TO HIS LADY IN SICKNESS

(*The 16th Epistle.*)

It is the way this is printed that makes some miss its value. It is, like all the best he wrote, a song; it needs the varying time of human expression, the effect of tone, the repose and the re-lifting of musical notes; illuminated thus it greatly charmed, and if any one would know the order of such a tune, why, it should follow the punctuation: a cessation at the third line; a rise of rapid accents to the thirteenth, and then a change; the last three lines of the whole very much fuller and strong.

So I would hear it sung on a winter evening in an old house in Auvergne, and re-enter the sixteenth century as I heard.

TO HIS LADY IN SICKNESS

Ma mignonne,
Je vous donne
Le bon jour.
Le séjour,
C'est prison.
Guérison
Recouvrez,
Puis ouvrez
Vostre porte
Et qu'on sorte
Vistement;
Car Clément
Le vous mande.
Va, friande
De ta bouche,
Qui se couche

En danger
Pour manger
Confitures;
Si tu dures
Trop malade,
Couleur fade
Tu prendras
Et perdras
L'embonpoint.
Dieu te doint,
Santé bonne,
Ma mignonne.