

he listened attentively to all he heard, and accustomed himself to speak softly the words pronounced by others. He laboured hard in perfecting himself in the pronounciation, and in the ideas attached to every sound. At length, supposing himself qualified to break silence, he declared that he could speak, though as yet but imperfectly. Soon after some able divines questioned him concerning his ideas of his past state, and principally with respect to God, his soul, the moral beauty of virtue and deformity of vice. Of these, however, he did not appear to have the slightest conception. He had gone to mass indeed with his parents, had learned to sign himself with the cross, to kneel down, and to assume all the external signs of devotion; but he did all this without comprehending the intention or the cause. He had no idea even of death, but led a life of pure animal instinct, and though entirely taken up with sensual objects, and such as were present, he yet did not seem to have made any reflections upon them. The young man was not, however, in want of understanding, but the understanding of a man deprived of all intercourse with society is so very confined, that the
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