Paris, and by his pleaſant humour ſoon attracted to his houſe all the men of wit about the city. The loſs of his health was followed by the lots of his for­tune. On the death of his father he entered into a proceſs with his mother-in-law. He pleaded the cauſe in a ludicrous manner, though his whole fortune depended on the deciſion. He accordingly loſt the cauſe Mademoiſelle de Hautefort, compaſſionating his misfor­tunes, procured for him an audience of the queen. The poet requeſted to have the title of *Valetudinarian* to her majeſtv. The queen ſmiled, and Scarron conſidered the ſmile as the commiſſion to his new office. He there­fore aſſumed the title of *Scarron, by the grace oſ God, υnworthy valetudinarian to the queen.*

Cardinal Mazarine gave him a penſion of 500 crowns; but that miniſter having received diſdainfully the dedi­cation of his *Typhon,* the poet immediately wrote a *Mazarinade,* and the penſion was withdrawn. He then at­tached himſelf to the prince of Condé, and celebrated his victories. He at length formed the extraordinary reſolution of marrying, and was accordingly, in 1651, married to Mademoiſelle d’Aubigné (afterwards the fa­mous Madam de Maintenon), who was then only 16 years of age. “At that time (ſays Voltaire) it was conſidered as a great acquiſition for her to gain for a huſband a man who was disfigured by nature, impotent, and very little enriched by fortune. ” When Scarron was queſtioned about the contract of marriage, he ſaid he acknowledged to the bride two large invincible eyes, a very beautiful ſhape, two fine hands, and a large portion of wit. The notary demanded what dowry he would give her? Immediately replied Scarron, “The names of the wives of kings die with them, but the name of Scarron’s wife ſhall live for ever. ” She reſtrained by her modeſty his indecent buffooneries, and the good company which had formerly reſorted to his houſe were not leſs frequent in their viſits. Scarron now became a new man. He became more decent in his manners and converſation; and his gaiety, when tempered with moderation, was ſtill more agreeable. But, in the mean time, he lived with ſo little economy, that his income was ſoon reduced to a ſmall annuit and his marquiſate of Quinet. By the marquiſate of Quinet, he meant the revenue he derived from his pub­lications, which were printed by one Quinet. He was accuſtomed to talk to his ſuperiors with great freedom in his jocular ſtyle. In the dedication to his *Don Japhet d'Armenie,* he thus addreſſes the king. “I ſhall en­deavour to perſuade your majeſty, that you would do yourſelf no injury were you to do me a ſmall favour; for in that caſe I ſhould become more gay: if I ſhould become more gay, I ſhould write ſprightly comedies: and if I ſhould write ſprightly comedies, your majeſty would be amuſed, and thus your money would not be loft. All this appears ſo evident, that I ſhould cer­tainly be convinced of it if I were as great a king as I am now a poor unfortunate man. ”

Though Scarron wrote comedies, he had neither time nor patience to ſtudy the rules and models of dramatic poetry. Ariſtotle and Horace, Plautus and Terence, would have frightened him; and perhaps he did not know that there was ever ſuch a perſon as Ariſtophanes. He ſaw an open path before him, and he follow­ed it. It was the faſhion of the times to pillage the Spaniſh writers. Scarron was acquainted with that language, and he found it eaſier to uſe the materials which were already prepared, than to rack his brain in inventing a ſubject; a reſtraint to which a genius like his could not eaſily ſubmit. As he borrowed liberally from the Spaniſh writers, a dramatic piece did not coſt him much labour. His labour conſiſted not in making his comic characters talk humorouſly, but in keeping up ſerious characters; for the ſerious was a foreign lan­guage to him. The great ſucceſs of his *Jodelet Maitre* was a vaſt allurement to him. The comedians who acted it eagerly requeſted more of his productions. They were written without much toil, and they procured him large ſums. They ſerved to amuſe him. If it be neceſſary to give more reaſons for Scarron’s readineſs to engage in theſe works, abundance may be had. He dedicated his bocks to his ſiſter’s greyhound bitch; and when ſhe failed him, he dedicated them to a certain Monſeigneur, whom he praiſed higher, but did not much eſteem. When the office of hiſtoriogtapher be­came vacant, he ſolicited for it without ſucceſs. At length Fouquet gave him a penſion of 1600 livres. Chriſtina queen of Sweden having come to Paris, was anxious to fee Scarron. "I permit you (ſaid ſhe to Scarron) to fall in love with me. The queen of France has made you her valetudinarian, and I create you my *Roland."* Scarron did not long enjoy that title: he was ſeized with ſo violent a hiccough, that every perſon thought he would have expired, "If I recover (he ſaid), I will make a fine ſatire on the hiccough. ” His gaiety did not forſake him to the laſt. Within a few minutes of his death, when his domeſtics were ſhedding tears about him, “My good friends (ſaid he), I ſhall never make you weep ſo much for me as I have made you laugh.” Juſt before expiring, he ſaid, “I could never believe before that it is ſo eaſy to laugh at death. ” He died on the 14th of October 1660, in the 51ſt year of his age.

His works have been collected and publiſhed by Bruzen de la Martiniere, in 10 vols 12 mo, 1737. There are, 1. The Eneid traveſtied, in 8 books. It was afterwards continued by Moreau de Braſey. 2 Typhon, or the Gigantomachia 3. Many comedies; as, jode­let, or the Maſter Valet; Jodelet cuffed; Don Japhet d’Armenie; The Ridiculous Heir; Every Man his own Guardian; The Fooliſh Marquis; The Scholar of Salamanca; The Falſe Appearance; The Prince Corſaire, a tragi-comedy. Beſides theſe, he wrote other pieces in verſe. 4. His Comic Romance in proſe, which is the only one of his works that deferves attention. Itis written with much purity and gaiety, and has contri­buted not a little to the improvement of the French lan­guage. Scarron had great pleaſure in reading his works to his friends as he compoſed them: he called it trying his works. Segrais and another of his friends coming to him one day, "Take a chair (ſays Scarron to them) and fit down, that I may examine my Comic Romance. ” When he obſerved the company laugh, “Very well (ſaid he), my book will be well received ſince it makes perſons of ſuch delicate taſte laugh. ” Nor was he de­ceived. His Romance had a prodigious run. It was the only one of his works that Boileau could ſubmit to read. 5. Spaniſh Novels tranſlated into French. 6. A volume of Letters. 7. Poems; conſiſting of Songs, Epiſtles, Stanzas, Odes, and Epigrams. The whole col­lection abounds with ſprightlineſs and gaiety. Scarron