in ideas of British origin that in many ways ran parallel with his own, Leibnitz could hardly be ignored in the 1740s and 1750s. In his valuable introduction to Voltaire's Candide, Morize has furnished evidence of the importance of Leibnitzian ideas about this time. In 1726, Dupont-Bertres devoted one of his éloges to this philosopher; in 1728, the Abbé Houteville's Essai philosophique sur la Providence was constructed by using the best in Leibnitz; in 1732, the French translation of Chubb's New Essays on the Goodness of God mentioned Leibnitz and his disciple Wolff; two years later, Jaucourt produced a translation of Leibnitz with a biography; in 1736, there appeared some Nouvelles pièces sur les erreurs prétendues de la philosophie de Wolff, and, in the following year there was published at Leipsig an Esquisse d'une histoire complète de la philosophie de Wolff. Formey's Amusements littéraires contained allusions to Leibnitz; and two years later - the very year of the publication of Pigmalion - Du Vattel set forth his Défence du système leibnitzien contre les objections et les imputations de M. de Crousaz, contenues dans l'Examen de l'Essai sur l'Homme de Pope - Pope being at this time associated in philosophic circles with the thinker

whose writings he claimed not to have read at the time of composing his Essay.

Of the two contes we are about to study, La Fortune of 1751 is more positively Leibnitzian than the other story of 1741. Perhaps, since Pigmalion was so obviously Spinozist in places, it was the author's prudent decision to avoid a second condemnation by a Parlement that partly prompted him to choose a less "abominable" system; but we must also remember that, whereas Pigmalion deals with a problem of "substances", La Fortune is principally concerned with the existence and meaning of good and evil in the world. For this purpose the ideas of Leibnitz were perhaps more appropriate in the case of the second conte.

Certainly in the interim between the two there had been no diminution in the vogue enjoyed by Leibnitzian thought. In 1745, Muys considered that " le mal moral ne peut qu'orner beaucoup le théâtre de ce monde, et fournir à plusieurs classes d'intelligences un spectacle admirable, et bien digne de la sagesse et de la majesté de Dieu" (cit. Morize, Intr., xxviii) 1747 saw the appearance of three significant publications: a new edition of Jaucourt's translation of the Theodicée; the addition of several pages on the problem of evil to the 1737 edition of D'Argens's Philosophie du bon-sens; and (in Germany) Boëldicken's Nouvel Essai de Theodicée, which advanced theories regarding the origin of evil in the best possible world. If we add to these pieces of evidence the fact that Pope was very much "in the news" during this period, we shall see that, in discussing the problem of good and evil roughly within the limits of a Leibnitz-Pope formula, Deslandes was rather fdlowing the fashion of the time.

If we may be allowed to look a little beyond this period, we find that in 1756 Leibnitz and Pope are still being discussed and that the topic of one discussion centres round optimism and fatalism. What is more important, however, is the confirmation that this document gives to the philosophic parentage of the Essay on Man that we have tried to explain in this chapter. In the Preface to the celebrated Poème sur le désastre de

Lisbonne, Voltaire indicates a line of continuity linking Shaftesbury, Leibnitz, Bolingbroke and Pope;[6] and, stressing the theological implications of the famous "tout est bien", makes it clear that the disciples of Leibnitz and Pope are currently accused of fatalism: "Les critiques ont dit: 'Leibnitz, Pope, enseignent le fatalisme: et les partisans de Leibnitz et de Pope ont dit: 'Si Leibnitz et Pope enseignent le fatalisme, ils ont donc raison, et c'est à cette fatalité qu'il faut croire'" (Oeuvres, ed. Mol. IX, 468). This aspect of the contemporary trend of the philosophies of Leibnitz and Pope will be found in La Fortune of 1751. For, although the reader will not find the names of Spinoza, Leibnitz or Pope in the text either of Pigmalion or La Fortune, he will (if he is good enough to follow our analysis) meet their doctrines over and over again.

CHAPTER II PIGMALION

--Je voudrais bien que vous me dissiez quelle différence vous mettez entre l'homme et la statue, entre le marbre et la chair.
--Assez peu. On fait du marbre avec de la chair, et de la chair avec du marbre (Diderot, Oeuvres, ed. Assézat, II, 105).

a) Origins and Early Treatments of the Myth

Until late in the nineteenth century the story of Pygmalion, the sculptor, was considered to have been derived purely from a Cypriot legend, which was subsequently versified by Ovid. In 1880, however, the Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres (4me série, VIII, 60-68) contained an article in which Philippe Berger submitted some results of research into the matter. The learned contributor found (as eighteenth-century dictionaries had done (Encycl. art. Pygmalion; Nouv. Dict. port., ed. 1769, III, 680))two legends: the first, of Phoenician origin, spoke of Pygmalion, King of Tyre and brother of Dido, who killed his brother-in-law during a hunting-trip, and of Dido who then fled to Cyprus and thence to Africa, where she founded the city of Carthage; the second, a Cypriot tale, described Pygmalion as the son of Cilix and grandson of Agenor, King of Cyprus. It is in this latter myth that we find the hero depicted as a sculptor who, having fallen in love with the beautiful image he had made, implored Aphrodite to give it life. This she did, and from the subsequent union was born Adonis, who was later to be killed in hunting. The originality of Berger begins at this point, for he goes on to show that there are several connections between the two myths (such as the detail of death in the chase) which suggest a common source to be found in some oriental cosmogonic myth (cf. Frazer, The Golden

Bough, ed. 1929, pp. 332-333), [a conclusion unwittingly anticipated by Fontenelle, who confused the two stories by setting the scene in Tyre and then apparently leading up to the Cypriot legend (Oeuvres, ed. 1764, X, 169-186).] Berger finally suggested that, in time, the fabulous account of Creation was gradually displaced by a fabulous account of the birth of the arts.

This "aesthetic" version of the story was so widespread in Antiquity and into the early Christian era, that Fathers of the Church - for example, Clement of Alexandria and Arnobius - employed it to scourge man's lewdness and wicked perversion. Thus the emphasis had been shifted from a divine hero to a royal personage, and from a royal personage to a human sculptor capable of sinful "deviation" from the moral law. Indeed, this tendency is already to be found in Ovid's Metamorphoses (Bk. X, VIII), which provide the best-known literary source of the story. A glance at the Latin text reveals the possibilities offered. It is clear that Pygmalion is something of a rebel and a mysogynist, who, initially aesthetic and at times almost ascetic, flies to an extreme in his obliquity when admiration for a work of art develops into a passion. It is equally clear that there is little of the popular hero about Ovid's sculptor. As a lover bestowing caresses and gifts upon inanimate marble, he appears pitiable and even ridiculous: as a suppliant he is afraid to ask what he really desires; and, as witness of the subsequent magic, is fearful lest his senses be mocking him, Yet, at the end, he is indeed a hero in a more symbolic sense, for in the creation of Paphos we find a vestige of the ancient cosmogonic myth. Such are the details which, for specific purposes or from private predilection, Ovid's imitators selected and chose to emphasize. The "aesthetic-erotic" conception provides the Roman de la Rose with an artistic and erotic symbol, comparable (as Jean de Meung tells us) "come de souriz a lion" with the "image en leu de chaasse"; but there is something more, for the myth is interpreted in such a way as to stress the sculptor's sense of guilt and to high-light the terrifying aspects of

the process of animation (ed. Langlois, 1924, V, 58-59). This pre-occupation with the magic of metamorphosis recurs in certain mediaeval biographies of Ovid. In fourteenth-century texts we read: "Et est mutatio moralis et magica mutatio sicuti de Pimalione qui fecit virginem eburneam et per artem magicam mutavit eam in virginem; and: "magica est de ymagine Pygmalionis in virginem mutata" (F. Ghisalberti, "Mediaeval Biographies of Ovid", in Journal of Warburg Inst., IX (1946), pp. 52,55 and 42, n.1). It was this aspect of the Ovidian account, then, that appealed most to superstitious minds in the Dark Ages; yet fear of the "black art" is still very real in Shakespeare's Winter's Tale, to which the supposition of an animated statue supplies a dramatic dénouement. For instance: on the point of inviting Hermione to descend from the pedestal, Paulina observes: "...you'll think--/ Which I protest against--I am assisted/ By wicked powers", and commands: "...those that think it is unlawful business/ I am about, let them depart". Of course, in the crude and lusty Elizabethan era, the erotic elements of the tale had an equally strong appeal, and John Marston chose to emphasize them in order to suggest to his mistress the pleasures they might share (The Metamorphosis of Pygmalion's Image, in Works, ed.1887, III, 251 sqq.). This short poem closely follows Ovid's account. Pygmalion is filled with distaste for the opposite sex. He carves from ivory -although Marston later speaks of stone - a female statue and is immediately captivated by its beauty. His passion aroused, he fondles and caresses the image, half expecting it to blush at his attentions. He invokes Venus to bestow life and, "in changing stone to flesh" to grant his wishes. The wish is granted. The "stony substance" changes to flesh beneath his eager hands ("Each part like wax before the sun did melt"). Finally, we learn that the "gods of marriage" were graciously disposed towards this unusual pair of lovers, for that night Paphos was conceived. The wanton tone of the poem is in fact established in the dedication:[7] "My wanton muse lasciviously doth sing/ Of sportive

love, of lovely dallying.../ Force me not envy my Pygmalion:/ Then when they kindness grants me such sweet bliss,/ I'll gladly write thy Metamorphosis".

In emphasizing this aspect of the Ovidian account, Marston will appear in spirit very close to our eighteenth-century conteur; yet, since the Elizabethan poem never seems to have been translated, we must say in advance that it is the development of this aspect of the tradition, rather than the influence of any particular author, that accounts for the concupiscence of Deslandes's hero. Indeed, we are now in a position to discern two currents in the stream of this traditional portrayal. First, as we have seen, there is the "aesthetic-erotic" current, in which the degree of emphasis upon one or the other is conditioned by the author's inclinations and interests, by the medium and the times in which he writes and by the audience for which the work is intended. But we do not forget the "supernatural" current, related to the process of transformation. Now, in the eighteenth century there is an increasing tendency to view this aspect in a more "modern", scientific and in fact "philosophic" manner. And, like other forms of "magic", the magic of metamorphosis is rationalized into something more amenable to explanation, in accordance with the facts of experience and the dominant philosophies of the age. With this in mind, let us look at the content of the story of 1741, before proceeding to an analysis in the light of doctrines that were in vogue amongst contemporary free-thinkers.

Pygmalion is a talented Cypriot sculptor, working not for private profit but for immortal glory, and encouraged in this by his good friends. In the society of these good friends, he indulges in free-thinking, but in public is wise enough to conform to the bienséances of his times and to pay his respects to established religion. Eschewing excessive luxury and ostentation, he cultivates wit and tasteful pleasures amongst his intimate circle of acquaintance. At the age of twenty he is

urged to marry the daughter of a rich merchant, but, having made enquiries about her character, he decides to renounce marriage in favour of more transitory attachments; and, in his disillusionment, he resolves not to depict female beauty lest his passion should be aroused in the process.

One day, however, when he is sleeping in a myrtle-grove sacred to the goddess Venus, this divinity appears to him in a dream and proposes that, under her guiding hand, he should make a marble[8] statue of herself. Back in his studio, the sculptor complies with this request, and the resulting statue is of such perfection that it appears to be made of living flesh. Indeed, so beautiful is it, that the divinely inspired artist resolves to abandon an art that will never again yield such supreme excellence. It is at this moment that he dares to express his true desires: if only marble could come to life, his happiness would be complete. After all, he muses, how did the sculptor who created such a perfect image receive life? Matter can have extension, weight, motion and thought - it is simply a question of modifications of the All. Then one day he notices some slight movement in the statue: extended matter is gradually becoming thinking matter - through motion which is the link between them.

At last the statue, acquiring thought as well as movement, asks herself some fundamental philosophic questions about life, its origin and its meaning. Pygmalion arrives appropriately to supply some answers about the nature of things and about the sources of knowledge. But he is not only a "philosopher" who acknowledges the advantages of the "double système": he is a man of flesh and blood, whose passions are soon aroused by the charms of the image he has created. These he proceeds to satisfy with his beloved. But, aware that a surfeit of such delights would weaken their appeal, he turns to another appetite. Having ordered rare and exquisite table delicacies, he explains that taste demands that appetite should be satisfied only occasionally and that it should be well stimulated

in advance. After eight days in the exclusive company of his lady, the sculptor finds that happiness begins to pall. He therefore invites his friends to join them at a supper prepared with all manner of devices to excite the senses. At this point in the narrative we have a description of the petit souper with its delicate foods, amorous glances, gallant songs and flow of witticisms. Provoked by these things, Pygmalion suggests that the charming animated statue should become his bride; but she, disposed towards a looser alliance, proposes that they should, here and now before friends, decide never to part so long as they continue to appeal to each other.

Then Venus appears on a golden cloud, reminding Pygmalion always to woo his beloved and never to force her to love him. It is at this point that the story comes to its end, since "le reste de l'Histoire de Pigmalion n'a jamais été écrit".

Certain things are clear already: the cosmogonic element has been completely eliminated from the conte of 1741, for none but scientifically based cosmogonies appeal to eighteenth-century "philosophers"; the erotic and aesthetic ingredients are somewhat unequally balanced in an age when Boucher is treating mythological themes in a manner that suggests strong sensual appeal ("Boucher's pictures are generally inspired by lust" (Clive Bell, An Account of Fr. Paint., ed. 1936, p. 117)); the "magic" of metamorphosis is much diminished in this version by the fact that the sculptor's anterior speculations have suggested that such a transformation is possible within the frame-work of natural laws; the sinful "deviation" from the norm no longer scandalizes, and ~~his~~ audacity finds a more "modern" expression, for, like his creator, the hero is deeply interested in the nature of things, in the origin of knowledge and in an Epicurean ideal of enjoyment. We shall therefore consider the philosophic basis of the conte under headings that correspond to this three-fold expression of interest: pantheism, naturalism and hedonism,

b) The Doctrines of Pigmalion

The conte philosophique entitled Pigmalion, ou la statue animée and concerned with the relationship between extension and thought (and therefore also with the problem of life and death), is woven from three strands that are not always easy distinguishable, but which, to facilitate our study, we shall try to separate as far as possible. We begin with the pantheist strand.

1º Pantheism

This element we find chiefly in speculations regarding God, Nature and the Universe, and in the discussions between Pygmalion and his statue about the nature of life itself. An analysis of these speculations will serve to show how indebted the author is to Spinoza and to those who, whether they would have admitted the fact or not, had absorbed some of that philosopher's ideas.

God "...tous ces êtres n'en composent qu'un seul, qui est le Tout, qu'on appelle Dieu, la Nature, l'Univers. Tous les êtres particuliers tiennent à ce premier Etre, & participent plus ou moins à la Vie universelle" (ed. 1742, pp. 66-67).

This is the pantheist interpretation of Spinoza's philosophy - the one that seizes on the "Deus sive natura", but overlooks the qualification expressed in the distinction which Spinoza made between natura naturans and natura naturata, that is between God's creative power and His created Universe, or between God conceived as a free self-creating cause and God regarded as the system He created. Some modern writers find that Spinoza's true system is not really pantheistic, but a metaphysical expression of the underlying unity necessary to an arrangement based on the hypothesis of single substance. Thus Hampshire declares: "This so-called pantheistic doctrine can in fact be fairly represented as the metaphysical expression of the ideal or programme of a unified science, that is, of a completed science which would enable every natural change to be shown as a completely determined effect within a single system of causes; everything must be explicable within a

single theory" (Spinoza, ed. 1951, p. 47). From the Ethics themselves it is clear that Spinoza was not going to allow his reader to suppose that he was postulating the absolute identity of God and the World: "...by natura naturans we are to understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, or those attributes of substance which express eternal and infinite essence, that is to say...God in so far as He is considered as a free cause. But by natura naturata I understand everything which follows from the necessity of the nature of God, or of one of God's attributes, that is to say, all the modes of God's attributes in so far as they are considered as things which are in God, and which without God can neither be nor can be conceived" (tr. White, 1883, p. 30; Pt. I, Prop XXIX, Schol.) Thus Deslandes's point of view is not that of a pure Spinozist: nor indeed is it comparable with some ideas of Pope, for the author of the Essay on Man was even more precise about the distinction between Nature, which is the body of the Universe, and God, who is its soul - an attitude which admits close interdependence whilst denying identity. Yet the pure Spinozist distinction is so fine and so abstruse that we can hardly blame the pantheists of the eighteenth century for exclaiming with Diderot:

> On nous parle trop tôt de Dieu: autre défaut; on n'insiste pas assez sur sa présence. Les hommes ont banni la Divinité d'entre eux; ils l'ont réléguée dans un sanctuaire; les murs d'un temple bornent sa vue; elle n'existe point au delà. Insensés que vous êtes! détruisez ces enceintes qui rétrécissent vos idées; élargissez Dieu; voyez-le partout où il est, ou dites qu'il n'est point (Pensées philosophiques, XXVI, ed. Assézat, I, 138).

Truly these "philosophers" force upon us a rigorous choice of atheism or pantheism. The pantheism in question, the pantheism also of Pygmalion is that which is outlined, without hostile comment, in the Discours printed at the head of the fourth volume of the critical history (pp. 26-27). As the source of this is Bayle's article on Spinoza (H.c., IV, 27 n. a), the "philosophic" misinterpretation of Spinoza's "pantheism" is understandable.

God and Nature "Il y a apparence que le Tout, que le vrai Etre doit contenir toutes les modifications possibles; & par conséquent il ne doit moins penser qu'être étendu, moins raisonner que se mouvoir, moins avoir des sentimens qu'être figuré &c. Qui dit tout, ne fait aucune exception (pp. 67-68).

Though Bayle uses this word "modifications" many times in the same article to which we have just referred (Rem. N), the tone of the final sentence above is reminiscent of the rigorous geometrical method that Spinoza himself uses to prove the same point:

Corol 1. Hence it follows with the greatest clearness firstly, that God is one, that is to say...in nature there is but one substance, and it is absolutely infinite,as...we have already intimated.
Corol 2. It follows, secondly, that the thing extended (rem extensam) and the thing thinking (rem cogitantem) are either attributes of God or...affections of the attributes of God (p.13; Pt. I, Propn. XIV).

There is a good deal more in the passage from Pigmalion quoted above that takes us straight back to the Ethics, in which Spinoza declares that "everything which can be perceived by the infinite intellect as constituting the essence of substance pertains entirely to the one sole substance only, and consequently that substance thinking and substance extended are one and the same substance" (p. 52; Pt. II, Propn. VII. Schol.) Again, Pt. I, Propn. XV states: "Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can either be or be conceived without God". There is evidence, then, of Spinozism; but that does not necessarily mean that the ideas here were drawn directly from the Ethics. For in 1741 do we not find that Silhouette tries to defend Pope against De Crousaz's accusation of Spinozism that bears on this very issue? Indeed, was it not on this very point that we discovered Silhouette's argument to be unconvincing, since he could only declare that, if this were "Spinozism", then that doctrine was to be discerned in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Athenians? And, finally, did not the apologist go on to point out the important distinction found in Pope (but, significantly, absent in Pigmalion) between God and his Creation? The need for Warburton and the French translator to defend Pope on this issue, shows how readily the doctrine of the All was associated with Spinoza and with pantheism at this time.

Life and Death "A proprement parler...tout vit, & ce qui paroît cesser de vivre, revit d'une autre manière...Sçachez seulement, o divine Statue, que pour nous autres qui pensons, vivre c'est se ressouvenir, c'est pouvoir joindre ensemble quelques idées qui se suivent les unes les autres, & qui ne sont interrompues que par de courts intervalles. Quand le fil de ces idées est rompu cela s'appelle mourir. Mais on revit d'une autre manière, & alors recommence une nouvelle suite d'idées qui n'ont aucun rapport avec les premières" (pp. 69-71).

Here we are close to the pre-Socratic view of life, to ideas described in 1737 as "claires & vraisemblables", because they are superior to the Aristotelean notions of generation and decay (II, 230). We are closer still to the Eleatic opinion — that "rien ne vit...rien ne meurt" (II, 308). Moreover in the passage from Pigmalion quoted above there is more than a suggestion of the doctrine of palingenesis, which the author of the Histoire critique finds in Seneca and in the Ancient — Celts (I, 72-73 and 244); and , having referred to lines in Ecclesiasticus in which we learn "there is no new thing under the sun", the critical historian has been at pains to point out that Platonists and Stoics held the view we are now discussing:

Comme les Stoïciens admettoient aussi cette renaissance de toute la Nature, cette Palingénésie universelle, les Stoïciens osoient compter sur une sorte d'immortalité, toûjours flateuse à l'amour-propre. On souffriroit la mort, avoue Sénéque, avec plus de courage & de fermeté, si l'on pensoit que tout est dans le monde balancé de manière, que tout doit se détruire & se renouveller. Il n'y a point d'anéantissement, la vie conduit à la mort, & la mort ramene à la vie (I, 244)

Having already noted his regard for Seneca on this very issue of facing death with fortitude, we shall not be deceived by the exoteric presentation of the heretical doctrine of immortality that we find here. Nor is the notion that we are discussing limited to Ancient thought. In Leibnitz, for — instance, we discover a system of monads endowed with inner activity and indestructibility. Nature lives throughout the cosmos in such a way that there is no absolute death, but merely a change in relationships between the monads. In such an arrangement, death becomes a kind of sleep of short duration and "immortality" exists in the very nature of things. Moreover these notions are inherent in Leibnitzian metamorphosis, which, unlike metempsychosis, does not imply transference of life

to another creature, but transformation of life within the same creature[9] (Epist. ad Bernouillium (1698); v. Leibn, The Monadology etc., tr. Latta, ed. 1898, p. 114, n. 2). How, then, does the doctrine we find in Pigmalion connect with the Leibnitzian notions we have just indicated? We shall allow the author of Pigmalion to demonstrate this himself. In a passage located in the Discours at the beginning of the fourth volume -and the frequency of our allusions to this Discours are further proof of the value we have given it in our study - we find the identical expressions but a slightly different arrangement:

> Mais qu'est-ce que vivre? c'est se ressouvenir, c'est pouvoir lier ensemble un certain nombre d'idées, d'actions, de mouvemens. Si ces mouvemens, ces actions, ces idées ne sont coupées que par de courtes [sic] intervalles: cette interruption s'appelle sommeil. Si elle est sans retour, on la nomme mort, & elle peut passer pour le plus long de tous les sommeils qui regardent un seul & même être. Mais on ne doit pas s'imaginer pour cela que cet être meurt en effet & tombe dans l'anéantissement, il se reveille au contraire & revit d'une autre façon (pp. 20-21)

Now, it is of the greatest significance in assessing the origin of these ideas openly expressed in Pigmalion (and less ostensibly embodied in what we have chosen to consider a key to essential doctrines) to note the sentence that immediately succeeds the ones we have just quoted: "La monade, la semence, la graine où il est comme préformé & préordonné par la Nature, ne périt point & ne peut périr". It is therefore clear that it is from Leibnitz that he draws this aspect of his transformism.

To confirm this it can be shown how the idea of metamorphosis appears in Leibnitzian Principles of Nature and Grace: "Thus not only souls but also animals are ingenerable and imperishable: they are only developed, enveloped, clothed, unclothed, transformed. Souls never put off the whole of their body, and do not pass from one body into another body which is entirely new to them. Accordingly there is no metempsychosis but there is metamorphosis" (tr. Latta cit., p. 414). The idea of recollection too is to be discovered in the writings of Leibnitz, who, anxious to postulate the continuity of the life of the soul, expresses himself thus in a letter to Arnauld:

> Minds are not subject to these revolutions [i.e. of bodies],

> or rather those revolutions of bodies are subservient to the Divine economy regarding minds. God creates them when the time comes and detaches them from the body, at least from the earthly body, by death, since they must always retain their moral qualities and their recollection in order to be perpetual citizens of that universal all-perfect commonwealth, of which God is the Monarch, which can lose none of its members and the laws of which are higher than those of bodies (ibid, p. 117).

Again, in the Monadology the power of memory is represented as the hall-mark of the soul: "I think it right that the general name of Monads or Entelechies should suffice for simple substances which have perception only, and that the name of Souls should be given only to those in which perception is more distinct, and is accompanied by memory" (ibid, p. 230). We conclude, then, that most of the Pigmalion passage is to be found in the works of Leibnitz - the fact that Nature is living throughout, that the life of the soul is continuous, that there is no absolute death but a kind of metamorphosis, that therefore death is but a short sleep, and that recollection is the characteristic of the soul as distinct from the body and in truth the sign of consciousness.

What Leibnitz wrote on life and death is much more precise and positive than anything that can be found in Spinoza. Yet Spinozist influences cannot be overlooked as the possible points de départ. Indeed, many Leibnitzian notions are implicit in the thought of Spinoza, but there expressed in a form so sketchy that commentators have found difficulty in interpreting them. It is however probable that Spinoza did not intend us to take his word "eternity" in the usual sense of survival after the death of the body. Spinoza conceived eternity as being concerned with existence or with the essence of anything; duration of time is thus not the primary concern, which is in fact the absence of temporal predicates. Again, Spinoza's definition of mind is certainly pertinent to our search; for he regarded the mind as a set of ideas reflecting a particular set of modifications of Nature conceived as extension. It is this succession of ideas considered as the mind that links up with what Deslandes says of life and death. However, Spinoza does not proceed very far with discussions

regarding the immortality of the soul of which he speaks with a certain reserve: "The human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body, but something of it remains which is eternal" (tr. White, p. 269, Pt. V, Propn. XXIII). Clearly Spinoza's views on this matter were too abstruse or vague to satisfy the "Spinozists", some of whom tried to improve on the original by adding notions that were current at the time or of their own invention. This is true of the Essai de métaphysique dans les principes de B... de Sp..., attributed to Boulainvilliers, and in which we come upon this paragraph which supplies a further parallel for our passage from the conte of 1741:

> Il s'ensuit donc que je ne mourrai pas tout entier, et qu'une grande partie de moi-même échappera à la ruine de mon existence modale, sans que je puisse toutefois me flatter d'avoir après ma mort, connaissance ou notion de ce que je suis, ou que j'aurai été; puisque je n'en ai aucune de l'existence précédente de toutes les parties de matière dont je suis à présent composé, lesquelles existaient aussi réellement, avant que je fusse, qu'elles existeront, après que je ne serai plus (cit. Wade, The Clandestine Org. etc., p. 120).

The first phrase here is pure Spinoza, but the rest appears to consist of conjectures which may very well follow from the Spinoza text, but are certainly not to be found in the works of the master. It is of great interest to us to note that these speculations are closely allied to those of Leibnitz and to those of Deslandes - the same notion of the breaking of the succession of consciousness and the substitution of another; the same implied denial of orthodox conceptions of immortality, which is of course a negation also to be read into Spinoza's remarks on the subject.

Matter and Soul "Tout dépend peut-être d'un peu plus ou d'un peu moins de mouvement, d'un certain arrangement de parties... Ici la matière est étendue, là elle pèse, plus loin elle se meut, plus loin encore elle pense. Ce ne sont peut-être là que différentes modifications qui concourent à former un tout parfait" (pp. 46-47).

This shall serve as our point of transition between our division into pantheist and naturalist tendencies. For instance, the tradition of Spinoza and Leibnitz still holds sway here. A compound substance is constantly changing because the monads are constantly changing. Sometimes, indeed, Leibnitz declares

the indistinctness of matter and souls; as in this passage from the Monadology: "Whence it appears that in the smallest particle of matter there is a world of creatures, living beings, animals, entelechies, souls" (tr. Latta, p. 256) Turning now to Spinoza, we find in Janet an example of a Spinozist who holds views similar to those of Deslandes. Referring to Dom Deschamps, Janet explains: "...le tout universel est un être qui existe...dont tous les êtres sensibles ne sont que des nuances" (Les Maîtres de la pens. mod., p. 132). This word "nuances" coincides with what Deslandes says about the "modifications" of the "tout", especially as Deschamps considered that the All included everything existing metaphysically and physically at the same time.

The other source is a naturalist one. It was Locke amongst modern thinkers who, by his guarded hypothesis of thinking matter set off a whole chain of materialist reasoning in the eighteenth century. These speculations went far beyond what Locke said openly in the famous Essay: "...it is not harder to conceive how thinking should exist without matter, than how matter should think" (Bk. II, Ch. 23, parag. 32); and: "We have the ideas of matter and thinking, but possibly shall never be able to know, whether any mere material being thinks, or no..." (Bk. IV, Ch. 3, parag. 6). It is also difficult to separate Locke from Newton on this topic, since the speculations of the first and the discoveries of the second were largely responsible for naturalist theories about thinking matter. They are both to be found in our extract from Pigmalion. The reiteration of "perhaps" and the hypothesis itself are Locke's; but the ideas about weight and movement are Newtonian.

2ª Naturalism

Several other pages of the conte are obviously inspired more by Locke than by Spinoza. We have seen that it is impossible to separate the two currents, and for this reason we repeat that it is largely a question of degree of emphasis.

In the pages we now consider, the accent is more definitely upon thinking matter, upon the notion of l'homme-machine and l'âme-machine, and sensualist theories about the origin of ideas and sources of knowledge. We return first to the question of thinking matter, which is so important in the work of 1741.

Thinking Matter "Qu'est-ce que la Matière?...Il est vrai que nous connoissons quelques propriétés de la Matière; mais ces propriétés sont-elles les seules qui lui appartiennent?...Déja quelques Philosophes tombent d'accord que l'impénétrabilité, que la pensanteur ou la tendance vers un centre, ne sont point essentielles à la Matière: témoin le Feu, & peut-être l'Air. Qu'est-ce donc qui lui est essentiel?...nous n'en sçavons rien;— & le peu qui nous en est connu, le peu qu'apperçoivent nos foibles regards, n'exclud point la Pensée (pp. viii-xii).

"Comme le mouvement est le milieu par où doit passer la matière, pour, de non-pensante qu'elle étoit, devenir pensante...(p. 57).

This conception of thought as a possible attribute of matter was one that Deslandes had already found amongst the atomists of Antiquity, for whom he showed such sympathy in the Histoire critique, and again in the Stoics who also conceived motion as the medium between modifications of the single substance, and the link between extension and thought (II, 414). In an important passage of the work of 1737, Deslandes unconsciously anticipated the judgement of the Parlement de Dijon who condemned the conte of 1741 to the fire:

Les Atomistes, comme Leucippe, Démocrite, Epicure, étoient une sorte d'Athées qui, sans avoir recours à aucune opération divine, n'admettoient que du vuide & des corps diversement situés; qui nioient que l'étendue fût essentielle à la Matiere, & convenoient en même tems que la pensée pouvoit être un de ses attributs, & l'étoit en effet (II, 322-323).

Now admittedly, in Pigmalion, divine intervention occurs; but this does not explain away the fact that, in his speculations the sculptor had already forseen the possibility of transformation within natural laws, and was therefore indulging in "atomist" and therefore "atheistic" thinking. But, of course, in the eighteenth century one could certainly envisage thinking matter without considering one's self an atheist. We think for instance of the case of the theistic Voltaire who in the Traité de métaphysique went far beyond what he had said in the letter on Locke in 1734:[10]

Il est impossible, me dit-on, que la matière pense. Je ne vois pas cette impossibilité. Si la pensée était un composé de la

matière, comme ils me le disent, j'avouerais que la pensée devrait être étendue et divisible; mais si la pensée est un attribut de Dieu; donné à la matière, je ne vois pas qu'il soit nécessaire que cet attribut soit étendu et divisible; car je vois que Dieu a communiqué d'autres propriétés à la matière lesquelles n'ont ni étendue ni divisibilité; le mouvement, la gravitation, par exemple, qui agit sans corps intermédiaires, et...dont la cause est aussi cachée que celle de la pensée (Oeuvres, ed. Mol. XXII, 211-212).

This is further confirmation of the remark we have made already to the effect that it is not merely the hypothesis of Locke, but also Newton's gravitation theory that is responsible for eighteenth-century notions of thinking matter. Indeed, discussion of "new" properties of matter apparently helps to forestall objections to Locke's hypothesis.

If we return to another passage of Pigmalion we shall see how Locke's postulate can be blended with theories of survival that arise from the Monadology of Leibnitz. That speculations about thinking matter should emerge from a tale in which the hero declaims to his statue Leibnitzian notions is no longer surprising when we learn that Deslandes's great contemporary, Voltaire, was trying to reconcile the two: "He was peculiarly fascinated by Locke's insistence upon the possibility that the soul is 'corporeal', and that God may have endowed a 'material substance' with thought; so that thought is a faculty of that substance, and not its essence. He asked whether, in that case, at the dissolution of the body, some monad thus endowed with life and thought may not survive the rest, in a new order of being" (Noyes, Voltaire, ed. 1936, p. 530). Is not this a remarkable parallel with the basic thought of Pigmalion, as far as we have analysed it?

And if thinking matter could be reconciled with the philosophies of Locke, Newton and Leibnitz, how much more snugly did it fit into Spinoziem! Let us recall at this point that we have had reason to associate our author with the "Coterie Boulainvilliers". Another habitué of this circle was Jean-Baptiste de Mirabaud, permanent secretary of the Académie Française, and one who (if we may believe Paul de Mirabaud) showed his writings only to a chosen few: "...il ne faisait part de ses productions qu'à une petit nombre d'amis et de connaisseurs, auxquels il les

lisait lorsqu'il en était prié..." (cit. Wade, The Clandestine Organization and Diffusion etc., p. 209). Not only, however, is this esotericist comparable with Deslandes in that respect, but his speculations on the problem of thinking matter are almost identical with those we have found in the work of 1741:

> S'il est vrai que la matière soit incapable de penser, certainement l'existence de l'esprit est pleinement démontrée, mais si nous n'avons qu'une idée imparfaite de la matière, l'argument ne conclut rien. Or il est absolument impossible de prouver que la matière soit aussi parfaitement connue qu'on se l'imagine. Outre les propriétés de l'étendue qu'on lui accorde, elle en a vraisemblablement d'autres que nous n'imaginons ni ne concevons pas, et peut-être que les sensations et la pensée dont on croit aujourd'hui le corps incapable, sont des propriétés de la matière lesquelles ne nous sont point connues (ibid, pp. 214-215).

Thus, as we have said, the notion of thinking matter is at the very centre of the doctrines in the first of Deslandes's contes philosophiques; and it acquires this position of importance because it is the meeting-point of so many influences.

Man-Machine "C'est ainsi qu'un enfant au berceau ressemble à quelque chose de brut, & de plus brut encore, de plus informe que du marbre. La machine se développe peu à peu, ses ressorts jouent les uns contre les autres, les fluides & les solides se combattent & résistent tour à tour, c'est une action & une réaction continuelle. Enfin, la machine acquiert toute sa perfection, on voit la pensée & le raisonnement prendre des accroissemens successifs...Ensuite, la machine décroît, s'use, se détraque, périt. (pp. 54-55)"

"Les Enfans...de Statues qu'ils étoient...deviennent raisonnables" (p. 73).

Here is clearly a mechanistic explanation of human life. As such, it is removed from the pure philosophy of Spinoza and close to that of the materialists like La Mettrie, whose Homme-Machine bears a date but seven years after that of the first edition of Pigmalion. Yet the expression "fluides & les solides" reminds us of a passage in the Ethics:

> 1. The human body is composed of a number of individuals of diverse nature, each of which is composite to a high degree.
> 2. Of the individuals of which the human body is composed, some are fluid, some soft, and some hard.
> 3. The individuals composing the human body, and consequently the human body itself, are affected by external bodies in many ways.
> 4. The human body needs for its preservation many other bodies by which it is, as it were, continually regenerated.
> 5. When a fluid part of the human body is determined by an external body, so that it often strikes upon another which is soft, the fluid part changes the plane of the soft part, and

leaves upon it, as it were, some traces of the impelling external body (tr. White, pp. 65-66; Pt. II, Propn. XIII, Post.). There is also more than a trace of the notion, expressed in the fourth part of the Ethics, that reality and perfection are the same thing; and that, since perfections are but modes of thought, greater perfection must accompany greater knowledge, or (as Deslandes has it) an increase in thinking and reasoning power. Where the text of 1741 departs from Spinoza, however, is in the complete exclusion of God from the explanation - the exclusion, therefore, of anything but the mechanistic view of the workings of body and mind. Deslandes is therefore close indeed to the materialist tradition (the "clock-work" explanation of human development) - that tradition which Spinoza condemned when he averred: "...experience has taught no one hitherto what the body, without being determined by the mind, can do and what it cannot do from the laws of nature alone, in so far as nature is considered merely as corporeal" (tr. White, p. 109; Pt. III, Propn. II, Schol.). For, in Spinoza's system, thought does not happen within a purely mechanical pattern: it is merely another aspect of the divine unity of life, and cannot be fitted into theories of man-machine. It is in the eighteenth-century materialists - Diderot, La Mettrie, Helvétius, D'Holbach - that we find the notion of homme-machine and (as we shall see) of homme-statue, the notion therefore that the child is initially a physical substance like marble (a favourite simile, this), which is later to acquire the powers of feeling and reasoning. It is interesting to note that the idea recurs in slightly different form in La Fortune, where we read: "...les autres enfin, plus vils que les plus vils automates, agissent par instinct & ne connoissent pas même la raison; tout les étonne, ils ouvrent des yeux stupides & ne voyent rien; leur âme est plus informe que le marbre le plus brut..." (ed. 1751, pp. 190-191). Here, however, the gradation of beings comes into the question. It is no longer a uniform scheme of development applicable to all human beings, and according to which the child is as amorphous as marble, and indeed even more so. In 1751, the gradation of

beings allows Deslandes to suppose that there are some adults who continue in this brutish state of existence.

Soul-Machine "L'Ame ressent les mêmes diminutions: elle n'étoit d'abord rien, elle devient quelque chose, elle se fortifie; elle retombe peu à peu dans un état d'anéantissement, elle s'anéantit enfin. Voilà la vie de l'Ame peu différente de la vie du Corps" (pp. 55-56).

It is of course Spinozistic to treat the soul on the same plane as the body, but the tone of the passage is not purely Spinozistic, and indeed Spinoza himself would hardly have recognized it. In fact it is evidence of speculations current at the time. For instance, in Diderot's Promenade du sceptique and at a moment when the question of anéantissement is certainly under discussion (ed. Assézat, I, 222), Le Marronnier declares: "Il n'y a point de rendez-vous, si ce que vous appelez âme n'est qu'un effet de l'organisation. Or, tant que l'économie des organes dure, nous pensons; nous déraisonnons quand elle s'altère. Lorsqu'elle s'anéantit, que devient l'âme? D'ailleurs, qui vous a dit que, dégagée du corps, elle pouvait penser, imaginer, sentir?" (ibid, p. 223). This is surely Deslandes's point of view in associating the life of the soul with that of the body. It is a point of view easily distinguished from the spinozist and Leibnitzian traditions, which, as we have seen, led Deslandes into assuming some sort of immortality for the soul, arising, it will be remembered, from a metamorphosis, an interruption in the sequence of ideas that is the soul, and transition to a different set of ideas. Thus the contradiction the reader may feel in reading these different pages of Pigmalion - pages in which immortality is first allowed and then disallowed in the word anéantissement - is exphined by the fact that, in the first case, the ideas are Leibnitzian, in the second, naturalist and materialist. We admit that for Leibnitz too the soul is an automaton, and in his New System we do in fact learn of the correspondence between the soul and the body; but for Leibnitz the soul is a spiritual automaton. Moreover it is the body that is adapted to the life of the soul - not, as in Deslandes's text, the soul to

the body:

> ...as the nature of the soul is to represent the universe in a very exact way...the succession of representations which the soul produces for itself will correspond naturally to the succession of changes in the universe itself; while, on the other hand, the body has also been adapted to the soul to fit the circumstances in which the soul is conceived as acting outwardly. This adaptation of the body to the soul is the more reasonable inasmuch as bodies are made only for spirits, which alone are capable of entering into fellowship with God and celebrating His glory (tr. Latta, p. 315).

In conclusion, then: it is Diderot who, like Deslandes at this point, excludes God, and who ties the fate of the soul to that of the body. Leibnitz, on the other hand, spoke of metamorphosis, not of annihilation.

First Questions about Existence "La Statue, non plus Statue, pensa, & dans le même moment elle s'écria: 'Que suis-je, & qu'étois-je il n'y a qu'un instant? Je ne me comprens point: je ne me connois point. A quoi suis-je destinée? Pourquoi m'a-t-on tirée du néant? Tout ce que j'apperçois, tout ce qu'il m'est permis de connoître, c'est que j'existe & que je sens que j'existe. Mais d'où vient ma pensée? Qu'est-ce que penser? Je me replie sur moi-même, & je ne connois rien à mon être. O pensée! vous m'appartenez en propre: vous êtes le Sceau de mon existence; mais j'ignore tout le reste" (pp. 58-60).

Some "philosophers" of the eighteenth century studied the first reactions of a person suddenly endowed with a "new" sense, and therefore exhibited unusual interest in persons born blind, deaf or dumb, or suddenly relieved of these afflictions. For instance, as early as 1703 (Hist. Ac. Sc., ed. Amst. 1707, pp. 22-23) Fontenelle discussed the case, reported by Félibien, of a young person of the town of Chartres who "sourd & muet de naissance, commença tout d'un coup à parler"; and a mere three years before the publication of Deslandes's Pigmalion, Voltaire told of the results of Cheselden's operation to restore the sense of sight to a young fellow of fourteen:

> Son expérience confirma tout ce que Locke et Barclay avaient si bien prévu. Il ne distingua de longtemps ni grandeur, ni situation, ni même figure...Ce ne fut qu'au bout de deux mois d'expérience qu'il put apercevoir que les tableaux représentaient des corps solides...Comment nous représentons-nous donc les grandeurs et les distances? De la même façon dont nous imaginons les passions des hommes, par les couleurs qu'elles peignent sur leurs visages, et par l'altération qu'elles portent dans leurs traits. Il n'y a personne qui ne lise tout d'un coup sur le front d'un autre la douleur, ou la colère. C'est la langue que la Nature parle à tous les yeux; mais l'expérience

seule apprend ce langage (Oeuvres, ed. Mol. XXII, 469-470). With such ideas circulating in "philosophic" circles in the late 1730s, it is not surprising that Deslandes should have deprived his statue initially of the ability to prove her existence by a priorist methods. Thus in the conte we have a partly sensualist proof: all that introspection discloses is the existence of thought itself, but not, as we see, the first proof which is a feeling and not a rational concept. The Cartesian cogito is not given priority in 1741. Indeed, as early as 1724, the former tutor and friend of our author, Claude Buffier, who had distinct leanings towards Lockian principles, spoke of: "...cette première proposition, qui est d'une évidence invincible: Je pense, je sens, j'existe" (Traité des premières vérités, art. 11, in Oeuvres, ed. Bouillier, p.8). That is to say: since he considered the Cartesian proof "puerile", he inserted the empiricist proof as well. Deslandes has proceeded a step further by reversing the first two items.

In early editions of the Histoire critique de la philosophie we find a frontispiece showing man surrounded by various aspects of Nature and asking: "Qui suis-je? où suis-je et d'où suis-je venu?". In 1741 his answer is essentially that of an empiricist: we know nothing; we feel our own existence. It is a scepticism that we rediscover in the Lettre sur les aveugles of Diderot (1749), where we read: "Car, que savons-nous? ce que c'est que la matière? nullement; ce que c'est que l'esprit et la pensée? encore moins..." (Oeuvres, ed. Assézat, I, 329-330); and it marks that precedence of feeling that, in this same year 1749, Buffon was to establish in his short analysis of a "first man": "J'imagine donc un homme tel qu'on peut croire qu'était le premier homme au moment de la création, c'est-à-dire, un homme dont le corps et les organes seraient parfaitement formés, mais qui s'éveillerait tout neuf pour lui-même et pour tout ce qui l'environne" (v. Oeuvres, ed. Flourens, II, 133-137). For, unlike Condillac's statue of 1754 which was to reason too soon, Buffon's "man", finding that he did not know where he was, what he was or whence he came,

opened his eyes and at first thought external objects part of himself; then perceived the sun, experienced sounds and took account of a thousand objects, noticed certain odours, found his bearings by touch, and in short learned about the world by sense and by feeling. Finally, if we recall the statue's questions recorded for us in the passage we quoted at the head of this section, we shall find something comparable Voltaire's Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne of 1756: "Que peut donc de l'esprit la plus vaste étendue?/ Rien: le livre du sort se ferme à notre vue./ L'homme, étranger à soi, de l'homme est ignoré./ Que suis-je? où suis-je? où vais-je? et d'où suis-je tiré?"(Oeuvres, IX, 477). Moreover, Voltaire's "corollary" is in the same spirit as Deslandes's passage: "Il est clair que l'homme ne peut par lui-même être instruit de tout cela. L'esprit humain n'acquiert aucune notion que par l'expérience..." (ibid, n. 1). In this we surely discover the same questions, the same scepticism and the same insistence upon empiricist premises.

The Origin of Ideas "D'abord, ils reçoivent ces idées & ces connoissances par leurs Sens: ils voyent, ils entendent, ils touchent, ils sentent. Les autres hommes leur apprennent ensuite ce que les Sens n'ont fait que leur montrer, que leur indiquer. Ils combinent enfin eux-mêmes ce qu'ils ont entrevu & ce qu'on leur a appris: c'est le fruit des réfléxions. Par-là se forment les idées, s'acquièrent des connoissances (pp. 73-74).

This is pure empiricism. Like Locke, Deslandes here divides the origin of ideas into two parts, both of which are related to experience rather than to innate notions. There are ideas from sensation and ideas from reflection, occasioned respectively by sensible objects and by the operation of our minds. Thus we have, as it were, two kinds of senses: those that teach us about the world outside, and a sort of internal sense (reflection which combines sense-impressions received at some earlier period in our lives). On this point, the Lettre sur les aveugles offers another parallel with the conte that preceded it by eight years. In both we find that sense-impressions are regarded as the "raw material" of knowledge, and that it is contact with others that turns sense-impressions into ideas.

In Diderot we read: "...c'est l'expérience seule qui nous apprend à comparer les sensations avec ce qui les occasionne; que les sensations n'ayant rien qui ressemble essentiellement aux objets, c'est à l'expérience à nous instruire sur des analogies qui semblent être de pure institution..." (I, 320). Another parallel is supplied in Boulainvilliers's treatise entitled: Considérations abrégées des opérations de l'entendement humain sur les idées, which, if we may believe Wade, "discloses Boulainvilliers attempting to comprehend the principles of Locke's psychology". Of this attempt the American writer submits the following summary:

> ...three operations are noted: (1) perception "qui est le premier acte de l'esprit", (2) attention, consisting in part of contemplation and in part of memory, and (3) association of ideas which are "les actes par lesquels l'esprit distingue les idées, les compare, les étend, les compose, et en forme des abstractions" (The Cland. Orgn. etc., p. 100).

We have cited this out of its chronological order because it allows us to say that on the question of empiricism there is some common ground between the disciples of Locke and the disciples of Spinoza; for although Spinoza himself was far from a sensualist, it is clear that some French Spinozists were interested in Locke's theory of ideas.

The Supreme Good "Je sens que si j'existe, je dois exister avec contentement, avec satisfaction de moi-même" (p. 61). This is far removed from the summum bonum of Spinoza, who located it in more perfect knowledge of the Divine Nature. And it appears too suggestive of present satisfaction to conform to the lofty Leibnitzian ideas of freedom, felicity and wisdom. On the other hand, the choice of the word "contentment" (rather than "pleasure") suggests the influence of Bolingbroke and Pope. On the whole, however, if we take this declaration of the supreme good along with the descriptions of sensual delights subsequently enjoyed by Pygmalion and his lady, we may well suspect that in these words we have a link with the hedonist tradition of our author's early ~~prose~~ works. Thus the passage we have cited above will form a bridge between our review of naturalist and empicirist sections of the conte, and the study we must now make of the influence of hedonist ideas.

3º Hedonism

This is the last time that this strain assumes any degree of importance in Deslandes's major works. Even here, however, it is subsidiary to the two other elements we have discussed. Indeed, it is subsidiary in the way the biographical part is to the present study; and in that analogy there is more than is immediately apparent.

Pygmalion, we are told, is an honnête homme. He therefore lives voluptuously but without ostentation; he thinks "avec hardiesse" (p.9), but at the same time he remains on the surface an "exact observateur des bienséances dont la Religion est la principale" (ibid). Again, probably like his creator Deslandes, he has decided to renounce marriage, in which the risks of making a fatal mistake are too overwhelming. Preferring, therefore, to take his pleasures lightly and to vary his amorous adventures, no matter what the priesthood thinks of his fickleness, he devotes himself to cultivating a tasteful volupté. We recall that he makes love to his animated statue, the personification of his ideal of beauty and physical charm. This too he describes as volupté (p. 84), and uses the pleasurable sensation to persuade the statue of "reality". And, at the end of their love-making, their eyes are heavy with sensual joy: "Ils étoient pleins d'une douce langueur, & ne respiroient que la volupté" (p. 94). With the philosophic elements, then, we find the aesthetic and erotic aspects of Ovid's story, and we are impressed by the constant play on the word volupté. It is dominant once more in the pleasures that follow those we have described above. The sculptor delights his mistress with a tastefully chosen meal - dried fruits, fresh fruits served with honey, cakes made of the finest flour and milk, and containing almonds and pistachio-nuts. He offers her the wine of his native island: "Ce vin joignoit à un petit goût d'amertume qui lui étoit propre, tout le liant & tout l'agréable du vin de Lesbos" (p. 98); and, since she is a beginner in the art of voluptuousness, he explains the technique of savouring table-delights. This, we remember, depends

upon cultivating one's taste, "mais il ne faut le satisfaire que par intervalles: il faut même l'irriter plutôt que le satisfaire. Pour bien goûter les plaisirs, il est nécessaire que quelque besoin les précède. Ils ont alors tout le piquant qu'ils doivent avoir". Then we come upon the devise of his early writings in prose and in verse, the slogan of Deslandes, the devotee of the Epicurean circles: "La Volupté demande de l'oeconomie" (pp. 99-100).

After several days of conversation and repasts interspersed with caresses, Pygmalion, "comme il étoit très-instruit dans l'art des voluptez" (p. 103), perceives that it is time to terminate for the moment this delicious mode of life. He therefore takes his new mistress into society, or rather he brings society to her, for he invites his friends to join them at supper. The scene is carefully set; the air is scented with exquisite perfumes; the curtains and furniture are so arranged as to give the impression of negligence. Over all reigns wit and refinement: "Quelques-uns des Convives s'avisèrent à table de faire en sa faveur des chansons qui étoient galantes, mais longues & d'un goût métaphysique. Un trait d'esprit les terminoit, sans beaucoup de paroles" (pp. 116-117). "Le repas s'égayoit de plus en plus...", and, as his amorous feelings grow, Pygmalion proposes marriage to his statue; to which, in her ingenuousness and good sense, she replies:

> Je vous jure, moi, que tant que vous me plairez, je ne vous abandonnerai point; je vous jure de plus, que je ferai tous mes efforts pour vous plaire toujours. A ce prix aimons-nous. Laissez-les sermens à ceux qui n'en connoissent pas la force, aux fous & aux imbécilles. Pour nous, cher Pigmalion, engageons-nous devant vos Amis qui sont devenus les miens, à ne nous point quitter tant que nous nous plairons l'un à l'autre (pp. 120-122).

Such are the Epicurean, libertine, hedonist elements of this conte philosophique - recollections of Paris in the last years of the Grand Règne, savoured in retrospect. For Pygmalion's attitudes to women, to marriage, to free-thinking, and to the clergy are the attitudes of Deslandes himself in youth. Again, the elegant, tasteful sensuous delights, the exotic dishes, the rare wines, the witty and animated conver-

sation, the amorous glances, the songs that ended in a shaft of wit - these were joys to be experienced at the Temple and allied societies. How do we know that Deslandes was thinking of precisely these circles? To the details of the preparations for the repast to which Pygmalion invites his chosen friends there is a foot-note. It informs us that the details in question were taken from a Chanson of Jacques Vergier who "sçavoit ennoblir la débauche, & rendre la volupté polie & spirituelle" (pp. 106-107, n.). We remember that, apart from being a naval official and a libertine poet, this person Vergier also frequented the Temple Society."

Such is the triple harmony of this conte philosophique of 1741 - the three-part harmony that results from combining pantheism of Spinozist origin with naturalism from empiricists and materialists of Lockian descent, and with hedonism from the Gassendist circles. The bridge between Gassendism and Spinozism we noted earlier in this study; the link between these two and the empiricism of Locke is found in the doctrine of the single substance, of thinking matter, and in atomistic hylozoism and the theory of gravitation. For the central fact of the tale is the metamorphosis of marble into flesh - a transformation no longer (in the eighteenth century) regarded as implying either divine or diabolic agency, but rather as illustrative of man's attempted penetration into Nature's deepest mystery, the link between matter and mind. And we shall see that the implications of this transformation were too enormous to allow the ancient myth to remain idle in a century of scientific curiosity and philosophic temerity.

c) The Animated Statue in Eighteenth-Century France

The appeal of the Pygmalion story in eighteenth-century France is quite remarkable. For instance the "aesthetic" Pygmalion appears in the opéra-ballets of Houdard de la Motte (1700) and his plagiarist, Ballot de Sovot (1748), who merely fit a gallant hero into a pastoral scene. It is interesting to note, moreover, that the story becomes the vehicle for comedy in a number of pieces mentioned in the Correspondance littéraire (IV, 340 n.1; XII, 464).[12] The myth is also popular with the painters. In 1717, Jean Raoux of the Temple Society submitted Pygmalion amoureux de sa statue, which in rococo style reflects the ideals of the Epicurean circles and the Regency; a mid-century canvas attributed to J-B Deshayes, son-in-law of Boucher, mirrors the voluptuousness of the latter's mythological studies and dramatically depicts the effects of "magic" upon the sculptor and his apprentice; in 1777, Jean-Jacques Lagrenée produced a much more sensitive and delicate masterpiece, in artistic classification mid-way between the extravagance of Boucher and the restraint of the neo-Classicists; Laurent Pécheux's Pygmalion et Galatée of 1785 is cold and formal in the classical idiom, and Jean-Baptiste Regnault's Pygmalion priant Vénus d'animer sa statue (of the same year) gives the impression of marble conveyed to canvas.

The myth appealed equally to Falconet, who chose the medium of sculpture; and in fact it was this small composition, Pygmalion aux pieds de sa statue qui s'anime (1763) that aroused the enthusiasm of Diderot (Oeuvres, X, 221-223, 426; XVIII, 123, 333) - an enthusiasm not divorced from eroticism, and which therefore was to excite the reproof of Goëthe in Diderots Versuch über die Mahlerei (Werke, Weimar, XLV (1900), p. 263).[13] This was not the only time that Diderot was attracted to the Pygmalion story, in which he also found "philosophic" possibilities. It is to be noted, for instance, that at the beginning of the Entretien entre d'Alembert et Diderot he speaks once more of Falconet's group. Perhaps it sounds presumptuous to suggest that Deslandes's treatment of the

legend also was a source of inspiration to Diderot; but, as the latter did not hesitate to plagiarize the Histoire critique, the supposition must at least be accounted credible. What, then, is the evidence? In the detailed introduction to the 1951 edition of the Lettre sur les aveugles, Niklaus lists the elements of Diderot's thought between 1746 and 1749 as deism, scepticism, naturalism and a sort of Spinozism sometimes imperfectly comprehended. Here, then, we have already some common interests. Secondly, in the Lettre sur les sourds et les muets of 1751, Diderot conceived a notion regarding a society of five persons, possessing one sense each.[14] This form of philosophic speculation depending on an imaginary experiment with the senses, is similar in that respect to the parts of our conte of 1741 dealing with the animation of the statue and recounting some of the explanations put forward by the sculptor. But it is the Entretien entre d'Alembert et Diderot and the Rêve de d'Alembert, composed in 1769, that furnish the most striking evidence. Just as Deslandes's sculptor explained: "Ici la matière est étendue, là elle pèse, plus loin elle se meut, plus loin encore elle pense! Ce ne sont peut-être là que différentes modifications qui concourent à former un tout parfait" (pp. 46-47), so Diderot speaks of "une substance dans l'univers, dans l'homme dans l'animal" (II, 117). There are still more impressive similarities. In the Entretien D'Alembert requests: "Je voudrais que vous me dissiez quelle différence vous mettez entre l'homme et la statue, entre le marbre et la chair"; to which Diderot replies: "Assez peu. On fait du marbre avec de la chair, et de la chair avec du marbre", and then proceeds to explain how marble may be pulverized, turned into humus and so on (II, 105-108). Here, then, is the theme of the animated statue, associated, as in 1741, with notions of single substance. Furthermore, it is this attempt to find basic unity in the universe that inspires reflections on the nature of life and death. Life, asserted Deslandes, is "une action & une réaction continuelle", and death can be explained thus: "...tout vit & ce qui paroît cesser de vivre

revit d'une autre manière...Quand le fil de ces idées est rompu, cela s'appelle mourir. Mais on revit d'une autre manière, & alors recommence une nouvelle suite d'idées qui n'ont aucun rapport avec les premières"(pp. 54-55, 69-71). For Diderot too life is "une suite d'actions et de réactions", and death is explained in terms similar to those used a quarter of a century before: "...vivant, j'agis et je réagis en masse... mort, j'agis et je réagis en molécules...Je ne meurs donc point? Non, sans doute...Naître, vivre, et passer, c'est changer de formes" (II, 139-140). Similar also are their ideas on the question of reminiscence. We recall that, in the opinion of the author of Pigmalion, "...vivre, c'est se ressouvenir, c'est pouvoir joindre ensemble quelques idées qui se suivent les uns les autres, & qui ne sont interrompues que par de courts intervalles" (pp. 70-71). Diderot's Entretien furnishes the following dialogue:

Diderot: Pourriez-vous me dire ce que c'est que l'existence d'un être sentant, par rapport à lui-même?
D'Alembert: C'est la conscience d'avoir été lui, depuis le premier instant de sa réflexion jusqu'au moment présent.
Diderot: Et sur quoi cette conscience est-elle fondée?
D'Alembert: Sur la mémoire de ses actions.
Diderot: Et sans cette mémoire?
D'Alembert: Sans cette mémoire il n'y aurait point de lui, puisque, ne sentant son existence que dans le moment de l'impression, il n'aurait aucune histoire de sa vie. Sa vie serait une suite interrompue de sensations que rien ne lierait (II, 112).

Is it not natural, therefore, to assume that the leader of the Encyclopedists had read our author's conte of 1741? And is it not possible to disagree a little with the nineteenth-century critic who states: "...le véritable ancêtre du transformisme en France n'est ni Lamarck, ni Robinet...mais Diderot. C'est lui qui a dit le premier qu'il n'y a jamais eu qu"un seul animal , et que la nature entière n'est qu' 'un même phénomène transformé"' (Janet, Les Maîtres de la pens. mod., p. 342) ?

Now, if the legend of the animated statue (minus the amorous or artistic hero) would lend itself to pantheistic speculation, Deslandes had already demonstrated its value to the empiricist, and this demonstration may not have passed unheeded. In the Traité des sensations (1754), Condillac postulates the

progressive and ordered animation of that which, in the myth, is suddenly endowed with life (though in Deslandes's account the animation is not immediately full and complete). In the Traité we read: "...nous imaginâmes une Statue organisée intérieurement comme nous, et animée d'un esprit privé de toute espèce d'idées. Nous supposâmes encore que l'extérieur tout de marbre ne lui permettoit l'usage d'aucun de ses sens, et nous nous réservâmes la liberté de les ouvrir à notre choix aux différentes impressions dont ils sont susceptibles...et après les avoir considérés séparément et ensemble, nous vîmes la Statue devenir un animal capable de veiller à sa propre conservation" (Oeuvres phil., ed. 1792, II, 5). Thus the device of giving sensations to a marble image becomes the master illustration for a thesis which, though Lockian in general principles, goes beyond Locke on the grounds that "toutes les facultés de l'âme lui ont paru des qualités innées, et...il n'a pas soupçonné qu'elles pourroient tirer leur origine de la sensation même" (II, 380). Moreover, just as Deslandes described the faculty of reminiscence as the essence of identity and Diderot considered it to be the force of continuity in existence, Condillac envisages memory ("la sensation transformée") as the basis of ideation and therefore of intellectual development. Yet, despite these similarities, Condillac's philosophic treatment is unique in that, deriving from the legend only the distinctive notion of quickening marble, it uses that notion for the single purpose of a hypothetical demonstration of sensationalism.

From our short review of representations of the myth in eighteenth-century painting, we recall that the erotic and aesthetic aspects of the Ovidian account were certainly not overlooked in the age of "philosophy" and enlightenment. Indeed we have found both in the contes of 1741. Curiously enough, Voltaire appears to have been more intrigued by the erotic than the philosophic possibilities. Adopting the same conceit as Marston in Elizabethan England, he tells his lady

(perhaps Adrienne Lecouvreur) how the statue "S'anime à de nouveaux combats,/ Et semble aimer enfin avant de vivre". The whole conception is erotic. The statue sees her lover before she perceives the light, and is immediately convinced that the aim of her existence is to attract him. Indeed, profane love is so potent that the traditional deus ex machina is swept aside; and, after the rallying cry "Mortels, aimez, tout vous sera possible", the poet describes how the statue has been quickened by the force of the sculptor's own ardour: "...de son âme un rayon s'élança,/ Se répandit dans ce marbre insensible" (XXXIII, 420-421). In Voltaire's Pygmalion, then, this aspect of the original tale overshadows and virtually excludes everything else. But he had not done with the theme, and in 1770 he was to treat it once more in the "lascivious" manner. "Sculptez-nous quelque beauté nue,/ De qui la chair blanche et dodue/ Séduise l'oeil du spectateur", he commands Pigalle; and, delighting vicariously in the triumph of Pygmalion, suggests that the animated statue of antiquity "...fut plus dissolue/Que son père et créateur...". Here — once more we observe that it is Pygmalion alone who has accomplished the animation of marble, by infusing a soul located in the senses: "Au marbre il sut donner un coeur,/ Cinq sens, instruments du bonheur,/ Une âme en ces sens répandue..." (X, 410-412). In short, Voltaire, interested above all in Pygmalion's concupiscence, is characteristically unwilling to concede divine intervention for a specific purpose, and in 1770 actually hints as the idea of the sense-soul, dear to naturalism.

How different from this is the aesthetic conception of J-J. Rousseau! In the scène lyrique, played in Lyon in 1770 and — in Paris in 1775,[15] the pastoral idiom persists from former musical versions, and (we believe for the first time) emerges in the name Galatea by which the statue now begins to be known.[16] On the other hand, the sculptor himself - no longer the conventional swain of the opéra-ballet - acquires a personality that effectively dominates this brief drama. As the curtain

rises, Pygmalion, disillusioned about the opposite sex and (since Galatea was completed) conscious of loss of talent, is discovered in a state of extreme nervous agitation and confined to his studio by a supernatural force. Peace of mind (so he muses) will be restored only by a miracle - the animation of marble: therefore, with a sort of Faustian enthusiasm, he offers half, and, if need be, all his own soul. Venus answers his prayer in precisely the way he has suggested. At the end of the scene, Galatea, touching her creator, exclaims: "Ah! encore moi!," and the sculptor replies: "...je t'ai donné tout mon être; je ne vivrai plus que par toi". Thus consummation of aesthetic desire is achieved only at the cost of his own personality - a sacrifice rendered the more dramatic by the vividness of the hero's character. As Grimm tells us (Corr. litt., IX, 139-141), Rousseau's lyric scene is a "tableau pathétique des transports, de l'enthousiasme, du délire que peut exciter dans une âme sensible et passionnée l'amour des arts et de la beauté" Apart, however, from this extreme aestheticism, we observe that the author has retained supernatural elements of the original myth. He has done so, of course, because music is traditionally intended to serve as a "charm", and because magic intensifies the dramatic effect. But he has done so for more personal reasons. Rousseau's own ascetic tendencies are expressed in the mysticism of Pygmalion's language, in his repeated appeals to the gods, in fear of himself and about the purity of his desires, in submission to the eternal order of things. How different is Rousseau's sculptor from the fool-blooded libertine of 1741! For Deslandes's Pygmalion eventually finds satisfaction is the possession not merely of beauty brought to life, but also of a mistress as accommodating as man could wish. More significant still: he has accomplished this without loss of individuality, since, as he tells his ideal mate: "Si vous vivez, vous vivez par moi, & vous devez vivre pour moi" (p. 63).

What conclusions may we draw, then, regarding Deslandes's portrayal of Pygmalion? The image fashioned by the mythical

artist can symbolize three things: beauty, woman and matter; and the sculptor himself is therefore capable of representing man's desire to create beauty, to secure a particular pleasure, or to achieve or comprehend the animation of "extended substance". In our author's conte philosophique the symbol of beauty and the desire to create beauty are very subsidiary to sense-pleasures, and there is the same lack of purity that is noted in Diderot's panegyric of Falconet's group and in Deshayes's painting. Thus, though the erotic and aesthetic can never be completely separated, the question of stress is important; and in Deslandes's interpretation the stress is upon the physical rather than the spiritual impulses. But, above all, the motive underlying this composition of 1741 is a "philosophic" motive - not so serious, of course, as that which prompted Condillac's demonstration of sensationalism, but none the less an attempt to separate a transformist notion of metamorphosis from all association with the supernatural. To the pantheist, all is natural, for everything is in the All and in Nature; and it is for pantheistic reasons that our author chooses the myth that offered the horror of sinful perversion and of magic to mediaeval writers, and turns it into an amiable tale about a young rebel who confirms his speculations about the unity of substance, and acquires a perfect mistress in the process. To a great extent, we suspect that, like other interpretations we have studied, Deslandes's portrayal is a projection of a self that inclines to pantheism and prizes the delights of the flesh.

CHAPTER III LA FORTUNE

La Fortune toujours fuyante,
Ne plaît ici que par son changement.
L'un en gémit, l'autre en plaisante,
L'un s'eleve rapidement,
Son rival vient qui bientôt le supplante,
Chacun vit, sans sçavoir comment (Nouv. Voy. d'Angl., ed. 1717, p. 242).

Jusqu'ici Platon a reconnu le Dieu suprême pour l'unique cause de tout ce qui vit & se meut dans l'Univers: maintenant il en admet une seconde qu'il appelle la Nécessité, la Fortune... Cette cause...ne dépend point de Dieu: mais Dieu a le pouvoir de l'engager, de la plier, de la soumettre à ses désirs (H.c., II, 214).

a) The Story and its Ancient Sources

The conte philosophique of 1751 is a mythological tale, written principally to demonstrate the workings of Fate in human and divine affairs. At first we discover the gods and goddesses during the period of interregnum, when they are unconcerned about, or disgusted with mankind. The exception is the goddess, Fortune. Resenting accusations levelled at her by human beings, and consequently determined to investigate the grounds for such complaints, she has come to the conclusion that she must ask Jupiter's permission to journey to Earth.[17] As she goes into the Palace of Destinies, she meets the porter - Father Time, the Parcae, Mercury (representing "la beauté de l'esprit") and the Four Ages. At last she reaches Jupiter himself, intent upon the Book of Destinies. At first the Supreme Divinity queries her strange desire, on the grounds that it does not matter what men think about their divine masters; but, seeing that she is resolved on the journey, he accedes to her request. Mercury is prevailed upon to accompany her to Greece, which at this time - roughly the Golden Age, described in the critical history of philosophy (II, 383) - is the most flourishing of civilizations. They arrive, then, in Athens, where they are immediately besieged by all sorts and conditions

of men flocking to solicit Fortune's favours; and where they are able to answer some important questions posed by the oldest priest of the Temple of Mercury. After such a tumultuous reception, Fortune realizes that she must resort to some stratagem if she is to observe the true state of affairs. Her disguise is one that will be familiar to students of eighteenth-century literature: dressed as a Persian, she visits the residence of Athenagoras, an honest citizen in impecunious retirement; and that of Cleodymas, whose career of dissimulation and flattery has provided a life of opulence and luxury. These contrasting examples provide the goddess with much food for thought. In reflective mood, then, she passes on to the home of Cleis, who is desperately unhappy at the prospect of being obliged to marry a rich suitor selected by her parents. Appearing just in time to forestall a suicide-pact between Cleis and her true lover, Cleon, Fortune saves the situation by making Cleon the richest man in Athens. At the same time, thinking of the opulent suitor who has now been rejected, Mercury is prompted to observe that riches are often the portion of the most despicable members of society.

It is perhaps logical that such a remark should lead on to economic considerations. The two deities visit, therefore, the Athenian parliament to hear debates centred round the two questions: Ought the state to permit the abuse of luxury? Should purely lucrative professions be allowed? In the first case, having heard younger representatives maintain that luxury encourages emulation, industry and courage, and promotes the circulation of money; and, having heard elder statesmen reply that the rapid acquisition of wealth leads to dishonour, dishonesty and to national ruin, Fortune favours a middle course. Regretting that her bounty should have been enjoyed by those who clamoured persistently and that men of real worth should have been overlooked, she concludes that there should be sufficient means of amassing wealth, but that such means should be related to the time and effort expended. In the second case, Mercury and Fortune are left to reflect upon the evils inherent in the sale of state

dignities and upon the apparent fruitlessness of merit and virtue.

From this survey of economic problems Fortune's journey next takes her to the philosophies of Greece. She meets the Platonist, Iphicrates - an estimable man, who is widely travelled, tasteful in his mode of living, outwardly obedient to the laws and decencies of society (a familiar theme, this!) and less openly devoted to the quest of truth and human happiness. Still in oriental disguise, Fortune asks the recipe for contentment, and is told that a man must dispel prejudice, master himself, be content with his condition and resist the temptation to pay homage to the mighty. At this point there is a digression. Mercury presents to his companion two petitions: the first from a young priestess, Iphises, who seeks to be freed from her religious vows; the second from mother maiden, who wishes to avoid a mariage de convenance. Both requests are granted by Fortune.

The author then proceeds to deal more specifically with political matters; for Fortune visits two noblemen, banished from the court of Epirus and living in retirement close to Athens. (There is much in this section of the tale that reminds us of parts of the Ontique des moeurs.) The first statesman is described as a sober, studious person who, having turned his attention to theoretical astronomy, was obliged to resign his post: the second, of a more active disposition, squandered his inheritance in pursuing his love of fine art, of novelty and of pleasure. The former speaks of the obligation to give the monarch carefully-considered advice that will help him to rule justly and earn the respect of his subjects; the latter, missing the pleasures he enjoyed at court, accuses Fortune of deceiving him. Naturally Fortune's sympathies are all on the side of the conscientious exile.

We penetrate at length into the daily life of Athens. Fortune enters a building given over to financial speculation and the pursuit of luxury, and where she is honoured above all other divinities. Still in disguise, she listens to the master of

the establishment explaining why he is a fatalist; and then to Mercury, who maintains that, instead of being hoarded, money should be employed to succour les illustres malheureux. With our divine companions we proceed next to the abode of a hermetic philosopher of austere habits, and who, refusing to adore Fortune, is engaged in his constant quest for the "philosopher's stone". This fact prompts Fortune to remark that it is folly to devote one's life to the pursuit of idle dreams. Next our Olympian visitors inspect a convent, where they find Zoroastrian fire-worship and the inevitable back-biting associated with monastic institutions. In contrast to this place, they see, across the street a building occupied by the priestesses of Venus, who are devoted to the cult of volupté. One of these ladies recounts the history of their founder, Alcibiades, a virtuous and self-effacing Socratic, who, persecuted for his deistic beliefs, turned to politics and was several t imes banished and recalled to Athens, and who, having at length retired to a country house, was there killed by his enemies. It is interesting to add that the order instituted by Alcibiades (that of the priestesses of Venus and volupté) is dedicated to that cult of tasteful pleasure "qui s'accorde avec les sentimens du coeur, & n'est point suivi de remords" (p. 153).

With our travellers we next visit the Athens Academy, where the anniversary of Plato's death is celebrated with a display of artistic magnificence; yet, amid all this, Fortune overhears a philosopher predicting the imminent decline of Athens, which is addicted to worthless amusements and, like the rest of Greece, merely in the infancy of religion, law and ethics. Since people are hurrying to flatter the goddess, she escapes to a hermitage deep in the garden of the Academy. The fact that this place was formerly the refuge of Pericles excuses a digression concerning that philosopher and statesman. Having established his political reputation, Pericles won the love of Aspasia, and thereby created for himself a number of enemies. Aspasia's ambition that her lover should become the greatest man of his century was thwarted by their foes;

and, exiled as a foreigner, Pericles was obliged to quit his beloved. After Aspasia's death, the exiled statesman was recalled to the capital, where he turned his attention to philosophy, teaching natural religion in company with Anaxagoras, with whom he was condemned and ultimately obliged to flee the city-state.

At this point Fortune decides that she has seen and heard enough of this mundane spectacle. Moreover, converted at last to the point of view of her colleagues, she resolves to leave men to their own devices in that irregular and internally motivated machine which is their world. Back on Olympus, she is met by Momus who recounts the tale of an Ephesian girl, who fell ill just before the date fixed for her marriage to one Agathon. The latter sought the help of medical advisers, but the girl's mother called in the priests. The consequence was that, when the young Chryseis was restored to health, both professional bodies claimed the credit, and soon men and gods were involved in the debate. Disdaining to give any opinion of that matter, Fortune renders account of her trip to Jupiter and asks him why he created such a despicable race of beings. Jupiter's replies provide a series of powerful and important philosophic conclusions to the tale - conclusions perhaps best summed up in the observation that Fortune will do well in future not to be concerned about human complaints.

Like Pigmalion, such a story must of necessity draw upon the Ancients.[18] The acknowledged source of our author's information about three different opinions of the Ancients regarding the ordering and government of mundane affairs - Providence, Chance and Destiny - is Gérard-Jean Vossius' De Idolatria. This, however, merely explains the place from which, for the sake of convenience, our author extracted various notions of the Ancients, and does not take us much beyond the exoteric Preface. There is a page in the Histoire critique de la philosophie, which, though not concerned with Fortune, provides one excellent clue to one origin of the plot: "Si l'on veut voir d'un coup d'oeil quels chemins a tenu la Philosophie avant que de se donner aux Grecs,

on peut lire le Dialogue de Lucien qui a pour titre, Les Fugitifs" (I, 37). Now in Lucian's Runaways (tr. Fowler, IV, 95-107), we come across a story which in many respects recalls La Fortune. At the beginning, Philosophy appears in tears, and is questioned by Zeus as to the reason for this sadness. He asks, for instance, if it is the consequence of the misdeeds of the ignorant rabble. The reply to this is that, though the common people are respectful, they do not seem to understand what she has said to them. There are also fake philosophers who abuse a good name. "When formerly you looked down upon the world", continues Philosophy, "and when you saw it filled with iniquity and human folly, you had compassion and sent me down to them, to lift their eyes to the truth". Then (in accordance with the accepted progress of philosophy through Ancient civilizations) Philosophy explains that she journeyed through India, Ethiopia, Chaldea and other lands before arriving in Greece, where she was at first received with enthusiasm. Perhaps, she says, she would have done better to leave human beings to their ignorance: "There is a vile race upon the earth, composed for the most part of serfs and menials, creatures whose occupations have never suffered them to become acquainted with philosophy...They took refuge with may lady Folly, called in the assistance of Boldness, Ignorance and Impudence..." (ibid, IV, 99-100). And she describes seductions and drunken orgies. Zeus is so indignant that he proposes launching a thunder-bolt against the inhabitants of Earth. Yet in the end clemency prevails, and it is decided that Philosophy should return, accompanied by Hermes. Here, then, as in La Fortune, we have men viewed from on high and judged to be worthless creatures. We find a goddess perplexed at men's attitude towards herself; and who makes a journey, accompanied by the messenger of the gods, through the world of mortals. Moreover, the discussions between Zeus and the chief character remind us of similar conversations between Jupiter and Fortune in the conte of 1751. Consequently, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that this passage from Lucian, to which Deslandes himself refers in

the critical history of philosophy, supplied some important ideas, particularly in respect of structure and plot.

And, if Lucian provided the framework of this imaginary journey, we may find in other classical authors the conception of the central character. For instance, one of the clearest sources of Deslandes's characterization of Fortune is to be found in Horace. The thirty-fifth ode in the first book begins: "O Diva, gratum quae regis Antium..."; and, after showing the immense power possessed by Fortune, the poet stresses the fact that the rule of the goddess implies inexorable necessity. We think also of one of Pindar's Olympian odes (xii), in which Fortune is called the daughter of Zeus, and men are depicted as foolish visionaries who will never discern the workings of the goddess. Here too destiny is prepared in advance, and events can never turn out quite in the way that human beings would like to expect (v. Encycl., art. Fortune).

So much, then, for the setting and plot and for the main character in the story. Of greater importance to our study, however, is an examination of the philosophic doctrines of the Ancients expressed by the gods and goddesses; for in this case we expect something like absolute and eternal values. Indeed, to be more precise, we expect to perceive our author's estimate of truth within a Greek setting. With this object in mind, we turn to four sections of the work, each of which gives some important indication of the author's inclinations in the matter of Ancient philosophies, viewed, in this case, on a superhuman level.

1º The Palace of Destinies

It will be recalled that we are introduced to the gods at the time of interregnum, when they have ceased to care for mankind, and when, deprived of their assistance and interest, men are drifting more and more towards error and ignorance. It will be remembered too that we are taken inside the Palace of Destinies, where the Fatal Sisters cut the threads of individual lives, unaffected by prayer or supplication. Now, inside this

palace, there is a court-yard with two galleries. The first of these contains representations of possible and creatable worlds; the second, an image of the present world, which is the best of all, since advantages and disadvantages are balanced within it. At last Jupiter himself is discovered turning the pages of the Book of Destinies, from which he draws the immutable laws on which he acts; for events develop from one another in ineluctable succession.[19] Now ideas similar to these are to be found amongst certain Greek philosophers. For example, Democritus and the atomists were like the Stoics in accepting the rule of Destiny. Moreover, like Plutarch, Democritus and Epicurus spoke of the plurality of worlds, without, however, stressing notions of creatability (H.c, II, 329-330). The gods' indifference is clearly a situation accepted by the Epicureans; but the interregnum introduces a feature of Stoic and Platonic philosophy. In the critical history of philosophy, our author quotes from Plato:

> Mais à chaque révolution les choses changent, les races des hommes se corrompent, leurs facultés s'affoiblissent. Enfin quand la terre a souffert tous les changemens, toutes les dégradations dont elle est susceptible, elle retombe dans le cahos, & pendant cette espece d'interregne, Jupiter reste oisif & ne s'occupe de rien, la Divinité s'endort, pour ainsi dire, jusqu'à ce que la grande année recommence, qui ne manque jamais de recommencer (I, 245).

This passage appears to present a parallel with many of the basic notions expressed by the gods both here and in the final paragraphs of the 1751 text. Finally, the idea that Jupiter himself is subject to Destiny is Homeric in origin. In two articles of the Dictionnaire philosophique, Voltaire draws attention to this fact. First, in Chaîne ou Génération des Evénements, he says: "...c'est le destin, qui, dans Homère, est supérieur à Jupiter même. Ce maître des dieux et des hommes déclare net qu'il ne peut empêcher Sarpédon son fils de mourir dans le temps marqué" (v. Iliad, tr. Pope, Bk. XVI, ll. 528-531). Secondly, in the article Destin, as he is once more referring to Homer, he remarks: "...c'est là que...on trouve aussi les semences de la philosophie, et surtout l'idée du destin qui est maître des dieux, comme les dieux sont les

maîtres du monde...Jupiter veut sauver le grand Hector qui lui a fait tant de sacrifices, et il consulte les destinées..." (v. Iliad, Bk. XXII, ll. 239-240).

2º Mercury and the Old Priest

The oldest of the priests of Mercury takes the oppatunity of asking his divine master some questions about the reasons why man was created in his present form. He asks, for instance, why the gods created man so ridiculous, so foolish, so weak - and so wretched. To this interrogation Mercury duly responds by repeating the doctrine of the plurality of worlds and adds that uniformity throughout creation would have been distasteful to the gods. He then goes on to give examples of other worlds, and Fortune supports Mercury's point of view by stressing the necessary diversity of beings. Once more the Ancient source is Democritus and Epicurus, since on the matter of the number of worlds they "en admettoient une infinité" (II, 330), and - since, a few pages later, Deslandes goes out of his way to reproduce the views of Democritus regarding human folly: "...il n'y a presque dans le monde que des fous & des enfans: des - fous plus dignes de pitié que de colere..." (II, 336).

3º Fortune and Mercury

Towards the end of the tale Fortune decides to leave the world as it is: "Je vais donc reprendre mon train accoûtumé, & je laisserai le monde aller comme il va. C'est une machine, ô Mercure, dont tous les mouvemens sont irréguliers: mais qui trouve dans cette irrégularité même, le principe de son action, & la force intérieure qui la fait mouvoir" (pp. 178-179). Again we must look to Democritus and the atomists for the inspiration - this time of a mechanistic view of the world. The rest of the passage contains ideas common to most of the Ancients. The irregularity of the world's motion is, however, particularly a feature of Platonism: as Deslandes himself tells us in the Histoire critique de la philosophie, God was not able to rectify the disorder that arose from the "soul of the world", but He could apply corrective touches to the

action of the world (II, 215-216). In La Fortune, however, Jupiter has decided not to avail himself of this privilege.

4º Jupiter and Fortune

In answer to some of Fortune's questions regarding reasons for creating mankind, Jupiter replies that Creation would have been imperfect if the Universe had not contained all possibilities. Man's limited comprehension of the nature of things and his ignorance of true happiness are stressed. The power of Destiny is once more asserted, and Fortune is urged to leave things as they are. Vice and luxury are described as being part of the scheme of things; and, since present society is decadent, another will ultimately be built on its ruins. That also is in the scheme of things. In other words: the world is falling back into the chaos from which it was derived; and when that finally happens, the gods will place more reasonable creatures on its surface. We have already noted that the Ancient conception of the interregnum involves the Stoic doctrine of cycles of civilization and some aspects of Platonic thought as well. We now look at these two influences in greater detail. In La Fortune there are echoes of our author's presentation of Stoicism in the Histoire critique in 1737. For instance, the prayer of Cleanthes on p. 410 of the second volume of the critical history comes to mind, relating as it does ideas about the "chain of events" and the necessity of moral and physical evil. Indeed, it is worth examining the pages that precede and follow this prayer to see how it fits into a context of ideas, and how far these ideas re-appear in 1751:

1. "La liberté...est une chimere". "La destinée nous entraîne..."
2. "...le mal moral & le mal physique ne sont pas moins nécessaires à la beauté, à la perfection de l'Univers, que le bien physique & le bien moral; ... les vicieux...servent autant à former le caractere du genre humain, que les vertueux..."
3. "Tout est lié d'une chaîne invisible & sacrée, tout concourt au même but; & par conséquent tout est également nécessaire au systeme général de l'Univers."
4. [At the end of the world] "Jupiter se rendra à lui-même, la Nature prendra ses vacances, & le souverain Etre ne sera plus occupé que de lui-même, de ses pensées secrettes." [We quotes from Seneca]

5. "Quand la grande année...est finie...toutes les choses reprennent l'ancien train, & la Nature se revêt de ses premiers ornemens..." /This idea was later adopted by the Epicureans/ (H.c., II, 408-418).

There is hardly an idea in the above passages that does not find its place in the conte of 1751.

We turn to Platonism. This is particularly discerned in the relationship between Jupiter, Fortune and mankind. For is not the supreme deity of our novel the Platonic god of the critical history: "Dieu s'est réservé la vérité, il contient en lui-même les formes immuables de toutes choses"? (II, 206)? And is not the intermediate and partly independent goddess somewhat like the "cause" described by Plato: "Jusqu'ici Platon a reconnu le Dieu suprême pour l'unique cause de tout ce qui vit & se meut dans l'Univers: maintenant il en admet une seconde qu'il appelle la Nécessité, la Fortune...Cette cause, il est vrai, ne dépend point de Dieu: mais Dieu a le pouvoir de l'engager, de la plier, de la soumettre à ses désirs" (II, 214) ? Finally, are not men envisaged in the same way as by the Platonists: "Pour les hommes, il ne leur a accordé que les opinions, & les vraisemblances" (II, 206)?

Amongst other things, then, there is an ample provision of atomism, Epicureanism, Stoicism and Platonism in our conte of 1751. Now, whilst this diversity of sources suggests eclecticism, we note the same affection for the Atomists, Epicureans and Stoics that we observed in 1737. But, quite apart from the times in which the journey is set, there is much more enthusiasm in 1751 for Platonism; and we shall see that this can be accounted for by studying some of the modern sources of the philosophic content of La Fortune.

b) <u>The Doctrines of La Fortune</u>

Already in the <u>Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant</u>, Deslandes had stated the problem he attempted to solve in 1751. This is what he wrote in 1712:

> La fortune passe avec tant de rapidité, qu'elle laisse à peine entrevoir ses faveurs. Il semble que son inconstance l'empêche de se fixer en aucun lieu, pour rendre un bonheur solide. Peut-être aussi y a-t-il trop de gens à contenter. Elle ne peut suffire à tout le monde, & les fonds lui manquent, c'est là au moins son excuse: mais qui oseroit verifier si elle ne fait pas quelque double emploi, rendroit un service essentiel au Public (ed. 1732, pp. 42-43).

Is Fortune redundant? On the contrary, is Fortune essential to an understanding of the problem of good and evil and of happiness and unhappiness in the world? Let us examine the text of 1751.

<u>The Deity and Fortune</u> "...la Fortune, annoncée par Mercure, entra dans le cabinet de Jupiter. Il feuilletoit alors le grand Livre des Destinées, & y puisoit les regles, qui ne changent point, de sa conduite & de ses projets. Car, quoiqu'il soit le plus grand des Dieux, il n'est pourtant que l'exécuteur de leurs ordres & de leurs décrets invariables" (pp. 18-19).

Fortune and Jupiter are both obedient to the dictates of pre-arranged destinies. We find neither an omnipotent Jupiter nor a capricious and irresponsible Fortune in the pages of Deslandes's <u>conte</u>. That indeed is how he is able to reconcile Fate and Fortune, which some conceptions of the goddess would render incompatible (v. Russell, <u>Hist. of West. Phil.</u>, p. 250). The influence of the Cambridge Platonists is perhaps significant — in this connection. Deslandes could have learned much about these ideas during his stay in London; in addition there was Mosheim's translation of Cudworth's <u>True Intellectual System of the Universe</u> which appeared in 1733, and there were Leclerc's articles in the <u>Bibliothèque choisie</u> to which Deslandes refers his reader in the <u>Histoire critique</u> (II, 322, n.).

We have just mentioned the exoteric critical history. Now what did that work say about Cudworth and his "Plastic Natures"? On "logical" grounds he appears to oppose these Cambridge philosophers, arguing that either God has delegated his power and intelligence to beings acting like Himself, or He performs everything alone: "C'est à quoi beaucoup de Philosophes modernes

n'ont point assez pensé, sur-tout en Angleterre" (II, 222); and, having referred to "Facultez plastiques", he concludes: "Il faut donc que Dieu fasse tout; ou les Etres qu'on substitue à sa place, lui doivent à peu de chose près ressembler" (II, 223). Precisely the same criticism recurs in 1756. Dubbing Cudworth an "atheist", he dismisses Plastic Natures with the remark: "Ces Natures ne sont point intelligentes, & cependant font tout avec intelligence: sans doute par quelque direction ou par quelque instinct de l'Etre suprême. Mais croira-t-on qu'il ait besoin de recourir à des Natures Plastiques lui, qui peut tout faire lui-même?" (IV, 37). Finally, on pp. 66-67 of the same volume, Cudworth's System is mentioned again. This time judgement is both favourable and unfavourable. Cudworth is blamed for prejudice in being too attached to the philosophy of Plato, and he is reproached with excessive interest in cabalistic theology: yet, on the other hand, he is praised for his opposition to the materialism of Thomas Hobbes. Is there sincerity behind this last judgement? Perhaps so; for the Deslandes of 1756 is not the Deslandes of 1712. He is no longer merely stating problems: he is trying to find solutions. He is not merely anxious to entertain and to shock: he is bent upon evolving an explanation of the tremendous perplexities presented by the existence of evil in the world. Certainly in this fourth volume of the critical history he himself admonishes Hobbes for his materialism.

Surely, however, the most conclusive evidence is furnished by La Fortune of 1751. Fortune is certainly not in possession of the complete knowledge that belongs to Jupiter. How indeed could she be, since, to quote the Vergilian phrase, Jupiter is "Divûm Pater atque hominum Rex" (La Fortune, p. 9, n. 1)? Indeed, initially she does not appear to have complete understanding even of things that appertain to her own domain. She acts not with discretion but almost mechanically - that is, as a subordinate, yet in some respects independent instrument of the divine plan, the full scope and purpose of which is

unknown to her. Yet, despite his knowledge, Jupiter himself is not entirely free to act as he wishes: "Car, quoiqu'il soit le plus grand des Dieux, il n'est pourtant que l'exécuteur de leurs ordres & de leurs décrets invariables" (pp. 18-19).

Now let us turn to Cudworth. The Intellectual System begins with an examination of three "determinist" philosophies; and in the third section of the first chapter we read: "There is another wild and extravagant conceit, which some of the Pagans had, who though they verbally acknowledged a Deity, yet supposed a certain fate superior to it, and not only to all their other petty gods, but also to Jupiter himself" (ed. 1845, I, 7). This is the notion that we found in Homer and which is certainly one of the basic ideas of Deslandes's conte - a fact that we understand better when we note that Gassendi coupled the Ancient idea with the Stoic doctrine regarding Fate (ibid, p. 7, n. 7). And what of the goddess, Fortune? In the third chapter of the first book of Cudworth's work, the author treats of several forms of atheism and makes it clear that there were degrees of atheism amongst the Ancients. For instance, he maintains that Strato was not quite so materialistic as the atomists, since "He did not fetch the original of all things...from a mere fortuitous motion of atoms..." (I, 148): yet Strato was certainly an atheist, since for him the Deity was nothing more than the "life of nature in matter" (I, 149). Thus, as Seneca declared, Strato was "a kind of mongrel thing,- betwixt an Atheist and a Theist" (ibid). What was it that gave him this tinge of theism? The fact that "he must needs attribute something to fortune, and make the mundane system to depend upon a certain mixture of chance and plastic or orderly nature both together, and consequently must be an Hylozoist" (ibid, p. 151). This (a foot-note tells us) was the opinion of Bayle, Leibnitz and Clarke about the Greek thinker. Strato was an atheist; but he could have escaped this stigma if he had not made Fortune completely independent of higher authority (ibid, p. 154). Now a philosopher who managed to steer clear of this reef was Cudworth's favourite.

Plato, says Cudworth, does subordinate Plastic Natures, for "...he supposes a certain regular nature to be a partial and subordinate cause of things under the divine intellect" (I, 155).

This partial instrument, subjected and inferior to Jupiter in respect of intellect, is precisely the goddess we meet in Deslandes's conte.[20] And it is the subordination of a relatively independent Fortune to a higher intellectual authority (itself subjected to divinely instituted rules of proceedure)—that saves the novel from being classed as an apology for what Cudworth calls "hylozoic atheism". Instead, we have some notion in La Fortune of general Providence, and consequently some aspects of theism or deism combined none the less with a hylozoic natural system. Though Jupiter is superior in intellect, he does not over-rule Fortune: rather he passes on some portions of his superior knowledge when she seeks it. For Fortune is not the slave of Jupiter, but his daughter; and that relationship symbolizes the ratio of power and understanding between the supreme godhead and the subordinate instrument. Let us finally take account of what Cudworth says about Plastic Natures in his book:

> Wherefore since neither all things are produced fortuitously, or by the unguided mechanism of matter, nor God himself may reasonably be thought to do all things immediately and miraculously; it may well be concluded that there is a plastic nature under him, which, as an inferior and subordinate instrument, doth drudgingly execute that part of his providence, which consists in the regular and orderly motion of matter; yet so far as that there is also, besides this, a higher providence to be acknowledged, which, presiding over it, doth often supply the defects of it, and sometimes overrule it; forasmuch as this plastic nature cannot act electively, nor with discretion (I, 223-224).

However much exoterically Deslandes may disown Cudworth, there is much of the Intellectual System in La Fortune, in which things are not produced fortuitously; God does not act immediately, or by miracles, but leaves things to work out according to rules; and in which Fortune is a sort of Plastic Nature in charge of the regular operation of part of the divine plan. There are degrees of atheism, says Cudworth: Cudworth is an atheist, says the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie. But the writer of the esoteric conte of 1751 is

perhaps closer to atheism than the man he so criticizes; for Deslandes's Jupiter does not overrule providence or "supply defects" in the way the God of the critical history was reported as doing. On the contrary, the Jupiter of 1751 is dependent upon the Book of Destinies. In 1751, the author who in 1737 appeared to incline at least towards divine liberty, envisages neither divine nor human free-will. This conclusion leads to a philosophy that was particularly "dangerous".

Destiny and Chance "Il /man/ appelle hasard ce qu'il ne connoît pas. Il se croit libre, parce qu'il suit volontairement les ordres de la Destinée auxquels il est assujetti..." (p. 192). "Les évenemens se succedent à point nommé les uns aux autres, ou, pour mieux dire, se développent & naissent les uns des autres... l'ordre des Destinées ne se change point..." (pp. 19-22) "...cet ordre certain qui fait que toutes les choses de la vie se succedent les unes aux autres, ne peuvent se succeder autrement qu'elles font; de la manière que les causes sont proportionnées à tous les effets qu'elles produisent: ce que j'appelle Destin... (p. 132)

Having studied Pigmalion, we suspect that this fatalism is Spinozist in origin.[21] There is much to confirm our suspicions.

In the Ethics we read :

> The mind is a certain and determinate mode of thought, and therefore it cannot be the free cause of its own actions, or have an absolute faculty of willing or not willing, but must be determined to this or that volition by a cause which is also determined by another cause, and this again by another, and so on ad infinitum (Pt. II, Propn. XLVIII, Demonst.; tr. White, p. 94).

Here, then, in Spinoza is the identical notion of the unbreakable and absolute chain of causation, denying to man the use of what he likes to call "free-will". The starting-point of the chain is, of course, God Himself; determined by His nature:

> All things have necessarily followed from the given nature of God, and from the necessity of His nature have been determined to existence and action in a certain manner. If, therefore, things could have been of another nature, or could have been determined in another manner to action, so that the order of nature would have been different, the nature of God might then be different to that which it now is, and hence that different nature would necessarily exist, and there might consequently be two or more Gods, which is absurd. Therefore, things could be produced by God in no other manner nor in any other order than that in which they have been produced (Pt. I, Propn. XXXIII, Demonst.; tr. White, p. 33).

Thus Deslandes's doctrine on this matter is closer to that of Spinoza than to any other. True, Leibnitz rules out the liberty of indifference and rejects an absolutely undetermined choice; but here there is no talk of choosing the greater perfection; no nice distinction between necessitating and inclining; no suggestion that the highest freedom which God

could allow implied that man would sin and be punished. It is pure determinism, of the Spinozist kind, with no qualification.

The Good of the Whole "...ils [men] ne voyent que quelques détails...leur vûë y est bornée, ils trouvent souvent à redire à ce que nous [the gods] faisons. C'est l'effet de la foiblesse humaine. Pour nous, qui voyons les choses en grand, qui voyons le tout-ensemble, nous devons assûrément trouver que tout est bien arrangé" (pp. 21-22) [Elsewhere we read of] "un tout admirable" [and learn that] "Tout est bien: car tout est à sa place" (pp. 13 &19).

The first passage is close to the Spinozist point of view, which embodies a refusal to attach man-made tags of "goodness" or "perfection" to something beyond man's comprehension: "Thus we see that the custom of applying the words perfect and imperfect to natural objects has arisen rather from prejudice than from true knowledge of them" (tr. White, p. 177). This is because man inevitably applies such words to things that give him personal pleasure. In contrast, the cosmic view which Spinoza tries to adopt is altogether wider than man's view. Thus Spinoza tells his reader that the greatest good lies in knowledge of the infinite nature of God and of one's own nature (Pt. IV, Propns. XXVIII & XXX-XXXI). Thus also Spinoza is guarded and consequently not very explicit about "the good of the Whole". On the other hand, there are thinkers who are very explicit on this point. We note, for instance, what Pope says in the closing lines of the first Epistle of the Essay on Man:

> All nature is but art unknown to thee,
> All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good;
> And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right (ll. 289-294).

We think also of Leibnitz, who, whilst careful elsewhere not to condone private evil, is none the less convinced of the harmony of the Whole:

> But as to our saying that a part may be disturbed without destroying harmony in the whole, this must not be understood as meaning that no account is taken of the parts or that it is enough for the world as a whole to be perfect...For it is to be observed that, as in a thoroughly well-constituted commonwealth care is taken, as far as may be, for the good of individuals, so the universe will not be sufficiently perfect unless the interests of individuals are attended to, while the universal harmony is preserved (The Monadology etc., tr. Latta, p. 348).

Thus there is ample philosophical precedent in 1751 for the assertion that the Whole is good and that it is only man's limitations that prevent him from appreciating the excellent general arrangement.

The Gradation of Beings "Parmi des combinaisons infinies d' Etres qui existent dans le vaste univers, il en doit exister de toutes les sortes, les uns plus, les autres moins parfaits; quelques autres enfin sans aycune perfection. Mais ce n'est point aux Dieux qu'il faut s'en prendre. Leur puissance est sans bornes, & ils n'ont pû agir sur la matiere, sans l'animer, pour ainsi dire, & la rendre toute vivante" (p. 45).

The Whole is an admirable arrangement; but the parts present a spectacle of degrees of perfection and imperfection. This notion of the gradation of beings is frequently to be found in eighteenth-century thought. For instance, Sichel finds it in Bolingbroke; who wrote:

> Shall we not be persuaded rather, that as there is a gradation of sense and intelligence here from animal beings imperceptible to us, for their minuteness without the help of microscopes, -- and even with them, up to man, in whom, though this be their highest stage, sense and intelligence stop short and remain very imperfect; so there is a gradation from man, through various forms of sense, intelligence and reason, up to beings who cannot be known by us because of their distance from us, whose rank in the intellectual system is even above our conceptions (cit. Sichel, Bolingbroke and his Times, ed. 1901, II, 323).

It is not with surprise, therefore, that we rediscover it in Pope:

> Far as creation's ample range extends,
> The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:
> Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,
> From the green myriads in the peopled grass;
> What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
> The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam (Ep. I, ll. 207-212)
>
> Vast chain of being! which from God began,
> Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
> Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
> No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,
> From thee to nothing...(Ep. I, ll. 237-241).

This "chain of beings" (which Leibnitz calls the "law of continuity") is also to be found in the writings of French Spinozists. For example, in the Essay de métaphysique dans les principes de B.... de Sp...., it occurs in this form:

> De là, il faut conclure qu'il y a des individus de toutes espèces, les uns composés de corps très simples, d'autres composés eux-mêmes d'autres individus, et d'autres encore de ces derniers, et ainsi jusqu'à l'universalité des choses, qui est elle-même, en ce sens, une espèce d'individu, dont les parties changent perpétuellement, et en une infinité de manières, sans que sa nature en soit altérée, ni qu'elle cesse d'être la même (cit. Wade, op. cit., p. 119).

Not only Boulainvilliers, but also Voltaire, applied this notion to "animals", and concluded that the difference between beasts and mankind is one of organization and rank in the scale of beings. In the Traité de métaphysique (c. 1734) he wrote:

> Plus j'examine tous ces êtres, plus je dois soupçonner que ce sont des espèces différentes d'un même genre...Enfin je vois des hommes qui me paraissent supérieurs à ces nègres, comme ces nègres le sont aux singes, et comme les singes le sont aux huîtres et aux autres animaux de cette espèce (Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XXII, 210).

Since this idea of gradation and scale of beings, interpreted in diverse ways, was current in eighteenth-century thought, it is not with surprise that we remark its presence in Deslandes's conte of 1751.

> Man "A peine ai-je trouvé deux ou trois hommes raisonnables, attentifs sur eux-mêmes, contens de leur sort, parmi les milliers d'hommes que j'ai vûs. Les uns sont fous, extravagans; ils souhaitent & ne souhaitent plus, ils se consument en projets, ils courent après des chimeres: les autres joüissent sans savoir joüir; ils sont bas, rampans, plus esclaves que leurs esclaves mêmes; amis de ceux qui les flattent, & ennemis de ceux qui osent leur dire la vérité..." (pp. 189-190).

This is Fortune's judgement of mankind at the end of her journey through the world. But it is more than the judgement of a fictitious character: it is a view maintained by Deslandes himself through all his writings. We recall that, in his very first work of a philosophical nature, he used more or less the same phrases to describe mankind: "Une troupe de visionnaires qui courent après des chimeres, qui, s'inquietent de bagatelles, qui haïssent le soir ce qu'ils ont aimé le matin, qui s'entretuent pour un pouce de terre..." (Réflexions etc., ed. 1732, p. 12). Indeed this fact gives a clue as to the origin of this view, which is not only consistent with the "Stoicism" of the early writings, but also with the philosophy of one who exercised a profound formative influence upon the young author. In the work of Fontenelle, we remember, Carré found "Folie et sottise, puissance des forces troubles de la passion, incertitude des lumières vacillantes de la raison, tel est l'homme tout entier..."; and he added: "...la vision générale de l'homme n'a point varié chez Fontenelle" (La Phil. de Font., p. 49).

Like his friend Fontenelle, Deslandes never varied his low opinion of mankind. Indeed we suspect that by 1751 some bitter experiences had merely confirmed it: by that time however he had learned with the Platonist Iphicrates the solace of resignation:

> La vie est une mer orageuse & pleine d'écueils...Il faut enfin se contenter de la situation où l'on se trouve, soit qu'on l'ait choisie par goût, soit qu'on y soit engagé par des rencontres imprévûes: & alors, il faut joüir des caresses de la Fortune, si elle est favorable, ou se roidir contre ses injustices, si elle est de mauvaise humeur (pp. 105-106).

Thus there is in La Fortune some evidence of the influence of another Fontenellian notion, to be found in Du Bonheur (1724). Unable to escape the full effects of Fortune's sway, man can at least do something to minimize those effects. He can seek the obscurity of retreat, and thus provide the goddess with fewer opportunities of tossing him about. This limitation, coupled with a certain nonchalance, is partly an Epicurean technique; but there is also more than a little Stoicism in the attitude. In fact, it is very much the "Stoicism" of the Réflexions of 1712.

Finally, what is the relationship between the divine will and the aspirations of human beings? Jupiter gives the answer when he says of men: "Ils sont si au-dessous de la Divinité, qu'ils ne peuvent l'effleurer par leurs plaintes & leurs reproches" (p. 21).[22] If we are familiar with Spinoza's work, we shall be reminded of something in the Ethics: "Properly speaking, God loves no one and hates no one; for God is not affected with any affect of joy or sorrow, and consequently He neither loves nor hates any one" (Pt. V, Propn. XVII, Corol.; tr. White, p. 265). The result of this view of God as being above personal feelings is, first that intellectual and spiritual progress is achieved by acquiring a closer and deeper knowledge of the divine Nature, and secondly that such progress implies an increasing realization that we are subjected to determinism. For, if the Divinity were to hearken to individual pleas or protests, the Book of Destinies would cease to have any meaning. That is the view also of the author of La Fortune.

Human Judgements "Ce qu'il appelle plaisir est une vraie peine, ou suivi par des peines. Il veut être heureux, & ne sçait seulement pas en quoi consiste le bonheur" (p. 39). "Il a de bonnes & de mauvaises qualités tellement mêlées ensemble, qu'on ne peut s'empêcher de l'estimer, & de le mépriser presqu'en même tems. Il n'est ni heureux ni malheureux. Il ignore même ce que c'est que le bonheur & que malheur. Le faux lui plaît autant que le vrai" (p. 192).

These sentiments recall what Spinoza tells us about good and evil, pleasure and pain, happiness and unhappiness, of which man's definitions are influenced by human limitations. For Spinoza perfection is reality: a thing is good if it is useful rather than pleasant; and evil is that which hinders man from possessing the good. We suffer, adds the philosopher, because we are part of Nature. It is impossible that man should be part of Nature and yet should suffer no changes but those that can be understood as arising purely from his own nature. Consequently human nature prevents man from seeing the true good and the real evil (Ethics, Pt. IV, Propns. II & IV). Leibnitz thought along the same lines. In his system too, good and evil are relative terms, misunderstood by men in general. Souls tend to seek quick, direct, momentary pleasures: they therefore tend to lose their way in the pursuit of true happiness. He expresses the view metaphorically in the Nouveaux Essais:

> The stone goes by the most direct, but not always the best way towards the centre of the earth, not being able to foresee that it will meet rocks on which it will be broken, while it would have more nearly attained its end, if it had had the intelligence and the means to turn aside (cit. Latta, op. cit., p. 147).

Here once more we find the same opinion that we have found in the work of 1751: man does not know how to achieve valid pleasures, and only deeper knowledge would enable him to find the right way. Assuming the same thing, Pope turns what might become a universal disaster into a general good:

> Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be,
> Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree;
> The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;
> And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.
> 'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill;
> For, vice or virtue, self directs it still;
> Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal;
> But heav'n's great view is one, and that the whole.
> (Essay on Man, Ep. II, ll. 231-238)

In these loosely allied philosophies, then, the same idea emerges: man is blind to his true good, and only the cosmic view would

permit us fully to comprehend the nature of good and evil.

The Indispensability of Evil in Society "...le monde ne pourroit subsister, si l'on n'appelloit que d'honnêtes gens aux premieres places, si l'on n'employoit que des hommes vertueux, si toutes les affaires ne passoient que par leurs mains...les vices, les desordres, l'avidité du gain, le luxe, les dissipations ridicules, les fatuités mêmes, servent plus à donner de l'éclat à une société, que les vertus qui n'ont qu'une seule allûre, toûjours conforme au devoir le plus rigoureux" (pp. 193-194).

Thus, in an esoteric conte, Deslandes partly resolves his own dilemma, expressed in the Histoire critique (II, 105-106), about the difficulty of understanding why dishonest men are so successful in this life! The direct and incontestable modern source of the subversive doctrine we have printed above is Mandeville's Fable of the Bees, which appeared in French translation in 1740 and again in 1750, and was therefore very much in the eye of the intelligent reading public in 1751. In this fable we are introduced to bees very like human beings in modern society. Millions were busy satisfying the vanity and ambition of other bees, who were occupied solely in consuming the produce of the others' labour. Lawyers were keeping quarrels from dying down; doctors preferred to amass riches rather than to cure their patients; most priests were as irascible as they were ignorant; the toughest soldiers received the lowest pay; and corruption was rife throughout society. "Thus every Part was full of Vice,/ Yet the whole Mass a Paradise..." (ed. 1924, I, 24). Vice and virtue worked together for the good of the whole nation. In this way evil was discovered to be fruitful: "Envy it self, and Vanity,/ Were Ministers of Industry..." (ibid, p. 25). Then, as a result of the bees' discontentment and of mutual jealousy of frauds, Jupiter was begged to bestow probity upon this flourishing society. All was changed. People (i.e. bees) worked too hard, luxury disappeared, defence was neglected, architecture was allowed to fall into disregard, and "...many Thousand Bees were lost" (ibid, p. 35). "Then leave Complaints: Fools only strive/ To make a Great and Honest Hive.../Fraud, Luxury and Pride must live,/ While we the Benefits receive..." (ibid, p.36). A nation's greatness cannot depend purely on honesty: "So Vice is beneficial found,/ When it's by Justice lopt and bound;/ Nay,

where the People would be great,/ As necessary to the State,/ As Hunger is to make 'em eat" (ibid, p. 37). We have felt it necessary to give a fairly long summary of this fable, because it is the most obvious origin of the passage we have quoted. There too the author is not suggesting that vice alone causes society to flourish and "sparkle"; but he is certainly maintaining that virtue alone will never achieve this end.

It is not, however, the only possible source; for Mandeville's view connects with the notion of providentialisme naturel of Pierre Bayle (v. Delvolvé, Rel., crit. et phil. etc. pp. 103-105 & pp. 104-105, n. 3). Delvolvé is of the belief that Bayle has taken the Christian theological explanation of the existence of evil by the providential government of the world, and turned it to his own ends - that is, towards naturalism. This solution amounts to asserting that Nature - or God acting by purely natural means - makes the vices of mankind serve her purposes. Viewed from on high, therefore, vice helps to achieve physical and social order in the world. The origin of Bayle's theory is unknown to Delvolvé, but he rightly points to its connections with Fontenelle's notion of the utility of the passions - a notion we discovered in our author's Art de ne point s'ennuyer, and which is to be found in the Dialogues des morts, perhaps most specifically in the assertion that what Nature cannot achieve through man's reason, she achieves through his folly. The latter opinion (which inspired a passage in the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant) is also to be discerned in Bayle's Nouvelles Lettres critiques: "En général, il est vrai que le monde ne se conserve dans l'état où nous le voyons qu'à cause que les hommes sont remplis de mille faux préjugés, et de mille passions déraisonnables" (cit. Delvolvé, p. 106). By this statement, Bayle means to imply that passions are necessary "evils" which contain within themselves an antidote to their evil effects.

Mandeville may have been influenced by Bayle, and Deslandes by both. Certinly the combined opinion harmonizes with the

argument that "le plaisir est le maître, le lien de la société..." (La Fortune, p. 159). Pleasure is not to be found purely in virtue, since the world was not intended to banish everything but virtue. The writer who, in 1737, presented the "Two Principles" in such a favourable light has not forgotten this fact as he approaches the problem fom a different angle; and in 1751 he postulates a "...mélange de biens & de maux...d'où dépendent...tout le méchanisme physique & moral du monde actuel..." (La Fortune, p. 133). Such is our author's esoteric view of good and evil in society - a view which for a short distance runs parallel with that of King (De Orig. Mali, ed. 1781, p. 382); and that of Pope (Essay on Man, Ep. II, ll. 238-248), to the effect that private vices can be found to contribute to public or general good. Yet, as we have said, it coincides most completely with the opinion of the author of the Fable of the Bees, who asserts the positive usefulness of vice.

Having begun in 1712 with Fontenelle's cynical notion of universal folly, Deslandes had adopted in the critical history of 1737 a somewhat resigned attitude to the vices that afflicted society: "...le meilleur gouvernement n'est pas celui qui exclut tous les vices; le pourroit-il, à parler sans fard? Mais celui qui empêche que ces vices ne soient trop contagieux, & qu'une certaine faveur, une certaine impunité, ne les rende trop brillans & trop communs" (H.c., I, 308-309). By this time we are well aware of the fear of social upheaval that lies behind such qualifications in this exoteric writing. But in 1751 he was no longer addressing the wider public, and was therefore able to conclude that the "brilliance" which vice imparts to society justifies its existence.

The Plurality of Worlds "L'oeuvre de la création...auroit été imparfaite, si l'univers n'eût contenu tout ce qui est possible, tout ce qui peut exister" (p. 191). "Mais il y a une infinité de mondes, parce que la matiere est infiniment étendue: il a donc fallu, pour éviter l'uniformité toûjours désagréable, diversifier ces mondes à l'infini, & leur donner à chacun des habitans qui n'eussent entr' eux aucune ressemblance..." (pp. 40-41) "...tous les mondes possibles & créables, avec leurs avantages & leurs desavantages. Dans l'autre est la représentation du monde actuel & créé, le meilleur de tous, celui où les avantages & les desavantages se compensent mutuellement & de la maniere la plus parfaite. On y voit

comment la bonté de Dieu s'accorde avec sa justice; comment les loix de la Nature sont simples, constantes & regulieres; en un mot, comment le Morale [sic] & le Physique s'ajustent l'un à l'autre & forment un tout admirable" (pp. 12-13).

Let us note first, that, though the motion of the Universe will be accounted irregular, the principles upon which the machine works are regular. The rest of the passages cited are closely Leibnitzian. For instance, we can discount the influence of Spinoza here; for, as Hampshire has pointed out recently, in Spinozism:

> The possible cannot be wider than the actual, in the sense that the actual world is one of a number of possible worlds, as Leibnitz was to hold; the actual world is the only possible world, and therefore, in any ordinary sense of choice or will, it is meaningless to conceive God as exercising choice or will in creation (Spinoza, p. 54).

We turn our attention, then to Leibnitz. One clearly indicated source is the Monadology, in which we read: "Now, as in the Ideas of God there is an infinite number of possible universes, and as only one of them can be actual, there must be a sufficient reason for the choice of God, which leads Him to decide upon one rather than another" (tr. Latta, p. 247). Although Deslandes does not mention the principle of raison suffisante, there is much in this part of the Monadology that is similar to the doctrines implied in our quotations from La Fortune. Another section of the same work of Leibnitz serves to underline similarities: "And by this means there is obtained as great a variety as possible, along with the greatest possible order; that is to say, it is the way to get as much perfection as possible" (ibid, p. 249). We now understand why, in the third of our selected passages, there is so much stress on "perfection"; and, as Latta's note explains: "For Leibnitz the highest perfection is the most complete unity or order in the greatest variety" (ibid, n. 90).

There is something more: the third passage to which we have just referred concerns the Palace of Destinies, which is mentioned also in the Théodicée of 1710. Now, towards the end of this book, a philosophical discussion of divine prescience and Providence (based on one of Valla's dialogues about free-will

and against Boetius) is continued in the form of a short fable. This fable which, as an illustration of matters of philosophy, is reminiscent of the conte philosophique viewed as a literary form or manner, is of particular interest to us at this moment in our study. Having received from the Oracle of Apollo a verdict predicting banishment and suffering, Sextus Tarquinius has accused the god of treating him badly. Apollo has replied: "Je say l'avenir, mais je ne le fais pas" (ed. 1710, p. 609), and has referred the objector to Jupiter and the Parcae. Now, consulting Jupiter's oracle, Sextus is told that, if he is prepared to renounce his ambition to rule Rome, the Parcae will change his destiny and make him happy. Rejecting this offer, Sextus decides to obey his destiny as it stands. Hearing this, Theodorus, the high priest, commends the wisdom of Jupiter, claiming that mankind would rather admire goodness than greatness. Jupiter refers him to Pallas Athene, who makes the following remarks:

> Vous voyez icy le Palais des Destinées, dont j'ai la garde. Il y a des representations non seulement de ce qui arrive, mais encor de tout ce qui est possible. Et Jupiter en ayant fait la revûe avant le commencement du Monde existant, a digeré les possibilités en Mondes, & a fait le choix du meilleur de tous... Mais si vous posés un cas qui ne differe du Monde actuel que dans une seule chose définie & dans ses suites, un certain Monde determiné vous repondra; Ces Mondes sont tous icy, c'est à dire en idées (ibid, pp. 615-616).

And, showing him his own career in the celebrated Book, [illegible]: "C'est l'Histoire de ce Monde, où nous sommes maintenant en visite, luy dit la Déesse: C'est le livre de ses destinées" (p.617). And, after a complicated description of the many worlds, we come upon this statement regarding Jupiter's choice: "...il ne-pouvoit manquer de choisir ce Monde, qui surpasse en perfection tous les autres...autrement Jupiter auroit renoncé à sa sagesse..." (pp. 617-619). Apart altogether from the doctrine of the "best possible world", and the insistence upon divine greatness and wisdom rather than upon mere goodness, this fable is of great significance as a model for the tour of the Palace of Destinies undertaken by Fortune at the beginning of Deslandes's story.

Leibnitz claims our attention in yet another way. The phrase in La Fortune, "comment la bonté de Dieu s'accorde avec sa justice" echoes some notions contained in articles 89-90 of the Monadology: "It may also be said that God as Architect satisfies in all respects God as Lawgiver...Finally, under this perfect government no good action would be unrewarded and no bad one unpunished...". As Latta remarks: "That is to say, the world is built on a plan which perfectly harmonizes with the moral government of its inhabitants" (op. cit, p. 269 & n. 140). Is not this what Deslandes is trying to express when he speaks of the accord of moral and physical in the scheme of things? Is it not, moreover, what Voltaire puts into the mouth of Jesrad in Zadig (1748)? For, in a chapter in which reference is made to the Book of Destinies, this conversation occurs:

Jesrad: ...il n'y a point de mal dont il ne naisse un bien.
Zadig: Mais s'il n'y avait que du bien, et point de mal?
Jesrad: Alors cette terre serait une autre terre, l'enchaînement des événements serait un autre ordre de sagesse; et cet ordre, qui serait parfait, ne peut être que dans la demeure éternelle de l'Etre suprême, de qui le mal ne peut approcher. Il a créé des millions de mondes dont aucun ne peut ressembler à l'autre. Cette immense variété est un attribut de sa puissance immense (Oeuvres, ed. Mol, XXI, p. 90).

The ideas advanced in response to Zadig's interrogation are close indeed to those that we find in the conte philosophique which appeared three years later. Even closer in time is the conte, Memnon of 1750, which reveals the topicality of notions of Pope, Shaftesbury and Leibnitz regarding the plurality of worlds and the excellence of the Whole. We remember that, in a state of disillusionment and dejection, the hero is faced by his bonrénie, who, having informed him that absolute perfection is impossible in the world we know, adds:

Il y a un globe où tout cela se trouve; mais dans les cent mille millions de mondes qui sont dispersés dans l'étendue tout se suit par degrés. On a moins de sagesse et de plaisir dans le second que dans le premier, moins dans le troisième que dans le second, ainsi du reste jusqu'au dernier, où tout le monde est complètement fou.

Memnon finally replies:

Eh mais! dit Memnon, certains poètes, certains philosophes, ont donc grand tort de dire que tout est bien? --Ils ont grande raison, dit le philosophe de là-haut, en considérant l'arrangement de l'univers entier. --Ah! je ne croirai cela, répliqua le pauvre Memnon, que quand je ne serai plus borgne (ibid, pp. 99-100).

Thus only the cosmic view of the problem will allow the optimistic conclusion; and Memnon is too close to his own misfortunes to understand the fine distinction between "all is good" and "the All is good". Here, then, is another philosophic tale embodying ideas similar to those of 1751.

We must add one more observation to what we have said already. There is a consequence of the notion of the "best possible world" - a consequence to which Diderot was to draw attention in the article Manichéisme of the Encyclopédie. The Leibnitzian doctrine must surely lead to some restriction upon divine liberty, since a deity limited to any sort of choice cannot be entirely free. Yet Deslandes's portrayal of a Homeric Jupiter is not at variance with this consequence of the notion of the "best possible world". For, as Voltaire makes clear in 1756 (ed. Mol., IX, 472-473, n.1), this Jupiter is quite frankly "l'esclave des Destins"; and our author is apparently not concerned with distinctions between necessitating and inclining in La Fortune.

The World "C'est une machine...dont tous les mouvemens sont irréguliers: mais qui trouve dans cette irrégularité même, le principe de son action, & la force intérieure qui la fait mouvoir" (pp. 178-179).

Despite the regularity of the laws of nature, then, the "machine" functions somewhat eccentrically. This irregularity is consistent with the Leibnitzian view of a Universe in which quantity of motion is constant, whilst motion is diffused by variability of its direction.[23] As Latta explains, "it rebounds in the direction from which it came or is deflected in some other way". And to continue the parallel, we may add another phrase from the same editor's explanation: "That which is conserved, then, is not actual motion, as an extrinsic property of material substance, but this intrinsic tendency or potentiality of motion, which Leibnitz calls force" (op. cit., pp. 88-90). This notion of intrinsic force in an irregularly functioning machine is precisely that which Deslandes is attempting to expound in the passage we have cited above. Pope looks upon Nature in a similar manner: man cannot be expected to be without flaw since Nature is capable of erratic behaviour:

> But errs not nature from this gracious end,
> From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
> When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
> Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
> "No", 'tis replied, "the first Almighty Cause
> Acts not by partial but by gen'ral laws:
> Th' exceptions few; some change since all began;
> And what created perfect?" --Why then man?
> If the great end be human happiness,
> Then nature deviates; and can man do less?
>
> (Essay on Man, Ep. I, ll. 141-150).

We turn to a third eighteenth-century thinker. In pages devoted to Newton's thought, we have already referred to the admission of irregularity of the Universe. For, although as a scientist Newton believed in stability and regularity, he was apparently driven to a metaphysical solution of the problem of change and decay and of loss of energy in the Universe. Consequently, the argument for uniformity in a measurable system is complemented by "un argument presque inverse, faisant voir que la diversité des choses, mieux encore que leur uniformité, est l'indice d'un dessein supérieur" (Bloch, La Phil. de Newton, p. 508). And, as Leibnitz defines unity as existing in diversity, and as the author of La Fortune speaks of "l'uniformité toûjours désagréable" (p. 41), so Newton considers that an intelligent Deity is sufficient to explain why all cannot be reduced to a single principle. Yet, Newton is often on the verge of pantheism - even in his published works. So too is the author of La Fortune.[24] If irregularity is necessary to the motion of the Universe, the Divinity intervenes only when the cycles have run their courses, and then only to wind up the spring and thus allow a new cycle to commence.

The Succession of Societies "Il est vrai que cette société ne peut durer long-tems. Mais sur ses débris il s'en forme une autre, & une autre encore après. C'est ainsi que les choses humaines souffrent, & doivent souffrir des variations continuelles...la terre retombe insensiblement dans le cahos d'où elle a été tirée il y a un certain nombre de siecles. Quand elle y sera retombée tout-à-fait, alors nous prendrons de nouvelles mesures, & après l'avoir délivrée & nettoyée des êtres qui la peuplent aujourd'hui, nous y en placerons d'autres plus sages & plus raisonnables (pp. 194-196).

Such ideas, as Bury explains in the Idea of Progress (ed. 1920, Ch. I), were current amongst the Ancients, who tended to

embrace them with pessimistic resignation. The eighteenth century did not take quite so pessimistic a view of these revolutions and destructions, and in this sense Deslandes interprets the spirit of his age which believed in ultimate betterment of mankind. We think once again of Voltaire's Romans. Consider Le Monde comme il va: la vision de Babouc, composed about 1746 and published three years before La Fortune; in this conte which is a vehicle for criticism of society, of financiers and of the Church — in much the same way as the story of 1751 is found to be — we come across this passage:

> Ah! la vilaine ville que Persépolis! Apparemment que les anges veulent la détruire pour en rebâtir une plus belle, et la peupler d'habitants moins malpropres, et qui chantent mieux. La Providence peut avoir ses raisons; laissons-la faire (Oeuvres, XXI, 4).

Admittedly it is a very cynical view of the city of Paris; yet the idea behind the remark of Babouc is similar to that of Jupiter at the end of Deslandes's conte. Perhaps the modern source of such notions is to be found in the works of Leibnitz, who speaks of the partial destruction and repeated regeneration of the world, but sees in it progress towards a greater end (v. The Ultimate Organization of Things, esp. the closing paragraph). Although, as Deslandes states, there will be periodic returns to chaos, yet in the long run they will lead to a finer race of men and to a better society. On the cosmic scale destructive revolutions are inevitable because they are in the general scheme of things; but the final aim is good and the future is ultimately bright for mankind or man's successors. It is, therefore, a limited form of optimism.

This, then, is the essential doctrine of La Fortune. It is completely eclectic. It cannot be pinned down under the ticket of any single system of philosophy, yet it draws upon some of the familiar systems of the time as well as upon Ancient philosophies. The very nature of the novel, set as it is for so such of its duration on Olympian heights, lent itself to a vast cosmic view of things. Pigmalion is a tale

about a humanized hero who called upon a goddess to perform a "natural" miracle. It is concerned with some passions and ideas possessed by human beings; and in its most striking passages we find a human view of life and of matter. But the problem of good and evil could be solved only by taking a much wider canvas and by depicting thereon superhuman characters, who alone may speak with authority on such matters. That is also why we find in La Fortune a limited form of optimism which was lacking in the conte of 1741, and why there is much more of Pope and Leibnitz in the later story. That this should be blended with fatalism is not difficult to understand, once we accept the fact that we are looking at things from Olympian heights of divine loftiness through the perspective glass of gods who themselves are bound by the rules of Destiny which they draw up in concert. It is only from the great Jupiter himself that Fortune can find answers to her many questions. John Locke had been able to suggest that matter might think: it required a god to elucidate the problem of good and evil. This is clearly a basic difference between the two stories, and one that suggests that, in retirement from affairs, Deslandes had been able to acquire a grander view of problems that beset the human mind.

Another thing that becomes much clearer at the end of our examination of our author's philosophic writings is the test that must be applied to decide whether a work is exoteric or esoteric. We have spoken of anonymity, of indications in prefaces regarding the public for which the work is intended, and these are certainly important subsidiary factors; but the really central factor is the author's treatment of ideas. It is a common-place, for instance, to say that he expresses himself through the mouths of other people - Seneca, Pliny, Pygmalion, Fortune, Jupiter and the rest. The question that arises is: what qualifications does he add to those opinions? If, as in the case of the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat (which is not a conte philosophique, and will be discussed in the course of our study of Deslandes's notions of history),

the writer half-apologizes for deistic sentiments expressed by one of his characters, then the work is exoteric. Again: if, as we found so often in the Histoire critique de la philosophie, the author provides a counter-weight to balance the "strong meat" on one side of the scales; if he strews orthodoxy or semi-orthodoxy amongst the impieties of his pagans, ancient and modern, then once more we have to do with an exoteric text. If, on the other hand, the writer allows such impieties to stand on their own, unopposed and unqualified, we may class the work as an esoteric text. Finally, we may add that there are degrees of esotericism; for, although in the case of both Pigmalion and La Fortune the text itself is esoteric, the former has an esoteric preface and the latter an exoteric preface - a fact that may well be accounted for by the condemnation of the 1741 publication by the Parlement de Dijon.

Meanwhile the conte we examined last has a political and economic content almost completely absent from the story that appeared ten years earlier. This in itself requires some considerable explanation. Consequently, before coming to final and general conclusions about our author's philosophic ideas, we propose to devote a part of this study to Deslandes's economic and political opinions.

PART VI NOTES

1. e.g. Deslandes's Optique des moeurs is concerned with Arab doctors, and in La Fortune the goddess and her companion adopt Persian disguise.

2. In the Dict. phil. (art. Bien (Tout est)), Voltaire recognizes the community of ideas between Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke and Pope: "Je passe vite de ce quatrième ciel à milord Bolingbroke, pour ne pas m'ennuyer. Cet homme, qui avait sans doute un grand génie, donna au célèbre Pope son plan de Tout est bien, qu'on retrouve en effet mot pour mot dans les Oeuvres posthumes de milord Bolingbroke, et que milord Shaftesbury avait auparavant inséré dans ses Caractéristiques (XVII, 534).

3. v. Pt. V of our study, n. 14.

4. ed. 1751, p. 80, n. 1.

5. v. n. 2 above: Voltaire shows that Leibnitz renewed and extended the Platonic notion concerning the "best possible world".

6. v. n. 2 & 5 above.

7. A slight, but curious similarity between the versions of Marston and Deslandes lies in the fact that both have a verse dedication of sixteen lines addressed to a lady. It is probably a pure coincidence.

8. On the title-page of Pigmalion, Desl. quotes from the Metam. of Ovid: "Interea niveum mirâ feliciter arte/ Sculpit ebur, formamque dedit, qua femina nasci/ Nulla potest; operisque sui concepit amorem". Yet he himself mentions ivory only once (ed. 1742, p. 4), and then only in connection with previous works of sculpture performed by Pygmalion. Marston speaks of ivory but later of stone; Romagnesi (v. this Pt. VI, n. 12) of alabaster.

9. The notion of metamorphosis outlined here is close to that of the Ancient Anaxagoras (v. Pt. IV of this study, n. 13). Moreover, Mc Dougall (Body and Mind, pp. 26-27) tells us that "Some of the Stoics hold that death is the end of life; others suspended judgement on this problem; others again, adopting a materialistic Pantheism taught, not without some inconsistency, that the soul of the wise man maintains itself after death, according to the degree of his ethical development; but that it eventually loses its individuality and, after being consumed in fire, is reabsorbed in the divine Being" (cf. H.c., II, 417). Whereas the doctrine of metempsychosis, favoured in Antiquity by Pythagoras, depends on animist premises, the doctrine of metamorphosis is a hylozoist notion, supposing change of form within animated Nature. It is therefore close to the Epicurean soul-atoms and Leibnitzian monads, and fits into the pantheist framework of Deslandes's conte. Our author's H.c. contains several refs. (all disdainful - e.g. II, 67) to metempsychosis, in opposing which, Deslandes is furnishing evidence of his dislike of theology, and particularly of Jewish theology. For it was in the second half of the seventeenth century that the Hebraic cabalistic idea of Dybbuk ("possessing") appeared. Since the Dybbuk represented a superstitious belief that the soul of a sinner seeks shelter after death in the body of a living person, it was obviously associated with the older doctrine of metempsychosis. Voltaire speaks of metamorphosis in Micromégas (Oeuvr., XXI, 109): "...vous savez bien que quand il faut rendre son corps aux éléments, et ranimer la nature sous une autre forme, ce qui s'appelle mourir; quand ce moment de

métamorphose est venu, avoir vécu une éternité, ou avoir vécu un jour, c'est précisément la même chose". The Ms. d'Argenson also tells us that the Duc d'Orléans (who died in the year that Micromégas was published) was captivated by a system of Pythagorean metempsychosis reconciled with Christianity by the Chev. de Béthune (Mém., ed. 1825, p. 339). v. Pt. I, n. 43.

10. cf. Lange, Hist. of Materialism (tr. Thomas, 1877- 81, II, 18): "...Locke lets fall the somewhat superficial remark that it is godless to maintain that a thinking matter is impossible; for if God had willed it, he might by his omnipotence have created matter capable of thinking...Voltaire thought himself so enthusiastically into this question, that he no longer left it unsettled with Locke, but decided it in the materialistic sense."

11. v. Pt. I of this study, n. 35, and Pt. II, n. 24 and text. In the n. to Pigmalion, Desl. says: "Mr. Vergier, si malheureusement assassiné pendant la Régence de Mr. le Duc d'Orléans". cp. Voltaire (Oeuvr., VIII, 284): "Des voleurs assassinent Vergier dans la rue; tout Paris accuse de ce meurtre un grand prince". A current rumour attributed the murder to Condé or the Regent himself.

12. In 1753 Gaubier parodied Rameau's musical version (to De Sovot's libretto) under the topical title Briochè, ou l'origine des marionettes. A comedy of Poinsinet de Sivry was "représentée pour la première et dernière fois le 12 décembre 1760, et non imprimée" (Corr. litt. IV, 340, n. 1). A most inferior comic-opera caricature of Rousseau's scène lyrique (v. n. 15 of this Pt.) was concocted by Du Rozoy and Bonesi (Corr. litt., XII, 464 (Jan. 1781)). In 1800 the Ambigu-Comique and later the Paris Opéra presented a two-act ballet-pantomime (scenario by Milon, music by Lefebvre) entitled Pygmalion. But perhaps the most successful comic version was that of Romagnesi - a three-act play presented by the Comédie Italienne in the same year as the 1st ed. of Deslandes' conte. It introduces a number of minor characters - for example, the valet, Dosie, who witnesses the metamorphosis whilst his master is praying in the temple for the miracle to happen. It also portrays the statue (Agalmérie) as "coquette, légère, orgueilleuse", and ends lamely with her promise of good behaviour in the future (v. Oeuvr., 1772). (re. name of statue, v. n. 16 to this Pt.). In the Confessions (Pt. II, Livre VIII), Rousseau speaks of some of the stock pieces of French opera, Eglé, Pygmalion, Le Sylphe, adding smugly: "Le seul Devin du Village soutint la comparaison". Rameau's version had 203 performances in 33 yrs. and 7 reprises (Teneo, Commentaire, in Rameau, Oeuvr. compl., XVII, 1ère partie, p. lxi).

13. cf. Diderot, Oeuvr., ed. Assézat, XI, 60: " On ne se lasse pas de parcourir le cou, les bras, la gorge, les pieds, les mains, la tête d'Hersé [L-J-F. Lagrenée's composition of 1767] J'y porte mes lèvres, et je couvre de baisers tous ces charmes"; v. Reinarch, Diderot, ed. 1894, pp. 129-130: "Dans la nudité il ne voit que la promesse du plaisir...Il regarde ainsi, en louchant, toutes les Vénus et toutes les Galatées"; and Réau,(in Michel's Hist. de l'art, ed. 1924, VII, 2nde. partie, 494).

14. v. Diderot, ed. cit., I, 353: "Ce serait, à mon avis, une société plaisante, que celle de cinq personnes dont chacune n'aurait qu'un sens; il n'y a pas de doute que ces gens-là ne se traitassent tous d'insensés...il y a une observation singulière à faire sur cette société de cinq personnes dont chacune ne jouirait que d'un sens; c'est que, par la faculté qu'elles auraient d'abstraire, elles pourraient toutes être géomètres, s'entendre à merveille, et ne s'entendre qu'en géométrie."

15. Oeuvres, ed. 1817, VIII, 345-353.

16. Other eighteenth-century writers mentioned here do not use the name "Galatea", who in mythology was a nereid. In Vergil's 3rd Eclogue, as a symbol of rustic coquetry, she was identified with the pastoral, thanks to which she reappeared in Cervantes's Galatea (1584), in D'Urfé's Astrée (1610-27) and in Florian's novel of 1783. In the Hist. de l'art (v. n. 13, above) p. 561, Falconet's piece of sculpture is referred to in error as Pygmalion et Galatée. The salon title given by Diderot as Pygmalion aux pieds de sa statue qui s'anime is the authentic one (Oeuvr., X, 221).

17. The device of the voyage philosophique is common enough in literature. We think, for instance, of Fénelon's hero, guided by Minerva (in the guise of Mentor) and visiting Egypt, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Crete &c. But perhaps we think more fruitfully of Voltaire's works - of Micromégas that appeared a year later than La Fortune, and in which there is a journey undertaken by someone larger than humans; of the brief Aventure de la Mémoire, which tells of Jupiter; and the goddess, Mnemosyne, complaining that men have blasphemed against her; — and of human life turned topsy-turvy by the withdrawal of memory. Yet a closer parallel with Deslandes's conte is offered by the Eloge historique de la Raison, at the beginning of which we discover Reason hiding down a well with her daughter, Truth, and bitterly reproaching mankind with treating her badly. With her daughter she travels then to Rome, to the Italian states, to Germany, to Sweden, to Poland, to England, and finally to France, making appropriate comments upon the degree of enlightenment in each place.

18. v. Bayle, Dict. crit., art. Lucrèce, n. F, for Lucretius' view of Fortune.

19. In the Henriade, Voltaire makes Saint Louis conduct Henri IV to the Palace of Destinies where, like the goddess Fortune in Deslandes's story, he comes upon Father Time who (unlike the porter in the conte of 1751) is responsible for sending good and evil: "Et de là sur la Terre il verse à pleines mains/ Et les biens et les maux, destinés aux humains". In both texts we find allusions to the Book of Destinies which, in the words of the poet, "Contient de l'avenir l'histoire irrévocable"; on the other hand, Voltaire's supreme deity "y marqua nos désirs," whilst the more rigorously deterministic conte of 1751 presents a Jupiter who merely reads what has happened and is to happen (Volt. Oeuvr., VIII, 179).

20. In La Survivance des dieux antiques, Seznec refers to a rather different subordination of Fortune in Bonincontri's astrological works, in which the stars ("ministras executricesque") are agents of God in the government of the sublunary sphere and Fortune is dependent on them (pp. 72-73).

21. We do not find a single reference to Anthony Collins in the works of Deslandes, and have therefore hesitated to attribute anything in those works to the Inquiry.

22. Resigned to their decadence, Jupiter appears to despise mankind. It is a pessimistic attitude; yet the pessimism of Deslandes on this occasion is more sober than that displayed in 1712, when he agreed with Momus " que les Dieux étoient pleins de nectar quand ils firent les hommes, & qu' ils ne purent regarder leur ouvrage de sans froid [sic] sans en rire" (Réflex. &c., ed. 1732, p. 13).

23. In notes on the Poëme sur le désastre de Lisbonne, Voltaire makes a distinction between the ideas of Leibnitz and Pope; for whereas he interprets Pope's philosophy as implying that "si on était un atome du monde, le monde ne pourrait subsister",

he devotes some considerable space to showing the superiority of the Leibnitzian view that all events are not equally fertile in consequences; that "dans toute machine, il y a des effets nécessaires au mouvement, et d'autres effets indifférents, qui sont la suite des premiers, et qui ne produisent rien"; and that "Tel est donc l'ordre général du monde, que les chaînons de la chaîne ne seraient point dérangés par un peu plus ou un peu moins de matière, par un peu plus ou un peu moins d'irrégularité" (Oeuvr., IX, 472-473, n. 1). Making no such distinctions, Deslandes simply states that there is irregularity which is essential to the "machine".

24. At the turn of the century we find this near-pantheism and several other aspects of Deslandes's conte in Shelley's esoteric Queen Mab, which we mention without suggesting that it was influenced in any way by Deslandes's work, but at the same time pointing to some common sources and hinting at some continuity of ideas. In Shelley's poem we discover the "plurality of worlds": "Whilst round the chariot's way/ Innumerable systems rolled,/ And countless spheres diffused/ An ever-varying glory" (Poet. Works, ed. 1870, I, 8); and insistence upon a determinist atomism of Holbachian stamp: "No atom of this turbulence fulfils/ A vague and unnecessitated task,/ Or acts but as it must and ought to act" (ibid, p. 38). Again, there is the negation of notions of a Christian Deity placed alongside the belief in "A pervading Spirit, coeternal with the universe" - a form of pantheism which S[illegible] connects with Newton's definition of an hypothesis applied to the common idea of a creative god, and is elaborated from D'Holbach and Spinoza (v. Rossetti's n. to p. 40). Here also, as in Pigmalion, we find eternity conceived as a question of degree of consciousness and of a succession of ideas in the mind. Thus, as in the case of the author of Pigmalion and La Fortune, there is an esoteric doctrine compounded from Newtonianism, Spinozism and French naturalism.

PART VII

THE MATURE PHILOSOPHY: AFFAIRS OF STATE

CHAPTER I NAVAL, COMMERCIAL & ECONOMIC MATTERS

...quelque tranquille & bien réglé que soit un Etat au dedans, cela ne suffit point; il faut encore qu'il se fasse estimer au dehors, & même respecter; il faut que ses voisins le craignent, qu'ils se ménagent avec lui & regardent son alliance comme un bien qui leur est précieux... (Fragmens d'un auteur grec, in Lettre sur le luxe, ed. 1745, p. 64).

L'amour de la patrie est le seul motif qui me guide... (Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce, ed. 1743, p. 10)

a) The Navy

As we have stressed before, an important difference between Deslandes and professional "philosophers" is that he was obliged to earn his living as Commissaire de la Marine. This obligation was not, however, an unqualified disadvantage, since it provided him with such technical knowledge as would fit him to perform one of the functions of the eighteenth-century - "philosopher" - to render practical service to the community and state. In his scientific monographs he had given proof of this regard, by writing papers about such matters as the best method of dealing with worms that destroy the timbers of a vessel and of ensuring a supply of safe drinking-water during long voyages.[1] In middle age he did not disdain to pursue the study of such technical matters; and in fact the last of the Recueils appeared but four years before his death. At the same time, taking a wider view of his duties as Commissaire, he found himself involved in more ambitious projects relating to the French Navy, to economic affairs and to the welfare of the realm.

The urgency of the first of these projects was all too apparent. Between 1740 and 1750 - a period which included a naval war that began in 1744 - France had but 88 ships of the line, compared with England's 226. It was not surprising, therefore, that the naval history of the reign of Louis XV was so inglorious. The situation had been bad for some time.

True, a temporary revival of interest in the Fleet had been occasioned by the need to protect the new trade routes at the end of the Regency period, and, despite the indifference of Fleury, Maurepas had been permitted to make a modest expansion after 1723, so that by 1730 the Naval Minister could point to 51 ships and in the following year 54. This progress was welcome, but it was not good enough; for England still had a fleet three times as powerful as that of France. This was particularly deplorable, since, in those days of colonial expansion, wars were often fought at great distances from home-waters. Having these facts in mind, Deslandes agreed to second the efforts of Maurepas. First, as an introduction to this national problem, he decided to compose a history of the Franch Navy. For this task he was considered eminently qualified. The Mémoires de Trévoux (ed. Paris, July, 1748, p. 1360) made this remark: "Il faut pour y réussir beaucoup de génie, encore plus de lecture, & une opiniâtreté infatigable dans le travail. Outre que l'Auteur est bien pourvu de ces talens, il a presque toujours vécu dans le voisinage de la mer, & dans les ports du Royaume"; and the Mercure de France was equally flattering: "M. Deslandes, qui joint à une étude profonde de l'antiquité, une connoissance réfléchie de la Marine, qui fait depuis longtems sa principale occupation, étoit plus en état que personne de débrouiller ce chaos, & il l'a fait avec succès..." (Feb., 1748, pp. 109 sqq.). Secondly, in order to draw attention to the urgent need of increasing naval strength, he wrote the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce,[2] which was published, under the secret patronage of Maurepas,[3] in 1743. The translator of the English edition of the book that appeared in the same year (William Temple of Trowbridge) also tells us that the work was "addressed to the Count de Maurepas"; and yet this can hardly be the case, since the initials "Mr. le C. de B.C.M...." do not suggest the name of Jean-Frédéric Phelippeaux, comte de Maurepas.[4] Thus, despite silent approval, we may assume that the Naval Minister preferred to have his name kept out of it.

The moment was in one sense propitious, and in another unfavourable. Fleury, the opponent of naval expansion, was dead; and it was hoped that his successor Choiseul would pay more heed to the promptings of the Naval Minister. At least, it was hoped that he would not, like the Bishop of Fréjus, regard such recommendations as an expression of "party" spite: M. de Maurepas...fatiguait en vain le ministre par des représentations trop frappantes et importunait, à force de vérité. M. de Fréjus voulait croire que c'était jalousie de ministre, qui cherchait à faire valoir sa partie, et ne croyait pas un mot de l'importance ni de l'extrémité où était cette portion du gouvernement (Pr. Hénault, Mém., ed. Fr. Rousseau, 1911, p. 165).

Moreover the urgency of the task of increasing naval power could not have been more obvious, since France was involved in war with England during 1743. But the moment was also unfortunate because of the peculiar position of Deslandes's "protector" who was soon to be disgraced (1749) for an alleged insult against Madame de Pompadour.[5] Even in 1743 the Count was deeply embroiled in "political" strife of court factions. The situation is sketched for us in Noyes' book on Voltaire, in which the author discusses the intrigues that followed the death of Cardinal de Fleury, particularly those related to the choice of the minister's successor in the Academy. Speaking of the anti-Voltaire cabal, consisting of men like Boyer, tutor to the Dauphin and Bishop of Mirepoix, who were opposed to the candidature of any except an ecclesiastic, Noyes writes: "Maurepas was a secret ally of this cabal for various reasons of his own, one of which was his jealousy of the Duchesse de Châteauroux, the king's mistress, with whom Maurepas had quarrelled, not on moral grounds, but over the allotment of favour and the spoils...Maurepas was at war with Madame de Châteauroux and Richelieu..." (ed. 1936, p. 299). This is one facet of the delicate position in which the Naval Minister found himself at the time when Deslandes's Essay appeared, and it goes far to explain his treatment of a protégé. For, although the Count does not appear to have wished to provide open support for Deslandes's outspoken treatise, he certainly hoped to give it secret protection at Court.[6] In this, however, he was doomed

to be unsuccessful, for he was powerless to prevent its condemnation by an order in council because of the author's "liberté qui déplut à la cour" (Corr. litt., I, 128). On the other hand, he had a further edition privately printed in Amsterdam in the same year as the first edition of "Geneva". This was as far as the Naval Minister could allow himself to go at this time, particularly as the author of the new work had set about his task with the zeal of the true reformer.

In fact, the author crowded a good deal into the 176 pages of his Essay, the aim of which was to show the need of a history of the French Fleet written by a professional person, competent, unprejudiced, devoted to truth and courageous enough to state the facts; and to stress the urgent necessity of increasing naval power for defence and for the protection and promotion of French commerce. The main body of the work is divided into four parts, concerned respectively with the following topics:

1. "...que tous les peuples anciens qui ont voulu remplir l'Univers du bruit de leur nom, & se distinguer par-dessus les autres, ont cultivé la Marine, & que plus ils l'ont cultivé, plus ils ont acquis de puissance & d'autorité"

2. "...que depuis le commencement de la Monarchie, on a reconnu en France, l'utilité de la Marine, non-seulement sous les régnes un peu éclairés, mais encore au milieu de ces révolutions dont elle a été quelquefois agitée; que nos plus grands Rois ont cherché à s'en procurer une, & que nos plus judicieux Ministres les y ont aidés de tous leurs soins & de toute leur industrie"

3. "...que de tous les Royaumes de l'Europe, la France est d'abord celui qui a le plus de ressources & de commodités pour faire fleurir la marine; qu'il est encore celui qui par la longue étenduë de ses côtes, par ses différens ports & ses différens havres, en a le plus de besoin"

4. "...que la Marine soûtenuë par l'autorité Royale doit servir à proteger le commerce, à l'étendre, à lui donner chaque jour de nouveaux accroissemens, & que le commerce doit servir à introduire l'abondance & toute sorte de richesses dans le Royaume, à la rendre aussi puissant qu'il peut être" (pp. 7-9).

"This work of M. Deslandes seems to be the Minister's last effort", says William Temple in his translator's Preface of 1743. It was indeed the most recent attempt made by Maurepas to sponsor naval expansion; but it was certainly not destined to the final one, as a MSS in the Bibliothèque Nationale proves. For there, under the date of 1745, we may read a Mémoire de Maurepas au Roi (n. a. fr. 9479), in which the Naval Minister refers to his

twenty-three years in office and complains of opposition within the government to his repeated proposals. These proposals he submits again in 1745. The MSS begins with a kind of preamble, in which the writer states the principles upon which he is basing his mémoire:

i. Commerce is the origin of national wealth (f²s 384–385)
ii. Naval power is necessary to protect commerce (f²s 387 v², & 384 v²)
iii. Naval strength is essential to the defence of a maritime nation. Supreme example: Britain (f²s 384 v² & 385 v²)
iv. Luxury trade, if regarded by some as an evil, is none the less a necessary evil when neighbouring states indulge in it (f² 386 r²)
v. National wealth is necessary both for defence and attack (ibid)
vi. Naval power guarantees national prosperity (f² 387 v²).

In the pages that follow he elaborates these points, showing how commerce "fait la richesse conséquemment la puissance des Etats", and how "les forces maritimes sont absolument nécessaires pour le soutien du commerce et pour la déffence [sic] d'un Etat bordé par la Mer". He explains the system of cabotage ("coastal trade") by which European states satisfy their needs, and cites in evidence the powerful fleets of Sweden and Denmark in the Baltic. Then, looking further afield, he refers to trade with French colonial possessions, insisting that, since these offer suitable markets for French goods, their defence is vital to French prosperity. With regard to home defence, he points out that Britain, challenged by Holland, is proudly asserting her mastery of the oceans. With this fact before him, he turns to a very brief historical review of the state of the Navy throughout the past centuries: in the fifteenth, there was no Navy; in the seventeenth there had been a sudden expansion due to increased trade with America and India, and he declares that the effective origins of the French Fleet can be placed around the year 1669. He then proceeds to supply details of various naval budgets, proving that in peace-time there have often been no adequately armed ships at all in French service. The conclusion that the King may draw from this is presumably that he is relatively not more guilty of neglect than some of his forbears. Yet the mémoire is far from encouraging complacency. Now, adds the writer, the situation is critical, thanks

to the outbreak of war. He reminds Louis that, in view of threatened hostilities with Britain, he sent the King in October 1743 a mémoire proposing measures to protect commerce, to defend the realm and its colonies abroad. He adds that, in 1744, the Navy estimates had been made for an expenditure of some twenty millions, which had been cut in the budget to ten millions; and that, in the present year 1745, he had again asked for twenty millions and once more been disappointed. This, he claims, is the more distressing, since stores and arsenals are depleted and since these cuts in expenditure have already resulted in huge losses in merchant shipping. Then, in order the more effectively to convince the sovereign that any money accorded to the Fleet will not be wasted, he points out that, on January 22 1744, the British, who had long blockaded Toulon, were obliged to retire after a somewhat undecisive engagement; and that, thanks to the vigilance of the Brest squadron, a convoy from the Middle East came through unmolested. All that, he adds, with a French Fleet of merely 62 vessels!

He passes finally to a precise statement of the requirements of his department (fºs 408-409). Louis XIV was considered to have a relatively powerful navy; but the 120 ships of the Grand Roi would not be of decisive strength in these days of such rapid naval expansion on the part of France's enemies. Even that figure, then, would be unsatisfactory. He admits that money is hard to come by, and therefore makes so bold as to state the principles on which naval budgets might well be based. First, they should be regulated in accordance with the total revenue of the state; but (equally important) they should be determined also by the size of navies of potential foes. In support of these two principles, he makes the following observations:

1. That since the Navy does so much to bring in revenue, it should have a greater share in it (fº 409 rº)

2. That it is not possible to make an exactly valid comparison between the forces of France and Britain. The British have 125 vessels of 50-100 canons, in a navy that costs 70-80 millions per annum. The French cannot be expected to indulge in expenditure on such a large scale, because they have greater land forces to maintain (fº 411, vº)

What, then, is strictly and immediately needed? First, says the minister, twenty millions a year are the minimum for efficiency; secondly, in the particular peril in which France now finds herself, an extra twenty millions a year for the next two years are required, so that some 60 additional ships may go into service. The ordinary budget should be devoted exclusively to construction, armament, colonial fleets, galleys, sailors's welfare and refitting: the extraordinary budget should be devoted to additional building and not to armament, which should be a normal, routine, peace-time concern since it is necessary for training sailors and ~~in~~ maintaining the royal authority at sea. Immediately, he adds, an extra force of some 70-80 vessels would impress Britain, who has the disadvantage of having very much to split her forces; but, in addition, France must annually arm and equip 15 men-of-war and 15 frigates and keep them on active duty. In conclusion, he argues that the Fleet should not be treated as inferior in importance to other forces: that in fact is the crux of the whole argument.

Now it is interesting to see in what respects Maurepas has learned a lesson from the fortunes of Deslandes's Essay of two years before, and to note which topics he avoids in his mémoire. Naturally they concur on several points. First, of course, in the argument that the Navy protects commerce which is one of the main sources of national prosperity; that a maritime state is particularly dependent upon naval forces for its defence; that cabotage is of the greatest importance to France, as it is to northern states; that colonial markets are too valuable to lose and that, consequently, ships are essential to the maintenance of French sovereignty abroad; that Britain is the supreme example of a state which follows the precepts laid down here; that the French must always keep an eye on neighbouring countries when deciding how to allocate funds for maritime defence; that, in some respects, the French have natural advantages over the British and the Dutch; that the French Fleet will pay for itself in the protection it will provide for commerce.

There, however, the similarity ends, for in so many ways the two theses are different. Indeed, we should hardly expect to find the same approach in an official memorandum of Maurepas and an essay - even one inspired by the very same minister. The Essay of 1743 is so obviously doctrinaire; and nowhere is this more apparent than in the references to luxury. For instance, whilst the essayist, speaking of the luxury which exists amongst merchants resident in coastal towns, declares: "...quelquefois aussi le luxe qui suit de près les richesses dont on est redevable au commerce, entraîne la dissipation de ces mêmes richesses, presque aussitôt évanouies qu'amassées" (p. 144), the minister adopts a more realistic view of the problem: "Si les richesses que ce commerce apporte dans un état sont un mal comme quelques-uns le prétendent parce qu'elles y font augmenter le luxe et le prix de toutes choses, c'est un mal nécessaire quand les Etats voisins font le même commerce..." (fº 386 rº). In Deslandes alone do we find attacks upon the idle nobility, the ineffectual education system, administrative "red-tape", national intolerance, the fickleness of the French temperament, the ignorance of Parisians regarding maritime affairs, the greed of financiers that threatens to ruin the kingdom, the short-comings of a commercial policy that encourages importation instead of developing home industry, the heavy taxation of essentials, the prevalence of corruption and nepotism, the rottenness of contemporary society. These tendentious and inflammatory remarks are naturally absent from the work of Maurepas. Absent too is Deslandes's technique of abusing the personnes en place by quoting to support his insinuations. This device, so common in the Histoire critique, is used extensively in the course of the lengthy review of the naval history of many nations. We think, for example, of his remarks about Richelieu (who is given pride of place as founder of the modern French Fleet), about Henri IV and Sully, about Louis XIV who is repeatedly eulogized for qualities which (as the contemporary reader would surely know) were lacking in Louis XV. We give an illustration of the last-named point:

[Louis XIV] "Je pensois avoir gagné dans le monde qu'on eût meilleure opinion de moi: mais je me console en ce que peut-être n'est-ce qu'à Londres qu'on fait de si faux jugemens. C'est à moi à faire par ma conduite qu'ils ne demeurent pas long-tems en de semblables erreurs...Cependant il est vrai que rien ne m'est plus indifférent, parce que je prétens mettre bien-tôt mes forces de mer en tel état, que les Anglois tiendront à grace que je veuille bien alors entendre à quelques tempéramens...Après tout, rien ne m'est à l'égard d'un point d'honneur, où je croirois la réputation de ma couronne tant soit peu blessée..."
(pp. 83-84).

And, on this occasion, the essayist permits himself to add a supporting comment: "C'est-là penser & parler en Roi". So too, in dealing with the Egyptians and Phoenicians, he repeatedly stresses conscientious and efficient monarchs; and he praises the government of China as being "le plus parfait de tous ceux qu'on connoît aujourd'hui, le plus sage, le moins tyrannique, le plus favorable au mérite & aux talens qui osent paroître, celui en un mot où l'on travaille davantage à maintenir l'ordre public, à assurer la tranquillité & la fortune de chaque particulier" (pp. 14-15)! Thus the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce arraigns and impeaches Louis XV and his government, and in this respect is even more critical than was the history of philosophy of 1737. Maurepas must have realized that his ambassador had "overplayed his hand" and consequently defeated the object of the work. Thus in his official mémoire the minister sought not to incur the anger of the King and the rest of the Court. He did so by emphasizing the positive side of the argument, by employing tact instead of reproof, by limiting his review of naval history to monarchs who were rather like Louis XV. By this softening process he hoped to persuade rather than to bludgeon. He preferred for instance to praise the few actions in which French arms had been successful in recent years; and avoided the suggestion that the French were temperamentally unsuited to making a determined stand against an enemy. And he chose to be practical and precise, and therefore to omit idealistic opinions to the effect that the Navy was the most important power in the kingdom - "le soutien de l'Etat", as Deslandes called it two years before.

Two questions remain to be answered: first, was Deslandes really justified in his views; secondly, was Maurepas more successful in the attempt of 1745? In his Mémoires,

the contemporary observer, President Hénault, expresses sentiments very similar to those of Deslandes. For he too lauds the efforts of ministers like Colbert and of sovereigns like Louis XIV, and, in so doing implies disapproval of the apathy of Fleury and Louis XV. Indeed, referring to the Cardinal he is very explicit:

> M. de Fréjus n'avait aucune idée du commerce ni de la marine et c'était peut-être, par là, qu'il s'était montré moins suspect à l'Angleterre. Il avait passé sa vie à Paris et à la Cour, dans la grande compagnie. Paris est la capitale du royaume, ou, plutôt, Paris est tout le royaume, situé au milieu des terres et loin des mers qui l'environnent: aussi nulle idée de la marine, ni rien qui en rappelle l'idée (ed. cit., p. 164).

This estimate of public opinion in the capital agrees with that of Deslandes, who writes:

> Paris au contraire ne la [the sea] connoit que par des rélations tronquées, &, si j'ose ainsi le nommer, de la seconde main. On y vit dans une indolence volontaire pour tout ce qui n'est point agrément, ou plaisir: & je suis sûr que de la moitié des choses qui s'y consomment & des raretés qui y brillent, on ignore à quelle contrée ou à quelle industrie on en est heureusement redevable (p. 105).

The President speaks disparagingly of national fickleness:

> Mais c'était forcer la nature: c'était vouloir rendre les Français marins, ce qu'ils n'avaient jamais été. Le moindre accident pouvait détruire ce moment de prodige; et c'est ce qui arriva: des malheurs sur la mer en dégoûtèrent; nous crûmes aisément que ce genre de gloire n'était pas fait pour nous...On suivait en cela les préjugés de l'éducation; et c'était flatterie que de ne plus connaître ces objets (p. 165).

And if Hénault finds them incapable of sustained interest in the Navy, Deslandes finds his compatriots lacking in commercial tenacity:

> Mais les François se hâtent de jouïr, & ils ne sçavent point faire céder à un intérêt éloigné, mais plus considérable, un intérêt présent, mais beaucoup plus petit. De-là vient qu'ils se rebuttent facilement, & que par une sorte de lâcheté, ils abandonnent dans l'exécution les entreprises les mieux conçûes dans le cabinet, ils s'ennuyent lorsqu'il faut renouveller de courage & agir de tête (p. 159).

So our author is not without support in his choice of reasons why the French were apathetic about the Navy and about commerce. But there are different ways of telling the truth, and his Essay would have been read more sympathetically if it had been more tactfully worded. Incontestably, one explanation of its failure is to be found in the fact that conversion is almost never effected by vituperation.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that Maurepas's

carefully composed memorandum does not appear to have been much more fruitful. The lawyer, Barbier, tells us in his Chronique of June 1747 that the Compagnie des Indes recently sent a force of twenty-five or twenty-six ships from the port of Brest laden with considerable sums of money. This fleet was attacked by Admiral Anson, with the disastrous result that the commander was wounded and forty millions of money were lost. This does not sound as if there had been any rapid increase in protection afforded to convoys. Indeed, Barbier adds the remark that the French Navy is now so weak that it is feared that Canada will soon be lost (as it surely was after 1759 and 1763). This weakness Barbier rightly attributes to the naval policy of Fleury; but he notes that public opinion is outraged and is bitterly reproaching Maurepas and his staff:

> Les nouvellistes ici ne songent qu'aux petits avantages que nous remportons, en prenant quelques places qu'il faudra rendre. Mais les gens sensés songent à ce qui peut ruiner notre commerce, et que, tant que nous n'aurons pas une marine assez forte à opposer aux Anglois, nous serons toujours la victime dans ce qui regarde le commerce des pays étrangers; c'est à quoi le cardinal de Fleury, peu intelligent, a le moins prévu. Cet événement fait crier contre M. le comte de Maurepas, ministre de la marine, et contre ceux qu'il employe sous lui(ed. 1857, IV, 245-246).

Poor Maurepas, who, despite the earnest endeavours of one of his contemporaries and despite his own representations to the monarch, had become the whipping-post for years of royal and governmental incompetence!

b) Economic Theories in the Essay of 1743

The cherished economic and monetary doctrine of the first half of the eighteenth century (that is until the full impact of physiocracy was felt about the mid-century, and to a smaller extent after that time) was mercantilism. In his study of the Doctrines monétaires et financières en France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle, Marain has shown how this fundamental theory - in different degrees and with varying emphasis - pervades the writings of economists like Vauban, Boisguillebert, Law, Dutot, Cantillon, Paris-Duverney, Dupré de

Saint-Maur, Montesquieu and Fortbonnais, many of whom disagreed about certain principles and some of whom have been regarded as precursors of the physiocrats. What, then, is the basis of mercantilist thought in the early eighteenth century? First, economic nationalism, the aim of each theorist being the encouragement of the national prosperity of France, more especially as it concerns commerce and trade; the development of home industries and the exploitation of natural resources. Second, the mercantilist believes in the regulation and benevolent control by the state of exports and imports, and, in many cases, of prices too. Third, unlike some of their predecessors, most mercantilists of the early eighteenth century denied the "chrysohedonic prejudice" in that they did not consider that gold and silver were the entire basis of value, and some (like Vauban, for instance) pointed to countries like Peru which had a great deal of gold but little prosperity (Harsin, p. 96). Fourth, although there were divergent theories regarding the merits of "augmentations" and "diminutions" of the currency, there was more general agreement about the idea that supply and demand should be regulated in some way to ensure the profit of those engaged in commerce and therefore (given unselfish and diligent merchants) to benefit the realm as a whole. Fifth, coupled with this notion of regulating supply and demand (and consequently of controlling inflation) is the concern these economists feel for the maintenance of public confidence and therefore of credit: only fair prices and just returns will achieve this object. In general, then, the mercantilist does not believe in <u>laissez-faire</u>, and does approve of state intervention in commerce and finance.

It is now our intention to consider the economic ideas of Deslandes in the 1743 <u>Essay</u> and to situate them against this background. At the outset, let us admit that our author was by no means a profound theorist in these matters; that his economic ideas are relatively few and that he does not pursue them to any great lengths. Nevertheless, there are two passages that demand careful study.

The first (pp. 105-107) shows our author anxious to recommend, for the education of young men of quality who will later be called to important state posts, a course of instruction about the economic relations of France and her colonies, and about home industries. The object of such studies is the inculcation of the following precepts:

1. The manufactures which promote the prosperity of the provinces should be revived or extended. This accords with remarks he makes elsewhere in the book: on pp. 174-175, he deplores unreadiness to exploit natural resources, and, in a note to p. 106, insists that France could easily provide her own supplies of commodities like linseed-oil. Moreover, he states that, if essential raw materials cannot be obtained at home, they should be acquired through a trade agreement - for instance, with Baltic states (pp. 110-111).

2. French monetary resources should not be allowed to pass so freely into the hands of foreigners. Here the whole business of protectionism is involved; and there are several allusions to this form of control in other parts of the volume. For example, at one point he praises the British for having the good sense to insist upon the use of British ships for such importations, and he deplores the payment of commissions to the Dutch for acting as intermediaries between France and her sources of supply (p. 111 and n. c).[8] At another moment he attacks rich financiers who consider their own supplies of luxury goods from overseas at the expense of things more essential to national welfare (p. 112, n. d, & pp. 144-145). In precise terms he opposes the whole idea of excessive importation (p. 160); and with equal vehemence insists that superfluous home-produced commodities should be exported (p. 129), making it clear that more could be done in this direction if domestic consumption were to be restrained (p. 113).

3. The true sources of economic prosperity are the land, commerce and industry, and the three sources are interdependent. He mentions the land first for logical rather than for

ideological reasons; for, after all, the work we are examining is devoted to the promotion of industry and commerce (with naval support) rather than to agriculture.[9] For instance, the essayist repudiates the suggestion that France needs only soldiers and ploughmen (p. 126, n. (h)), and points to Amsterdam, London and Hamburg, whose citizens can afford to purchase the best of French produce precisely because singular commercial acumen has made that possible (pp. 162-163). Furthermore, he goes on to stress the fact that "les biens réels" acquire a greater value by virtue of flourishing commerce and industry which cause money to circulate. Thus, without disdaining the claims of agriculture to recognition, he appears superlatively anxious to foster the other two sources of national prosperity (v. p. 111 : "valeurs de tous les effets réels").

4. Money is "le gage, la mesure commune de la confiance du public & de l'autorité du Souverain" (pp. 106-107). We shall see that this is precisely the definition of the function of money given by most eighteenth-century mercantilists who were not attached to the "chrysohedonic prejudice" (Harsin, p. 239).

Now it is clear that there is more behind these suggestions than educational or economic theory. Our writer appears anxious, in fact, that the nobility should grow up to be <u>useful</u> to the nation, and, before we pass on to the second extract, it is fitting that we should consider the topicality and implications of this idea. We have noted that the Court of Versailles was offended by certain passages in the <u>Essay</u>, and this is not surprising since the author openly deplored the idleness of the privileged classes. But was their reluctance to participate in what Doslandes considers eminently useful occupations entirely their own fault? In his informative book about the nobility, Henri Carré tells us that, since the days of Louis XIV, there had been something amounting to a royal veto upon their taking part in occupations like retail trade; and he recounts the story of the Duc de la Force who had had to bear the unfortunate consequences of secretly

defying this veto (La Noblesse de France, &c, ed. 1920, pp. 135-153). Surely, then, it was partly to the monarch that recommendations in favour of a "noblesse commerçante" had to be addressed. Of course, custom had turned the taboo into an aristocratic prejudice in some quarters, and it was to counter this also that projects were drawn up and proposals were made. Chiefly the proceedure was to show how England had prospered with a commercially active nobility. In 1726, Desfontaines's Apologie du caractère des Anglois & des Francois; in 1733, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre's posthumous Projet pour perfectionner le commerce de France; and, in the same year, an anonymous Traité du vrai mérite de l'homme - all made the same point. Furthermore, and most important of all, in the following year Voltaire presented his famous challenge to French nobles in the Lettres philosophiques.[10] The suggestions made in these writings were not necessarily distasteful to the nobility themselves. Carré tells us that, under Fleury's ministry, the mania for speculation in maritime enterprises had infected the aristocracy, who saw in commerce and finance a means of increasing their wealth, and who envied the British system whereby younger scions of noble houses were encouraged to enter commerce. Especially they were interested in developing the new colonial territories, and many would have liked to emigrate, despite the strong prejudice against such an action. Nor did the opposition merely manifest itself purely in mumbled rebukes or raised eye-brows: two years after the Lettres philosophiques there appeared the Marquis du Lassay's Réflexions que j'ai faites sur moi in which the author tried to counteract the new ambitions of certain sections of the nobility, and, twelve years later, there were parts of the Esprit de lois which appeared to intimate that the nobility would do better to stick to their traditional rôle (e.g., Livre, XX, Ch. XXI).

Now the remarks of Deslandes upon this controversial matter are published in two of his works: first, as we have said, in the Essay of 1743, which is situated in time between Voltaire and Montesquieu; secondly, in the last volume of the Histoire critique (1756).

In 1743 Deslandes is found to be in complete agreement with Voltaire on this issue; and he has the effrontery to compare the aristocracy unfavourably with common workmen, "races roturiéres,il est vrai, mais qui surpassent à mon gré la noblesse oisive & dont le plaisir est la seule occupation..." (p. 108), and to recommend a more virile education for the sons of noble families: "Heureux le siécle, où l'on verra la Noblesse s'accoutumer dès l'âge le plus tendre à une vertu mâle & généreuse,...mépriser les occupations frivoles..." (p. 132). Thirteen years later, when he devotes many pages of the final tome of the critical history, to an encomium of the British way of life, his remarks are even more pointed: "...un vif attachement à l'étude n'est point une marque de roture en Angleterre; & le Gentilhomme le plus qualifié ne se déshonore point, en approfondissant les sujets qui embrassent le Droit public, le Commerce & le Gouvernement des Etats..." (H.c., IV, 136-137).

In 1756 he was not alone in such opinions; for in the same year the Abbé Coyer, publishing his famous treatise on La Noblesse commercante, urged that the prejudice of dérogeance, which had been over-ruled in the colonies, should be abolished in France. No longer was there any need to distinguish between wholesale and retail trading, he argued: for why should not the nobility trade like members of the Third Estate? If they were allowed to do this, the Navy would be strengthened, export trade would be expanded and agriculture revived. Furthermore, Coyer deliberately depicts the restrictions to which he objects as being of recent origin. In former times the nobility of Provence, Normandy and Brittany sailed the seas in merchant ships. Why should they not do so to-day? Is a gentleman hunting a stag a greater nobleman that the captain of a ship bringing in food for thousands of his compatriots? Thus, rather than insulting an "idle" nobility, Coyer attacks the system that keeps them (often unwillingly) idle.

Arguments continued from both sides. In this same year,

1756, the Chevalier d'Arc wrote his Noblesse militaire ou le patriote francois in deploration of the fact that there were now as many nobles interested in commerce as in the Army; but two years later La Hausse composed La Noblesse telle qu'elle être partly in support of Coyer's thesis, and there is no doubt that the nobility were by this time playing a more and more active rôle in commerce.

Many of the discussions we have mentioned centred round the argument as to whether the aristocracy were better employed in commerce than in the armed forces; whether they were an essential part of the sovereign's august majesty and a link between the monarch and the Third Estate. Deslandes does not enter into the details of these controversies. He sees only a frivolous and idle class of society and a state economically insecure, and he would like to assist the latter by urging the former to take up some useful occupation. In 1743 he can see only the benefits that would accrue to commerce and the Navy; in 1756 he widens the scope of his suggestions to embrace the study of law and government.

We pass to the second important passage concerned with economic theory. Towards the end of his book (pp. 169-171), the author praises the city of Amsterdam; and for the following reasons:

1. Despite lack of natural resources and the hostility of the elements, this city has managed to become extremely prosperous because of the intense commercial activity that is evident there to-day. In other words: by virtue of her industry and trade, Amsterdam has managed to compensate natural disadvantages. (How much more prosperous could France be with such a diversity of resources and climates?)

2. One reason for the prosperity of Amsterdam is the fact that prices are not left to the whim of each merchant, but fixed according to a "tarif général qui apprécie les choses à peu près

sur le pied où elles doivent être" (p. 170). The true "equation of commerce", continues Deslandes, lies in the balance between abundance and rarity. Excessive demand raises prices: excessive supply reduces the value of the commodity. What, then, is the solution?

> Le but d'un commerce bien réglé & bien conduit est de faire ensorte que le nombre des demandeurs surpasse toujours la quantité demandée, afin que le crédit se soutienne & que le public ne soit point rassasié (ibid).

A slow process of inflation is thus profitable and advisable; but control is absolutely necessary. Now, what our essayist says here is in harmony with remarks made elsewhere in the same work. For instance, on pp. 159-160 he tells of the evils of "flooding the market" (on this occasion with foreign goods, which makes it doubly harmful); and he adds this comment, which, in view of the warning he has just issued about excessive supply, coincides with what we have discovered in the pages devoted to Amsterdam: "Le public qui ne sait guéres placer ni son estime ni son mépris, veut être manié avec adresse: il ne faut ni le rassasier, ni le tenir dans la disette" (p. 160). Moreover, as this sentence is immediately succeeded by a paragraph deploring the favouring of "les vuës particulieres" before "l'avantage commun & général", we can see that it is for the good of the public that he recommends state control of supply and of prices.

The theory behind the two passages we have examined (and supporting evidence from other pages) is not difficult to define, since it fits into a recognizable trend of economic ideas. First, the encouragement of home production and the exploitation of natural resources is a cry that recurs in both Vauban and Fortbonnais (Harsin, Les Doctrines monétaires &c., pp. 96 & 250-251). Second, the protectionist thesis and the notion of state interference is common ground in all these mercantilist treatises. Even Boisguillebert, whose doctrine of "laisser agir la nature" applied to agriculture appears at first sight to herald the Physiocratic Movement, is in fact interventionist in other respects and even in the matter of the import and export of grain (ibid, pp. 105-106). Third, the laying of equal stress on

agriculture and on commerce, and in fact of putting the land first; the stressing of the interdependence of agriculture, commerce and industry - these things too are common enough in mercantilist writings of the time. In particular, we think of Cantillon (ibid, pp. 228-229), and of Boisguillebert, who without needing to be classed as a precursor of the physiocrats, still manages to consider agriculture the most important of the three (ibid, p. 105). Fourth, the "equation of commerce" to which we have but recently referred is generally accepted by mercantilists as the determining factor in value. Law derived much of his doctrine on this point from Locke; and the idea of a balance between abundance and rarity recurs in the theories of Daguesseau who, like Deslandes, was willing to envisage an inevitable process of gentle inflation (ibid, pp. 144 &224). Again, the regulation of supply and demand to sustain the latter is generally accepted in these treatises analysed by Harsin. For instance, Fortbonnais urges the desirability of a favourable balance of trade" - a fact which distinguishes him from his contemporaries, the physiocrats (ibid, p. 251). Fifth, the stress upon the necessity of constant circulation of money - regarded by mercantilists as the vitalizing and validating force behind mere currency - is to be discerned in Vauban, Boisguillebert and Saint-Maur (ibid, pp. 97 & 111); and in it is a MSS of Dutot that Harsin discovers the phrase: "plus l'argent est bas, plus les biens réels ont de valeur" (p. 247). Long before 1743, Vauban had reproved the French for excessive demand for imported luxuries (ibid, p. 98); and in this author, as in Deslandes, we find attacks upon the Compagnie des Indes that lines the pockets of the few to the detriment of the majority (Harsin, p. 97; Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce, pp. 159-160). Finally, the definition and conception of money as "le gage, la mesure" is to be found in almost all the mercantilists, but more specifically perhaps in Melon and Fortbonnais (Harsin, pp. 241 & 251); and the desire to sustain credit appears strongly in theories of Law and Boisguillebert (ibid, pp. 93 & 150).

We see, then, how Deslandes fits into the picture. In the Essay we are presented with no "laissez-faire", no demand for freedom of trade, no excessive emphasis upon the claims of agriculture. Instead we find protectionism, insistence upon state control and upon the value of commerce and industry. It is pure mercantilism. That is why our author's pronouncements upon an analagous topic are, at first hearing, so strange. For two years after the Essay we find our author attacking one of the leaders of mercantilist thought.

c) The Problem of Luxury

Tracing the influences that contributed to the doctrines of Voltaire's defence of luxury, Le Mondain, Morize speaks of the Conti circle, the Cour de Sceaux and the Temple Society; and he adds: "Qu'enseigne, en effet, à Voltaire, la philosophie libertine?...Que la vie est bonne à qui sait la prendre; que le temps présent vaut mieux que ne le disent ses censeurs... La vie est méchante à ses heures. Cueillons donc toutes les voluptés..." (L'Apologie du luxe &c., ed. 1909, p. 35). If we think back to the early writings of our author, the same could obviously be said of what Deslandes learned from the same or similar sources. Yet, unlike his former school-fellow, the young Epicurean of the Réflexions and particularly of the French poems was publically to turn against one consequence of the philosophy of the Epicureans and Gassendists, which he contrived privately to esteem at the time of composing Mon Cabinet and even in 1741 (Pigmalion). Thus, in a way, his attitude to hedonism is the same as his attitude to other moral issues: -the intelligent and enlightened minority who exercise self-control in their "debauch" must be distinguished from the majority who do not. The latter, of course, may not be impecunious. Indeed, in a century of rapidly amassed fortunes there were many uncultured persons, who, having become suddenly opulent, displayed their riches in the only way they knew - in

a vulgar manner. In producing this state of affairs, the John Law disorders at the end of the Regency period (coinciding incidentally with the South Sea Bubble in Britain) were economically momentous; but since, as we have said, they also had considerable social repercussions, some of the intelligent few were obliged to face the reality of a fairly new situation.—As we saw earlier in this study, it is more than probable that Deslandes suffered from the billets de banque affair in 1720-21. By the time the Histoire critique de la philosophie was composed he had also acquired a political and social conscience. Such is the background to his economic writings of the 1740s - a personal distaste combines with a "philosophic" concern for the national welfare to produce the Essay of 1743, the Lettre sur le luxe of 1745 and (looking further ahead) La Fortune of 1751.

For the debate around the problem of luxury was not a political, economic or social matter: it had entered the field of philosophic literature when Mandeville's Fable of the Bees of 1705 began to be influential;[12] and it had had its main impact on French ideas in 1734, when Melon's Essai politique sur le commerce, appeared, and in 1736, when Voltaire's Mondain embodied the Mandeville-Melon line of argument. We have said that Voltaire and Deslandes did not see eye to eye on the problem of luxury; but Voltaire was neither a naval official in daily contact with a neglected service nor yet a person whose fortunes had been depleted as a result of the mania for speculation. That is why, though both regard austerity as absurd and both enjoy their pleasures, Deslandes is more disquieted by the contemporary cult of the superfluous. But what is "superfluous"? Essentially the whole basis of this controversy in the eighteenth century rests on a definition of luxury. Mandeville and his disciples could well argue that frugality was synonymous with poverty, but national bankrupcy and insecurity was the surest road to indigence. Equally one could contend that private vices were contributing to public prosperity, but moral degeneracy in a whole nation might reduce it to anything but prosperity. Therefore the line of demarcation had to

be drawn differently - closer to austerity perhaps, but only with the aim of correcting what Deslandes considered a dangerous bias towards certain forms of over-indulgence.

We consult the texts. At the end of the eulogy of Amsterdam, which, in 1743, Deslandes submits as a supreme example of a city enriched by commercial endeavour, there occur a few words not unconnected with the question of national prosperity. Just as Mandeville (whom Deslandes never mentions) had learned from William Temple that Holland is exceptional in being frugal and rich at the same time,[13] so Deslandes reports:

> J'ajouterai ici qu'une des merveilles d'Amsterdam, c'est que dans le sein même de l'opulence, le luxe est ignoré; j'entens ce luxe qui va à braver ses concitoyens, & à les éblouir par une vaine ostentation de richesses mal employées. La magnificence y est reservée pour les bâtimens publics; le particulier se contente de l'agréable & du commode (Essay sur le marine & sur le commerce, p. 171).

Now this passage provides a useful guide to Deslandes's attitude to the moral and economic problem of luxury. He does not see why Amsterdam should be exceptional at all. On the one hand, a flourishing city; on the other, a few opulent individuals flaunting their riches before their compatriots - that is the contrast which, with Amsterdam and Paris in mind, he chooses to present to his reader. Surely the central theme is that, of itself, wealth is no evil - indeed, the author of the Essay of 1743 would be guilty of self-contradiction if he suggested anything so absurd. It is the employment of wealth that is in question: to borrow an expression often heard to-day, if money is "ploughed back" into the commonwealth to stimulate and expand vital industries, all is well. It is only when riches are devoted to ephemeral and vulgar ostentation by a handful of unenlightened and selfish citizens that our author sounds the note of warning and expresses his disapproval.

Mandeville had noted that the Dutch spent a deal of money on public buildings. Deslandes considers that this is a sound investment for public prosperity; but he insists that to spend the same amount on the palaces of the newly-rich would not be in the public interest.

More specifically he repeats the warning in the Lettre of 1745. The luxury of brazen ostentation is once more designated as selfish and anti-social:

> Le luxe consiste à user des biens de la Providence, d'une manière qui tourne ou au préjudice de celui qui en use...ou au préjudice du public qu'on brave par une profusion insolente & déplacée, ou au préjudice des autres qu'on est humainement obligé d'assister & de secourir (p. 3).

Luxury is therefore that which corrupts the individual who does no know the meaning of excess, angers the rest of the population who do not share in its benefits, and wastes resources that should be devoted to humanitarian ends. "O luxe, malheureux luxe, tu vas enfin tout perdre, tu vas tout renverser!", cry the elderly statesmen in La Fortune (p. 86). There is something of the same sober prophecy about the sentence we have quoted above: if the abyss between vulgar ostentation and resentful poverty widens, we may all be plunged into it. But where does luxury begin and end? Deslandes's answer in 1745 is that, unlike partisans of rigid austerity, he does not frown on the arts. On the contrary, "l'amour du beau" is "admirable"; and it would be sheer fanaticism to suggest that it is wrong to adorn one's study with Raphaels, Corregios, Rubens and Mignards, which of course cannot be justified on strictly utilitarian grounds. Rather it is the pursuit of "bagatelles" that our author finds reprehensible as being a form of abuse. To exaggerate the value of the culinary art[14]; to deck a man out in over-elaborate costume; to suggest that industry would be sterile without the fillip of luxury trade, when in fact it has degenerated because of concentration upon the production of frivolities; to stock one's house with showy furniture and ornaments - these are examples of misuse of the gifts of Providence. In the first place, they divert production into non-essentials; in the second, they pervert a nation's sense of moral values and destroy its standards of taste. Our author has not therefore jettisoned his dominant criteria of taste and moderation. The carefree poet has grown up to sterner realities and to a sense of social responsibility, but the author of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer has kept his ideals.

The Lettre of 1745 is followed by an examination of Melon's Essai politique sur le commerce of 1734. It is a case of mercantilist versus mercantilist, but Harsin shows that there is nothing strange or rare about that phenomenon. So whilst Deslandes agrees with Melon on some matters, he does not accept the latter's views on luxury.[15] The author of the Essai politique is accused of having confused luxury with abundance and of having been more concerned with economic advantages than with moral disadvantages. What, then, does the critic suggest? The mercantilist of 1745 urges state intervention to restrain luxury trades; and, for instance, to divert labour into useful public works. Indeed, the arguments of our two mercantilists can be summed-up in the form of a dialogue:

Melon: (Ess. pol., ed. 1734, Ch. IX) If men followed the precepts of religion, laws would not be needed; but, since they are creatures of passion, the legislator can do no better than turn these passions to the benefit of society [The Mandeville thesis].
Deslandes: We must not accept sin as inevitable, but strive to lead men back to natural religion.
Melon: The prospect of luxury gives the soldier and the merchant something to strive for.
Deslandes: Concentration on luxury, extravagance in youth lead to insecurity in old age.
Melon: Abundance is the inevitable outcome of a good civil administration ("police") which protects property and allows trade to flourish.
Deslandes: But a bad administration[16] allows abundance to develop into luxury.
Melon: Luxury is relative [a favourite argument in Le Mondain], and what was a luxury to our fathers is now common-place.
Deslandes: Take the case of silk stockings. They were not a luxury in olden times, but simply more expensive than they are to-day. Luxury does not come into the discussion, since silk stockings are not harmful.
Melon: Luxury trades provide employment for surplus labour.
Deslandes: There should be no surplus labour; for there is always enough work to be done in public projects or vital industries.
Melon: The desire for luxury has often encouraged pirates to bring home riches to France.
Deslandes: All pirates do not bring back their booty, and in any case piracy is a cruel occupation.
Melon: The foolish vanity of the individual can do no harm to the state.
Deslandes: It can do a great deal of harm to his own family.
Melon: It is for the good of society in general that money should be kept in circulation. It is consequently better that it should be spent on luxuries than hoarded in a chest.
Deslandes: Not many people are in a position to hoard money these days: but the extravagant and ostentatious members of the community are sufficiently numerous to set a bad example to others.

Thus Deslandes's replies must appear as an early manifestation of a trend that was to become more pronounced in the second

half of the century - a trend which Morize recognizes by implication when he declares that "des dernières années du XVIIe siècle jusqu'aux alentours de 1750, on assiste à une transposition de l'opinion morale, au profit du luxe, aux dépens de la morale traditionnelle" (op. cit. Pref.). Like so many writers who were to oppose luxury after 1750, Deslandes takes a serious view of an evil that causes economic and moral harm, and refuses to condone in Mandeville (and Melon) "that argument... with which he [Mandeville] confronted not only all the more ascetic codes of morality but what was once the classic economic attitude,--- which set forth the ideal of a Spartan state, exalted the simpler agricultural pursuits, and denounced luxury as the degenerator of peoples and impoverisher of nations" (F.B. Kaye, Fable of the Bees, Introd., I, cxxxv).

But there was nothing ascetic, or Spartan, or physiocratic about this refusal; and Deslandes never indulged in censorious moralizing. Indeed, there is something paradoxical about his view of luxury - something which, as we have said, is not unconnected with his esotericism. For, suggesting in 1751 that private vices can contribute to public good, or at least that they are necessary to the brilliance of society, he at the same time appears even more disturbed about the prevalence of luxury than he was in 1745. There are some phrases in the Fragmens d'un auteur grec (printed with the letter of 1745) that help to elucidate the apparent confusion in the conte philosophique of 1751:

> Dès que la porte dans un état est ouverte aux gains illicites... il ne faut point douter que la corruption ne devienne bientôt générale...Le Luxe inonde tout, & traîne à sa suite une foule de désordres. Personne n'est satisfait de sa condition, personne ne cherche à se mettre au niveau de ses facultez. Les désirs augmentent, & les besoins se multiplient...La vertu, l'honneur, l'attachement à la Patrie, ne sont plus que des phantômes qu'on regarde avec mépris (in Lettre sur le luxe, ed. 1745, pp. 63-64).

We submit, then, that it is the unleashing of general moral disorder that he fears. To condone luxury on a national scale would open the flood-gates to anarchy and widespread immorality. That is why his public conscience forces him to resist the Mandeville trend as far as it concerns luxury. And it is in this respect that his attitude on this issue is consistent with the prudent separation of doctrines in his philosophic works.

CHAPTER II HISTORY & ITS USES

...L'Histoire, qui, comme tout le monde sait, est l'oëil de la société, la vie dc la mémoire, & le flambeau de la vérité (La Fortune, p. 118).

L'Histoire est une sorte de peinture, qui doit non-seulement rappeler en détail les actions des principaux personnages dont elle parle; mais appuyer sur leurs caractères, &, pour ainsi dire, sur les traits de leurs visages (Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat, ed. 1749, p. 22).

Pour moi, je souhaiterois qu'on immole au bon sens les Autours qui ensevelissent leurs pensées sous un amas prodigieux de passages, & ceux qui écrivent au hasard l'Histoire d'un tems reculé (L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer, pp. 117-118)

a) Naval History

In our study of the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce we referred to Deslandes's decision regarding a history of the French Navy and press reactions to that intention. We also noted two main topics explicit in the title of the treatise of 1743: France's naval power and commercial prosperity. There is a third aspect that it is now necessary to consider, since to some considerable extent the Essay must rank amongst our author's ventures into the domain of history. At the very outset, for instance, he establishes certain principles. First, he declares that the best history of the French Fleet will be written by "un homme du métier; qui ait du coeur & des sentimens, non par un Prêtre ou par un Moine, gens qui d'ordinaire ne parlent que d'après ceux qui les employent, ou d'après les passions basses & grossiéres qui les occupent" (p. 5). Thus, with the composition of his own projected history of the Navy in mind, he insists on technical knowledge, upon sympathetic treatment of material. Above all, he recommends the secular, and, if we may believe him, unbiassed approach; and a foot-note aptly condemns Fathers Daniel and Fournier for their handling of naval history. Secondly, he insists: "Il faut de plus que cette Histoire soit exactement vraye, qu'elle reconte sans artifice & sans détour les bonnes & les mauvaises actions des

Officers généraux qui ont commandé des Escadres & des Flottes, qu'elle applaudisse à ceux qui ont noblement réüssi, & qu'en même tems elle blâme ceux qui ont manqué de tête, où [sic] se sont retirés avec lâcheté, qu'elle excite enfin la jeune Noblesse à servir utilement la Patrie & à prodiguer pour elle tout son sang" (pp. 5-6). That is clear enough: the historian who seeks the truth should be impartial in his judgements, and his work should have a didactic aim - in this case, a patriotic message. Thirdly, he speaks of the Essay he is publishing in 1743: "Tout ce que j'y rapporte, tout ce que j'y propose — est fondé sur ma propre expérience [i.e. of an "homme du métier"] ou emprunté d'un petit nombre d'Auteurs, dont vous démêlerez sans peine le génie & la pénétration; qualités dont je ferois peu de cas, si elles n'étoient jointes à l'amour si rare de la vérité & au talent plus rare encore de la dire avec hardiesse" (p. 6). Once more, then, he emphasizes the need for profound acquaintance with one's subject, and he prizes that "genius and penetration" that springs from a regard for truth and is demonstrated in the courage to proclaim it. Five pages later he passes to the first part of his essay - itself an illustration of what he has just established.

This first part is devoted purely to the commerce and navigation of ancient times. In treating this subject he was not without precursors, including a certain ecclesiastic to whose "long & pénible Discours" he alludes in the Essay (p. 19). For, before he had been elevated to the bishopric of Avranches, that friend of Deslandes's favourite tutor Sanadon had composed an Histoire du commerce & de la navigation des anciens, and this "production de sa jeunesse" had first been published in 1716. Now as Deslandes had obviously read Pierre-Daniel Huet's Histoire du commerce, it is interesting to compare and contrast this work with the first part of the Essay of 1743. Immediately we are aware of the different approach. As the publisher of the Histoire is anxious to make clear: "L'Ouvrage que je mets au jour, n'a nul rapport à ce tems-ci" (ed. 1727, Avert. du Libraire); and the text justifies this remark, for it is simply a review

of rivalries and advances in the field he has chosen. Deslandes, on the other hand, is clearly incapable of writing anything but a critical history: that is his established genre. Two examples to be found in pp. 27-29 of the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce offer themselves in evidence. As a pretext for building a powerful fleet, Philip of Macedonia cleverly claimed that he had to deal with piracy on the high seas; but (continues Deslandes) "bientôt il exerça lui-même ce métier aussi honteux que lucratif, aussi indigne d'un grand Prince, que propre à augmenter ses finances: & les flatteurs qui suivoient sa cour, qui étudioient tous ses mouvemens, inventérent des raisons pour lui en faire honneur. Car les Monarques à qui tout rit & que favorise la fortune, ne manquent point de se faire approuver. Quel mérite pour eux, que celui de réüssir! Ils confondent le succès avec la Justice". Surely we have before us a series of comments that have a very apt bearing upon the 1740s! We read on. Alexander the Great also increased his fleet; he founded Alexandria and caused Egypt to prosper, "Mais au milieu de tout ce que la fortune pouvoit offrir d'agréable & de brillant, mourût Alexandre, & avec lui s'anéantirent tous ses projets...". He had conquered without fully consolidating his gains - that is the lesson that we may learn from this passage which, like its partner, embodies critical insinuations and, in its reference to Fortune, is not without some relationship with the conte that was to appear some eight years later.

Huet's treatment of the same monarchs is entirely different. We are told that Philip practised piracy, and have to be content with the bald remark that it was an "infâme métier" (ed. 1727, p. 85); and, in the case of Alexander, we are told that he founded Alexandria and, whilst we are treated to a rather tedious discussion regarding the original name of that city (pp. 359-360), we are informed merely that "la mort d'Alexandre prévint la plûpart de ces desseins..." (p. 96). Above all, we do not find in the earlier work that critical urge which leads Deslandes to declare, en passant, that, without a fairly large navy and

and "un établissement fixe de commerce", Alexandre "pourroit prendre bien le titre de Héros, mais non celui de Souverain, qui suppose un homme utile & attentif à procurer toutes sortes d'avantages à ceux que la guerre lui a assujettis" (p. 28).

Again, there is essentially a difference between the ecclesiastic and the deist; and this distinction is quite apparent in their respective treatments of the Hebrews. Whilst admitting that this people were not the first navigators ("On ne voit point dans l'Histoire des plus anciens navigateurs que les Egyptiens & les Phéniciens" (p. 20)), Huet, beginning with Holy Scripture, places them at the very head of his cavalcade because of their land commerce, and proposes to show that they sailed the sea long before the time of Solomon (pp. 28-29). But the writer who has shown so little respect for the Jews in his critical history of philosophy, whilst making almost the same remark as his predecessor ("On doit rapporter l'origine & les commencemens de la Navigation aux Egyptiens & aux Phéniciens" (Essay, p. 11)), assigns to the Hebrews their rightful place in his history. He places them after the Egyptians (and the Chinese whom he associates with the latter) and the Phoenicians.

There are two other characteristics that distinguish Deslandes from Huet. In the first place, we observe that both writers consider the relationship between fabulous and factual history. Yet, whilst Huet associates Bacchus with the Egyptian god Osiris (Histoire &c., p. 340), Deslandes's topical approach leads him to make quite a different association with Bacchus: "Si les Modernes se sentoient le même goût pour les fictions, quel lieu n'auroient-ils pas de vanter ceux qui depuis le seiziéme siécle, ont parcouru les mers les plus éloignées & ont presque fait le tour du monde; un Ferdinand Magalhacus, appellé communément Magellan, un Chevalier François Drack, un Chevalier Thomas Cavendish...Ces illustres Navigateurs n'auroient-ils point été transformés en autant de Bacchus ou d'Hercules...?" (Essay, p. 17). Secondly, in some of his judgements Deslandes is certainly influenced by his particular "hobby-horses".

Consider the case of Demetrius Poliorcetes. Both Huet and Deslandes credit him with a certain flair for devising methods of propelling vessels; but whereas the former simply concludes that the inventions of this son of Antigonus prove how rapidly naval science was progessing in those days (Hist., pp. 103-104), the historian who was also a commissaire de la marine -thinking perhaps of his own ingenious "rames tournantes", mentioned in the critical history of 1737 and explained fully in the scientific Recueil of 1753 (pp. 90-97) - concludes that the inventor was a person of infinite resource and courage (Essay, pp. 32-33). In short, the comments of Deslandes are a tribute to the character of one who, like himself, laboured to increase naval efficiency.

Such is the general pattern that unfolds as we compare the author of the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce with his predecessor. He has read Huet, and has learned from Huet some facts about the Ancients; but he has turned away from Huet principally by choosing to be less tedious and detailed and to be more topical and didactic, and he has allowed his experience in the naval administration to swell his enthusiasm and colour his judgements. But, above all, he has adopted the critical method elaborated in 1737. Almost every item of his material is referred to a rationalist and utilitarian ideology, and the text is constantly embellished by remarks arising from this almost automatic conjunction. For, if it is a crime to be prejudiced in favour of one system of philosophy and one revealed religion, it is equally reprehensible to retail material without the apt comment that will dedicate it to the cause of human progress.

Having made this general observation, we cannot but regret that the larger history of the French Navy was not published and has never come to light in MSS form. Consequently, beyond the Essay of 1743 and the Essay sur la marine des Anciens of 1748 (which disappoints us, since it is concerned particularly with methods of naval construction in Antiquity and to a great extent is a "re-hash" of monographs published in scientific Recueils of the same author), we are limited to a letter in

which Deslandes criticizes Lediard, author of a Naval History of England. The work in question is called: Lettre critique sur l'Histoire navale d'Angleterre, and appeared in 1752 - one year after the French translation of Lediard's book. The defects the French critic finds in the British history provide principles in confirmation of, and in addition to those laid down in 1743. First, the critic abhors national prejudice[17]! "Lorsque les Anglois parlent de leur Marine, ils la vantent jusqu'à l'excès... c'est à l'Historien de se mettre au-dessus de ce préjugé"(pp. 7-8). Next, he deplores the inexactitude that arises when an author is careless about examining and verifying his sources. The fact that the French historian reprimands Lediard who "copie brusquement des Mémoires qu'il n'a même lus qu'en courant" (p. 10) reminds us that, two years previously, Deslandes had composed a slender opuscule entitled Traité sur les différens degrés de la certitude morale, which is in some ways apposite to our discussion, since it was precisely to provide a means of determining the value of testimony that the Traité was written. Deslandes had assured his readers that, as far as oral testimony was concerned, it would lose one twelfth of its reliability in twenty years, and that after four hundred and eighty years it would be thoroughly untrustworthy; that, by the same computation, written testimony would lose half its validity in seven hundred years and would be completely worthless in one thousand four hundred years; but that printed evidence would stand for a much longer period of time. Having made these statements, he had set out to investigate "moral certitude". The subject was a delicate one, and naturally the author was cautious:

> S'il y a une Certitude morale complète ou absolue; c'est assurément celle qui regarde les faits innombrables dont s'appuie la Religion Chrétienne...Cette remarque m'a paru nécessaire, pour éviter d'injurieuses Critiques (p. 6, n.)

It is none the less interesting to see how, in a manner with which we are familiar in exoteric writings, the second half of the note discloses a motive that considerably weakens the apparent submission of the first!

The demonstration proceeds with an attempt once more to prove the case by means of a pseudo-mathematical exposition inspired by some of Chubb's writings (e.g. Tracts, ed. 1754, I, Treat. XI; Author's Farewell in Posth. Works, ed. 1748, I, pp. 137-153).[18] Thomas Chubb, to whom he refers as "un Anglois qui a curieusement examiné cette matière" (p. 10), had tried to show, for instance, the relative validity of the evidence of twelve men and one man. Deslandes offers us first a little algebra:

a=degré de certitude pour le 1er rapport
b=ce qui manque pour le rendre complet

$$\text{1er rapport} = \frac{a}{a+b} \qquad \text{2nd rapport} = \frac{a^2}{a+b^2}$$

and decides that, with ten witnesses there would be

$$\frac{1023}{1024}$$ de certitude complète

and with twenty

$$\frac{2096999}{2097000}$$ de certitude complète.

He then surveys the three "traditions", oral, written and printed, of which he finds the second less doubtful than the first, and the third most reliable of all. Yet, to some extent, his conclusion casts doubts on all three:

> Mais il faut enfin que toute tradition, soit qu'elle soit orale, soit qu'elle soit écrite, perde insensiblement de la certitude morale incomplète qu'elle avoit dans son origine, & que cette certitude se réduise à rien ou presque à rien (p.17).

Extreme caution is therefore urged in this treatise of 1750, and nothing may be regarded as sound material for history unless it has been checked and counter-checked and unless it is well substantiated by reliable evidence from different sources.

Thus, in the Lettre critique of 1752, we find the writer of this Traité contesting the authenticity of a letter attributed by Ledlard to James II, and "qui fait parler indécemment un Roi malheureux" (p. 14), and we observe his scepticism regarding details of the Battle of La Hogue (1692) as recorded by the foreign historian. Clearly Deslandes considered that the most effective reply to this defective history would be a work written according to principles laid down in the Essay of 1743 and in the Lettre critique - a history "écrite avec goût, avec

impartialité, avec un amour éclairé pour la justice; qui rappelle la mémoire des Grands Hommes qui ont fleuri autrefois dans la Marine, & excite ceux qui y sont employés aujourd'hui à les imiter; qui serve enfin à porter la gloire du nom François; qui fasse connoître l'intelligence & la noble conduite de la Nation, dans toutes les parties du monde où elle s'est déjà si avantageusement répandue" (Lettre, pp. 26-27). It had to be a work of art, an unbiassed contribution to sound knowledge, a means of extolling the French nation. Who was to write such a book? It had already been written and was waiting to be published. The Mémoires de Trévoux of May 1752 (pp. 1113-1118) do more than merely agree with Deslandes's strictures. Commenting on the passage from the Lettre critique that we have just quoted, the journalist ventures this opinion: C'est la conclusion de M. Deslandes; il est plus en état que personne de satisfaire nos désirs; il a même composé & fini une Histoire de la Marine de France depuis le commencement de la Monarchie jusqu'à la paix conclue à Aix-la-Chapelle (ed. Paris, pp. 1117-1118).

As we have said, it is sad that the MSS has not yet been unearthed; for in 1752 Deslandes may well have been on the threshold of renown as an historian of the French Navy. At least we cannot doubt that it would have been the work of one who approached his subject from the "philosophic", modern point of view. And, although like the monks and clerics he reprimanded in 1743 he was much influenced by the dogma and ideals of his (secular) "convent", he was none the less devoted to a sort of cosmopolitan impartiality, and committed to a method that demanded specialized knowledge, and was scientific in the sense that it drew conclusions only from facts, and refused to regard as "facts" material that could not reasonably be authenticated.

b) History Proper

Let us recall for a moment Deslandes, the historian of philosophy; for some of the principles applied in 1737 are equally valid in historical writings of a more formal nature.

The Preface to the Histoire critique is enlightening because it embodies criticisms of other historians of philosophy. For example, our author reproves those who labour "sans choix, sans discernement, plus en compilateurs qui remassent, qu'en censeurs qui jugent". Conversely, he considers that the best history of philosophy is produced by a critical mind, ready to reject what is superfluous or purely incidental, capable of thinking independently instead of reproducing the ideas of others, intent upon instructing rather than overburdening the reader. This, we remember, is the writer's attitude to the biographical elements of his history, from which (unlike Stanley, for instance) he excises meaningless details. Instead, we find him deliberately choosing such facts as help to characterize the philosopher he is discussing - that is, to disclose his mode of thinking and understanding. Finally, the historian of philosophy maintains that one should neglect what he calls "les ames foibles" in favour of true "philosophers", who appear to be those thinkers who have had the courage to deviate from the well-worn paths of tradition and authority (H.c., I, xvi-xix).

Twelve years later the same writer devotes another preface to the technique of composing history itself. Between the history of philosophy and the philosophy of history there are obvious connections; for in both cases the writer treats not merely isolated facts, but a general development, and is consequently concerned partly with ideas and with events. In the Preface to the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat of 1749,[19] Deslandes, declaring first (as in La Fortune) that history is "l'oeil de la société, la vie de la mémoire, & le flambeau de la vérité"; that it is a source of pleasure and instruction - for instance about man's passions, errors, his real and apparent virtues - claims that it should be studied by sovereigns, ambassadors, ministers of state and military commanders. He proceeds to explain that there are three sorts of history: general, particular, and still more particular.[20] The first treats of a whole nation from its origins onwards. The short-

comings of those who have hitherto ventured to compose such histories are listed as: lack of penetration and discernment (one aspect of his opinion in the Preface of 1737), an elaborate and complicated style which delays an impatient reader, prejudice and narrowmindedness that spring from superstition. "Particular" history deals with the lives, customs and opinions of men, and is therefore much concerned with biography. Many modern examples of this genre (claims Deslandes) suffer from lack of form, lack of vigour, and from a general mediocrity of presentation. This is because exponents have been unable to distinguish those characters in the pageant of history who were at variance with the common run of opinions and beliefs (another complaint he made in 1737); have not thought enough about their material before composing; have lacked the courage to state the true, unvarnished facts; and have been guilty of that kind of extremism which prevents a historian from steering the middle course between impiety and superstition. The third kind of history selects a single fragment from the general story, "soit pour l'éclaircir, soit pour en tirer des conséquences politiques ou utiles au gouvernement des Etats". Into this last category falls the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat, composed principally for the second of the two motives just mentioned by the author himself. For, as he informs us immediately: "J'ai voulu faire voir qu'un Prince qui abandonne les intérêts de la vérité & de la justice, tombe nécessairement dans un décri universel, & devient d'autant plus malheureux que le pouvoir qu'il exerce est plus absolu".

This fragment from the obscure and uncertain annals of the Montferrat family concerns Alderamo, the founder of the line, who was created marquis by Otho II in 967 and probably met his death in 995 A.D.. As a preliminary, the historian takes us back briefly to the first Otho who "renversa les dignités de l'Eglise, showed "une sage modération" during his rule and was surprised to find that Christianity caused so much dissention. Already, then, there is more than a trace of "philosophic" indoctrination in the book; but, since the

core of the narrative concerns the time of Otho III, he concentrates upon this emperor, who succeeded in 983 and died probably about 1002 A.D., and who, though he sometimes lapsed from his regard for justice and truth, was willing to redress the wrongs he had committed when they were pointed out to him (p. 21). The convent education of Otho's wife, Marie of Aragon, gives our inevitably critical historian the opportunity of telling us that the Empress had learned more useful moral precepts from her aunt's "philosophie particulière" than she ever learned in the religious house (pp. 28-30). We are told also that unfortunately the constant separations of husband and wife created a sort of estrangement between Marie and her spouse. Now, there was in Piedmont at this time a young Prince of Montferrat who was outstanding in character and ability, and who had a loving and virtuous wife... The scene is set, the principal characters are introduced; and we shall let the Abbé Raynal recount his excellent summary of what takes place:

> Un grand empereur choisit un héros célèbre par sa probité et ses talents pour le rendre le dépositaire de sa puissance. L'impératrice trouve malheureusement un homme adorable où l'on n'avait vu qu'un homme d'Etat. Le ministre, uniquement occupé du bonheur des peuples, ne tarde guère à devenir la victime d'un feu honteux qu'il a méprisé. Une épouse désolée fait crier dans une assemblée de plusieurs nations un sang injustement versé. La princesse [he means the Empress], coupable de toutes ces horreurs, ne peut ni soutenir, ni étouffer les remords qui la rongent, et se précipite dans les flammes. Le monarque lui-même consent à périr pour expier le crime d'un jugement injuste et précipité. Ses sujets le forcent à vivre. Il offre sa main à la veuve généreuse qui poursuit avec tant d'éclat une illustre vengeance. Elle dédaigne ces nouveaux noeuds et termine la journée par des prophéties que le ciel autorise par le tonnerre qu'il fait gronder (Corr. litt., I, 175-176).

Such is the dramatic, almost Racinian tale of 130 pages that the historian extracted from an insignificant corner of the past, not for its own sake but to show how history should be written and explain why it should be read. We shall therefore be concerned here with techniques and ideas.

Whence did our author derive his notions of "philosophic" history? Let us consider first his attitude towards two historians of the late seventeenth century. Noting that Father Louis Maimbourg (1620-93) had dealt with the same fragment of history as himself, in the Preface of 1749 Deslandes criticized

the seventeenth-century historian. This "Jésuite célèbre par le peu de confiance que le Public lui témoigne aujourd'hui" had approached his subject from the point of view of a professional theologian rather than a professional historian. "Il peignoit toujours en faux", declared the critic. Consequently he robbed history of some of its rights: "...il la rabaisse en quelque manière & la décrédite par un faux air de dévotion qui rebute l'esprit & ne touche point le coeur". A modern reader would tend to agree with Deslandes on this matter; and there are indeed striking differences between the story as recounted briefly by Maimbourg (Sur la décadence de l'Empire d'Occident, ed. 1686, (Livre II), pp. 108-110) and at much greater length by the eighteenth-century writer.

In the first place, Deslandes regarded his characters as human beings endowed with emotions, and he showed some interest in the psychology behind their actions. Maimbourg, on the other hand, used them purely as pegs on which to hang his slender narrative. An example will illustrate the difference. At one point in the story the Empress sets her cap at the Prince.[21] Now Maimbourg contents himself with telling us that Montferrat repelled the lady's advances, but Deslandes describes the psychological struggle which took place in the young man's mind - a struggle that arose from the fact that he was devoted to his wife yet afraid to offend the Empress who had considerable power over their destinies. We pass on to another example. When the Empress, angry at being rebuffed, writes a letter to her husband-and thereby causes the Prince's death, the Princess of Montferrat demands the life of the Empress in revenge for miscarriage of justice. Now Maimbourg simply reports the fact that Otho, satisfied that he has been tricked, has his wife burned alive. But Deslandes makes this incident highly dramatic. The Emperor and Empress are present when the Princess makes her demand; and, instead of requiring the life of the Empress, it is Otho she claims as victim. The sovereign is judged to be indispensable; but, unimpressed by this argu-

ment, the avenger does not waver in her determination. Finally, then, the Emperor offers the widow his hand in marriage; and it is at this point that we take note of some rather different reactions. Maimbourg has the Emperor condemn his wife to death; but Deslandes makes conscience and disillusionment precipitate her suicide. Realizing that by her treachery she has lost her husband's esteem, she rushes headlong into a burning brazier (which bears a cauldron of boiling oil) and dies in the very presence of the disputing parties. Truly, in the story of 1749, the characters come to life in a most vivid manner!

We turn to consider the "faux air de dévotion", which Deslandes finds in the earlier account. Like Deslandes, Maimbourg is fond of "asides", but they are almost invariably devoted to an ecclesiastical theme. For example, almost at the end of the tale the Princess of Montferrat proposes to prove the justice of her cause by "tenant un fer chaud entre mes mains sans me brusler", as she is heard to say in Maimbourg's version. The author's comment is dictated by pious aversion from neglect of papal and pontifical condemnation of such practices: "A la verité l'Empereur ne devoit pas admettre cette épreuve que le Pape Estienne VI avoit condamnée plus de cent ans auparavant, & contre laquelle le sçavant Archevesque de Lyon Agobard avoit fait un traité..." (Hist. de la décad. &c. p. 109). Our second example shows respect for an even higher Christian authority: the power of divine Providence punishing the offender, either in a striking manner, or by depriving the sinner of extreme unction. So, when Otho condemns his faithless spouse to the flames, the Jesuit historian remarks:

"Terrible exemple cependant, qui fait voir l'horreur qu'on doit avoir d'un pareil crime, que Dieu ne manque gueres de punir d'une fin tragique, soit d'une maniere éclatante devant les hommes, comme on le vit en cette occasion, soit d'une autre d'autant plus funeste, qu'elle n'est connuë que de celuy qui punit quelquefois les pecheurs endurcis & scandaleux du plus formidable de tous les chastimens, en les faisant mourir dans

leur peché!" (Ibid, pp. 109-110). The rationalist does not indulge in this kind of moralizing; and with this pious comment we cannot do better than contrast the foot-note to which another Jesuit, Yves Valois, took particular exception, and in which the author of the Princesse de Montferrat pointed out that, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the priesthood was so corrupt that in their last hours men often preferred to raise their departing souls directly to the Deity (Hist. de la Pr. de M., p. 94, n.). That such an observation had a real meaning for eighteenth-century France may be presumed after we have read this passage, which refers to the 1750s:

> Many of the official representatives of religion in France at the time had no belief at all. They questioned nothing, because they were entirely cynical, and were prepared to make use of every superstition, and every weakness in human nature, for political purposes or personal aggrandisement. How could a man perplexed with real difficulties talk to men like these? Their evil spirit had so infected the life of France that sincere men and women could hardly talk of their religion to an ecclesiastic without wondering whether he was secretly sneering at them (Noyes, Voltaire, p. 423).

That is the situation that Deslandes faces in his history. Again, unconcerned with theological notions of the Hereafter, he tends to draw a more practical moral and to use the occasion to convey a few principles in state-craft. Thus, at the end, the Princess exhorts the Emperor in these words:

> Aimez la Religion, mais étudiez-la dans les sources pures qui la contiennent. Etudiez-la en grand homme, & non en esprit foible & timide. N'estimez que la piété qui est accompagnée de la science, & cherchez la science qui est soutenue d'une solide piété. Fuyez la guerre, & méprisez l'honneur frivole qui peut vour revenir, ou d'une province conquise, ou d'une Bataille gagnée. Vous n'êtes pas né pour détruire les hommes... (p. 129).

Remembering that we class this history amongst our author's exoteric works, we see that the warning about true religion is as direct as can be expected. Thus, in his tale, our historian prefers to teach the monarch his duties and obligations to his subjects. Nor do we find in the work of 1749 that providential direction of events that is so dear to some seventeenth-century writers. Instead, we have a strong feeling after reading Deslandes's book that the meaning of history is found in history itself - in the loves and passions and jealousies of the characters themselves. That is why, as we have seen, our author uses psychological insight to illuminate his scenes.

One important forerunner of this new conception of history was the seventeenth-century writer, Mézerai (1618-1683); and, if Maimbourg is of interest chiefly by contrast with Deslandes, his contemporary claims our attention by virtue of a number of points of similarity with our author's ideals and techniques. Nor is it merely that we feel the necessity of mentioning this historian: in the Preface to the Princesse de Montferrat his name occurs amongst a number of "models" recommended in 1749. Now, what had Mézerai to offer the succeeding century? In L'Historien Mézeray et la conception de l'histoire en France au XVIIe siècle (ed. 1930, v. esp. pp. 83-120), Evans depicts him as unprejudiced to the point of omitting nothing that was evidently true, even if it offended ecclesiastical and patriotic susceptibilities; as intelligent and enlightened enough to perceive that one of the purposes of history was to draw attention to progress in arts and sciences, and to affirm that history could instruct young princes and help to form the honnête homme. Nor were these the only qualities that would surely attract Deslandes. For instance, Mézerai had not been blinded by the splendour of royal affairs to the contributions of humbler folk to a nation's story; like Deslandes, he appreciated Grotius' De Veritate and even to the extent of translating it into French; and he sacrificed personal comfort and temporary advantages to the proclamation of truth, losing pensions in the process. Again, Evans indicates that his hero broke with tradition in drawing some of his examples and illustrations from French history, and even from contemporary French history, instead of from Plutarch or other Ancient sources. By the year 1749, this habit is well established; and in the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat we find the names of the Maréchal de Saxe, Madame de Lambert, Cardinal Mazarin, the Duc de Montausier and so on. There is another significant aspect of Mézerai's influence on the "New History". Evans tells us that this historian does not hesitate to introduce presages and prodigies - for example, comets - for dramatic effect; but that he is in

advance of his times in doing so half-apologetically, as though he is anxious to disclaim responsibility for such details.[22] In the next century it became possible to do this more openly, and in the Princesse de Montferrat (with the exception of the highly theatrical thunder-clap at the end), we find little of the supernatural or the miraculous. Indeed, if we have read the Histoire critique de la philosophie, we do not expect these ingredients in a work of the historian who wrote in 1737:

> Il seroit à souhaiter que le goût & le discernement y fussent en même proportion [he is speaking of the history of Byzantium]; qu'on n'y trouvât point le merveilleux, le surprenant, prodigués presque à chaque page; que la vérité s'y déduisît d'elle-même, en faisant voir que rien n'arrive brusquement dans le monde & comme par sauts: mais que les évenemens sont enchaînés les uns aux autres; enfin, que des plus petites causes naissent les plus grands effets (III, 217).

Now this is merely a step further than Mézerai in the matter of the marvellous and the supernatural; and, moreover, it is precisely Mézerai's view of the importance of small causes (such as court intrigues) as pregnant with great consequence. For instance, in the work of 1749, how different would have been the story of the virtuous prince, if he had turned a deaf ear to his wife's entreaties that he should accept the invitation to attend the court of Otho III! Finally, unlike Maimbourg, Mézerai had made critical "asides" that won our author's approval. In the second volume of the critical history of philosophy, Deslandes had alluded to Mézerai as "le plus sincère de nos Historiens" (p. 91). Significantly, he had done so when, discussing the question of sartorial extravagance at a certain period in history, he had reproduced Mézerai's comment: "C'est une vraie folie, c'est une marque d'ignorance & de légéreté". On such side-issues as ostentation, therefore, Deslandes found the earlier writer a "model" he could recommend to those interested in historical method.

We have just noted our historian's concern for sincerity in 1737. There was nothing novel about this preoccupation, for, in the year before Fénelon made his famous comment, "Il y a très peu d'historiens qui soient exempts de grands défauts" (Oeuvres, ed. (1824), XXI, 227), Deslandes had shown awareness

of one of the crucial problems about the reading or writing of history:

> Il n'y a guères d'excès où la basse Flatterie n'ait précipité l'Homme, abandonné à lui-même. Pou contente de déguiser des crimes exposez à la vûë publique, elle a souvent orné le Vice des dehors de la Vertu. Les plus grands Princes lui doivent une partie de leur gloire: la Verité ne prodigue pas si aisément ses loüanges. C'est là ce qui rend la lecture de l'Histoire dangereuse, ou du moins peu agréable aux personnes sinceres (Réflexions sur les grands hommes &c., ed. 1732, p.53).

Now we date this passage as appearing in 1713, because it was one of those that were added to the Réflexions during our author's visit to London. We may well wonder why he showed his first recorded interest in history at that time; and the answer may be not difficult to find. We have seen that, in London, Deslandes came into contact with the intellectual posterity of men like Saint-Réal[23] and Saint-Evremond. Both these names mean something to the student of eighteenth-century historical method. In 1671 there had appeared Saint-Réal's De l'usage de l'histoire, containing seven Discours and an introduction in which the writer inveighed against overloading the memory with dates and facts, and argued that since, properly conceived, history is the study of man, it must treat of the moral causes of events and the motives that impel man to certain courses of action. This aspect of Saint-Réal's ideal is not without significance in explaining the psychological approach of Deslandes in 1749. Saint-Evremond had composed a brief Discours sur les historiens francois which was originally dated 1673 and was later called De la manière d'écrire l'histoire (Oeuvres, ed. 1927, I, 245-262). In this work he had accused his compatriots of mediocrity as historians; he had recommended the study of the conditions and customs of the period and nation treated; he had suggested a widening of historical horizons to include laws, religions and political affairs as well as warfare; he had urged a broadening of the historian's judgement of individuals. Speaking therefore (like his friend Saint-Réal) of "la connoissance des hommes", he observed: "nos Historiens ne nous en donnent pas assez, faute d'application, ou de discernement pour les bien connaître. Ils ont cru qu'un récit exact des événements suffisait pour nous

instruire, sans considérer que les affaires se font par des hommes que la passion emporte plus souvent que la politique ne les conduit". Once more, then, there is an insistence upon the human, psychological approach to history - an approach in which flattery has no part at all and sincerity and intellectual integrity are of great moment, and which subordinates facts to people.

His interest in history undoubtedly aroused, Deslandes returned to Paris in 1713; and a letter of that year shows him seeking historical material for a "Benedictine friend". Apart, however, from this person's researches, what was there in France at this time to maintain Deslandes's interest? In this same year, 1713, there was published an important treatise by the Abbé Lenglet-Dufresnoy;[24] and by 1743 (Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce, pp. 5-6) it is obvious that our author has absorbed some of the ideas set forth in the Méthode pour étudier l'histoire. For example, the precept that history should be composed by persons versed in the subject under review and not by ecclesiastics who are prejudiced by their theological training is partly an echo of the twenty-first chapter of Dufresnoy's book, which condemns "les historiens passionés"; the decision to consult only those authorities possessing "genius, penetration, fired with the love of truth and courageous enough to proclaim it" is in line with the "seconde précaution" issued in chapter seventeen of the earlier work, which urges the budding historian to "choisir un petit nombre d'Historiens exacts" (ed. 1714, I, 376); the reproof of patriotic bias which Deslandes makes in the Lettre critique of 1752 coincides with advice that will be found in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of the Méthode. Finally, both writers speak of "good" and "bad" historians; and Dufresnoy defines them in a manner that anticipates the later theorist: the competent craftsman should "avoir une facilité naturelle pour écrire l'histoire; beaucoup d'étude; & un grand usage des affaires; pourvû neanmoins qu'en écrivant, il ne se laisse point emporter à la passion" (Méthode, ed. 1714, I, 390); and he should

"n'être attaché à aucun parti; mais...juger des uns & des autres sans prévention" (ibid, p. 396).

If Dufresnoy's treatise of 1713 was an important contribution to the new historical techniques, so also was part of Fénelon's Lettre à l'Académie of the following year. We have seen that, in the Réflexions, Deslandes was aware that historians of his day were apt to mislead their readers with fulsome eulogies of eminent yet unworthy characters. In 1714, Fénelon spoke on the same theme: "Le bon historien n'est d'aucun temps ni d'aucun pays...Il évite également le panégyrique et les satires: il ne mérite d'être cru qu'autant qu'il se borne à dire, sans flatterie et sans malignité, le bien et le mal" (Oeuvres, XXI, 227-228). Consequently patriotic bias was a reprehensible as ignoble flattery to the writer who said of the "good" historian: "Quoiqu'il aime sa patrie, il ne la flatte jamais en rien. L'historien français doit se rendre neutre entre la France et l'Angleterre" (ibid, 227). Is not that precisely what Deslandes was to state in 1752 when he reviewed a foreign history? Again, like his predecessor Mézerai, Fénelon appreciated the importance of small details which serve "à découvrir les causes des événemens"; and, like Saint-Evremond, he saw the value of characterization ("Je ne connais point un homme, en ne connaissant que son nom"). He insisted, moreover, that history should have a unity and form - rather like the unity and form of an epic poem - and that in consequence "la principale perfection d'une histoire consiste dans l'ordre et dans l'arrangement" (ibid, 229). Thus the historian, choosing "sur vingt endroits celui où un fait sera mieux placé pour répandre la lumière sur tous les autres" (p. 230), could create a work of lucidity and logic and oblige the reader to use his reason; thus also he could convey "la plus solide morale, sans moraliser" (p. 231).

This point raises once more the whole issue of the functions of history. The Lettre of 1714 had begun with a statement of the value of history "qui nous montre les grands exemples, qui fait servir les vices mêmes des méchans à l'

instruction des bons, qui débrouille les origines, et qui explique par quel chemin les peuples ont passé d'une forme de gouvernement à une autre" (XXI,227). The didactic aim had already been made clear in the previous century by historians like Bossuet, anxious to point object-lessons and to instruct princes in their future obligations and duties. In the eighteenth century, however, this didactic aim was divorced from the morality of the Church, and was pursued by secular reformers who called themselves "philosophers". In this respect it is fruitful and pertinent to compare Deslandes with Voltaire, whose name is surely the one that comes to mind most readily when we think of the "New History" in eighteenth-century France.

"Historien, Voltaire ne sépare pas l'histoire de la 'philosophie'. Selon lui, les philosophes seuls y sont propres", declares one of the many Voltairian commentators (Pellissier, Voltaire philosophe, ed. 1908, p. 213). (The remark is just as valid in the case of Deslandes as in that of his more illustrious contemporary.) Consider, for example, the article Histoire of the Dictionnaire philosophique. There Voltaire deplores the partiality of those clerics who make the Hebrews the centre-piece in history: in that opinion he concurs exactly with the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie and, to a less impressive degree, with the author of the Essay of 1743. Voltaire impugns the sectarian and ecclesiastical prejudice which urges a writer to excuse the most villainous monarchs who happened to promote the temporal interests of the Church, and to blacken the memory of virtuous and benevolent sovereigns who happened to incur clerical hostility. With less vehemence Deslandes says the same thing in 1749; and, in the Lettre à M. le Trésorier of the preceding year, he anticipates Voltaire in dubbing ~~such critiques~~ the Jesuit Berruyer "un sot". Similarities will also be found in the respective attitudes of our two "philosophers" to the validity of historical material; and Voltaire, who states that "toute certitude qui n'est pas une démonstration mathématique n'est qu'une extrême probabilité: il n'y a pas d'autre certitude historique", is close to the opinion

of the author of the Traité sur les différens degrés de la certitude morale of 1750. Furthermore, in stressing that (with the exception of some confidential details) the historian must reveal all information that will assist the understanding of his reader and contribute significant testimony to the study the writer has undertaken, he is repeating what Deslandes said in the Preface to the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat. Indeed, there is one recorded case of the greater man asking his obscure colleague for information of this kind. In October 1752, Voltaire wrote from Potsdam to La Condamine in Paris, requesting details that Deslandes might be able to supply regarding the reign of Louis XIV - details presumably needed for the famous Siècle that he was then engaged upon augmenting.[25]

The aims of the two historians coincide exactly. Both enunciate their view that history should be composed in an agreeable and engaging style in order to interest and please the reader; and it is only to be regretted that Voltaire was so much more successful in putting precept into practice. There was, of course, an even more important aim. "Quelle serait l'histoire utile?", asks Voltaire: "Celle qui nous apprendrait nos devoirs et nos droits, sans paraître prétendre à nous les enseigner". It is the aim of Fénelon, with one important difference: the rights as well as the obligations of men are given their true value. Voltaire goes on to argue that historical studies will be found useful to statesman and citizen alike, since, allowing the reader to make comparisons with other nations, they encourage emulation in the arts, in agriculture and commerce. Particularly with regard to the last-named of these desiderata, this motive is shared by ~~the~~ our minor historian who, in his writings on the Navy and commerce, made some significant comparisons and contrasts between France and her European neighbours.

We may go further and say that in 1743 the didactic aim is realized in suggestions and insinuations that fall into four categories: hints addressed to princes, to administrators and ministers of state, to the young nobility of France, to

businessmen and traders. To princes, the lesson is conveyed in examples drawn from Ancient and from French history, and by quotations and illustrations chosen to demonstrate the need for greater concern about defence, about the renown of the kingdom and about its economic well-being. The message to persons in high office is in many particulars similar to the message to princes, but there is a strong insistence upon the obligation to recognize merit and reward talent. Young nobles are (we remember) exhorted to interest themselves in useful occupations, like the Navy and commercial ventures. Finally, to businessmen and traders are addressed a number of maxims and words of warning about the selfishness of trading companies, the evils of private luxury and the demerits of short-sighted economic policies.

Six years later, the objective is more limited; and it is easy to explain this by the fact that in 1749 the "Bien-Aimé" was rapidly ceasing to be ~~regarded~~ designated in this endearing manner. The exhortation of 1749 is: "Qu'on éclaire ceux qui gouvernent, qu'on les instruise de leurs devoirs, bientôt les Peuples obéissans & dociles seront aussi éclairés & aussi instruits qu'ils doivent l'être" (Preface); and we do not forget the frank admission: "J'ai voulu faire voir qu'un Prince qui abandonne les intérêts de la vérité & de la justice, tombe nécessairement dans un décri universel & devient d'autant plus malheureux que le pouvoir qu'il exerce est plus absolu" (ibid). If we bear these precise statements in mind, a summary of the essential content of the Histoire of 1749 can be envisaged in this form:

Part	Essential lesson	Details of story
I	Character of good ruler: virtuous and enlightened; and of ideal woman: reasonable	Insignificant
II	Danger of allowing hypocritical and immoral priests to gain ascendency. Lessons in toleration and moderation; in justice and religion	Insignificant

III	Danger of flattering advisers. Montferrat's, as example of excellent administration: the public good before all other things	Marriage of Prince and Princess. Prince invited to court by Otho.
IV	Dangers of excessive cult of luxury, especially at court. Prince's delstic demise.	Empress enamoured of Prince, who, having repelled advances, is condemned to death on false charge
V	Ruler warned of consequences of injustice. Advice of Princess to Emperor: prize only religious sincerity; choose counsellors who care for public good, & tell the truth; avoid aggressive war.	Princess fails to save her husband; proves the guilt of the Empress, who commits suicide. Otho offers marriage, which Princess declines.

From this summary the main conclusion that can be drawn is that this slender history is in fact a pretext for a serious, illustrated lecture on the art of governing a country, and for attacks on the enemies of public felicity. Outstanding amongst these are the corrupt ecclesiastics; and, although in this history we are provided with an impassioned harangue in favour of loving God, we do not overlook the last thoughts of the Prince, and the fact that we have already classed the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat amongst our author's exoteric presentations.

Yet, though in 1737 politics were subordinated to metaphysical, religious and moral issues, in 1749 that situation is reversed. And, as the Histoire is superlatively a lesson in statecraft, it deserves to be considered against the wider back-cloth of our author's political ideas.

CHAPTER III POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

"Un tel Roi, disoit-on, a été juste & modéré, il se plaisoit dans l'intérieur de sa famille, il a eu même des amis: un autre a fait bâtir des Ouvrages considérables, un College, des Ponts, des Quais pour la commodité publique...Sous celui-là les Impôts furent retranchés, & la Cour se défendit elle-même les dépenses superflues." Heureux le Royaume, dont l'histoire ne présente que de pareils traits! (H.c., I, 143-144).

...sous les Tyrans, ou même sous les Princes qui affectent une autorité arbitraire & despotique, on manque de la double liberté, & de pouvoir révéler ce qu'on pense, & presque de pouvoir penser ce qu'on veut. Tems funeste, & qui retenant la vérité captive, ne semble destiné qu'à accréditer le mensonge! (ibid, II, 85-86).

Heureux les Royaumes, où le soin de récompenser les Talens supérieurs, les Talens utiles, passe: non-seulement pour une obligation essenticlle, mais encore pour une dette de l'Etat; & où les grands Artistes ne sont point obligéz de vendre leurs Ouvrages à des Ignorans superbes, qui n'ont pour tout goût & pour toute intelligence que de stupides richesses! (Pigmalion, pp. 7-8).

a) The Opinions of Youth (1712-1717)

Raised in the latter days of the rule of Louis XIV, and educated chiefly in the capital of the realm subjected to that suffocating absolutism, Deslandes acquired at an early age a deep-rooted hatred of despotism, the ill effects of which he never tired of mentioning in his writings. For instance, in 1712 he wrote of the Emperor Augustus: "...l'esprit qui ne laisse perdre aucun des avantages qui se présentent, est le plus propre pour le Trône. Peu semblable aux Princes qui veulent seulement qu'on les craigne, Auguste vouloit qu'on l'estimât" (Réflexions &c., pp. 56-57); and, amid the chapters added to the same volume during our author's sojourn in Britain, we discover a reference to monarchs who "insultent à l'ignorance populaire, & se jouent, pour ainsi dire, de la crédulité de leurs Sujets...On les trompe grossierement & pour comble de disgrace, on les oblige à respecter le plus vil séducteur" (ibid, p. 87). But, hating absolutism in its extreme form was not the same thing as disapproving of a powerful monarchy or as inclining in any way towards demagogism. The young

colonial who (probably indignant at the neglect of overseas territories that was one consequence of over-centralization) had arrived in France in time to witness the déclin, was, at the very end of the Grand Règne, to be in a position to s tudy a nation which had within living memory accomplished a blood-less revolt, and was now in possession of wider freedoms than were enjoyed in France at that time. But was this liberty an unqualified boon? How, then, did Deslandes react to the British political spectacle in 1712-13?

In the Preface to the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre, the traveller tells his reader:

> Je passai même en Angleterre dans le tems du monde le plus favorable au dessein que j'avois formé: tous les esprits étoient dans une agitation terrible; le Ministère venoit de changer, & ceux qu'on avoit obligez de quitter les premieres places, se vangeoient des nouveaux Favoris par des bruits injurieux, & par des satires outrées (ed. 1717, p. 225).

This must indeed have been the state of affairs in 1712. On the very last day of the year 1711, it was announced that Queen Anne had dismissed the Duke of Marlborough from all his appointments and had created twelve new peers, with the clear intention that the latter should over-rule the majority in the House of Lords. This coup de force, welcomed by the Tories, who were glad of any measures that would keep them in power, was bitterly opposed by the Whigs protesting that the Queen was overthrowing the constitution. But Her Majesty - herself in a sense the victim of a palace plot - persisted in her decision and intimated that the Lords, like the Commons, should adjourn until January 14th. In the keen debate which ensued, the motion for the adjournment was carried by a mere thirteen votes, which included those of the twelve new peers. In the Commons there began a period of savage retaliation against the members of the late administration; and Walpole found himself accused of having made illicit gains in connection with forage contracts in Scotland, and was soon condemned to the Tower. That chief enemy of the conspirators, Marlborough, was also found guilty of corruption - in this case in respect of payments to bread contractors for the forces in Flanders; and his secretary,

Cardonnel, was accused of complicity and expelled from the House. Thus the machinations of Harley and Mrs. Masham were singularly successful and their enemies were confounded in a most dramatic manner. Public opinion was of necessity divided about the respective merits of the hostile factions, and there was considerable bitterness against corruption from one party, and even more bitterness from the other about the arbitrary influencing of Parliament.

This, then, was the situation underlying the disturbed political conditions to which Deslandes was introduced late in the year 1712, and which he describes in these words:

Toute l'Angleterre est, pour ainsi dire, divisée en deux corps, aussi animez l'un contre l'autre, que si des intérêts differens les séparoient: & ce n'est point à la Cour seulement que l'esprit de parti se fait sentir, mais aussi parmi le peuple; un bourgeois, un simple artisan, croit avoir sa part dans la querelle generale de la Nation: il s'agite, il s'inquiette, il s'abandonne à son goût politique; il porte ses vûës aussi loin qu'un premier Ministre; ses propres affaires l'occupent moins, on diroit qu'il est chargé des plus importantes negotiations. J'ai vû quelquefois qu'à l'exemple de nos Charlatans,—

Sur un Theatre politique
S'établissoit un Tabarin,
Qui tenant la gazette en main,
Parloit de la chose publique
D'un ton vrayment Académique.

Une populace attentive l'entouroit gravement, & lui proposoit des doutes. Le refrain ordinaire de cette scene burlesque consiste à avouër

Qu'un Gouvernement Anarchique
Est préferable au Monarchique (Houy. Voy., ed. 1717, pp. 240-241).

As our author goes on to speak derisively of the common people, with their passionate and fickle demonstrations of political opinion, we may take it that he does not approve of this excessive freedom of speech in Britain. It is also clear that he regards this "querelle generale de la Nation" as something quite odd and decidedly comic. An apologist of the régime (Voltaire, for example) would hardly have used this expression. We also note the amazement evident in such a phrase as "aussi animez l'un contre l'autre, que si les intérêts differens les séparoient", which betrays the visitor from the France of Louis XIV, accustomed to political views expressed only in court factions, in religious differences, in struggles between classes of society, and moreover ~~not~~ rarely expressed at all by the lower bourgeoisie or by artisans. Finally, the last few

lines of the passage reveal his fear of political licence leading to anarchy and the destruction of the monarchist system to which French public opinion was still generally attached. If there is any qualification which must be made in respect of this view, it is the fact that the author intended that the work should be published openly in France, and that in 1713 he submitted it to Bignon for this very purpose. It is obvious, therefore, that he would not place before the Abbé an extravagant eulogy of a foreign system of government or of the cross-Channel political scene. This restriction is hardly to be considered valid in this case, however, since the insistence upon a powerful and determined monarchy is something that he holds dear throughout his life — for instance, especially in 1753 - and about which he is perfectly sincere at all times.

In addition, we may say that the whole position taken up by Deslandes is one that is common amongst his compatriots up till the Lettres philosophiques of 1734. In La Culture et la civilisation britannique devant l'opinion française, Bonno gives a detailed review of the writings of Deslandes and others who expressed their opinions upon the British political scene between the years 1700 and 1734. From this we learn that the Journal de Verdun stressed the bitter struggle between British political parties in 1715, the court intrigues and parliamentary corruption. About 1715 Father D'Orléans speaks of Britain as "belliqueuse, fière, inquiète, toujours intriguée contre ses voisins, et encore plus rarement d'accord avec elle-même qu'avec les autres", and perceives in the Bill of Rights the germs of untold contagions. In 1719, Ramsay, taking his cue from Fénelon, sees mischief in the encroachments upon the sovereign's power made by the Commons, and in the Revolution of 1688 a further violation of the fundamental rights of the monarchy. Emmanuel de Cize and Rapin de Thoyras in 1717 (though more favourably disposed than some towards the system of "checks and balances") deplore the fanaticism pervading British political life, and the permanent animosities and party warfare: moreover, like

Ramsay, they stress the corruptions and abuses that characterized the British political system in the early eighteenth century. (Bonno, pp. 39-41).

Admittedly the judgements of Deslandes in 1713- 1717 are immature; yet in a striking manner they echo those of many of his compatriots. Far from glossing over the corruption of the day (as Voltaire was to do in 1734), Deslandes was impressed during his visit by the stupidity of a querelous and quarrelsome people, and by the absurdity of a party system that led to such abuse of the freedom of speech. It is also apparent that the author of the Nouveau Voyage holds no brief for the anarchist or the demagogue, or for freedom at the expense of national peace and unity. The picture is amusingly quaint, but it is tinged with more than a little forboding and disapproval.

b) Opinions of Middle Age (1737-49)

For twenty years we have no document to disclose the political views of Deslandes. In 1737, however, there appeared the most substantial of our author's works, which, though concerned much more with philosophical and moral issues, is none the less capable of supplying us with some precious information regarding our author's political opinions. Consequently, from the Histoire critique de la philosophie we choose two revealing passages.

The first (I, 323-333), takes us back to the Seven Sages of Greece; and in these pages we discover an apparent justification of regicide if it rids the land of a tyrant, for the writer tells us that the action taken by Pittacus (and to which we have already referred in another connection) was "jugé nécessaire dans les circonstances". Immediately thereafter we are told that for a tyrannical régime Pittacus substituted a "good government". What was this admirable innovation? When he assumed power, Pittacus was faithful to the laws of

the land and stayed in office only as long as the people wished him to govern them. If this appears to be an oblique tribute to constitutional rule, we must take account of a warning that is appended by our critical historian: Pittacus struggled manfully to remain an honnête-homme, for, having reverted once more to the position of a prominent citizen after ten years of rule, he probably found it difficult to maintain his integrity in high places, "où toute la vie n'est que feinte & dissimulation; où, pour complaire aux Princes, on doit flatter leurs passions & ménager leurs intrigues secrettes; où, pour conserver enfin ses dignités, il faut souvent trahir ses propres lumieres, & sacrifier à la pourpre...plutôt qu'à la conscience". Next we come to Bias, who criticized the cult of superfluities and therefore of luxury; and to Solon who, having become minister of state, would only propose equitable laws and then show firmness in their execution, and who managed to maintain a nice balance between a haughty aristocracy and a querelous people - a rabble which he contrived to appease by concentrating public expenditure on markets and city-squares. We are transported to a slightly later period. Back in Athens after a sojourn in Egypt (where he had been studying philosophy), Solon did not deign to pay his respects to a tyrant, and ceaselessly exhorted the people to dethrone such a monster. Some pages later, we read of Chilon who achieved political preferment without resorting to base intrigue - a rare achievement, says the historian. To Chilon is also attributed the remark that a tyrant is never safe from sword or poison, even if he chooses to live mainly within his own family circle. "Il ne meurt pas assez tôt pour le bien de ses sujets". In these pages, then, there is a recurrent tendency to condemn despotism and to emphasize the fact that power corrupts and makes integrity difficult to sustain. The "good" government, we conclude, is not an arbitrary rule, and it maintains a balance between the reasonable claims of social orders. But it is not a weak government; for it exacts rapid execution of justice.

We consider the second passage (II, 426-439). Here we are concerned mainly with Alexander the Great and with the division of the Empire after his death. Ptolomy, son of Lagus, was adept at the art of "seducing" his subjects and thus of exacting blind obedience. This the critical writer finds reprehensible. Perhaps it is the stuff that heroes are made of, but it is quite out of place in a king, "dont le principal titre doit être celui de Pere des Peuples". Some pages later we return to the same Ptolomy, this time to consider his merits. Once he was securely enthroned, the ruler assembled about him aesthetic and intelligent spirits who helped to add lustre to arts and sciences - musicians, painters, astronomers, geometers and philosophers, who enhanced the glory of thestate and its sovereign. There was a huge library and an academy, whose members received their pensions for merit alone, or at least "for some semblance of merit". Similarly, Hadrian is reported to have opened the doors of the academy only to men of real distinction, and to have provided for the every-day needs of members, so that they were free to concentrate on study. Our historian's maxim at this point is of considerable significance: "Plus les Muses s'approchent du Trône, & plus le Trône semble acquérir de réputation". Yet, as so often, there is a word of warning: these same philosophers who are close to the monarch may be tempted, and almost obliged to sell their consciences. So Plutarch is brought in at this moment to reprove this kind of complacency. How should the "philosophic" counsellor treat his prince? "La vraie maniere de les servir, c'est de leur reprocher hautement leurs vices & leurs travers: c'est de leur répéter sans cesse, qu'il sied mal à un Souverain de passer les jours au milieu des danses & des divertissemens."

The two passages are obviously parallel, and, considering them together, we come to the conclusion that tyranny is bad for the people who sometimes come to accept it as normal, and bad for the monarch who must ever go in fear of his life. The alternative is a powerful but benevolent rule, based on law

and shunning the evils of flattery and malfeasance. The "good" king is described here as the "father of his people", just as elsewhere in the same work he is called "le soutien du peuple" (III, 170). There is certainly no plea for any form of republicanism; and in the first volume of the Histoire critique we learn: "...ces Républiques offrent chacune leur système particulier. Mais ce qu'elles ont de commun, c'est qu'elles n'ont jamais pu empêcher que les puissans n'opprimassent les foibles, que les personnes en place ne se prévalussent de tous les avantages que leur donne la force..." (I, 272). The author of the critical history is attached to the monarchy, because he forsees the tyranny of petty overlords in positions of authority not subjected to higher authority. These "personnes en place" must act as advisers, and they must maintain the social equilibrium of the state. They should be men of merit, of talent, of education, and should represent the arts, the sciences and philosophy. And they must see their duty clearly: they must have the courage to tell their master the truth, even if by so doing they fall into disgrace. Thus, in the critical history of 1737, we discover a course of instruction for sovereigns and counsellors alike. A powerful and responsible monarchy, with enlightened counsel and rapid execution of justice - that is our author's ideal in middle age.

Between 1737 and the end of his career, Deslandes remains attached to his ideal. Yet, after the refusal of his application for renewal in his favour of his father's letters of nobility (1742) a note of personal grievance naturally creeps into his political comments. In the esoteric contes philosophique of 1741, he merely praises those realms where talent is appreciated by the state (ed. 1742, pp. 7-8); but in the Optique des moeurs of the following year we find a satire on ministerial corruption, and in the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce of 1743 we are supplied not only with reminders about strong, conscientious and vigorous monarchs of the past,

but with this impudent comment which heralds the Deslandes of the later period: "L'argent d'ailleurs est presque le seul mobile qui remue aujourd'hui toute chose. Sans lui, on ne peut parvenir à aucune place qui soit de quelque distinction: & il faut se resoudre à languir dans l'obscurité, si l'on n'a les moyens d'acheter des honneurs..." (pp. 175-176). Dare one assert after reading these lines that they are of a purely general and impersonal character? Would it not be strange if they did not in fact serve as a form of self-expression for the man who was disappointed in 1742? Two years later, in the volume containing the Lettre sur le luxe, our disgruntled author inserted the Dialogue pourquoi il est si difficile aux personnes d'un certain mérite de s'avancer dans le monde - by its very title an expression of disgust about an iniquitous social system. Three short extracts will show the kind of argument that takes place between Ariste and Theagène (names that figure considerably in the Abbé Bellegarde's Réflexions and Modèles, to which we referred in our pages devoted to the Art de ne point s'ennuyer). Ariste begins with the complaint: "Je souhaiterois *qu'il* régnât dans le monde un certain ordre, une judicieuse symétrie. Je voudrois que la vertu seule frayât le chemin aux honneurs..." (in Lettre sur le luxe, 1745, p. 71); and he proceeds to condemn the frivolous ineptitude of courtiers and administrators. His cynical partner indicates the disadvantages from which the "homme de mérite" must suffer in the present state of society:

> ...ennemi de toute fraude...il ne s'accrédite point par des mensonges adroits, ni par une imposture curieusement soutenue... Offrira-t-il son encens à la maîtresse du premier Ministre...? Entrera-t-il dans ces souterrains odieux, où l'on trafique de charges & de dignités, où l'on achète à prix d'argent le privilège de dépouiller une Province entière...? (ibid, pp. 73-75)

It is once again the bitter remark of one who has been unsuccessful and who reproaches a decadent and corrupt social order. So Theagène concludes: "Un honnête homme est obligé de faire tout ce qu'il peut pour s'avancer dans le monde...mais il n'est point obligé de réüssir. Le succès n'a jamais été une preuve de mérite..." (ibid, pp. 95-96).

The Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat of 1749 is

rather different. Aimed, as we have seen, at a ~~wider~~ wider audience, it approaches political issues much more in the manner of the critical history of 1737; and, by the process of historical analogy and general comment, it becomes "tout ensemble une philosophie, une politique, une morale pleine de sentiment" (Corr. litt., I, 177). What, then, is the political ideal proposed but one year after the appearance of Montesquieu's Esprit des lois? Like Montesquieu, Deslandes warns against the consequences of absolutism, which, far from fostering the happiness of citizens, maintains a tyranny of fear (E. des l., Livre, III, Ch. VIII-IX). We recall that, after having shown the evils that result from neglect of justice and truth, the historian adds: "Je l'avouerai hautement, le bonheur des hommes consiste à n'avoir point de pareils Souverains" (Preface). The essential safeguard, he asserts, lies in enlightenment, without which the sovereign cannot avoid the arbitrary and capricious exercise of authority: "Les injustices que font les Souverains, soit en rejetant la vérité qui leur est connue, soit en négligeant les moyens les plus propres à la connoître, ces injustices ont toujours des suites longues & fâcheuses" (p. 104). As Montesquieu said the year before: the whole difference between monarchy and despotism lies in the fact that "dans la monarchie, le prince a des lumières..." (op. cit., Livre IV, Ch. X). How does all this apply to Louis XV? How may he acquire or regain a regard for justice and truth, and snatch the sovereign power from the governing clique? There is in the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat, an insignificant anecdote concerning the Archbishop of Toulouse and the Queen Regent which embodies the following significant remark: "...heureux le Prince qui, ayant succombé à des passions violentes, obtient tout-à-coup sur elles une pleine victoire" (p. 7). Furthermore, to indicate a means of subduing royal passions, he emphasizes the exercise of will-power; and he alludes to princes of Persia, to Henry VIII of England, as rulers who lacked self-control. Only when the sovereign is

master of himself and of his realm can he achieve what Otho III is said to have done: "Tout ce qui pouvoit contribuer à la félicité publique devenoit l'objet de son attention vive & agissante" (p. 42). In this way it can be accomplished: if the monarch conquers his passions and learns to love truth (rather than pleasures), he will begin to promote justice and earn the respect of his subjects; for "Les Rois ne s'attirent nos respects qu'autant qu'ils sont justes, & ils ne sont justes qu'autant qu'ils aiment la vérité" (p. 1).

Such is the political message of 1749: a strong government capable of restraining the selfish aspirations of the privileged few; a monarch who loves truth and justice and is willing to be enlightened as to his true obligations; a responsible and benevolent <u>régime</u> for the good of the nation as a whole. Never was the need so great. The man who had declared in 1737:

> ...une Nation n'est plus proche de sa ruïne & de son anéantissement, que lorsqu'elle paroît la plus polie au-dehors, & par-là même la plus superficielle au-dedans; lorsqu'elle rampe devant ses maîtres, en lui prodiguant des respects qui ne sont dûs qu'à Dieu seul; lorsqu'elle fait enfin des plaisirs qui enyvrent, sa principale occupation...Triste situation, qui annonce infailliblement la chute de tout l'Etat (H.c., I, 339-340),

now felt that his diagnosis was proving correct in a most alarming manner. So, two years after the <u>Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat</u>, he concentrated personal and general criticism in the <u>conte philosophique</u> of 1751.

c) <u>Opinions of Old Age (1751-56)</u>

At first sight it is rather strange that the enemy of the Philosophic Party, Fréron, should have composed such a fine tribute to the "philosopher", Deslandes, in the <u>Année littéraire</u> of 1757 (V, 145-165). The key to this mystery is to be found in <u>La Fortune</u>. In the beginning of this book, we note that the <u>Lettre préliminaire</u> (an exoteric and soothing document compared with the text of the <u>conte</u>) is addressed

to one "Madame de Rob....", whom we can reasonably imagine to have been Madame de Robecq, daughter of Rousseau's protector M. de Luxembourg, enemy of Madame de Pompadour and her clique (v. Lavisse, Hist. de Fr, ed. 1911, VIII, Pt. 2, p. 225)[26], and later the patron of Palissot who wrote such a scathing comedy against the Philosophes. Can it be therefore that Deslandes, for some reason disliking the Party which La Pompadour was protecting, sought the friendship of a party hostile to the Movement which, on the face of it, had ideals very like his own?

There is some evidence to support such a conclusion. In the first place, we need hardly say that the Lettre sur le luxe would hardly find favour in the eyes of the most extravagant of royal mistresses who "acceded to power" in the same year. Three years later there appeared in the Mercure de France (Dec. 1748, I, 26-27) a poem sanctimoniously criticizing the whole idea of rational progress in the critical history of philosophy, and recommending to the author greater humility and less confidence in reason:

.....
Depuis Thalès, qu'a-t-on appris
Sur la structure de ce monde?
Avons-nous beaucoup mieux compris
L'air, & le feu, la terre, & l'onde?
Ces tourbillons ingénieux,
Et la nature des Monades,
Ne paroissent plus à nos yeux
Que de sçavantes gasconnades;
Mais, dans des points importans,
Nos esprits sont-ils bien contens,
Et se comprennent-ils eux-mêmes?
Hélas! Sans les ordres suprêmes
De la divine autorité,
Quel garant d'immortalité
Tiendroit contre le Pirrhonisme,
Et certain matérialisme,
De nos jours accrédité
Par le libertin révolté?
Défions-nous de nos lumières;
La raison nous servira mal,
Ou n'y portons que les matieres
Du ressort de son Tribunal.

The writer of this poem, which slyly suggests that the Histoire critique weakens belief in the immortality of the soul and strengthens the cause of sceptics, materialists and libertines, is René de Bonneval, whom Voltaire describes in 1753 (Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XXXVIII, 147-148) as being in the

service of Madame Paris de Montmartel, wife of one of the famous brothers who were certainly to be classed amongst the intimates of La Pompadour. Can it be, therefore, that in 1748 Deslandes was already viewed with disfavour by the friends of the royal mistress?

We pass on to the year 1751 - the year in which Diderot plagiarized the Histoire critique for the article Aristotélisme, and in which La Fortune was published. What do we find in this conte philosophique? A series of important critical remarks relating to government, to ministers, to financiers, to persons in high places and to some "philosophers". We know, for instance, that the position in 1750 was that a clique composed of the royal favourite and her friends had come between an indolent king and subjects who were far from regarding him now as "dearly-beloved". Clearly the author of La Fortune insinuates that those in high places wield too much power; for we read about "un Mémoire, lequel contient les noms de tous ceux, qui, dans la République occupent sans mérite & sans vertu, des places importantes, & qui abusent à la honte de l'humanité, de leur pouvoir & de leur crédit portés trop loin" (pp. 177-178). We also note this condemnation of the bad advice given to the monarch, and which is for ever widening the gulf between him and his people:

> N'en doutez point, le plus grand crime que puisse commettre un Ministre, est de donner à son Maître des conseils précipités, des conseils qui ne s'accordent point avec les grands principes du gouvernement. Un de ces principes est de conserver la bonne harmonie entre le Prince qui commande, & les Sujets qui obéissent; & de faire ensorte que les Sujets soient persuadés de la justice & de la nécessité de ce qu'on leur commande, que le Prince doit être persuadé du zele & de la promptitude avec lesquelles on lui obéit. Si ce lien qui unit le Prince à ses Sujets, vient à manquer, le commandement dégénere en hauteur, en tyrannie; & l'obéissance se tourne en basse servitude, en soûmission forcée (pp. 123-124).

The situation in 1750 gives a great deal of alarm to the author of La Fortune, who depicts for us some of the causes of social decadence. For example, here are some reflections of Mercury:

> Si l'or, si l'argent, si ces deux métaux tant enviés, tant souhaités, devoient être la récompense du bon esprit, de la vertu, de l'honneur, de la probité: pourquoi voit-on dans l'indigence

& dans l'obscurité la plûpart des gens de mérite? Pourquoi ces métaux sont-ils prodigués à ce qu'il y a de plus décrié & de plus abject dans la société; à un Ecrivain connu par ses folies & ses disparates; à un vil Adulateur des sottises des Grands; à des Parasites; à des Proxenetes; à des Esclaves employés aux plus bas offices d'une maison? Pourquoi sont-ils donnés en partage au Sot, au Fou qui les dissipe, à l'Avare qui les enterre, à l'homme vain, méchant, à ceux qui levent les impôts publics, à ceux qui font des fournitures de blés...!(pp. 79-81).

In these pointed questions we are surely introduced to a fair cross-section of those who profited by a corrupt social system which seemed to have lost all sense of true value - a society that worshipped money and cared very little by what means it had been amassed; and we meet the sycophants, the parasites, the middle-men, the grabbing tax-collectors, the wealthy suppliers - men like the Pâris brothers, of whom the character Cleodymas is perhaps a composite portrait. Listen to our author's description of the latter amid his opulence and extravagance:

Tout ce que le luxe offre de plus recherché; tout ce que les arts ont de mieux travaillé; tout ce que le génie peut inventer, soit en ameublemens, soit en dorures, soit en grotesques & en bambochades, se trouvoit réuni dans cette maison. Elle étoit d'ailleurs pleine d'escluves & d'affranchis, dont le nombre marquoit & les richesses & le fol orgueil de Cleodyme. Pour lui, enivré de son opulence, & courbé, si j'ose le dire, sous le poids de son argent, il se regardoit comme un des premiers Citoyens d'Athenes; il affectoit des airs importans, il s'habilloit de pourpre, il se vantoit avec insolence, sans jamais se rappeller l'obscurité de son origine, & les basses fonctions auxquelles il avoit été employé dans sa jeunesse (pp. 58-59).

In truth, Deslandes really detests these newly-rich who made such flamboyant display of their possessions! For this is indeed the century of mad speculation, of wide-spread usury and of rich banking-houses. Another scene flashes before our eyes:

Mercure...la conduisit d'abord dans une maison où l'on ne voyoit que des hommes occupés à remuer de l'or & de l'argent, où l'usure étoit comme sur un throne, où tous les visages offroient je ne sai quoi de dur & de rebutant, où enfin personne ne paroissoit content, parce que personne ne savoit se contenter de ce qu'il possédoit (pp. 129-130).

The vision would be apocalyptic if it were not unfortunately true already; for in this age of "nouvelles parures introduites par un luxe qui a franchi toutes les bornes", men are like children dazzled by the glitter of playthings. Athenagoras cries out in disgust:

> Amusez-les, ô Fortune, avec les diamans, avec des pierres de diverses couleurs, avec des colifichets garnis d'or & d'argent. Amusez-les, encore une fois. Ce sont des enfans qu'il faut amuser sans cesse, crainte qu'ils ne viennent à se replier sur eux-mêmes & à faire des réflexions (pp. 56-57).

Far more immediately effective and influential than the monarch who spends his time hunting are these friends of the Marquise de Pompadour, these "Monopoleurs qui gouvernent les revenus de la République, & qui l'appauvrissent, en s'enrichissant par des exactions continuelles" (p. 55). Even those who should know better are caught up in Fortune's whirl and forget their true vocation: "On voyoit...beaucoup de Philosophes abandonner les nobles occupations de leur cabinet, pour courir au-devant de la Fortune" (p. 32). Could these be the men whom Madame de Pompadour was favouring? Could they be the Philosophes who published the first volume of their massive work in this same year, 1751? The suggestion is at least reasonable.

Now we may perhaps suspect in these caustic remarks some evidence of "sour grapes", for Deslandes was neither a member of the official panel of Encyclopedists nor one who appears to have benefited in any way by the prevailing corruption.[27] When he made these remarks, our author was living in Paris, which was then in a state of hostility towards the tyranny of Versailles. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to say that revolution was in the air in 1751; for the Marquis d'Argenson tells us in his Mémoires: "Tous les ordres sont mécontents. Les matières étant partout combustibles, une émeute peut faire passer à la révolte, et la révolte à une totale révolution..." (cit. Strieyenski, Le XVIIIe s., ed. 1913, p. 170). We recall too that Deslandes had left the Navy under a cloud and had acquired a small pension, probably inadequate for his needs. Meanwhile the Navy he had served so many years was still being neglected for mere "bagatelles" and for the profligate spending of the Marquise de Pompadour:

> On lui reprocha des dépenses qui furent énormes en effet; sept ou huit millions pour des bâtimens, quatre millions pour le théâtre et les fêtes, un million pour un seul de ses voyages, celui du Havre où elle alla mettre la première cheville du vaisseau Le Gracieux (Lavisse, op. cit., VIII, Pt. 2, p. 225).

If a million could be spent on the lady inaugurating the building of such a vessel, would it not have been better invested in

supplying the Fleet with another man-of-war just like it? Such was the reasoning of a man like Deslandes, we may be sure. It was the Marquise who openly practised nepotism and trafficked in posts; it was she who played for such high stakes. There lay the present menace to France's economic, and indeed moral survival.

There was one solution, to which Deslandes returned with most precision and vigour in 1753. In the Recueil de différens traités of that year we come across a commentary upon "deux estampes allégoriques gravées sous les Règnes de Louis XIII & de Louis XIV" (pp. 99-105). In one of these engravings our author finds a ship with the king and his court on the top-most deck, his ministers & Chancelier a stage lower down, and his chief military commanders on the lower deck. This he calls "L'image d'un parfait gouvernement, réduit à quatre points principaux": first, "l'autorité Royale pleine & entière" (our underline); second, the assistance of mature ministers, who will be firm in executing royal commands; third, rapid and impartial dispensation of justice; fourth, the implementing of justice by force of arms.[28] Moreover, he finds that the ship is hoisting little sail; and from this he concludes that "pendant la paix toutes les dépenses superflues doivent être retranchées" (p. 104). In this way what he says obliquely in 1753 connects with the bitter attacks of two years before: France's troubles can be cured only by some economy, and above all by full and complete assumption of royal power.

In the year 1756, the author who, at the very beginning of his literary career, had surveyed the political scene in a foreign land, chose to reconsider the matter; and what we might call the second half of his "Lettres anglaises" is to be found in pp. 135-147 of the final volume of the Histoire critique. It is a survey that bears the hall-mark of experience and maturity, and it is much closer than the Nouveau Voyage to the view-points of Voltaire (1734) and Montesquieu (1748).

What, then, do we find in these pages composed at the very end of Deslandes's career? He begins in a way that immediately sets the tone of the rest of his remarks: "On ne sçauroit parler des Anglois qu'avec une forte estime & une sorte de respect. La liberté qu'ils chérissent, les rend hardis à penser & courageux à exprimer leurs pensées. Ils se piquent d'agir & de vivre en hommes". This time, then, there is no alarm at the "soap-box" orators who threaten to undermine the monarchist <u>régime</u>: he sees the British from afar, as a nation, and he approves of their general freedom of speech. To Henry VIII he pays some tribute, since it was under his rule that "les sciences presque éteintes en Angleterre, commencerent à refleurir"; yet, as in the <u>Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat</u>, he regrets that this English ruler preferred "ses passions & ses haines personnelles à la voix de la raison, sans laquelle les Rois ne sont que des tyrans insupportables ou des voluptueux infâmes". And he exclaims: "O raison, que vous êtes nécessaire à ceux que la Nature a destinés à gouverner les autres hommes!". In this way he continues his lessons in state-craft in the time of 1756. Since Henry VIII, he continues, "l'Angleterre a été fertile en hommes excellens & versés dans presque toutes les sciences. On peut même dire qu'elles y ont fait des progrès plus rapides & plus extraordinaires que dans les autres pays"; and he supplements this eulogy by suggesting that the causes of Britain's superiority in these matters are to be found in the national temper which is given to abstraction and reflection, and delights in the discovery of truth, as well as in the fact that "Ce n'est point-là seulement le goût des Sçavans de profession; mais encore de tous ceux qui veulent se distinguer, & qui aiment le bien public si négligé dans les Royaumes soumis au pouvoir despotique". So the lesson has brought the reader once more to a positive attack upon despotism, and it now proceeds to the encomium of a useful nobility that we have studied in an earlier chapter of our work, but to which we would now add this comment of Deslandes: "C'est avec plaisir que je rappelle ici l'éloge que fait Erasme de l'attachement que la

Noblesse Angloise témoigne pour les Sciences. Elle les regarde comme son vrai partage, & comme le moyen le plus assuré pour défendre sa liberté". Can we doubt that the historian who ouoted Erasmus with such pleasure was addressing these pointed remarks to the French aristocracy?

The Protestant religion was always inflammable material to handle in eighteenth-century France; yet Deslandes dares to speak about the "changement de religion qu'introduisit Henri VIII & qu'il n'eût pas de peine à introduire dans une Isle ouverte à tous vents de Doctrine..."; and having ostensibly lamented the split in the original Catholic Church, he adds: "Tous les Evêques Anglois sont sçavans & de moeurs admirables, quelques uns mêmes d'un génie supérieur, comme il paroît par leurs ouvrages. Les Evêques des autres Royaumes au contraire ne se distinguent que par leur luxe, & par le faste qu'ils étalent au dehors. S'ils ont quelque érudition, ce n'est point celle qui leur convient". We may well wonder what a French bishop would say on reading such comments! We come next to a full and candid appreciation of Queen Elizabeth I, who must surely rank amongst our author's "philosophic" rulers. For, in a most unusual paragraph coming from the pen of one educated by Catholics and writing to a largely Catholic public, the Queen is depicted as having stopped brutal religious persecutions and massacres, and, with "beaucoup de hautour dans l'esprit & de fermeté dans la conduite & d'habileté dans l'art de gouverner les hommes", as having laid the foundations of "cette Politique qui a rendu l'Angleterre & si utile à ses alliés & si formidable à ses ennemis". Can the reader doubt that these words of wisdom were addressed to the weak and ineffectual French King? Moreover, to complete the picture of the "philosophic" monarch, Deslandes informs us that Queen Elizabeth "traduisit en Latin quelques Tragédies de Sophocle & quelques Harangues d'Isocrate". But the most important message of all is: "Il suffit de dire qu'elle regna avec gloire, & que l'Europe attentive l'admira. Quel éloge plus magnifique!"

Considering some notable persons in England's story,

Deslandes (like Voltaire in 1734) is not interested in great generals and conquerors, but in men like Francis Bacon, who is lauded for having been "le Pere de la Philosophie expérimentale". Indeed, other memories of the Lettres philosophiques[29] are awakened in: "Je compare volontiers ces ouvrages aux échaffauts des Architectes, lorsqu'ils élevent de grand bâtimens, & qu'ils détruisent, dès que ces bâtimens sont élevez". Yet he does not agree with his illustrious precursor in finding Bacon's history of Henry VII unsatisfactory, or in attempting to gloss over the accusations of corruption levelled at the Chancellor. Surely, however, the essential fact that he is trying to make plain in these pages devoted to Bacon is that, unlike so many of their French counterparts, les personnes en place in British history have often been men of culture and learning, and that Britain's present renown and strength is to be attributed partly to these illustrious figures.

For the "philosophic" message is particularly clear in the Réflexions which end this fifty-first chapter of the critical history. In England, says our author, "La Philosophie ne fut point...une étude de pure curiosité...Elle se tourna au profit du bien public: elle servit aux différentes branches de gouvernement...". And he concludes his chapter with these striking phrases:

> Heureux un état où les personnes en place ont toûjours la balance en main; où l'on sçait compter & peser, compter les avantages qui peuvent revenir à cet état & peser les moyens les plus simples & les plus courts de les lui procurer! Quel plus grand Philosophe, que celui qui prévoit les évenemens, qui arrange, pour ainsi dire, les circonstances, qui n'est ni prévenu ni trompé, qui par des combinaisons délicates arrive insensiblement à la vérité! C'est-là cette Philosophie, qui mérite seule d'approcher du Thrône, & peut-être de s'y asseoir.

In the pages we have reviewed, Deslandes has borrowed more than a little from the Lettres philosophiques: the letter on the Anglicans supplied him with some details about the morals of English bishops; the letter on Parliament gave him the metaphor of Bossuet about "the winds of doctrine"[30] and some notions regarding political liberty in Britain; the letter on Commerce can show some parallels relating to the rôle of the nobility; and the letter on Bacon furnished more than ideas. But there

is a great deal in those Réflexions ~~that~~ we have quoted that is his own, because it summarizes so much that we have said about our author's political views, and opinions on topics appertaining thereto - the enlightened counsellor and administrator; the study of history so that men in positions of importance may forsee eventualities and make provision accordingly; the "philosopher" who advises, and (even more important) the "philosopher" who rules the country. "La liberté anglaise — nous a gagnés; la tyrannie en est mieux surveillée", says the Marquis d'Argenson in a passage of his Mémoires in which he comments on the change in moral and political climate that had come about since the boisterous days of the Regency (ed. 1825, pp. 292-294). The fact is also evident in the development of Deslandes's political opinions. Some things, of course, remain constant. Like Voltaire, Deslandes is steadfastly monarchist, and definitely in favour of a just, vigorous and resolute monarchist régime that will assert its authority at home and abroad. Other things change; and in particular our author's views on British liberties. For the freedoms that seemed absurd and even dangerous in the London of 1712 appear in 1756 as a glorious alternative to an indolent and capricious despotism that degrades and dishonours his native land.

PART VII NOTES

1. v. Pt. I, n. 49.

2. The work gives the impression of hasty compilation in response perhaps to urgent official request, and probably partly from notes collected for the Histoire de la Marine de France (v. Pt. VII, Ch. II, sect. a) end, of this study). Desescarts (Siècles litt., ed. 1800, II, 328-9) finds it an "ouvrage qui manque un peu de dialectique, de justesse, et même de goût. Il n'y a presque point de suite dans ses idées, et elles naissent rarement l'une de l'autre". Villenave (Biog. univ., art. Deslandes) calls it a "livre superficiel, dont les idées sans justesse et sans liaison sont trop souvent présentées dans un style précieux".

3. In his Trn. Pref. to the tr. of 1743, Temple writes: "He was encouraged to write this Essay by the Count de Maurepas, who has at this Time the Care of the Marine..."; and he describes the Count as being inspired by "an ardent Passion of retrieving the Naval Power of France, & setting it once again on the Foot upon which it stood in the Reign of Lewis XIV...".

4. Rather they suggest the Comte de Beauharnais, who was Contrôleur de la Marine during the early years of Desl. sojourn in Rochefort (v. Arch. de la Mar., B^2 307 (504); and Arch. du port de Roch., I E, 129, pp. 399, 577).

5. v. Barbier, Chron. de la Rég. &c, ed. 1857, IV, 361-363 and D'Argenson, Mém., ed. 1863, V, 446-453.

6. v. Temple's Pref. (n. 3 above): "...he could not prevent an Order of Council from suppressing it, almost as soon as the first Impression was distributed in Paris; yet, as he knew this would raise a great Curiosity in the Publick, and excite a mighty Demand for the Book, he directed a new Edition of it to be privately printed, which will be taken off in a little time." Re. the treatment meted out to Desl., v. D'Argenson, Journ. et Mém., ed. 1863, V, 423: "M. Deslandes, ancien commissaire de marine, homme fort appliqué, savant et éclairé, m'a dit hier qu'avec cinquante ou même cent millions qu'on donnerait aujourd'hui de fonds à la marine, M. de Maurepas ne la rétablirait pas, tant tout était mal monté, mal disposé! Le génie et les bonnes intentions manquent. Ce M. Deslandes met feu M. de Pontchartrain fort au-dessus de M. de Maurepas; il dit même que le premier était un grand homme. J'ai eu grand plaisir à entendre cela". This entry is dated Mar. 22 1749 (at the time when Maurepas was being held responsible for the dangerous naval situation in the Baltic, and only a month before D'Argenson was to convey to him the royal letter of disgrace); and even if we allow for the fact that D'Argenson was obviously pleased to hear Pontchartrain preferred to the present Naval Minister, there is no doubt about Deslandes's disillusionment.

7. v. Pt. V, n. 10.

8. Precisely the same views are expressed in the Rec. de diff. tr. of 1750 (p. 114, n.). Once more he stresses British wisdom in insisting that transport of goods should be effected in native vessels.

9. The importance of an increasing population is a topic reserved until the Recueil mentioned in n. 8 above, where it appears in a monograph entitled: Conjectures sur le nombre des hommes qui sont actuellement sur la terre: "Les Politiques

doivent seulement encourager les mariages, & demander qu'on favorise ceux qui ont de nombreuses familles. Effectivement, la grandeur & la puissance d'un Monarque consistent dans la multitude de ses sujets, vivans sous un gouvernement juste, sage & éclairé"(p. 221, n.). On succeeding pp. he pays respect to the Esprit des lois, from which he draws the notion that— "le climat & la nourriture contribuent à la propagation de l'espèce humaine...".

10. v. Oeuvr., XXII, 111: "Le négociant entend lui-même parler si souvent avec dédain de sa profession qu'il est assez sot pour en rougir: je ne sais pourtant lequel est le plus utile à un Etat, ou un seigneur bien poudré qui sait précisément à quelle heure le roi se lève, à quelle heure il se couche, et qui se donne des airs de grandeur en jouant le rôle d'esclave dans l'antichambre d'un ministre, ou un négociant qui enrichit son pays, donne de son cabinet des ordres à Surate et au Caire, et contribue au bonheur du monde".

11. cp. Rec. de diff. tr., ed. 1750, p. 131: "...il faut que... le prix de ce qu'on transporte hors d'un Royaume surpasse toujours le prix de ce qu'on y rapporte".

12. Bonno, La Cult. et la civln. brit. &c., ed. 1948, pp. 99-100, tells us that the Fable, which "avait d'abord paru en 1705 sur une feuille volante...", had little repercussion in England before 1723. In 1725 the Bibl. angl., noting its belated popularity in Britain, gave a 30-page summary; and in 1729 the Bibl. rais. provided a 14-page review of the Fable and its second part (1728). It was not however until 1740 that the first complete translation appeared - a fact which lends topicality to Desl.'s assault upon the abuse of luxury.

13. v. The Fable of the Bees, ed. 1924, I, 188-189, Rem. Q: "Those that are frugal by Principle, are so in every Thing, but in Holland the People are only sparing in such Things as are daily wanted, and soon consumed; in what is lasting they are quite otherwise: In Pictures and Marble they are profuse; in their Buildings and Gardens they are extravagant to Folly. In other Countries you may meet with stately Courts and Palaces of great Extent that belong to Princes, which no body can expect in a Commonwealth, where so much Equality is observ'd as there is in this; but in all Europe you shall find no private Buildings so sumptuously Magnificent, as a great many of the Merchants and other Gentlemen's Houses are in Amsterdam... ...What we know of their Oeconomy and Constitution with any Certainty has been chiefly owing to Sir William Temple..." The difference between this and Deslandes's observation is of course that Mandeville's note does not overlook the magnificence of private as well as public buildings, and in fact draws attention to the enduring and the ephemeral. v. Pt. V, n. 7.

14. Lettre sur le luxe, p. 14: "...comme la France fournit tout le reste de l'Europe de cuisiniers...on ne sauroit croire combien cela les détourne des travaux plus essentiels & plus utiles à la société". cp. H.c., I, 315-316: "Tite-Live se plaint que depuis les guerres d'Asie on ne songeoit qu'à raffiner sur les plaisirs de la table, & que celui qu'on traitoit auparavant comme le plus vil des domestiques d'une maison, le Cuisinier en un mot, étoit devenu le plus distingué & le plus nécessaire de ces mêmes domestiques. Combien le mal a-t-il augmenté parmi nous! On paye plus chérement aujourd'hui ceux qui exercent les arts séducteurs dont le grand objet est la volupté, que ceux qui veillent à l'instruction de la jeunesse, si importante dans un Etat, & d'ordinaire si négligée". cp. also: "On dit que je suis un homme brut & sans politesse, parce que j'ai honte de mener un comédien à ma suite, que je dédaigne les fastueuses & molles voluptés, que je donne moins de gages à mon Cuisinier qu'à un simple valet de bassecour" (Essay sur la m. & sur le c., pp. 136-137).

15. Voltaire does make common cause with Melon on the question of luxury: "Cette sage apologie du luxe est d'autant plus estimable dans cet auteur, et a d'autant plus de poids dans sa bouche, qu'il vivait en philosophe" (Oeuvr., XXII, 363). He also stresses the advantages of rapid circulation of money: "C'est en ne la gardant pas qu'on se rend utile à la patrie et à soi-même" (ibid, p. 364).

16. v. H.c., II, 73 for Desl. definition of police: "Lorsqu'on veut dire qu'un Royaume est bien policé, qu'il est florissant, on dit qu'un même esprit y régne, qu'une même ame le vivifie, qu'un même ressort le remue".

17. Naturally French commentators and journalists agree with this judgement. The Corr. litt. (II, 106-107) accuses Lediard of being inclined to "donner à des faits peu importants autant d'attention qu'aux événements décisifs", and to "n'être pas sans partialité"; the J. des sav. (ed. Paris, Mar. 1752, p. 140 B) observes: "...s'il avoit marqué moins de partialité pour sa Nation, il seroit digne de plus grands éloges"; the Mém. de Tr. (ed. Paris, May 1752, p. 1116) also reproaches the English historian with partiality, and praises the fact that Deslandes "tempère la narration de l'Anglois par des Anecdotes sûres & honorables à notre Marine".

18. cf. Locke, Essay concerning Underst., Bk. IV, Ch. XVI, parags. 10-11; Descartes, Oeuvres, ed. A. & T., IX, 323-324; Gravesande, Math. Elem., tr. Desaguliers 1747, pp. xxxvi-liii.

19. Fréron's Ann. litt. of 1757 (V, 161) considered that a work combining political and ethical issues was not acceptable to the reading public; the Merc. de Fr. (Nov. 1748, p. 143) none the less found much that was interesting in the book; in the Corr. litt. Raynal wrote to the lady who had sent him the MSS of the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat: "Le sujet est grand et simple, les incidents sensibles et surprenants, le dénouement juste et terrible...Oh! je ne me trompe pas, il y a du grand, du neuf, du pathétique dans ce sujet. Les principaux caractères entrent dans cette action, me paraissent noblement dessinés, ingénieusement variés, constamment soutenus ...Le caractère de la Princesse de Montferrat est un des plus beaux qu'on ait jamais tracés...il règne un air d'héroïsme dans ses démarches, qui ne me permet point de lui refuser mon admiration...Je regarde les harangues comme la partie brillante de cet ouvrage; elles sont vives, nobles, intéressantes. Les devoirs des souverains y sont développés sans humeur, sans exagération, sans faiblesse" (op. cit, I, 175-177). With very minor variations, the Raynal eulogy is found in the 1749 ed. of Deslandes's book.

20. v. Daniel, Hist. de Fr., ed. 1725, I, xlii-xliii.

21. A minor difference between the Maimbourg and Deslandes versions lies in the fact that the former constantly refers to the principal characters as "Count" and "Countess".

22. Mézerai was not, of course, exempt from credulity; or at least paid lip-service to it on occasion. In the Hist. de Jenni (Oeuvr., XXI, 566), Voltaire maintains (against the XVIIth c. historian) that Henry V died as a consequence of general laws of the Universe.

23. v. this study, Pt. I, n. 46.

24. v. Pt. I, n. 43, & Pt. IV, n. 8.

25. Oeuvr., XXXVII, 501: "Vraiment je serais très-obligé à M. Deslandes, s'il voulait bien me favoriser de quelques particularités qui servissent à caractériser les beaux temps de Louis XIV. M. Deslandes est citoyen et philosophe: il faut absolument être philosophe, pour avoir de quoi se consoler,

dès là qu'on est citoyen".

26. Lavisse says that the royal favourite "avait à se défendre contre les dames de haut vol qui voulaient lui prendre le Roi, Mmes de La Mark, de Robecq...". Of the last-named we read in Rousseau's Confessions (Livre X, v. Oeuvr. ed. 1817, XIV, pp. 427, 429-430, 432, & 449-450). First we are told that, as Diderot had insulted the Princesse de Robecq, Palissot whom she was protecting, avenged her in Les Philosophes. Rousseau reminds us that he himself was not spared in this satire, but says that Palissot despatched a copy to him, expecting perhaps that the *récipient* would be delighted to find Diderot, with whom Rousseau had quarrelled, ridiculed. But Rousseau explains that he still respected an old friend, and did not at this time consider Diderot a wicked person. The latter found an avenger in the Abbé Morellet, who composed La Vision de Charles Palissot, in which he also insulted Madame de Robecq, "dont les amis le firent mettre à la Bastille". (Thus Rousseau suggests that the noble lady, who was not vindictive by nature, did not take the initiative in having Morellet shut away. But, in his Audacieux Message &c. (ed. 1951, p. 98 and n. 1), Grosclaude suspects that she took her complaints to Choiseul - principally because the Abbé had revealed to her for the first time the gravity of her own illness.) Rousseau goes on to inform us that he himself was instrumental in having Morellet released from the Bastille, only to find that soon the Abbé and D'Alembert displaced the sensitive philanthropist in the favour of Madame de Luxembourg, mother of Madame de Robecq. About M. de Luxembourg, Rousseau says: "Cette année 1761 mit le comble aux pertes continuelles que fit ce bon seigneur depuis que j'avois le bonheur de le voir; comme si les maux que me préparoit la destinée eussent dû commencer par l'homme pour qui j'avois le plus d'attachement, et qui en étoit le plus digne. La première année il perdit sa soeur, madame la duchesse de Villeroy; la seconde il perdit sa fille, madame la princesse de Robeck; la troisième il perdit dans le duc de Montmorency, son fils unique...".

27. Twenty years before this, Voltaire had explained to one, Lefèvre, the importance of literary factions: "Il faut être d'un parti, ou bien tous les partis se réunissent contre vous... Un ou deux hommes de lettres sont les premiers ministres de ce petit royaume. Si vous négligez d'être au rang des courtisans, vous êtes dans celui des ennemis, et on vous écrase" (Oeuvr., XXXIII, 294).

28. cf. Pope, Essay on Man, Ep. III, ll. 303-304; and Volt., Oeuvr., XXII, 225.

29. Oeuvr., XXII, 118.

30. v. Bonno, op. cit., p. 49 A.

PART VIII

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

a) <u>The Evolution of Deslandes's Interests</u>

We are now at last in a position to view from afar, and as it were to synthesize our discoveries. The interests and ideas of Deslandes develop and change throughout his life, as influences wax and wane. We think, for instance, of our author's residence in two European capitals; and we naturally remember first the influence of the Jesuit college with its relatively broad and liberal conception of education. At Louis-le-Grand he studied Aristotle in his various branches, and regarded such efforts as a waste of time; but, on the other hand, he acquired a sound knowledge of Ancient philosophy which was to stand him in good stead later. Personalities too are of importance. To Sanadon, he owed his interest in humanism and in the composition of Latin verse; and at the age of forty-five still turned for solace to the works of Horace and Anacreon, so esteemed by Father Sanadon. To these and to other classical authors like Catullus and Petronius is to be attributed an important part of our poet's hedonistic paganism. To Buffier he was indebted for a liberal and often rationalistic interpretation of the Catholic religion, and for an early acquaintance with Lockian ideas. Finally, to the education as a whole are to be ascribed his first notions of the need to conceal one's private thoughts from the masses; his excellent standards of taste; and some important contacts with men of influence and learning.

Another source of inspiration during this period is the Gassendist cult favoured by certain groups of libertines. Of these groups we have considered the Temple Society, to which Voltaire was also introduced during his college-career, as the most likely. There,a traditional misconception, or an esoteric interpretation of the philosophy of Epicurus and Gassendi was used to sanction the cult of sensual pleasures. This philosophic distortion is also apparent in the <u>Réflexions</u>, which are altogether too flippant and facetious to accord with Gassendi's publically expressed views on death.

The importance of the short sojourn in London cannot be over-estimated, for its effects overshadow those of previous influences. In London Deslandes learned to perform scientific experiments, most probably visited the Royal Society, and noted the respect with which British scientists were treated. He was also an intelligent observer of the contemporary British scene in its wider aspects, and in 1717 showed interest in our politics, literature and drama. In London he came into contact with the philosophic descendants of Madame de Mazarin and Saint-Evremond, and refugee circles only served to strengthen his inclination towards free-thinking. Through his acquaintance with French refugees, and perhaps with Englishmen too, he learned more about Francis Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Newton, Samuel Clarke, Thomas Burnet and the English deists. Finally - and arising from the nature of the mission itself - he re-inforced his interest in the navy, in commerce and in the "noblesse commerçante". Here he was a step ahead of Voltaire; yet the full and sober consequences of these contacts and observations were not in his case to be felt until more than twenty years after the publication of Voltaire's Lettres philosophiques- that is, at a time when advantages of the British way of life were thrown into relief by a decadent political and social system in France.

We recall that, after his return from London, Deslandes resided for a short while in Montmartre, and residence in Paris gave him the opportunity of entering the polite literary society of the salons. In this connection the general evidence appears to indicate the Hôtel de Nevers, the salon of Madame de Lambert. In addition to this, the dominant doctrinal influence of this period is that of Fontenelle, and is expressed in a concern for gallantry, for the pastoral conceit, for literary "Modernism" and for a philosophy dealing with human passions and human folly. Again, at some time during this early stage our author was infected with an enthusiasm for Spinozism; and in this case the source of his interest was probably the Boulainvilliers circle of libertines. The

results of this interest are to be discovered in the MSS analysis of Burnet's writings composed during the second decade of the century, and perhaps at a time when Deslandes was living in the provinces - although we can certainly not rule out the possibility of his meeting these café-libertines during his occasional visits to the capital.

The nature of his occupation condemned him, however, to spend most of his life in Brest and Rochefort, and it was there that he was to compose most of his major works. These works reveal his concern for inductive, scientific method and for that supremacy of ethics he had proclaimed already in 1712; and this two-fold concern is fused in 1737 with Bayle's critical treatment of the history of philosophy. And, since the aim of our author's magnum opus was public enlightenment, his favourite notions were conveyed indirectly, by quotation or by insinuation. In 1741, however, he wrote the conte philosophique that was clearly intended to be read only by a small circle of initiated people. In this book the influence of Locke and Spinoza is very evident; and Locke, carried to naturalist extremes, with Spinoza's Ethics, to some extent interpreted in accordance with pantheistic notions, sway him completely in 1741.

During the next decade his interests evolve perceptibly. The Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat of 1749 and La Fortune of 1751 both speak of principles of good government - a matter on which Pigmalion was almost completely silent. This innovation is to be accounted for, first by rejection of his application for letters of nobility, and secondly, by the disagreements and misfortunes that abound during this period: in the Optique des moeurs he is already critical of statesmen; in the same year Pigmalion is condemned to the flames; in 1743 the Court of Versailles in angered by some outspoken remarks in the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce and his association with Maurepas is likely to bring him into disrepute when the minister himself is disgraced in 1749; the quarrel with Yves Valois is likely to discredit him still further

in the eyes of the Church and may be partly responsible for his dismissal from his post in Rochefort; finally, between 1745 and 1752, financial troubles are added to his already heavy burden of sorrow and anxiety. It is not surprising, therefore, that La Fortune is concerned partly with economic grievances and partly with the problem of evil; and that human prospects of combating evil seem slender indeed. Evil is an essential part of the social system; and our destinies are not entirely in the hands of God. Faced with reality of Fate, we are restricted to pure resignation; and it is only on the wider scale that we can ever expect improvement. Neither is it in the least surprising that, in La Fortune, the ex-Commissaire takes to task a decadent society that enriches its unworthiest members.

The political thread that runs through our author's works from 1737, and most specifically after 1742, is found even in the scientific monographs of 1753 and is very visible in the final volume of the critical history. For this fourth volume is very different from the other three: here are fewer quotations, fewer marginal references, infinitely less documentation and therefore greater scope for personally collated material and private opinion. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the chapters devoted to England and to English philosophers, which is in fact the real core of the book and may perhaps be regarded as its raison d'être; and we have seen that the author eulogizes precisely those aspects of British life which Voltaire praised in 1734 - political and philosophic freedom under a wise and equitable system of government, based on law rather than on ministerial and royal caprice; the love of truth and a regard for the common weal; and enlightened and hard-working nobility; ecclesiastics who are virtuous and who prize learning; "philosophers" whose counsel is sought and followed by those in high places and who are often to be found at the head of affairs.

Try as we may, we cannot therefore escape the conclusion that Deslandes was "Voltaire en miniature". Already we have

felt the need to compare and contrast the lives of these two eighteenth-century writers. We now propose to study side by side their interests. A mere comparison of the sequence of these interests suggests that they followed a similar evolution and a similar pattern. They were Epicureans and hedonists at about the same time; both turned towards English thought and went out of their way to show that Newton was not only the greatest scientist of all time, but that he was also something of a deist too. Again, recognizing the limits of human intellect, they both confessed ignorance of the true nature of things and turned their attention from fruitless metaphysical speculation to moral issues of importance to the ordinary man. It is in this sense too that both favour Newton and Locke, who had the courage to doubt. Yet, despite this positivist aversion from metaphysics, both were deeply involved in subjects proper to that study - the immateriality and the immortality of the soul; the existence of evil and the operations of divine justice; the problem of free-will. The theories of Pope and Leibnitz catch their fancy to the extent that both are heard to assert the "good of the Whole". Finally, both adopt a less optimistic view of this question. Once more, then, we have numerous points of similarity.

Their expressed attitudes to the Church were different, largely because they lived in different circumstances, which we mentioned in our biographical part. Voltaire was often more outspoken, especially after he had retired to the relative security of Ferney. Before this, he had, like Deslandes, contented himself with a kind of deism, with the subterfuge of the 'double doctrine", and with in fact believing only one article of the Christian Faith, namely the existence of God. At Ferney, and especially in his Dictionnaire philosophique, Voltaire launched his bitter attacks against the "Infâme"; and, in the career of the part-time "philosopher" we have nothing to show comparable with this campaign. Yet they both shared a private scepticism about the incomprehensible ecclesiastical notions of the soul, the unjust doctrine of Original Sin and

the hopelessly unconvincing attempts of the Church to reconcile divine omnipotence with human free-will. On the positive side, both preached toleration and scourged fanaticism and superstition, preferring a virtuous atheism to the "enthusiasm" of visionaries, Catholic or Protestant.

In the writings of the two men we find contes philosophiques which resemble each other; and their respective histories of the human intellect have much in common, especially in respect of the "thread" that runs through them, and the "philosophic"-approach of the writer. This approach is found once more in their conceptions of history itself: history must be readable and didactic; truth is the paramount concern, and religious or patriotic prejudice must not interfere with its expression. Under the influence of English ideas, both writers insist on sound commercial policies and a powerful navy; both stress the need to reward men of talent and those who enrich the nation's cultural heritage in art or in letters; both try to break down barriers that keep young French nobles in idleness.

Poetry, science, philosophy and religion, history and politics - we can fill in the details in a great number of ways, for, with the exception of Voltaire's dramatic works and his apology for luxury at a time when Deslandes appears to have turned his back on the soft delights of his youth, the writings of these two are, as we said earlier, distinguished chiefly by quantity and by that indefinable quality called "genius". Indeed, the really significant divergences occur in the 1750s, when Voltaire is in the Philosophic Movement and Deslandes is left in the back-ground; when Voltaire is free to be outspoken and, living in straitened circumstances in Paris, Deslandes can hardly afford to follow his example. After 1755, Voltaire becomes more pessimistic and fatalistic: we may suspect that the author of the conte philosophique of 1751 might very well have been led by his determinism into reacting similarly to that earthquake that rocked the foundations of Leibnitzian optimism. But by that time he was tired and probably already ill, and there were more pressing calls on his time. So

apparent differences become less apparent as we examine the circumstances (for instance the fact that in 1755 Voltaire had twenty-three years to live and Deslandes only two); and there is no doubt at all that our two "philosophers" shared the same ideals of liberating the human reason from the tyranny of superstition and authority; of re-establishing public morality upon foundations more rational, more personal and yet more cosmopolitan than they had been before; of teaching men to recognize the relative instead of the absolute, and to be critical of all forms of dogmatism.

b) Metaphysical Problems in Voltaire and Deslandes

In general terms, we have just referred to similar opinions of Voltaire and Deslandes on some metaphysical issues. Let us now test the truth of the parallel we have just made by examining these points in greater detail - that is, by studying their views on the Deity, on the relationship between the Deity and Nature, on the question of free-will, on the problem of the possibility of life after death good and evil, and finally on their conceptions of progress.

The existence of the Deity is the one metaphysical notion that is not denied at some time or another in the works of Voltaire. Yet, whilst he appears to favour the idea of a God dispensing rewards and punishments, he does so mainly for the good of society, for the sake of that fear of consequences that alone will ensure the moral conduct of ignorant people. Secretly, however, he seems inclined to the view that the Deity is too "non-human" to be concerned specifically in the affairs of mankind. Is this "non-human" God synonymous with Nature? Generally speaking, Voltaire does not assume this; since he prefers to consider that the arrangement of the Universe implies an intelligence which is not to be identified with Nature. Yet, especially in his later writings, he is not always very far from pantheism: indeed, as a modern writer says, "Whenever

he tries conscientiously to define his conception of God he is on the verge of pantheism" (Rockett, "An Optimistic Streak in Voltaire's Thought", MLR, Jan. 1944, p. 26). As far as Voltaire's attitude to liberty is concerned, there is perhaps evolution in his ideas as well as an apparent contradiction between what he believes in private and what he would commend to the wider public. Up till 1737-38, he appears to prefer a belief in free-will; yet, in his correspondence with Frederick in those years, he, suggests that, whilst writing in favour of freedom, he is really concerned chiefly with the good of society in so doing. In fact, considerably impressed by Collins' Inquiry, he is tending more and more towards determinism, of which sections XIII & XIX of the Philosophe ignorant (1766) provide the clearest expression. Social considerations also govern his views regarding the immortality of the soul. In 1734, under the influence of Locke's hypothesis, and in 1738 of Newton's private opinions, Voltaire is much attracted to the notion of thinking matter; and in the esoteric Traité de métaphysique he appears to believe neither in the immateriality nor the immortality of the soul. That is his sincere opinion, which he usually prefers to keep to himself - once more, as we have said, lest the uneducated masses be plunged into moral disorder. There is certainly a marked evolution in the great "philosopher's" attitudes to the problem of good and evil. In the earlier stages of his career he leans towards the optimism of Pope and Leibnitz; and for him "good" and "evil" are purely human definitions arising from man's limited knowledge of the divine scheme. After the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, he changes to a marked pessimism; and if, at the end of the Poème of 1756, he seems to display a limited sort of hope and confidence, these lines were perhaps added "to avoid trouble with censor or public" (Cabeen, A Critical Bibl. of Fr. Lit. IV (ed. Havens & Bond), № 1797, comment of Havens). In 1759, the facile Leibnitzian optimism of Pangloss is held up to ridicule. Consequently, there is a similar evolution in Voltaire's views on progress. In his early works he is

fired with enthusiasm for the benefits that "philosophy" can convey, and "His belief in the possibility and the benefits of material progress is a fundamental part of his philosophy of history, and it permits him to view human life and effort with a certain degree of optimism" (Rockett, art. cit. p. 27). Nevertheless, at the end of Candide, Voltaire's belief in progress has been reduced to an attitude of mere resignation. "Travaillons sans raisonner" represents the very restrained meliorism of Martin: we must "cultiver notre jardin", not with a fine confidence in progress, but rather to "rendre la vie supportable". Such, in the briefest possible form, is the opinion of Voltaire upon these six important issues. As in the case of Deslandes, we note how closely we must scrutinize each statement to ascertain whether it is meant for general or limited perusal. Furthermore we note the development that takes place in some of these opinions, and, turning now to Deslandes, we shall see how, on some issues, that very evolution is identical with Voltaire's.

Deslandes's God is neither personal nor "interventionist": therefore it would be inapt and irrelevant to speak of divine indifference to human needs, for only an anthropomorphist would attribute human qualities and affections to the Deity. God cannot intervene, because He is already involved as Creator, Conserver and Animator and as supreme sanction for moral law. He acts through pre-determined principles of cause and effect, and is so far beyond human understanding that man is inclined to see the miraculous in events that he does not comprehend. Thus Deslandes's God is neither the Hebraic nor yet the Christian Deity, but one whose wisdom and love of order are revealed in eternal and natural processes and especially in the working of the Universe. These are generalizations, which are given more substance if we take into account the evolution of our author's opinions on this subject. In 1737 (H.c., I, 175, II, 34), God does not seem to be identified with Nature. [illegible] Nature, its original motion and its general laws, which are allowed to operate without divine intervention in particular instances, assumes great importance in the Histoire critique of 1737.

Yet, we recall, God is depicted as correcting the loss of energy in the Universe; and this rectifying of irregularities appears to become almost one of the general laws. How much of this did the writer really believe? Only four years later the conte Pigmalion tells us that God is Nature. Yet this Spinozist pantheism does not re-appear in 1751, when we find some return to the indolent, aloof Divinity of the Epicureans. God has certainly acted a First Cause; but now the irregularities noted in 1737 are quite certainly described as being part of the mechanical system which is motivated by an internal force of its own, and is capable of producing wonderful phenomena without any sort of intervention (p. 102). Thus, though avoiding the God=Nature thesis of 1741, La Fortune carries the suggestions of 1737 to pagan and logical conclusions.

Indeed, if we see the Deity of 1737 in a pagan context, the unity of thought between the Histoire critique and La Fortune becomes clearer. There is a passage in which the author of the former work refers to Aristotle, accused of impiety by a priest of Ceres, and therefore in danger of meeting the same fate as Socrates "qu'on doit regarder comme le premier Martyr de l'unité de Dieu dans la Loi de Nature" (II, 269). Immediately after this (indeed, on the next page), Socrates is quite certainly represented as a deist martyr, who "s'empoisonna, en invoquant la Cause universelle, l'Etre suprême, à qui il alloit se rejoindre". Thus Socrates is associated with those enlightened thinkers who, like Newton, privately worshipped the secret Deity of the Histoire critique, the First Cause and force of continuity in Nature. And it is significant that Aristotle is reproved for having failed to be sufficiently circumspect, and sufficiently respectful towards organized religion: "En faloit-il davantage pour armer contre lui les Prêtres intéressés du Paganisme?", asks the historian (p. 270). And how does the honnête homme (with whom the author repeatedly indentifies himself) acknowledge his God in La Fortune? He adheres to natural religion, which, without clerical intermediary, leads him to a simple belief and dis-

tinguishes him from the rabble. Now it is interesting to

note that the religion of Socrates comes to mind once more:

> Alcibiade fut mis sous la discipline de Socrate, qu'on regardoit comme un faiseur d'honnêtes-gens, & il apprit de lui à connoître la Religion naturelle qui mene, sans détour, à la révéléo, & à mépriser les opinions frivoles & indécentes dont les Atheniens étoient si prevenus (pp. 148-149).

Moreover, as in 1737, we discover the insistence upon circumspection in the propagation of deism. For instance, Pericles and Anaxagoras

> ...se mirent tous les deux à enseigner les principes de la Religion naturelle, & les rapports qu'elle a avec la Morale & la Politique. Le peuple surpris les écouta d'abord avec plaisir. Mais bien-tôt il fut choqué de la hardiesse avec laquelle les deux Philosophes blâmoient les systèmes reçus de tems immémorial, & les cérémonies autorisées par l'usage. On condamna Anaxagore à une amende considérable...(pp. 175-176)

These ideas are neither excused nor contradicted in 1751, which is one reason why we have classed the story as an esoteric document. But there are degrees of esotericism; and the conte philosophique of 1751 is certainly milder than its partner published a decade before. Yet, we ask ourselves, is there really an evolution from deism to pantheism and back to deism again, between 1737 and 1751? In 1751 the writer is openly (i.e. without prudent contradiction or qualification) promoting the secret Deity of 1737, the private God of Newton, the "Jupiter of the Philosopher", the Supreme Being, an essence or spirit diffused throughout the Universe. Thus he is indulging in a kind of animistic deism. Yet, in other parts of both the critical history and La Fortune, he tends to reject animism and lean towards the hylozoists, who, accepting the fact of vital force in Nature, consider that the seed of life is intrinsic. On scientific grounds, then, Deslandes inclines towards hylozoism. Is there necessarily a contradiction between the two? Does he really separate his religion and his science to this extent? Is it not possible to contemplate hylozoic deism? Surely there is a piece of common ground between animism on the one side and hylozoism on the other; and surely this meeting-point is to be found in pantheism. Between animism, which emphasizes a universal spirit, and

hylozoism, which finds the moving power in Nature herself, surely a philosophy in which God and Nature are not distinguished provides the ideal reconciliation. This pantheism, which as it were represents the composite doctrine of our author, is moreover found to be made up of two aspects which reflect the two judging-points of his major writings: ethical utility and a posteriori principles. The former is related to the Supreme Being as the eternal sanction for the moral fitness of things: the latter is inspired largely by reflections on the properties of matter, and particularly by Newtonian attraction which is considered intrinsic. The two converge in the essential doctrine of the highly esoteric conte of 1741. And, if we seek further proof of the unity of thought that underlies this period 1737-1751, we shall find it in the Discours printed at the beginning of the 1756 volume of the Histoire critique. There, discussing a form of pantheism that is an alternative to "le Naturalisme très-grossier", Deslandes himself provides a list of tenets which are a meeting-point at least for the principal doctrines of 1741 and 1751:

1. The Whole is God
2. There is no Providence
3. The Universe is governed by Fate, and there is an invariable succession of events in the World
4. The single substance is immobile and unchanging, but is capable of modifications ("des substances passagères & momentanées"). Herein lies the mechanism of the Universe
5. Subjected to the single substance, Nature is a divine seed existing everywhere.

There are two supplementary points of importance: first, the fact that he immediately proceeds to show the modern renewal of this philosophy in Spinozism, to which he makes no reasoned retort; secondly, that a foot-note suggests that he extracted some of his information about the principles listed above from the article Spinoza of Bayle's Dictionnaire critique. There is no doubt that secretly our author was a hylozoic deist, or, to express the matter in more conventional terms, a pantheist.

The third item in the list we have given above is (by coincidence) the third in our own series of topics. The problem of Deslandes's attitude to free-will is at some stages in his career as difficult to solve as it is in the case of

Voltaire. There is no doubt, however, that there is evidence of some evolution between 1737 (when Voltaire was corresponding on this subject with Frederick) and 1756 (when the same writer was publishing his Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne). In considering the exoteric critical history we must remind ourselves first of all that fatalism meant Calvinism, Jansonism, Spinozism and other systems of a highly "dangerous" character, and that the Jesuits, who were usually to be found in power, were quite determined to have man possessed of free-will. So we are not surprised to find that, at first sight, the problem is prudently left unsolved in 1737, and that the escape from determinism is indicated as lying in Cartesianism and the Faith - though not, we remember, in Malebranchist "occasional causes", which, as Voltaire pointed out about 1734, tend towards Spinozist conclusions (Oeuvres, ed. Mol., XXII, 205). Yet there are many hints. The critical historian points out that the partisans of la morale have always inclined to fatalism. Let us return for a moment to one such passage and see how it is constructed. "L'ordre si merveilleux de la Nature y feroit soupçonner une sorte de fatalité..." (This is the rational view, based on a posteriorist principles: it is probably therefore that of the writer, but it cannot be allowed to stand.)

"...si l'on ne sçavoit que l'Etre suprême combine le moral & le physique par des loix qui leur sont propres & assorties, de manière qu'il laisse aux agens libres toute la liberté, toute la spontanéité de leurs actes, & qu'il produit dans les corps toute l'activité de leurs mouvemens, toutes les modifications qui leur surviennent". (Having thus submitted to Cartesian orthodoxy, he does not let the matter rest.) "Je répéterai ici que dans l'Antiquité, les Philosophes les plus indulgens à la mollesse du coeur, ont été les plus grands partisans de la Liberté..." (We may now wonder if the doctrine of free-will promotes moral flabbiness!) "...au-lieu que les Philosophes qui se piquoient d'une vie austère & d'une morale rigide, étoient tous défenseurs de la Nécessité & du Fatalisme" (II, 18). (The fatalists are not, therefore, as many churchmen would claim,

morally lax: it is the enemies of fatalism (e.g. the Jesuits?) who have always shown themselves so accommmodating about sin.) That is how Deslandes proceeds on this issue of liberty in 1737; and no one could really accuse him of saying the things we have felt obliged to add by way of elucidation and comment, and which we are quite sure he <u>implies</u> in this passage. He is prudent, therefore; yet, having forced us into a choice between divine and human freedom in the critical history, he shows that he will tolerate no restriction on divine omnipotence; and, - although he closes one discussion of the problem with the non-committal remark: "Des deux côtés, difficultés insurmontables mais dont triomphe, & triomphe avec éclat, la raison aidée de la Foi" (I, 372), he has referred to man (a hundred pages before this remark) as "Une Créature...qui fait consister sa liberté dans cette facilité à recevoir toute sorte d'impressions, à être frappée de toute sorte d'images, qui enfin par les habitudes de l'enfance & les préjugés de l'éducation, se trouve toute portée à l'erreur, avant même que de sçavoir s'il y a une vérité & où elle se trouve" (p. 275). If we wonder where our author acquired this view of human "freedom", we cannot do better than consider this passage in Hampshire's little book on <u>Spinoza</u>: "Men think themselves free, in so far as they are conscious of their volitions and desire, and are ignorant of the causes by which they are disposed to will and desire..." (op. cit.pp. 151-152). Thus, if we search deep enough, we find the apology for determinism lightly sketched for us in 1737. In 1751, of course, it is no longer a question of hints: the Deity,who alone can have the wide view of things,declares that "l'ordre des Destinées ne se change point..." (<u>La Fortune</u>, p. 22). Man is subjected to the decrees of the famous Book, to which Diderot's Jacques is to refer so often in the 1770s. The wise man realizes that free-will would introduce an element of anarchy into the grand scheme. What, then, does he do? Without any adverse comment, the critical historian quotes the view of Seneca in the volume of 1756: "Or le Sage céde volontairement à ces Loix, dont aussi-bien

il ne peut s'écarter. La Nature & Dieu sont donc la même chose, & vivre convenablement à la Nature, c'est s'unir, c'est participer à la Raison Divine" (H.c, IV, 29). As we have already seen, determinism is an essential facet of our author's conception of pantheism.

If, then, there is but one substance in the Universe, how may we regard the soul? By virtue of its very title, -- the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant of 1712 are an argument against facing one's Maker in the spirit of true contrition demanded by the Church, and, in the text itself, this spirit is referred to as "bigotisme" (ed. 1732, p. 82). The only concession made is a mere suggestion regarding the possibility of survival ("...en mourant, il doit songer qu'il peut vivre encore"); and on the whole we may conclude that this is the work of one who, inspired by non-Christian ideas, had not the slightest belief in the Church's doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Again, in 1737, the frequent suggestion that this belief is necessary (to the principle that divine justice will redress wrongs suffered in this life) is weakened by the insinuation that acceptance of the dogma is needful to keep the common people in check. When we consider the conte philosophique of 1741, we are faced with two doctrines, both of which are contrary to the teaching of Christian theology. The first is the naturalist suggestion that the soul follows the fate of the body; the second is the hylozoist or monist theory that metamorphosis takes place at death and life is resumed, or rather continued in another form. The first envisages little or no hope of survival: the second postulates a transformist survival which in fact entails a re-arrangement of atoms or monads. In neither is there Purgatory, Hell or Paradise: in neither are there rewards or punishments. It is in the 1756 volume of the critical history that we come upon the most extensive treatment of the question of immortality. For example, from his great favourite, Pomponazzi, he states that the doctrine is not to be found in Aristotle and not to be reached by reason.

Yet he admits that to deny immortality is "dangerous" (p. 112). We have met this adjective before, and know that the author implies that it is dangerous for the ignorant majority. This time, however, it is clear that he is alluding to the mass of the citizens of a civilized state; for at another point in the same volume he tells us that belief in survival after death is not necessary to enable men to face their end with cheerful courage, and he quotes "des Peuples ignorans & grossiers qui bornent toutes leurs espérances à cette vie..." (p. 115). The "great men" of 1712 and the "uncivilized peoples" of 1756 have consequently something in common: they can dispense with belief in the Hereafter, which thus becomes a "police" concern for a civilized nation like the French. Indeed, this conclusion might have been devined from La Fortune, in which the Deity is represented as too lofty to redress what men call "injustices," and in which the non-survival not only of men but also of their civilization is a foregone result. Of the nature of the soul we may perhaps acquire some information from this fourth volume of 1756. Our author is not going to locate the soul in the pineal gland: that, we suspect, is much too orthodox. The doctrine that is taught with circumspection in his day is the Epicurean notion of soul atoms permeating every part of the body. It is yet another aspect of the hylozoic deism which underlies our author's thought; and at least we can affirm with some degree of conviction that at no time did he seriously entertain the idea that the soul was immaterial or immortal in the way theologians would have us believe.

As we have seen, Deslandes appears to hold the view that "good" and "evil" are relative terms which man, in his ignorance of the supreme plan, applies to things that give pleasure and pain. Only the cosmic outlook will fully explain the apparent duality of life. Like a train, the Universe (physically and morally) is intended to run on two "lines", necessary to its balance. To continue our metaphor: this means that it runs on the "right lines". To call them "good" or "evil" would be human and irrelevant. That is the general view; but and

it is well worth tracing through our author's philosophic writings. In the Réflexions, he limits himself to a conventional and shallow pessimism; and he does so to assist him in demonstrating that "la mort est plus à souhaiter qu'à craindre". An example of this immature pessimism occurs at the beginning of the book: "Il est certain que les douceurs de la vie n'égalent pas les amertumes dont elle est environnée. Pour un jour tranquile [sic] & serein, on en a quarante où la douleur & la tristesse se font vivement sentir" (ed. 1732, p. 5). Decidedly, this is because we are concerned more with contentment than with the moral problem of "good" and "evil" in 1712; and the whole work is intended to teach a technique of placing the mind in that "assiette" which protects it against extremes (pp. 129-130). Thus, like the Art de ne point s'ennuyer, it is a practical treatise rather than a metaphysical argument. The same can be said about the exoteric Histoire critique of 1737. Like Bayle, the historian favours the doctrine of "Two Principles", and we may wonder why. If we may believe Bayle's long note N to the article Spinoza of the Dictionnaire critique, it is for pragmatic, ethical reasons that he [Bayle] cannot accept the theory of the single principle; for if good and evil proceed from the Deity, where shall we find the supreme moral sanction or norm? Thus he rejects Spinozism, which promotes not a unity but a contradiction and calls it God or Nature. Now, without bringing Spinoza into the discussion, Deslandes has followed closely the Baylian apology of Manicheism; and he has done so because, having secretly spurned the dogma of the Fall, he finds it none the less necessary to suppose that evil resides in, and proceeds from somewhere other than the Divinity. If we do not accept the revealed doctrines, then the "Two Principles" best satisfy logic and present the most acceptable, rational view of good and evil - that appears to be his view in 1737. Once more, however, as in 1712, he recommends a technique: since "le sçavoir & l'ignorance sont les principes du bien & du mal" (II, 141), the enlightened person is best equipped to deal with the vicissitudes of life. In 1741, of course, all this is left behind. The "Two Principles"

are replaced by but one. The same can be said of La Fortune, which bears very much indeed upon this problem of good and evil. Once again we are faced with a unity represented by Jupiter. Admittedly he delegates part of his power to his daughter, Fortune; yet he is by no means opposed by an exactly opposite force, and Fortune obeys the same rules as himself.

How then is evil explained in the book? Rather in the way Pyrrho explained it (H.c., II, 365-366). If man finds a thing disagreeable, he gives it an unpleasant name, but that does not mean that it is a defect in the grand scheme. On the contrary it is essential to the Whole, it is necessary to society; and it is therefore foolish to label it "evil" at all. Jupiter knows best; he alone knows best; because he alone is capable of conceiving the grand unity of things, and because the unity of things is symbolized by himself. Thus in 1751 we are not presented with Vejovis and Diespiter: if man were Jupiter he would know that all can be explained in one principle. Surely we can now see why some people have misunderstood Spinoziem; for Bayle reveals his ignorance when he suggests that, in time of war, the Spinozist must consider that "Dieu hait et aime". It is this attempt to foist human passions on the Deity that causes the trouble, and prevents us from seeing the unity of God "in the Law of Nature". This unity within a single system can be appreciated only if we divest ourselves of this prejudice. That is what Deslandes attempts to do after 1741. The God of Pigmalion is not only unanthropomorphic: he is beyond human definitions and humanly conceived attributes. And the Jupiter of La Fortune does not appear either a loving or a jealous god. In fact he is a symbol of unity.

With a high opinion of the supreme unity of things and a steadfastly low opinion of man, Deslandes cannot be expected to be markedly optimistic. Yet he is a man of the eighteenth century, and that must count for something. In 1737, he writes a history of philosophy to encourage men to seek wisdom. Why is he so intent upon this? Because he feels that gradual progress can be made, and indeed is made all the time. "Il y a

je ne sçai quelle fatalité dans la marche des Sciences, qui se fait encore avec une si prodigieuse lenteur..." (II, 4). Progress is slow, but it is none the less a fact; and he refers us to the theory of Borrichius that useful discoveries of the past have been handed down to us and that useless ones have not stood the test of time (I, 90). Listen, then, to the confidence he has in modern thinkers:

Sûrs des principes, ils ont acquis sans peine le génie d'observation & de détail: ils ont tiré une infinité de conséquences, qui par leur fécondité & par leur étroite liaison fortifioient ces principes mêmes, & les étendoient infiniment. Tel est aujourd'hui l'état de la Philosophie, bien différent de celui où elle se trouvoit parmi les Orientaux & chez les Grecs...Des qu'on est assez heureux pour se trouver sur les bonnes voyes, on s'avance rapidement, & tous les pas qu'on fait sont utiles, fermes, caractérisés par quelque chose de neuf. Notre siecle considéré sous ce point de vûe, a de grands avantages par-dessus tous les autres...le grands Philosophes d'aujourd'hui peuvent tenir tête, ou à ceux de chaque siecle pris séparément, ou à ceux de tous les siécles pris ensemble (Préf., pp. xxxviii-ix).

This is a form of encouragement to be expected in work that enjoins the public to seek wisdom and truth. Confidence in progress is necessary to oblige men to ameliorate their condition. In 1751, however, the situation is very different. What is his view of "progress" in La Fortune? In the human sphere wisdom means fuller comprehension of the nature of life and the Creator's plan. To speak of "improvement" is to employ human terms. There is no progress on the human, but only on the cosmic level, where it would perhaps be better described as evolution. For instance, Jupiter could create wiser and more enlightened men, but he will let our civilization run its downward course according to natural processes. Then, and only then, will he improve matters by making a fresh start. In the midst of this divinely instituted and humanly incomprehensible scheme of things, man must find his own way to present satisfaction. Instead of cursing ill-luck or rejoicing in Fortune's favours, he must set his mind to accept with "philosophic" calm all that life can bring, seeking always mental and physical contentment, and striving to make his position less unbearable. And, in particular, since God rules the moral domain, man can insure his present contentment by acknowledging the eternal fitness of things and aligning his

thought and action with the divine moral order. This conclusion is so like that of Candide that we may well wonder whether it is reached by dint of the same processes of thought. We rather suspect that it was, for on the six issues we have studied there is obviously considerable agreement between the two writers. And if we think of two journeys through the world; if we think of the observations and experiences of Fortune beside the more painful disillusionment of Voltaire's hero of 1759, we are led to believe that both writers considered that the only sane escape lay in cultivating the garden. In the case of Deslandes's conte, however, the philosopher Athenagoras, rather than the goddess, will speak the epilogue - an epilogue for the human characters in the story:

> Eh bien! la Fortune, soit. Je ne lui demande rien, ni à vous /Mercury/ non plus...Qu'elle me laisse seulement le peu que j'ai sauvé du naufrage: qu'elle me laisse la douce tranquillité dont je joüis, sans m'offir des mensonges brillans! (p. 55). -

c) The Essential Unity

We narrow our conclusions still further, striving now to bring to an apex or single point our impressions of the philosophy of Deslandes. Let us remember first of all that the secular eighteenth-century thinker was necessarily involved in some confusions because he so often tried to face two ways at the same time. For example, influenced by Newtonian scientific theory, he wanted to consider Nature as a "closed circuit", balanced and self-sufficient. Consequently the hypothesis of a Deity other than Creator or First Cause tended to appear unnecessary. On the other hand, he was almost invariably concerned with notions of justice, human and divine. This ideal was in the forefront of his mind when he repeatedly asked why the innocent should suffer, why the worthy ones should be neglected - in short, why the world should be such a distressing place for the honnêtes-gens whose cause he had espoused. Yet he could not have it both ways: either the world was an im-

personally functioning machine which, like most mechanisms, continues its Juggernaut course without respecting individuals, or a personally directed arrangement that makes some sense to a moralist and appears to demonstrate some sort of benevolence. Thus there was an embarrassment that arose from the a posteriorist approach and the high regard for ethical considerations, and which increased the perplexity of those who were drawn to metaphysical issues in a century which, paradoxically enough, professed to jettison metaphysics in favour of ethics. Surely in this embarrassment we discover one of the main-springs of our author's eclecticism, which tries to avoid partial or exclusive opinions. But this eclecticism is neither Cartesian, nor Malebranchist, nor Christian, nor yet Spinozist: it has its roots in a classical education, and if we were forced to attach a single label to the philosophy of Deslandes, we should reply that it is essentially pagan.

In his very earliest writings he is completely pagan. The crucial issue of reconciling the existence of a Supreme Being with a hylozoist Universe is not yet pressing; and, if he refers to divinity at all, he speaks of the "gods". He is young and inexperienced and can indulge in Stoic-Epicurean materialism without taking the Deity into account. In the Réflexions he recommends pagan methods of dying without fear and even with a joke on one's lips. In the Art de ne point s'ennuyer his cure for the "maladie de l'âme" ignores Christianity altogether. In the Latin poems he is a humanist and hedonist, devoted to the elegance and lubricity of Ancient and Renaissance models; and in the French poems he is the Epicurean enamoured of Bacchus and Venus. In the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre he continues to demonstrate his Epicurean and hedonist predilections, which, with "classical" standards of taste, influence most of his judgements. But there is now a new element in his thought: he is the enemy of fanaticism, whether of Catholic or Protestant persuasion. This is the consequence of the influence of deists encountered in London, and it is an aspect of his philosophy that anticipates the unpublished work preserved for us in the

Mazarine. In this MSS he is sceptical, and the "reconciliation" he claims is achieved only at the expense of reverence for Mosaic revelation; for he is now a critical deist on the English model and, since he has certainly not lost his taste for his first favourite, we may say that he has evolved towards an Epicurean deism.

This fact goes far to explain the basis of the philosophy that underlies the Histoire critique of 1737. One belief alone is sacred: the existence of the Supreme Being. Christ is a great moralist, but nothing more; and theological Christianity is secretly judged to be a lamentable perversion of that pure ethic. That is his deism in 1737. The Epicurean strand is found, of course, in the judgement of the great philosophor himself and those who anticipated or imitated his ideas. In particular this means the atomists and hylozoists, who fall into line not only with the much-esteemed Hellenic thinker but with Newton as well. But the problem remains: how may we reconcile the idea of a Supreme Being with a Universe intrinsically animated? It is this problem that he approaches from different angles in the contes philosophiques of 1741 and 1751. In 1741 he turns his attention to the riddle of life and death and to the nature of matter, and in 1757 he considers the question of good and evil and of divine justice.

In Pigmalion our Epicurean deist has embraced the pantheistic view that God and Nature are the same thing, and which ~~meets~~ resolves a great number of his perplexities. True, there is some sort of divine intervention, but it is significant that it is not the intervention of Jupiter but of the goddess of love, which can be regarded - and we recall that Voltaire regards it thus - as the projection of the sculptor's ardour. Thus it is love, and not the Supreme Being, the "Jupiter of the Philosopher", who effects the "natural" miracle of animating marble. His basis is still paganism. The setting remains throughout purely Greek; and, ignorant of Original Sin, Pygmalion's sense of guilt relates to "égarements" (p. 49) - that is, to deviation from the Greek norm. Furthermore, we find in this tale the

continuing attraction of the hedonist, Epicurean aspects of his early thought; and the hylozoist predilections of 1737 come out once more, prompting him to prefer a monism that is implicit in the doctrine of metamorphosis. Now he could not be further from Cartesianism. Newton's theory of attraction and gravitation and Locke's hypothesis of thinking matter sway him in 1741; and, whereas Descartes denied consciousness to animals, our author is prepared to grant it to marble. It is once more a pagan point of view; and as Janet says (about Diderot's Rêve de d'Alembert, which we have already shown to offer many parallels with the conte) this "sorte de panthéisme vitaliste et hylozoiste" is in line of descent from the Ancient Stoics (Les Maîtres de la pens. mod., pp. 339 & 342-343).

But, though pantheism and monism may explain life and death and the animation of matter, they do not meet intellectual and moral objections on the score of divine justice. In La Fortune, then, he tries a different approach. The difficulty of reconciling hylozoism, preferred on scientific and a posteriorist grounds, with the existence of a Supreme Being (the only satisfactory authority to which one can refer the problem of good and evil) leads Deslandes to reconsider a number of ideas largely of pagan origin. So it is not only from Cudworth, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Pope and Mandeville that he draws his material, but also from the atomists, Stoics and Platonists. It is the first time that he has shown any marked leanings towards the Platonists, and his Stoicism is deeper and more mature than before life presented him with a sucession of bitter experiences. He believes in Fate and Fortune, and manages to circumvent the inconsistencies of such an attitude. The result is a system that affords little personal comfort, and without implying the possibility of personal survival, reveals the long-term plan from on high. A hylozoist system and the nature of the Supreme Being are finally reconciled by postulating an inferior instrument. The world is a machine, whose irregular motion is "natural" and will be allowed to continue to its limits. Jupiter is supreme in wisdom but not in power.

He is not personally responsible for the evils of this life, and he does not interfere with an irregularly functioning machine. It is a pagan conception of "Providence"; the god of 1751 is an aloof, Epicurean deity.

What, then, is this "Epicurean deism" that recurs so much in our author's work and underlies his thought? The term is best understood in eighteenth-century definitions, one of the best-known of which is supplied by Samuel Clarke in the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion. In this book, Clarke divides contemporary deists into four categories, of which the first is of most interest to us here. He discusses, for example, the opinions of deists who are influenced by Epicurean ideas about the Deity: "...they pretend to believe the Existence of an Eternal, Infinite, Independent, Intelligent Being; and, to avoid the name of Epicurean Atheists, teach also that this Supreme Being made the World..." (in A Demonstr. of the Being and Attr., ed. 1749, p. 159). Conceding the insinuation regarding pretence, we find that this is the God of the Histoire critique, and thus we have a first point of concordance. Secondly, he turns to the question of divine government of the world: "...at the same time they agree with the Epicureans in this, that they fancy God does not at all concern himself in the Government of the World..." (ibid). This is the deity of La Fortune, where we find a Jupiter remote from human affairs. Indeed, additional proof of our author's Epicurean bias is found in the fourth volume of the critical history, published five years after La Fortune. Here the historian appears to favour a definition of God given by some British thinkers, and which we find in the writings of Warburton: "Il est & la raison universelle & au-dessus de la raison particuliere de chaque homme. Il est en même tems, selon le langage de quelques Philosophes modernes, intelligentia supramundana & intelligentia extramundana" (H.c., IV, 99-100). Now Clarke has met this idea and, in a marginal note, connects it with the Epicurean deism he is examining: "Nor is the doctrine of those Modern Philosophers, much different; who ascribe every thing to Matter and Motion, exclusive of Final Causes;

and speak of God as an Intelligentia Supramundana: Which is the very Cant of Epicurus and Lucretius" (p. 159, n). Thirdly, Clarke passes to the question of the Deity and the rule of chance; and the passage is of such importance to our conclusions that we shall quote it at length:

> For though to imagine that God at the Creation of the World... could (if he had pleased,) by his infinite Wisdom, Foresight, and unerring Design, have originally so ordered, disposed, and adapted all the Springs and Series of future necessary and unintelligent Causes, that, without the immediate interposition of his Almighty Power upon every particular occasion, they should regularly by Virtue of that original Disposition, have produced Effects worthy to proceed from the Direction and Government of infinite Wisdom: Though this, I say, may possibly by very nice and abstract reasoning be reconcileable with a firm Belief both of the Being and Attributes of God, and also with a consistent Notion even of Providence itself; yet to fancy that God originally created a certain Quantity of Matter and Motion, and left them to frame a World at adventures, without any determinate and particular view, design or direction; this can no way be defended consistently, but must of necessity recur to downright Atheism...(pp. 159-160).

Now Deslandes appears to have realized this. Of the two alternatives it is the first that appeals to him; and he is therefore not on the road to "Atheism" in the sense that Clarke judges the Epicureans to be. For in La Fortune the direction of things is ascribed to a kind of delegated Providence, and nothing is left to chance as it was by some Epicureans. Here, then, the influence of Platonists, like Cudworth, and fatalists, like Spinoza, saves him from "downright Atheism". Fourthly, advancing the Newtonian theory of gravitation, Clarke maintains that the mere idea of motion originally impressed on matter does not sufficiently explain this vital aspect of Newton's thought. Superficially at least, Deslandes appears to share this opinion in the Histoire critique of 1737, when he postulates the constant activity of the divinity in matter. He would in fact agree with Clarke that there is something "which penetrates the very Solid Substance of all Bodies". And, since he is on the road to pantheism and secretly refuses to separate matter and spirit, that "something" is the divine activity, that vital spark in Nature which keeps atoms in motion and constitutes the intrinsic vitality of matter itself. By applying this hylozoist and pantheist principle, he is able to assert - and we borrow Clarke's words - that God's immaterial power is

"perpetually and actually exerting itself every Moment in every part of the World". It is a "Preserving and Governing Power" which, from Saint Augustine, Deslandes defines in 1737 as the power of the "Créateur & Conservateur" (H.c., I, 86). Fifthly, returning to the question of Providence, Clarke mentions two ways in which the conservation and direction of the Universe is achieved: first, by direct action; second, by action through "subordinate Instruments appointed by Him to direct and preside respectively over certain parts thereof [of the world]" (p. 161). Now we have seen that, discussing the question of Destiny in La Fortune, Deslandes depicts the goddess Fortune as a subordinate agent presiding over human affairs, and that he certainly does not "form a World at adventures". Thus his determinism appears to have placed in this respect outside the Epicurean category of deists. But Clarke had anticipated this faux-fuyant. If these deists maintain that God is concerned only with wider cosmic issues, they do not escape his censure: "If, to avoid this, they will own God's Government and Providence over the greater and more considerable parts of the World, but deny his Inspection and Regard to humane Affairs here upon Earth, as being too minute and small for the Supreme Governour [sic] of all things to concern himself in; This still amounts to the same" (p. 162). Now in La Fortune we find a representation of the Supreme Divinity who, acknowledging the folly of humans, tells Fortune not to concern herself too much about mankind (pp. 192-196). Thus the Deity is not directly concerned about the state of human affairs and is in fact content to let things run their dismal course. He delegates his power to subordinate agents and limits his own concern to wider cosmic issues. Now what does Clarke finally say of this view of the Divinity? "...if he has no regard, nor concern, for these things; his Attributes must, of course, be denied; and consequently his Being" (p. 163). Thus, in the opinion of the author of the Evidences, Deslandes cannot really escape the charge of atheism if he is consistent in his notions. One thing is quite certain: he is closer to atheism in 1751 than in 1737 and closest of

all in 1741, when the pagan deity is synonymous with Nature.

This leads us to the most important factor in Deslandes's thought; for, if we consider his philosophy as a pyramid, the base of which is paganism, the apex of that figure will be represented by Nature. For instance, he is very attached to the notion of natural balance. In 1737, discussing in obviously enthusiastic vein some beliefs of the Chinese, he finds therein a primitive version of the doctrine of the "Two Principles", in that Nature is envisaged as being endowed with two "determinations", the one towards good and the other towards evil. He adds: "Au milieu de ces mouvemens, & de ces agitations, il y a une espece d'équilibre qui fait que tout se balance, tout est dans une proportion assez égale" (H.c., I, 84). Again, in the Essay sur la marine des Anciens, we read: "...la nature n'agit point par sauts, par des mouvemens brusques, &...elle suit une certaine analogie..." (ed. 1768, p. 296). At this point he is speaking of science; so the idea of natural balance, which is one of his most revered articles of faith, is of wide application - so wide, in fact, that it forms a link between his scientific and philosophic thought. The sub-stratum of all things is in equilibrium and is measurable. Let us see where he may have acquired this important theory.

It is as old as thought itself. In particular, it was current in Ancient Greece, where it encouraged a view close to resignation. For instance, the Stoics, believing as they did in the endless repetition of world-cycles, accepted the idea of Nature renewing herself and returning over and over again—to equilibrium; and there was a general tendency to cherish the notion of Moira, a fixed order in the Universe, keeping everything in its allotted place and demanding of man a conception of wisdom composed mainly of resignation to the general order of things (Bury, The Idea of Progress, ed. 1920, pp. 18-19). A similar view is taken by Jean Bodin (who is mentioned in the final volume of the Histoire critique (p. 25)) in the sixteenth century. Bodin stressed the uniformity of Nature's powers and the eternal similarity of human nature, and believed that progress depends on the growing oneness of the

human species. In the seventeenth century, Cartesian views of the invariability of natural laws and their mechanistic explanation of the Universe, tended to give more prominence to the natural than to the supernatural, and to favour the notion of balance and equilibrium inherent in Nature herself. Indeed, the "fathers" of the eighteenth-century "philosophers" ventured to prefer a constant and measurable Nature to an incomprehensible Providence. The efforts of Bayle were as influential as those of Fontenelle; yet Carré gives Fontenelle priority in respect of some of these theories: "C'est à Fontenelle...que Bayle emprunte la formule qui résume sa propre doctrine: 'L'ordre que la nature a voulu établir dans l'univers va toujours son train...'" (La Phil de Font., p. 62). Another important source is to be found in a favourite English authority of the French "philosophers". Bloch suggests that Newton, who so often spoke of "the uniformity of the course of Nature", found in the idea proof of an intelligent God who created "un agencement intelligent" (La Phil de Newton, p. 507); but that the same idea of natural balance and uniformity furnished materialists with an argument against God: "Chose curieuse, la même uniformité sera bientôt l'arme favorite du matérialisme...Pour les matérialistes du XVIIIe siècle, elle servira à ruiner toute finalité" (ibid, p. 508). Thus it all depends on one's view of "final causes" to which most people find that Newton was attached. The same writer tells us that "le 'finalisme' de Newton n'a pas fait-école après lui" (ibid, p. 503). This is certainly true of our hylozoic and Epicurean deist who, despite his love of Newtonian method, warns the scientist in 1736 against teleological inferences: "nous ne prenons pour causes finales que ce qu'une imagination tantôt rétrécie par nos besoins, tantôt enflée par notre orgueil , nous force de regarder comme telles" (Recueil de différens traités &c, pp. 58-59). Instead, in the same book, Deslandes conceives Nature as operating gradually on all her works, skilfully moving towards ultimate perfection; and thus we have the notion of natural balance associated with the doctrine of progress: "La Nature agit avec autant de fin-

esse que de lenteur, faisant passer tous ses Ouvrages par une infinité d'accroissemens successifs; depuis leur origine jusqu'à leur entière perfection" (ibid, p. 85).

Something similar, yet on a different plane, is discovered in the Histoire critique of the following year. The great and general picture is one of Nature renewing and compensating and endlessly ensuring that human nature shall remain constant: "Il est...certain que tous les siecles se ressemblent, se contrepesent, pour le gros des vertus & des vices; & que les hommes, malgré les passions & les préjugés dont ils sont susceptibles, présentent à peu près le même spectacle moral"(I, 250). This arises because there are fundamental truths common to all, and because the mind is universally the same: "Je remarque qu'à l'égard de certaines vérités qu'on doit nommer primitives & fondamentales, tous les Peuples du monde semblent mutuellement se prêter la main; soit que ces vérités fussent d'abord très-faciles à découvrir, & qu'elles se présentassent d'elles-mêmes à l'esprit; soit qu'il y ait un point fixe par où doivent commencer nos pensées, & que ce point soit quelque chose d' indépendant de nos caprices & de nos incertitudes" (ibid, p. 46). To one who rejects the "vision in God" of Malebranche, this point fixe must surely be some aspect of Nature, or rather of human nature. We remember, moreover, that in this critical history the author expresses a faith in progress that complements, instead of counteracting this human uniformity.

It is this conception of the fundamental unity, identity and continuity of things that leads Deslandes to use the words "fil" and "liaison" so often in his writings. In Pigmalion we hear of the "fil" of ideas that become the thread of life for the sculptor hero. In the Histoire critique of 1737-1756 Deslandes speaks time and again of the "fil de la vérité", the "fil de la Nature", the "fil dans les affaires du monde qui les enchaîne les unes aux autres", the "fil des bonnes études", and so on. We also read of the "liaison" that exists between branches of knowledge, between men's thoughts, between parts of the Universe and the whole. All these references serve

to underline our author's regard for the essential unity of all things, whether it be found in Nature in general or in that part of Nature which is the human mind. It appears in contexts where we should hardly think of seeking it. For instance, in the Recueil de différens traités of 1750 (pp. 240-249) we discover a discussion of estimates and conjectures regarding the population of the Earth. Now the scientific writings are not esoteric in character, so we must not be misled into believing that he has really ceased to be a pantheist in 1750. He first stresses the argument that the Creator has so arranged things that world-population probably remains fairly constant: "En augmentant, la terre auroit été trop peuplée; & en diminuant, elle seroit devenuë deserte. L'une & l'autre de ces extrémités paroissent également contraires aux vûes du Créateur..." (p. 240). So far, then, his belief in a salutary equilibrium in Nature leads Deslandes to suppose something which is not proved statistically and indeed is far from the truth. For, instead of figures, he provides the "evidence" of natural calamities like plagues and warfare which, he argues, do not have much effect on the total numerical strength of world-population. Moreover, if the population is increasing too rapidly, we generally find that the span of life of individuals is shortened and the proportions of the sexes are altered by "Providence"(or rather, by Nature): "...la Providence se sert encore d'un moyen qui y paroît très propre: c'est de faire naître plus de garçons que de filles" (p. 244). Yet, lest this should go too far, it is also provided that "il meurt plus de garçons que de filles au-dessous de dix ans" (p. 245).

The conclusion he draws at this point is surely of the greatest significance: "...tout est balancé avec un art infini" (p. 248). Yet this balance is not limited to the single domain under discussion. Rather there is a correlation between different realms under Nature's sway; and, for instance, "du monde Physique au monde Moral il y a un rapport aussi constamment établi" (p. 249). It is one more proof of the

link within our author's principal scientific and philosophical writings, and of the notion that determines his view of civilizations and of individuals. He repeats in 1750 what he said in 1737, namely that " la même quantité ou le même fond de vertus & de vices subsiste pareillement toujours, malgré les différentes espèces de gouvernement & la différente manière dont ils sont conduits" (ibid).

In that major work of 1737, our author was concerned with finding a single thread running through human thought across the ages. Is it not logical, therefore, to ask what is the single thread that runs through his own? The answer has already been given: the thread we are seeking is represented by the word "nature" in all its connotations, of which we immediately distinguish five in the writings of Deslandes:

1. A standard of moderation and taste
2. Simplicity
3. The principle of balance and renewal
4. The main-spring of life and universal animation
5. The divine principle.

The young Epicurean who wishes to follow Nature never forgets that one of the virtues stressed by his master is temperance, which almost becomes a key to felicity: the critic of excessive luxury merely sees this principle applied on a national scale. The young admirer of the pastoral, the devotee of gallantry and the exponent of the art of being easy in society joins forces with the critic of British uncouthness and brutality in appealing to "natural" criteria of simplicity and decorum. The Newtonian scientist envisages Nature as something to be studied and measured. The hylozoist finds in Nature the seed of life, just as the pantheist finds the same thing by equating Nature ~~to~~ with the Deity. Indeed, Pigmalion offers a particularly intriguing case: the pantheist considers God and Nature to be the All; the naturalist tends to find the principle of life in Nature alone; and the hedonist finds in Nature his standard of moderation and taste. The Histoire critique and our author's Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat combine with La Fortune to preach natural religion and the last-named begins with a discussion of natural theology. Furthermore, the

Jupiter of this conte philosophique is so impersonal that he is barely to be distinguished from Nature herself; and we do not forget that, in certain representations, Fortune appears as Panthea and combines the attributes of all other deities. Thus it is Nature all the time, and throughout his works. Nature is a harmony, and man is part of Nature. Here, then, is "le fil de la Nature", as Deslandes himself calls it when he examines the ethics of Epicurus. To follow that thread became the guiding principle of the eighteenth-century disciple of the Greek master.

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- Genève, 1743, pp. 176
- Amst., Changuion, 1743, pp. 252
- Nantes, Marie, pp. 176 (Bibl. de Nantes, 5311)
- Paris, 1768 (Signet Lib., Edim.)
- An Essay on Maritime Power and Commerce, tr. William Temple of Trowbridge, London, Vaillant, 1743, pp. 163

10. Lettre sur le luxe
- Frankfurt, Vanebban, 1745, pp. 96
- ditto, 1746, pp. 95

N.B. contains: Examen du IX Chap. de l'Essai politique sur le commerce; Fragmens d'un auteur grec; Dialogue pourquoi il est si difficile aux personnes d'un certain mérite de s'avancer dans le monde
- without these pieces, in Rec. de diff. tr., 1753

11. Mon Cabinet
- 1745 ? (Barbier, Dict. des anon., № 18378)
- 1756, in M.c., IV, pp. 187-199

12. Lettre de Monsieur D... à Monsieur .... Trésorier de France
- s.l.n.d., 1748 (Bibl. de La Rochelle), pp. 14

13. Essay sur la marine des Anciens, & particulièrement sur leurs vaisseaux de guerre
- Paris, David l'aîné & Ganeau, 1748, pp. 297
- Paris, Ganeau, 1768, pp. 297

14. Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat, London, 1749, pp. 129+judgement by Raynal (pp. 130-141).

15. Traité sur les différens degrés de la certitude morale par rapport aux connoissances humaines
- Paris, Quillau fils, 1750, pp. 17 (B. Nat. Rés. p. R.96)

16. La Fortune, histoire critique
- s.l., 1751, pp. 198

17. Lettre critique sur l'Histoire navale d'Angleterre
- s.l., 1751, pp. 31

18. Histoire de M. Constance
- first draft in Rec. de diff. tr., 1753, pp. 33-45
- Amsterdam & Paris, Duchesne, 1756, pp. 55

Attr. to Desl. père:
Remarques historiques, critiques & satiriques d'un cosmopolite, Cologne (Nantes?), chez les héritiers de P. Marteau, 1731, pp. 365
Les Relations de la France avec le Royaume de Siam, in Relation et mémoires inédits, ed. P. Margry, Paris, Challamel, 1867, pp. 147-183.

b) Bibliographical notes

Réflexions &c.,

Re. Ist. ed. Robertson says (Short History of Freethought, ed. 1914, II, 214): "The Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant by Deslandes, ostensibly published at Amsterdam in 1712, seems to have had a precarious circulation, inasmuch as Brunet never saw the first edition". This is not surprising since, after an extensive search, the present writer has located but one copy, which is in the town library at Vesoul, Haute Saône (№ 9490). This rare ed. bears the full name, Mr. Deslandes, and is publ. by Jacques Desbordes at Amsterdam in 1712 - a fact which dispels doubts raised by the word "ostensibly" above. The Pref. is the same as in later eds., except that pp. i-ii give a list of the great men who died mocking, and that it ends "A R..., ce 4ème octobre, 1711". This is surely Rochefort. This 1712 ed., which, like the tr. of 1713, contains no Poésies diverses or other additional pieces, does not have Ch. VIII or XIV-XVII of the 1714 and succeeding eds. The unique copy at Vesoul must have been rebound, since it contains another in-12, dated 1742 and entitled Lettre sur la comète. This work is by Maupertuis.

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There is in the MSS of the B. Nat. (n. a. fr., 9688, f. 52 r²) a single sheet without indication of origin and bearing this note: "Reflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts — en plaisantant par M. D*** a Rochefort Jacques le Noir 1714 in-12 pag. 202. Sans la table et la preface. On dit que cet ouvrage est d'un Monsr Deslandes. Il auroit pu ses [sic] dispenser d'en donner un aussi mauvais au public. Soit qu'on examine le Système et les propositions qui y sont avancées, soit qu'on fasse attention a l'ordre et a la dispo..on, ce [sic] ouvrage ne vaut rien".

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Index Librorum prohibitorum, ed. 1838, p. 298: put on Index, Dec. 5 1758.

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On p. 121 of the 1732 ed. we find a curious misprint. The word "Bourreau" ("executioner") appears twice in this page, but on the first occasion it is spelt "Boureau". We wonder if this was a facetious gesture on the part of a type-setter who knew the author's name.

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Recently the library of Wentworth Woodhouse was being sold. A copy of the 1745 tr. of the work was offered, bound with the Devil's Almanac, Being a Curious Set of Hellish Predictions. The binding together of these two works may possibly suggest the improper and "infernal" character the Réflexions had assumed for the eighteenth-century reader.

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At the end of most eds. of the work we come upon the poems of "Monsieur La Chapelle". Since these are obviously not contemporaneous with the Réflexions (one poem is addressed to Molière), it is surprising to find the cat. of the B. Mus. suggesting, with a query, that they are to be attributed to Desl. In fact they are not by "La Chapelle", but by C. E. Luillier Chapelle, and, with the sole exception of Sur une eclipse du soleil, are all catalogued by Lachèvre (Bibliog. des rec. coll. de Poés, 1597-1700, ed. 1904, III, 252-253) under that name. Lancaster mentions the poem addressed to

Molière (A Hist. of Fr. Dram. Lit. in the XVIIth C., Pt. III, v. I (1936), p. 25). The binding of Chapelle's poems with Deslandes's Réflexions is additional proof of the latter's association with Chaulieu, who was a disciple of Chapelle - or at least an association in the mind of the compiler.

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The Ist ed. of the Epitaphes & autres pièces curieuses, "où bien des choses ne sont sûrement pas de Deslandes" (Saulnier, in Rev. univ., Nov.-Dec., 1949, p. 275, n. 4), is not in the Réflexions of 1712 (Barbier, Dict. des anon., № 15872) but the 1732 ed. (The 1714 ed. contains only the Poés div.) The Epitaphes were probably collected by Deslandes himself from various sources. For instance, in the Nouveau Voyage we learn how he was entertained in Canterbury Cathedral by the epitaph of a woman who had had 17 children (ed. 1717, pp. 236-237); and the H.c. (e.g. II, 154 & 245) furnishes further evidence of his hobby. Nothing could be more absurd, therefore, than to make these pieces the work of Desl.; and by the same token it is rash to assume his authorship of the Pièces plaisantes, one of which, the Sonnet beginning "Toi qui meurs avant que de naître...", is by D'Hénault (v. Voltaire, Ecr. du temps de Louis XIV, art. Hénault). On the other hand, the Avertissement to the Poésies div. makes it quite clear that Desl. is the author of these verses, and the Birch MSS 4283 of the B. Mus. (14 Sept. 1713) confirms this.

Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre

J.B.A. Suard (Mém. et corr. inédites, ed. 1858, p. 164) says that Desl. was wrongly presumed to be author of a work entitled Londres. We may add that the real author of this book (obviously confused with the Nouveau Voyage) was Pierre-Jean Grosley (1718-85). v. Biog. univ., art. Grosley.

Remarques historiques, critiques et satiriques d'un cosmopolite &c.

In his Dict. des anon., Barbier attributes this to Deslandes's father. This is open to serious doubt; for in this "ambigu semblable aux Repas des Anglois" (Au Public), the only acknowledged contribution is the Lettre à M. de Camilly, écrite dans le style de Marot (pp. 94-95: v. p. 94: "Mr. Deslandes, Contrôleur de la Marine, écrivit cette Lettre.") and p. 96: "Ce Mr. Deslandes qui est de l'Académie des Sciences est né aux Indes Orientales; son Pere Directeur de la Compagnie, et depuis Commissaire General à Saint Domingue, où il est mort, avoit épousé la fille du fameux Mr. Martin Gouverneur de Pontichery [sic]") The rest of this curious recueil dealing with all manner of topics is, as far as we can judge, anonymous. Our author could hardly be responsible for the whole, since some of the lines in the above letter (e.g. "Des biens qui sont mis sur notre passage") are criticized. Moreover, a poem which, at first sight, suggests that the supposed "author" was of Norman stock (p. 110), is the work of René Boudier (1634-1723), and is quoted both in Voltaire's Ecrivains du temps de Louis XIV (art. Boudier) and in the Biog. univ., art. Boudier de la Jousselinière. Thus it is just as permissible to attribute the book to Boudier (whose name does not occur in the text); and since there are references to dates and events almost before the birth of André-François (p. 132: "J'ay vu une de ces Mascarades en 1689...") and after the death of his father (p. 334, ref. to Voltaire's Oedipe of 1717), it is difficult to see how the work can be regarded as the production of either Deslandes père or fils.

Recueil de différents traités &c.
Here are the contents of the four editions:

1736

I Discours sur la meilleure manière de faire des exp. (publ. separately in 1744, B. Mus. 957. i. I.)
II Observations nouvelles & physiques sur la manière de conserver les grains
III Lettre sur la prompte végétation des plantes: Lettre sur la pêche des saumons
IV Eclaircissement sur les oyseaux de mer & sur les huitres
V Eclaircissement sur les vers qui rongent les bois des vaisseaux
VI Lettre sur une antiquité celtique
VII Des observations sur l'eau de la mer & l'eau douce qu'on embarque dans les vaisseaux

1748

I Sur la manière de conserver les grains
II Traité sur la prompte végétation des plantes
III Sur la pêche du saumon
IV Sur les sympathies & les antipathies, avec quelques remarques de physique & d'anatomie pour expliquer ce qu'elles sont
V Sur diverses particularités d'histoire naturelle, qui regardent l'Angleterre, l'Ecosse, et l'Iolande, tirées des Transactions philosophiques
VI Sur la meilleure manière de faire les expériences
VII Sur les disgraces qu'essuya Galilée, pour avoir soutenu que le Soleil est placé dans le centre ou foyer commun de notre Monde planétaire

1750

I Traité où l'on parle de l'artillerie en général, & particulièrement du recul des armes à feu
II Examen d'un passage de Plutarque, & d'un point important de la manoeuvre des vaisseaux
III Histoire du coup de vent, 1er janvier 1687
IV Traité sur les arrangemens singuliers de pierres, qu'on trouve en différens endroits de l'Europe
V Noms & situations des principaux volcans
VI Remarques & expériences sur différens sujets, tirées des Transactions philosophiques (music, blood, gold-beating, vapour raised by sun's heat, liquid explosives)
VII Traité sur la pêche des baleines que font les Basques, & sur la manière de l'améliorer, avec des remarques sur le pays qu'ils habitent
VIII De quelques particularités peu connües du païs de Labourd
IX De quelques singularités trouvées en Basse-Bretagne
X Traité sur la construction des vaisseaux
XI Nouveau traité des vents
XII Conjectures sur le nombre des hommes qui sont actuellement sur la Terre
XIII Traité historique des progrez successifs de l'artillerie & du génie

1753

I Mémoire sur l'établissement des colonies françaises aux Indes Orientales
II Mémoire sur le crystal de roche de la Basse-Bretagne
III Mémoire sur quelques effets singuliers du tonnerre
IV Eclaircissement sur les rames tournantes
V Description de deux estampes allégoriques gravées sous les règnes de Louis XIII & Louis XIV
VI Lettre sur le luxe
VII Traité sur le jardinage

VIII Lettre critique sur l'Histoire naval d'Angleterre
IX Eclaircissement sur l'état où étoient les colonies portugaises aux Indes Orientales, lorsque la Royale Compagnie de France s'y établit.

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The following list of Desl. principal contributions to the Académie des Sc. is drawn from the Hist. and Mém. of that body:

1713 (Hist., p. 16) Expériences sur le charbon de terre faites en Angleterre
1716 (Hist., p. 30) Histoire d'un enfant qu'il avait vu dont tout le corps étoit en os continu
1718 (Hist.,1719, pp. 26-28) Desl. lit à l'Académie l'histoire d'un tonnerre extraordinaire arrivé en Basse-Bretagne
1719 (Hist., pp. 50-51) Envoie à l'Académie la description d'un animal de Barbarie, nommé Cani-Apro-Lupo-Vulpes
1720 (Hist., p. 34) Examine les vers de mer qui rongent les vaisseaux (v. J. des sav., Oct. 1736, p. 602)
1722 (Hist., p. 10) Son observation sur les environs de Saint Paul de Léon, qui sont submergés par un sable venu de la mer
(ibid, p. 12) Son observation sur l'eau douce qu'on embarque sur les vaisseaux & qui s'y gâte à plusieurs reprises (v. M. de Tr., March., 1730, pp. 409-423)
(ibid, pp. 26-27) Son observation sur ce qui a donné lieu de croire que les soles sont produites par les chevretes espèces d'ecrevisses de mer
1725 (Hist., pp. 1 sqq.) Observation sur les glaces trouvées en mer au mois de juin par les 41 & 42 degrés de latitude
1726 (Hist., p. 2) Observations sur un poisson inconnu qui parut en grande quantité aux côtes de Bretagne en 1725
(ibid, pp. 19 sqq.) Observations sur la constitution de l'air &c en Bretagne & dans l'Amérique en 1725
(ibid, p. 21) Observation singulière sur l'immobilité du mercure du baromètre pendant sept mois
1728 (Mém., p. 401) Observation singulière sur une espèce de ver, extraite de lettres ecrites de Brest à M. de Réaumur.

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Principal scientific monographs communicated to other periodicals:
1716 (M. de Tr., ed. Paris, Oct., 1716, pp. 1935-37) Lettre au père Catrou (tempest of Sept. 24 1716)
1725 (M. de Tr., Jul. pp. 1276-87) Extrait d'une lettre au R.P. Deslandes, Jésuite (about iron pyrites)
1726 (M. de Tr., Sept., pp. 1643-51) Lettre sur la formation des nouvelles îles
1727 (Merc. de Fr., Jun., I, 1107-12) Lettre à M. de Saint-Gelais...sur la langue celtique
(M. de Tr., Nov., pp. 2094-2106; & Merc. de Fr., Sept., 1736, pp. 2005-17) Lettre sur une antiquité celtique
1730 (M. de Tr., Mar., pp. 409-423) Observation sur l'eau de la mer & l'eau douce qu'on embarque dans les vaisseaux (+ investigation of number of deaths at ebb and flood-tide, v. Essay sur la marine des Anciens, ed. 1768, pp. 234-236).
1731 (M. de Tr., May, pp. 889-890) Eclaircissement sur les oyseaux de mer & sur les huitres
1732 (M. de Tr., Feb., pp. 367 sqq.) Sur quelques curiosités trouvées en Bretagne (wedge-shaped metal objects, v. corresp. with Bignon).

De la certitude des connoissances humaines

This work is so often attributed to, or associated with Deslandes that we are obliged to give reasons from omitting it in the present study. The title-page reads: De la certitude des connoissances humaines, ou examen philosophique des diverses prérogatives de la raison & de la foi, avec un parallèle entre l'une & l'autre, Traduit de l'Anglois, par F.A.D.L.V., A Londres, chez William Robinson, MDCCXLI. This treatise derives its main title from a book published in 1661 by Jean de Silhon (De la certitude des connoissances humaines, ou sont particulierement expliquez les principes & les fondemens de la morale & de la politique), from whom the anti-Pyrrhonist position in the opening chapters appears to have received some inspiration, and to whom "F.A.D.L.V." is probably indebted for technical distinctions between types of faith (divine and human) and types of demonstration (depending on evidence, opinion and moral persuasion) as foundations for certitude. Yet Silhon is not mentioned in the text of 1741, and there are no specific similarities between these two works bearing the same principal title. Indeed, the precise inspiration is to be found elsewhere. Consider first the phrase "Traduit de l'Anglois". The necessity of investigating such an apparently insignificant detail becomes clear when we note conflicting attitudes of authorities like Mornet and Lanson; for, in his Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution française, the former unquestioningly attributes the composition to Deslandes, and consequently ignores the claim that the work is "translated": "Le déisme reste prudent dans la Certitude des connaissances humaines...de Boureau-Deslandes. Il fait des politesses aux théologiens et s'excuse des libertés grandes; mais c'est à la raison seule qu'il donne sa confiance" (ed. 1947, pp. 37-38). Lanson, however, far from overlooking the claim on the title-page, adduces results of research to support it; for he adds: "D'après Locke, Chubb, Toland, Collins, ce dernier traduit parfois mot à mot" (Man. bibl., 9959). Other bibliographers are equally confusing. Although this treatise (or that of Silhon?) figures, anonymously and undated, in an eighteenth-century list of prohibited works in the B. Nat. MSS (f. fr., 21928, fº 8), very few contemporary bibliographers refer to it at all. In 1778, La Porte (La Fr. litt.), though significantly omitting it from the list of writings attributed to Deslandes, mentions it later under the rubric Certitude, with the remark: "traduit de l'Anglois, par Deslandes"; yet in 1781 Sabatier de Castres (Les Trois Siècl. litt.) neither lists it under the works of Deslandes nor mentions it elsewhere. The nineteenth-century bibliographer, Quérard, refers twice to the book - first, in the article Deslandes of La Fr. litt. of 1828, as "une traduction supposée"; secondly, under the article F.A.D.L.V. of Les Supercheries litt. dév. (tacitly professing to have lifted the mask) he comments: "ou plutôt composé en français par F.A. Deslandes" - a judgement which reappears in Barbier (Dict. des anon., 2191). It is apparently upon these conflicting comments that library catalogues have based their own. The B. Nat. asserts that the initials represent Deslandes; the B. Mus. deems the book to have been "written in French by A.F. Boureau-Deslandes"; and the Leeds U. L. labels it "a supposititious translation". Thus we are faced with two assumptions: that it is not in fact a translation, but an attempt to pass off as English some French deistic notions; that by some ingenious rearrangement of initials, "F.A.D.L.V." can apply to A.F.B. Deslandes. We shall deal with each in turn.

As already noted, it is to Lanson that we attribute the discovery that the text of 1741 embodies ideas of Chubb, Toland and Locke. For example, the XVth Ch. is at times a rough paraphrase of parts of the 2nd section of Toland's Christianity not mysterious; whilst Chubb's Examination of Mr. Barclay's Principles may be considered to have inspired large amounts of the XIXth Ch. Finally, the XXIst Ch.

presents a close parallel with the 3rd sect. of Christianity not Mysterious. Thus we have partly confirmed Lanson's discoveries. But the third name in his quartet is more significant, as in this case actual phrases of Coste's trans. of Locke's Essay appear (cp. Essai phil. conc. l'ent. hum., ed. 1723, p. 932 with De la cert., pp. vi-vii). A phrase like "sous le passeport des Siècles précédens" is not arrived at accidentally by different authors, and "jetter à croix ou à pile" represents more than a mere coincidence. Furthermore, from the English text of the Essay, we must infer that our anonymous author did not have recourse to it. For example, "this, with most men, serves the turn" (Bk. IV, Ch. XX, parag. 17) might have been rendered in several ways, but La Certitude reproduces Coste's exact words: "la plûpart n'en demandent pas davantage pour se déterminer". The last source mentioned in the Manuel is Collins, who is drawn on more literally than his colleagues. He is certainly employed more extensively, as is shown by pp. 126-129 of the 1741 text which are almost entirely derived word for word from the Scheurléer and Roussot tr. of the Discourse on Freethinking (tr. ed. 1714, pp. 158-161). Having thus confirmed Lanson, we proceed further. "F.A.D.L.V." found an even more fruitful field for his gleaning in the posthumous Treatise of Humane Reason of Martin Clifford (1674), which was republished in English in 1675, 91, 1707, 08, and 36, and in Poppel's Fr. tr. in 1682 (ed. consult.) 99, 1705 and 44. (cf. Briggs in RHL, 1934, p. 509; and Robertson, Short Hist. &c, ed. 1914-15, II, 90) Now this discovery has two significant consequences: it discloses a source not only of the text of 1741, but also of Collins' Discourse of 1713:

Clifford	Collins	"F.A.D.L.V."
(1) Mais leur argument principal & auquel ils donnent des couleurs tout à fait tragiques, c'est que cette liberté de raisonnement aux personnes particuliéres feroit naistre autant de religions différentes, qu'il est de différentes personnes au monde, & que par conséquent elle produiroit par tout du désordre & de la confusion, qui seroit incompatible avec le repos ou plûtôt avec l'Estre mesme de la société humaine.	D'autres objectent, que si on anime les Hommes à penser librement, il s'ensuivra une diversité d'opinions innombrables; & conséquemment un désordre affreux dans la Société...	On fait une autre Objection qui paroît extrêmement forte à bien des gens, & à laquelle les partisans de la soûmission aveugle donnent des couleurs tout-à-fait tragiques. Ils disent donc, que si on laisse cette liberté de sentimens aux Particuliers, elle fera naître autant de Religions qu'il y a de personnes au monde; & que par conséquent elle produiroit par-tout une confusion & un desordre, qui seroient incompatibles avec le repos ou plutôt avec l'Etre même de la Société Civile.
(2) Cette accusation est forte & grave. Et si par évenement nostre Raison demeure convaincuë d'une furie si pernicieuse, il sera sans doute à propos de la tenir bien enchaînée dans l'obscurité. Mais j'espere, qu'elle s'en justifiera. On sçait	Mais c'est à tord qu'on prétend que la diversité d'Opinions cause de la confusion dans la Société; la Grece en est une preuve invincible; On y a vû en même tems	L'accusation est grave; & si, par avanture, nôtre Raison se trouve coupable, & demeure convaincuë d'une Furie si pernicieuse, il faudra la tenir bien enchaînée dans l'obscurité; mais j'espère qu'elle s'en justifiera. On sait que la Philo-

bien, que la philosophie des Anciens estoit partagée en plusieurs Sectes, comme les Pytagoriciens, les Peripateticiens, les Stoiciens, les Pirroniens, les Academiciens, les Epicuriens, les Cyniques & beaucoup d'autres. Et la dispute de ces Sectes indifferentes n'estoit pas de paroles seulement & sur des matiéres légéres ou frivoles, mais sur les dernieres fins des actions humaines, sur la nature du bien & du mal, & mesme sur la nature de Dieu: ils contestoient entre eux, si l'homme agissoit avec liberté, ou par une nécessité inévitable, si l'Ame estoit sujette à corruption, ou si elle estoit immortelle; si le Monde a eû un commencement, ou s'il a esté de toute éternité; si les Dieux se mesloient du gouvernement de l'univers...Mais avec tout cela, cette variété d'Opinions ne causoit jamais de guerre civile dans la Grece...chacun gardoit encore son Opinion avec plus de seureté & de liberté, qu'il ne joüissoit de ses biens.

des Pythagoriciens, des Epicuriens, des Stoiciens, des Platoniciens, des Academiciens, des Cyniques & des Stratoniciens, qui diféroient tous sur les Points les plus importans, tels que sont la Liberté des Actions humaines, l'Immortalité & la Spiritualité de l'Ame, l'Existence & la Nature des Dieux, le soin qu'ils prénent du gouvernement du Monde &c. Cependant cette diversité d'Opinions n'a jamais causé de confusion, & on étoit si éloigné de croire que la diférence des sentimens parmi les Philosophes pût être la cause de quelque désordre, que les Epicuriens aussi-bien que les autres recevoient des apointemens du Gouvernement.

sophie ancienne étoit partagée en plusieurs Sectes, comme les Pytagoriciens, les Epicuriens, les Stoiciens, les Platoniciens, les Périnateticiens, les Cinigues, les Stratoniciens &c., qui diféroient tous sur les Points les plus importans, tels que sont la Liberté des Actions humaines, l'Immortalité & la Spiritualité de l'Ame, l'Existence & la Nature des Dieux, le Soin qu'ils prennent du gouvernement du Monde &c. Cependant, cette diversité d'opinions sur ces matiéres de si grande importance ne causa jamais aucun trouble dans la Grece. Chacun gardoit son opinion avec plus de cûreté & de liberté qu'il ne jouissoit de ses biens; & on étoit si éloigné de croire que la différence des sentimens entre les Philosophes pût être la cause de quelque désordre, que les Epicuriens, aussi bien que les autres, recevoient des Apointemens du Public.

(3)

Il en estoit de mesme de la Religion des Anciens que de leur Philosophie. Car bien que des villes différentes ayent fait profession d'adorer des Deitez différentes, nous ne trouvons pas neantmoins dans l'histoire, que la guerre en soit ja-

L'Ancienne Rome avoit dans son sein plus de six cens sortes de Religions & de Cultes diférens, & nous n'aprenons d'aucun Historien que cette grande diversité y ait causé la moindre confusion dans la Société... Mais si la calomnie avoit été en usage

Il en étoit de même à l'égard de la Religion des Anciens, que de leur Philosophie. L'ancienne Rome avoit dans son sein plus de six cens sortes de Religions & de Cultes différens. La plûpart des Villes avoient des Divinités différentes les unes des autres. Et cependant on ne lit dans aucun

mais suivie...un chacun accordoit la mesme liberté aux autres, qu'il trouvoit luy estre si nécessaire (Clifford, Tr. de la raison humaine, tr. Poppel, Amst., 1682, pp. 6-10).	parmi eux, s'ils s'étoient condamnez réciproquement aux fagots... (Collins, Disc. sur la liberté de pens., tr. Scheurléer & Rousset, Lond., 1714, pp. 149-151).	Historien que cette diversité de Cultes ait jamais causé le moindre trouble dans la Société ...C'est que chacun étoit assez équitable pour accorder aux autres la même Liberté, dont il étoit bien-aise de jouir lui-même. Mais si l'esprit de persécution avoit régné parmi eux, s'ils s'étoient réciproquement condamnés aux fagots...(De la cert., ed. 1741, pp. 121-123).

Now these pages of the book of 1741 deserve careful study. Consider the first paragraph. Although the opening phrases suggest the influence of Collins, we are concerned here mainly with an attempt to imitate and occasionally to amend Poppel's tr. of Clifford. Modifications of the latter type are easily recognized. "Cette liberté de raisonnement aux personnes particuliéres" has become "si on laisse cette liberté de sentimens aux Particuliers"; the indefinite article is rightly preferred to the partitive in the case of confusion and desordre; la Société Civile is considered more apt than la société humaine. Moreover, if we consult the English texts of Clifford and Collins, we must conclude that "F.A.D.L.V." did not have recourse to either. Details of the second paragraph illustrate this. The phrase par avanture (par évenement in Poppel) is absent from Clifford: " and if our Reason be convinc'd of so harmful a Madness"; and in this very expression we note the simple convinc'd, which, rendered as convaincuë by Clifford's translator, is supplemented (to avoid ambiguity) by the word coupable in 1741. We pass to the most intriguing parts of our parallel - the weaving together of two texts to form a third. In the passage dealing with philosophic sects and in the short sentence that follows the reader begins with Poppel and proceeds to the tr. of Collins' text - itself presumably based on Clifford; and in the last sentence of the second paragraph we note that half is derived from Clifford and half from Collins - or rather from Scheurléer & Rousset, since Collins does not mention the Epicureans at this point. This tendency to despoil alternately the standard tr. becomes even more pronounced in the third paragraph, until the phrase "Mais si l'esprit de persecution avoit régné..." heralds the supremacy of Collins which is maintained for some time thereafter, providing a further example of the compiler's ignorance of the original text, which speaks of calumny and not of persecution. On other occasions it is Poppel's tr. alone which supplies the text of 1741 (De la Cert., Pref., pp. iv-v from Poppel's tr. ed. 1682, pp. 75-76). For instance, pp. 117-121 and 124-125 are - with the exception of odd words - derived exclusively from this source. But there has been considerable rearrangement of sentence-sequence: pp. 117-119 are faithful to pp. 14-17 of Poppel's tr.; then suddenly we are obliged to turn forward to p. 59 of the latter to find the source of a long paragraph, and immediately back to pp. 58-59 for two sentences. From this point we continue to trace the exact transcription until p. 62 of the Traité, when we are obliged to refer back to p. 35 of that work to pick out a single sentence. If, then, as we now suspect, standard tr. are the principal ingredient of De la cert., the compiler has modified and dismembered them to suit his needs. Yet, even this conclusion cannot be final, for there is a source that is purely French. Poppel wrote a Preface in French; and surprisingly enough pp. 5-16 of this have become pp. 101-103 of the book that

describes itself as "Traduit de l'Anglois" !

Was Deslandes the compiler? The first person to associate his name with this hotch-potch was apparently La Porte who, writing after Deslandes's death and perhaps confusing the 1741 work with the Traité sur les différens degrés de la certitude morale of 1750, hesitated to the extent of not including the 1741 title in the list of this author's writings. Against this hesitant attribution we set three arguments: (i) the initials on the title-page do not appear readily applicable to A.F.B.D., and indeed are more suggestive of Voltaire. Nor are they used by Desl. elsewhere, even in works where he seeks to conceal his identity; (ii) in the act drawn up a few hours before his demise, Desl. did not mention this work of 1741 along with the equally irreligious Pigmalion; (iii) since the compiler of 1741 helped to spread British deism in France, we may assume he had some sympathy with the ideas contained in the book; that he approved of arguments advanced against Pyrrhonists ("...la vérité est, que ces opinions...n'ont jamais subsisté que dans les discours & sur le papier...Ils se contredisent donc perpétuellement eux-mêmes" (pp. 5-6)); that he too ridiculed their inconsistency when they complained of ill-treatment ("coups de bâton", p. 7). All this is very different from the attitude of the author of the H.c. of 1737, which owed much to Bayle's scepticism. There the Pyrrhonist case is heard much more sympathetically: "Quoi de plus propre à nous inspirer une juste défiance de nos foibles lumieres!" (II, 368); and the critical historian does not attempt to refute these remarks of Sextus Empiricus: "J'avoue que le Pyrrhonien n'établit aucun dogme: mais pour cela, il ne se soustrait point aux choses de goût & de sentiment. Il se plaint, quand la douleur l'accable: il fuit, quand un danger pressant le menace: il se livre aux transports les plus flâteurs, quand il est tems de se réjouir. Ce n'est que dans les matieres de science, dans les choses problématiques qu'il hésite & qu'il refuse de prendre parti" (II, 369-370). Again, we contrast with what we have just read in the third paragraph of our lengthy quotation: "J'ajoûterai encore, que dans la Gréce & à Rome, l'on pouvoit dire impunément: Il n'y a point de Dieu, la ruine de corps entraîne celle de l'ame, l'homme doit chercher sa félicité dans les joyes & les plaisirs sensibles...Toute liberté étoit permise sur une matiere qui n'en souffre point" (H.c., III, 76); and we remember that he reproached Locke, Toland etc. with making religion too matter-of-fact (III, 297). Now, in case the reader makes reply that De la certitude cannot be compared with the critical history of 1737 because it is obviously an esoteric writing, we turn to Pigmalion, which appeared in the same year as the compilation and which is our author's most esoteric writing. There we recall the frank materialism of such passages as: "...un enfant au berceau ressemble à quelque chose de brut...La machine se développe peu à peu, ses ressorts jouent les uns contre les autres...Enfin, la machine décroit, s'use, se détraque, périt" (ed. 1742, pp. 54-55); and we set it aginst De la certitude, which is openly scornful of those "qui se sont mis dans la tête, que tout est méchanisme, au dedans, au dehors, dans les corps, & dans les esprits" (p. 6). In Pigmalion (pp. xiii-xiv) we shall also find derision of philosophers and theologians who rely on the syllogism: "laissons les prendre leurs Syllogismes pour des Oracles..." - an attitude consistent with that assumed in the H.c., where he speaks of the "appui fragile du syllogisme" (III, 274), and comments: "...cet art ne mérite point de si grands éloges. Les hommes apprennent de la Nature à tirer des conséquences d'un principe établi..." (II, 274). In Desl.'s works of this period, then, the art of the syllogism is decried; yet in De la Cert. it is employed several times to prove a point (e.g., pp. 18 & 27)! For this reason, and for all the te others listed above, we doubt whether Desl. had any hand in the work of 1741, even as compiler; and we prefer to eliminate it from our thesis.

Orinoco illustrado

The J. des sav. (Amst., May 1757, p. 493) says: "M. Deslandes avoit traduit l'Orinoco illustrado, bon Ouvrage Espagnol...". The work in question was composed by José Gumilla and appeared in 1741. If Deslandes undertook such a tr. its present location is unknown, and it was clearly not published during his life-time, since the J. des sav. goes on to request that the MSS shall be preserved. But there is absolutely no evidence that Desl. was familiar with Spanish: on the other hand, only one year after the journalist had made this remark Eidous published a French tr. of the work under discussion, and perhaps it is a confusion of translators that accounts for the strange ref. of 1757. We may add that a novel of Mrs. Aphra Behn of 1688, entitled Oroonoko, was tr. into Fr. by P.A de la Place in 1745; and in the Confessions Rousseau tells us that the Comtesse de Boufflers wrote a prose tragedy called L'Esclave généreux which "avoit un très grand rapport à une pièce angloise, assez peu connue, mais pourtant traduite, intitulée Oroonoko" (Oeuvr., ed. 1817, XIV, 458).

Mon Cabinet

Barbier (Dict. des anon., Nº 18378) says "Deslandes a encore publié, sous le voile de l'anonyme, Mon Cabinet... 1745, in-12". We have not been able to discover a single copy of this edition. The date of comp. is vaguely established by this ref. to the author's portrait: "...c'est l'ouvrage d'un Peintre illustre, & qui étoit fort de mes amis. A peine finissois-je alors mon cinquiéme lustre: quatre autres s'y sont joints depuis" (in H.c., IV, p. 196), which points to a date between 1734 and 1739. We can now narrow this further. On p. 187 of the same vol. we read: "Mais qu'on me permette auparavant de marquer quels étoient les sentimens d'esprit dans lesquels je me trouvois, lorsque j'ai composé cette Histoire de la Philosophie". It was therefore written before 1737. Furthermore, the study to which he refers is not that of Brest but Rochefort, where he took up residence in 1736. This identification is supplied in the Rec. de diff. tr. of 1753, in which he alludes to an experiment carried out on Sept. 2 1742 at Rochefort, and adds: "Je renverrois ici volontiers les Curieux à la Description que j'ai donnée de mon Cabinet, si cette Description n'étoit point un ouvrage de pur agrément, & peu propre à figurer avec les Traités de Physique & d'Histoire Naturelle" (p. 75, n.). This is obviously not the truth, since we have just read that the author himself considers the poem as a useful indication of his true opinions at the time of composing his critical history. The note also establishes two other facts: first, that Barbier is right in finding an edition anterior to the 1756 vol. of the H.c.; secondly that we are justified in stating that the study described in the poem is the one he used after 1736. We conclude, therefore, that Mon Cabinet was composed in 1736-37, when Desl. was putting final touches to his major work.

Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat

A gross error occurs in an art. in the Bulletin du bibliophile of 1859, composed by the bibliophile Jacob, Paul Lacroix (B. Nat., Q. 3688, item Nº 8, p. 54). Here is the text of the inaccurate item:

Barbier, dans son Dictionnaire des anonymes, attribue ce roman à Fr. A. Deslandes, auteur des Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant. Le savant bibliographe a reproduit sans examen une opinion généralement répandue. Mais on avait confondu ici l'éditeur avec l'auteur. C'est Deslandes, en effet, qui fit réimprimer ce roman, dont la première édition laquelle est fort rare, avait paru en 1677. Deslandes, mort en 1757, ne pouvait pas être romancier en 1677, d'autant plus

qu'il était né en 1690. Une lettre contemporaine du roman que l'éditeur a réimprimée à la fin de ce volume, ne nous révèle pas le nom de l'auteur, qu'elle nous dépeint seulement dans ce portrait anonyme: "c'est un homme d'un certain âge, qui a exercé des emplois qu'on peut dire considérables, du moins importants. Il y a acquis l'estime publique, mais en essuyant des persécutions secrètes...Personne n'a dit avec plus de courage les vérités utiles au bien de l'Etat, à l'honneur de la philosophie, au progrès des sciences, ni tu avec plus de ménagement celles qui intéressent l'honneur des particuliers et la tranquillité des familles. Quoiqu'il aime à parler, il est si modeste, qu'il laisse jouir ceux qui sont avec lui du plaisir de croire qu'ils l'instruisent de beaucoup de choses qu'il sait infiniment mieux qu'eux...La vivacité de son esprit ne nuit point à la justesse de ses idées, l'étendue de sa mémoire à la profondeur de son raisonnement, la diversité de ses connaissances à la pureté de son goût...Il est ferme dans les nouvelles amitiés et vif dans les anciennes... On trouve réunis en lui les trois genres d'esprit, l'esprit d'affaires, l'esprit de lettres, l'esprit de conversation" -- Cet homme-là était, à coup sûr, de la société de Mlle. de Scudéry, et le savant M. Cousin doit le connaître. P.L.

Now this will not do at all; and we accuse the "bibliophile" of being ignorant and arrogant, and of overlooking the following facts:

1. Desl. could not have "re-edited" the 1677 (first ed. - actually 1676, but this is a minor slip) ed. of the Princesse de Montferrat, which was composed by Sébastien Brémond - a detail which Lacroix does not mention - and ran into at least 3 Fr. eds. and 2 eds. in Engl. tr. before 1690. He could not have done so for the very simple reason that the two stories are entirely different (we have found absolutely - no similarity) and are concerned with entirely different epochs of the lengthy history of the family in question (v. Biog. univ., arts. relating to Montferrat). Lacroix could have found this out for himself if he had taken the trouble to read the two stories.

2. Already in 1769 the Nouv. Dict. hist. port. of L.M. Chaudon had attributed the authorship of this work to Desl. but under the title: La Comtesse de Montferrand; and it was certainly to this novel that Yves Valois alluded in 1752 in his attack on Desl.

3. The "lettre contemporaine du roman" (which appears at the end of the 1749 ed.) is, of course, the Abbé Raynal's (Corr. litt., I, 175-177). In this sense, it is "contemporary"-but-with Desl. and not with Brémond. Indeed, we can - turn Lacroix's remarks against himself: "Raynal, who died - in 1796, could not have been the author of this contemporary letter concerning Brémond, especially as Raynal was not born until 1713"! Nor, for that matter, could Desl. have known Mlle. de Scudéry, who died in 1701!

May we not say, as Lacroix said of Barbier: "Le savant bibliographe a reproduit sans examen une opinion [personnelle & mal-fondée]" ?

Histoire des Princesses de Bohême

The cat. of the B. Mus. attributes to Desl. a novel in 2 vols. publ. at the Hague in 1749 and entitled: Histoire des Princesses de Bohême. Now, reading this novel one is immediately impressed by the fact that it is not the style of Deslandes, being too "romantic", and not philosophic and critical in the way the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat of the same year is found to be. Consulting a work with the same title in the B. Nat. (where it is catalogued under the name of Mme. de Mareuille) we discover it to be the identical book. That some mistake has been made in London

is, we believe, confirmed by the n. in Barbier's Dict. des anon.(№ 14765), which suggests that Mme. de Mareuille is the author("femme séparée de son Mari, agé de 60 ans...note de l'exempt de police d'Hemery du 19 mars 1750").

Histoire des anciennes révolutions du Globe terrestre

The cat. of the B. Nat. attributes to Desl. the Fr. tr. of this work by "Krüger" (Johann Gottlog); yet as early as 1778, La Fr. litt.(II, 300)records: "HISTOIRE des anciennes révolutions du Gobe terrestre, par M. Sellius, continuée par M. l'abbé Sepher, 1752 in-12" (same date as B. Nat. ed.), and Barbier's Dict. des anon.(№ 7812) attributes the tr. to Sellius and tells us that the 1752 ed. was "revue et augmentée par l'abbé Sepher". Since the B. Nat. copy bears a pencil inscription to this effect, we see no reason why their cat. should mention it under the name of Deslandes, even if Maigeon le jeune made that attribution (v. Barbier, item cit.). There is however another reason why we discount it. In the Vth Ch., judging between Descartes, Burnet and Whiston on the question of the Flood, the author opts in favour of Whiston's comet; but in the H.c., and even more so in the Mazarine MSS, Desl. is stubbornly Burnetian in his sympathies (v. Pt. IV of our study, n. 9).

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Erratum

For 'Brücker" read "Brucker", which appears to be the more general and correct spelling of this author's name