The Original Edition of the "Sireine" of Honoré d'Urfé

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THE ORIGINAL EDITION OF THE 'SIREINE' OF HONORÉ D'URFÉ.

THE first edition of D'Urfé's pastoral poem, *Le Sireine*, had until recently escaped discovery. The earliest known edition was that published by Jean Micard in 1606¹, and were it not for the 'Avis au Lecteur' with which the bookseller introduces the volume it is quite possible and withal probable that no one would have ever suspected the existence of an earlier edition. The passage in question runs:

Je te fais voir, amy lecteur, le Sireine de Monsieur d'Urfé en meilleur estat qu'il n'estoit pas ces années passées, que ie l'imprimay sur vne tres-mauuaise coppie, changée et deffaillante presque en toutes les parties principales de l'œuvre, parce que celuy qui me la donna ne prit pas garde que depuis l'auteur l'auoit plusieurs fois retouchée, & que celuy qui la luy auoit donnée l'auoit escrite à la haste, comme la prenant à la desrobée & à l'insceu de l'auteur.

The only other reference to this earlier impression, as far as I know, occurs in an article contributed to the *Mercure Galant* of June, 1683, by a certain Forezian, a fellow-countryman of D'Urfé, who repeats, this time emphatically, the veiled statement of the 'Avis au Lecteur' that the poem was first published without the author's connivance or knowledge. This statement has now been proved to be true.

Some time ago the writer of the present article was engaged in the preparation of a critical edition (published since by the *Société des Textes Français Modernes*) of the poems of one of D'Urfé's warmest admirers, the pastoral poet, Jean de Lingendes, and, for the purpose of comparison, sought to procure a copy of D'Urfé's pastoral. Mr Guppy, the eminent librarian of the Rylands Library of Manchester, offered his assistance, with the happy result that the Rylands Library now possesses a copy of the long lost and much sought for *editio princeps*, the one spoken of by Jean Micard and the correspondent of the *Mercure Galant*.

This book, apparently unique, is a small volume in-16, measuring 115 × 55 mm., bound in vellum, with the following title-page:

¹ *Le Sireine de Messire Honoré d'Urfé, Gentil-Homme de la Chambre du Roy, Capitaine de Cinquante hommes d'armes de ses Ordonnances, Comte de Chasteau-neuf, Baron de Chasteaumorand, etc.* A Paris, Chez Iean Micard. 1606. Avec Privilege du Roy.—In-12.

LE | SIREINE | DE MESSIRE | HONORÉ D'URFÉ | Gentilhomme de
la Cham|bre du Roy, Capitaine de | cinquante hommes d'ar|mes de ses
Ordonnances, | Conte de Chasteauneuf, | & Baron de Chasteaumorand,
&c. | ○ | A PARIS, | Chez IEAN MICARD, au Palais, | en la gallerie
allant à la | Chancellerie || 1604. | *Avec Privilège du Roy.* |

A detailed typographical description, which, it is hoped, will not be altogether without interest, is here appended :

The folios are marked A to K, and the numbering begins with folio B. The plan of the book is as follows :

- A. [blank].
 - A. i. [Title] [verso blank].
 - A. ij. [Typographical ornament.]
 - A Madame Diane de Chateau-morand, &c. I. Aubery.
 - A. iij. v. Au Berger Sireine. De Lingendes.
 - A. v. v. Le Berger Philene à Monseigneur d'Urfé.
 - Stances. Par de Lingendes.
 - A. vij. v. [Ornament.]
 - Dédicace. Honoré D'Urfé.
 - B. [Ornament.]
 - Le Départ de Sireine. Premier Livre.
 - Stances.
 - D. vj. (f. 22). [Ornament.]
 - L'Absence de Sireine. Deuxiesme Livre.
 - Stances.
 - G. ij. v. [Ornament.]
 - G. iij. (f. 43). [Ornament.]
 - Le Retour de Sireine. Troisiesme Livre.
 - Stances.
 - K. iij. Fin du Retour de Sireine.
 - K. iv. Extraict du Privilège du Roy.
- In all 68 folios.

The little volume has several features of absorbing interest, but none perhaps more calculated to satisfy the curiosity of students of D'Urfé than the remarkable dedicatory epistle addressed to Diane de Châteaumorand by the Bourbonnais Jean Aubery, known to us already as a friend and patron of the poet De Lingendes.

Aubery was evidently a man of considerable importance. 'Conseiller

¹ Cf. Register 420 of the *Archives Communales de l'Allier, Ville de Moulins*.

et medecin du Roy, et intendant des bains du Bourbonnois'; as he is described in the Archives of the town of Moulins¹, where he resided, his administrative functions would naturally bring him into touch with all departmental movements and activities in Bourbonnais, and his high distinction would ensure him the respect and homage of his fellow-countrymen. We know, moreover, that he had a taste for literature, as witness his own publications and the literary patronage which he extended to the poets of Bourbonnais, and particularly to Jean de Lingendes¹. So far, however, no direct evidence has been traced of any personal connections between him and the poet of the *Astrée*.

D'Urfé's latest critic and biographer, M. Reure, has established beyond doubt that Honoré's relations with the province of Bourbonnais were of a most intimate kind. Literary, pecuniary, and family interests all helped to bind the lord of Châteaumorand to this neighbouring region, and it is noteworthy that the poets of the province, including among others De Lingendes and Estienne Bournier, have made ready claim to his literary patronage.

It is therefore *a priori* highly improbable that two men of note and of similar tastes, living at no great distance from each other, like D'Urfé and Aubery, could have failed to cultivate each other's acquaintance. Indirect evidence of their friendship there was already, and has been produced by M. Reure in his *Honoré d'Urfé*. In the inventory of Honoré's books and papers at the Château of Virieu there are mentioned: 'quatre livres escriptz à la main des Recherches de l'Antiquité d'Autun en quatre tomes,' an item which by its context would seem to imply that the work was by D'Urfé. This, however, is not the case, but on the other hand, it is known that Jean Aubery was the author of a *Histoire de l'Antique Cité d'Autun*, a work now lost, but which is undoubtedly the one mentioned in the inventory in question.

That the doctor and the baron not only knew each other but were on terms of close intimacy has now been definitely proved by the discovery of the first edition of the *Sireine*, with its dedicatory epistle in which Aubery speaks of a stay which he made at Châteaumorand, probably in the spring or summer of 1604², and which resulted in the publication of the poem, albeit that the work appeared 'à l'insceu de l'auteur.'

¹ Cf. Griffiths, *Œuvres Poétiques de Jean de Lingendes*, Paris, 1916.

² It is interesting to note that, just about that time, the town of Moulins was negotiating with Diane, Honoré's wife, for the foundation of a Jesuit College in her domaine of Pouzeux, in the township of Moulins. [See Reure, *op. cit.* pp. 123-5.] The *privilege* for the publication of the *Sireine* is dated August 15.

The text of the dedication is as follows :

A MADAME DIANE DE CHATEAU-MORAND
CONTESSE DE CHATEAUNEUF, &c.

MADAME,

C'est estre larron de bonne conscience que de vous rendre aux yeux de tous, ce que ie desrobay chez vous en cachette : pendant le sejour que ie fis aupres de vous, ie prins vne copie de *Sireine*, dans le Cabinet de Monseigneur DVRFE, d'où ie le rauï pour luy faire voir le iour qu'il doit recevoir de vous, puis qu'il est né de luy. Ie le vous rends en le donnant à tout le Monde, & le mets entre vos mains pour auoir de l'honneur de mon larcin, que ie ne pouuois esperer qu'en vous le rendant : *Sireine* luy mesme sera le suppliant du pardon que ie desire, & qu'il me doit faire meriter, puis ie le rends à sa DIANE, que seule il desiroit, aussi vous l'ayant rendu, il sera le gage enuers vous de son affection, et de la mienne, & en ceste assurance vous le presentant, par luy ie me presente à vous,

MADAME,

pour

Vostre tres humble & tres-fidele seruiteur,

I. AVBERY.

This high-flown exercise of literary ingenuity is the most important document yet discovered for the solution of the problem of the allegorical meaning of the *Sireine*. Here is first-hand evidence in support of the theory advanced by certain critics, and as often disputed, that the poem represents, under a pastoral disguise, the love-lorn youth of the author, and that the Diane sung by the poet is no other than the beautiful Diane de Châteaumorand whose grace and charm had enraptured him, and who was destined to become his wife. Such was the common tradition in the seventeenth century, and M. Reure has not hesitated to give it the seal of his approval. With Aubery's convincing evidence the persistent tradition enters the domain of actual facts, for what other interpretation could be given to a statement which declares with no uncertain voice, as clearly as the stilted and high-flown style of the prefaces of the time will allow, the satisfaction experienced by the writer in giving back *Sireine* to his Diana, *que seule il desiroit*? *Sireine* for Aubery, who was intimately acquainted with the little family of Châteaumorand, was Honoré d'Urfé himself, and Diane was assuredly Diana of Châteaumorand.

From what we know of D'Urfé it is very probable that he did not desire his early private life to be unveiled and thus become public property, and as the authorised edition of 1606 appeared without Aubery's preface, it may well be that Honoré in suppressing it was actuated by motives of prudence and discretion. But, on the other hand, it must be admitted that Aubery's preface, written expressly for a surreptitious publication, would have been entirely out of place in an

edition produced with the author's permission, and differing substantially from the former edition.

The author's dedication of the poem to 'Madame' is dated 'de Virieu le grand, ce 15 juillet, 1599,' but with the sole exception of the date, it offers no variants to the text given in the other printed editions.

The 'Extraict du Priuilege du Roy' is perhaps worth quoting in full. It runs :

Par grace & Priuilege du Roy il est permis à Iean Micard Marchand Libraire à Paris, d'imprimer ou faire imprimer *Les Œuvres de Messire Honoré d'Urfé, tant en prose qu'en vers*, sans qu'aucun les puisse imprimer sans le congé & consentement dudit Micard pendant le temps et terme de dix ans entiers & accomplis, sur peine de confiscation des impressions qui en seront trouuees, & d'amende arbitraire, & de tous despens, dommages & interests, comme plus amplement est contenu es lettres sur ce données à Paris le 17. iour d'Aout, l'an 1604.

Par le Roy en son Conseil,

ADDEE.

The prefatory poems by De Lingendes, hitherto unknown, are of the utmost interest to students of the literature of the early seventh century, and settle once for all, in favour of D'Urfé, the vexed question of priority in the conception and the literary form of the lyric pastoral in France¹.

The text of this original edition of the *Sireine* is widely divergent from that of succeeding editions and bears out Micard's statement in the impression of 1606 that the work is 'changée et deffaillante,' and that since the manuscript (of July 15, 1599) was written 'l'auteur l'auoit plusieurs fois retouchée.' As an indication of the extent of the divergence we have chosen a number of passages which we have compared with an edition of 1618, 'jouxte la coppie imprimée à Paris, chez Iean Micard...M.DC.XVIII,' kindly lent by M. Reure.

1604.

[I.]

Je chante en ces vers amoureux
Un depart triste & mal-heureux,
Une absence pleine d'angoisse,
Et un retour d'un beau Pasteur—
Amour qui seul en fus l'auteur
Fay qu'en ces vers on te cognoisse.

[II.]

O belle, de qui les beautez
N'ont rien que des extremitez,
Dont les effects sont admirables,
Voyez Sireine, & sa pitié
Fasse qu'en vous mon amitié
Ne se plaigne de coups semblables.

1618.

I.

Je chante un despart amoureux,
Un exil long & mal-heureux,
Et le retour plein de martyre :
Amour qui seul en fus l'auteur,
Laisse pour quelque temps mon cœur,
Et viens sur ma langue les dire.

II.

Vous de qui l'œil m'a surmonté,
Et qui m'a fait par sa beauté
Tant de blessures incurables :
Voyez Sireine, etc.

¹ This question is treated in the Introduction to my edition of the works of Jean de Lingendes.

1604.

[III.]

Pres d'un riuage verdoyant
 En courbes replis ondoyant,
 Sous l'ombre d'un penchant bocage
 Esmillé d'un printemps de fleurs,
 Où qui eut eu moins de douleurs
 Eut peu se plaie au frais ombrage.

[IV.]

Sireine amoureux pastoureau
 Auecques son camus troupeau,
 Vint pour fuyr le chaud extreme,
 Sa face monstroist son ennuy
 Et il sembloit viure en autruy
 Tant il estoit mort en soy-mesme.

1618.

III.

Où l'Esté noirci de chaleurs,
 Iamais n'outreperçoit l'ombrage.

IV.

Sireine amoureux pastoureau
 Conduisant son camus troupeau,
 Vint pour fuyr le chaud extrême,
 Tellement oppressé d'ennuy
 Qu'il sembloit viure en autruy,
 Tant'il estoit mort en soy-mesme.

It will thus be seen that a large percentage of the changes are corrections of faulty style and faulty prosody, but it is by no means rare to find a wholesale substitution of stanzas with a complete change of subject-matter. Thus in Canto I, stanzas v—xxx of the 1618 edition are not represented at all in the first edition, which fills the gap with ten stanzas as compared with twenty-six in the later edition. The expansion of the original text is a marked feature of the 1618 edition, and it is worthy of note that this issue is the first to bear the words: 'Reveu, corrigé et augmenté de nouveau par l'Autheur outre les precedentes impressions.' The ten stanzas indicated in A [= 1604] are a playful description of the ideal passion which animated the two simple hearts of Sireine and Diane, and of the mutuality of their affections, on which D'Urfé fondly lingers:

Ce berger mouroit adorant,
 Ce berger adoroit mourant
 Des beautez la beauté plus belle,
 Vne Diane estoit son cœur
 D'une Diane il eut tant d'heur,
 Que l'aimant il fut aimé d'elle.

Si d'elle il estoit le soucy
 Elle de luy l'estoit aussi,
 Si elle n'aimoit que Sireine,
 Sireine moins ne l'adoroit:
 Ainsi esgalement serroit
 Ces deux cœurs vne mesme chaine.

The interpolated stanzas (v—xxx) in B [= 1618] are of a totally different character, forming as they do a distinct pastoral episode, the nature of which may be judged from the following quotations:

v.

Ce ruisseau sourdoit d'un rocher,
 Que deuot, n'eust osé toucher
 De main, ny de langue alterée,
 Ny le berger, ny son troupeau,
 Parce qu'ils croyoient que ceste eau
 Fut à Diane consacrée.

XII.

En ce lieu Sireine Berger,
 Pour mieux à son ennuy songer,
 Mena sa troupe toisonnee,
 Et desia le soleil panchant
 S'approchoit plus de son couchant
 Que d'où commence sa iournee.

The same phenomenon is noticeable in stanzas XLIII—XLVIII of B (not represented in A), in which D'Urfé interpolates another pastoral episode. One stanza will serve as an illustration :

XLIII.

Ses moutons prés de leur Berger
 Sembloient de pitié se ranger,
 Ressentant le mal de leur maistre,
 Et tenant les yeux dessus luy
 Comme s'ils plaignoient son ennuy,
 Auoient oublié de repaistre.

It would indeed seem as if the author, by means of these pastoral interpolations, had deliberately set himself the task of concealing the true meaning of the *Sireine*, which is all too evident in the first edition, and it would be interesting, in this connection, to compare A with the two extant MSS. of the poem. The manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale, which bears D'Urfé's signature, proves that the author was engaged on the copy in 1596. It was completed on July 1, 1599, precisely a fortnight before the copy filched by Aubrey was completed. M. Reure describes it as 'plein de corrections, de stances supprimées, refaites ou ajoutées.' Aubrey's copy can scarcely have been better, if we accept Micard's statement: 'Parce que ceste œuvre ainsi deschirée & desbiffée, faisoit mal au cœur à plusieurs qui l'auoient veüe en meilleur estat & que tous les iours i'en auois du reproche, i'ay esté curieux d'en recouruer vne bonne coppie, à fin de te la faire voir telle qu'elle doit estre.'

The Turin manuscript, also an autograph copy, is apparently later. The dedication is dated June 16, 1600.

Such interpolations as we have indicated above are common throughout the poem. One more example, taken from the second canto, will suffice to illustrate the poet's method of amplifying his original design :

A.

Chasque moment de ce sejour
 Qui va eslongnant ton retour
 M'est vn long siecle que ie pleure :
 Et si autres fois tu as veu
 En mes yeux quelque amour de feu,
 Or sans plus le pleur y demeure.

B.

ABSENCE. ST. LIX.

Chasque moment de ce sejour
 Qui va retardant ton retour,
 M'est vn long siecle que ie pleure :
 Tu vis mes yeux (ô temps heureux)
 Tous bruslans de feux amoureux,
 Or sans plus le pleur y demeure.

A.

B.

ABSENCE. ST. LIX.

Que c'est, amy, de bien aymer,
Si l'on me parle de la mer,
Fay l'ame de craincte frappée,
Que quelque tourbillon volant
Ne t'ait accueilly violent,
Et ta gallere enueloppee.

Si l'on me discourt des poissons,
Monstres-marins, mille glaçons
Me gellent aussi tost craintive,
Si l'on me nomme quelque escueil,
(O Berger) que deuient mon œil!
Je suis aussi morte que viue.

Que si l'on raconte les lousps
Qu'aux Alpes on voit à tout coups,
Je tremble, amy, toute peureuse,
Et plus encore pour ces grands Ours,
Aussi la vraye amour tousiours
Est pleine de crainte soigneuse.

Dieux! qu'est ce que ie ne crains
point?
Loing de toy toute fleur me point,
Et m'est vne tranchante espine,
Ce que ie crains, ie ne sçay pas,
Mais ie sçay bien qu'à tous les pas
L'effroy me gelle la poitrine.

Qui sçait? peust estre à mes despens
A nouuelle amour tu te prens,
Et porte d'vne humeur volage,
Te mocquant de moy, tu luy dis
Qu'aussi sotte que mes brebis,
Je suis vrayment nee au village.

Ah! soit faux ce penser fascheux,
Que si toutesfois tu le veux
Auant que de m'estre infidelle,
Fay courre ce bruit, i'en mourray,
(Sireine) iamais ie n'oray
Sans mourir, semblable nouuelle.

Mais non, ie ne veux plus songer
Que tu puisse estre leger,
Ny qu'autre de toy me recule,
Aussi toute raison veut bien
Puis que ton feu seul est le mien,
Que le mien seul aussi te brusle.

Que si le desir de me voir
N'a tant en ton cœur de pouuoir,
Qu'vn prompt retour il te permette,
Que mon ennuy si violent
Te fasse reuenir volant,
Et tu verras comme il me traicte.

Si le desir de me reuoir
N'a plus en ton cœur de pouuoir,
Ce qu'he!las! amour ne permette,
Que mon deuoir si violent
Te face reuenir volant,
Et tu verras comme il me traicte.

The longest interpolation which I have noticed comes at the beginning of the third canto where sixty-nine stanzas, which have no equivalent in the original edition, have been introduced into the later editions. In

these stanzas we have a highly-coloured and fanciful description of Sireine's return journey from his land of exile, beginning with :

Vn doux vent refrisoit la mer
Qui l'empeschoit de se calmer
Et dedans la voile legere
Faisant vn agreable effort,
Promptement esloigna du port
Le triste amant, & sa galere.

This scene is one of the most beautiful in the whole poem, heightened as it is by the dramatic touch by which D'Urfé makes an old mariner relate the sad love-story of Sireine and Diana¹, how they had been separated, and how Diana was to be forcibly married that very day to Delio:

Ce berger riche [qui] n'auoit rien
En soy d'aymable que son bien.

Here occurs the tragic event of Sireine's attempted suicide by drowning. Upon hearing the words :

C'est (ce me semble) aujourd'huy
Le iour fatal de son ennuy
Si ma memoire est bien certaine,

Sireine, realising that all his hopes are in vain, decides that he will die for Diana's love.

As we have said above, all this is absent from the first edition, which opens the third canto in the usual affected strain :

Cet œil qui pleuroit au partir,
Ce pleur qui brusloit au sortir,
Ce cœur qui mouroit de l'absence,
Ces sermens si souuent iurez,
Sont-ils contre moy coniurez
Pour faire vne si grande offence.

We have surmised that D'Urfé may have made these changes and additions to the poem with the definite object of preventing or circumventing a too literal and obvious interpretation of the story. This may also be the explanation of the suppression of De Lingendes' commendatory poems in the second and subsequent editions. One of these, in which the poet speaks of the forthcoming publication of his own pastoral of *Iris*, would of course be out of date in the 1606 edition, but they both refer in no uncertain terms to the true and inner purport of D'Urfé's work.

LLANFYLLIN.

E. T. GRIFFITHS.

There is one passage in the old mariner's tale which seems to have escaped the notice of the critics, and which seems to me to place beyond doubt the allegorical interpretation of the *Sireine* as the story of the love of D'Urfé and Diane de Châteaumorand. It is stanza xvi (f. 57) of the 1618 edition :

Ces deux amants ont fort long temps
Ensemble vescu bien contens,
Et d'une finesse bien sage
Ont les yeux plus clairs aueuglez
Courrant en leurs desirs reglez
L'amour dessous le parentage.