

## Le Philosophe Malgre Lui.

"Full of wise saws, and modern instances."

A saw—since definitions are in fashion,—is the equivalent of *saga*, a saying, a story. It may be grave or gay, romantic or heroic ; but, for our purpose, let it serve to mean, a saying ; such wisdom of our forbears as has found expression in handy form. At least, it passes for wisdom.

Motley, good friends, is *not* "the only wear," nor is it the most becoming. There is, moreover, a smug respectability about the philosopher's robe which lay a flattering unction to the human soul. *Dulce est desipere in loco*. True ; but so much depends on the place. "There is a time to laugh." Yes ; provided it be not "the laughter of fools." Yes, and "there is a time to keep silence." It were well, for most of us, did we find more of it.

*Fuge, tace, quiesce, haec sunt principia salutis*. That is the message which sent Arsenius, the Senator, the friend and counsellor of Emperors, to his cell in the Egyptian desert. "It is not given to all," says holy Thomas à Kempis, "to renounce the world, and to serve God in "a cloister." True, but it is given to every man, if he will, to "scorn delights, and live laborious days." So much for "*Fuge*." "*Ne nos inducas in tentationem*." Why ? "He that loveth danger shall perish in 'it."

"*Tace*," to quote the rogues' jargon current in the seventeenth century, "is the Latin for a candle." Jargon, only, most likely ; a more or less vague hint as to the value of silence and discretion. Were one to read a meaning into it, one might enunciate it thus : "Silence is better than a votive offering." Otherwise, "Prevention is better than cure."

"I do know of those,

"That therefore only are reputed wise,

"By saying nothing."

Perhaps they are wiser than reputed. "Silence is golden." If you say nothing—well ; "Least said, soonest mended." More