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This study deals with analysing certain problems concerning the translation of *The Fourth Book (Quart livre de Pantagruel)* by François Rabelais, focussed on three particular aspects: stylistic questions, lexical variety, and plays on words. After a brief introduction describing the work and its (un)lucky reception in Italy, three textual sequences were examined to demonstrate the difficulties faced by the translator charged with creating a metatext to be published as a parallel text alongside the French version; it shows some of the most difficult obstacles that had to be overcome also because of the cultural and literary problems that arose. The translation exercise is interpreted here in a philological perspective because in order to carry out this kind of work on texts that are so polysemous and distant from the target culture, meticulous preparation of documentation and interpretation of the text is absolutely essential.