

Pascal, the first to study the laws of probabilities, believed that the contact of a relic could cure lachrymal fistula.<sup>1</sup> Rousseau<sup>2</sup> made the savage the ideal type. He believed that everything naturally sweet to sight and palate must be harmless. His life was a tissue of contradictions. He eulogised the rural life and lived in city streets. He wrote a treatise on education and put his children in a foundling home. He was sceptical about religion, yet stoned a tree to determine the future.<sup>3</sup> He deposited his letters to God<sup>4</sup> on church altars as if God dwelt there only. Baudelaire compared the sublime in the artificial to a beautiful woman swathed in straw. He depicted in a moment of insane inspiration, a continent of metal whence water and vegetation were banished. All was there rigid, polished, shining, without heat or sun. In the midst of the eternal silence, the blue immensity reflected in it as old mirrors in a basin of gold.<sup>5</sup> The Latin of the decadence was his ideal; it alone could render passion.<sup>6</sup> He adored cats to the extent of addressing poems to them. He made many incoherent and incomprehensible utterances. He said in his "Advice to Communists":

Now, everything is common, even God who wishes to say these words.

Hayem defined Schopenhauer's philosophy as a dream intensely dreamt and spiritually realized.

Walt Whitman was certainly insane when he wrote, that to his eye, accuser and accused and judge and criminal were equal,<sup>7</sup> and when in one of his poems he declares homage to the virtue of one woman only, and she a courtesan, and when he proclaims:

In me latitude stretches out, longitude elongates; in me are sea, space, volume, matter, Africa, Polynesia.<sup>8</sup>

And when to make comprehensive his materialism he claims that soul is not only in the arms, nose, chin, hair, but even in the genitalia.<sup>9</sup>

Lenau, reversing all poets, in his "Moon of a Melancholiac," sees in the moon, cold, airless, waterless, the cemetery of a planet,<sup>10</sup> which, with a thread of twisted silver enchains sleepers and drags them to death.<sup>11</sup> It is she whose finger guides the somnambulist and who counsels the

robber.<sup>1</sup> Lenau, who said several times in his youth, that mysticism was an evidence of dementia, frequently fell into mysticism in his later poetry. There is no connection between any two chapters of the Koran, often even in a single surate the ideas are interrupted or associated in a most bizarre manner. Morkos<sup>2</sup> says:

As to Mahomet, the most diverse conclusions can be drawn. He cannot be denied a great superiority, but on the other hand, it is impossible not to recognize also the clearest evidences of imposture, transcendent ignorance and phenomenal audacity. These qualities and defects are reflected in the Koran, where shine high ideas of science and religion, where are taught the most sacred principles of justice and humanity. The impious and traitorous are thundered at with eloquent energy. But the finest conceptions are distastefully mingled with puns. They are often flung like pearls midst rubbish. Taken as whole, the Koran appears an illy-digested, unfinished work, in which is to be found neither continuity of any thought nor of any elementary art. Its chapters contain intertangled verses; disorder everywhere and throughout reigning pell-mell. In the same chapter, one subject suddenly passes into a totally different one. Historical facts are mingled with commands, without relation to them; menaces against the impious confusingly mix with testamentary laws; ritual, prescriptions, with fantasies on the origin of the universe; remembrances of wars, with judiciary cases. Anachronisms are enormous and frequent. Historical facts are fabulously travestied and paralogisms are repeated with strange ingenuity. In the midst of these are declarations against idolatry, menaces of eternal fire to the impious, promises to believers of an extremely sensual heaven, where the excretions themselves and the celestial repasts are exhaled in the form of ethereal fluid in odoriferous mask. These ideas are mixed with advice as to the necessity for charity, justice and prayer repeated hundreds of times and constituting the only links in this incoherently bizarre mixture.

There is much insanity manifest, says Addison, speaking of Swift, in his conceptions of the mathematician who taught the science by giving his pupils problems to swallow; in the economical distiller of excrement and in the philanthropic proposal to turn babies into food.

The style of alcoholic genius is a characteristic one. They have a tendency varying from eroticism to frigidity, to an inequality more bizarre than beautiful, thanks to a too much excited fantasy, to frequent imprecations, to brusque passages of black depression, to the most obscene gaiety and to a manifest tendency to depict insanity, alcoholism and lugubrious death scenes. Poe, says Baudelaire, loved to throw his figures against or to revel in the phosphorescence of decomposition or the perfumes of the tempest and the orgie. He threw himself into the grotesque for love of the grotesque and into the horrible for love of the horrible. Baudelaire, in his turn, described the effects of alcohol and opium. "They are days when my heart disappears, when pangs conquer me," sang poor Praga, whom alcohol killed, and who, in praising wine, blasphemed thus:

1. In full consonance with the belief of his time and of not a few persons in *ours*.

2. He amplified notions which he derived from the original contract theory of Locke, who derived it from Hobbes, who took it from the Puritan, Anabaptist and Lollard school of politics.

3. Or to settle his mind in a moment of indecision.

4. Was this not done to secure greater notoriety and personal?

5. Certain conceptions anent results of the nebular hypothesis make this appear anything but bizarre.

6. From it sprang the provençal, pre eminently the language of passion.

7. Has Lombroso ever read Emerson's "Brahma," wherein the same philosophy is expressed?

8. What is this but the Berkeleyian philosophy, expressed popularly even in Italy by the proverb, "I dead, the world is dead."

9. This is certainly only a poetic expression of the notions of Bichat.

10. This is the scientific view of the moon.

11. An expression of the popular notion of the effect of sleeping in the moon's rays.

1. Old poetic and popular notions about the moon often expressed in poetry.

2. See Carlyle however on this subject. It was badly edited.