A proposition which emanates from myself—whether cited variously as my eulogy or as blame—I claim it as my own together with all those that crowd in here—affirms, in short, that everything in the world exists in order to end up as a book.

The qualities required for this work, certainly genius, make me afraid, as one among the destitute—but not to halt there, and granted that the volume requires nobody to sign it, what is it?--the hymn, harmony and joy, grouped as a pure unity in some lightning circumstance, of the relations between everything. Man is entrusted with seeing divinely, because the bond, at will and pellucid, has to his eyes no other expression than in the parallelism of the sheet.

On a garden bench such a new publication lies; I rejoice if the passing wind half opens and unintentionally animates aspects of the book’s exterior—several of which, because of the flood of things perceived, maybe nobody has thought of since reading existed. The opportunity to do it is when, liberated, the newspaper dominates, even my own, which I put aside, and it takes flight near the roses, anxious to smother their fervent and proud assembly—spread out amidst the clump, I shall abandon it, and the flowering words, to their silence, and, in a technical way, propose to note how such a
tattered sheet differs from the book, itself pre-eminent. A newspaper remains the point of departure; literature discharges itself at will.

Thus--

With regard to the large printed sheet, the folding is a sign, almost religious, which is not so striking as its settling, in density, presenting the miniature tomb, indeed, of the soul.

Everything that printing discovered is summarized under the name of the Press, up until now, in an elementary form in the newspaper--the sheet in itself, having received the imprint, exhibits, to the highest degree, crudely, the casting of a text. This usage, proximate or previous to the finished product, certainly has conveniences for the writer: posters joined end to end, proofs, which restore improvisation. So, in the same way, strictly speaking, with a 'daily' before there appears to the vision, little by little, but whose vision?, a meaning in the arrangement, a charm even, I would say, like a popular fairyland. Proceed--the elite or high-class of Paris, detached, superior, despite a thousand obstacles, attains disinterestedness and, following on from the situation, precipitates and stems, far away, as though by means of an electric fire, after the articles that have appeared as a result of it, the original servitude: the announcement, on the fourth page, between an incoherence of inarticulate cries. A spectacle, moral even--what lacks the newspaper, with all its exploits, in order to wipe out the book--although, visibly yet, they are united simply, or rather basically, by the signatures, and the demand for generality of columns--it lacks) nothing, or almost--as long as the book, such as it is, delays, like a weir, unconcerned, where the other empties itself...even the format, useless--and in vain does this extraordinary, gathered in like a wing about to unfold, intervention of the folding or the rhythm concur, initial cause for a closed sheet to contain a secret, where dwells the silence, precious, in pursuit of evocative signs, quite literally abolished for the spirit.

So, without the furling of the paper and the undersides that it establishes, the shadow scattered in black characters would not present a reason for spreading itself out, like a wreckage of mystery, on the surface, in the separation lifted up by the finger.

Newspaper, the spread sheet, assumes an untimely outcome from the
impression, through simple maculation—there is no doubt that the vulgar, glaring advantage lies, in the eyes of everyone, in the multiplication of each copy, and the circulation. This benefaction bestows a miracle, in the higher sense, wherein the words, originally, are reduced to the usage, capable of infinity almost to the point of sanctifying a language, of some twenty letters--their growing, everything returning there so as to well up in a moment, the beginning--bringing the typographical composition close to a rite.

The book, total expansion of the letter, has to extract from it, directly, a mobility and, being spacious, through connections, has to institute a game, we know not what, that confirms the fiction.

There is nothing fortuitous, there, where a chance seems to catch the idea, the apparatus is all the same--consequently do not judge these remarks, either in an industrial sense or in relation to materiality. The fabrication of the book, in the ensemble that will expand, begins with a phrase. Since time immemorial the poet knows the place of this verse, in the sonnet which is inscribed spiritually or onto pure space. As for myself, I disregard the volume and a marvel proclaimed by its structure if I cannot, knowingly, imagine such a motif with the idea of a special place, the page and the height, in its own everyday aspect or in terms of the work itself. Plus the incessant coming and going of looking, one line finishing and beginning again at the next one--such a practice does not represent the pleasure, having everlastingly broken with everything for one hour, of translating its chimera. Otherwise or unless it is executed actively, like pieces for piano, measured by the sheets, how could anyone not close his eyes to dream? Neither this presumption nor a fastidious servility, but the initiative of whoever receives its lightning bolt, connects the fragmented notation.

Through reading, a solitary tacit concert presents itself to the spirit that regains, at a lower volume, the meaning—no mental means will be lacking to extol the symphony, rarefied, and that's everything--the act of thinking. Poetry, next to the idea, is Music, par excellence—it does not consent to inferiority.

Here in real life, nevertheless, as far as I am concerned, as regards pamphlets to be read in the current fashion, I brandish a knife, like the cook about to slit the fowl’s neck.

The unopened virginal book, moreover, ready for a sacrifice from which the red edges of ancient books bleed; the introduction of a weapon, or page cutter, to establish the taking of possession. How personal the conscience previously, with this barbarous sham--when it would become participation, with the book purchased from
here or from there, varied in likeness, divined like an enigma--almost remade by itself. The folds will perpetuate a mark, intact, inviting the sheet to be opened or closed, as the owner wishes. So blind and petty a process, this assault which is committed, through the destruction of a fragile inviolability. Our sympathy might go to the newspaper which is not exposed to this treatment--its influence, nonetheless, is disagreeable, imposing a monotony onto the complex organism, which literature requires, and onto the divine tome--always the unbearable column which is merely distributed there, page-sized, hundreds of times.

But ...

--I hear, can there be any end to this; and in a moment I am going to satisfy the curiosity in every detail, for the work, preferably on its own, should provide an example. Why--a burst of grandeur, of thought or of emotion, eminent, a sentence pursued in large letters, one line per page, in a graduated arrangement--wouldn't this keep the reader in suspense throughout the whole book, appealing to this power of enthusiasm--all around, minor clusters, of secondary importance, explicatory or derivative--an array of flourishes.

The fashion of catching the sauntering reader unawares, through remote statement; I would agree, if many, whom I am friends with, do not notice, with the instinct coming from somewhere else which made them assemble their writings in an obsolete way, decoratively, between the sentence and the line of verse, certain characteristics similar to this; thus, if it is to be isolated, let it be so, for the sake of the renown of clairvoyance that the epoch clamours for, where everything is apparent. One divulges his intuition, theoretically and, it may well be, into the void, like time--he knows that such suggestions, which attain to the art of literature, have to commit themselves firmly. The hesitation, however, in discovering all of a sudden everything that does not yet exist, prudishly, to everyone's surprise, weaves a veil.

Let us attribute to our dreams, before reading, in a garden, the attention demanded by some white butterfly, this one that is everywhere at once,
nowhere, it vanishes; but not before an acute and ingenious trifle, to which I reduce the subject, had, a moment ago, passed and repassed, insistently, before my astonished eyes.