

CHAPTER XI

BOURSAULT, BARON, BRUEYS, AND CAMPISTRON

Besides Dancourt, four authors who had written for the Comédie Française before 1690 continued writing for it after 1700.¹ The oldest of them was Boursault, who had had his first comedy acted shortly after Molière returned to Paris, had tried various kinds of literature, and had won great success with his *Comédie sans titre* or *Mercurie galant* and his *Esope* or *Fables d'Esopé*. This last play introduced extensive moralizing into seventeenth-century comedy and was so well received that its author returned to the subject and again put Æsop on the stage in *ESOPÉ À LA COUR*,² practically completed in five acts and in verse before Boursault's death on Sept. 15, 1701, though he was unable to prepare it for publication.

The form of the play, which presents its rambling plot mainly in alexandrine couplets, but with intercalated fables in "vers libres," is that of the author's earlier *Esope*. Possibly acting on a suggestion from Lenoble's *Esope*, which his own had inspired, he introduced from Herodotus, as he had not done previously, Rodope, a Thracian freedwoman. From La Fontaine he derived his dénouement and at least four of his sixteen fables, while a fifth fable has the same moral as one by La Fontaine, and a sixth puts in the form of an apologue one of La Rochefoucauld's maxims.³

Æsop is represented as in the earlier play. He is deformed and ugly, an ex-slave, but so great is his wisdom that Croesus makes him a minister of state. He has no ambition except to lead an excellent life. He understands the vices of a court, preaches tolerance, gratitude, unselfishness, love in marriage, filial affection, belief in a Creator, and the forgiveness of one's

¹ For these four men cf. my *op cit*, Parts III and IV.

² Paris, Beugnie and veuve Gasse, 1702, 8°. Dedicated by Boursault's widow, in accordance with his wishes, to Mme de Villequier. Published by Le Breton, 1706, 1724, 1725, by Pierre Ribou, 1708, by the latter's widow, 1724, 1725, at Amsterdam, 1726, at Paris, 1742, 1746, 1788, and in *Choix de piéces*, Duchêne, 1783. For nineteenth century editions, including that in one act brought out by Truffier, cf. the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale. It was translated into Italian in 1747. For a study of the play cf. Alfred Hoffmann, *Edme Boursault*, Metz, 1902, pp. 130-42.

³ The fables are *Le lion, l'ours, le tigre, et la pantherre*, *Le héron et les poissons* (from La Fontaine, VII, 4, *Le héron*), *La marchandise de mauvais débit* (Apollo offers *esprit* for sale, Mercury, *mémoire*, Apollo sells nothing, Mercury, much; cf. La Rochefoucauld, *Maxime* 89), *Le jardinier et l'âne*, *Le coq et la poulette*, *Le figuier foudroyé* (the same moral as La Fontaine, III, 14, but with a fig tree and birds substituted for a lion and other beasts), *La guenon et son maître*, one without a title in which rain on a river illustrates the careless distribution of favors by the great, *Le lion et le rat* (La Fontaine, II, 11), *Le faucon malade*, *Le fleuve et la source*, *La colombe et la fourmi* (La Fontaine, II, 12), *Le lion décepré* (La Fontaine, VIII, 3, *Le lion, le loup et le renard*), *L'enfer*, *La trompette et l'écho*, *L'homme et la puce*. The *freres Parfait*, XIV, 238-49, show that the main portion of the last act comes from La Fontaine, X, 9, *Le berger et le roi*.

enemies. The other characters, introduced chiefly to give *Æsop* an opportunity to sermonize and recite a fable, include an amiable king, a kindly princess, sinful and penitent *Rodope*, her neglected mother, four typical courtiers, two of whom conspire against *Æsop*, a retired warrior who is an agnostic, a young colonel, and an aged financier.*

The manners described are those of the seventeenth century, especially those of Versailles, except that slavery exists and polytheism is practised, as in *Æsop's* day. The sovereign is an absolute monarch, advised by courtiers. His marriage for love rather than for reasons of state could be tolerated in view of Louis's union with *Mme de Maintenon*. The king investigates charges of embezzlement brought against a minister, as Louis XIV had done in the case of *Fouquet*. A man can grow rich by collecting taxes, as many men did in *Boursault's* time. The state religion is supported by the monarch, but courtiers think more of his approbation than they do of the gods.

Pour peu que l'on y prie on est toujours en garde,
On observe avec soin si le Prince y regarde,
Et lorsque par hazard on rencontre ses yeux,
C'est lui que l'on invoque encor plus que les Dieux⁶

It is in the same scene that *Æsop*, at the king's request, tries to convert General *Iphicrate*, a man of excellent morals who is unable to believe in the gods. His ideal is to

Ne se reprocher rien & vivre en honnête homme,
Appuyer l'innocent contre l'iniquité,
Briller moins par l'esprit que par la probité,
Du mérite opprimé réparer l'injustice,
Ne souhaiter du bien que pour rendre service,
Etre accessible à tous par son humanité

He believes both men and the world eternal, but he does not wish to be

* When *Æsop* returns from a trip, he is asked by *Cræsus* to correct the morals of his court and is made a minister in place of *Iphis*, who has offended the king by telling him that he drinks too much. *Æsop* persuades *Cræsus* to pardon *Iphis* and restore him to favor. He advises him to marry for love rather than for reasons of state and persuades Princess *Arsinoé* to postpone no longer the choice of a husband, but to accept *Cræsus* in marriage. He offers to wed her confidant, *Lais*, apparently in order to test her, and approves of the girl's refusal. He criticizes *Rodope's* conduct, but he pardons her when she shows remorse over her ingratitude to her slave mother. He urges *Plexippe* to avoid gossip, *Cléon* to seek less for himself, *Iphicrate* to admit the existence of a Creator, *Griffet*, who is eighty two, to give up his pursuit of money. His influence at court excites the jealousy of *Trasibule* and *Tirrene*, who accuse him to the king of hiding in his chest money that belongs to the state, but, when the chest is opened, the king finds in it only the clothes *Æsop* had worn as a slave. The sage prevails upon *Cræsus* to pardon these courtiers. At the end of the comedy the marriage of *Cræsus* and *Arsinoé* is to take place next day, that of *Rodope* and *Æsop* subsequently.

⁶ Ill. 3, of the familiar passage about Louis XIV and his courtiers in *La Bruyère, Caracteres, "De la Cour"* (I, 328 in the *Grands Ecrivains* edition)

called an atheist and will be only too glad to be convinced that the gods exist. *Æsop* uses the familiar arguments drawn from the need of a first cause, the order of systems and planets, and the thought of death. He will visit Iphicrate again. The scene must be an echo of life in 1701, when skepticism was abroad and was attacked by the orthodox. It is certainly to Boursault's credit that he gave so pleasing an account of an unbeliever and that he sought to enlarge the sphere of comedy by introducing a discussion of this kind, previously suggested on the modern French stage chiefly by Cyrano de Bergerac in *Agrippine* and by Molière in *Don Juan*.⁶ Neither of these last plays was in the repertory of the Comédie Française in 1701. Boursault's scene met a similar fate, according to the *Avis au lecteur* published with the play. It declares that "on ne la joue pas sur le Theatre, n'y étant pas tout-à-fait convenable."

Boursault's purpose in writing the play was obviously a moral one. If this is not clear enough in the five acts, it is made so by a letter to the Archbishop of Paris and by the author's verses:

Celui qui succédera sera *Esop* a la cour, persuadé qu'il y a des abus comme ailleurs, et qu'ils y sont d'autant plus considérables, que ceux qui les commettent sont dans une plus grande elevation⁷

Les Grecs & les Romains ont épuisé les veilles
Des Racines & des Corneilles,
Molière a critiqué les habits & les mœurs,
Et je souhaiterois, avec l'aide d'*Esop*,
Pouvoir déraciner des cœurs
Les vices qu'on y développe⁸

As he limited himself to persons who might appear at court, his characters are less varied than in the earlier *Esop*, in which peasants, children, actors, a genealogist, and persons representing other professions appear. The dialogue is less amusing in the new play and the fables are less effective. The latter present the same variety in verse, but they lack the pungency and raciness of those in the older play. *Æsop* is as constantly on the stage⁹ and as monotonously produces a fable for every situation. The success of the play shows that the rôle was well interpreted and that moralizing was beginning to replace in popular esteem the wit and the art that had distinguished the comedy of the seventeenth century.

⁶ For other examples of the references listed in my *op cit*, Part V, p 170

⁷ *Lettres nouvelles* (Lyons, 1715), II, 72, cited by Hoffmann, *op cit*, p 131. A writer in the *Histoire des Ouvrages de Savans*, cited by Méless, *Th et Pub*, p 311, observed that "il y a une belle morale et des portraits assez fins, et quelquefois assez malicieus."

⁸ Prologue of the play

⁹ The rôle, which seems to have been taken by Dancourt (cf above, Chapter I, note 41), must have been hard to play as *Æsop* is in all the scenes of Act II and in all but one of the scenes in each of the other four acts

It was with the increase of this tendency in the eighteenth century that the play grew in popularity. Acted originally on Dec. 16, 1701, it had had by the end of the following year twelve performances, not many for a new play. It was not acted again until 1708, but in that year and those that followed through 1715 it had forty-two performances. It remained in the repertory until 1817 and was played in all 227 times. The fact that it surpassed the other *Esop* in popularity, *Esop à la ville* as it came to be called, may be due to the preference of the public during much of the period for affairs of the court over those of the city.¹⁰

La Harpe noted that the play had increased in popularity, but he offered no explanation of the fact. Though he objected to *Æsop's* being "amoureux et aimé," he found the character in other respects sensible and noble. He admired the emotional scene of Rodope's repentance, the comic scene of the financier, *Æsop's* reply to the officer who insisted that he was a colonel, not a soldier—"Monsieur le colonel, qui n'êtes point soldat,"—and the dénouement. He made no reference to the omission of the theological scene, but he cited an anecdote to the effect that lines spoken by Cræsus and *Æsop* were omitted or altered for fear they might offend Louis XIV.¹¹

The great tragic actor, Michel Baron, had retired from the troupe of the Comédie Française in October, 1691. As he had not taken the trouble to publish his three comedies that had been acted in 1689, he seemed to have renounced permanently dramatic composition as well as acting. In 1702, however, he took part in court performances of *Athalie*, Duché's *Absalon*, and Longepierre's *Electre*. It may be his participation in them that awoke his Muse, for by the autumn of the following year he had written an adaptation of Terence's *Andria* that he entitled L'ANDRIENNE.¹²

In an *Au lecteur* the author expressed his surprise that Terence had not

¹⁰ In 1701-7 the older play had seventeen performances, but in 1708-15 only eleven. It was given subsequently only sixty-four times and was dropped from the repertory in 1777. When *Esop à la cour* was acted at Choisy before Louis XV, the monarch thought that the temperance lesson given by Iphis to Cræsus was intended for himself and ordered that the comedy should not reappear at court, cf. Desnoiresterres, *la Comédie satirique au dix huitième siècle*, Paris, 1885, pp. 102-3.

¹¹ Cf. La Harpe, *op cit*, VIII, 300-2. The most important part of the anecdote he cites, without naming its source, is found in Clement et La Porte, *anecdotes dramatiques*, Paris, 1775, I, 316. According to this work the line in I, 3, that now reads "Et que le trône enfin l'emporte sur le roi" was originally "Et que le roi qui règne est toujours le plus grand," in which form it might easily have caused trouble for the actors.

¹² Paris, Pierre Ribou, 1704, 12°, *priv*, Jan 30, registered, Feb 13. I have given my reasons (*op cit*, Part IV, pp. 831-2) for believing that *Solemne*, no. 1504, and the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale were led into error by a faulty title page when they gave 1694 as the date of this edition. The play was republished in 1729, 1769, 1778, 1789, 1816, 1821, and 1823, as well as in collected editions of 1736, 1738, 1742, 1750, 1759, and 1784, in the *Recueil Petitot* of 1804, in the *Auteurs du Second Ordre* of 1808, and in the *Repertoire* of 1823. For a study of the play cf. B. E. Young, *Michel Baron*, Grenoble, 1904, pp. 271-81, 314.

been adapted to the French stage since the time of Baif, gave the Roman credit for the success of his imitation, defended himself against those who claimed that he had not written the French play, and referred to good translations of Terence, especially to those of "ce savant homme" who had unfortunately translated only the *Andria*, the *Adelphoe*, and *Phormio*.¹³ This last remark suggests that Baron made use of the savant's translations in making his own adaptations of Terence, but there is no reason to doubt the fact that the verses were his own.¹⁴ It is not true, however, that there had been no adaptations of Terence between Baif and Baron, for *le Muet* by Brueys and Palaprat had been acted at the Comédie Française in 1691 before Baron retired, to say nothing of La Fontaine's *Eunuque*, of Molière's borrowings from Terence, and of plays less well known than these.

Baron's chief problems were to turn Latin verse into French, to avoid offending the proprieties, and to give the heroine a rôle of distinction. He kept almost all of Acts I, II, and V, but he made considerable changes in the others. He eliminated both the midwife and the child and made it clear that the hero and heroine were married. For the scenes concerned with the infant he substituted others in which the heroine pleads, listens to reflections upon her character, and interviews her husband. He succeeded in making a living person of the heroine, who in the Latin play remains behind the scenes and is heard to speak only one line. His changes prevent the hero from losing our sympathy, but the new scenes are less striking than the old. He made minor alterations in regard to manners, substituting French amusements, terms of endearment, food, and methods of punishment for Roman.¹⁵ As, however, he kept the location at Athens, the ancient names, and the slave system, his introduction of French customs is anachronistic.

Baron enlarged the rôle of Davus and at times expanded the dialogue. In so doing he seems to have taken hints from Molière and Corneille.¹⁶ He made minor changes in structure in order to link his scenes. The most celebrated line in the *Andria*, "Amantium irae amores integratiost" (v. 555) is thrown into relief, at least in the edition of 1759, by being printed in capitals (III, 4) "Les piques des Amans renouvellent l'Amour."¹⁷

¹³ This must be Saint-Aubin, who published at Paris in 1669 a prose translation of these three comedies and of no others, cf. the *Bib. du th. fr.*, III, 233.

¹⁴ Allainval claimed that *l'Andrienne* was written by Father La Rue. So did Voltaire, *op. cit.*, XIV, 95.

¹⁵ Cf. I, 1, III, 5, II, 3, III, 8. In V, 7, he employs the modern word *roman*.

¹⁶ The use of coughing as a signal and the remark, "ce rhume est obstiné" (III, 5) resemble *Tartuffe*, vv. 1497-9. "Qu'on me jette dans l'eau la tête la première" (III, 7), *George Dandin* III, 8, "Je le ferai encore, si j'avois à le faire" (I, 1), *le Cid*, v. 878, and *Polyeucte*, v. 1671.

¹⁷ Pamphile, an Athenian, is secretly married to Glicérie, who is supposed to be the sister of Chrysis. The latter had come to Athens from Andros, had acquired a

Baron kept too close to his model to allow his own talents to express themselves. The hero lacks initiative, the heroine appears only in the fourth act, Philumène is never seen, the rôle of Carin is superfluous, and the opportune arrival of Criton has the effect of a *deus ex machina*. The most interesting rôles are those of Simon and Dave, who must have seemed pale, however, in comparison with many fathers and servants of French comedy. Nevertheless respect for Terence and Baron's reputation as actor and author enabled the play to win a certain amount of popularity, testified to by the duchesse d'Orléans¹⁸

First acted on Nov. 16, 1703, the play was given at Paris seventeen times in that and the following year and once, Dec 10, 1703, at Versailles. It remained in the repertory until 1782. As the total number of performances was 155, it ranks third in this respect among its author's plays. According to the frères Parfaict,¹⁹ Etienne Baron played Pamphile, Guérin, Simon, La Thorillière, Dave, la Beauval, Mysis, and la Dancourt, Glicérie. The costume worn by the latter actress gave rise to a style of "robe negligée" known as an "andrienne." It may be of interest to note that three of the principal rôles were given by the author to his son, his brother-in-law, and his sister-in-law two others to persons with whom he had often acted, Guérin and la Beauval. The interpretation of these five experienced players may have had much to do with the play's success.

Baron was encouraged to make a second adaptation of Terence. From his *Adelphoe* he derived LES ADELPHES, or, as it was subsequently called, L'ÉCOLE DES PÈRES.²⁰ His method was much the same as that which he had

dubious reputation, and had recently died. Simon, Pamphile's father, had engaged his son to Philumène, daughter of his friend Chremés, but the latter has withdrawn his promise because he suspects Pamphile of a *liaison*. To test his son, Simon tells him that he must marry Philumène, an order that distresses the young man as well as Carin, who loves her. Pamphile's slave, Dave, discovers that no preparations are being made for the wedding, fears that Simon may have Glicérie sent out of town, and advises his master to gain time by accepting his father's proposition. When Pamphile does so, Simon persuades Chremés to renew the engagement, and the lovers are again in despair, but Dave succeeds in convincing Chremés that Pamphile and Glicérie are married. Meanwhile Criton has come from Andros, has declared the girl to be an Athenian, and has offered to take her to his home. Simon believes that he is an impostor and has Dave tied up to prevent him from spreading the story, but Chremés vouches for Criton's honesty. From the latter's narrative Chremés discovers that Glicérie is his daughter, shipwrecked in childhood on the island of Andros and brought up by the parents of Chrysis. There is now no objection to her union with Pamphile, who frees Dave and will try to arrange the marriage of Carin and Philumène.

¹⁸ Cf. Mélése, *Rép.*, p. 214. Evidence of its popularity is probably contained in the prologue, sc. 5, of Regnard's *Folies amoureuses*, acted only two months later, for Momus, in referring to a *savante* who gives her decisions about authors, mentions by name only "l'Andrienne" and Terence.

¹⁹ XIV, 315. They state that, after la Dancourt retired, the rôle of Glicérie was given to her daughter, Mimi.

²⁰ Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-4, makes a study of the play. He lists an edition of Paris, 1705, but does so only on the authority of Mouhy's *Tablettes dramatiques*.

employed for the earlier play except that he transferred the location to Paris and referred to places in that city. He omitted the prologue, the rôle of Sostrata, and those of a few minor characters, but he gave genuine parts to the two young heroines, one of whom in the Latin play does not appear at all, while the other says only a few words and those behind the scenes. Baron elevated one of the heroines in rank and introduced a method of identifying her by means of two halves of a ring that had been employed in the Italian pastoral play, *la Fille di Sciro*. This identification is not employed to bring about the dénouement, but to reward the lovers for their fidelity.

Baron omitted, as in *l'Andrienne*, Terence's obstetrical references. Neither of his heroines is pregnant. His alteration not only is more in accord with the usage of the modern stage, but it helps to demonstrate the value of kindness in the bringing up of young men. Terence had raised the question and had created a stern father and his indulgent brother, but both of their methods proved unsuccessful. The only conclusion to be drawn from the Latin comedy is that a kindly parent is happier than one who is not, whereas Baron, by eliminating seduction and justifying the elopement, spared his youths the criticism to which Terence exposed them. He even rewarded Léandre for disobeying his stern father by making the *chanteuse* turn out to be an heiress.

In preparation for this piece of good fortune he introduced Sanion's wife and added the fourth scene of Act I. The first three scenes of Act II bring Pamphile on the stage and improve the preparation. In the rest of the first four acts he follows Terence step by step, but his fifth act, with the exception of sc 7, is largely new, for he adds Clarice's adventure with the police and alters the dénouement. Especially noteworthy is the fact that, though Terence had made of Demea a convert to his brother's methods, Baron keeps Alcée hard and impenitent, in accordance with the general usage of French classical comedy.²¹

On the other hand, Beauchamps and Lérin refer to the work as found among Baron's papers after his death, and the *Bib du th fr* declares that it was not published "dans le tems," but only in later editions of the author's work. The first edition must have been that of Paris, P J Ribou, 1736. Even Mouhy in his *Abrégé*, Paris, 1780, I, 6, states that it was first published in 1736. It was republished in collected editions of Baron's plays.

²¹ Alcée, the stern father of Eraste and Léandre, has allowed the former to be brought up by his indulgent brother, Telamon. Eraste has been for some time secretly in love with Pamphile, a girl of good family whose father has died and left her little. We hear that Eraste has carried off Clarice, a girl of unknown parentage, from Sanion's house. Alcée blames his brother for the young man's conduct, but Telamon defends him and soon learns the explanation from Sanion's wife. When eight years old, Clarice had been left in this woman's keeping by a man who went off to Italy. He had given Mme Sanion 6000 francs and, for subsequent identification, half a ring. As no further news had been received, Sanion had proposed to turn her over to a scoundrel. Thereupon his wife had arranged the *enlèvement*,

The comic element is chiefly derived, as in Terence, from the conduct of Alcée, whose efforts at discipline are thwarted by his brother and his sons, and from the antics of Sirius, who comes on the stage drunk and jests at the expense of Alcée and Samon. When the latter slaps him, he points out, in lines that recall Scarron rather than Terence, the serious nature of a slap.²²

Vous donnez des soufflets! Ah, mon petit mignon,
Apprenez qu'un soufflet vaut cent coups de bâton'

Baron's additions increased the play's comic quality little, but they made the comedy more romantic, more modern, and more in accord with French technique. They brought it little favor from the public, as is shown by a letter of the duchesse d'Orléans²³ and by the fact that, first given, Jan. 3, 1705, it was acted only seven times in that year and was never revived. Perhaps it was the more purely romantic character of *l'Andrienne* that made it more successful than *les Adelphe*s, in which romantic elements are grafted on what might have been either a *pièce à thèse* or a comedy of manners, had either tendency been more satisfactorily developed.

Patein, except for contributing a phrase and probably a few individual words to the language, had had no influence upon seventeenth-century comedy. It had been sufficiently well known, however, for an edition of it to be published at Rouen by Jacques Cailloué in 1656, reproducing one of 1560. Brueys's attention was called to the farce by a reading of Pasquier, who preferred it to all Greek, Latin, and Italian comedies. He determined to modernize the edition of 1656, both in language and in technique, and to prepare it for presentation by amateurs before Louis XIV. This was in 1700, but the war that broke out the following year prevented the realization of the plan. The comedy was not acted until June 4, 1706, and then, not at court, but at the Comédie Française "par les soins de M. Palaprat," as Brueys tells us in his preface.

carried out by Eraste for his brother, who loves the girl, but who, on account of Alcée's watchfulness, could not well rescue her himself. Pamphile, who thinks Eraste has deserted her for Clarice, appeals to his father's friend, Hegion, who takes the matter up with Telamon. Samon comes to get the girl back or to secure the 100 pistoles he was to have received for her. He is kept off by promises from Sirius, Telamon's valet, and is finally beaten by Eraste and his servants. Telamon explains the situation to Pamphile and makes arrangements for her marriage to Eraste, but Alcée, discovering that Leandre is in love with Clarice, has the girl put in the keeping of the police. Sirius and handmaids he engages bring her back to Leandre. Alcée, disgusted with his sons and his brother, turns over to the latter the guardianship of both youths. Telamon prepares to marry them and rewards the servants. It is not until this point in the story has been reached that Hegion produces the other half of the ring and identifies Clarice, who will have a dowry of 50,000 écus. Alcée sends all his relatives "au diable de bon cœur."

²² II, 11, cf. my *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 462.

²³ *Mémoires, Récit*, p. 215, lists the play as "d'après Plaute" [*sic!*] and cites a letter from the duchess of Feb. 11, 1705 [1705?] stating that "*L'Andrienne* de Térénce a très bien réussi, mais non pas les A."

It was entitled *L'AVOCAT PATELIN*, or simply *PATELIN*.²⁴ Brueys turned the old farce into a three-act comedy in prose with three *intermèdes*, after the manner of *George Dandin*. These *intermèdes* were omitted when the play was acted, probably because of the expense involved and because an allusion to the blessings of peace would have been inappropriate when the country was at war. In the three acts Brueys did not confine his contribution to modernizing the language. He added a slight love plot, gave the work unity, improved the preparation, omitted some repetition of material, and prolonged the dénouement. While sacrificing a good deal of the original, he added jests of his own and a few details intended to make the events more probable. La Harpe thought that "Brueys et Palaprat l'ont fort embell." ²⁵ About half the scenes of the play are almost wholly new, while the other half, though making some adaptations of the original, seldom follow it closely.²⁶

Patelin is still the crafty and dishonest lawyer of the medieval play, less boisterous in his speech and actions when pretending madness, but equally clever in deceiving the draper and defending the shepherd Guillaume

²⁴ Goziet lists editions of Paris, 1707 and 1715, 12°. It was republished in 1725 (Paris), 1743 (Lyons, Delaroche), 1760, 1773, 1782, 1783 (Paris), 1785 (London), 1786 (*Petite Bibliothèque*), 1787 (*Choeur de pièces*), 1788, 1798, 1801, 1816, in collected editions of 1735, 1755 &, in the *Recueil Petitot* of 1804, the *Auteurs du Second Ordre* of 1808, and the *Repertoire* of 1823. For seven editions published at Paris after 1816, cf. the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The play has been studied especially by Johannes Koch, *Brueys und Palaprat*, Leipzig dissertation, 1906, pp. 63-73. For its reputation in the eighteenth century cf. C. D. Brenner, *MLN*, XLVIII (1933), 88-90.

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, VIII, 292.

²⁶ Patelin and his wife have recently come to a village near Paris and have taken a house near that of the merchant, Guillaume, and that of the judge, Bartolin. Patelin's daughter, Henriette, is loved by Guillaume's son, Valère, while his servant, Colette, is engaged to Guillaume's shepherd, Agnelet. So ragged are the lawyer's clothes that he fears no one will marry his daughter. He consequently goes to Guillaume's shop, pretends that he wishes to pay him money his father had owed to Guillaume's father, and wheedles cloth out of the draper with a promise to pay early next morning and an invitation to eat goose. Agnelet now begs Guillaume not to have him arrested for killing sheep, but the draper prefers to let the law decide the matter, so that the shepherd, acting on Colette's advice, engages Patelin to defend him. Meanwhile Guillaume has gone to collect what Patelin owes him, but he has been repulsed by the lawyer's wife, who insists that her husband has been for some time mentally ill, and by Patelin himself, who pretends to think he is an apothecary, to see visions, and to hear robbers, against whom he takes up arms. When Bartolin holds the hearing, Guillaume represents himself, while Patelin speaks for Agnelet. Guillaume confuses his charges against Agnelet and Patelin. The judge, convinced by Agnelet's replies of "Bée" that he is out of his head, dismisses the case. As he knows that the shepherd has been hit on the head by Guillaume, he is not surprised to hear, shortly after the trial, that Agnelet is dead. When he goes to view the corpse and is shown the mutilated head of a calf, he concludes that Guillaume is a murderer. Colette demands justice, but she agrees to withdraw the charges if Guillaume will sign the marriage contract of Valère and Henriette. After this has been done, Agnelet, who had hidden in a neighbor's attic, is brought to the judge by a peasant, who suspects him of robbery. Guillaume now wishes to withdraw his consent to the marriage of his son and Henriette, but, as Patelin has put a forfeit into the contract, he accepts the situation. Patelin keeps the cloth. We may suppose that Agnelet will marry Colette.

differs from his model only in the fact that he has a slight feeling of guilt at having overcharged the lawyer. Agnelet is now engaged to be married and has made arrangements with a butcher so that he can dispose of the slaughtered sheep. He seems to have risen slightly in the social scale, but his nature has altered little. We are shown more of the judge and a good deal less of Guillemette, now called Mme Patelin. The three persons that are added are but slightly characterized, though they have an important part in the plot, as the marriage of Henriette and Valère is the event to which the action leads and as Colette sends Agnelet to Patelin and assists in the deception of the judge.

Brueys made fewer allusions to manners than did the fifteenth-century author, omitted the references to the saints, and softened the vulgarity of the original, but he kept in the main the atmosphere of village life and added a few satirical thrusts of his own, as when Guillaume admits that epidemics exist among men "avec les medecins, mais les moutons n'en ont pas" (I, 4), and regrets his sheep, "dont la laine me fait des draps d'Angleterre." He improved the preparation by bringing in Agnelet and the judge at an earlier point in the play. He does not allow Patelin to repeat to his wife what the audience already knows. On the other hand, one misses Patelin's exuberant speech, when he pretends to be delirious, his use of foreign words, or words from French dialects, his fable of the Fox and the Crow, and much of his wife's conversation.

Most of the credit for Brueys's comedy is due to the author of *Patelin*, but the scorn that medievalists heap upon the later play is quite undeserved. It is an entertaining comedy, adapted to the tastes of the eighteenth century, though preserving the chief characteristics of its model. Without Brueys the old play would have been unknown in that century except to a learned few. Thanks to him it became one of the most popular plays in the repertory of the Comédie Française. Lérin and Clément et La Porte testified to the pleasure it gave the public in their time. Voltaire²⁷ predicted that *l'Avocat Patelin* and *le Grandeur* would make the name of Brueys remembered so long as there would be a theater in France. Though it never enjoyed a long run, it was played a number of times almost every year from 1706 to 1829 and occasionally thereafter, down to 1859. The total number of performances at the Comédie Française was 885, a record surpassed by only two other plays written in the eighteenth century.

In 1709 Campistron was probably considered the leading author of tragedies then living, but his one comedy had had little success and had not been played for many years. Nevertheless, when he returned to dramatic

²⁷ *Op cit.*, XIV, 47

composition, which he had abandoned for a decade, he wrote in the lighter genre. The experience he had acquired in tragedy had taught him the advantages of simplicity and logical structure and may well have developed his taste for the type of high comedy that Molière had illustrated by *le Misanthrope*. It is to the latter play that *LE JALOUX DÉSABUSÉ*²⁸ is related rather than to a farce like de Visé's *Gentilhomme guespín*, or to Baron's *Jaloux*, with its unmarried and physically violent protagonist. Like Molière's play, it is a comedy of character, depicts high Parisian society, and introduces a jealous hero, a coquettish heroine, and a group of minor characters in league with her. Alceste has, however, married Célimène. In this respect and in the fact that the man is ashamed of his jealousy Campistron's comedy resembles Dufresny's recent *Jaloux honteux*. Moreover, the woman whom the protagonist loves uses her coquetry only in behalf of her sister-in-law. The characters of the play arouse no such interest as do those of *le Misanthrope* and the picture of society is less complete, but this is not to say that the comedy is without merit.²⁹

Dorante is an "Homme de Robe" who has an income of over 20,000 écus. He neglects the law and mingles with the aristocracy (I, 1)

Ennemí du travail, toujours plein de loisir,
Méprisant ses égaux, & depuis son enfance,
Nourri dans le repos, dans la magnificence,
Cherchant les Courtisans & les Gens du bel air,
Imitant leur exemple, & les traitant du pair

²⁸ Paris, Pierre Ribou, 1709 and 1710, 12°. Reprinted in editions of its author's works that appeared at Amsterdam in 1722-3 and subsequently at Paris, as well as in the *Petite Bibliothèque* of 1788, the *Recueil Petitot* of 1804, the *Auteurs du Second Ordre* of 1809, and the *Répertoire* of 1823. It has been studied by Curt Hausding, *Jean Galbert de Campistron*, Leipzig, 1903.

²⁹ Dorante and his sister, Julie, have inherited great wealth, which will be divided only when the girl marries. As this fact makes him unwilling for Julie to marry Citandre, his wife's cousin, a domestic conspiracy is formed against him. Not only Citandre, but Eraste and many other young men come constantly to Dorante's home. Célié, Dorante's wife, pretends that several of them are in love with her and that she is not indifferent to their courtship. Dorante is deeply disturbed, but he fears that, if he protests, he will be laughed at. A supper at Suresnes, to which he declines to go and which is vividly described to him by his sister's *souvante*, heightens his suspicions. In the early hours of the morning, while his wife and his guests are amusing themselves, he decides to act. In the meantime Eraste admits that he has really fallen in love with Célié, tells her so, and is rebuked. She assures him that she will remain faithful to her husband, and decides that, since Eraste's confession has shown that she has allowed matters to go too far, she must now explain to her husband that she was merely pretending to be a coquette in order to force him to allow Julie to marry Citandre. They had thought he would give this consent in the hope that, with Julie out of the house, the young men who made him jealous would have no excuse for entering it. When Célié is about to explain, Dorante speaks first, permits his sister to marry, and announces his intention of retiring from Paris with his wife into one of his châteaux. She tells him of their conspiracy and dismisses Eraste. Dorante shows that he has been "désabusé" by agreeing to remain in Paris, but she insists that his love is her most valued possession and prefers to leave next day for the country.

Il chasse, il court le Cerf, est homme de Campagne,
 Aime le jeu, la table & le vin de Champagne,
 Decide & parle haut parmi les Beaux Esprits,
 Impose, plaît, commande aux Belles de Paris,
 D'habits tout galonnez remplit sa Garderobe,
 Et n'a rien en un mot du métier que la Robe

The frères Parfaict complain that these characteristics are not shown in the course of the play, but there is a good reason for this in the fact that Dorante's jealousy, aroused intentionally by his wife, has in the last few days caused him to lose his taste for pleasure (I, 7) He first appears in II, 2, when he complains about his wife's conduct Shortly afterwards he seeks an explanation, but he finds it difficult to overcome her smiling resistance. At the beginning of Act III we learn that he has suffered from his wife's behavior at dinner. When she comes to borrow his horses, as one of hers is ill and she wishes to go with Eraste and other friends to Suresnes, he becomes angry, but she pretends to faint and soon has her way His jealousy is greatly increased when he has this party described to him He has been restrained by the feeling that jealousy in a husband is a bourgeois characteristic, an opinion acquired when he entered high society (II, 2) :

Et blâmant du vieux tems les maximes sensées,
 J'en plaisantois sans cesse, & traitois de Bourgeois
 Ceux qui suivoient encor les anciennes loix

He had married, not only without love, but expecting to be grateful to his wife's lovers for entertaining her Then he had become enamoured of her, but he dared not show his jealousy, for fear of ridicule (II, 2)

Si je montre l'ennui que mon cœur en reçoit,
 Les enfans dans Paris me montreront au doigt,
 Et traité de bizarre & d'Epoux indocile,
 Je serai le sujet d'un heureux Vaudeville

In the end his bourgeois jealousy prevails over both his aristocratic fear of ridicule and his selfishness in regard to his sister's fortune. The frères Parfaict thought that the fact of his being "désabusé" was not satisfactorily shown, but his willingness for his wife to remain in Paris is as much proof as can be required of a play written in accordance with the unity of time. What the future may bring has to be left to our imagination.

Célie is a person of great composure, who can pretend to be unconscious and can laugh when her husband would have her weep She enjoys admiration (I, 1)

Elle a de la vertu, mais elle est belle & Femme,
 Elle aime à plaisanter, à sourire en passant,
 Elle a l'accueil flateur, le coup d'œil caressant,
 Et croit, lorsque le cœur est en effet fidele,
 Qu'un souris, qu'un regard n'est qu'une bagatelle

There are limits, however, beyond which she will not go. She admits that there are women in society, especially at Paris, whose conduct deserves contempt, but she insists that there are others (IV, 7),

Qui des folles ardeurs savent garder leurs ames,
Posseder la vertu telle qu'on doit l'avoir,
Et vivre dans le monde en faisant leur devoir

She belongs to the latter class herself and will doubtless become a charming châtelaine in Brie or Champagne, while her husband will hunt with the gentry of the neighborhood.

Their two rôles dominate the play. We learn little of the sister except that she is much in love and will have a large dowry. Clitandre and at first Eraste represent the gay society with which Célie surrounds herself. Subsequently Eraste has the unhappy rôle of a man caught in his own trap, of one who has to be reproved and sent away by the woman he loves. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Campistron derives none of his comic effects from valets. The only one he introduces, Champagne, appears merely as a messenger, as a lover, and to complain of his master's late hours. On the other hand, the two *souvantes* are given rôles of some importance. Justine is the family servant, so well established that she speaks her mind freely to all members of the household. She has an important function in the exposition and in helping Célie to carry out her plans. Babet, though young, is experienced in intrigue. Her air of innocence deceives Dorante into believing her racy account of the supper at Suresnes. More unusual is the characterization of Dubois, Dorante's secretary, well versed in the ways of the law, but so poorly paid that he readily accepts a bribe to work in Clitandre's interests. He has an underling's conviction of his own importance, unrecognized by the world at large. He has promised Dorante success in his profession if he will dress and behave as magistrates do (I, 5)

De la main du Greffier je prendrai les Procez,
Je m'en instruirai seul, j'en ferai les extraits
J'aurai le soin sur tout de vous les bien écrire,
Et vous ne prendrez, vous, que celui de les lire,
Je ne vous trompe point. Regardez Ariston,
On l'estime par tout comme un autre Caton
La Province le craint, la Cour le considere,
Cependant son merite est dans son Secretaire

We are introduced into a wealthy household, whose owners have some 800,000 francs and, besides their Parisian mansion, two châteaux. The husband and wife have each a pair of horses. They dine in the middle of the day. The wife drives to Suresnes for supper, a walk in the woods, and agreeable conversation. At night there is more talk, helped out with games till the small hours of the morning. Such a society has an aristocratic

view of life. It is not necessarily immoral, but may appear so, especially to the wealthy bourgeois it admits into its ranks and to people of other nations (II, 2). We are assured, moreover, that the old morality survives among "Gens du Peuple, Artisans, Portefaix & Vilains," who show that they adhere to it by beating their wives (III, 4).

The structure of the comedy is peculiar in that none of the leading characters appears in Act I. Too much use is made of asides, nine of which follow one another in succession in the last scene of this act. However, the exposition is clear and is agreeably presented. The other acts show Dorante's progress in jealousy and Célie's gradual recognition of the fact that she is playing a dangerous game. These two lines of development meet near the end of the play and solve the problem in its last scene, the final speech of which clinches matters by proposing to the male portion of the audience a test of virtue.

Si vous voulez sçavoir quelle est vôtre Compagne,
Messieurs, proposez lui de vivre à la campagne

This is the test that had been applied to Célième in the *Misanthrope* and in which, from Alceste's point of view, she had failed. Dorante's use of it is crowned with success. In both plays it is based on the assumption that outside of Paris there is no "salut pour les honnêtes gens," but both plays show that it is quite possible not to share this opinion.

The comedy was moderately well received. Between Dec. 13, 1709, when it was first acted, and Jan. 3, 1710, it was performed ten times and earned for its author 1206 francs, 12 sous,³⁰ a satisfactory sum, but far less than three of his tragedies had brought him. The *Gazette de Rotterdam* hailed it on Jan. 2, 1710 as a play that was "dans le véritable comique, et des plus belles qu'on ait vues depuis longtemps."³¹ However, it was given only four more times in 1710, only six times in 1713. It was after the author's death in 1723 that it was revived and had its chief success, 50 performances in 1724-31. Though acted less frequently than *Andronic* and *Alcibiade*, it remained in the repertory till 1807, much longer than either. The total number of performances at the Comédie Française was 166. La Harpe³² declared that he had seen it acted twenty-five years before and wondered why it was no longer played. He held it greatly superior to Campistron's tragedies, claimed that it had inspired La Chaussée's *Préjugé à la mode*, praised the two leading characters, the structure, and the "facilité élégante" of the style.

Except in the case of Brueys, these five comedies constitute the last plays

³⁰ Cf. the frères Parfaict, XV, 35

³¹ Quoted by Mélése, *Rép.*, p. 220

³² *Op. cit.*, VIII, 293-4

of four distinguished seventeenth-century dramatists. They show considerable variety in subject and tone, admitting moralistic, romantic, farcical, and psychological elements, reflecting methods that had been employed in ancient Rome, medieval France, and the Paris of Molière's time. The most original of them is *le Jaloux désabusé*, as it follows no comedy so closely as the others do those of Terence, *Patelin*, and Boursault's first *Esope*. All four authors showed discernment in selecting their subjects and technical skill in presenting them to their audiences, for, with the exception of *les Adelpes*, all the plays remained in the repertory of the Comédie Française in the nineteenth century and each was acted over 150 times, *l'Avocat Patelin* as many as 885.