

**Religio medici : with observations upon Religio medici occasionally written by Sir Kenelm Digby / by Sir Thomas Browne.**

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RELIGIO MEDICI



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# RELIGIO MEDICI

BY

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

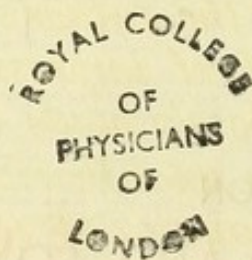
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## EDITORIAL NOTE

**I**T has been thought that a reprint in worthy form of this fine plea for religious toleration and charitable judgment in all things may be acceptable to many for whom the words of an old writer can still have a modern application, and for whom, in spite of some vestiges of outworn ideas, it will ever remain, in the phrase of its first critic, a "noble discourse." To that intent it is here reproduced with close adherence to the text as it was originally given to the world by its author.

It is, however, to be observed that there is no single authentic text of the work. Made known first through several manuscript copies, differing slightly, but of equal authenticity, it was printed in the year 1642 without the author's knowledge or consent. His own first impression of the following year was purposely made to differ in various details from the unauthorized edition, and also from other manuscript copies which are still extant.

The reprint here given follows the author's



*text as it was edited with much care by Simon Wilkin in 1836; but it omits the cumbrous overgrowth of notes which had accumulated upon a work whose fame spread throughout Europe very soon after its first appearance. It reproduces only the author's own brief marginalia, some of which have been transferred from the manuscripts; these latter, with a few similar interpolations in the text, are all distinguished by being inclosed in brackets.*

*Sir Kenelm Digby's Observations, referred to in the preliminary correspondence, though they were published separately, are generally included with Sir T. Browne's work; and as they are by no means unworthy of it, they are here printed as an Appendix.*



*A Letter sent upon the information of Animadversions to come forth, upon the imperfect and surreptitious copy of "Religio Medici," whilst this true one was going to press*

HONOURABLE SIR,

GIVE your servant, who hath ever honoured you, leave to take notice of a book at present in the press, intituled (as I am informed) Animadversions upon a Treatise lately printed under the name of "Religio Medici;" hereof, I am advertised, you have descended to be the author. Worthy Sir, permit your servant to affirm there is contained therein nothing that can deserve the reason of your contradictions, much less the candour of your animadversions; and to certify the truth thereof, that book (whereof I do acknowledge myself the author) was penned many years past, and (what cannot escape your apprehension) with no intention for the press, or the least desire to oblige the faith of any man to its assertions. But what hath more especially emboldened my pen unto you at present is, that the same piece, contrived in my private study, and as an exercise unto myself, rather than exercitation for any other, having past from my hand under a broken and imperfect copy, by frequent tran-



scription it still run forward into corruption, and after the addition of some things, omission of others, and transposition of many, without my assent or privacy the liberty of these times committed it unto the press; whence it issued so disguised, the author without distinction could not acknowledge it. Having thus miscarried, within a few weeks I shall, God willing, deliver unto the press the true and intended original (whereof in the mean time your worthy self may command a view), otherwise whenever that copy shall be extant, it will most clearly appear how far the text hath been mistaken, and all observations, glosses, or exercitations thereon, will in a great part impugn the printer or transcriber, rather than the author. If, after that, you shall esteem it worth your vacant hours to discourse thereon, you shall but take that liberty which I assume myself, that is, freely to abound in your sense, as I have done in my own. However ye shall determine, you shall sufficiently honour me in the vouchsafe of your refute, and I oblige the whole world in the occasion of your pen.

Your Servant,  
T. B.

*Norwich, March 3, 1642.*

WORTHY SIR,

Speedily upon the receipt of your letter of the third current, I sent to find out the printer that Mr. Crook (who delivered me yours) told me was printing something under my name, concerning your treatise of "Religio Medici," and to forbid him any further pro-



ceeding therein ; but my servant could not meet with him ; whereupon I have left with Mr. Crook a note to that purpose, entreating him to deliver it to the printer. I verily believe there is some mistake in the information given you, and that what is printing must be from some other pen than mine ; for such reflexions as I made upon your learned and ingenious discourse, are so far from meriting the press, as they can tempt no body to a serious reading of them ; they were notes hastily set down, as I suddenly ran over your excellent piece, which is of so weighty subjects, and so strongly penned, as requireth much time, and sharp attention, but to comprehend it ; whereas what I writ was the employment but of one sitting ; and there was not twenty-four hours between my receiving my Lord of Dorset's letter that occasioned what I said, and the finishing my answer to him ; and yet part of that time was taken up in procuring your book, which he desired me to read, and give him an account of ; for till then I was so unhappy as never to have heard of that worthy discourse. If that letter ever come to your view, you will see the high value I set upon your great parts : and if it should be thought I have been something too bold in differing from your sense, I hope I shall easily obtain pardon, when it shall be considered, that his lordship assigned it me as an exercitation to oppose in it, for entertainment, such passages as I might judge capable thereof ; wherein what liberty I took is to be attributed to the security of a private letter, and to my not knowing (nor my lord's) the person whom it concerned.

But, sir, now that I am so happy as to have that



knowledge, I dare assure you, that nothing shall ever issue from me, but savouring of all honour, esteem, and reverence, both to yourself, and that worthy production of yours. If I had the vanity to give myself reputation by entering the lists, in publick, with so eminent and learned a man as you are, yet I know right well I am no ways able to do it; it would be a very unequal congress: I pretend not to learning: those slender notions I have are but disjointed pieces I have by chance gleaned up here and there: to encounter such a sinewy opposite, or make animadversions upon so smart a piece as yours is, requireth a solid stock and exercise in school learning. My superficial besprinkling will serve only for a private letter, or a familiar discourse with lady-auditors. With longing I expect the coming abroad of the true copy of that book, whose false and stolen one hath already given me so much delight. And so, assuring you I shall deem it a great good fortune to deserve your favour and friendship, I kiss your hand, and rest,

Your most humble Servant,

KENELM DIGBY.

*Winchester-House,*

*March 20, 1642.*

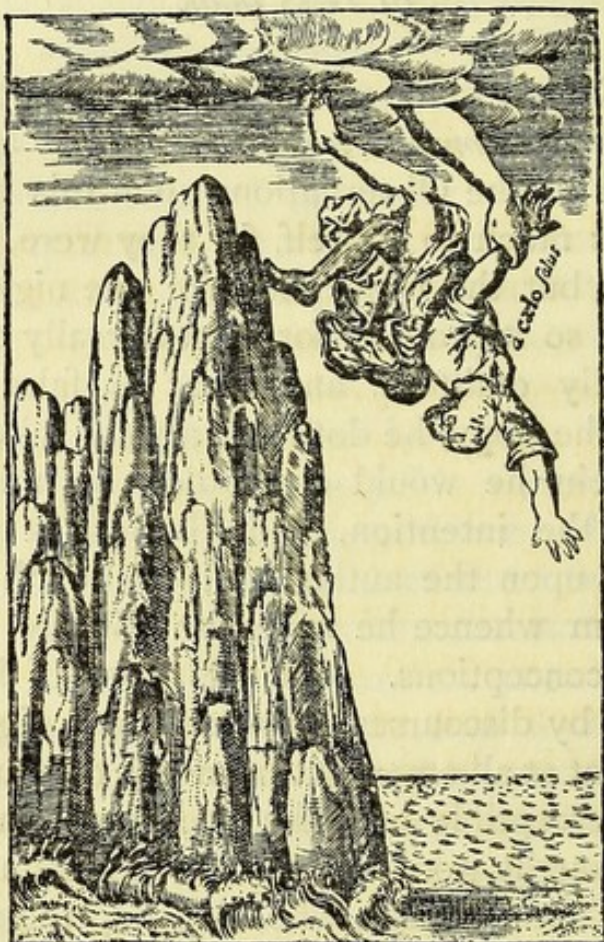


*To such as have, or shall peruse the Observa-  
tions upon a former corrupt copy  
of this book*

THERE are some men that Politian speaks of, *Cui quam recta manus, tam fuit et facilis*: and it seems the author to the Observations upon this book would arrogate as much to himself, for they were, by his own confession, but the conceptions of one night; a hasty birth; and so it proves: for what is really controllable he generally omitteth, and what is false upon the error of the copy, he doth not always take notice of; and wherein he would contradict, he mistaketh, or traduceth the intention, and (besides a parenthesis sometimes upon the author) only meddleth with those points from whence he takes an hint to deliver his prepared conceptions. But the gross of his book is made out by discourses collateral, and digressions of his own, not at all emergent from this discourse; which is easily perceptible unto the intelligent reader. Thus much I thought good to let thee understand without the author's knowledge, who, slighting the refute, hath inforcedly published (as a sufficient confutation) his own book; and in this I shall not make so bold with him, as the observator hath done with that noble knight, whose name he hath wrongfully prefixed, as I am informed, to slight animadversions: but I leave him to repentance, and thee to thy satisfaction. Farewell.

Yours,  
A. B.





*A true and full copy of that which was most  
imperfectly and surreptitiously printed before  
under the name of Religio Medici.*

*Printed for Andrew Crooke 1645*



## TO THE READER

CERTAINLY that man were greedy of life, who should desire to live when all the world were at an end ; and he must needs be very impatient, who would repine at death in the society of all things that suffer under it. Had not almost every man suffered by the press, or were not the tyranny thereof become universal, I had not wanted reason for complaint : but in times wherein I have lived to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention, the name of his Majesty defamed, the honour of Parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitly, imprinted : complaints may seem ridiculous in private persons ; and men of my condition may be as incapable of affronts, as hopeless of their reparations. And truly had not the duty I owe unto the importunity of friends, and the allegiance I must ever acknowledge unto truth, prevailed with me ; the inactivity of my disposition might have made these sufferings continual, and time, that brings other things to light, should have satisfied



me in the remedy of its oblivion. But, because things evidently false are not only printed, but many things of truth most falsely set forth; in this latter I could not but think myself engaged: for, though we have no power to redress the former, yet in the other the reparation being within ourselves, I have at present represented unto the world a full and intended copy of that piece, which was most imperfectly and surreptitiously published before.

This I confess, about seven years past, with some others of affinity thereto, for my private exercise and satisfaction, I had at leisurable hours composed; which being communicated unto one, it became common unto many, and was by transcription successively corrupted, until it arrived in a most depraved copy at the press. He that shall peruse that work, and shall take notice of sundry particularities and personal expressions therein, will easily discern the intention was not publick: and being a private exercise directed to myself, what is delivered therein was rather a memorial unto me, than an example or rule unto any other: and therefore if there be any singularity therein correspondent unto the private conceptions of any man, it doth not advantage them; or if dissentaneous thereunto, it no way overthrows them. It was penned in such a place and with such disadvantage,



that (I protest) from the first setting of pen unto paper, I had not the assistance of any good book, whereby to promote my invention or relieve my memory; and therefore there might be many real lapses therein, which others might take notice of, and more than I suspected myself. It was set down many years past, and was the sense of my conceptions at that time, not an immutable law unto my advancing judgment at all times; and therefore there might be many things therein plausible unto my passed apprehension, which are not agreeable unto my present self. There are many things delivered rhetorically, many expressions therein merely tropical, and as they best illustrate my intention; and therefore also there are many things to be taken in a soft and flexible sense, and not to be called unto the rigid test of reason. Lastly, all that is contained therein is in submission unto maturer discernments; and, as I have declared, [I] shall no further father them than the best and [most] learned judgments shall authorize them: under favour of which considerations, I have made its secrecy publick, and committed the truth thereof to every ingenuous reader.

THOMAS BROWNE.





## RELIGIO MEDICI

FOR my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all,—as the general scandal of my profession,—the natural course of my studies,—the indifferency of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion (neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another),—yet, in despite hereof, I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font, my education, or the clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my unwary understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my country; but that having, in my riper years and confirmed judgment, seen and examined all, I find myself obliged, by the principles of grace, and the law of mine own reason, to embrace no other name but this: neither doth herein my



zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity, as rather to hate than pity Turks, Infidels, and (what is worse) Jews ; rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style, than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

[Quousque patiere, bone Jesu !  
Judæi te semel, ego saepius crucifixi ;  
Illi in Asia, ego in Britannia, Gallia, Germania ;  
Bone Jesu, miserere mei, et Judæorum.]

SECT. II.—But, because the name of a Christian is become too general to express our faith,—there being a geography of religion as well as lands, and every clime not only distinguished by its laws and limits, but circumscribed by its doctrines and rules of faith,—to be particular, I am of that reformed new-cast religion, wherein I dislike nothing but the name ; of the same belief our Saviour taught, the apostles disseminated, the fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed ; but, by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty, that it required the careful and charitable hands of these times to restore it to its primitive integrity. Now, the accidental occasion whereupon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person by whom, so good a work was set on



foot, which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn, fill me with wonder, and are the very same objections the insolent pagans first cast at Christ and his disciples.

SECT. III.—Yet I have not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom, than bring her in to be new-trimmed in the dock,—who had rather promiscuously retain all, than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are, than what they have been,—as to stand in diameter and sword's point with them. We have reformed from them, not against them: for, omitting those impropriations and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our affections, and not our cause, there is between us one common name and appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both; and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers, or the place wherein we make them; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Creator anywhere,



especially in places devoted to his service ; where, if their devotions offend him, mine may please him ; if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it. Holy water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition : my common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigour, sometimes not without morosity ; yet, at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote my invisible devotion. I should violate my own arm rather than a church ; nor willingly deface the name of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross, or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour. I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or condemn the miserable condition of friars ; for, though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary bell<sup>1</sup> without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one

<sup>1</sup> A church-bell, that tolls every day at six and twelve of the clock ; at the hearing whereof every one, in what place soever, either of house or street, betakes himself to his prayer, which is commonly directed to the Virgin.



circumstance, for me to err in all,—that is, in silence and dumb contempt. Whilst, therefore, they directed their devotions to her, I offered mine to God ; and rectified the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own. At a solemn procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter. There are, questionless, both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies, whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use ; and which stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look askint on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot consist in the narrow point and centre of virtue without a reel or stagger to the circumference.

SECT. IV.—As there were many reformers, so likewise many reformatations ; every country proceeding in a particular way and method, according as their national interest, together with their constitution and clime, inclined them : some angrily and with extremity ; others calmly and with mediocrity, not rending, but easily dividing, the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation ;—which, though peaceable spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may



effect, yet that judgment that shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes,—their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion,—may, with the same hopes, expect a union in the poles of heaven.

SECT. v.—But, to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle; there is no church whose every part so squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs, seem so consonant unto reason, and, as it were, framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief—the church of England; to whose faith I am a sworn subject, and therefore, in a double obligation, subscribe unto her articles, and endeavour to observe her constitutions: whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe, according to the rules of my private reason, or the humour and fashion of my devotion; neither believing this because Luther affirmed it, nor disapproving that because Calvin hath disavouched it. I condemn not all things in the council of Trent, nor approve all in the synod of Dort. In brief, where the Scripture is silent, the church is my text; where that speaks, 'tis but my comment; where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but from the dictates of my own reason. It is an unjust scandal of our adversaries, and



a gross error in ourselves, to compute the nativity of our religion from Henry the Eighth; who, though he rejected the Pope, refused not the faith of Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and essayed in ages past, and it was conceived the state of Venice would have attempted in our days. It is as uncharitable a point in us to fall upon those popular scurrilities and opprobrious scoffs of the Bishop of Rome, to whom, as a temporal prince, we owe the duty of good language. I confess there is a cause of passion between us: by his sentence I stand excommunicated; heretic is the best language he affords me: yet can no ear witness I ever returned to him the name of antichrist, man of sin, or whore of Babylon. It is the method of charity to suffer without reaction: those usual satires and invectives of the pulpit may perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ears are opener to rhetoric than logic; yet do they, in no wise, confirm the faith of wiser believers, who know that a good cause needs not be patroned by passion, but can sustain itself upon a temperate dispute.

SECT. VI.—I could never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that from which, perhaps, within a



few days, I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion: and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage. Where we desire to be informed, 'tis good to contest with men above ourselves; but, to confirm and establish our opinions, 'tis best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity; many, from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error and remain as trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender; 'tis therefore far better to enjoy her with peace than to hazard her on a battle. If, therefore, there rise any doubts in my way, I do forget them, or at least defer them, till my better settled judgment and more manly reason be able to resolve them; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best Oedipus, and will upon a reasonable truce, find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the subtleties of error have enchained our more



flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems doublefaced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself: but in divinity I love to keep the road; and, though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move; not reserving any proper poles, or motion from the epicycle of my own brain. By this means I leave no gap for heresy, schisms, or errors, of which at present, I hope I shall not injure truth to say, I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three; not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For, indeed, heresies perish not with their authors; but, like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy: it may be cancelled for the present; but revolution of time, and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again. For, as though there were a metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find, after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again, we need not look for



Plato's year:<sup>1</sup> every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogeneses, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been some one since, that parallels him, and is, as it were, his revived self.

SECT. VII.—Now, the first of mine was that of the Arabians; that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day: not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul, but, if that were (which faith, not philosophy, hath yet thoroughly disproved), and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof that we all do of the body, that it should rise again. Surely it is but the merits of our unworthy natures, if we sleep in darkness until the last alarm. A serious reflex upon my own unworthiness did make me backward from challenging this prerogative of my soul: so that I might enjoy my Saviour at the last, I could with patience be nothing almost unto eternity. The second was that of Origen; that God would not persist in his vengeance for ever, but, after a definite time of his wrath,

<sup>1</sup> A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate, and he be teaching again in his school, as when he delivered this opinion.



would release the damned souls from torture ; which error I fell into upon a serious contemplation of the great attribute of God, his mercy ; and did a little cherish it in myself, because I found therein no malice, and a ready weight to sway me from the other extreme of despair, whereunto melancholy and contemplative natures are too easily disposed. A third there is, which I did never positively maintain or practise, but have often wished it had been consonant to truth, and not offensive to my religion ; and that is, the prayer for the dead ; whereunto I was inclined from some charitable inducements, whereby I could scarce contain my prayers for a friend at the ringing of a bell, or behold his corpse without an orison for his soul. 'Twas a good way, methought, to be remembered by posterity, and far more noble than a history. These opinions I never maintained with pertinacity, or endeavoured to inveigle any man's belief unto mine, nor so much as ever revealed, or disputed them with my dearest friends ; by which means I neither propagated them in others, nor confirmed them in myself : but, suffering them to flame upon their own substance, without addition of new fuel, they went out insensibly of themselves ; therefore these opinions, though condemned by lawful councils, were not heresies in me, but



bare errors, and single lapses of my understanding, without a joint depravity of my will. Those have not only depraved understandings, but diseased affections, which cannot enjoy a singularity without a heresy, or be the author of an opinion without they be of a sect also. This was the villany of the first schism of Lucifer; who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions of spirits; and upon this experience he tempted only Eve, well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.

SECT. VIII.—That heresies should arise, we have the prophecy of Christ; but, that old ones should be abolished, we hold no prediction. That there must be heresies, is true, not only in our church, but also in any other: even in the doctrines heretical there will be superheresies; and Arians, not only divided from the church, but also among themselves: for heads that are disposed unto schism, and complexionally propense to innovation, are naturally indisposed for a community; nor will be ever confined unto the order or economy of one body; and therefore, when they separate from others, they knit but loosely among themselves; nor contented with a general breach or dichotomy with their church, do subdivide and mince



themselves almost into atoms. 'Tis true, that men of singular parts and humours have not been free from singular opinions and conceits in all ages; retaining something, not only beside the opinion of their own church, or any other, but also any particular author; which, notwithstanding, a sober judgment may do without offence or heresy; for there are yet, after all the decrees of councils, and the niceties of the schools, many things, untouched, unimagined, wherein the liberty of an honest reason may play and expatiate with security, and far without the circle of a heresy.

SECT. IX.—As for those wingy mysteries in divinity, and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *pia mater* of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith: the deepest mysteries ours contains have not only been illustrated, but maintained, by syllogism and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery; to pursue my reason to an *O altitudo!* 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity—incarnation and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian, *Certum est quia impossibile est.* I desire to



exercise my faith in the difficultest point ; for, to credit ordinary and visible objects, is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre ; and, when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself, and am thankful, that I lived not in the days of miracles ; that I never saw Christ nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea ; nor one of Christ's patients, on whom he wrought his wonders : then had my faith been thrust upon me ; nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'Tis an easy and necessary belief, to credit what our eye and sense hath examined. I believe he was dead, and buried, and rose again ; and desire to see him in his glory, rather than to contemplate him in his cenotaph or sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe ; as we have reason, we owe this faith unto history : they only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith, who lived before his coming, who, upon obscure prophesies and mystical types, could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

SECT. X.—'Tis true, there is an edge in all firm belief, and with an easy metaphor we may say, the sword of faith ; but in these obscurities I rather use it in the adjunct the apostle gives



it, a buckler ; under which I conceive a wary combatant may lie invulnerable. Since I was of understanding to know that we know nothing, my reason hath been more pliable to the will of faith: I am now content to understand a mystery, without a rigid definition, in an easy and Platonic description. That allegorical description of Hermes<sup>1</sup> pleaseth me beyond all the metaphysical definitions of divines. Where I cannot satisfy my reason, I love to humour my fancy: I had as lieve you tell me that *anima est angelus hominis, est corpus Dei*, as ἐντελέχεια ;—*lux est umbra Dei*, as *actus perspicui*. Where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 'tis good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration ; for, by acquainting our reason how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it becomes more humble and submissive unto the subtleties of faith: and thus I teach my haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith. I believe there was already a tree, whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though, in the same chapter where God forbids it, 'tis positively said, the plants of the field were not yet grown ; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. I believe that the serpent (if we shall literally understand it), from his proper form and figure,

<sup>1</sup> "Sphaera cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi."



made his motion on his belly, before the curse. I find the trial of the pucelage and virginity of women, which God ordained the Jews, is very fallible. Experience and history informs me that, not only many particular women, but likewise whole nations, have escaped the curse of childbirth, which God seems to pronounce upon the whole sex ; yet do I believe that all this is true, which, indeed, my reason would persuade me to be false : and this, I think, is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to, reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

SECT. XI.—In my solitary and retired imagination (*neque enim cum porticus aut me lectulus accepit, desum mihi*) I remember I am not alone ; and therefore forget not to contemplate him and his attributes, who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, his wisdom and eternity. With the one I recreate, with the other I confound, my understanding : for who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstasy ? Time we may comprehend ; 'tis but five days older than ourselves, and hath the same horoscope with the world ; but, to retire so far back as to apprehend a beginning,—to give such an infinite start forwards as to conceive an end,—in an essence that we affirm hath neither the one



nor the other, it puts my reason to St. Paul's sanctuary: my philosophy dares not say the angels can do it. God hath not made a creature that can comprehend him; 'tis a privilege of his own nature: "I am that I am" was his own definition unto Moses; and 'twas a short one to confound mortality, that durst question God, or ask him what he was. Indeed, he only is; all others have and shall be; but, in eternity, there is no distinction of tenses; and therefore that terrible term, predestination, which hath troubled so many weak heads to conceive, and the wisest to explain, is in respect to God no prescious determination of our estates to come, but a definitive blast of his will already fulfilled, and at the instant that he first decreed it; for, to his eternity, which is indivisible, and altogether, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. St. Peter speaks modestly, when he saith, "a thousand years to God are but as one day;" for, to speak like a philosopher, those continued instances of time, which flow into a thousand years, make not to him one moment. What to us is to come, to his eternity is present; his whole duration being but one permanent point, without succession, parts, flux, or division.

SECT. XII.—There is no attribute that adds



more difficulty to the mystery of the Trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. I wonder how Aristotle could conceive the world eternal, or how he could make good two eternities. His similitude, of a triangle comprehended in a square, doth somewhat illustrate the trinity of our souls, and that the triple unity of God ; for there is in us not three, but a trinity of, souls ; because there is in us, if not three distinct souls, yet differing faculties, that can and do subsist apart in different subjects, and yet in us are thus united as to make but one soul and substance. If one soul were so perfect as to inform three distinct bodies, that were a petty trinity. Conceive the distinct number of three, not divided nor separated by the intellect, but actually comprehended in its unity, and that is a perfect trinity. I have often admired the mystical way of Pythagoras, and the secret magick of numbers. "Beware of philosophy," is a precept not to be received in too large a sense : for, in this mass of nature, there is a set of things that carry in their front, though not in capital letters, yet in stenography and short characters, something of divinity ; which, to wiser reasons, serve as luminaries in the abyss of knowledge, and, to judicious beliefs, as scales and runcles to mount the pinnacles and highest pieces of divinity.



The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some real substance in that invisible fabrick.

SECT. XIII.—That other attribute, wherewith I recreate my devotion, is his wisdom, in which I am happy; and for the contemplation of this only do not repent me that I was bred in the way of study. The advantage I have of the vulgar, with the content and happiness I conceive therein, is an ample recompense for all my endeavours, in what part of knowledge soever. Wisdom is his most beauteous attribute: no man can attain unto it: yet Solomon pleased God when he desired it. He is wise, because he knows all things; and he knoweth all things, because he made them all: but his greatest knowledge is in comprehending that he made not, that is, himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man. For this do I honour my own profession, and embrace the counsel even of the devil himself: had he read such a lecture in Paradise as he did at Delphos,<sup>1</sup> we had better known ourselves; nor had we stood in fear to know him. I know God is wise in all; wonderful in what we conceive,

<sup>1</sup> Γινώθι σεαυτὸν. Nosce teipsum.



but far more in what we comprehend not : for we behold him but asquint, upon reflex or shadow ; our understanding is dimmer than Moses's eye ; we are ignorant of the back parts or lower side of his divinity ; therefore, to pry into the maze of his counsels, is not only folly in man, but presumption even in angels. Like us, they are his servants, not his senators ; he holds no counsel, but that mystical one of the Trinity, wherein, though there be three persons, there is but one mind that decrees without contradiction. Nor needs he any ; his actions are not begot with deliberation ; his wisdom naturally knows what's best : his intellect stands ready fraught with the superlative and purest ideas of goodness : consultation and election, which are two motions in us, make but one in him : his actions springing from his power at the first touch of his will. These are contemplations metaphysical : my humble speculations have another method, and are content to trace and discover those expressions he hath left in his creatures, and the obvious effects of nature. There is no danger to profound these mysteries, no *sanctum sanctorum* in philosophy. The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man : 'tis the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts. Without this, the



world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honour from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire his works. Those highly magnify him, whose judicious enquiry into his acts, and deliberate research into his creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration. Therefore,

Search while thou wilt ; and let thy reason go,  
To ransom truth, e'en to th' abyss below ;  
Rally the scattered causes ; and that line  
Which nature twists be able to untwine.  
It is thy Maker's will ; for unto none  
But unto reason can he e'er be known.  
The devils do know thee ; but those damn'd meteors  
Build not thy glory, but confound thy creatures.  
Teach my endeavours so thy works to read,  
That learning them in thee I may proceed.  
Give thou my reason that instructive flight,  
Whose weary wings may on thy hands still light.  
Teach me to soar aloft, yet ever so,  
When near the sun, to stoop again below.  
Thus shall my humble feathers safely hover,  
And, though near earth, more than the heav'ns discover.  
And then at last, when homeward I shall drive,  
Rich with the spoils of nature, to my hive,  
There will I sit, like that industrious fly,  
Buzzing thy praises ; which shall never die  
Till death abrupts them, and succeeding glory  
Bid me go on in a more lasting story.



And this is almost all wherein an humble creature may endeavour to requite, and some way to retribute unto his Creator: for, if not he that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of the Father, shall be saved, certainly our wills must be our performances, and our intents make out our actions; otherwise our pious labours shall find anxiety in our graves, and our best endeavours not hope, but fear, a resurrection.

SECT. XIV.—There is but one first cause, and four second causes, of all things. Some are without efficient, as God; others without matter, as angels; some without form, as the first matter: but every essence, created or uncreated, hath its final cause, and some positive end both of its essence and operation. This is the cause I grope after in the works of nature; on this hangs the providence of God. To raise so beauteous a structure as the world and the creatures thereof was but his art; but their sundry and divided operations, with their predestinated ends, are from the treasury of his wisdom. In the causes, nature, and affections, of the eclipses of the sun and moon, there is most excellent speculation; but, to profound farther, and to contemplate a reason why his providence hath so disposed and ordered their motions in that vast circle, as to conjoin and



obscure each other, is a sweeter piece of reason, and a diviner point of philosophy. Therefore, sometimes, and in some things, there appears to me as much divinity in Galen his books, "De Usu Partium," as in Suarez's Metaphysicks. Had Aristotle been as curious in the enquiry of this cause as he was of the other, he had not left behind him an imperfect piece of philosophy, but an absolute tract of divinity.

SECT. XV.—*Natura nihil agit frustra*, is the only indisputable axiom in philosophy. There are no grotesques in nature; not any thing framed to fill up empty cantons, and unnecessary spaces. In the most imperfect creatures, and such as were not preserved in the ark, but, having their seeds and principles in the womb of nature, are every where, where the power of the sun is,—in these is the wisdom of his hand discovered. Out of this rank Solomon chose the object of his admiration; indeed, what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels; these, I confess, are the colossuses and majestick pieces of her hand; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematics; and the civility of these little citizens



more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker. Who admires not Regio Montanus his fly beyond his eagle; or wonders not more at the operation of two souls in those little bodies than but one in the trunk of a cedar? I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature which, without farther travel, I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us: there is all Africa and her prodigies in us. We are that bold and adventurous piece of nature, which he that studies wisely learns, in a compendium, what others labour at in a divided piece and endless volume.

SECT. XVI.—Thus there are two books from whence I collect my divinity. Besides that written one of God, another of his servant, nature, that universal and publick manuscript, that lies expanded unto the eyes of all. Those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other: this was the scripture and theology of the heathens; the natural motion of the sun made them more admire him than its supernatural station did the children of Israel. The ordinary effects of nature wrought more



admiration in them than, in the other, all his miracles. Surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature; which I define not, with the schools, to be the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of his creatures, according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the nature of the sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve but by a faculty from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts; but, like an excellent artist, hath so contrived his work, that, with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweeteneth the water with a wood, preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created;—for God is like a skilful geometrician, who, when more easily, and with one stroke of his compass, he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way, according to the constituted and forelaid principles of



his art: yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with his prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power, and conclude he could not. And thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore, to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honour of our writings. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind of species or creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logick we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly; they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms; and having passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all that he had made was good, that is, conformable to his will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and beauty. There is no deformity but in monstrosity; wherein, notwithstanding, there is a kind of beauty; nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabrick. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never any thing ugly or mis-shapen, but the chaos;



wherein, notwithstanding, to speak strictly, there was no deformity, because no form; nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature; they being both the servants of his providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world, and art another. If brief, all things are artificial; for nature is the art of God.

SECT. XVII.—This is the ordinary and open way of his providence, which art and industry have in good part discovered; whose effects we may foretell without an oracle. To foreshow these is not prophecy, but prognostication. There is another way, full of meanders and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides: and that is a more particular and obscure method of his providence; directing the operations of individual and single essences: this we call fortune; that serpentine and crooked line, whereby he draws those actions his wisdom intends in a more unknown and secret way; this cryptic and involved method of his providence have I ever admired; nor can I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes, or dangers, and hits of chance, with a *bezo las manos* to Fortune, or a bare gramercy to my good stars. Abraham might have thought



the ram in the thicket came thither by accident: human reason would have said, that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharaoh's daughter. What a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph! able to convert a stoick. Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches, which pass a while under the effects of chance; but at the last, well examined, prove the mere hand of God. 'Twas not dumb chance that, to discover the fougade, or powder plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of '88 the better for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonour, and the partiality of fortune; to wit, the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did not detract from the nation, when he said, he sent his armada to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds. Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason we may promise the victory to the superior: but when unexpected accidents slip in, and unthought-of occurrences intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we may behold the hand, but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the Grand Seignior proudly said, if they should



trouble him, as they did the Spaniard, he would send his men with shovels and pickaxes, and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but the mercy of God, that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius; and to the will of his providence, that dispenseth his favour to each country in their preordinate season. All cannot be happy at once; for, because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, and [they] must obey the swing of that wheel, not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates arise to their zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods. For the lives, not only of men, but of commonwealths and the whole world, run not upon a helix that still enlargeth; but on a circle, where, arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity, and fall under the horizon again.

SECT. XVIII.—These must not therefore be named the effects of fortune but in a relative way, and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God: for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way; nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superior cause. 'Tis not



a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables; for, even in sortileges and matters of greatest uncertainty, there is a settled and preordered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune. Because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects, we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that "fools only are fortunate;" or that insolent paradox, that "a wise man is out of the reach of fortune;" much less those opprobrious epithets of poets,—whore, bawd, and strumpet. 'Tis, I confess, the common fate of men of singular gifts of mind, to be destitute of those of fortune; which doth not any way deject the spirit of wiser judgments who thoroughly understand the justice of this proceeding; and, being enriched with higher donatives, cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition, to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, not to be content with the goods of mind, without a possession of those of body or fortune: and it is an error, worse than heresy, to adore these complimentary and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness, wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy,



the favours of fortune. Let providence provide for fools: 'tis not partiality, but equity, in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents. Those that are able of body and mind he leaves to their deserts; to those of weaker merits he imparts a larger portion; and pieces out the defect of one by the excess of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature for leaving us naked; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures; being provided with reason, that can supply them all. We need not labour, with so many arguments, to confute judicial astrology; for, if there be a truth therein, it doth not injure divinity. If to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty; under Jupiter to be wealthy; I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity unto such benevolous aspects. Those that hold, that all things are governed by fortune, had not erred, had they not persisted there. The Romans, that erected a temple to Fortune, acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity; for, in a wise supputation, all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logick may conjoin a heaven and earth in one argument, and, with less than a sorites, resolve all things to God. For though we christen



effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all; whose concurrence, though it be general, yet doth it subdivide itself into the particular actions of every thing, and is that spirit, by which each singular essence not only subsists, but performs its operation.

SECT. XIX.—The bad construction and perverse comment on these pair of second causes, or visible hands of God, have perverted the devotion of many unto atheism; who, forgetting the honest advisoes of faith, have listened unto the conspiracy of passion and reason. I have therefore always endeavoured to compose those feuds and angry dissensions between affection, faith, and reason: for there is in our soul a kind of triumvirate, or triple government of three competitors, which distracts the peace of this our commonwealth not less than did that other the state of Rome.

As reason is a rebel unto faith, so passion unto reason. As the propositions of faith seem absurd unto reason, so the theorems of reason unto passion and both unto reason; yet a moderate and peaceable discretion may so state and order the matter, that they may be all kings, and yet make but one monarchy: every one exercising his sovereignty and prerogative in a due time and place, according to the restraint



and limit of circumstance. There are, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts, and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself; which I confess I conquered, not in a martial posture, but on my knees. For our endeavours are not only to combat with doubts, but always to dispute with the devil. The villany of that spirit takes a hint of infidelity from our studies; and, by demonstrating a neutrality in one way, makes us mistrust a miracle in another. Thus, having perused the Archidoxes, and read the secret sympathies of things, he would dissuade my belief from the miracle of the brazen serpent; make me conceit that image worked by sympathy, and was but an Egyptian trick, to cure their diseases without a miracle. Again, having seen some experiments of bitumen, and having read far more of naphtha, he whispered to my curiosity the fire of the altar might be natural, and bade me mistrust a miracle in Elias, when he intrenched the altar round with water: for that inflammable substance yields not easily unto water, but flames in the arms of its antagonist. And thus would he inveigle my belief to think the combustion of Sodom might be natural, and that there was an asphaltick and bituminous nature



in that lake before the fire of Gomorrah. I know that manna is now plentifully gathered in Calabria; and Josephus tells me, in his days it was as plentiful in Arabia. The devil therefore made the query, "where was then the miracle in the days of Moses?" The Israelites saw but that, in his time, which the natives of those countries behold in ours. Thus the devil played at chess with me, and, yielding a pawn, thought to gain a queen of me; taking advantage of my honest endeavours; and, whilst I laboured to raise the structure of my reason, he strove to undermine the edifice of my faith.

SECT. XX.—Neither had these or any other ever such advantage of me, as to incline me to any point of infidelity or desperate positions of atheism; for I have been these many years of opinion there was never any. Those that held religion was the difference of man from beasts, have spoken probably, and proceed upon a principle as inductive as the other. That doctrine of Epicurus, that denied the providence of God, was no atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of his majesty, which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferior creatures. That fatal necessity of the stoicks is nothing but the immutable law of his will. Those that heretofore denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost have been condemned but as



hereticks ; and those that now deny our Saviour, though more than hereticks, are not so much as atheists : for, though they deny two persons in the Trinity, they hold, as we do, there is but one God.

That villain and secretary of hell, that composed that miscreant piece of the three impostors, though divided from all religions, and neither Jew, Turk, nor Christian, was not a positive atheist. I confess every country hath its Machiavel, every age its Lucian, whereof common heads must not hear, nor more advanced judgments too rashly venture on. It is the rhetorick of Satan ; and may pervert a loose or prejudicate belief.

SECT. XXI.—I confess I have perused them all, and can discover nothing that may startle a discreet belief ; yet are their heads carried off with the wind and breath of such motives. I remember a doctor in physick, of Italy, who could not perfectly believe the immortality of the soul, because Galen seemed to make a doubt thereof. With another I was familiarly acquainted, in France, a divine, and a man of singular parts, that on the same point was so plunged and gravelled with three lines of Seneca, that all our antidotes, drawn from both Scripture and philosophy, could not expel the poison of his error. There are a set of heads that can



credit the relations of mariners, yet question the testimonies of Saint Paul: and peremptorily maintain the traditions of Aelian or Pliny; yet, in histories of Scripture, raise queries and objections: believing no more than they can parallel in humane authors. I confess there are, in Scripture, stories that do exceed the fables of poets, and, to a captious reader, sound like Garagantua or Bevis. Search all the legends of times past, and the fabulous conceits of these present, and 'twill be hard to find one that deserves to carry the buckler unto Sampson; yet is all this of an easy possibility, if we conceive a divine concourse, or an influence but from the little finger of the Almighty. It is impossible that, either in the discourse of man or in the infallible voice of God, to the weakness of our apprehensions there should not appear irregularities, contradictions, and antinomies: myself could show a catalogue of doubts, never yet imagined or questioned, as I know, which are not resolved at the first hearing; not fantastick queries or objections of air; for I cannot hear of atoms in divinity. I can read the history of the pigeon that was sent out of the ark, and returned no more, yet not question how she found out her mate that was left behind: that Lazarus was raised from the dead, yet not demand where, in the interim, his soul awaited;



or raise a law-case, whether his heir might lawfully detain his inheritance bequeathed unto him by his death, and he, though restored to life, have no plea or title unto his former possessions. Whether Eve was framed out of the left side of Adam, I dispute not; because I stand not yet assured which is the right side of a man; or whether there be any such distinction in nature. That she was edified out of the rib of Adam, I believe; yet raise no question who shall arise with that rib at the resurrection. Whether Adam was an hermaphrodite, as the rabbins contend upon the letter of the text; because it is contrary to reason, there should be an hermaphrodite before there was a woman, or a composition of two natures, before there was a second composed. Likewise, whether the world was created in autumn, summer, or the spring; because it was created in them all: for, whatsoever sign the sun possesseth, those four seasons are actually existent. It is the nature of this luminary to distinguish the several seasons of the year; all which it makes at one time in the whole earth, and successive in any part thereof. There are a bundle of curiosities, not only in philosophy, but in divinity, proposed and discussed by men of most supposed abilities, which indeed are not worthy our vacant hours, much less our serious studies. Pieces only fit to be



placed in Pantagruel's library, or bound up with Tartaretus, "De Modo Cacandi."

SECT. XXII.—These are niceties that become not those that peruse so serious a mystery. There are others more generally questioned, and called to the bar, yet, methinks, of an easy and possible truth.

'Tis ridiculous to put off or drown the general flood of Noah, in that particular inundation of Deucalion. That there was a deluge once seems not to me so great a miracle as that there is not one always. How all the kinds of creatures, not only in their own bulks, but with a competency of food and sustenance, might be preserved in one ark, and within the extent of three hundred cubits, to a reason that rightly examines it, will appear very feasible. There is another secret, not contained in the Scripture, which is more hard to comprehend, and put the honest Father to the refuge of a miracle; and that is, not only how the distinct pieces of the world, and divided islands, should be first planted by men, but inhabited by tigers, panthers, and bears. How America abounded with beasts of prey, and noxious animals, yet contained not in it that necessary creature, a horse, is very strange. By what passage those, not only birds, but dangerous and unwelcome beasts, came over. How there be creatures there, which are not found in



this triple continent. All which must needs be strange unto us, that hold but one ark ; and that the creatures began their progress from the mountains of Ararat. They who, to salve this, would make the deluge particular, proceed upon a principle that I can no way grant ; not only upon the negative of Holy Scriptures, but of mine own reason, whereby I can make it probable that the world was as well peopled in the time of Noah as in ours ; and fifteen hundred years, to people the world, as full a time for them as four thousand years since have been to us. There are other assertions and common tenets drawn from Scripture, and generally believed as Scripture, whereunto, notwithstanding, I would never betray the liberty of my reason. 'Tis a postulate to me, that Methusalem was the longest lived of all the children of Adam ; and no man will be able to prove it ; when, from the process of the text, I can manifest it may be otherwise. That Judas perished by hanging himself, there is no certainty in Scripture : though, in one place, it seems to affirm it, and, by a doubtful word, hath given occasion to translate it ; yet, in another place, in a more punctual description, it makes it improbable, and seems to overthrow it. That our fathers, after the flood, erected the tower of Babel, to preserve themselves against a second deluge, is generally opinioned and be-



lieved ; yet is there another intention of theirs expressed in Scripture. Besides, it is improbable, from the circumstance of the place ; that is, a plain in the land of Shinar. These are no points of faith ; and therefore may admit a free dispute. There are yet others, and those familiarly concluded from the text, wherein (under favour) I see no consequence. The church of Rome confidently proves the opinion of tutelary angels, from that answer, when Peter knocked at the door, 'Tis not he, but his angel ; that is, might some say, his messenger, or somebody from him ; for so the original signifies ; and is as likely to be the doubtful family's meaning. This exposition I once suggested to a young divine, that answered upon this point ; to which I remember the Franciscan opponent replied no more, but, that it was a new, and no authentick interpretation.

SECT. XXIII.—These are but the conclusions and fallible discourses of man upon the word of God ; for such I do believe the Holy Scriptures ; yet, were it of man, I could not choose but say, it was the most singular and superlative piece that hath been extant since the creation. Were I a pagan, I should not refrain the lecture of it ; and cannot but commend the judgment of Ptolemy, that thought not his library complete without it. The Alcoran of the Turks (I speak



without prejudice) is an ill-composed piece, containing in it vain and ridiculous errors in philosophy, impossibilities, fictions, and vanities beyond laughter, maintained by evident and open sophisms, the policy of ignorance, deposition of universities, and banishment of learning. This hath gotten foot by arms and violence: that, without a blow, hath disseminated itself through the whole earth. It is not unremarkable, what Philo first observed, that the law of Moses continued two thousand years without the least alteration; whereas, we see, the laws of other commonwealths do alter with occasions: and even those, that pretended their original from some divinity, to have vanished without trace or memory. I believe, besides Zoroaster, there were divers others that writ before Moses; who, notwithstanding, have suffered the common fate of time. Men's works have an age, like themselves; and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the general flames, when all things shall confess their ashes.

SECT. XXIV.—I have heard some with deep sighs lament the lost lines of Cicero; others with as many groans deplore the combustion of the library of Alexandria: for my own part, I think there be too many in the world; and could



with patience behold the urn and ashes of the Vatican, could I, with a few others, recover the perished leaves of Solomon. I would not omit a copy of Enoch's pillars, had they many nearer authors than Josephus, or did not relish somewhat of the fable. Some men have written more than others have spoken. Pineda quotes more authors, in one work,<sup>1</sup> than are necessary in a whole world. Of those three great inventions<sup>2</sup> in Germany, there are two which are not without their incommodities. 'Tis not a melancholy *utinam* of my own, but the desires of better heads, that there were a general synod—not to unite the incompatible difference of religion, but,—for the benefit of learning, to reduce it, as it lay at first, in a few and solid authors; and to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of rhapsodies, begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgments of scholars, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers.

SECT. XXV.—I cannot but wonder with what exception the Samaritans could confine their belief to the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. I am ashamed at the rabbinical interpretation of the Jews upon the Old Testament, as much as their defection from the New: and truly it

<sup>1</sup> Pineda, in his "Monarchia Ecclesiastica," quotes one thousand and forty authors.

<sup>2</sup> [Guns; printing; the mariner's compass.]



is beyond wonder, how that contemptible and degenerate issue of Jacob, once so devoted to ethnical superstition, and so easily seduced to the idolatry of their neighbours, should now, in such an obstinate and peremptory belief, adhere unto their own doctrine, expect impossibilities, and in the face and eye of the church, persist without the least hope of conversion. This is a vice in them, that were a virtue in us: for obstinacy in a bad cause is but constancy in a good: and herein I must accuse those of my own religion; for there is not any of such a fugitive faith, such an unstable belief, as a Christian; none that do so often transform themselves, not unto several shapes of Christianity, and of the same species, but unto more unnatural and contrary forms of Jew and Mahometan; that, from the name of Saviour, can descend to the bare term of prophet: and, from an old belief that he is come, fall to a new expectation of his coming. It is the promise of Christ, to make us all one flock: but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion we hold a slender proportion. There are, I confess, some new additions; yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries; and those only drawn from the revolt of pagans; men but of negative impieties; and such as



deny Christ, but because they never heard of him. But the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mahometan against both ; for the Turk, in the bulk he now stands, is beyond all hope of conversion : if he fall asunder, there may be conceived hopes ; but not without strong improbabilities. The Jew is obstinate in all fortunes ; the persecution of fifteen hundred years hath but confirmed them in their error. They have already endured whatsoever may be inflicted : and have suffered, in a bad cause, even to the condemnation of their enemies. Persecution is a bad and indirect way to plant religion. It hath been the unhappy method of angry devotions, not only to confirm honest religion, but wicked heresies and extravagant opinions. It was the first stone and basis of our faith. None can more justly boast of persecutions, and glory in the number and valour of martyrs. For, to speak properly, those are true and almost only examples of fortitude. Those that are fetched from the field, or drawn from the actions of the camp, are not oftentimes so truly precedents of valour as audacity, and, at the best, attain but to some bastard piece of fortitude. If we shall strictly examine the circumstances and requisites which Aristotle requires to true and perfect valour, we shall find the name only in his master, Alex-



ander, and as little in that Roman worthy, Julius Caesar; and if any, in that easy and active way, have done so nobly as to deserve that name, yet, in the passive and more terrible piece, these have surpassed, and in a more heroical way may claim, the honour of that title. 'Tis not in the power of every honest faith to proceed thus far, or pass to heaven through the flames. Every one hath it not in that full measure, nor in so audacious and resolute a temper, as to endure those terrible tests and trials; who, notwithstanding, in a peaceable way, do truly adore their Saviour, and have, no doubt, a faith acceptable in the eyes of God.

SECT. XXVI.—Now, as all that die in the war are not termed soldiers, so neither can I properly term all those that suffer in matters of religion, martyrs. The council of Constance condemns John Huss for a heretick; the stories of his own party style him a martyr. He must needs offend the divinity of both, that says he was neither the one nor the other. There are many (questionless) canonized on earth, that shall never be saints in heaven; and have their names in histories and martyrologies, who, in the eyes of God, are not so perfect martyrs as was that wise heathen Socrates, that suffered on a fundamental point of religion,—the unity of God. I have often pitied the miserable



bishop<sup>1</sup> that suffered in the cause of antipodes ; yet cannot choose but accuse him of as much madness, for exposing his living on such a trifle, as those of ignorance and folly, that condemned him. I think my conscience will not give me the lie, if I say there are not many extant, that, in a noble way, fear the face of death less than myself ; yet, from the moral duty I owe to the commandment of God, and the natural respect that I tender unto the conservation of my essence and being, I would not perish upon a ceremony, politick points, or indifferency : nor is my belief of that untractable temper as, not to bow at their obstacles, or connive at matters wherein there are not manifest impieties. The leaven, therefore, and ferment of all, not only civil, but religious, actions, is wisdom ; without which, to commit ourselves to the flames is homicide, and (I fear) but to pass through one fire into another.

SECT. XXVII.—That miracles are ceased, I can neither prove nor absolutely deny, much less define the time and period of their cessation. That they survived Christ is manifest upon record of Scripture : that they outlived the apostles also, and were revived at the conversion of nations, many years after, we cannot

<sup>1</sup> [Virgilius.—*MS.*]



deny, if we shall not question those writers whose testimonies we do not controvert in points that make for our own opinions: therefore, that may have some truth in it, that is reported by the Jesuits of their miracles in the Indies. I could wish it were true, or had any other testimony than their own pens. They may easily believe those miracles abroad, who daily conceive a greater at home—the transmutation of those visible elements into the body and blood of our Saviour;—for the conversion of water into wine, which he wrought in Cana, or, what the devil would have had him do in the wilderness, of stones into bread, compared to this, will scarce deserve the name of a miracle: though, indeed, to speak properly, there is not one miracle greater than another; they being the extraordinary effects of the hand of God, to which all things are of an equal facility; and to create the world as easy as one single creature. For this is also a miracle; not only to produce effects against or above nature, but before nature; and to create nature, as great a miracle as to contradict or transcend her. We do too narrowly define the power of God, restraining it to our capacities. I hold that God can do all things: how he should work contradictions, I do not understand, yet dare not, therefore, deny. I cannot see why the angel of God should



question Esdras to recall the time past, if it were beyond his own power ; or that God should pose mortality in that which he was not able to perform himself. I will not say that God cannot, but he will not, perform many things, which we plainly affirm he cannot. This, I am sure, is the mannerliest proposition ; wherein, notwithstanding, I hold no paradox : for, strictly, his power is the same with his will ; and they both, with all the rest, do make but one God.

SECT. XXVIII.—Therefore, that miracles have been, I do believe ; that they may yet be wrought by the living, I do not deny : but have no confidence in those which are fathered on the dead. And this hath ever made me suspect the efficacy of relicks, to examine the bones, question the habits and appertenances of saints, and even of Christ himself. I cannot conceive why the cross that Helena found, and whereon Christ himself died, should have power to restore others unto life. I excuse not Constantine from a fall off his horse, or a mischief from his enemies, upon the wearing those nails on his bridle which our Saviour bore upon the cross in his hands. I compute among your *piae fraudes*, nor many degrees before consecrated swords and roses, that which Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, returned the Genoese for their costs and pains in his



wars; to wit; the ashes of John the Baptist. Those that hold the sanctity of their souls doth leave behind a tincture and sacred faculty on their bodies, speak naturally of miracles, and do not salve the doubt. Now, one reason I tender so little devotion unto relicks is, I think the slender and doubtful respect I have always held unto antiquities. For that, indeed, which I admire, is far before antiquity; that is, Eternity; and that is, God himself; who, though he be styled the Ancient of Days, cannot receive the adjunct of antiquity, who was before the world, and shall be after it, yet is not older than it: for, in his years there is no climacter: his duration is eternity; and far more venerable than antiquity.

SECT. XXIX.—But, above all things, I wonder how the curiosity of wiser heads could pass that great and indisputable miracle, the cessation of oracles; and in what swoon their reasons lay, to content themselves, and sit down with such a far-fetched and ridiculous reason as Plutarch allegeth for it. The Jews, that can believe the supernatural solstice of the sun in the days of Joshua, have yet the impudence to deny the eclipse, which every pagan confessed, at his death; but for this, it is evident beyond all contradiction: the devil himself confessed it.<sup>1</sup> Cer-

<sup>1</sup> In his oracle to Augustus.



tainly it is not a warrantable curiosity, to examine the verity of Scripture by the concordance of human history; or seek to confirm the chronicle of Hester or Daniel by the authority of Megasthenes or Herodotus. I confess, I have had an unhappy curiosity this way, till I laughed myself out of it with a piece of Justin, where he delivers that the children of Israel, for being scabbed, were banished out of Egypt. And truly, since I have understood the occurrences of the world, and know in what counterfeiting shapes and deceitful visards times present represent on the stage things past, I do believe them little more than things to come. Some have been of my own opinion, and endeavoured to write the history of their own lives; wherein Moses hath outgone them all, and left not only the story of his life, but, as some will have it, of his death also.

SECT. XXX.—It is a riddle to me, how this story of oracles hath not wormed out of the world that doubtful conceit of spirits and witches; how so many learned heads should so far forget their metaphysicks, and destroy the ladder and scale of creatures, as to question the existence of spirits; for my part, I have ever believed, and do now know, that there are witches. They that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits: and are obliquely, and upon conse-



quence, a sort, not of infidels, but atheists. Those that, to confute their incredulity, desire to see apparitions, shall, questionless, never behold any, nor have the power to be so much as witches. The devil hath made them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft; and to appear to them were but to convert them. Of all the delusions wherewith he deceives mortality, there is not any that puzzleth me more than the leger-demain of changelings. I do not credit those transformations of reasonable creatures into beasts, or that the devil hath a power to transpeciate a man into a horse, who tempted Christ (as a trial of his divinity) to convert but stones into bread. I could believe that spirits use with man the act of carnality; and that in both sexes. I conceive they may assume, steal, or contrive a body, wherein there may be action enough to content decrepit lust, or passion to satisfy more active veneries; yet, in both, without a possibility of generation: and therefore that opinion, that Antichrist should be born of the tribe of Dan, by conjunction with the devil, is ridiculous, and a conceit fitter for a rabbin than a Christian. I hold that the devil doth really possess some men; the spirit of melancholy others; the spirit of delusion others: that, as the devil is concealed and denied by some, so God and good angels are pretended by others, whereof the late defec-



tion of the maid of Germany<sup>1</sup> hath left a pregnant example.

SECT. XXXI.—Again, I believe that all that use sorceries, incantations, and spells, are not witches, or, as we term them, magicians. I conceive there is a traditional magick, not learned immediately from the devil, but at second hand from his scholars, who, having once the secret betrayed, are able and do empirically practise without his advice; they both proceeding upon the principles of nature; where actives, aptly conjoined to disposed passives, will, under any master, produce their effects. Thus, I think, at first, a great part of philosophy was witchcraft; which, being afterwards derived to one another, proved but philosophy, and was indeed no more than the honest effects of nature:—what invented by us, is philosophy; learned from him, is magick. We do surely owe the discovery of many secrets to the discovery of good and bad angels. I could never pass that sentence of Paracelsus without an asterisk, or annotation: *ascendens<sup>2</sup> constellatum multa revelat quaerentibus magnalia naturae, i.e. opera Dei*. I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our inventions have been the courteous revela-

<sup>1</sup> [That lived, without meat, on the smell of a rose.—MS.]

<sup>2</sup> Thereby is meant our good angel, appointed us from our nativity.



tions of spirits; for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow-natures on earth; and therefore believe that those many prodigies and ominous prognosticks, which forerun the ruins of states, princes, and private persons, are the charitable premonitions of good angels, which more careless inquiries term but the effects of chance and nature.

SECT. XXXII.—Now, besides these particular and divided spirits, there may be (for aught I know) a universal and common spirit to the whole world. It was the opinion of Plato, and it is yet of the hermetical philosophers. If there be a common nature, that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all? However, I am sure there is a common spirit, that plays within us, yet makes no part of us; and that is, the spirit of God; the fire and scintillation of that noble and mighty essence, which is the life and radical heat of spirits, and those essences that know not the virtue of the sun; a fire quite contrary to the fire of hell. This is that gentle heat that brooded on the waters,<sup>1</sup> and in six days hatched the world; this is that irradiation that dispels the mists of hell, the clouds of horror, fear, sorrow, despair; and preserves the region of

<sup>1</sup> [Spiritus Domini incubabat aquis. Gen. i.—MS.]



the mind in serenity. Whosoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this spirit, (though I feel his pulse) I dare not say he lives; for truly without this, to me, there is no heat under the tropick; nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the sun.

As when the labouring sun hath wrought his track  
Up to the top of lofty Cancer's back,  
The icy ocean cracks, the frozen pole  
Thaws with the heat of the celestial coal;  
So when thy absent beams begin t' impart  
Again a solstice on my frozen heart,  
My winter's o'er, my drooping spirits sing,  
And every part revives into a spring.  
But if thy quickening beams awhile decline,  
And with their light bless not this orb of mine,  
A chilly frost surpriseth every member,  
And in the midst of June I feel December.  
Oh how this earthly temper doth debase  
The noble soul, in this her humble place!  
Whose wingy nature ever doth aspire  
To reach that place whence first it took its fire.  
These flames I feel, which in my heart do dwell,  
Are not thy beams, but take their fire from hell.  
O quench them all! and let thy Light divine  
Be as the sun to this poor orb of mine!  
And to thy sacred Spirit convert those fires,  
Whose earthly fumes choke my devout aspires!

SECT. XXXIII.—Therefore, for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons, have their tutelary and guardian angels. It is not a new opinion of



the Church of Rome, but an old one of Pythagoras and Plato: there is no heresy in it: and if not manifestly defined in Scripture, yet it is an opinion of a good and wholesome use in the course and actions of a man's life; and would serve as an hypothesis to salve many doubts, whereof common philosophy affordeth no solution. Now, if you demand my opinion and metaphysicks of their natures, I confess them very shallow; most of them in a negative way, like that of God; or in a comparative, between ourselves and fellow-creatures: for there is in this universe a stair, or manifest scale, of creatures, rising not disorderly, or in confusion, but with a comely method and proportion. Between creatures of mere existence and things of life there is a large disproportion of nature: between plants and animals, or creatures of sense, a wider difference: between them and man, a far greater: and if the proportion hold on, between man and angels there should be yet a greater. We do not comprehend their natures, who retain the first definition of Porphyry;<sup>1</sup> and distinguish them from ourselves by immortality: for, before his fall, man also was immortal: yet must we needs affirm that he had a different essence from the angels. Having, therefore, no certain knowledge of their

<sup>1</sup> [Essentiae rationalis immortalis.—*MS.*]



nature, 'tis no bad method of the schools, whatsoever perfection we find obscurely in ourselves, in a more complete and absolute way to ascribe unto them. I believe they have an extemporary knowledge, and, upon the first motion of their reason, do what we cannot without study or deliberation: that they know things by their forms, and define, by specifical difference, what we describe by accidents and properties: and therefore probabilities to us may be demonstrations unto them: that they have knowledge not only of the specifical, but numerical, forms of individuals, and understand by what reserved difference each single hypostatis (besides the relation to its species) becomes its numerical self: that, as the soul hath a power to move the body it informs, so there's a faculty to move any, though inform none: ours upon restraint of time, place, and distance: but that invisible hand that conveyed Habakkuk to the lion's den, or Philip to Azotus, infringeth this rule, and hath a secret conveyance, wherewith mortality is not acquainted. If they have that intuitive knowledge, whereby, as in reflection, they behold the thoughts of one another, I cannot peremptorily deny but they know a great part of ours. They that, to refute the invocation of saints, have denied that they have any knowledge of our affairs below, have proceeded



too far, and must pardon my opinion, till I can thoroughly answer that piece of Scripture, "At the conversion of a sinner, the angels in heaven rejoice." I cannot, with those in that great father, securely interpret the work of the first day, *fiat lux*, to the creation of angels; though I confess there is not any creature that hath so near a glimpse of their nature as light in the sun and elements: we style it a bare accident; but, where it subsists alone, 'tis a spiritual substance, and may be an angel: in brief, conceive light invisible, and that is a spirit.

SECT. XXXIV.—These are certainly the magisterial and masterpieces of the Creator; the flower, or, as we may say, the best part of nothing; actually existing, what we are but in hopes, and probability. We are only that amphibious piece, between a corporeal and a spiritual essence; that middle form, that links those two together, and makes good the method of God and nature, that jumps not from extremes, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures. That we are the breath and similitude of God, it is indisputable, and upon record of Holy Scripture: but to call ourselves a microcosm, or little world, I thought it only a pleasant trope of rhetorick, till my near judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein.



For, first we are a rude mass, and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being, not yet privileged with life, or preferred to sense or reason; next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits: running on, in one mysterious nature, those five kinds of existences, which comprehend the creatures, not only of the world, but of the universe. Thus is man that great and true *amphibium*, whose nature is disposed to live, not only like other creatures in divers elements, but in divided and distinguished worlds; for though there be but one [world] to sense, there are two to reason, the one visible, the other invisible; whereof Moses seems to have left description, and of the other so obscurely, that some parts thereof are yet in controversy. And truly, for the first chapters of Genesis, I must confess a great deal of obscurity; though divines have, to the power of human reason, endeavoured to make all go in a literal meaning, yet those allegorical interpretations are also probable, and perhaps the mystical method of Moses, bred up in the hieroglyphical schools of the Egyptians.

SECT. XXXV.—Now for that immaterial world, methinks we need not wander so far as the first moveable; for, even in this material fabrick, the spirits walk as freely exempt from the



affection of time, place, and motion, as beyond the extremest circumference. Do but extract from the corpulency of bodies, or resolve things beyond their first matter, and you discover the habitation of angels; which if I call the ubiquitary and omnipresent essence of God, I hope I shall not offend divinity: for, before the creation of the world, God was really all things. For the angels he created no new world, or determinate mansion, and therefore they are everywhere where is his essence, and do live, at a distance even, in himself. That God made all things for man, is in some sense true; yet, not so far as to subordinate the creation of those purer creatures unto ours; though, as ministering spirits, they do, and are willing to fulfil the will of God in these lower and sublunary affairs of man. God made all things for himself; and it is impossible he should make them for any other end than his own glory: it is all he can receive, and all that is without himself. For, honour being an external adjunct, and in the honourer rather than in the person honoured, it was necessary to make a creature, from whom he might receive this homage: and that is, in the other world, angels, in this, man; which when we neglect, we forget the very end of our creation, and may justly provoke God, not only to repent that he hath made the world,



but that he hath sworn he would not destroy it. That there is but one world, is a conclusion of faith; Aristotle with all his philosophy hath not been able to prove it: and as weakly that the world was eternal; that dispute much troubled the pen of the ancient philosophers, but Moses decided that question, and all is salved with the new term of a creation,—that is, a production of something out of nothing. And what is that?—whatsoever is opposite to something; or, more exactly, that which is truly contrary unto God: for he only is; all others have an existence with dependency, and are something but by a distinction. And herein is divinity conformant unto philosophy, and not only generation founded on contrarieties, but also creation. God, being all things, is contrary unto nothing; out of which were made all things, and so nothing became something, and omneity informed nullity into an essence.

SECT. XXXVI.—The whole creation is a mystery, and particularly that of man. At the blast of His mouth were the rest of the creatures made; and at his bare word they started out of nothing: but in the frame of man (as the text describes it) he played the sensible operator, and seemed not so much to create as make him. When he had separated the materials of other



creatures, there consequently resulted a form and soul; but, having raised the walls of man, he was driven to a second and harder creation,—of a substance like himself, an incorruptible and immortal soul. For these two affections we have the philosophy and opinion of the heathens, the flat affirmative of Plato, and not a negative from Aristotle. There is another scruple cast in by divinity concerning its production, much disputed in the German auditories, and with that indifferency and equality of arguments, as leave the controversy undetermined. I am not of Paracelsus's mind, that boldly delivers a receipt to make a man without conjunction; yet cannot but wonder at the multitude of heads that do deny traduction, having no other argument to confirm their belief than that rhetorical sentence and *antimetathesis* of Augustine, *creando infunditur, infundendo creatur*. Either opinion will consist well enough with religion: yet I should rather incline to this, did not one objection haunt me, not wrung from speculations and subtleties, but from common sense and observation; not pick'd from the leaves of any author, but bred amongst the weeds and tares of my own brain. And this is a conclusion from the equivocal and monstrous productions in the copulation of a man with a beast: for if the soul of man be not transmitted and transfused in the



seed of the parents, why are not those productions merely beasts, but have also an impression and tincture of reason in as high a measure, as it can evidence itself in those improper organs? Nor, truly, can I peremptorily deny that the soul, in this her sublunary estate, is wholly, and in all acceptions, inorganical: but that, for the performance of her ordinary actions, is required not only a symmetry and proper disposition of organs, but a crasis and temper correspondent to its operations; yet is not this mass of flesh and visible structure the instrument and proper corpse of the soul, but rather of sense, and that the hand of reason. In our study of anatomy there is a mass of mysterious philosophy, and such as reduced the very heathens to divinity; yet, amongst all those rare discoveries and curious pieces I find in the fabrick of man, I do not so much content myself, as in that I find not,—that is, no organ or instrument for the rational soul; for in the brain, which we term the seat of reason, there is not anything of moment more than I can discover in the crany of a beast: and this is a sensible and no inconsiderable argument of the inorganity of the soul, at least in that sense we usually so receive it. Thus we are men, and we know not how; there is something in us that can be without us, and will be after us, though it is strange that it



hath no history what it was before us, nor cannot tell how it entered in us.

SECT. XXXVII.—Now, for these walls of flesh, wherein the soul doth seem to be immured before the resurrection, it is nothing but an elemental composition, and a fabrick that must fall to ashes. “All flesh is grass,” is not only metaphorically, but literally, true; for all those creatures we behold are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves. Nay, further, we are what we all abhor, *anthropophagi*, and cannibals, devourers not only of men, but of ourselves; and that not in an allegory but a positive truth: for all this mass of flesh which we behold, came in at our mouths: this frame we look upon, hath been upon our trenchers; in brief, we have devoured ourselves. I cannot believe the wisdom of Pythagoras did ever positively, and in a literal sense, affirm his metempsychosis, or impossible transmigration of the souls of men into beasts. Of all metamorphoses or transmigrations, I believe only one, that is of Lot’s wife; for that of Nabuchodonosor proceeded not so far. In all others I conceive there is no further verity than is contained in their implicit sense and morality. I believe that the whole frame of a beast doth perish, and is left in the same state after death as before it was materialized unto life;



that the souls of men know neither contrary nor corruption ; that they subsist beyond the body, and outlive death by the privilege of their proper natures, and without a miracle : that the souls of the faithful, as they leave earth, take possession of heaven ; that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villany ; instilling and stealing into our hearts that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander, solicitous of the affairs of the world. But that those phantasms appear often, and do frequent cemeteries, charnel-houses, and churches, it is because those are the dormitories of the dead, where the devil, like an insolent champion, beholds with pride the spoils and trophies of his victory in Adam.

SECT. XXXVIII.—This is that dismal conquest we all deplore, that makes us so often cry, O Adam, *quid fecisti?* I thank God I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life, or be convulsed and tremble at the name of death. Not that I am insensible of the dread and horror thereof ; or, by raking into the bowels of the deceased, continual sight of anatomies, skeletons, or cadaverous relicks, like vespilloes, or grave-makers, I am become stupid, or have forgot the appre-



hension of mortality ; but that, marshalling all the horrors, and contemplating the extremities thereof, I find not anything therein able to daunt the courage of a man, much less a well-resolved Christian ; and therefore am not angry at the error of our first parents, or unwilling to bear a part of this common fate, and, like the best of them, to die ; that is, to cease to breathe, to take a farewell of the elements ; to be a kind of nothing for a moment ; to be within one instant of a spirit. When I take a full view and circle of myself without this reasonable moderator, and equal piece of justice, death, I do conceive myself the miserablest person extant. Were there not another life that I hope for, all the vanities of this world should not entreat a moment's breath from me. Could the devil work my belief to imagine I could never die, I would not outlive that very thought. I have so abject a conceit of this common way of existence, this retaining to the sun and elements, I cannot think this is to be a man, or to live according to the dignity of humanity. In expectation of a better, I can with patience embrace this life ; yet, in my best meditations, do often defy death. [It is a symptom of melancholy to be afraid of death, yet sometimes to desire it ; this latter I have often discovered in myself, and think no man ever desired life, as I have



sometimes death.] I honour any man that contemns it; nor can I highly love any that is afraid of it: this makes me naturally love a soldier, and honour those tattered and contemptible regiments, that will die at the command of a sergeant. For a pagan there may be some motives to be in love with life; but, for a Christian to be amazed at death, I see not how he can escape this dilemma—that he is too sensible of this life, or hopeless of the life to come.

SECT. XXXIX.—Some divines count Adam thirty years old at his creation, because they suppose him created in the perfect age and stature of man: and surely we are all out of the computation of our age; and every man is some months older than he bethinks him; for we live, move, have a being, and are subject to the actions of the elements, and the malice of diseases, in that other world, the truest microcosm, the womb of our mother; for besides that general and common existence we are conceived to hold in our chaos, and whilst we sleep within the bosom of our causes, we enjoy a being and life in three distinct worlds, wherein we receive most manifest gradations. In that obscure world, the womb of our mother, our time is short, computed by the moon; yet longer than the days of many creatures that



behold the sun ; ourselves being not yet without life, sense, and reason ; though, for the manifestation of its actions, it awaits the opportunity of objects, and seems to live there but in its root and soul of vegetation. Entering afterwards upon the scene of the world, we rise up and become another creature ; performing the reasonable actions of man, and obscurely manifesting that part of divinity in us, but not in complement and perfection, till we have once more cast our secundine, that is, this slough of flesh, and are delivered into the last world, that is, that ineffable place of Paul, that proper *ubi* of spirits. The smattering I have of the philosophers' stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold) hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief, how that immortal spirit and incorruptible substance of my soul may lie obscure, and sleep awhile within this house of flesh. Those strange and mystical transmigrations that I have observed in silkworms turned my philosophy into divinity. There is in these works of nature, which seem to puzzle reason, something divine ; and hath more in it than the eye of a common spectator doth discover.

SECT. XL.—I am naturally bashful ; nor hath conversation, age, or travel, been able to effront or enharden me ; yet I have one part of modesty,



which I have seldom discovered in another, that is (to speak truly), I am not so much afraid of death as ashamed thereof; 'tis the very disgrace and ignominy of our natures, that in a moment can so disfigure us, that our nearest friends, wife, and children, stand afraid, and start at us. The birds and beasts of the field, that before, in a natural fear, obeyed us, forgetting all allegiance, begin to prey upon us. This very conceit hath, in a tempest, disposed and left me willing to be swallowed up in the abyss of waters, wherein I had perished unseen, unpitied, without wondering eyes, tears of pity, lectures of mortality, and none had said, *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* Not that I am ashamed of the anatomy of my parts, or can accuse nature of playing the bungler in any part of me, or my own vicious life for contracting any shameful disease upon me, whereby I might not call myself as wholesome a morsel for the worms as any.

SECT. XLI.—Some, upon the courage of a fruitful issue, wherein, as in the truest chronicle, they seem to outlive themselves, can with greater patience away with death. This conceit and counterfeit subsisting in our progenies seems to me a mere fallacy, unworthy the desires of a man, that can but conceive a thought of the next world; who, in a nobler ambition, should



desire to live in his substance in heaven, rather than his name and shadow in the earth. And therefore, at my death, I mean to take a total adieu of the world, not caring for a monument, history, or epitaph; not so much as the bare memory of my name to be found anywhere, but in the universal register of God. I am not yet so cynical, as to approve the testament of Diogenes,<sup>1</sup> nor do I altogether allow that rodomontado of Lucan;

——— *Caelo tegitur, qui non habet urnam.*

He that unburied lies wants not his hearse;  
For unto him a tomb's the universe.

but commend, in my calmer judgment, those ingenuous intentions that desire to sleep by the urns of their fathers, and strive to go the neatest way unto corruption. I do not envy the temper of crows and daws, nor the numerous and weary days of our fathers before the flood. If there be any truth in astrology, I may outlive a jubilee;<sup>2</sup> as yet I have not seen one revolution of Saturn,<sup>3</sup> nor hath my pulse beat thirty years, and yet, excepting one, have seen the ashes of, and left under ground, all the kings of Europe;

<sup>1</sup> Who willed his friend not to bury him, but to hang him up with a staff in his hand, to frighten away the crows.

<sup>2</sup> [The Jewish computation for 50 years.]

<sup>3</sup> [The planet Saturn maketh his revolution once in 30 years.]



have been contemporary to three emperors, four grand signiors, and as many popes: methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun; I have shaken hands with delight in my warm blood and canicular days; I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age; the world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but pantaloons and anticks, to my severer contemplations.

SECT. XLII.—It is not, I confess, an unlawful prayer to desire to surpass the days of our Saviour, or wish to outlive that age wherein he thought fittest to die; yet, if (as divinity affirms) there shall be no grey hairs in heaven, but all shall rise in the perfect state of men, we do but outlive those perfections in this world, to be recalled unto them by a greater miracle in the next, and run on here but to be retrograde hereafter. Were there any hopes to outlive vice, or a point to be superannuated from sin, it were worthy our knees to implore the days of Methuselah. But age doth not rectify, but incurvate our natures, turning bad dispositions into worser habits, and (like diseases) brings on incurable vices; for every day, as we grow weaker in age, we grow stronger in sin, and the number of our days doth but make our sins innumerable. The same vice, committed at sixteen, is not the same, though it agrees in



all other circumstances, at forty; but swells and doubles from the circumstance of our ages, wherein, besides the constant and inexcusable habit of transgressing, the maturity of our judgment cuts off pretence unto excuse or pardon. Every sin, the oftener it is committed, the more it acquireth in the quality of evil; as it succeeds in time, so it proceeds in degrees of badness; for as they proceed they ever multiply, and, like figures in arithmetick, the last stands for more than all that went before it. And, though I think no man can live well once, but he that could live twice, yet, for my own part, I would not live over my hours past, or begin again the thread of my days; not upon Cicero's ground, because I have lived them well, but for fear I should live them worse. I find my growing judgment daily instruct me how to be better, but my untamed affections and confirmed vitiosity make me daily do worse. I find in my confirmed age the same sins I discovered in my youth; I committed many then because I was a child; and, because I commit them still, I am yet an infant. Therefore I perceive a man may be twice a child, before the days of dotage; and stand in need of Aeson's bath before threescore.

SECT. XLIII.—And truly there goes a deal of providence to produce a man's life unto three-



score; there is more required than an able temper for those years: though the radical humour contain in it sufficient oil for seventy, yet I perceive in some it gives no light past thirty: men assign not all the causes of long life, that write whole books thereof. They that found themselves on the radical balsam, or vital sulphur of the parts, determine not why Abel lived not so long as Adam. There is therefore a secret gloom or bottom of our days: 'twas his wisdom to determine them: but his perpetual and waking providence that fulfils and accomplisheth them; wherein the spirits, ourselves, and all the creatures of God, in a secret and disputed way, do execute his will. Let them not therefore complain of immaturity that die about thirty: they fall but like the whole world, whose solid and well-composed substance must not expect the duration and period of its constitution: when all things are completed in it, its age is accomplished; and the last and general fever may as naturally destroy it before six thousand, as me before forty. There is therefore some other hand that twines the thread of life than that of nature: we are not only ignorant in antipathies and occult qualities; our ends are as obscure as our beginnings; the line of our days is drawn by night, and the various effects therein by a pencil that is invisible; wherein, though



we confess our ignorance, I am sure we do not err if we say, it is the hand of God.

SECT. XLIV.—I am much taken with two verses of Lucan, since I have been able not only, as we do at school, to construe, but understand :

*Viturosque Dei celant, ut vivere durent,  
Felix esse mori.*

We're all deluded, vainly searching ways  
To make us happy by the length of days ;  
For cunningly, to make's protract this breath,  
The gods conceal the happiness of death.

There be many excellent strains in that poet, wherewith his stoical genius hath liberally supplied him : and truly there are singular pieces in the philosophy of Zeno, and doctrine of the stoics, which I perceive, delivered in a pulpit, pass for current divinity : yet herein are they in extremes, that can allow a man to be his own assassin, and so highly extol the end and suicide of Cato. This is indeed not to fear death, but yet to be afraid of life. It is a brave act of valour to condemn death ; but, where life is more terrible than death, it is then the truest valour to dare to live : and herein religion hath taught us a noble example ; for all the valiant acts of Curtius, Scaevola, or Codrus, do not parallel, or match, that one of Job ; and sure there is no torture to the rack of a disease, nor any poniards



in death itself, like those in the way or prologue unto it. *Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihil curo*; I would not die, but care not to be dead. Were I of Caesar's religion, I should be of his desires, and wish rather to go off at one blow, than to be sawed in pieces by the grating torture of a disease. Men that look no further than their outsides, think health an appertenance unto life, and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick; but I, that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments that fabrick hangs, do wonder that we are not always so; and, considering the thousand doors that lead to death, do thank my God that we can die but once. 'Tis not only the mischief of diseases, and the villainy of poisons, that make an end of us; we vainly accuse the fury of guns, and the new inventions of death:—it is in the power of every hand to destroy us, and we are beholden unto every one we meet, he doth not kill us. There is therefore but one comfort left, that though it be in the power of the weakest arm to take away life, it is not in the strongest to deprive us of death. God would not exempt himself from that; the misery of immortality in the flesh he undertook not, that was in it, immortal. Certainly there is no happiness within this circle of flesh; nor is it in the opticks of these eyes to behold felicity. The first day of



our jubilee is death; the devil hath therefore failed of his desires; we are happier with death than we should have been without it: there is no misery but in himself, where there is no end of misery; and so indeed, in his own sense, the stoic is in the right. He forgets that he can die, who complains of misery: we are in the power of no calamity while death is in our own.

SECT. XLV.—Now, besides this literal and positive kind of death, there are others whereof divines make mention, and those, I think, not merely metaphorical, as mortification, dying unto sin and the world. Therefore, I say, every man hath a double horoscope; one of his humanity,—his birth, another of his christianity,—his baptism: and from this do I compute or calculate my nativity; not reckoning those *horae combustae*,<sup>1</sup> and odd days, or esteeming myself anything, before I was my Saviour's and enrolled in the register of Christ. Whosoever enjoys not this life, I count him but an apparition, though he wear about him the sensible affections of flesh. In these moral acceptions, the way to be immortal is to die daily; nor can I think I have the true theory of death, when I contemplate a skull or behold a skeleton with those vulgar imaginations it casts upon us. I have therefore

<sup>1</sup> [That time when the moon is in conjunction, and obscured by the sun, the astrologers call *horae combustae*.]



enlarged that common *memento mori* into a more Christian memorandum, *memento quatuor novissima*,—those four inevitable points of us all, death, judgment, heaven, and hell. Neither did the contemplations of the heathens rest in their graves, without a further thought, of Rhadamanth or some judicial proceeding after death, though in another way, and upon suggestion of their natural reasons. I cannot but marvel from what sibyl or oracle they stole the prophecy of the world's destruction by fire, or whence Lucan learned to say,

*Communis mundo superest rogos, ossibus astra  
Misturus—*

There yet remains to th' world one common fire,  
Wherein our bones with stars shall make one pyre.

I believe the world grows near its end; yet is neither old nor decayed, nor will ever perish upon the ruins of its own principles. As the work of creation was above nature, so is its adversary, annihilation; without which the world hath not its end, but its mutation. Now, what force should be able to consume it thus far, without the breath of God, which is the truest consuming flame, my philosophy cannot inform me. Some believe there went not a minute to the world's creation, nor shall there go to its destruction; those six days, so punctually described, make not to them one moment, but



rather seem to manifest the method and idea of that great work in the intellect of God than the manner how he proceeded in its operation. I cannot dream that there should be at the last day any such judicial proceeding, or calling to the bar, as indeed the Scripture seems to imply, and the literal commentators do conceive: for unspeakable mysteries in the Scriptures are often delivered in a vulgar and illustrative way, and, being written unto man, are delivered, not as they truly are, but as they may be understood; wherein, notwithstanding, the different interpretations according to different capacities may stand firm with our devotion, nor be any way prejudicial to each single edification.

SECT. XLVI.—Now, to determine the day and year of this inevitable time, is not only convincing and statute madness, but also manifest impiety. How shall we interpret Elias's six thousand years, or imagine the secret communicated to a Rabbi which God hath denied unto his angels? It had been an excellent quaere to have posed the devil of Delphos,<sup>1</sup> and must needs have forced him to some strange amphibology. It hath not only mocked the predictions of sundry astrologers in ages past, but the prophecies of many melancholy heads in these present; who, neither understanding reasonably

<sup>1</sup> [The oracle of Apollo.]



things past nor present, pretend a knowledge of things to come; heads ordained only to manifest the incredible effects of melancholy, and to fulfil old prophecies,<sup>1</sup> rather than be the authors of new. "In those days there shall come wars and rumours of wars" to me seems no prophecy, but a constant truth in all times verified since it was pronounced. "There shall be signs in the moon and stars;" how comes he then like a thief in the night, when he gives an item of his coming? That common sign, drawn from the revelation of antichrist, is as obscure as any; in our common compute he hath been come these many years; but, for my own part, to speak freely [omitting those ridiculous anagrams<sup>2</sup>], I am half of [Paracelsus's] opinion [and think] that antichrist is the philosopher's stone in divinity, for the discovery and invention whereof, though there be prescribed rules, and probable inductions, yet hath hardly any man attained the perfect discovery thereof. That general opinion, that the world grows near its end, hath possessed all ages past as nearly as ours. I am afraid that the souls that now depart cannot escape that lingering expostulation of the saints under the altar, *quousque, Domine?* how long, O Lord?

<sup>1</sup> In those days there shall come liars and false prophets.

<sup>2</sup> Whereby men labour to prove the pope antichrist, from their name making up the number of the beast.]



and groan in the expectation of the great jubilee.

SECT. XLVII.—This is the day that must make good that great attribute of God, his justice; that must reconcile those unanswerable doubts that torment the wisest understandings; and reduce those seeming inequalities and respective distributions in this world, to an equality and recompensive justice in the next. This is that one day, that shall include and comprehend all that went before it; wherein, as in the last scene, all the actors must enter, to complete and make up the catastrophe of this great piece. This is the day whose memory hath, only, power to make us honest in the dark, and to be virtuous without a witness. *Ipsa sui pretium virtus sibi*, that virtue is her own reward, is but a cold principle, and not able to maintain our variable resolutions in a constant and settled way of goodness. I have practised that honest artifice of Seneca, and, in my retired and solitary imaginations to detain me from the foulness of vice, have fancied to myself the presence of my dear and worthiest friends, before whom I should lose my head rather than be vicious; yet herein I found that there was nought but moral honesty; and this was not to be virtuous for his sake who must reward us at the last. I have tried if I could



reach that great resolution of his, to be honest without a thought of heaven or hell ; and, indeed I found, upon a natural inclination, and inbred loyalty unto virtue, that I could serve her without a livery, yet not in that resolved and venerable way, but that the frailty of my nature, upon an easy temptation, might be induced to forget her. The life, therefore, and spirit of all our actions is the resurrection, and a stable apprehension that our ashes shall enjoy the fruit of our pious endeavours ; without this, all religion is a fallacy, and those impieties of Lucian, Euripides, and Julian, are no blasphemies, but subtile verities ; and atheists have been the only philosophers.

SECT. XLVIII.—How shall the dead arise, is no question of my faith ; to believe only possibilities is not faith, but mere philosophy. Many things are true in divinity, which are neither inducible by reason nor confirmable by sense ; and many things in philosophy confirmable by sense, yet not inducible by reason. Thus it is impossible, by any solid or demonstrative reasons, to persuade a man to believe the conversion of the needle to the north ; though this be possible and true, and easily credible, upon a single experiment unto the sense. I believe that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite again ; that our separated dust, after so



many pilgrimages and transformations into the parts of minerals, plants, animals, elements, shall, at the voice of God, return into their primitive shapes, and join again to make up their primary and predestinate forms. As at the creation there was a separation of that confused mass into its species; so at the destruction thereof there shall be a separation into its distinct individuals. As, at the creation of the world, all the distinct species that we behold lay involved in one mass, till the fruitful voice of God separated this united multitude into its several species, so, at the last day, when those corrupted relicks shall be scattered in the wilderness of forms, and seem to have forgot their proper habits, God, by a powerful voice, shall command them back into their proper shapes, and call them out by their single individuals. Then shall appear the fertility of Adam, and the magick of that sperm that hath dilated into so many millions. I have often beheld, as a miracle, that artificial resurrection and revivification of mercury, how being mortified into a thousand shapes, it assumes again its own, and returns into its numerical self. Let us speak naturally, and like philosophers. The forms of alterable bodies in these sensible corruptions perish not; nor, as we imagine, wholly quit their mansions; but retire and con-



tract themselves into their secret and unaccessible parts ; where they may best protect themselves from the action of their antagonist. A plant or vegetable consumed to ashes to a contemplative and school-philosopher seems utterly destroyed, and the form to have taken his leave for ever ; but to a sensible artist the forms are not perished, but withdrawn into their incombustible part, where they lie secure from the action of that devouring element. This is made good by experience, which can from the ashes of a plant revive the plant, and from its cinders recall it into its stalk and leaves again. What the art of man can do in these inferior pieces, what blasphemy is it to affirm the finger of God cannot do in those more perfect and sensible structures ? This is that mystical philosophy, from whence no true scholar becomes an atheist, but from the visible effects of nature grows up a real divine, and beholds not in a dream, as Ezekiel, but in an ocular and visible object, the types of his resurrection.

SECT. XLIX.—Now, the necessary mansions of our restored selves are those two contrary and incompatible places we call heaven and hell. To define them, or strictly to determine what and where these are, surpasseth my divinity. That elegant apostle, which seemed to have a glimpse of heaven, hath left but a



negative description thereof; which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor can enter into the heart of man: he was translated out of himself to behold it; but, being returned into himself, could not express it. Saint John's description by emeralds, chrysolites, and precious stones, is too weak to express the material heaven we behold. Briefly, therefore, where the soul hath the full measure and complement of happiness; where the boundless appetite of that spirit remains completely satisfied that it can neither desire addition or alteration; that, I think, is truly heaven: and this can only be in the enjoyment of that essence, whose infinite goodness is able to terminate the desires of itself, and the unsatiable wishes of ours. Wherever God will thus manifest himself, there is heaven, though within the circle of this sensible world. Thus, the soul of man may be in heaven anywhere, even within the limits of his own proper body; and when it ceaseth to live in the body it may remain in its own soul, that is, its Creator. And thus we may say that Saint Paul, whether in the body or out of the body, was yet in heaven. To place it in the empyreal, or beyond the tenth sphere, is to forget the world's destruction; for when this sensible world shall be destroyed, all shall then be here as it is now there, an empyreal



heaven, a *quasi* vacuity ; when to ask where heaven is, is to demand where the presence of God is, or where we have the glory of that happy vision. Moses, that was bred up in all the learning of the Egyptians, committed a gross absurdity in philosophy, when with these eyes of flesh he desired to see God, and petitioned his Maker, that is truth itself, to a contradiction. Those that imagine heaven and hell neighbours, and conceive a vicinity between those two extremes, upon consequence of the parable, where Dives discoursed with Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, do too grossly conceive of those glorified creatures, whose eyes shall easily out-see the sun, and behold without perspective the extremest distances : for if there shall be, in our glorified eyes, the faculty of sight and reception of objects, I could think the visible species there to be in as unlimitable a way as now the intellectual. I grant that two bodies placed beyond the tenth sphere, or in a vacuity, according to Aristotle's philosophy, could not behold each other, because there wants a body or medium to hand and transport the visible rays of the object unto the sense ; but when there shall be a general defect of either medium to convey, or light to prepare and dispose that medium, and yet a perfect vision, we must suspend the rules of our philosophy,



and make all good by a more absolute piece of opticks.

SECT. L.—I cannot tell how to say that fire is the essence of hell ; I know not what to make of purgatory, or conceive a flame that can either prey upon, or purify the substance of a soul. Those flames of sulphur, mentioned in the scriptures, I take not to be understood of this present hell, but of that to come, where fire shall make up the complement of our tortures, and have a body or subject whereon to manifest its tyranny. Some who have had the honour to be textuary in divinity are of opinion it shall be the same specifical fire with ours. This is hard to conceive, yet can I make good how even that may prey upon our bodies, and yet not consume us : for in this material world, there are bodies that persist invincible in the powerfulest flames ; and though, by the action of fire, they fall into ignition and liquation, yet will they never suffer a destruction. I would gladly know how Moses, with an actual fire, calcined or burnt the golden calf into powder : for that mystical metal of gold, whose solary and celestial nature I admire, exposed unto the violence of fire, grows only hot, and liquefies, but consumeth not ; so when the consumable and volatile pieces of our bodies shall be refined into a more impregnable and fixed temper, like gold, though they suffer from



the action of flames, they shall never perish, but lie immortal in the arms of fire. And surely, if this frame must suffer only by the action of this element, there will many bodies escape; and not only heaven, but earth will not be at an end, but rather a beginning. For at present it is not earth, but a composition of fire, water, earth, and air; but at that time, spoiled of these ingredients, it shall appear in a substance more like itself, its ashes. Philosophers that opinioned the world's destruction by fire, did never dream of annihilation, which is beyond the power of sublunary causes; for the last and proper action of that element is but vitrification, or a reduction of a body into glass; and therefore some of our chymicks facetiously affirm, that, at the last fire, all shall be crystallized and reverberated into glass, which is the utmost action of that element. Nor need we fear this term, annihilation, or wonder that God will destroy the works of his creation: for man subsisting, who is, and will then truly appear, a microcosm, the world cannot be said to be destroyed. For the eyes of God, and perhaps also of our glorified selves, shall as really behold and contemplate the world, in its epitome or contracted essence, as now it doth at large and in its dilated substance. In the seed of a plant, to the eyes of God, and to the understanding of man, though in an in-



visible way, there exist the perfect leaves, flowers, and fruit thereof; for things that are in *posse* to the sense, are actually existent to the understanding. Thus God beholds all things, who contemplates as fully his works in their epitome as in their full volume, and beheld as amply the whole world, in that little compendium of the sixth day, as in the scattered and dilated pieces of those five before.

SECT. LI.—Men commonly set forth the torments of hell by fire, and the extremity of corporal afflictions, and describe hell in the same method that Mahomet doth heaven. This indeed makes a noise, and drums in popular ears: but if this be the terrible piece thereof, it is not worthy to stand in diameter with heaven, whose happiness consists in that part that is best able to comprehend it, that immortal essence, that translated divinity and colony of God, the soul. Surely, though we place hell under earth, the devil's walk and purlieu is about it. Men speak too popularly who place it in those flaming mountains, which to grosser apprehensions represent hell. The heart of man is the place the devils dwell in; I feel sometimes a hell within myself; Lucifer keeps his court in my breast; Legion is revived in me. There are as many hells as Anaxagoras conceited worlds. There was more than one hell in Magdalene, when



there were seven devils ; for every devil is an hell unto himself ; he holds enough of torture in his own *ubi* ; and needs not the misery of circumference to afflict him : and thus, a distracted conscience here is a shadow or introduction unto hell hereafter. Who can but pity the merciful intention of those hands that do destroy themselves ? The devil, were it in his power, would do the like ; which being impossible, his miseries are endless, and he suffers most in that attribute wherein he is impassible, his immortality.

SECT. LII.—I thank God, and with joy I mention it, I was never afraid of hell, nor ever grew pale at the description of that place. I have so fixed my contemplations on heaven, that I have almost forgot the idea of hell ; and am afraid rather to lose the joys of the one, than endure the misery of the other : to be deprived of them is a perfect hell, and needs methinks no addition to complete our afflictions. That terrible term hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof. I fear God, yet am not afraid of him ; his mercies make me ashamed of my sins, before his judgments afraid thereof : these are the forced and secondary method of his wisdom, which he useth but as the last remedy, and upon provocation ; —a course rather to deter the wicked, than in-



cite the virtuous to his worship. I can hardly think there was ever any scared into heaven: they go the fairest way to heaven that would serve God without a hell: other mercenaries, that crouch unto him in fear of hell, though they term themselves the servants, are indeed but the slaves, of the Almighty.

SECT. LIII.—And to be true, and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself. And, whether out of the prejudice of my affection, or an inverting and partial conceit of his mercies, I know not,—but those which others term crosses, afflictions, judgments, misfortunes, to me, who inquire further into them than their visible effects, they both appear, and in event have ever proved, the secret and dissembled favours of his affection. It is a singular piece of wisdom to apprehend truly, and without passion, the works of God, and so well to distinguish his justice from his mercy as not to miscall those noble attributes; yet it is likewise an honest piece of logick so to dispute and argue the proceedings of God as to distinguish even his judgments into mercies. For God is merciful unto all, because better to the worst than the best deserve; and to say he



punisheth none in this world, though it be a paradox, is no absurdity. To one that hath committed murder, if the judge should only ordain a fine, it were a madness to call this a punishment, and to repine at the sentence, rather than admire the clemency of the judge. Thus, our offences being mortal, and deserving not only death but damnation, if the goodness of God be content to traverse and pass them over with a loss, misfortune, or disease; what frenzy were it to term this a punishment, rather than an extremity of mercy, and to groan under the rod of his judgments rather than admire the sceptre of his mercies! Therefore to adore, honour, and admire him, is a debt of gratitude due from the obligation of our nature, states, and conditions: and with these thoughts He that knows them best will not deny that I adore him. That I obtain heaven, and the bliss thereof, is accidental, and not the intended work of my devotion; it being a felicity I can neither think to deserve nor scarce in modesty to expect. For these two ends of us all, either as rewards or punishments, are mercifully ordained and disproportionably disposed unto our actions; the one being so far beyond our deserts, the other so infinitely below our demerits.

SECT. LIV.—There is no salvation to those that believe not in Christ; that is, say some,



since his nativity, and, as divinity affirmeth, before also ; which makes me much apprehend the end of those honest worthies and philosophers which died before his incarnation. It is hard to place those souls in hell, whose worthy lives do teach us virtue on earth. Methinks, among those many subdivisions of hell, there might have been one limbo left for these. What a strange vision will it be to see their poetical fictions converted into verities, and their imagined and fancied furies into real devils ! How strange to them will sound the history of Adam, when they shall suffer for him they never heard of ! When they [that] derive their genealogy from the gods, shall know they are the unhappy issue of sinful man ! It is an insolent part of reason, to controvert the works of God, or question the justice of his proceedings. Could humility teach others, as it hath instructed me, to contemplate the infinite and incomprehensible distance betwixt the Creator and the creature ; or did we seriously perpend that one simile of St. Paul, " shall the vessel say to the potter, why hast thou made me thus ? " it would prevent these arrogant disputes of reason : nor would we argue the definitive sentence of God, either to heaven or hell. Men that live according to the right rule and law of reason, live but in their own kind, as beasts do in theirs ; who



justly obey the prescript of their natures, and therefore cannot reasonably demand a reward of their actions, as only obeying the natural dictates of their reason. It will, therefore, and must, at last appear, that all salvation is through Christ; which verity, I fear, these great examples of virtue must confirm, and make it good how the perfectest actions of earth have no title or claim unto heaven.

SECT. LV.—Nor truly do I think the lives of these, or of any other, were ever correspondent, or in all points conformable, unto their doctrines. It is evident that Aristotle transgressed the rule of his own ethicks; the stoicks, that condemn passion, and command a man to laugh in Phalaris's bull, could not endure without a groan a fit of the stone or colick. The scepticks, that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confute themselves, and thought they knew more than all the world beside. Diogenes I hold to be the most vainglorious man of his time, and more ambitious in refusing all honours, than Alexander in rejecting none. Vice and the devil put a fallacy upon our reasons; and, provoking us too hastily to run from it, entangle and profound us deeper in it. The duke of Venice, that [yearly] weds himself unto the sea, by [casting thereinto] a ring of gold, I will not accuse of prodigality, because it is a solemnity



of good use and consequence in the state: but the philosopher, that threw his money into the sea to avoid avarice, was a notorious prodigal. There is no road or ready way to virtue; it is not an easy point of art to disentangle ourselves from this riddle or web of sin. To perfect virtue, as to religion, there is required a *panoplia*, or complete armour; that whilst we lie at close ward against one vice, we lie not open to the veney of another. And indeed wiser discretions, that have the thread of reason to conduct them, offend without a pardon; whereas under heads may stumble without dishonour. There go so many circumstances to piece up one good action, that it is a lesson to be good, and we are forced to be virtuous by the book. Again, the practice of men holds not an equal pace, yea and often runs counter to their theory; we naturally know what is good, but naturally pursue what is evil: the rhetorick wherewith I persuade another cannot persuade myself. There is a depraved appetite in us, that will with patience hear the learned instructions of reason, but yet perform no further than agrees to its own irregular humour. In brief, we all are monsters; that is, a composition of man and beast: wherein we must endeavour, to be as the poets fancy that wise man, Chiron; that is, to have the region of man above that of beast, and sense to sit but



at the feet of reason. Lastly, I do desire with God that all, but yet affirm with men that few, shall know salvation,—that the bridge is narrow, the passage strait unto life : yet those who do confine the church of God either to particular nations, churches, or families, have made it far narrower than our Saviour ever meant it.

SECT. LVI.—The vulgarity of those judgments that wrap the church of God in Strabo's cloak, and restrain it unto Europe, seem to me as bad geographers as Alexander, who thought he had conquered all the world, when he had not subdued the half of any part thereof. For we cannot deny the church of God both in Asia and Africa, if we do not forget the peregrinations of the apostles, the deaths of the martyrs, the sessions of many and (even in our reformed judgment) lawful councils, held in those parts in the minority and nonage of ours. Nor must a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than, perhaps, in the judgment of God, excommunicate from heaven one another ; much less those Christians who are in a manner all martyrs, maintaining their faith in the noble way of persecution, and serving God in the fire, whereas we honour him but in the sunshine.

'Tis true, we all hold there is a number of elect, and many to be saved ; yet, take our opinions together, and from the confusion there-



of, there will be no such thing as salvation, nor shall any one be saved: for, first, the church of Rome condemneth us; we likewise them; the sub-reformists and sectaries sentence the doctrine of our church as damnable; the atomist, or familist, reprobates all these; and all these, them again. Thus, while the mercies of God do promise us heaven, our conceits and opinions exclude us from that place. There must be therefore more than one St. Peter; particular churches and sects usurp the gates of heaven, and turn the key against each other; and thus we go to heaven against each other's wills, conceits, and opinions, and, with as much uncharity as ignorance, do err, I fear, in points not only of our own, but one another's salvation.

SECT. LVII.—I believe many are saved who to man seem reprobated, and many are reprobated who in the opinion and sentence of man stand elected. There will appear, at the last day, strange and unexpected examples, both of his justice and his mercy; and, therefore, to define either is folly in man, and insolency even in the devils. Those acute and subtile spirits, in all their sagacity, can hardly divine who shall be saved; which if they could prognostick, their labour were at an end, nor need they compass the earth, seeking whom they may devour. Those who, upon a rigid application of the law,



sentence Solomon unto damnation, condemn not only him, but themselves, and the whole world; for by the letter and written word of God, we are without exception in the state of death: but there is a prerogative of God, and an arbitrary pleasure above the letter of his own law, by which alone we can pretend unto salvation, and through which Solomon might be as easily saved as those who condemn him.

SECT. LVIII.—The number of those who pretend unto salvation, and those infinite swarms who think to pass through the eye of this needle, have much amazed me. That name and compellation of “little flock” doth not comfort, but deject, my devotion; especially when I reflect upon mine own unworthiness, wherein, according to my humble apprehensions, I am below them all. I believe there shall never be an anarchy in heaven; but, as there are hierarchies amongst the angels, so shall there be degrees of priority amongst the saints. Yet is it, I protest, beyond my ambition to aspire unto the first ranks; my desires only are, and I shall be happy therein, to be but the last man, and bring up the rear in heaven.

SECT. LIX.—Again, I am confident, and fully persuaded, yet dare not take my oath, of my salvation. I am, as it were, sure, and do believe without all doubt, that there is such a city as



Constantinople; yet, for me to take my oath thereon were a kind of perjury, because I hold no infallible warrant from my own sense to confirm me in the certainty thereof. And truly, though many pretend to an absolute certainty of their salvation, yet, when an humble soul shall contemplate her own unworthiness, she shall meet with many doubts, and suddenly find how little we stand in need of the precept of St. Paul, “work out your salvation *with fear and trembling.*” That which is the cause of my election, I hold to be the cause of my salvation, which was the mercy and *beneplacit* of God, before I was, or the foundation of the world. “Before Abraham was, I am,” is the saying of Christ, yet is it true in some sense if I say it of myself; for I was not only before myself but Adam, that is, in the idea of God, and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense, I say, the world was before the creation, and at an end before it had a beginning. And thus was I dead before I was alive; though my grave be England, my dying place was Paradise; and Eve miscarried of me, before she conceived of Cain.

SECT. LX.—Insolent zeals, that do decry good works and rely only upon faith, take not away merit: for, depending upon the efficacy of their faith, they enforce the condition of God,



and in a more sophistical way do seem to challenge heaven. It was decreed by God that only those that lapped in the water like dogs, should have the honour to destroy the Midianites ; yet could none of those justly challenge, or imagine he deserved, that honour thereupon. I do not deny but that true faith, and such as God requires, is not only a mark or token, but also a means, of our salvation ; but, where to find this, is as obscure to me as my last end. And if our Saviour could object, unto his own disciples and favourites, a faith that, to the quantity of a grain of mustard seed, is able to remove mountains ; surely that which we boast of is not anything, or, at the most, but a remove from nothing.

This is the tenour of my belief ; wherein, though there be many things singular, and to the humour of my irregular self, yet, if they square not with maturer judgments, I disclaim them, and do no further favour them than the learned and best judgments shall authorize them.



## PART THE SECOND

### SECT. I

**N**OW, for that other virtue of charity, without which faith is a mere notion and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity. And, if I hold the true anatomy of myself, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue,—for I am of a constitution so general that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humour, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but, being amongst them, make them my common viands; and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a church-yard as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander; at the sight of a toad or viper, I find in me no desire to take up a stone



to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others: those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch; but, where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honour, love, and embrace them, in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate, but seem to be framed and constellated unto all. I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs, make unto me one country; I am in England everywhere, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep, in a tempest. In brief I am averse from nothing: my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence, but the devil; or so at least abhor anything, but that we might come to composition. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do condemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude; that numerous piece of monstrosity, which, taken asunder, seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God, but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra. It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is



the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people : there is a rabble even amongst the gentry ; a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as those ; men in the same level with mechanicks, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But, as in casting account three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant Doradoes of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person, whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians ; there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity, whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and pre-eminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times, and the bias of present practice, wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well ordered polities : till corruption getteth ground ;—runder desires labouring after that which wiser considerations contemn ;—every one having a liberty to amass



and heap up riches, and they a licence or faculty to do or purchase anything.

SECT. II.—This general and indifferent temper of mine doth more nearly dispose me to this noble virtue. It is a happiness to be born and framed unto virtue, and to grow up from the seeds of nature, rather than the inoculations and forced grafts of education: yet, if we are directed only by our particular natures, and regulate our inclinations by no higher rule than that of our reasons, we are but moralists; divinity will still call us heathens. Therefore this great work of charity must have other motives, ends, and impulsions. I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God; I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but his that enjoined it; I relieve no man upon the rhetorick of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of pity doth not this so much for his sake as for his own: for by compassion we make another's misery our own; and so, by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. It is as erroneous a conceit to redress other men's misfortunes upon the common considerations



of merciful natures, that it may be one day our own case; for this is a sinister and politick kind of charity, whereby we seem to bespeak the pities of men in the like occasions. And truly I have observed that those professed eleemosynaries, though in a crowd or multitude, do yet direct and place their petitions on a few and selected persons; there is surely a physiognomy, which those experienced and master mendicants observe, whereby they instantly discover a merciful aspect, and will single out a face, wherein they spy the signatures and marks of mercy. For there are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our souls, wherein he that cannot read A B C may read our natures. I hold, moreover, that there is a phytognomy, or physiognomy, not only of men, but of plants and vegetables; and in every one of them some outward figures which hang as signs or bushes of their inward forms. The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all his works, not graphical, or composed of letters, but of their several forms, constitutions, parts, and operations, which, aptly joined together, do make one word that doth express their natures. By these letters God calls the stars by their names; and by this alphabet Adam assigned to every creature a name peculiar to its nature.



Now, there are, besides these characters in our faces, certain mystical figures in our hands, which I dare not call mere dashes, strokes *à la volée* or at random, because delineated by a pencil that never works in vain; and hereof I take more particular notice, because I carry that in mine own hand which I could never read of nor discover in another. Aristotle, I confess, in his acute and singular book of physiognomy, hath made no mention of chiromancy: yet I believe the Egyptians, who were nearer addicted to those abstruse and mystical sciences, had a knowledge therein: to which those vagabond and counterfeit Egyptians did after pretend, and perhaps retained a few corrupted principles, which sometimes might verify their prognosticks.

It is the common wonder of all men, how, among so many millions of faces, there should be none alike: now, contrary, I wonder as much how there should be any. He that shall consider how many thousand several words have been carelessly and without study composed out of twenty-four letters; withal, how many hundred lines there are to be drawn in the fabrick of one man; shall easily find that this variety is necessary: and it will be very hard that they shall so concur as to make one portrait like another. Let a painter carelessly limn out



a million of faces, and you shall find them all different; yea, let him have his copy before him, yet, after all his art, there will remain a sensible distinction: for the pattern or example of everything is the perfectest in that kind, whereof we still come short, though we transcend or go beyond it; because herein it is wide, and agrees not in all points unto its copy. Nor doth the similitude of creatures disparage the variety of nature, nor any way confound the works of God. For even in things alike there is diversity; and those that do seem to accord do manifestly disagree. And thus is man like God; for, in the same things that we resemble him we are utterly different from him. There was never anything so like another as in all points to concur; there will ever some reserved difference slip in, to prevent the identity; without which two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible.

SECT. III.—But, to return from philosophy to charity, I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue as to conceive, that to give alms is only to be charitable, or think a piece of liberality can comprehend the total of charity. Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us, in this narrow way, many paths unto goodness; as many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be



charitable. There are infirmities not only of body, but of soul and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot condemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body than apparel the nakedness of his soul. It is an honourable object to see the reasons of other men wear our liveries, and their borrowed understandings do homage to the bounty of ours. It is the cheapest way of beneficence, and, like the natural charity of the sun, illuminates another without obscuring itself. To be reserved and caitiff in this part of goodness is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than the pecuniary avarice. To this (as calling myself a scholar) I am obliged by the duty of my condition. I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasury of knowledge. I intend no monopoly, but a community in learning. I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head than beget and propagate it in his. And, in the midst of all my endeavours, there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish



with myself, nor can be legacied among my honoured friends. I cannot fall out [with] or condemn a man for an error, or conceive why a difference in opinion should divide an affection; for controversies, disputes, and argumentations, both in philosophy and in divinity, if they meet with discreet and peaceable natures, do not infringe the laws of charity. In all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much there is of nothing to the purpose; for then reason, like a bad hound, spends upon a false scent, and forsakes the question first started. And this is one reason why controversies are never determined; for, though they be amply proposed, they are scarce at all handled; they do so swell with unnecessary digressions; and the parenthesis on the party is often as large as the main discourse upon the subject. The foundations of religion are already established, and the principles of salvation subscribed unto by all. There remain not many controversies worthy a passion, and yet never any dispute it without, not only in divinity but inferior arts. What a *βατραχομυομαχία* and hot skirmish is betwixt S. and T. in Lucian! How do grammarians hack and slash for the genitive case<sup>1</sup> in Jupiter! How do they break their own pates, to salve that of Priscian! *Si foret in terris, rideret*

<sup>1</sup> Whether Jovis or Jupitris.



*Democritus.* Yea, even amongst wiser militants, how many wounds have been given and credits slain, for the poor victory of an opinion, or beggarly conquest of a distinction! Scholars are men of peace, they bear no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actius's razor; their pens carry further, and give a louder report than thunder. I had rather stand in the shock of a basilisk than in the fury of a merciless pen. It is not mere zeal to learning, or devotion to the muses, that wiser princes patron the arts, and carry an indulgent aspect unto scholars; but a desire to have their names eternized by the memory of their writings, and a fear of the revengeful pen of succeeding ages: for these are the men that, when they have played their parts, and had their *exits*, must step out and give the moral of their scenes, and deliver unto posterity an inventory of their virtues and vices. And surely there goes a great deal of conscience to the compiling of an history: there is no reproach to the scandal of a story; it is such an authentick kind of falsehood, that with authority belies our good names to all nations and posterity.

SECT. IV.—There is another offence unto charity, which no author hath ever written of, and few take notice of, and that's the reproach, not of whole professions, mysteries, and con-



ditions, but of whole nations, wherein by opprobrious epithets we miscall each other, and, by an uncharitable logick, from a disposition in a few, conclude a habit in all.

Le mutin Anglois, et le bravache Escossois ;  
Le bougre Italien, et le fol François ;  
Le poltron Romain, le larron de Gascogne,  
L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Alleman yvrogne.

St. Paul, that calls the Cretians liars, doth it but indirectly, and upon quotation of their own poet. It is as bloody a thought in one way as Nero's was in another. For by a word we wound a thousand, and at one blow assassin the honour of a nation. It is as complete a piece of madness to miscall and rave against the times ; or think to recall men to reason by a fit of passion. Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply hypochondriack as Heraclitus, that bewailed them. It moves not my spleen to behold the multitude in their proper humours ; that is, in their fits of folly and madness, as well understanding that wisdom is not profaned unto the world ; and it is the privilege of a few to be virtuous. They that endeavour to abolish vice destroy also virtue ; for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another. Thus virtue (abolish vice) is an idea. Again, the community of sin doth not disparage



goodness ; for, when vice gains upon the major part, virtue, in whom it remains, becomes more excellent, and, being lost in some, multiplies its goodness in others, which remain untouched, and persist entire in the general inundation. I can therefore behold vice without a satire, content only with an admonition, or instructive reprehension ; for noble natures, and such as are capable of goodness, are railed into vice, that might as easily be admonished into virtue ; and we should be all so far the orators of goodness as to protect her from the power of vice, and maintain the cause of injured truth. No man can justly censure or condemn another ; because, indeed, no man truly knows another. This I perceive in myself ; for I am in the dark to all the world, and my nearest friends behold me but in a cloud. Those that know me but superficially think less of me than I do of myself ; those of my near acquaintance think more ; God who truly knows me, knows that I am nothing : for he only beholds me, and all the world, who looks not on us through a derived ray, or a trajection of a sensible species, but beholds the substance without the help of accidents, and the forms of things, as we their operations. Further, no man can judge another, because no man knows himself ; for we censure others but as they disagree from that humour



which we fancy laudable in ourselves, and commend others but for that wherein they seem to quadrate and consent with us. So that in conclusion, all is but that we all condemn, self-love. 'Tis the general complaint of these times, and perhaps of those past, that charity grows cold; which I perceive most verified in those which most do manifest the fires and flames of zeal; for it is a virtue that best agrees with coldest natures, and such as are complexioned for humility. But how shall we expect charity towards others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves? "Charity begins at home," is the voice of the world; yet is every man his greatest enemy, and as it were his own executioner. *Non occides*, is the commandment of God, yet scarce observed by any man; for I perceive every man is his own Atropos, and lends a hand to cut the thread of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first murderer, but Adam, who brought in death; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel; and saw that verified in the experience of another which faith could not persuade him in the theory of himself.

SECT. v.—There is, I think, no man that apprehendeth his own miseries less than myself; and no man that so nearly apprehends another's. I could lose an arm without a tear, and with few groans, methinks, be quartered into pieces;



yet can I weep most seriously at a play, and receive with a true passion the counterfeit griefs of those known and professed impostures. It is a barbarous part of inhumanity to add unto any afflicted parties misery, or endeavour to multiply in any man a passion whose single nature is already above his patience. This was the greatest affliction of Job, and those oblique expostulations of his friends a deeper injury than the downright blows of the devil. It is not the tears of our own eyes only, but of our friends also, that do exhaust the current of our sorrows; which, falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel. It is an act within the power of charity, to translate a passion out of one breast into another, and to divide a sorrow almost out of itself; for an affliction, like a dimension, may be so divided as, if not indivisible, at least to become insensible. Now with my friend I desire not to share or participate, but to engross, his sorrows; that, by making them mine own, I may more easily discuss them: for in mine own reason, and within myself, I can command that which I cannot entreat without myself, and within the circle of another. I have often thought those noble pairs and examples of friendship, not so truly histories of what had been, as fictions of what should be; but I now perceive nothing in



them but possibilities, nor anything in the heroick examples of Damon and Pythias, Achilles and Patroclus, which, methinks, upon some grounds, I could not perform within the narrow compass of myself. That a man should lay down his life for his friend seems strange to vulgar affections and such as confine themselves within that worldly principle, "charity begins at home." For mine own part, I could never remember the relations that I held unto myself, nor the respect that I owe unto my own nature, in the cause of God, my country, and my friends. Next to these three, I do embrace myself. I confess I do not observe that order that the schools ordain our affections, — to love our parents, wives, children, and then our friends; for, excepting the injunctions of religion, I do not find in myself such a necessary and indissoluble sympathy to all those of my blood. I hope I do not break the fifth commandment, if I conceive I may love my friend before the nearest of my blood, even those to whom I owe the principles of life. I never yet cast a true affection on a woman; but I have loved my friend, as I do virtue, my soul, my God. From hence, methinks, I do conceive how God loves man; what happiness there is in the love of God. Omitting all other, there are three most mystical unions; two natures in one person; three per-



sons in one nature ; one soul in two bodies. For though, indeed, they be really divided, yet are they so united, as they seem but one, and make rather a duality than two distinct souls.

SECT. VI.—There are wonders in true affection. It is a body of enigmas, mysteries, and riddles ; wherein two so become one as they both become two : I love my friend before myself, and yet, methinks, I do not love him enough. Some few months hence, my multiplied affection will make me believe I have not loved him at all. When I am from him, I am dead till I be with him. United souls are not satisfied with embraces, but desire to be truly each other ; which being impossible, their desires are infinite, and must proceed without a possibility of satisfaction. Another misery there is in affection ; that whom we truly love like our own selves, we forget their looks, nor can our memory retain the idea of their faces : and it is no wonder, for they are ourselves, and our affection makes their looks our own. This noble affection falls not on vulgar and common constitutions ; but on such as are marked for virtue. He that can love his friend with this noble ardour will in a competent degree affect all. Now, if we can bring our affections to look beyond the body, and cast an eye upon the soul, we have found out the true object, not only of friendship, but charity :



and the greatest happiness that we can bequeath the soul is that wherein we all do place our last felicity, salvation ; which, though it be not in our power to bestow, it is in our charity and pious invocations to desire, if not procure and further. I cannot contentedly frame a prayer for myself in particular, without a catalogue for my friends ; nor request a happiness wherein my sociable disposition doth not desire the fellowship of my neighbour. I never hear the toll of a passing bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit. I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul. I cannot see one say his prayers, but, instead of imitating him, I fall into supplication for him, who perhaps is no more to me than a common nature : and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessing of mine unknown devotions. To pray for enemies, that is, for their salvation, is no harsh precept, but the practice of our daily and ordinary devotions. I cannot believe the story of the Italian ; our bad wishes and uncharitable desires proceed no further than this life ; it is the devil, and the uncharitable votes of hell, that desire our misery in the world to come.



SECT. VII.—“To do no injury nor take none” was a principle which, to my former years and impatient affections, seemed to contain enough of morality, but my more settled years, and Christian constitution, have fallen upon severer resolutions. I can hold there is no such thing as injury; that if there be, there is no such injury as revenge, and no such revenge as the contempt of an injury: that to hate another is to malign himself; that the truest way to love another is to despise ourselves. I were unjust unto mine own conscience if I should say I am at variance with anything like myself. I find there are many pieces in this one fabrick of man; this frame is raised upon a mass of antipathies: I am one methinks but as the world, wherein notwithstanding there are a swarm of distinct essences, and in them another world of contrarieties; we carry private and domestick enemies within, publick and more hostile adversaries without. The devil, that did but buffet St. Paul, plays methinks at sharp with me. Let me be nothing, if within the compass of myself, I do not find the battle of Lepanto, passion against reason, reason against faith, faith against the devil, and my conscience against all. There is another man within me that’s angry with me, rebukes, commands, and dastards me. I have no conscience of marble, to resist the hammer of



more heavy offences : nor yet so soft and waxen, as to take the impression of each single peccadillo or scape of infirmity. I am of a strange belief, that it is as easy to be forgiven some sins as to commit some others. For my original sin, I hold it to be washed away in my baptism ; for my actual transgressions, I compute and reckon with God but from my last repentance, sacrament, or general absolution ; and therefore am not terrified with the sins or madness of my youth. I thank the goodness of God, I have no sins that want a name. I am not singular in offences ; my transgressions are epidemical, and from the common breath of our corruption. For there are certain tempers of body which, matched with an humorous depravity of mind, do hatch and produce vitiosities, whose newness and monstrosity of nature admits no name ; this was the temper of that lecher that carnaled with a statue, and the constitution of Nero in his sphintrian recreations. For the heavens are not only fruitful in new and unheard of stars, the earth in plants and animals, but men's minds also in villany and vices. Now the dulness of my reason, and the vulgarity of my disposition, never prompted my invention nor solicited my affection unto any of these ;—yet even those common and quotidian infirmities that so necessarily attend me, and do seem to be my very



nature, have so dejected me, so broken the estimation that I should have otherwise of myself, that I repute myself the most abject piece of mortality. Divines prescribe a fit of sorrow to repentance: there goes indignation, anger, sorrow, hatred, into mine, passions of a contrary nature, which neither seem to suit with this action, nor my proper constitution. It is no breach of charity to ourselves to be at variance with our vices, nor to abhor that part of us, which is an enemy to the ground of charity, our God; wherein we do but imitate our great selves, the world, whose divided antipathies and contrary faces do yet carry a charitable regard unto the whole, by their particular discords preserving the common harmony, and keeping in fetters those powers, whose rebellions, once masters, might be the ruin of all.

SECT. VIII.—I thank God, amongst those millions of vices, I do inherit and hold from Adam, I have escaped one, and that a mortal enemy to charity,—the first and father sin, not only of man, but of the devil,—pride; a vice whose name is comprehended in a monosyllable, but in its nature not circumscribed with a world. I have escaped it in a condition that can hardly avoid it. Those petty acquisitions and reputed perfections, that advance and elevate the conceits of other men, add no feathers unto



mine. I have seen a grammarian tower and plume himself over a single line in Horace, and show more pride, in the construction of one ode, than the author in the composure of the whole book. For my own part, besides the jargon and *patois* of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages; yet I protest I have no higher conceit of myself than had our fathers before the confusion of Babel, when there was but one language in the world, and none to boast himself either linguist or critick. I have not only seen several countries, beheld the nature of their climes, the chorography of their provinces, topography of their cities, but understood their several laws, customs, and policies; yet cannot all this persuade the dullness of my spirit unto such an opinion of myself as I behold in nimbler and conceited heads, that never looked a degree beyond their nests. I know the names and somewhat more of all the constellations in my horizon; yet I have seen a prating mariner, that could only name the pointers and the north-star, out talk me, and conceit himself a whole sphere above me. I know most of the plants of my country, and of those about me, yet bethinks I do not know so many as when I did but know a hundred, and had scarcely ever simplified further than Cheapside. For, indeed, heads of capacity, and



such as are not full with a handful or easy measure of knowledge, think they know nothing till they know all; which being impossible, they fall upon the opinion of Socrates, and only know they know not any thing. I cannot think that Homer pined away upon the riddle of the fishermen, or that Aristotle, who understood the uncertainty of knowledge, and confessed so often the reason of man too weak for the works of nature, did ever drown himself upon the flux and reflux of Euripus. We do but learn, to-day, what our better advanced judgments will unteach to-morrow; and Aristotle doth but instruct us, as Plato did him, that is, to confute himself. I have run through all sorts, yet find no rest in any: though our first studies and junior endeavours may style us Peripateticks, Stoicks, or Academicks, yet I perceive the wisest heads prove, at last, almost all Scepticks, and stand like Janus in the field of knowledge. I have therefore one common and authentick philosophy I learned in the schools, whereby I discourse and satisfy the reason of other men; another more reserved, and drawn from experience, whereby I content mine own. Solomon, that complained of ignorance in the height of knowledge, hath not only humbled my conceits, but discouraged my endeavours. There is yet another conceit that hath sometimes made me



shut my books, which tells me it is a vanity to waste our days in the blind pursuit of knowledge: it is but attending a little longer, and we shall enjoy that, by instinct and infusion, which we endeavour at here by labour and inquisition. It is better to sit down in a modest ignorance, and rest contented with the natural blessing of our own reasons, than buy the uncertain knowledge of this life with sweat and vexation, which death gives every fool gratis, and is an accessory of our glorification.

SECT. IX.—I was never yet once [married], and commend their resolutions who never marry twice. Not that I disallow of second marriage; as neither in all cases of polygamy, which considering some times, and the unequal number of both sexes, may be also necessary. The whole world was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman. Man is the whole world, and the breath of God; woman the rib and crooked piece of man. I could be content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to perpetuate the world without this trivial and vulgar way of coition: it is the foolishhest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his cooled imagination, when he shall consider what an odd and unworthy piece of folly he hath com-



mitted. I speak not in prejudice, nor am averse from that sweet sex, but naturally amorous of all that is beautiful. I can look a whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of an horse. It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony; and sure there is musick, even in the beauty and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a musick wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may maintain "the musick of the spheres:" for those well-ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whatsoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony, which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church-musick. For myself, not only from my obedience but my particular genius I do embrace it: for even that vulgar and tavern-musick, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the first composer. There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and creatures of God,—such a melody to the ear, as the whole world, well



understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God. I will not say, with Plato, the soul is an harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto musick: thus some, whose temper of body agrees, and humours the constitution of their souls, are born poets, though indeed all are naturally inclined unto rhythm. This made Tacitus, in the very first line of his story, fall upon a verse;<sup>1</sup> and Cicero, the worst of poets, but declaiming for a poet, falls in the very first sentence upon a perfect hexameter.<sup>2</sup> I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession; I do not secretly implore and wish for plagues, rejoice at famines, revolve ephemerides and almanacks in expectation of malignant aspects, fatal conjunctions, and eclipses. I rejoice not at unwholesome springs nor unseasonable winters: my prayer goes with the husbandman's; I desire everything in its proper season, that neither men nor the times be out of temper. Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me. I desire rather to

<sup>1</sup> Urbem Romam in principio reges habuere.—*Taciti Annales*, l. i.

<sup>2</sup> In qua me non inficior mediocriter esse.—*Cicero pro Archia Poeta*.



cure his infirmities than my own necessities. Where I do him no good, methinks it is scarce honest gain, though I confess 'tis but the worthy salary of our well intended endeavours. I am not only ashamed but heartily sorry, that, besides death, there are diseases incurable ; yet not for my own sake or that they be beyond my art, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own. And, to speak more generally, those three noble professions which all civil commonwealths do honour, are raised upon the fall of Adam, and are not any way exempt from their infirmities. There are not only diseases incurable in physick, but cases indissolvable in law, vices incorrigible in divinity. If general councils may err, I do not see why particular courts should be infallible: their perfectest rules are raised upon the erroneous reasons of man, and the laws of one do but condemn the rules of another ; as Aristotle oftentimes the opinions of his predecessors, because, though agreeable to reason, yet [they] were not consonant to his own rules and the logick of his proper principles. Again,—to speak nothing of the sin against the Holy Ghost, whose cure not only, but whose nature is unknown,—I can cure the gout or stone in some, sooner than divinity, pride, or avarice in others. I can cure



vices by physick when they remain incurable by divinity, and they shall obey my pills when they contemn their precepts. I boast nothing, but plainly say, we all labour against our own cure; for death is the cure of all diseases. There is no *catholicon* or universal remedy I know, but this, which though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is nectar, and a pleasant potion of immortality.

SECT. x.—For my conversation, it is, like the sun's, with all men, and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad; and the worst best, that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities, wherein they are good. There is no man's mind of so discordant and jarring a temper, to which a tuneable dispositon may not strike a harmony. *Magnae virtutes, nec minora vitia*; it is the posy of the best natures, and may be inverted on the worst. There are, in the most depraved and venomous dispositions, certain pieces that remain untouched, which by an *antiperistasis* become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the contagion of their enemies' vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption. For it is also thus in nature: the greatest balsams do lie enveloped in the bodies of the most powerful corrosives. I say moreover, and I ground upon



experience, that poisons contain within themselves their own antidotes, and that which preserves them from the venom of themselves; without which they were not deleterious to others only, but to themselves also. But it is the corruption that I fear within me; not the contagion of commerce without me. 'Tis that unruly regiment within me, that will destroy me; 'tis I that do infect myself; the man without a navel<sup>1</sup> yet lives in me. I feel that original canker corrode and devour me: and therefore, *Defenda me, Dios, de me!* "Lord, deliver me from myself!" is a part of my litany, and the first voice of my retired imaginations. There is no man alone, because every man is a microcosm, and carries the whole world about him. *Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus*, though it be the apothegm of a wise man is yet true in the mouth of a fool: for indeed, though in a wilderness, a man is never alone; not only because he is with himself, and his own thoughts, but because he is with the devil, who ever consorts with our solitude, and is that unruly rebel that musters up those disordered motions which accompany our sequestered imaginations. And to speak more narrowly, there is no such thing as solitude, nor anything that can be said to be alone, and by

<sup>1</sup> [Adam, whom I conceive to want a navel, because he was not born of a woman.]



itself, but God ;—who is his own circle, and can subsist by himself ; all others, besides their dissimilary and heterogeneous parts, which in a manner multiply their natures, cannot subsist without the concurrence of God, and the society of that hand which doth uphold their natures. In brief, there can be nothing truly alone, and by its self, which is not truly one, and such is only God : all others do transcend an unity, and so by consequence are many.

SECT. XI.—Now for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not a history, but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable. For the world, I count it not an inn, but an hospital ; and a place not to live, but to die in. The world that I regard is myself ; it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on : for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my altitude ; for I am above Atlas's shoulders. The earth is a point not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us. That mass of flesh that circumscribes me limits not my mind. That surface that tells the heavens it hath an end cannot persuade me I have any. I take my circle to be above three hundred



and sixty. Though the number of the ark do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind. Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm, or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun. Nature tells me, I am the image of God, as well as Scripture. He that understands not thus much hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the alphabet of man. Let me not injure the felicity of others, if I say I am as happy as any. *Ruat coelum, fiat voluntas tua*, salveth all; so that, whatsoever happens, it is but what our daily prayers desire. In brief, I am content; and what should providence add more? Surely this is it we call happiness, and this do I enjoy; with this I am happy in a dream, and as content to enjoy a happiness in a fancy, as others in a more apparent truth and reality. There is surely a nearer apprehension of any thing that delights us, in our dreams, than in our waked senses. Without this I were unhappy; for my awaked judgment discontents me, ever whispering unto me that I am from my friend, but my friendly dreams in the night requite me, and make me think I am within his arms. I thank God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest; for there is a satisfaction



in them unto reasonable desires, and such as can be content with a fit of happiness. And surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this world, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams, to those of the next, as the phantasms of the night, to the conceit of the day. There is an equal delusion in both ; and the one doth but seem to be the emblem or picture of the other. We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps ; and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason ; and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity, my ascendant was the watery sign of *Scorpio*. I was born in the planetary hour of *Saturn*, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardise of company ; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams, and this time also would I choose for my devotions : but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken



tale of that which hath passed. Aristotle, who hath written a singular tract of sleep, hath not, methinks, thoroughly defined it; nor yet Galen, though he seem to have corrected it; for those *noctambulos* and night-walkers, though in their sleep, do yet enjoy the action of their senses. We must therefore say that there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus; and that those abstracted and ecstatick souls do walk about in their own corpses, as spirits with the bodies they assume, wherein they seem to hear, see, and feel, though indeed the organs are destitute of sense, and their natures of those faculties that should inform them. Thus it is observed, that men sometimes, upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves. For then the soul begins to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality.

SECT. XII.—We term sleep a death; and yet it is waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life. 'Tis indeed a part of life that best expresseth death; for every man truly lives, so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself. Themistocles therefore, that slew his soldier in his sleep, was a merciful executioner: 'tis a kind of punishment the mildness of no laws hath in-



vented ; I wonder the fancy of Lucan and Seneca did not discover it. It is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily ; a death which Adam died before his mortality ; a death whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death. In fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God :—

The night is come, like to the day ;  
Depart not thou, great God, away.  
Let not my sins, black as the night,  
Eclipse the lustre of thy light.  
Keep still in my horizon ; for to me  
The sun makes not the day, but thee.  
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,  
On my temples sentry keep ;  
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,  
Whose eyes are open while mine close.  
Let no dreams my head infest,  
But such as Jacob's temples blest.  
While I do rest, my soul advance :  
Make my sleep a holy trance :  
That I may, my rest being wrought,  
Awake into some holy thought.  
And with as active vigour run  
My course as doth the nimble sun.  
Sleep is a death ;—O make me try,  
By sleeping, what it is to die !  
And as gently lay my head  
On my grave, as now my bed.  
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me  
Awake again at last with thee.



And thus assur'd, behold I lie  
Securely, or to wake or die.  
These are my drowsy days ; in vain  
I do now wake to sleep again :  
O come that hour, when I shall never  
Sleep again, but wake for ever !

This is the dormitive I take to bedward ; I need no other *laudanum* than this to make me sleep ; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection.

SECT. XIII.—The method I should use in distributive justice, I often observe in commutative ; and keep a geometrical proportion in both, whereby becoming equable to others, I become unjust to myself, and supererogate in that common principle, “ Do unto others as thou wouldst be done unto thyself.” I was not born unto riches, neither is it, I think, my star to be wealthy ; or if it were, the freedom of my mind, and frankness of my disposition, were able to contradict and cross my fates : for to me avarice seems not so much a vice, as a deplorable piece of madness ; to conceive ourselves urinals, or be persuaded that we are dead, is not so ridiculous, nor so many degrees beyond the power of hell-bore, as this. The opinions of theory, and positions of men, are not so void of reason, as their practised conclusions. Some have held that snow is black, that the earth moves, that the soul is air, fire, water ; but all this is philo-



sophy : and there is no delirium, if we do but speculate the folly and indisputable dotage of avarice. To that subterraneous idol, and God of the earth, I do confess I am an atheist. I cannot persuade myself to honour that the world adores ; whatsoever virtue its prepared substance may have within my body, it hath no influence nor operation without. I would not entertain a base design, or an action that should call me villain, for the Indies ; and for this only do I love and honour my own soul, and have methinks two arms too few to embrace myself. Aristotle is too severe, that will not allow us to be truly liberal without wealth, and the bountiful hand of fortune ; if this be true, I must confess I am charitable only in my liberal intentions, and bountiful well wishes. But if the example of the mite be not only an act of wonder, but an example of the noblest charity, surely poor men may also build hospitals, and the rich alone have not erected cathedrals. I have a private method which others observe not ; I take the opportunity of myself to do good ; I borrow occasion of charity from my own necessities, and supply the wants of others, when I am in most need myself : for it is an honest stratagem to take advantage of ourselves, and so to husband the acts of virtue, that, where they are defective in one circumstance, they may repay their want, and multiply their goodness in.



another. I have not Peru in my desires, but a competence and ability to perform those good works to which [the Almighty] hath inclined my nature. He is rich who hath enough to be charitable; and it is hard to be so poor that a noble mind may not find a way to this piece of goodness. "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord:" there is more rhetorick in that one sentence than in a library of sermons. And indeed, if those sentences were understood by the reader with the same emphasis as they are delivered by the author, we needed not those volumes of instructions, but might be honest by an epitome. Upon this motive only I cannot behold a beggar without relieving his necessities with my purse, or his soul with my prayers. These scenical and accidental differences between us cannot make me forget that common and untoucht part of us both: there is under these centoes and miserable outsides, those mutilate and semi bodies, a soul of the same alloy with our own, whose genealogy is God as well as ours, and in as fair a way to salvation as ourselves. Statists that labour to contrive a commonwealth without poverty take away the object of our charity; not understanding only the commonwealth of a christian, but forgetting the prophecy of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ["The poor ye shall have always with you."]



SECT. XIV.—Now, there is another part of charity, which is the basis and pillar of this, and that is the love of God, for whom we love our neighbour; for this I think charity, to love God for himself, and our neighbour for God. All that is truly amiable is God, or as it were a divided piece of him, that retains a reflex or shadow of himself. Nor is it strange that we should place affection on that which is invisible: all that we truly love is thus. What we adore under affection of our senses deserves not the honour of so pure a title. Thus we adore virtue, though to the eyes of sense she be invisible. Thus that part of our noble friends that we love is not that part that we embrace, but that insensible part that our arms cannot embrace. God being all goodness, can love nothing but himself; he loves us but for that part which is as it were himself, and the traduction of his Holy Spirit. Let us call to assize the loves of our parents, the affections of our wives and children, and they are all dumb shows and dreams, without reality, truth, or constancy. For first there is a strong bond of affection between us and our parents; yet how easily dissolved! We betake ourselves to a woman, forgetting our mother in a wife, and the womb that bare us in that which shall bear our image. This woman blessing us with children, our



affection leaves the level it held before, and sinks from our bed unto our issue and picture of posterity: where affection holds no steady mansion; they growing up in years, desire our ends; or, applying themselves to a woman, take a lawful way to love another better than ourselves. Thus I perceive a man may be buried alive, and behold his grave in his own issue.

I conclude therefore, and say, there is no happiness under (or, as Copernicus<sup>1</sup> will have it, above) the sun; nor any *crambo* in that repeated verity and burthen of all the wisdom of Solomon; "All is vanity and vexation of spirit;" there is no felicity in that the world adores. Aristotle, whilst he labours to refute the *ideas* of Plato, falls upon one himself: for his *summum bonum* is a chimaera; and there is no such thing as his felicity. That wherein God himself is happy, the holy angels are happy, in whose defect the devils are unhappy;—that dare I call happiness: whatsoever conduceth unto this, may, with an easy metaphor, deserve that name; whatsoever else the world terms happiness is, to me, a story out of Pliny, an apparition or neat delusion, wherein there is no more of happiness than the name. Bless me in this life with but the peace of my conscience, command of my affections, the love of thyself

<sup>1</sup> [Who holds that the sun is the centre of the world.]



and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Caesar! These are, O Lord, the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth: wherein I set no rule or limit to thy hand or providence; dispose of me according to the wisdom of thy pleasure. Thy will be done, though in my own undoing.



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 dispose of me according to the wisdom of thy  
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undoing. *Exit Caesar.*

*Enter Brutus, Cassius, and others.*

Brutus, I have been thinking of thee, and of

the great wrong that thou hast done to me.

Cassius, I have been thinking of thee, and of

the great wrong that thou hast done to me.

Brutus, I have been thinking of thee, and of

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OBSERVATIONS  
UPON  
RELIGIO MEDICI

OCCASIONALLY WRITTEN

BY SIR KENELM DIGBY, KNIGHT,

1643



OBSERVATIONS

ON THE EFFECTS OF THE  
VACCINATION OF THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBSERVATIONS

RELIGIO MEDICI

BY THE REV. J. H. WILKINSON

BY SIR KENNETH DICKY, KNIGHT

1843



## OBSERVATIONS

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE EDWARD EARL OF  
DORSET, BARON OF BUCKHURST, ETC.

MY LORD,

I RECEIVED yesternight, your lordship's of the nineteenth current; wherein you are pleased to oblige me, not only by extreme gallant expressions of favour and kindness, but likewise by taking so far into your care the expending of my time, during the tediousness of my restraint, as to recommend to my reading a book that had received the honour and safeguard of your approbation; for both which I most humbly thank your lordship. And, since I cannot in the way of gratefulness express unto your lordship, as I would, those hearty sentiments I have of your goodness to me; I will at the least endeavour, in the way of duty and observance, to let you see how the little needle of my soul is thoroughly touched at the great loadstone of yours, and followeth suddenly and strongly, which way soever you beckon it. In this occasion, the magnetick motion was impatience to have the book in my hands, that your lordship gave so advantageous a character of; whereupon I sent presently (as late as it was) to Paul's church-yard, for this favourite of



yours, "Religio Medici:" which after a while found me in a condition fit to receive a blessing by a visit from any of such masterpieces, as you look upon with gracious eyes ;—for I was newly gotten into bed. This good natured creature I could easily persuade to be my bed-fellow, and to wake with me, as long as I had any edge to entertain myself with the delights I sucked from so noble a conversation. And truly, my lord, I closed not my eyes, till I had enriched myself with (or at least exactly surveyed) all the treasures that are lapped up in the folds of those few sheets. To return only a general commendation of this curious piece, or at large to admire the author's spirit and smartness, were too perfunctory an account, and too slight an one, to so discerning and steady an eye as yours, after so particular and encharged a summons to read heedfully this discourse. I will therefore presume to blot a sheet or two of paper with my reflections upon sundry passages through the whole context of it, as they shall occur to my remembrance. Whereas now your lordship knoweth this packet is not so happy as to carry with it any other expression of my obsequiousness to you, it will be but reasonable, you should even here give over your further trouble, of reading what my respect engageth me to the writing of.

Whose first step is ingenuity and a well natured evenness of judgment, shall be sure of applause and fair hopes in all men for the rest of his journey. And indeed, my lord, methinketh this gentleman setteth out excellently poised with that happy temper: and showeth a great deal of judicious piety in making a right use of the blind zeal that bigots lose themselves



in. Yet I cannot satisfy my doubts thoroughly, how he maketh good his professing to follow the great wheel of the church (vi) in matters of divinity; which surely is the solid basis of true religion. For to do so, without jarring against the conduct of that first mover by eccentrical and irregular motions, obligeth one to yield a very dutiful obedience to the determinations of it, without arrogating to one's self a controlling ability in liking or misliking the faith, doctrine, and constitutions, of that church which one looketh upon as their north-star: whereas, if I mistake not, this author approveth the church of England, not absolutely, but comparatively with other reformed churches.

My next reflection is, concerning what he hath sprinkled (most wittily) in several places, concerning the nature and immortality of a human soul, and the condition and state it is in, after the dissolution of the body. And here give me leave to observe what our countryman Roger Bacon did long ago: "That those students, who busy themselves much with such notions, as reside wholly in the fantasy, do hardly ever become idoneous for abstracted metaphysical speculations, the one having bulky foundation of matter, or of the accidents of it, to settle upon (at the least, with one foot): the other flying continually, even to a lessening pitch, in the subtile air. And accordingly, it hath been generally noted, that the exactest mathematicians, who converse altogether with lines, figures, and other differences of quantity, have seldom proved eminent in metaphysicks, or speculative divinity. Nor again, the professors of these sciences, in the other arts. Much less can it be expected that an excellent physician,



whose fancy is always fraught with the material drugs that he prescribeth his apothecary to compound his medicines of, and whose hands are inured to the cutting up, and eyes to the inspection of anatomized bodies, should easily, and with success, fly his thoughts at so towering a game, as a pure intellect, a separated and unbodied soul" (VII). Surely this acute author's sharp wit, had he orderly applied his studies that way, would have been able to satisfy himself with less labour, and others with more plenitude, than it hath been the lot of so dull a brain, as mine, concerning the immortality of the soul (VII). And yet, I assure you, my lord, the little philosophy that is allowed me for my share, demonstrateth this proposition to me, as well as faith delivereth it, which our physician will not admit in his.

To make good this assertion here, were very unreasonable, since that to do it exactly (and without exactness it were no demonstration) requireth a total survey of the whole science of bodies, and of all the operations that we are conversant with, of a rational creature: which I having done with all the succinctness I have been able to explicate so knotty a subject with, hath taken me up in the first draught near two hundred sheets of paper. I shall therefore take leave of this point, with only this note:—that I take the immortality of the soul (under his favour) to be of that nature, that to them only that are not versed in the ways of proving it by reason, it is an article of faith: to others, it is an evident conclusion of demonstrative science.

And with a like short note, I shall observe, how if he had traced the nature of the soul from its first prin-



ciples, he could not have suspected it should sleep in the grave, till the resurrection of the body (vii). Nor would he have permitted his compassionate nature to imagine it belonged to God's mercy (vii) (as the Chiliasts did) to change its condition, in those that are damned, from pain to happiness. For where God should have done that, he must have made that anguished soul another creature than what it was (as to make fire cease from being hot, requireth to have it become another thing than the element of fire); since, that to be in such a condition as maketh us understand damned souls miserable, is a necessary effect of the temper it is in, when it goeth out of the body, and must necessarily (out of its own nature) remain in, unvariably for all eternity; though, for the conceptions of the vulgar part of mankind (who are not capable of such abstruse notions) it be styled (and truly too) the sentence and punishment of a severe judge.

I am extremely pleased with him, when he saith (ix), "there are not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith." And no whit less, when in philosophy he will not be satisfied with such naked terms, as in schools used to be obtruded upon easy minds, when the masters' fingers are not strong enough to untie the knots proposed unto them. I confess when I inquire what light (to use our author's example) (x) is, I should be as well contented with his silence, as with his telling me it is *actus perspicui*; unless he explicate clearly to me, what those words mean, which I find very few go about to do. Such meat they swallow whole, and eject it as entire. But were such things scientifically and methodically declared, they would be



of extreme satisfaction and delight. And that work taketh up the greatest part of my formerly mentioned treatise. For I endeavour to show by a continued progress, and not by leaps, all the motions of nature; and unto them to fit intelligibly the terms used by her best secretaries; whereby all wild fantastick qualities and moods (introduced for refuges of ignorance) are banished from my commerce.

In the next place, my lord, I shall suspect that our author hath not penetrated into the bottom of those conceptions, that deep scholars have taught us of eternity (xi). Methinketh he taketh it for an infinite extension of time, and a never-ending revolution of continual succession; which is no more like eternity, than a gross body is like to a pure spirit. Nay, such an infinity of revolutions is demonstrable to be a contradiction, and impossible. In the state of eternity there is no succession, no change, no variety. Souls or angels, in that condition, do not so much as change a thought. All things, notions, and actions, that ever were, are, or shall be, in any creature, are actually present to such an intellect. And this, my lord, I aver, not as deriving it from theology, and having recourse to beatifick vision, to make good my tenet (for so, only glorified creatures should enjoy such immense knowledge), but out of the principles of nature and reason, and from thence shall demonstrate it to belong to the lowest soul of the ignorantest wretch whilst he lived in this world, since damned in hell. A bold undertaking, you will say. But I confidently engage myself to it. Upon this occasion occurreth also a great deal to be said of the nature of predestination (which, by the short touches



our author giveth of it, I doubt he quite mistakes), and how it is an unalterable series and chain of causes, producing infallible (and in respect of them, necessary) effects. But that is too large a theme to unfold here ; too vast an ocean to describe in the scant map of a letter. And therefore I will refer that to a fitter opportunity, fearing I have already too much trespassed upon your lordship's patience ; but that indeed, I hope, you have not had enough to read thus far.

I am sure, my lord, that you (who never forgot anything which deserved a room in your memory) do remember how we are told, that *abyssus abyssum invocat*. So here our author, from the abyss of predestination, falleth into that of the trinity of persons consistent with the indivisibility of the divine nature (xii) : and out of that (if I be not exceedingly deceived) into a third, of mistaking, when he goeth about to illustrate this admirable mystery by a wild discourse of a trinity in our souls. The dint of wit is not forcible enough to dissect such tough matter ; wherein all the obscure glimmering we gain of that inaccessible light, cometh to us clothed in the dark weeds of negations, and therefore little can we hope to meet with any positive examples to parallel it withal.

I doubt, he also mistaketh, and imposeth upon the severer schools, when he intimateth, that they gainsay this visible world's being but a picture or shadow of the invisible and intellectual : which manner of philosophizing he attributeth to Hermes Trismegistus (xii) ; but is everywhere to be met with in Plato ; and is raised since to a greater height in the christian schools.

But I am sure he learned in no great school (xiv),



nor sucked from any good philosophy, to give an actual subsistence and being to first matter without a form. He that will allow that a real existence in nature, is as superficially tinged in metaphysicks, as another would be in mathematicks, that should allow the like to a point, a line, or a superficies, in figures. These, in their strict notions, are but negations of further extension, or but exact terminations of that quantity which falleth under the consideration of the understanding, in the present purpose; no real entities in themselves. So likewise, the notions of matter, form, act, power, existence, and the like, that are with truth considered by the understanding, and have there each of them a distinct entity, are nevertheless nowhere by themselves in nature. They are terms which we must use in the negotiations of our thoughts, if we will discourse consequently, and conclude knowingly. But then again, we must be very wary of attributing to things, in their own natures, such entities as we create in our understandings, when we make pictures of them there; for there every different consideration, arising out of the different impression which the same thing maketh upon us, hath a distinct being by itself: whereas in the thing, there is but one single unity, that sheweth (as it were in a glass, at several positions), those various faces in our understanding. In a word, all these words are but artificial terms, not real things. And the not right understanding them, is the dangerousest rock that scholars suffer shipwreck against.

I go on with our physician's contemplations. Upon every occasion, he sheweth strong parts, and a vigorous brain. His wishes and aims, and what he pointeth at,



speake him owner of a noble and a generous heart. He hath reason to wish that Aristotle had been as accurate in examining the causes, nature, and affections, of the great universe he busied himself about, as his patriarch Galen hath been in the like considerations upon his little world, man's body, in that admirable work of his, "De usu partium" (xiv). But no great human thing was ever born and perfected at once. It may satisfy us, if one in our age buildeth that magnificent structure upon the other's foundations ; and especially, if where he findeth any of them unsound, he eradicateth those, and fixeth new unquestionable ones in their room : but so, as they still engross, keep a proportion, and bear a harmony, with the other's great work. This hath now (even now) our learned countryman done, the knowing Master White (whose name, I believe, your lordship hath met withal), in his excellent book, "De Mundo," newly printed at Paris, where he now resideth, and is admired by the world of lettered men there, as the prodigy of these latter times. Indeed his three dialogues upon that subject (if I am able to judge anything), are full of the profoundest learning I ever yet met withal. And I believe, who hath well read and digested them, will persuade himself, there is no truth so abstruse, nor hitherto conceived out of our reach, but man's wit may raise engines to scale and conquer. I assure myself, when our author hath studied him thoroughly, he will not lament so loud for Aristotle's mutilated and defective philosophy, as, in Boccalini, Caesar Caporali doth for the loss of Livy's shipwrecked decads.

That logick which he quarrelleth at, for calling a toad



or a serpent ugly (xvi), will in the end agree with his ; for nobody ever took them to be so, in respect of the universe (in which regard, he defendeth their regularity and symmetry), but only as they have relation to us.

But I cannot so easily agree with him, when he affirmeth, that devils, or other spirits in the intellectual world, have no exact ephemerides (xvii), wherein they may read beforehand the stories of fortuite accidents. For I believe, that all causes are so immediately chained to their effects, as if a perfect knowing nature get hold but of one link, it will drive the entire series, or pedigree of the whole, to each utmost end (as I think I have proved in my forenamed treatise) ; so that in truth, there is no fortuiteness or contingency of things, in respect of themselves, but only in respect of us, that are ignorant of their certain and necessary causes.

Now a like series or chain and complex of all outward circumstances (whose highest link, poets say prettily, is fastened to Jupiter's chair, and the lowest is rivetted to every individual on earth) steered and levelled by God Almighty, at the first setting out of the first mover, I conceive, to be that divine providence and mercy, which (to use our author's own example) giveth a thriving genius to the Hollanders, and the like : and not any secret, invisible, mystical blessing, that falleth not under the search or cognizance of a prudent indagation.

I must needs approve our author's equanimity, and I may as justly say his magnanimity, in being contented so cheerfully (as he saith) to shake hands with the fading goods of fortune, and be deprived of the joys of her most precious blessings ; so that he may in recompense possess in ample measure the true ones of the



mind (xviii). Like Epictetus, that great master of moral wisdom and piety, who taxeth them of high injustice, that repine at God's distribution of his blessings, when he putteth not into their share of goods such things as they use no industry or means to purchase. For why should that man, who above all things esteemeth his own freedom, and who, to enjoy that, sequestreth himself from commerce with the vulgar of mankind, take it ill of his stars, if such preferments, honours, and applauses, meet not him, as are painfully gained, after long and tedious services of princes, and brittle dependences of humorous favourites, and supple compliances with all sorts of natures? As for what he saith of astrology (xviii), I do not conceive that wise men reject it so much for being repugnant to divinity (which he reconcileth well enough) as for having no solid rules or ground in nature. To rely too far upon that vain art I judge to be rather folly than impiety, unless in our censure we look to the first origin of it, which savoureth of the idolatry of those heathens, that, worshipping the stars and heavenly bodies for deities, did in a superstitious devotion attribute unto them the causality of all effects beneath them. And for aught I know, the belief of solid orbs in the heavens, and their regularly-irregular motions sprang from the same root. And a like inanity I should suspect in chiromancy, as well as astrology (especially, in particular contingent effects) however our author, and no less a man than Aristotle, seem to attribute somewhat more to that conjectural art of lines.

I should much doubt (though our author showeth himself of another mind) (xx), that Bernardinus Ochinus



grew at the last to be a mere atheist; when after having been first the institutor and patriarch of the Capucine order (so violent was his zeal then, as no former religious institution, though never so rigorous, was strict enough for him) he from thence fell to be first an heretick, then a Jew, and after a while became a Turk; and at the last wrote a furious invective against those, whom he called the three grand impostors of the world, among whom he ranked our Saviour, Christ, as well as Moses and Mahomet.<sup>1</sup>

I doubt he mistakes in his chronology, or the printer in the name, when he maketh Ptolemy condemn the Alcoran (xxiii).<sup>2</sup>

He needeth not be so scrupulous, as he seemeth to be, in averring downrightly, that God cannot do contradictory things (xxvii) (though peradventure it is not amiss to sweeten the manner of the expression and the sound of the words); for who understandeth the nature of contradiction will find nonentity in one of the terms, which of God were impiety not to deny peremptorily. For he being in his proper nature self-entity, all being must immediately flow from him, and all not-being be totally excluded from that efflux. Now for the recalling of time past, which the angels posed Esdras withal (xxvii); there is no contradiction in that, as is evident to them that know the essence of time. For it is but putting again all things that had motion into the same state they were in, at that moment unto which time was to be reduced back, and from thence letting it travel on again by the same motions, and upon the same wheels

<sup>1</sup> This story I have but upon relation, yet of a very good hand.

<sup>2</sup> [This remark is due to an error in the unauthorized edition.]



it rolled upon before. And therefore God could do this admirable work, though neither Esdras, nor all the power of creatures together could do it: and consequently it cannot in this question be said, that he posed mortality with what himself was not able to perform.

I acknowledge ingenuously, our physician's experience hath the advantage of my philosophy, in knowing there are witches (xxx). Yet I am sure I have no temptation to doubt of the Deity; nor have any unsatisfaction in believing there are spirits. I do not see such a necessary conjunction between them, as that the supposition of the one must needs infer the other. Neither do I deny there are witches. I only reserve my assent, till I meet with stronger motives to carry it. And I confess I doubt as much of the efficacy of those magical rules he speaketh of, as also of the finding out of mysteries by the courteous revelation of spirits (xxxI).

I doubt his discourse of an universal spirit is but a wild fancy; and that in the marshaling of it, he mistaketh the Hermetical philosophers. And surely, it is a weak argument from a common nature, that subsisteth only in our understanding (out of which it hath no being at all) (xxxII), to infer, by parity, an actual subsistence of the like in reality of nature; of which kind of miscarriage in men's discoursings, I have spoken before. And, upon this occasion, I do not see how seasonably he falleth of a sudden from natural speculation, to a moral contemplation of God's spirit working in us (xxxII). In which also I would inquire (especially upon his sudden poetical rapture), whether the solidity of the judgment be not outweighed by the airiness of



the fancy. Assuredly one cannot err in taking this author for a very fine ingenious gentleman : but for how deep a scholar, I leave unto them to judge, that are abler than I am.

If he had applied himself with earnest study, and upon right grounds, to search out the nature of pure intellects, I doubt not but his great parts would have argued more efficaciously, than he doth against those, that between men and angels put only Porphyry's difference, of mortality and immortality (xxxiii). And he would have dived further into the tenor of their intellectual operations ; in which there is no succession, nor ratiocinative discourse ; for in the very first instant of their creation, they actually knew all that they were capable of knowing, and they are acquainted even with all free thoughts, past, present, and to come ; for they see them in their causes, and they see them all together at one instant ; as I have in my fore-mentioned treatise proved at large : and I think I have already touched thus much once before in this letter.

I am tempted here to say a great deal concerning light, by his taking it to be a bare quality (xxxiii). For, in physicks, no speculation is more useful, or reacheth further. But to set down such phenomena of it as I have observed, and from whence I evidently collect the nature of it, were too large a theme for this place. When your lordship pleaseth, I shall show you another more orderly discourse upon that subject, wherein I have sufficiently proved it to be a solid substance and body.

In his proceeding to collect an intellectual world, and in his discoursing upon the place and habitation of



angels (xxxv); as also in his consideration of the activity of glorified eyes, which shall be in a state of rest, whereas motion is required to seeing; and in his subtile speculation upon two bodies, placed in the vacuity (xlIX), beyond the utmost all-enclosing superficies of heaven (which implieth a contradiction in nature), methinks I hear Apelles crying out, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*: or rather, it putteth me in mind of one of the titles in Pantagruel's library (which he expresseth himself conversant in), namely, *Quaestio subtilissima, utrum chimaera in vacuo bombinans possit comedere secundas intentiones*; with which short note I will leave these considerations; in which (if time, and other circumstances allowed it) matter would spring up of excellent learning.

When our author shall have read Master White's "Dialogues of the World," he will no longer be of the opinion, that the unity of the world is a conclusion of faith (xxxv). For it is there demonstrated by reason.

Here the thread of the discourse (xxxvi) inviteth me to say a great deal of the production or creation of man's soul. But it is too tedious and too knotty a piece for a letter. Now it shall suffice to note, that it is not *ex traduce*, and yet hath a strange kind of near dependence on the body, which is, as it were, God's instrument to create it by. This, thus said, or rather tumbled out, may seem harsh. But had your lordship leisure to peruse what I have written at full upon this point, I doubt not but it would appear plausible enough to you.

I cannot agree with him, when he seemeth to impute



inconvenience to long life, and that length of time doth rather impair than improve us (XLII): for surely if we will follow the course of nature and of reason, it is a mighty great blessing; were it but in this regard, that it giveth time leave to vent and boil away the unquietnesses and turbulencies that follow our passions, and to wean ourselves gently from carnal affections, and at the last to drop with ease and willingness, like ripe fruit from the tree; as I remember Plotinus finely discourseth in one of his Aeneids. For when before the season, it is plucked off with violent hands, or shaken down by rude and boisterous winds, it carrieth along with it an indigested raw taste of the wood, and hath an unpleasant aigreness in its juice, that maketh it unfit for use, till long time hath mellowed it. And peradventure it may be so backward, as, instead of ripening, it may grow rotten in the very centre. In like manner, souls that go out of their bodies, with affections to those objects they leave behind them (which usually is as long as they can relish them), do retain still, even in their separation, a bias, and a languishing towards them; which is the reason why such terrene souls appear oftenest in cemeteries and charnel-houses (XXXVII), and not that moral one which our author giveth. For life, which is union with the body, being that which carnal souls have straitest affection to, and that they are loathest to be separated from; their unquiet spirit, which can never (naturally) lose the impressions it had wrought in it at the time of its driving out, lingereth perpetually after that dear consort of his. The impossibility cannot cure them of their impotent desires; they would fain be alive again,



— iterumque ad tarda reverti  
Corpora. Quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?

And to this cause peradventure may be reduced the strange effect which is frequently seen in England, when, at the approach of the murderer, the slain body suddenly bleedeth afresh. For certainly, the souls of them that are treacherously murdered by surprise, used to leave their bodies with extreme unwillingness, and with vehement indignation against them that force them to so unprovided and abhorred a passage. That soul then, to wreak its evil talent against the hated murderer, and to draw a just and desired revenge upon his head, would do all it can to manifest the author of the fact. To speak it cannot, for in itself it wanteth organs of voice; and those it is parted from are now grown too heavy, and are too benumbed for it to give motion unto. Yet some change it desireth to make in the body, which it hath so vehement inclinations to, and therefore is the aptest for it to work upon. It must then endeavour to cause a motion in the subtilest and most fluid parts (and consequently the most moveable ones) of it. This can be nothing but the blood, which then, being violently moved, must needs gush out at those places where it findeth issues.

Our author cannot believe, that the world will perish upon the ruins of its own principles (XLV). But Master White hath demonstrated the end of it upon natural reason. And though the precise time for that general destruction be inscrutable; yet he learnedly sheweth an ingenious rule, whereby to measure in some sort the duration of it, without being branded (as our author threateneth) with convincible and statute-madness



(XLVI), or with impiety. And whereas he will have the work of this last great day (the summer-up of all past days) to imply annihilation (XLV), and thereupon interesteth God only in it: I must beg leave to contradict him, namely in this point; and to affirm, that the letting loose then of the activest element, to destroy this face of the world, will but beget a change in it; and that no annihilation can proceed from God Almighty: for his essence being (as I said before) self-existence, it is more impossible that not-being should flow from him, than that cold should flow immediately from fire, or darkness from the actual presence of light.

I must needs acknowledge, that where he balanceth life and death against one another, and considereth that the latter is to be a kind of nothing for a moment, to become a pure spirit within one instant (XXXVIII), and what followeth of this strong thought, is extreme handsomely said, and argueth very gallant and generous resolutions in him.

To exemplify the immortality of the soul, he needeth not have recourse to the philosopher's stone (XXXIX). His own store furnisheth him with a most pregnant one of reviving a plant (the same numerical plant) out of its own ashes (XLVIII). But, under his favour, I believe his experiment will fail, if, under the notion of the same, he comprehendeth all the accidents that first accompanied that plant; for, since in the ashes there remaineth only the fixed salt, I am very confident, that all the colour, and much of the odour and taste of it, is flown away with the volatile salt.

What should I say of his making so particular a narration of personal things, and private thoughts of



his own?—the knowledge whereof cannot much conduce to any man's betterment; which I make account is the chief end of his writing this discourse. As where he speaketh of the soundness of his body, of the course of his diet, of the coolness of his blood at the summer-solstice of his age, of his neglect of an epitaph; how long he hath lived, or may live; what popes, emperors, kings, grand signiors, he hath been contemporary unto, and the like (XLI): would it not be thought that he hath a special good opinion of himself (and indeed he hath reason), when he maketh such great princes the land-marks in the chronology of himself? Surely if he were to write by retail the particulars of his own story and life, it would be a notable romance, since he telleth us in one total sum, it is a continued miracle of thirty years. Though he creepeth gently upon us at the first, yet he groweth a giant, an Atlas (to use his own expression) at the last. But I will not censure him, as he that made notes upon Balsac's Letters, and was angry with him for vexing his readers with stories of his colicks, and voiding of gravel. I leave this kind of his expressions, without looking further into them.

In the next place, my lord, I shall take occasion,—from our author's setting so main a difference between moral honesty and virtue, or being virtuous (to use his own phrase) out of an inbred loyalty to virtue (XLVII), and on the other side, being virtuous for a reward's sake,—to discourse a little concerning virtue in this life, and the effects of it afterwards. Truly, my lord, however he seemeth to prefer this latter, I cannot but value the other much before it, if we regard the nobleness and heroickness of the nature and mind from whence they



both proceed: and if we consider the journey's end, to which each of them carrieth us, I am confident the first yieldeth nothing to the second, but indeed both meet in the period of beatitude. To clear this point (which is very well worth the wisest man's serious thoughts), we must consider, what it is that bringeth us to this excellent state, to be happy in the other world of eternity and immutability. It is agreed on all hands to be God's grace and favour to us: but all do not agree by what steps his grace produceth this effect. Herein I shall not trouble your lordship with a long discourse, how that grace worketh in us (which yet I will in a word touch anon, that you may conceive what I understand grace to be), but will suppose it to have wrought its effect in us in this life, and from thence examine what hinges they are that turn us over to beatitude and glory in the next. Some consider God as a judge, that rewardeth or punisheth men, according as they cooperated with, or repugned to, the grace he gave. That according as their actions please or displease him, he is well affected towards them, or angry with them; and accordingly maketh them, to the purpose, and very home, feel the effects of his kindness or indignation. Others that fly a higher pitch, and are so happy,

— ut rerum poterint cognoscere causas,

do conceive that beatitude and misery in the other life are effects that necessarily and ordinarily flow out of the nature of those causes that begot them in this life, without engaging God Almighty to give a sentence, and act the part of a judge, according to the state of our cause, as it shall appear upon the accusations and



pleadings at his great bar. Much of which manner of expression is metaphorical, and rather adapted to contain vulgar minds in their duties (that are awed with the thought of a severe judge sifting every minute action of theirs), than such as we must conceive every circumstance to pass so in reality, as the literal sound of the words seems to infer in ordinary construction: (and yet all that is true too, in its genuine sense). But, my lord, these more penetrating men, and that, I conceive, are virtuous upon higher and stronger motives (for they truly and solidly know why they are so), do consider that what impressions are once made in the spiritual substance of a soul, and what affections it hath once contracted, do ever remain in it, till a contrary and diametrically contradicting judgment and affection do obliterate it and expel it thence. This is the reason why contrition, sorrow, and hatred for past sins, is encharged us. If then the soul do go out of the body with impressions and affections to the objects and pleasures of this life, it continually lingereth after them, and, as Virgil (learnedly as well as wittily) saith,

————— Quae gratia currum  
 Armorumque fuit vivis, quae cura nitentes  
 Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.

But that being a state wherein those objects neither are nor can be enjoyed, it must needs follow, that such a soul must be in an exceeding anguish, sorrow, and affliction, for being deprived of them; and for want of those it so much prizeth, will neglect all other contentments it might have, as not having a relish or taste moulded and prepared to the savouring of them; but



like feverish tongues, that when they are even scorched with heat, take no delight in the pleasingest liquors, but the sweetest drinks seem bitter to them, by reason of their overflowing gall : so they even hate whatsoever good is in their power, and thus pine away a long eternity. In which the sharpness and activity of their pain, anguish, and sad condition, is to be measured by the sensibleness of their natures : which being then purely spiritual, is in a manner infinitely more than any torment that in this life can be inflicted upon a dull gross body. To this add the vexation it must be to them, to see how inestimable and infinite a good they have lost ; and lost merely by their own fault, and for momentary trifles, and children's play ; and that it was so easy for them to have gained it, had they remained but in their right senses, and governed themselves according to reason, and then judge in what a tortured condition they must be, of remorse and execrating themselves for their most supine and senseless madness. But if, on the other side, a soul be released out of this prison of clay and flesh, with affections settled upon intellectual goods, as truth, knowledge, and the like ; and that it be grown to an irksome dislike of the flat pleasures of this world ; and look upon carnal and sensual objects with a disdainful eye, as discerning the contemptible inanity in them, that is set off only by their painted outside ; and above all, that it have a longing desire to be in the society of that supereminent cause of causes, in which they know are heaped up the treasures of all beauty, knowledge, truth, delight, and good whatsoever : and therefore are impatient at the delay, and reckon all their absence from him, as a



tedious banishment; and in that regard hate their life and body, as cause of this divorce : such a soul, I say, must necessarily, by reason of the temper it is wrought into, enjoy immediately at the instant of the body's dissolution, and its liberty, more contentment, more joy, more true happiness, than it is possible for a heart of flesh to have scarce any scantling of, much less to comprehend.

For immense knowledge is natural to it, as I have touched before. Truth, which is the adequated and satisfying object of the understanding, is there displayed in her own colours, or rather without any.

And that which is the crown of all, and in respect of which all the rest is nothing; that infinite entity, which above all things this soul thirsteth to be united unto, cannot for his own goodness' sake deny his embraces to so affectionate a creature, and to such an enflamed love. If he should, then were that soul, for being the best, and for loving him most, condemned to be the unhappiest. For what joy could she have in anything, were she barred from what she so infinitely loveth? But since the nature of superior and excellent things is to shower down their propitious influences, wheresoever there is a capacity of receiving them, and no obstacle to keep them out (like the sun that illuminateth the whole air, if no cloud or solid opacous body intervene), it followeth clearly that this infinite sun of justice, this immense ocean of goodness, cannot choose but environ with his beams, and replenish even beyond satiety with his delightful waters, a soul so prepared and tempered to receive them.

Now, my lord, to make use of this discourse, and



apply it to what begot it,—be pleased to determine, which way will deliver us evenest and smoothest to this happy end of our journey : to be virtuous for hope of a reward, and through fear of punishment ; or to be so out of a natural and inward affection to virtue, for virtue's and reason's sake ? Surely one in this latter condition, not only doth those things which will bring him to beatitude, but he is so secured, in a manner, under an armour of proof, that he is almost invulnerable ; he can scarce miscarry, he hath not so much as an inclination to work contrarily ; the alluring baits of this world tempt him not ; he disliketh, he hateth, even his necessary commerce with them whilst he liveth. On the other side, the hireling, that steereth his course only by his reward and punishment doth well, I confess ; but he doth it with reluctance ; he carrieth the ark, God's image, his soul, safely home, it is true, but he loweth pitifully after his calves, that he leaveth behind him among the Philistines. In a word, he is virtuous ; but if he might safely, he would do vicious things. (And hence be the ground in nature, if so I might say, of our purgatory.) Methinks two such minds may not unfitly be compared to two maids, whereof one hath a little sprinkling of the green sickness, and hath more mind to eat ashes, chalk, or leather, than meats of solid and good nourishment, but forbeareth them, knowing the languishing condition of health it will bring her to ; but the other having a ruddy, vigorous, and perfect constitution, and enjoying a complete, entire eucracy, delights in no food but of good nouriture, and loathes the other's delights. Her health is discovered in her looks, and she is secure



from any danger of that malady, whereas the other, for all her good diet, beareth in her complexion some sickly testimony of her depraved appetite; and if she be not very wary, she is in danger of a relapse.

It falleth fit in this place to examine our author's apprehension of the end of such honest worthies and philosophers (as he calleth them) (LIV) that died before Christ his incarnation, whether any of them could be saved, or no? Truly, my lord, I make no doubt at all, but if any followed in the whole tenor of their lives the dictamens of right reason, that their journey was secure to heaven. Out of the former discourse appeareth what temper of mind is necessary to get thither. And that reason would dictate such a temper to a perfectly judicious man (though but in the state of nature), as the best and most rational for him, I make no doubt at all. But it is most true, they are exceeding few (if any) in whom reason worketh clearly, and is not over-swayed by passion and terrene affections; they are few that can discern what is reasonable to be done in every circumstance.

——— Pauci quos aequus amavit

Jupiter, aut ardens evexit ad aethera virtus,  
Diis geniti, potuere.

And fewer that, knowing what is best, can win of themselves to do accordingly (*Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*, being most men's cases); so that after all that can be expected at the hands of nature and reason in their best habit, since the lapse of them, we may conclude it would have been a most difficult thing for any man, and a most impossible one for mankind,



to attain unto beatitude, if Christ had not come to teach, and by his example to show us the way.

And this was the reason of his incarnation, teaching, life, and death. For, being God, we could not doubt his veracity when he told us news of the other world; having all things in his power, and yet enjoying none of the delights of this life, no man should stick at foregoing them, since his example showeth all men, that such a course is best, whereas few are capable of the reason of it: and for his last act, dying in such an afflicted manner, he taught us how the securest way to step immediately into perfect happiness, is to be crucified to all the desires, delights, and contentments, of this world.

But to come back to our physician: truly, my lord, I must needs pay him, as a due, the acknowledging his pious discourses to be excellent and pathetical ones, containing worthy motives to incite one to virtue, and to deter one from vice; thereby to gain heaven, and to avoid hell. Assuredly he is owner of a solid head and of a strong generous heart. Where he employeth his thoughts upon such things as resort to no higher or more abstruse principles, than such as occur in ordinary conversation with the world, or in the common tract of study and learning, I know no man would say better. But when he meeteth with such difficulties as his next, concerning the resurrection of the body (XLVIII), (wherein after deep meditation upon the most abstracted principles and speculations of the metaphysicks, one hath much ado to solve the appearing contradictions in nature), there, I do not at all wonder, he should tread a little awry, and go astray in



the dark, for I conceive his course of life hath not permitted him to allow much time unto the unwinding of such entangled and abstracted subtilties. But if it had, I believe his natural parts are such, as he might have kept the chair from most men I know ; for even where he roveh widest, it is with so much wit and sharpness, as putteth me in mind of a great man's censure upon Joseph Scaliger's "Cyclometrica" (a matter he was not well versed in), that he had rather err so ingeniously as he did, than hit upon truth in that heavy manner, as the Jesuit his antagonist stuffeth his books. Most assuredly his wit and smartness in this discourse is of the finest standard ; and his insight into severer learning will appear as piercing unto such as use not strictly the touchstone and the test, to examine every piece of the glittering coin he payeth his reader with. But to come to the resurrection. Methinks it is but a gross conception, to think that every atom of the present individual matter of a body, every grain of ashes of a burned cadaver, scattered by the wind throughout the world, and, after numerous variations, changed peradventure into the body of another man, should at the sounding of the last trumpet be raked together again from all the corners of the earth, and be made up anew into the same body it was before of the first man. Yet if we will be Christians and rely upon God's promises, we must believe that we shall rise again with the same body that walked about, did eat, drink, and live, here on earth ; and that we shall see our Saviour and Redeemer, with the same, the very same eyes, wherewith we now look upon the fading glories of this contemptible world.



How shall these seeming contrarieties be reconciled? If the latter be true, why should not the former be admitted? To explicate this riddle the better, give me leave to ask your lordship, if you now see the cannons, the ensigns, the arms, and other martial preparations at Oxford, with the same eyes, wherewith many years ago you looked upon Porphyry's and Aristotle's learned leases there? I doubt not but you will answer me, assuredly with the very same. Is that noble and graceful person of yours, that begetteth both delight and reverence in every one that looketh upon it,—is that body of yours, that now is grown to such comely and full dimensions, as nature can give her none more advantageous,—the same person, the same body, which your virtuous and excellent mother bore nine months in her chaste and honoured womb, and that your nurse gave suck unto? Most certainly it is the same. And yet if you consider it well, it cannot be doubted, but that sublunary matter, being in a perpetual flux, and in bodies which have internal principles of heat and motion, much continually transpiring out to make room for the supply of new aliment; at the length, in long process of time, all is so changed, as that ship at Athens may as well be called the same ship that was there two hundred years before, and whereof (by reason of the continual reparations), not one foot of the timber is remaining in her that builded her at first, as this body now can be called the same, was forty years ago, unless some higher consideration keep up the identity of it. Now what that is, let us examine, and whether or no it will reach to our difficulty of the resurrection. Let us consider



then, how that which giveth the numerical individuation to a body, is the substantial form. As long as that remaineth the same, though the matter be in a continual flux and motion, yet the thing is still the same. There is not one drop of the same water in the Thames, that ran down by Whitehall yesternight ; yet no man will deny, but that it is the same river that was in Queen Elizabeth's time, as long as it is supplied from the same common stock, the sea. Though this example reacheth not home, it illustrateth the thing. If then the form remain absolutely the same after separation from the matter, that it was in the matter (which can happen only to forms that subsist by themselves, as human souls), it followeth then that whensoever it is united to matter again (all matter coming out of the same common magazine), it maketh again the same man, with the same eyes, and all the same limbs, that were formerly. Nay, he is composed of the same individual matter, for it hath the same distinguisher and individuator, to wit, the same form or soul. Matter considered singly by itself hath no distinction : all matter is in itself the same ; we must fancy it as we do the indigested chaos ; it is an uniformly wide ocean. Particularize a few drops of the sea by filling a glass full of them, then that glassful is distinguished from all the rest of the watery bulk : but return back those few drops from whence they were taken, and the glassful that even now had an individuation by itself, loseth that, and groweth one and the same with the other main stock : yet if you fill your glass again, wheresoever you take it up, so it be of the same uniform bulk of water you had before, it is the same glassful of water



that you had. But as I said before, this example fit-teth entirely no more than the other did. In such abstracted speculations, where we must consider matter without form (which hath no actual being), we must not expect adequated examples in nature. But enough is said to make a speculative man see, that if God should join the soul of a lately dead man (even whilst his dead corpse should lie entire in his winding-sheet here), unto a body made of earth, taken from some mountain in America; it were most true and certain, that the body he should then live by, were the same identical body he lived with before his death, and late resurrection. It is evident, that sameness, thisness, and thatness, belongeth not to matter by itself (for a general indifference runneth through it all), but only as it is distinguished and individuated by the form. Which in our case, whensoever the same soul doth, it must be understood always to be the same matter and body.

This point thus passed over, I may piece to it what our author saith (XLVIII), of a magazine of subsistent forms residing first in the chaos, and hereafter (when the world shall have been destroyed by fire) in the general heap of ashes: out of which God's voice did and shall draw them out, and clothe them with matter. This language were handsome for a poet, or a rhetorician to speak; but in a philosopher, that should ratiocinate strictly and rigorously, I cannot admit it. For certainly, there are no subsistent forms of corporeal things (excepting the soul of man, which besides being an informing form, hath another particular consideration belonging to it, too long to speak of here). But



whensoever that compound is destroyed, the form perisheth with the whole. And for the natural production of corporeal things, I conceive it to be wrought out by the action and passion of the elements among themselves; which introducing new tempers and dispositions into the bodies where these conflicts pass, new forms succeed old ones, when the dispositions are raised to such a height, as can no longer consist with the preceding form, and are in the immediate degree to fit the succeeding one, which they usher in. The mystery of all which I have at large unfolded in my above-mentioned treatise of the immortality of the soul.

I shall say no more to the first part of our physician's discourse, after I have observed, how his consequence is no good one where he inferreth that if the devils foreknew who would be damned or saved, it would save them the labour, and end their work of tempting mankind to mischief and evil (LVII). For whatsoever their moral design and success be in it, their nature impelleth them to be always doing it. For as on the one side, it is active in the highest degree (as being pure acts, that is, spirits), so on the other side, they are malign in as great an excess: by the one they must be always working, wheresoever they may work (like water in a vessel full of holes, that will run out of every one of them which is not stopped): by the other, their whole work must be malicious and mischievous. Joining then both these qualities together, it is evident, they will always be tempting mankind, though they know they shall be frustrate of their moral end.

But were it not time that I made an end? Yes, it



is more than time. And therefore having once passed the limit that confined what was becoming, the next step carried me into the ocean of error; which being infinite, and therefore more or less bearing no proportion in it, I will proceed a little further, to take a short survey of his Second Part, and hope for as easy pardon after this addition to my sudden and indigested remarks, as if I had closed them up now.

Methinks, he beginneth with somewhat an affected discourse, to prove his natural inclination to charity; which virtue is the intended theme of all the remainder of his discourse. And I doubt he mistaketh the lowest orb or limb of that high seraphick virtue, for the top and perfection of it; and maketh a kind of human compassion to be divine charity. He will have it to be a general way of doing good: it is true, he addeth then, for God's sake; but he allayeth that again, with saying he will have that good done, as by obedience, and to accomplish God's will; and looketh at the effects it worketh upon our souls, but in a narrow compass; like one in the vulgar throng, that considereth God as a judge, and as a rewarder or a punisher. Whereas perfect charity is that vehement love of God for his own sake, for his goodness, for his beauty, for his excellency, that carrieth all the motions of our soul directly and violently to him; and maketh a man disdain, or rather hate all obstacles that may retard his journey to him. And that face of it that looketh toward mankind with whom we live, and warmeth us to do others good, is but like the overflowing of the main stream, that swelling above its banks runneth over in a multitude of little channels.



I am not satisfied, that in the likeness which he putteth between God and man, he maketh the difference between them, to be but such as between two creatures that resemble one another. For between these, there is some proportion; but between the others, none at all. In the examining of which discourse, wherein the author observeth, that no two faces are ever seen to be perfectly alike, nay, no two pictures of the same face were ever exactly made so (II); I could take occasion to insert a subtile and delightful demonstration of Master White's, wherein he showeth, how it is impossible that two bodies (for example, two bowls) should ever be made exactly like one another; nay, not rigorously equal in any one accident, as namely, in weight, but that still there will be some little difference and inequality between them (the reason of which observation our author meddleth not with);—were it not that I have been so long already, as digressions were now very unseasonable.

Shall I commend or censure our author for believing so well of his acquired knowledge, as to be dejected at the thought of not being able to leave it a legacy among his friends? (III). Or shall I examine whether it be not a high injury to wise and gallant princes, who out of the generousness and nobleness of their nature, do patronize arts and learned men, to impute their so doing to vanity of desiring praise, or to fear of reproach.

But let these pass: I will not engage any that may befriend him, in a quarrel against him. But I may safely produce Epictetus to contradict him, when he letteth his kindness engulf him in deep afflictions for a friend: for he will not allow his wise man to have



an inward relenting, a troubled feeling, or compassion of another's misfortunes. That disordereth the one, without any good to the other. Let him afford all the assistances and relievings in his power, but without intermingling himself in the other's woe; as angels, that do us good, but have no passion for us. But this gentleman's kindness goeth yet further (v): he compareth his love of a friend to his love of God; the union of friends' souls by affection, to the union of the three persons in the Trinity, and to the hypostatical union of two natures in one Christ, by the Word's incarnation. Most certainly he expresseth himself to be a right good-natured man. But if St. Augustine retracted so severely his pathological expressions for the death of his friend, saying they savoured more of the rhetorical declamations of a young orator, than of the grave confession of a devout Christian (or somewhat to that purpose), what censure upon himself may we expect of our physician, if ever he make any retraction of this discourse concerning his religion.

It is no small misfortune to him, that after so much time spent, and so many places visited in a curious search, by travelling after the acquisition of so many languages; after the wading so deep in sciences, as appeareth by the ample inventory and particular he maketh of himself: the result of all this should be to profess ingenuously he had studied enough, only to become a sceptick; and that having run through all sorts of learning, he could find rest and satisfaction in none (viii). This, I confess, is the unlucky fate of those that light upon wrong principles. But Master White teacheth us, how the theorems and demonstra-



tions of physicks may be linked and chained together, as strongly, and as continuedly, as they are in the mathematicks, if men would but apply themselves to a right method of study. And I do not find that Solomon complained of ignorance in the height of knowledge (VIII) (as this gentleman saith); but only, that after he hath rather acknowledged himself ignorant of nothing, but that he understood the natures of all plants, from the cedar to the hyssop, and was acquainted with all the ways and paths of wisdom and knowledge, he exclaimeth, that all this is but toil and vexation of spirit; and therefore adviseth men to change human studies into divine contemplations and affections.

I cannot agree to his resolution of shutting his books, and giving over the search of knowledge, and resigning himself up to ignorance, upon the reason that moveth him; as though it were extreme vanity to waste our days in the pursuit of that, which by attending but a little longer (till death hath closed the eyes of our body, to open those of our soul), we shall gain with ease, we shall enjoy by infusion, and as an accessory of our glorification (VIII). It is true, as soon as death hath played the midwife to our second birth, our soul shall then see all truths more freely, than our corporal eyes at our first birth see all bodies and colours, by the natural power of it, as I have touched already, and not only upon the grounds our author giveth. Yet far be it from us, to think that time lost, which in the mean season we shall laboriously employ, to warm ourselves with blowing a few little sparks of that glorious fire, which we shall afterwards in one instant leap into the middle of, without danger of scorching. And that for



two important reasons (besides several others, too long to mention here); the one, for the great advantage we have by learning in this life; the other, for the huge contentment that the acquisition of it here (which implieth a strong affection to it) will be unto us in the next life. The want of knowledge in our first mother (which exposed her to be easily deceived by the serpent's cunning) was the root of all our ensuing misery and woe. It is as true (which we are taught by irrefragable authority) that *omnis peccans ignorat*: and the well-head of all the calamities and mischiefs in all the world consisteth of the troubled and bitter waters of ignorance, folly, and rashness; to cure which, the only remedy and antidote is the salt of true learning, the bitter wood of study, painful meditation, and orderly consideration. I do not mean such study, as armeth wrangling champions for clamorous schools, where the ability of subtile disputing to and fro, is more prized than the retrieving of truth; but such as filleth the mind with solid and useful notions, and doth not endanger the swelling it up with windy vanities. Besides, the sweetest companion and entertainment of a well-tempered mind is to converse familiarly with the naked and bewitching beauties of those mistresses, those verities and sciences, which by fair courting of them, they gain and enjoy; and every day bring new fresh ones to their seraglio, where the ancientest never grow old or stale. Is there anything so pleasing or so profitable as this?

— Nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere  
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;  
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre  
Errare, atque viam palanteis quaerere vitae.



But now, if we consider the advantage we shall have in the other life by our affection to sciences, and conversation with them in this, it is wonderful great. Indeed that affection is so necessary, as without it we shall enjoy little contentment in all the knowledge we shall then be replenished with : for every one's pleasure in the possession of a good is to be measured by his precedent desire of that good, and by the equality of the taste and relish of him that feedeth upon it. We should therefore prepare and make our taste beforehand by assuefaction unto, and by often relishing what we shall then be nourished with. That Englishman that can drink nothing but beer or ale, would be ill bestead, were he to go into Spain or Italy, where nothing but wine groweth : whereas a well experienced *goinfre*, that can criticise upon the several tastes of liquors, would think his palate in Paradise, among those delicious nectars (to use Aretine's phrase upon his eating of a lamprey). Who was ever delighted with tobacco the first time he took it? and who could willingly be without it, after he was awhile habituated to the use of it? How many examples are there daily of young men that marrying upon their father's command, not through precedent affections of their own, have little comfort in worthy and handsome wives, that others would passionately affect. Archimedes lost his life, for being so ravished with the delight of a mathematical demonstration, that he could not of a sudden recall his ecstasied spirits to attend the rude soldier's summons : but instead of him, whose mind had been always fed with such subtile diet, how many plain country-gentlemen doth your lordship and I know, that rate the knowledge of



their husbandry at a much higher pitch; and are extremely delighted by conversing with that; whereas the other would be most tedious and importune to them? We may then safely conclude, that if we will joy in the knowledge we shall have after death, we must in our lifetime raise within ourselves earnest affections to it, and desires of it, which cannot be barren ones; but will press upon us to gain some knowledge by way of advance here; and the more we attain unto, the more we shall be in love with what remaineth behind. To this reason then adding the other, how knowledge is the surest prop and guide of our present life; and how it perfecteth a man in that which constituteth him a man, his reason; and how it enableth him to tread boldly, steadily, constantly, and knowingly, in all his ways: and I am confident, all men that shall hear the case thus debated, will join with me in making it a suit to our physician, that he will keep his books open, and continue that progress he hath so happily begun.

But I believe your lordship will scarcely join with him in his wish, that we might procreate and beget children without the help of women, or without any conjunction or commerce with that sweet and bewitching sex (ix). Plato taxeth his fellow philosopher (though otherwise a learned and brave man) for not sacrificing to the Graces, those gentle female goddesses. What thinketh your lordship of our physician's bitter censure of that action, which Mahomet maketh the essence of his paradise? Indeed, besides those his unkindnesses, or rather frowardnesses, at that tender-hearted sex (which must needs take it ill at his hands),



methinketh he setteth marriage at too low a rate, which is assuredly the highest and divinest link of humane society. And where he speaketh of Cupid, and of beauty, it is in such a praise, as putteth me in mind of the learned Greek reader in Cambridge, his courting of his mistress out of Stephens his "Thesaurus."

My next observation upon his discourse draweth me to a logical consideration of the nature of an exact syllogism: which kind of reflection, though it use to open the door in the course of learning and study; yet it will near shut it in my discourse, which my following the thread that my author spinneth, assigneth to this place. If he had well and thoroughly considered all that is required to that strict way of managing our reason, he would not have censured Aristotle for condemning the fourth figure, out of no other motive, but because it was not consonant to his own principles (ix); that it would not fit with the foundations himself had laid; though it do with reason (saith he) and be consonant to that, which indeed it doth not, at all times, and in all circumstances. In a perfect syllogism, the predicate must be identified with the subject, and each extreme with the middle term, and so, consequently, all three with one another. But in Galen's fourth figure, the case may so fall out, as these rules will not be current there.

As for the good and excellency that he considereth in the worst things, and how far from solitude any man is in a wilderness (x); these are (in his discourse) but equivocal considerations of good, and of loneliness. Nor are they any ways pertinent to the morality of that part, where he treateth of them.



I have much ado to believe, what he speaketh confidently (xi), that he is more beholding to Morpheus, for learned and rational, as well as pleasing, dreams, than to Mercury for smart and facetious conceptions; whom Saturn (it seemeth by his relation) hath looked asquint upon in his geniture.

In his concluding prayer (xiv), wherein he summeth up all he wisheth, methinketh his arrow is not winged with that fire, which I should have expected from him upon this occasion: for it is not the peace of conscience, nor the bridling up of one's affections, that expresseth the highest delightfulness and happiest state of a perfect Christian. It is love only that can give us heaven upon earth, as well as in heaven; and bringeth us thither too: so that the Tuscan Virgil had reason to say,

— In alte dolcèzze

Non si puo gioir, se non amando.

And this love must be employed upon the noblest and highest object, not terminated in our friends. But of this transcendent and divine part of charity, that looketh directly and immediately upon God himself; and that is the intrinsical form, the utmost perfection, the scope and final period of true religion (this gentleman's intended theme, as I conceive), I have no occasion to speak any thing, since my author doth but transiently mention it; and that too, in such a phrase as ordinary catechisms speak of it to vulgar capacities.

Thus, my lord, having run through the book (God knows how slightly, upon so great a sudden) which your lordship commanded me to give you an account



of, there remaineth yet a weightier task upon me to perform; which is, to excuse myself of presumption for daring to consider any moles in that face, which you had marked for a beauty. But who shall well consider my manner of proceeding in these remarks, will free me from that censure. I offer not at judging the prudence and wisdom of this discourse: those are fit inquiries for your lordship's court of highest appeal: in my inferior one, I meddle only with little knotty pieces of particular sciences (*Matinae apis instar, operosa parvus carmina fingo*), in which it were peradventure a fault for your lordship to be too well versed; your employments are of a higher and nobler strain, and that concerns the welfare of millions of men:

Tu regere imperio populos (Sackville) memento  
(Hae tibi erunt artes) pacisque imponere morem.

Such little studies as these belong only to those persons that are low in the rank they hold in the commonwealth, low in their conceptions, and low in a languishing and rusting leisure, such an one as Virgil calleth *ignobile otium*, and such an one as I am now dulled withal. If Alexander or Caesar should have commended a tract of land, as fit to fight a battle in for the empire of the world, or to build a city upon, to be the magazine and staple of all the adjacent countries; no body could justly condemn that husbandman, who, according to his own narrow art and rules, should censure the plains of Arbela, or Pharsalia, for being in some places steril; or the meadows about Alexandria, for being sometimes subject to be overflown; or could tax aught he should say in that kind for a contradiction unto the other's



commendations of those places, which are built upon higher and larger principles.

So, my lord, I am confident I shall not be reproached of unmannerliness for putting in a demurrer unto a few little particularities in that noble discourse, which your lordship gave a general applause unto; and by doing so, I have given your lordship the best account I can of myself, as well as of your commands. You hereby see what my entertainments are, and how I play away my time,

— DORSET dum magnus ad altum  
Fulminat Oxonium bello, victorque volentes  
Per populos dat jura; viamque affectat Olympo.

May your counsels there be happy and successful ones, to bring about that peace, which if we be not quickly blessed withal, a general ruin threateneth the whole kingdom.

From Winchester-House, the 22nd (I think I may say the 23rd, for I am sure it is morning, and I think it is day) of December, 1642.

Your Lordship's most humble,

And obedient Servant,

KENELM DIGBY.

### POSTSCRIPT

MY LORD,

Looking over these loose papers to point them, I perceive I have forgotten what I promised in the eighth sheet, to touch in a word concerning grace: I

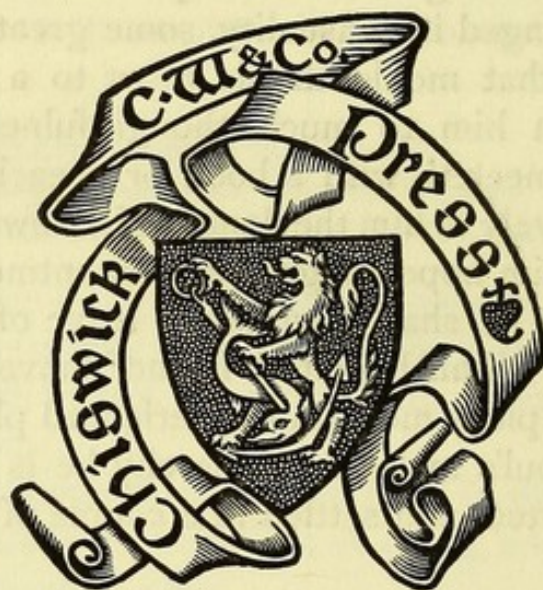


do not conceive it to be a quality infused by God Almighty into a soul.

Such kind of discoursing satisfieth me no more in divinity, than in philosophy. I take it to be the whole complex of such real motives (as a solid account may be given of them) that incline a man to virtue and piety; and are set on foot by God's particular grace and favour, to bring that work to pass. As for example: to a man plunged in sensuality, some great misfortune happeneth, that mouldeth his heart to a tenderness, and inclineth him to much thoughtfulness: in this temper, he meeteth with a book or preacher, that representeth lively to him the danger of his own condition; and giveth him hopes of greater contentment in other objects, after he shall have taken leave of his former beloved sins. This begetteth further conversation with prudent and pious men, and experienced physicians, in curing the soul's maladies; whereby he is at last perfectly converted, and settled in a course of solid virtue and piety.

Now, these accidents of his misfortune,—the gentleness and softness of his nature, his falling upon a good book, his encountering with a pathetick preacher, the impremeditated chance that brought him to hear his sermon, his meeting with other worthy men, and the whole concatenation of all the intervening accidents, to work this good effect in him, and that were ranged and disposed from all eternity, by God's particular goodness and providence for his salvation, and without which he had inevitably been damned,—this chain of causes, ordered by God to produce this effect, I understand to be grace.





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