

Gargantua and Pantagruel, Book II

MASTER FRANCIS RABELAIS
FIVE BOOKS OF THE LIVES,
HEROIC DEEDS AND SAYINGS OF
GARGANTUA AND HIS SON
PANTAGRUEL

Book II.



“My so good wife is dead, who was the most *this*, the most *that*, that ever was in the world.’ With these words he did cry like a cow.”

THE WORKS OF
RABELAIS

FAITHFULLY TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

WITH

VARIORUM NOTES, AND



NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

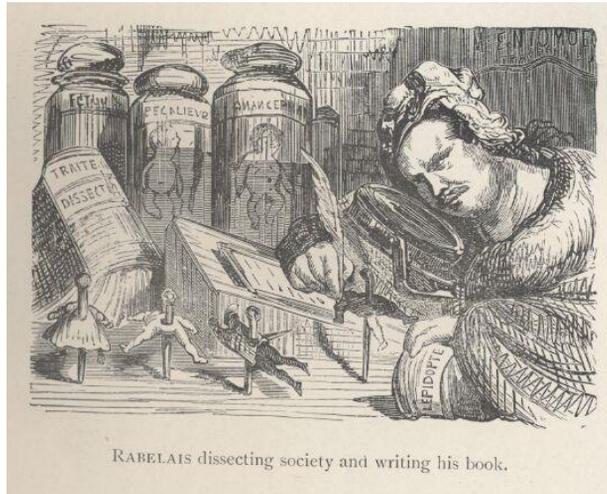
GUSTAVE DORÉ.

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**Translated into English by
Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty
and
Peter Antony Motteux**

The text of the first Two Books of Rabelais has been reprinted from the first edition (1653) of Urquhart's translation. Footnotes initialled 'M.' are drawn from the Maitland Club edition (1838); other footnotes are by the translator. Urquhart's translation of Book III. appeared posthumously in 1693, with a new edition of Books I. and II., under Motteux's editorship. Motteux's rendering of Books IV. and V. followed in 1708. Occasionally (as the footnotes indicate) passages omitted by Motteux have been restored from the 1738 copy edited by Ozell.



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François Rabelais.

THE SECOND BOOK.

For the Reader.

The Reader here may be pleased to take notice that the copy of verses by the title of 'Rablophila', premised to the first book of this translation, being but a kind of mock poem, in imitation of somewhat lately published (as to any indifferent observer will easily appear, by the false quantities in the Latin, the abusive strain of the English, and extravagant subscription to both), and as such, by a friend of the translator's, at the desire of some frolic gentlemen of his acquaintance, more for a trial of skill than prejudicacy to any, composed in his jollity to please their fancies, was only ordained to be prefixed to a dozen of books, and no more, thereby to save the labour of transcribing so many as were requisite for satisfying the curiosity of a company of just that number; and that, therefore, the charging of the whole impression with it is merely to be imputed to the negligence of the pressmen, who, receiving it about the latter end of the night, were so eager before the next morning to afford complete books, that, as they began, they went on, without animadverting what was recommended to their discretion. This is hoped will suffice to assure the ingenuous Reader that in no treatise of the translator's, whether original or translative, shall willingly be offered the meanest rub to the reputation of any worthy gentleman, and that, however providence dispose of him, no misfortune shall be able to induce his mind to any complacency in the disparagement of another.

Again.

The Pentateuch of Rabelais mentioned in the title-page of the first book of this translation being written originally in the French tongue (as it comprehendeth some of its brusquest dialects), with so much ingenuity and wit, that more impressions have been sold thereof in that language

than of any other book that hath been set forth at any time within these fifteen hundred years; so difficult nevertheless to be turned into any other speech that many prime spirits in most of the nations of Europe, since the year 1573, which was fourscore years ago, after having attempted it, were constrained with no small regret to give it over as a thing impossible to be done, is now in its translation thus far advanced, and the remainder faithfully undertaken with the same hand to be rendered into English by a person of quality, who (though his lands be sequestered, his house garrisoned, his other goods sold, and himself detained a prisoner of war at London, for his having been at Worcester fight) hath, at the most earnest entreaty of some of his especial friends well acquainted with his inclination to the performance of conducible singularities, promised, besides his version of these two already published, very speedily to offer up unto this Isle of Britain the virginity of the translation of the other three most admirable books of the aforesaid author; provided that by the plurality of judicious and understanding men it be not declared he hath already proceeded too far, or that the continuation of the rigour whereby he is dispossessed of all his both real and personal estate, by pressing too hard upon him, be not an impediment thereto, and to other more eminent undertakings of his, as hath been oftentimes very fully mentioned by the said translator in several original treatises of his own penning, lately by him so numerously dispersed that there is scarce any, who being skilful in the English idiom, or curious of any new ingenious invention, hath not either read them or heard of them.

Mr. Hugh Salel to Rabelais.

If profit mixed with pleasure may suffice
T' extol an author's worth above the skies,
Thou certainly for both must praised be:
I know it; for thy judgment hath in the
Contexture of this book set down such high
Contentments, mingled with utility,
That (as I think) I see Democritus
Laughing at men as things ridiculous.

Insist in thy design; for, though we prove
Ungrate on earth, thy merit is above.

The Author's Prologue.

Most illustrious and thrice valorous champions, gentlemen and others, who willingly apply your minds to the entertainment of pretty conceits and honest harmless knacks of wit; you have not long ago seen, read, and understood the great and inestimable Chronicle of the huge and mighty giant Gargantua, and, like upright faithfullists, have firmly believed all to be true that is contained in them, and have very often passed your time with them amongst honourable ladies and gentlewomen, telling them fair long stories, when you were out of all other talk, for which you are worthy of great praise and sempiternal memory. And I do heartily wish that every man would lay aside his own business, meddle no more with his profession nor trade, and throw all affairs concerning himself behind his back, to attend this wholly, without distracting or troubling his mind with anything else, until he have learned them without book; that if by chance the art of printing should cease, or in case that in time to come all books should perish, every man might truly teach them unto his children, and deliver them over to his successors and survivors from hand to hand as a religious cabal; for there is in it more profit than a rabble of great pocky loggerheads are able to discern, who surely understand far less in these little merriments than the fool Raclet did in the Institutions of Justinian.

I have known great and mighty lords, and of those not a few, who, going a-deer-hunting, or a-hawking after wild ducks, when the chase had not encountered with the blinks that were cast in her way to retard her course, or that the hawk did but plain and smoothly fly without moving her wings, perceiving the prey by force of flight to have gained bounds of her, have been much chafed and vexed, as you understand well enough; but the comfort unto which they had refuge, and that they might not take cold, was to relate the inestimable deeds of the said Gargantua. There are others in the world—these are no flimflam stories, nor tales of a tub—who, being much troubled with the toothache, after they had spent their goods upon

physicians without receiving at all any ease of their pain, have found no more ready remedy than to put the said Chronicles betwixt two pieces of linen cloth made somewhat hot, and so apply them to the place that smarteth, sinapizing them with a little powder of projection, otherwise called doribus.

But what shall I say of those poor men that are plagued with the pox and the gout? O how often have we seen them, even immediately after they were anointed and thoroughly greased, till their faces did glisten like the keyhole of a powdering tub, their teeth dance like the jacks of a pair of little organs or virginals when they are played upon, and that they foamed from their very throats like a boar which the mongrel mastiff-hounds have driven in and overthrown amongst the toils,—what did they then? All their consolation was to have some page of the said jolly book read unto them. And we have seen those who have given themselves to a hundred puncheons of old devils, in case that they did not feel a manifest ease and assuagement of pain at the hearing of the said book read, even when they were kept in a purgatory of torment; no more nor less than women in travail use to find their sorrow abated when the life of St. Margaret is read unto them. Is this nothing? Find me a book in any language, in any faculty or science whatsoever, that hath such virtues, properties, and prerogatives, and I will be content to pay you a quart of tripes. No, my masters, no; it is peerless, incomparable, and not to be matched; and this am I resolved for ever to maintain even unto the fire exclusive. And those that will pertinaciously hold the contrary opinion, let them be accounted abusers, predestinators, impostors, and seducers of the people. It is very true that there are found in some gallant and stately books, worthy of high estimation, certain occult and hid properties; in the number of which are reckoned Whippot, Orlando Furioso, Robert the Devil, Fierabras, William without Fear, Huon of Bordeaux, Monteville, and Matabrune: but they are not comparable to that which we speak of, and the world hath well known by infallible experience the great emolument and utility which it hath received by this Gargantuine Chronicle, for the printers have sold more of them in two months' time than there will be bought of Bibles in nine years.

I therefore, your humble slave, being very willing to increase your solace and recreation yet a little more, do offer you for a present another book of the same stamp, only that it is a little more reasonable and worthy of credit than the other was. For think not, unless you wilfully will err against your knowledge, that I speak of it as the Jews do of the Law. I was not born under such a planet, neither did it ever befall me to lie, or affirm a thing for true that was not. I speak of it like a lusty frolic onocrotary (Onocrotal is a bird not much unlike a swan, which sings like an ass's braying.), I should say crotentary (Crotentaire or notaire crotte, croquenotaire or notaire croque are but allusions in derision of protonotaire, which signifieth a pregnotary.) of the martyred lovers, and croquenotary of love. Quod vidimus, testamur. It is of the horrible and dreadful feats and prowesses of Pantagruel, whose menial servant I have been ever since I was a page, till this hour that by his leave I am permitted to visit my cow-country, and to know if any of my kindred there be alive.

And therefore, to make an end of this Prologue, even as I give myself to a hundred panniersful of fair devils, body and soul, tripes and guts, in case that I lie so much as one single word in this whole history; after the like manner, St. Anthony's fire burn you, Mahoom's disease whirl you, the squinance with a stitch in your side and the wolf in your stomach truss you, the bloody flux seize upon you, the cursed sharp inflammations of wild-fire, as slender and thin as cow's hair strengthened with quicksilver, enter into your fundament, and, like those of Sodom and Gomorrah, may you fall into sulphur, fire, and bottomless pits, in case you do not firmly believe all that I shall relate unto you in this present Chronicle.

THE SECOND BOOK.

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