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SELECTED WRITINGS OF FRANCIS BACON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

HUGH G. DICK

Professor of English, University of California at Los Angeles

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INTRODUCTION

"The monuments of wit survive the monuments of power"

BACON, *Gesta Grayorum*.

THE DEBT the modern world owes to science is so pervasive and so profound that no man can measure it. But before science and its resultant technologies could be freed for their development in the modern world, a revolution in human attitudes had to be achieved, and that revolution was not accomplished solely by the continuous impact of scientific discovery. Men's minds had to be prepared, older habits of thought challenged, and the areas of faith enlarged. The idea and the ideals of science had to be brought home to the human heart and mind. The idea and the ideals found their architect and their spokesman in Francis Bacon, whom the late Alfred North Whitehead called "one of the great builders who constructed the mind of the modern world."

What Bacon contributed was less a philosophical system than an irresistible conviction and a poet's vision. In a sense, Bacon is incomparably the greatest poet of science. The core of his thought is the dignity of man and the greatness of man's future. His avowed purpose was "to try whether I cannot in very fact lay more firmly the foundations and extend more widely the limits of the power and greatness of man." His conception is at once humble and magnificently arrogant—an expression of faith from one of the universal men of the High Renaissance. To understand it is to face a basic problem for the modern mind. Those who believe that we live in an appalling age in which man's ability to know and command nature has far outstripped his ability to know and command himself may be repelled by much (though certainly not all) of what Bacon has to offer. Those who believe that the limits of learning are not yet in sight or

have hardly begun to emerge may take added faith from him. His ultimate vision reaches far beyond our own times to embrace the conception of a unified science spanning the whole realm of the knowable, by which man's command of himself and of nature may be joined.

Bacon spoke of himself as "a bell-ringer which is first up to call others to church." In a more militant mood he described himself as a trumpeter who "summons and excites men not to cut each other to pieces with mutual contradictions, or to quarrel and fight with one another; but rather to make peace between themselves, and turning with united forces against the Nature of Things, to storm and occupy her castles and strongholds, and extend the bounds of human empire, as far as God Almighty in his goodness may permit." As herald of the scientific movement, Bacon uttered three challenges to his time. He called for a total reform of human knowledge, a true advancement of learning, and a revolution in the conditions of life.

His challenge for what he called "a total reconstruction of sciences, arts, and all human knowledge" sprang from disappointment with his own university training, which he felt to be out of touch with the needs of life. At Cambridge, according to his chaplain and first biographer William Rawley, "he first fell into the dislike of Aristotle, not for the worthlessness of the author, to whom he would ever ascribe all high attributes, but for the unfruitfulness of the way: being a philosophy (as his lordship used to say) only strong for disputation and contentions, but barren of production of works for the benefit of the life of man; in which mind he continued to his dying day." The starting point, then, was Bacon's reaction against the decadent Aristotelianism of the schools; but this was only the starting point.

When he looked about him, he came to realize (as others had done) that three recent discoveries—printing, gunpowder, and the compass—had done more to transform the world in which he lived than had any political theory or any school of philosophy. "For these three have changed the whole face and state of things throughout the world; the

of western society. Because its intellectual leaders were immersed in speculation rather than in observation and experiment, all too little was being done to "subdue and overcome the necessities and miseries of humanity." The basis for the badly needed reform of knowledge lay not in metaphysics on the one hand nor (as is sometimes said) in simple empiricism on the other but in "a true and lawful marriage between the empirical and the rational faculty, the unkind and ill-starred divorce and separation of which has thrown into confusion all the affairs of the human family."

What that reform was, how it was to be accomplished, and the spirit in which it was to be conducted do not require statement here. These things have been unforgettably set down by Bacon himself in the "Proemium," "Preface," and "Plan" of *The Great Instauration*. In less than two dozen pages his overarching scheme is set forth, and one could do worse than begin reading Bacon with these pages.

Bacon's second challenge to his time rang in his trumpet call for the *advancement* of knowledge, the phrase itself suggesting the idea of progress, which J. B. Bury termed "the animating and controlling idea" of the modern western mind. Since the doctrine of progress comes to us most immediately from Bacon and Descartes, we need to examine the background against which it arose, a complex of ideas which Bacon felt to be long-standing counsels of despair and which are nowadays grouped as theories of the decay of nature. The origin of these counsels lay in Greek thought. One of the most powerful of Greek myths was that of the Golden Age, which gave rise to two distinct approaches to the history of nature and of man. The simpler approach was that of an almost unqualified pessimism: man had once lived in perfect harmony with nature and himself, his subsequent story being that of a prolonged decline from the Golden Age to the Silver and thence through various stages of human disharmony and natural degeneration into the ages of Lead and Clay. This view of universal history was readily adaptable to the purposes of some early Fathers of the Church, who seized the analogy between the Golden

Age and the Garden of Eden with the subsequent Fall of Man and the Biblical prophecies of a Doomsday to come. Their teachings became so fixed in the Christian tradition that there was a widespread tendency for men to regard themselves as living in the twilight sickness of a dying world. As one of Bacon's contemporaries put it, the created universe "is not only in the staggering and declining age, but, which exceedeth dotage, at the very upshot, and like a sick man which lyeth at death's door, ready to breathe out the last gasp"—or again, "Man himself whom all these things do serve, is of lower stature, less strength, shorter life than at the first he was, so that there is a general decay of nature, and in every leaf of that book [the Bible] it is written, that the frame of the heavenly arch erected over our heads must very shortly loose and dissolve itself."

The second and more sophisticated approach to universal history arising out of the myth of the Golden Age was a concept of cycles or vast rhythms affecting the totality of things. On the surface this concept offered a more hopeful view, but only on the surface. Plato taught that the physical universe and everything in it is organic and mortal, moving from birth through growth to death in huge cycles of time which may be endlessly repeated, and that within these cycles of time human institutions are also organic, moving through growth to their decay and end. Aristotle's view did not greatly differ from Plato's except in stressing that these rhythms of change are certainly eternal, a view that Christian thought could not accommodate. But if the sole prospect is that of renewal and decay, some necessary emphasis falls on human resignation to a fixed pattern of things: the only prospect for a high civilization, for example, is simply to defer as long as possible the irresistible decline to which it is doomed. This is something less than a counsel of hope.

Such views, whether accepted directly or transmitted through Christian thinkers, were powerfully reinforced in some Renaissance quarters by a despairing sense of cultural inferiority. The moderns bowed before the ancients: the Homeric heroes and the golden ages of Periclean Greece

and Augustan Rome seemed to some thinkers like human splendors that the modern world could never match. Even the Reformation added some sense of splendors not to be regained or equaled when the cohesion and purity of the primitive Church were contrasted with the spectacle of Christendom fragmented and at bitterest war with itself.

Against these manifold counsels of despair Bacon advanced his arguments of hope. Like others of his time, but perhaps less whole-heartedly than they, he too felt that he was living in the old age of the universe. But because he believed that knowledge is cumulative, he saw no reason to despair. His imagination was haunted by the discovery of the New World, which moved him as a symbol of how men might add productively to knowledge and discover new realms undreamed of in the youthful times of the so-called ancients. The two persistent images of his prose are of planting and discovery. Again, Bacon shared to a degree the organic cyclical concept of history, but he utterly refused to accept the prevalent implication of this view. For Bacon asserted that man can control his destiny: he is not the slave of implacable decay *unless he chooses to be* because knowledge, being incremental, need not be subject to the unalterable laws of change that create and destroy empires. What Bacon feared and fought was any spirit of resignation or of complacency toward human knowledge. He had faith in its dynamic capacities.

Bacon sounded his third challenge by his call for a revolution in the conditions of life. The tenor of his call is profoundly humanitarian, and perhaps his noblest achievement was to awaken the consciences of men. The twin labels of "materialist" and "utilitarian" have been applied to him by some whom he would have thought guilty of counsels of despair. No man of his time saw more clearly the importance of technological discovery, none set a higher value on it, and none more exultantly predicted the changes that organized research and applied science would bring about in human life. For him a main (though not the chief) value of science was the hope of "a line and race of inventions

that may in some degree subdue and overcome the necessities and miseries of humanity." He unweariedly proclaimed the worth of knowledge sought for "the benefit and use of life," and in supporting his appeal for the development of science he declared that "the matter in hand is no mere felicity of speculation but the real business and fortunes of the human race."

At the same time he had a clear-sighted sense of values. He had no disposition to exalt applied science, which he valued greatly, over pure science, which he valued more. He vigorously condemned those who seek only "experiments of Fruit, not experiments of Light" and those who drop out of the race for theoretical knowledge to pick up the golden ball of some immediately practical discovery. In his eyes all scientific activity should be conducted with twin goals in mind, "the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate," his ultimate dream being that of "an apocalypse or true vision of the footsteps of the Creator imprinted on his creatures." Again, when he urged men to seek discoveries and to extend their command over nature, he was not thinking of physical science alone. He was no less concerned with all other disciplines in which men may approach truth by bowing their minds to facts. Indeed his breadth of view is such that a distinguished modern thinker has called for a return to Bacon on the grounds that science itself during the past three and a half centuries has been too much under the spell of the triumphs in the physical sciences with a concomitant narrowing of intellectual horizons. Man's knowledge of himself and of his own institutions is central to Bacon's concept of nature. His dream of a science beyond the sciences and his prayer for the apocalyptic vision furnish the just context in which he must be read.

2

The works by which Bacon helped shape the course of western civilization are four: successively the *Essays*, *The Advancement of Learning*, *The Great Instauration* (which includes *The New Organon*), and the *New Atlantis*. These

All this was a conscious piece of prose artistry. Since the general Elizabethan tradition was toward a copious style, Bacon's break with the dominant tradition helped produce what one contemporary called "schisms of eloquence." Bacon, to be sure, was not the first English prose stylist to aim at an Attic simplicity. Others had known the brevity of Tacitus and the superb directness of the English Bible stemming from William Tyndale. Every Elizabethan schoolboy had been taught to keep a commonplace book of "sayings" drawn from his reading, every Elizabethan writer knew the telling power of *sententiae* or proverbial-like utterances, and a good many Elizabethans besides Bacon had been trained at the Inns of Court, where the chant of *pauca verba, pauca verba* (few words, few words) was the price of prolixity in a speaker. But none before Bacon had braved the outermost limits of terseness. Even from the first, however, Bacon did not deny himself the advantages of balance, cadence, and metaphor which were to give his prose its quotability, its popularity, and its power.

That Bacon first conceived the *Essays* as a series of aphorisms is characteristic, and his original intentions are made clear in *The Advancement of Learning*, in which he distinguishes between two kinds of prose, the one "magistral," the other "probative." The magistral writer, he explains, operates from a ground of certitude and delivers knowledge "in such form as may best be believed, and not as may best be examined." The probative writer, on the other hand, is an explorer, not a preacher. By reducing his statements to bare aphorisms he deliberately strips off his defenses and cuts away everything that may hide "whether he be superficial or solid." More important still, the stark aphorism challenges readers to pit their observations against the writer's and thus add to the ultimate attainment of truth. The provisional, "scientific" attitude here implied is borne out by the fact that Bacon called these sketches merely *Essays*—i.e., tentative explorations. Not until more than a quarter of a century later, when he gave the essays their final form and modified their original austerity into something more nearly magistral, did he add—or *Counsels, Civil and Moral*.

One thing may be said with assurance of them: they never leave readers indifferent. They delighted Bacon's contemporaries and successors, including the Puritans, who transplanted them to this country. But later Puritans of a different stamp have often taken a strong moral line. William Blake penciled an outraged protest on the title page of his copy, "Good advice for Satan's kingdom"; and subsequent critics have at times labeled them "counsels of expediency" or studies in the ignoble art of getting ahead. The charge cannot be altogether dismissed. As a courtier Bacon was fascinated by what he called "the architecture of fortune," a phrase that had Machiavellian as well as classical connotations—hence his tough-minded and at times insensitive concern with the ways of getting and holding power. But we do well to remember that he was as much concerned to explore and to challenge as to counsel. "We are much beholden," he writes, "to Machiavel and others, that write what men do and not what they ought to do," and the *Essays* owe no small part of their impact to the writer's unsparing insight into the gullibilities, self-delusions, and pretenses of men. Bacon's desire "to join serpentine wisdom with columbine innocency" was part of his whole-hearted acceptance of life and a phase of his Renaissance gusto. One always has the sense of a shrewd and insatiable intelligence exploring the ways of men with extraordinary penetration and with the art of coalescing a world of experience in a phrase. But the unique triumph of the *Essays* comes in the great themes greatly handled, the discourses of truth, beauty, studies, death, and the vicissitude of things.

Of the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning appeared in 1605, but seems to have been in gestation from at least 1592 when Bacon, writing to Lord Burghley, announced: "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." His famous remark has sometimes been misconstrued. He did not mean that he intended to *master* all fields of human knowledge but rather to *survey* them, and *The Advancement* is the result of that survey. Even in an age when verifiable knowledge was far less extensive than now—and

far less multi-branched—it was remarkable that any man should have attempted what Bacon did. What is even more astonishing is that such a survey should retain its impressiveness. The feat could have been accomplished only by a writer of commanding power and breadth of vision.

Book I, which was written under conditions of relative leisure, is much the more finished of the two Books. Bacon cast it in the form of a great oration to be delivered before a discerning, dispassionate judge. Since the work was conceived under Elizabeth, whose learning was an unfailing source of national pride, and completed under James I, who had just come to the throne with an enviable reputation for scholarship, Bacon wrote with a royal judge in mind. The occasion, so to speak, was one of high dignity, and Bacon brought to it all the lucidity, conciseness, and magnificence of his prose. He here displays consummate literary tact and fully bears out Ben Jonson's well-known description of him as a speaker in Parliament: "No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, nor suffered less emptiness, less idleness in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke." Book I of *The Advancement of Learning* is Bacon's greatest English exercise in the magisterial style.

The essential theme of Book I being the dignity of learning, Bacon proceeds from a defense of secular learning against those inclined to attack or, at best, to undervalue it on to a statement of its positive values. What Bacon has to say in defense and in praise of learning was not a work of supererogation because the Renaissance was not exempt from anti-intellectual currents of considerable violence. In fact, Sir Philip Sidney was obliged to defend the values of the imagination and the function of literature at the very time when Spenser had emerged and when Marlowe, Shakespeare, and a host of major writers were shortly to create a literature in English that would take rank with any in the world. So Bacon, standing at the threshold of the seven-

teenth century—the first great age of science in the modern world—had similarly to defend enterprises of the inquiring mind. But Bacon's defense and laudation were the work not of a blind partisan of learning but of a far-seeing critic as well. Hence he manages to heighten the effectiveness of his defense by the discernment of his criticism and at the same time to establish by contrast with prevailing attitudes the values of the empirical position which he felt to be necessary for the development of science.

Book II, after a preliminary discussion of needed university reforms, embarks on Bacon's circumnavigation of what he calls "the small Globe of the Intellectual World," an image designedly evoking the exploits of Magellan and Drake. Bacon's purpose was to determine "what parts thereof lie fresh and waste, and not improved by the industry of man." His main interest, therefore, was in the unsurveyed realm of secular learning rather than in what was for his readers the familiar old world of Divinity, in which he pauses only briefly at the end of the Book. His explorations in the realm of the secular are conducted according to a careful plan, which in its broadest outlines is a psychological scheme that takes him through the continents of History (corresponding to memory), Poetry or imaginative literature (corresponding to imagination), and Philosophy (corresponding to reason). He sets foot briefly on the continent of History, which he finds reasonably well peopled; he merely skirts the shore of imaginative literature, which did not greatly interest him; and he hurries on to the dark continent of Philosophy, which embraced all learning other than history and literature. Bacon had to the full the traveler's gifts of a fresh eye and a questing mind, so that what he has to say is invariably illuminating—and he touches everything under the sun from astrology and athletics (including cosmetics) to logic and the art of government, all according to a scheme unfolded as he goes along. The seventeenth century was an age of curious and compendious minds; it was also about the last age in which anyone would undertake such a voyage of discovery; and what Bacon

rior to the soul; by reason whereof there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things." The phrase "some *shadow* of satisfaction" is revealing. Couple it with the appearance of the Father of Salomon's House, who "had an aspect as if he pitied men," and you reach a sense of the Faustian discontent behind the *New Atlantis* and in truth behind Bacon's whole life and thought.

3

The same Faustian elements emerge in the tragedy of Bacon's public career. He was born January 22, 1561, in the golden reign of Elizabeth I. He was, superficially, most fortunate in his birth. His mother was notable among the learned women of her time. His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was an outstanding statesman of the day. His uncle, William Cecil, later Lord Burleigh, was Elizabeth's greatest minister, and even the Queen herself was charmed by the precocious child. The boy was plainly destined for a career in public life, to which, as he grew older, he was drawn partly by a fierce desire for the kind of place and power his father had won, partly by a deep sense of duty. The Bacons, like the Cecils, were not of the Old Nobility: they were among the New Men who had just emerged in the breakup of the feudal world. Lawyers, Humanists, and Protestants, they were men dedicated to the service of the Crown. For them the noblest way to serve God was to serve the state. Thus the ideal of the active life was part of Bacon's birth-right, and the tragic polarity of his life was fixed for him by his birth and training.

The other polarity of the contemplative life he soon found for himself. He was educated privately, then sent in 1573 at the age of twelve to Trinity College, Cambridge, but with no intention on his or his parents' part that he should take a degree. He remained at Cambridge three years, long enough, however, to start him on his lifelong quest. His feelings toward Cambridge were ambivalent. He was repelled by its

traditionalism yet was deeply drawn to the kind of life he found there.

By the time he was fifteen his father had definitely settled on the decision "to mould and frame him for the arts of state," so that he was withdrawn from the university to start reading law at Gray's Inn. But he had barely entered his legal studies when an opportunity opened for foreign experience and some acquaintance with diplomacy in the service of Sir Amias Paulet, newly-made English Ambassador to France. In 1579 his stay abroad was cut short by his father's death, an event that threw a far deeper shadow over Bacon's brilliant prospects than even he could have realized at the time. His father, who had settled generous estates on his other sons, had by sheer mischance failed to make provision for his youngest son, and Bacon was left without an income adequate to a courtier's career and without the influence that would have assured his way. It is easy enough for us to see that Bacon at eighteen might have been wise to renounce all political ambitions and dreams of place and power, no matter how deeply they were ingrained or how much they were expected of him. As time went on, he was again and again tempted to do so and at the last bitterly to regret his lack of decision.

He returned to Gray's Inn to qualify himself for the bar, to which he was admitted in 1586. In 1584, however, he was elected to the House of Commons and began his distinguished Parliamentary career. In 1593 he led a vigorous fight for the rights of the Commons and the people against what he regarded as dangerous proposals urged by the House of Lords, the chief ministers of the Queen, and the Queen herself. His independence cost him dearly. The great Queen had a long memory for those who opposed her wishes, and when during the 1590's Bacon became a candidate first for the Attorney-Generalship and later for the Solicitorship, she allowed him to dangle interminably in hopes and then appointed others. Through Cecil's influence he was promised a lucrative post and through his own abilities he won unofficial status on Elizabeth's legal staff, but

the inescapable fact was that he held no appointed office during the reign of Elizabeth, whom he loved and revered.

A second source of sorrow and distress came from his association with the rising young Earl of Essex, beginning in the 1590's. Essex, a brilliant, virile, volatile youth of extraordinary promise, was the last of Elizabeth's favorites. He was drawn to Bacon by respect for the latter's conspicuous abilities, which he fought valiantly, though unsuccessfully, to have the Queen reward. When she failed to bestow offices which Essex and Bacon had thought were half-promised, Essex with characteristic generosity gave Bacon a rich gift of land. But as the decade wore on, Essex increasingly discovered that being an Elizabethan favorite was not always a happy lot; and although Bacon, who was one of his chief mentors, tried to moderate his courses and counsel temperance, the inevitable break occurred between the aging Queen and the ambitious favorite. Bacon did everything in his power to effect a reconciliation, urging obedience on Essex and understanding on the Queen; but when it became all too evident that pride and self-will in Essex were going to triumph over his loyalty, Bacon refused to be party to any courses headed toward treason, and the two men drew apart. Essex and his followers raised an armed rebellion to seize the Queen. They failed, were arraigned on charges of treason, and the leaders were executed. In the course of the trial Bacon was obliged to appear among the Queen's Counsel so that it seemed to some as though he were heartlessly prosecuting a friend and ardent benefactor. But we know today that, however distasteful the role was to Bacon, he behaved with entire probity. He had foreseen the Essex rebellion and had struggled manfully to prevent it. When the act of treason occurred, he could only accept it for what it was. When the trial came on, he could have withdrawn in a romantic, futile gesture that could in no way have helped Essex and that would have embarrassed the Crown's handling of its problem. He was in a cruel position, but in putting the security of the state ahead of personal considerations when treason was the issue, he had done, as

he said, his "duty to the Queen and State; in which I would not show myself false-hearted nor faint-hearted for any man's sake living."

Upon the death of Elizabeth and the accession of James I in 1603, the pattern of Bacon's public life began to change, slowly at first and then with increasing rapidity. He was knighted in 1603, sworn as King's Counsel in 1604, made Solicitor-General in 1607 and Attorney-General in 1613, placed on the Privy Council in 1616, created Lord Keeper of the Great Seal in 1617 and Lord Chancellor in 1618. These last were the highest appointive offices of the realm and made the holder technically the principal officer of state after the King. In 1618 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Verulam, and in January, 1621, he was further advanced as Viscount St. Alban. But the days of his glory were appallingly brief. Four months later he was indicted by the House of Lords, of which he was a member, on charges of corruption, specifically for accepting gifts from parties who had suits before him. Bacon made no effort to defend himself but pled guilty and threw himself on the mercy of the Peers. He was sentenced to a fine of £40,000, to imprisonment in the Tower at the King's pleasure, to banishment from London and the court, and to permanent disbarment from public office and from Parliament. If the Lords were not disposed to be merciful, the King was. The fine was remitted, his imprisonment lasted only a few days, and the banishment was subsequently removed. What was left was the disbarment from Parliament and public office.

That the long years of Bacon's distinguished public life ended in ignominy has caused much speculation. Why did he not defend himself? There have been hints, on the one hand, that he was betrayed by the rapacity of his servants, who unquestionably were all too free in accepting gifts in his name from litigants; and there have been hints, on the other hand, that Bacon threw himself down as a willing sacrifice to enemies of the King and of the Duke of Buckingham, Bacon's principal supporter. Perhaps so, but this is to multiply mystery needlessly. Up to a point Bacon was guilty as charged—which is not to say that he was guilty of corrup-

Learning, and *The Great Instauration*, among countless other writings. Besides, he had always had the unfulfilled impulse "with God's assistance to retire myself to Cambridge, and there spend my life in studies and contemplations, without looking back." There had steadily been moments of self-awareness—"knowing myself by inward calling to be fitter to hold a book than to play a part, I have led my life in civil causes; for which I was not very fit by nature, and more unfit by the preoccupation of my mind"—but even as he wrote, he had already decided "that in this theatre of man's life it is reserved only for God and Angels to be lookers-on." Now, having tasted the glory and the dust, he felt shame that he had misspent so much of his life "in things for which I was least fit; so as I may truly say, my soul hath been a stranger in the course of my pilgrimage." Yet he took comfort from the fact that time remained to him, and his mind turned eagerly to projects he had long wanted to attempt: a history of England under the Tudors, an analytical digest of English law, the final shaping of his major works, and the first samples of the natural history which he hoped future ages would perfect. His five remaining years were too short for all he hoped to do, yet his output was impressive for a man of his years and troubles, including, among other works, his able *History of the Reign of King Henry VII*, the expansion and Latin translation of *The Advancement of Learning* (called *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum*), the final form of the *Essays*, and the *New Atlantis*.

Bacon died April 9, 1626, an enigmatic yet mighty figure, whose monuments of wit have survived his monuments of power. A contemporary who knew him intimately has perhaps characterized him best: "A man most sweet in his conversation and ways, grave in his judgments, invariable in his fortunes, splendid in his expenses; a friend unalterable to his friends; an enemy to no man; above all, a most hearty and indefatigable servant of the King and a most earnest lover of the Public, having all the thoughts of his large heart set on adorning the age in which he lives and benefiting as far as possible the whole human race."

LETTER TO MY LORD TREASURER BURGHLEY (1592)

My Lord,

With as much confidence as mine own honest and faithful devotion unto your service and your honourable correspondence unto me and my poor estate can breed in a man, do I commend myself unto your Lordship. I wax now somewhat ancient; one and thirty years is a great deal of sand in the hour-glass. My health, I thank God, I find confirmed; and I do not fear that action shall impair it, because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are. I ever bare a mind (in some middle place that I could discharge) to serve her Majesty; not as a man born under Sol, that loveth honour; nor under Jupiter, that loveth business (for the contemplative planet carrieth me away wholly); but as a man born under an excellent Sovereign, that deserveth the dedication of all men's abilities. Besides, I do not find in myself so much self-love, but that the greater parts of my thoughts are to deserve well (if I were able) of my friends, and namely of your Lordship; who being the Atlas of this commonwealth, the honour of my house, and the second founder of my poor estate, I am tied by all duties, both of a good patriot, and of an unworthy kinsman, and of an obliged servant, to employ whatsoever I am to do you service. Again, the meanness of my estate doth somewhat move me: for though I cannot accuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend, nor my course to get. Lastly, I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends, as I have moderate civil ends: for I have taken all knowledge to be my province; and if I could purge it of two sorts of rovers, whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils, I hope I should bring in industrious observa-

tions, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries; the best state of that province. This, whether it be curiosity, or vain glory, or nature, or (if one take it favourably) *philanthropia*, is so fixed in my mind as it cannot be removed. And I do easily see, that place of any reasonable countenance doth bring commandment of more wits than of a man's own; which is the thing I greatly affect. And for your Lordship, perhaps you shall not find more strength and less encounter in any other. And if your Lordship shall find now, or at any time, that I do seek or affect any place whereunto any that is nearer unto your Lordship shall be concurrent, say then that I am a most dishonest man. And if your Lordship will not carry me on, I will not do as Anaxagoras did, who reduced himself with contemplation unto voluntary poverty: but this I will do; I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease of quick revenue, or some office of gain that shall be executed by deputy, and so give over all care of service, and become some sorry book-maker, or a true pioner in that mine of truth, which (he said) lay so deep. This which I have writ unto your Lordship is rather thoughts than words, being set down without all art, disguising, or reservation. Wherein I have done honour both to your Lordship's wisdom, in judging that that will be best believed of your Lordship which is truest, and to your Lordship's good nature, in retaining nothing from you. And even so I wish your Lordship all happiness, and to myself means and occasion to be added to my faithful desire to do you service. From my lodging at Gray's Inn.

[Unpublished dedication to Prince Henry—1612]

TO THE MOST HIGH AND EXCELLENT PRINCE, HENRY, PRINCE
OF WALES, DUKE OF CORNWALL, AND EARL OF CHESTER.

It may please your Highness,

Having divided my life into the contemplative and active part, I am desirous to give his Majesty and your Highness of the fruits of both, simple though they be.

To write just treatises requireth leisure in the writer, and leisure in the reader, and therefore are not so fit, neither in regard of your Highness' princely affairs, nor in regard of my continual services; which is the cause that hath made me choose to write certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called *Essays*. The word is late, but the thing is ancient. For Seneca's epistles to Lucilius, if one mark them well, are but *Essays*, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles. These labours of mine I know cannot be worthy of your Highness, for what can be worthy of you? But my hope is, they may be as grains of salt, that will rather give you an appetite than offend you with satiety. And although they handle those things wherein both men's lives and their pens are most conversant, yet (what I have attained I know not) but I have endeavoured to make them not vulgar, but of a nature whereof a man shall find much in experience, and little in books; so as they are neither repetitions nor fancies. But howsoever, I shall most humbly desire your Highness to accept them in gracious part, and to conceive, that if I cannot rest, but must shew my dutiful and devoted affection to your Highness in these things which proceed from myself, I shall be much more ready to do it in performance of any your princely commandments. And so wishing your Highness all princely felicity I rest,

Your Highness's most humble servant.

ESSAYS OR COUNSELS

CIVIL AND MORAL

[1625]

1

OF TRUTH

*What is Truth?*² said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting¹ free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers² of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits³ which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labour which men take in finding out of truth; nor again that when it is found it imposeth upon men's thoughts; that doth bring lies in favour; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians⁴ examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open day-light, that doth not shew the masks and mummeries and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-

lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that sheweth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that sheweth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the Fathers,⁵ in great severity, called poesy *vinum dæmonum* [devil's-wine], because it filleth the imagination; and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and settleth in it, that doth the hurt; such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his sabbath work ever since, is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter or chaos; then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet⁶ that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: *It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth,* (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene,) *and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below;* so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth, to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honour of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehood is like allay in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason, why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace and such an odious charge? Saith he, *If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much to say, as that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men.* For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold, that when Christ cometh, *he shall not find faith upon the earth.*

2

OF DEATH

MEN fear Death, as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification, that a man should think with himself what the pain is if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured, and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb: for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense. And by him that spake only as a philosopher¹ and natural

man, it was well said, *Pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa*: [it is the accompaniments of death that are frightful rather than death itself.] Groans and convulsions, and a discoloured face, and friends weeping, and blacks, and obsequies, and the like, shew death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; Love slights it; Honour aspireth to it; Grief flieth to it; Fear pre-occupateth it; nay we read, after Otho the emperor had slain himself, Pity (which is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die, out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay Seneca adds niceness and satiety: *Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest*. A man would die, though he were neither valiant nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft over and over. It is no less worthy to observe, how little alteration in good spirits the approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men till the last instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a compliment; *Livia, conjugii nostri memor, vive et vale*: [farewell, Livia; and forget not the days of our marriage.] Tiberius in dissimulation; as Tacitus saith of him, *Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant*: [his powers of body were gone, but his power of dissimulation still remained.] Vespasian in a jest; sitting upon the stool, *Ut puto Deus fio*: [I think I am becoming a god.] Galba with a sentence; *Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani*: [strike, if it be for the good of Rome;] holding forth his neck. Septimius Severus in despatch; *Adeste si quid mihi restat agendum*: [make haste, if there is anything more for me to do.] And the like. Certainly the Stoics bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better saith he,² *qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponat naturæ*: [who accounts the close of life as one of the benefits of nature.] It is as natural to die as to be born;

were in the two cross^s clauses thereof soundly and plainly expounded: *He that is not with us is against us*; and again, *He that is not against us is with us*; that is, if the points fundamental and of substance in religion were truly discerned and distinguished from points not merely of faith, but of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trivial, and done already. But if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed of rending God's church by two kinds of controversies. The one is, when the matter of the point controverted is too small and light, not worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contradiction. For as it is noted by one of the fathers,⁴ *Christ's coat indeed had no seam, but the church's vesture was of divers colours*; whereupon he saith, *In veste varietas sit, scissura non sit*, [let there be variety in the garment, but let there be no division:] they be two things, Unity and Uniformity. The other is, when the matter of the point controverted is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty and obscurity; so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree. And if it come so to pass in that distance of judgment which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men in some of their contradictions intend the same thing; and accepteth of both? The nature of such controversies is excellently expressed by St. Paul in the warning and precept that he giveth concerning the same, *Devita profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ*: [Avoid profane novelties of terms, and oppositions of science falsely so called.] Men create oppositions which are not; and put them into new terms so fixed, as whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the meaning. There be also two false peaces or unities: the one, when the peace is grounded but

upon an implicit ignorance; for all colours will agree in the dark: the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points. For truth and falsehood, in such things, are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nabuchadnezzar's image; they may cleave, but they will not incorporate.

Concerning the Means of procuring Unity; men must beware, that in the procuring or muniting of religious unity they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and temporal; and both have their due office and place in the maintenance of religion. But we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet's sword, or like unto it; that is, to propagate religion by wars or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences; except it be in cases of overt scandal, blasphemy, or intermixture of practice against the state; much less to nourish seditions; to authorise conspiracies and rebellions; to put the sword into the people's hands; and the like; tending to the subversion of all government, which is the ordinance of God. For this is but to dash the first table against the second; and so to consider men as Christians, as we forget that they are men. Lucretius the poet, when he beheld the act of Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed:

Tantum Relligio potuit suadere malorum:

[to such ill actions Religion could persuade a man.] What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France, or the powder treason^s of England? He would have been seven times more Epicure and atheist than he was. For as the temporal sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion; so it is a thing monstrous to put it into the hands of the common people. Let that be left unto the Anabaptists, and other furies. It was great blasphemy when the devil said, *I will ascend and be like the Highest*; but it is greater blasphemy to personate God, and bring him in saying, *I will descend, and be like the prince of darkness*: and what is it better, to make the cause of religion to de-

scend to the cruel and execrable actions of murdering princes, butchery of people, and subversion of states and governments? Surely this is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven; and set out of the bark of a Christian church a flag of a bark of pirates and Assassins. Therefore it is most necessary that the church by doctrine and decree, princes by their sword, and all learnings, both Christian and moral, as by their Mercury rod,^a do damn and send to hell for ever those facts and opinions tending to the support of the same; as hath been already in good part done. Surely in counsels concerning religion, that counsel of the apostle⁷ would be prefixed, *Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei*: [The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.] And it was a notable observation of a wise father,⁸ and no less ingenuously confessed; *that those which held and persuaded pressure of consciences, were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends.*

4

OF REVENGE

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Salomon, I am sure, saith, *It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence*. That which is past is gone, and irrevocable; and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come; therefore they do but trifle with themselves, that labour in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honour, or the like. Therefore why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill-nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch,

to Augustus, and dissimulation to Tiberius. And again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, *We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus, nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius.* These properties, of arts or policy and dissimulation or closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several, and to be distinguished. For if a man have that penetration of judgment as he can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be shewed at half lights, and to whom and when, (which indeed are arts of state and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them,) to him a habit of dissimulation is a hinderance and a poorness. But if a man cannot obtain to that judgment, then it is left to him generally to be close, and a dissembler. For where a man cannot choose or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general; like the going softly, by one that cannot well see. Certainly the ablest men that ever were have had all an openness and frankness of dealing; and a name of certainty and veracity; but then they were like horses well managed; for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn; and at such times when they thought the case indeed required dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad of their good faith and clearness of dealing made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self. The first, Closeness, Reservation, and Secrecy; when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken, what he is. The second, Dissimulation, in the negative; when a man lets fall signs and arguments, that he is not that he is. And the third, Simulation, in the affirmative; when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that he is not.

For the first of these, Secrecy; it is indeed the virtue of a confessor. And assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions. For who will open himself to a blab or babler? But if a man be thought secret, it inviteth discovery; as the more close air sucketh in the more open; and as in confes-

sion the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart, so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind; while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides (to say truth) nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal. For he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not. Therefore set it down, *that an habit of secrecy is both politic and moral.* And in this part, it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak. For the discovery of a man's self by the tracts of his countenance is a great weakness and betraying; by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's words.

For the second, which is Dissimulation; it followeth many times upon secrecy by a necessity; so that he that will be secret must be a dissembler in some degree. For men are too cunning to suffer a man to keep an indifferent carriage between both, and to be secret, without swaying the balance on either side. They will so beset a man with questions, and draw him on, and pick it out of him, that, without an absurd silence, he must shew an inclination one way; or if he do not, they will gather as much by his silence as by his speech. As for equivocations, or oraculous speeches, they cannot hold out long. So that no man can be secret, except he give himself a little scope of dissimulation; which is, as it were, but the skirts or train of secrecy.

But for the third degree, which is Simulation and false profession; that I hold more culpable, and less politic; except it be in great and rare matters. And therefore a general custom of simulation (which is this last degree) is a vice, rising either of a natural falseness or fearfulness, or of a mind that hath some main faults, which because a man must needs disguise, it maketh him practise simulation in other things, lest his hand should be out of ure.

The great advantages of simulation and dissimulation are

three. First, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise. For where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarum to call up all that are against them. The second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat. For if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through or take a fall. The third is, the better to discover the mind of another. For to him that opens himself men will hardly shew themselves adverse; but will (fair) let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought. And therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, *Tell a lie and find a troth*. As if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages, to set it even. The first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a shew of fearfulness, which in any business doth spoil the feathers of round flying up to the mark. The second, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many, that perhaps would otherwise co-operate with him; and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends. The third and greatest, is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action; which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature is to have openness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; dissimulation in seasonable use; and a power to feign, if there be no remedy.

7

OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN

THE joys of parents are secret; and so are their griefs and fears. They cannot utter the one; nor they will not utter the other. Children sweeten labours; but they make misfortunes more bitter. They increase the cares of life; but they mitigate the remembrance of death. The perpetuity by generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit, and noble works, are proper to men. And surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men; which have sought to express the images of their minds, where those of their bodies have failed. So the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity. They

OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE

HE that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men; which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times; unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are, who though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences. Nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges. Nay more, there are some foolish rich covetous men, that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer. For perhaps they have heard some talk, *Such an one is a great rich man*, and another except to it, *Yea, but he hath a great charge of children*; as if it were an abatement to his riches. But the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles. Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants; but not always best subjects; for they are light to run away; and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with churchmen; for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool. It is indifferent for judges and magistrates; for if they be facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly in their hortatives put men in mind of their wives and children; and I think the despising of marriage amongst the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base. Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men, though they may be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust, yet,

and think other men's harms a redemption of their own sufferings.

They that desire to excel in too many matters, out of levity and vain glory, are ever envious. For they cannot want work; it being impossible but many in some one of those things should surpass them. Which was the character of Adrian the Emperor; that mortally envied poets and painters and artificers, in works wherein he had a vein to excel.

Lastly, near kinsfolks, and fellows in office, and those that have been bred together, are more apt to envy their equals when they are raised. For it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and pointeth at them, and cometh oftener into their remembrance, and incurreth likewise more into the note of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame. Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel, because when his sacrifice was better accepted there was no body to look on. Thus much for those that are apt to envy.

Concerning those that are more or less subject to envy: First, persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied. For their fortune seemeth but due unto them; and no man envieth the payment of a debt, but rewards and liberality rather. Again, envy is ever joined with the comparing of a man's self; and where there is no comparison, no envy; and therefore kings are not envied but by kings. Nevertheless it is to be noted that unworthy persons are most envied at their first coming in, and afterwards overcome it better; whereas contrariwise, persons of worth and merit are most envied when their fortune continueth long. For by that time, though their virtue be the same, yet it hath not the same lustre; for fresh men grow up that darken it.

Persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising. For it seemeth but right done to their birth. Besides, there seemeth not much added to their fortune; and envy is as the sunbeams, that beat hotter upon a bank or steep rising ground, than upon a flat. And for the same reason those that are advanced by degrees are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly and *per saltum* [*by a leap].

Those that have joined with their honour great travels,

who, so they may have power and business, will take it at any cost.

Now, to speak of public envy. There is yet some good in public envy, whereas in private there is none. For public envy is as an ostracism, that eclipseth men when they grow too great. And therefore it is a bridle also to great ones, to keep them within bounds.

This envy, being in the Latin word *invidia*, goeth in the modern languages by the name of *discontentment*; of which we shall speak in handling Sedition. It is a disease in a state like to infection. For as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound, and tainteth it; so when envy is gotten once into a state, it traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill odour. And therefore there is little won by intermingling of plausible actions. For that doth argue but a weakness and fear of envy, which hurteth so much the more; as it is likewise usual in infections; which if you fear them, you call them upon you.

This public envy seemeth to beat chiefly upon principal officers or ministers, rather than upon kings and estates themselves. But this is a sure rule, that if the envy upon the minister be great, when the cause of it in him is small; or if the envy be general in a manner upon all the ministers of an estate; then the envy (though hidden) is truly upon the state itself. And so much of public envy or discontentment, and the difference thereof from private envy, which was handled in the first place.

We will add this in general, touching the affection of envy; that of all other affections it is the most importune and continual. For of other affections there is occasion given but now and then; and therefore it was well said, *Invidia festos dies non agit*: [Envy keeps no holidays:] for it is ever working upon some or other. And it is also noted that love and envy do make a man pine, which other affections do not, because they are not so continual. It is also the vilest affection, and the most depraved; for which cause it is the proper attribute of the devil, who is called *The envious man, that soweth tares amongst the wheat by night*; as it always com-

eth to pass, that envy worketh subtilly, and in the dark; and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat.

10

OF LOVE

THE stage is more beholding to Love, than the life of man. For as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief; sometimes like a syren, sometimes like a fury. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent,) there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love: which shews that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except nevertheless Marcus Antonius, the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius, the decemvir and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate; but the latter was an austere and wise man: and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus, *Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus*: [Each is to other a theatre large enough]; as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself a subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye; which was given him for higher purposes. It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature and value of things, by this; that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but in love. Neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said that the arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self; certainly the lover is more. For there was never proud man thought so absurdly well of himself as the lover doth of the person loved; and therefore it was well said, *That it is impossible to love and to be wise*. Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the

party loved; but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciproque. For it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded either with the reciproque or with an inward and secret contempt. By how much the more men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation doth well figure them. That he that preferred Helena,¹ quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas. For whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection quitteth both riches and wisdom. This passion hath his floods in the very times of weakness; which are great prosperity and great adversity; though this latter hath been less observed: both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore shew it to be the child of folly. They do best, who if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter; and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life; for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can no ways be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think it is but as they are given to wine; for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. There is in man's nature a secret inclination and motion towards love of others, which if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable; as it is seen sometime in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind; friendly love perfecteth it; but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

11

OF GREAT PLACE

MEN in great place are thrice servants: servants of the sovereign or state; servants of fame; and servants of business. So as they have no freedom; neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire, to seek power and to lose liberty: or to seek power over others and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious; and by pains men come to greater pains; and it is sometimes base; and by indignities men come to dignities.

The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall, or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing. *Cum non sis qui fueris, non esse cur velis vivere*: [When a man feels that he is no longer what he was, he loses all his interest in life.] Nay, retire men cannot when they would, neither will they when it were reason; but are impatient of privateness, even in age and sickness, which require the shadow; like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions, to think themselves happy; for if they judge by their own feeling, they cannot find it: but if they think with themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are happy as it were by report; when perhaps they find the contrary within. For they are the first that find their own griefs, though they be the last that find their own faults. Certainly men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves, and while they are in the puzzle of business they have no time to tend their health either of body or mind. *Illi mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi*: [It is a sad fate for a man to die too well known to every-body else, and still unknown to himself.] In place there is licence to do good and evil; whereof the latter is a curse: for in evil the best condition is not to will; the second not to can. But power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring. For good thoughts (though God accept them) yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act; and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works is the end of man's motion; and conscience of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest. For if a man can be partaker of God's theatre, he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest. *Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera quæ fecerunt manus suæ, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis*; [And God turned to look upon the works which his hands had made, and saw that all were very good;] and then the sabbath. In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples; for imitation is a globe of precepts. And

roughness; it is a needless cause of discontent: severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting. As for facility; it is worse than bribery. For bribes come but now and then; but if importunity or idle respects lead a man, he shall never be without. As Salomon saith, *To respect persons is not good; for such a man will transgress for a piece of bread.* It is most true that was anciently spoken, *A place sheweth the man.* And it sheweth some to the better, and some to the worse. *Omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset,* [a man whom every body would have thought fit for empire if he had not been emperor,] saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, *Solus imperantium, Vespasianus mutatus in melius:* [He was the only emperor whom the possession of power changed for the better;] though the one was meant of sufficiency,¹ the other of manners and affection. It is an assured sign of a worthy and generous spirit, whom honour amends. For honour is, or should be, the place of virtue; and as in nature things move violently to their place and calmly in their place, so virtue in ambition is violent, in authority settled and calm. All rising to great place is by a winding stair; and if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self whilst he is in the rising, and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them, and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors; but let it rather be said, *When he sits in place he is another man.*

12

OF BOLDNESS

It is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration. Question was asked of Demosthenes, *what was the chief part of an orator?* he answered, *action:*

deed in this virtue of goodness or charity may be committed. The Italians have an ungracious proverb, *Tanto buon che val niente*; So good, that he is good for nothing. And one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel, had the confidence to put in writing, almost in plain terms, *That the Christian faith had given up good men in prey to those that are tyrannical and unjust*. Which he spake, because indeed there was never law, or sect, or opinion, did so much magnify goodness, as the Christian religion doth. Therefore, to avoid the scandal and the danger both, it is good to take knowledge of the errors of an habit so excellent. Seek the good of other men, but be not in bondage to their faces or fancies; for that is but facility or softness; which taketh an honest mind prisoner. Neither give thou Æsop's cock a gem, who would be better pleased and happier if he had a barley-corn. The example of God teacheth the lesson truly; *He sendeth his rain, and maketh his sun to shine, upon the just and unjust*; but he doth not rain wealth, nor shine honour and virtues, upon men equally. Common benefits are to be communicate with all; but peculiar benefits with choice. And beware how in making the portraiture thou breakest the pattern. For divinity maketh the love of ourselves the pattern; the love of our neighbours but the portraiture. Sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor, and follow me: but sell not all thou hast, except thou come and follow me; that is, except thou have a vocation wherein thou mayest do as much good with little means as with great; for otherwise in feeding the streams thou driest the fountain. Neither is there only a habit of goodness, directed by right reason; but there is in some men, even in nature, a disposition towards it; as on the other side there is a natural malignity. For there be that in their nature do not affect the good of others. The lighter sort of malignity turneth but to a crossness, or frowardness, or aptness to oppose, or difficilness, or the like; but the deeper sort to envy and mere mischief. Such men in other men's calamities are, as it were, in season, and are ever on the loading part: not so good as the dogs that licked Lazarus' sores; but like flies that are still buzzing upon any thing that is raw;

misanthropi, that make it their practice to bring men to the bough,¹ and yet have never a tree for the purpose in their gardens, as Timon had. Such dispositions are the very errors of human nature; and yet they are the fittest timber to make great politiques of; like to knee timber,² that is good for ships, that are ordained to be tossed; but not for building houses, that shall stand firm. The parts and signs of goodness are many. If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shews he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them. If he be compassionate towards the afflictions of others, it shews that his heart is like the noble tree³ that is wounded itself when it gives the balm. If he easily pardons and remits offences, it shews that his mind is planted above injuries; so that he cannot be shot. If he be thankful for small benefits, it shews that he weighs men's minds, and not their trash. But above all, if he have St. Paul's perfection, that he would wish to be an *anathema* from Christ for the salvation of his brethren, it shews much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself.

14

OF NOBILITY

WE will speak of Nobility first as a portion of an estate; then as a condition of particular persons. A monarchy where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny; as that of the Turks. For nobility attempers sovereignty, and draws the eyes of the people somewhat aside from the line royal. But for democracies, they need it not; and they are commonly more quiet and less subject to sedition, than where there are stirps¹ of nobles. For men's eyes are upon the business, and not upon the persons; or if upon the persons, it is for the business sake, as fittest, and not for flags and pedigree. We see the Switzers last well, notwithstanding their diversity of religion and of cantons. For utility is their bond, and not respects. The united provinces of the Low

Countries in their government excel; for where there is an equality, the consultations are more indifferent, and the payments and tributes more cheerful. A great and potent nobility addeth majesty to a monarch, but diminisheth power; and putteth life and spirit into the people, but presseth their fortune. It is well when nobles are not too great for sovereignty nor for justice; and yet maintained in that height, as the insolency of inferiors may be broken upon them before it come on too fast upon the majesty of kings. A numerous nobility causeth poverty and inconvenience in a state; for it is a surcharge of expense; and besides, it being of necessity that many of the nobility fall in time to be weak in fortune, it maketh a kind of disproportion between honour and means.

As for nobility in particular persons; it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay; or to see a fair timber tree sound and perfect. How much more to behold an ancient noble family, which hath stood against the waves and weathers of time. For new nobility is but the act of power, but ancient nobility is the act of time. Those that are first raised to nobility are commonly more virtuous, but less innocent, than their descendants; for there is rarely any rising but by a commixture of good and evil arts. But it is reason the memory of their virtues remain to their posterity, and their faults die with themselves. Nobility of birth commonly abateth industry; and he that is not industrious, envieth him that is. Besides, noble persons cannot go much higher: and he that standeth at a stay when others rise, can hardly avoid motions of envy. On the other side, nobility extinguisheth the passive envy from others towards them; because they are in possession of honour. Certainly, kings that have able men of their nobility shall find ease in employing them, and a better slide into their business; for people naturally bend to them, as born in some sort to command.

OF SEDITIONS AND TROUBLES

SHEPHERDS of people had need know the calendars of tempests in state; which are commonly greatest when things grow to equality;¹ as natural tempests are greatest about the *Equinoctia*. And as there are certain hollow blasts of wind and secret swellings of seas before a tempest, so are there in states:

——Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet, fraudesque et operta tumescere bella.
[Of troubles imminent and treasons dark
Thence warning comes, and wars in secret gathering.]

Libels and licentious discourses against the state, when they are frequent and open; and in like sort, false news often running up and down to the disadvantage of the state, and hastily embraced; are amongst the signs of troubles. Virgil giving the pedigree of Fame, saith *she was sister to the Giants*:

Illam Terra parens, irâ irritata Deorum,
Extremam (ut perhibent) Cæo Enceladoque sororem
Progeniuit.

As if fames were the relics of seditions past; but they are no less indeed the preludes of seditions to come. Howsoever he noteth it right, that seditious tumults and seditious fames differ no more but as brother and sister, masculine and feminine; especially if it come to that, that the best actions of a state, and the most plausible, and which ought to give greatest contentment, are taken in ill sense, and traduced: for that shews the envy great, as Tacitus saith, *conflata magna invidia, seu bene seu male gesta premunt*: [when dislike prevails against the government, good actions and bad offend alike.] Neither doth it follow, that because these fames are a sign of troubles, that the suppressing of them with too much severity should be a remedy of troubles. For the despising of them many times checks them best; and the going

about to stop them doth but make a wonder long-lived. Also that kind of obedience which Tacitus speaketh of, is to be held suspected: *Erant in officio, sed tamen qui mallent mandata imperantium interpretari quam exequi*; [ready to serve and yet more disposed to construe commands than execute them;] disputing, excusing, cavilling upon mandates and directions, is a kind of shaking off the yoke, and assay of disobedience; especially if in those disputings they which are for the direction speak fearfully and tenderly, and those that are against it audaciously.

Also, as Machiavel noteth well, when princes, that ought to be common parents, make themselves as a party, and lean to a side, it is as a boat that is overthrown by uneven weight on the one side; as was well seen in the time of Henry the Third of France; for first himself entered league for the extirpation of the Protestants; and presently after the same league was turned upon himself. For when the authority of princes is made but an accessory to a cause, and that there be other bands that tie faster than the band of sovereignty, kings begin to be put almost out of possession.

Also, when discords, and quarrels, and factions, are carried openly and audaciously, it is a sign the reverence of government is lost. For the motions of the greatest persons in a government ought to be as the motions of the planets under *primum mobile*;² (according to the old opinion,) which is, that every of them is carried swiftly by the highest motion, and softly in their own motion. And therefore, when great ones in their own particular motion move violently, and, as Tacitus expresseth it well, *liberius quam ut imperantium meminissent*, [unrestrained by reverence for the government], it is a sign the orbs are out of frame.³ For reverence is that wherewith princes are girt from God; who threateneth the dissolving thereof; *Solvam cingula regum*: [I will unbind the girdles of kings.]

So when any of the four pillars of government are mainly shaken or weakened (which are Religion, Justice, Counsel, and Treasure), men had need to pray for fair weather. But let us pass from this part of predictions (concerning which,

nevertheless, more light may be taken from that which followeth); and let us speak first of the Materials of seditions; then of the Motives of them; and thirdly of the Remedies.

Concerning the Materials of seditions. It is a thing well to be considered; for the surest way to prevent seditions (if the times do bear it) is to take away the matter of them. For if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire. The matter of seditions is of two kinds; much poverty and much discontentment. It is certain, so many overthrown estates, so many votes for troubles. Lucan noteth well the state of Rome before the civil war,

Hinc usura vorax, rapidumque in tempore fœnus,
Hinc concussa fides, et multis utile bellum:

[estates eaten up by usurious rates of interest, credit shaken, war a gain to many.]

This same *multis utile bellum* [*war a gain to many], is an assured and infallible sign of a state disposed to seditions and troubles. And if this poverty and broken estate in the better sort be joined with a want and necessity in the mean people, the danger is imminent and great. For the rebellions of the belly are the worst. As for discontentments, they are in the politic body like to humours in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat and to inflame. And let no prince measure the danger of them by this, whether they be just or unjust: for that were to imagine people to be too reasonable; who do often spurn at their own good: nor yet by this, whether the griefs whereupon they rise be in fact great or small: for they are the most dangerous discontentments where the fear is greater than the feeling: *Dolendi modus, timendi non item*: [Suffering has its limit, but fears are endless.] Besides, in great oppressions, the same things that provoke the patience, do withal mate the courage; but in fears it is not so. Neither let any prince or state be secure concerning discontentments, because they have been often, or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued: for as it is true that every vapour or fume doth not turn into a storm;

modity as nature yieldeth it; the manufacture; and the vesture, or carriage. So that if these three wheels go, wealth will flow as in a spring tide. And it cometh many times to pass, that *materiam superabit opus*; that the work and carriage is more worth than the material, and enricheth a state more; as is notably seen in the Low-Countrymen, who have the best mines above ground⁴ in the world.

Above all things, good policy is to be used that the treasure and monies in a state be not gathered into few hands. For otherwise a state may have a great stock, and yet starve. And money is like muck, not good except it be spread. This is done chiefly by suppressing, or at the least keeping a strait hand upon the devouring trades of usury, ingrossing, great pasturages, and the like.

For removing discontentments, or at least the danger of them; there is in every state (as we know) two portions of subjects; the nobless and the commonalty. When one of these is discontent, the danger is not great; for common people are of slow motion, if they be not excited by the greater sort; and the greater sort are of small strength, except the multitude be apt and ready to move of themselves. Then is the danger, when the greater sort do but wait for the troubling of the waters amongst the meaner, that then they may declare themselves. The poets feign, that the rest of the gods would have bound Jupiter; which he hearing of, by the counsel of Pallas, sent for Briareus, with his hundred hands, to come in to his aid. An emblem, no doubt, to show how safe it is for monarchs to make sure of the good will of common people.

To give moderate liberty for griefs and discontentments to evaporate (so it be without too great insolency or bravery), is a safe way. For he that turneth the humours back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious imposthumations.

The part of Epimetheus mought well become Prometheus, in the case of discontentments; for there is not a better provision against them. Epimetheus, when griefs and evils flew abroad, at last shut the lid, and kept hope in the bottom of

the vessel. Certainly, the politic and artificial nourishing and entertaining of hopes, and carrying men from hopes to hopes, is one of the best antidotes against the poison of discontentments. And it is a certain sign of a wise government and proceeding, when it can hold men's hearts by hopes, when it cannot by satisfaction; and when it can handle things in such manner, as no evil shall appear so peremptory but that it hath some outlet of hope: which is the less hard to do, because both particular persons and factions are apt enough to flatter themselves, or at least to brave that they believe not.

Also the foresight and prevention, that there be no likely or fit head whereunto discontented persons may resort, and under whom they may join, is a known, but an excellent point of caution. I understand a fit head to be one that hath greatness and reputation; that hath confidence with the discontented party, and upon whom they turn their eyes; and that is thought discontented in his own particular: which kind of persons are either to be won and reconciled to the state, and that in a fast and true manner; or to be fronted with some other of the same party, that may oppose them, and so divide the reputation. Generally, the dividing and breaking of all factions and combinations that are adverse to the state, and setting them at distance, or at least distrust, amongst themselves, is not one of the worst remedies. For it is a desperate case, if those that hold with the proceeding of the state be full of discord and faction, and those that are against it be entire and united.

I have noted that some witty and sharp speeches which have fallen from princes have given fire to seditions. Cæsar did himself infinite hurt in that speech, *Sylla nescivit literas, non potuit dictare*: [Scylla was no scholar, he could not dictate:] for it did utterly cut off that hope which men had entertained, that he would at one time or other give over his dictatorship. Galba undid himself by that speech, *legi a se militem, non emi*; [that he did not buy his soldiers, but levied them:] for it put the soldiers out of hope of the donative. Probus likewise, by that speech, *si vixero, non opus erit*

amplius Romano imperio militibus; [if I live, the Roman empire shall have no more need of soldiers:] a speech of great despair for the soldiers. And many the like. Surely princes had need, in tender matters and ticklish times, to beware what they say; especially in these short speeches, which fly abroad like darts, and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions. For as for large discourses, they are flat things, and not so much noted.

Lastly, let princes, against all events, not be without some great person, one or rather more, of military valour, near unto them, for the repressing of seditions in their beginnings. For without that, there useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of troubles than were fit. And the state runneth the danger of that which Tacitus saith; *Atque is habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur*: [A few were in a humour to attempt mischief, more to desire, all to allow it.] But let such military persons be assured, and well reputed of, rather than factious and popular; holding also good correspondence with the other great men in the state; or else the remedy is worse than the disease.

16

OF ATHEISM

I HAD rather believe all the fables in the Legend,¹ and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind. And therefore God never wrought miracle to convince atheism, because his ordinary works convince it. It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion. For while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them, confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity. Nay, even that school² which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion; that is, the school of Leucippus and Democritus and Epicurus. For it is a thou-

sand times more credible, that four mutable elements, and one immutable fifth essence,³ duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions or seeds unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshal. The scripture saith, *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God*; it is not said, *The fool hath thought in his heart*; so as he rather saith it by rote to himself, as that he would have, than that he can thoroughly believe it, or be persuaded of it. For none deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh that there were no God. It appeareth in nothing more, that atheism is rather in the lip than in the heart of man, than by this; that atheists will ever be talking of that their opinion, as if they fainted in it within themselves, and would be glad to be strengthened by the consent of others. Nay more, you shall have atheists strive to get disciples, as it fareth with other sects. And, which is most of all, you shall have of them that will suffer for atheism, and not recant; whereas if they did truly think that there were no such thing as God, why should they trouble themselves? Epicurus is charged that he did but dissemble for his credit's sake, when he affirmed there were blessed natures, but such as enjoyed themselves without having respect to the government of the world. Wherein they say he did temporize; though in secret he thought there was no God. But certainly he is traduced; for his words are noble and divine: *Non Deos vulgi negare profanum; sed vulgi opiniones Diis applicare profanum*: [There is no profanity in refusing to believe in the Gods of the vulgar: the profanity is in believing of the Gods what the vulgar believe of them.] Plato could have said no more. And although he had the confidence to deny the administration, he had not the power to deny the nature. The Indians of the west have names for their particular gods, though they have no name for God: as if the heathens should have had the names Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, &c. but not the word *Deus*; which shews that even those barbarous people have the notion, though they have not the latitude and extent of it. So that against atheists the very savages take part with the

very subtlest philosophers. The contemplative atheist is rare: a Diagoras, a Bion, a Lucian perhaps, and some others; and yet they seem to be more than they are; for that all that impugn a received religion or superstition are by the adverse part branded with the name of atheists. But the great atheists indeed are hypocrites; which are ever handling holy things, but without feeling; so as they must needs be cauterized in the end. The causes of atheism are; divisions in religion, if they be many; for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides; but many divisions introduce atheism. Another is, scandal of priests; when it is come to that which St. Bernard saith, *Non est jam dicere, ut populus sic sacerdos; quia nec sic populus ut sacerdos*: [One cannot now say, the priest is as the people, for the truth is that the people are not so bad as the priest.] A third is, custom of profane scoffing in holy matters; which doth by little and little deface the reverence of religion. And lastly, learned times, specially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversities do more bow men's minds to religion. They that deny a God destroy man's nobility; for certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and, if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. It destroys likewise magnanimity, and the raising of human nature; for take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man; who to him is instead of a God, or *melior natura*; which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not obtain. Therefore, as atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty. As it is in particular persons, so it is in nations. Never was there such a state for magnanimity as Rome. Of this state hear what Cicero saith: *Quam volumus licet, patres conscripti, nos amemus, tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pænos, nec artibus Græcos,*

evil times; and which have much veneration, but no rest. All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two remembrances; *memento quod es homo*; and *memento quod es Deus*, or *vice Dei*; [Remember that you are a man; and remember that you are a God, or God's lieutenant:] the one bridleth their power, and the other their will.

20

OF COUNSEL

THE greatest trust between man and man is the trust of giving counsel. For in other confidences men commit the parts of life; their lands, their goods, their child, their credit, some particular affair; but to such as they make their counsellors, they commit the whole: by how much the more they are obliged to all faith and integrity. The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness, or derogation to their sufficiency to rely upon counsel. God himself is not without, but hath made it one of the great names of his blessed Son; *The Counsellor*. Salomon hath pronounced that *in counsel is stability*. Things will have their first or second agitation: if they be not tossed upon the arguments of counsel, they will be tossed upon the waves of fortune; and be full of inconstancy, doing and undoing, like the reeling of a drunken man. Salomon's son¹ found the force of counsel, as his father saw the necessity of it. For the beloved kingdom of God was first rent and broken by ill counsel; upon which counsel there are set for our instruction the two marks whereby bad counsel is for ever best discerned; that it was young counsel, for the persons; and violent counsel, for the matter.

The ancient times do set forth in figure both the incorporation and inseparable conjunction of counsel with kings, and the wise and politic use of counsel by kings: the one, in that they say *Jupiter did marry Metis*, which signifieth counsel; whereby they intend that Sovereignty is married to Counsel: the other in that which followeth, which was thus:

They say, after Jupiter was married to Metis, she conceived by him and was with child, but Jupiter suffered her not to stay till she brought forth, but eat her up; whereby he became himself with child, and was delivered of Pallas armed, out of his head. Which monstrous fable containeth a secret of empire; how kings are to make use of their counsel of state. That first they ought to refer matters unto them, which is the first begetting or impregnation; but when they are elaborate, moulded, and shaped in the womb of their counsel, and grow ripe and ready to be brought forth, that then they suffer not their counsel to go through with the resolution and direction, as if it depended on them; but take the matter back into their own hands, and make it appear to the world that the decrees and final directions (which, because they come forth with prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas armed) proceeded from themselves; and not only from their authority, but (the more to add reputation to themselves) from their head and device.

Let us now speak of the inconveniences of counsel, and of the remedies. The inconveniences that have been noted in calling and using counsel, are three. First, the revealing of affairs, whereby they become less secret. Secondly, the weakening of the authority of princes, as if they were less of themselves. Thirdly, the danger of being unfaithfully counselled, and more for the good of them that counsel than of him that is counselled. For which inconveniences, the doctrine of Italy, and practice of France, in some kings' times, hath introduced *cabinet* counsels;² a remedy worse than the disease.

[As to secrecy;] princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors; but may extract and select. Neither is it necessary that he that consulteth what he should do, should declare what he will do. But let princes beware that the unsecreting of their affairs comes not from themselves. And as for *cabinet* counsels, it may be their motto, *plenus rimarum sum*: [they are full of leaks:] one futile person that maketh it his glory to tell, will do more hurt than many that know it their duty to conceal. It is true

there be some affairs which require extreme secrecy, which will hardly go beyond one or two persons besides the king: neither are those counsels unprosperous; for, besides the secrecy, they commonly go on constantly in one spirit of direction, without distraction. But then it must be a prudent king, such as is able to grind with a hand-mill;³ and those inward counsellors had need also be wise men, and especially true and trusty to the king's ends; as it was with King Henry the Seventh of England, who in his greatest business imparted himself to none, except it were to Morton and Fox.⁴

For weakening of authority; the fable⁵ sheweth the remedy. Nay, the majesty of kings is rather exalted than diminished when they are in the chair of counsel; neither was there ever prince bereaved of his dependances by his counsel; except where there hath been either an over-greatness in one counsellor or an over-strict combination in divers; which are things soon found and holpen.

For the last inconvenience, that men will counsel with an eye to themselves; certainly, *non inveniet fidem super terram* [he will not find faith on the earth,] is meant of the nature of times, and not of all particular persons. There be that are in nature faithful, and sincere, and plain, and direct; not crafty and involved; let princes, above all, draw to themselves such natures. Besides, counsellors are not commonly so united, but that one counsellor keepeth sentinel over another; so that if any do counsel out of faction or private ends, it commonly comes to the king's ear. But the best remedy is, if princes know their counsellors, as well as their counsellors know them:

Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos.

[*The chief virtue of a ruler is to know his own counsellors]

And on the other side, counsellors should not be too speculative into their sovereign's person. The true composition of a counsellor is rather to be skilful in their master's business, than in his nature; for then he is like to advise him, and not feed his humour. It is of singular use to princes if they take

the opinions of their counsel both separately and together. For private opinion is more free; but opinion before others is more reverent. In private, men are more bold in their own humours; and in consort, men are more obnoxious to others' humours; therefore it is good to take both; and of the inferior sort rather in private, to preserve freedom; of the greater rather in consort, to preserve respect. It is in vain for princes to take counsel concerning matters, if they take no counsel likewise concerning persons; for all matters are as dead images; and the life of the execution of affairs resteth in the good choice of persons. Neither is it enough to consult concerning persons *secundum genera* [*according to types], as in an idea, or mathematical description, what the kind and character of the person should be; for the greatest errors are committed, and the most judgment is shown, in the choice of individuals. It was truly said, *optimi consilarii mortui*: [the best counsellors are the dead:] books will speak plain when counsellors blanch. Therefore it is good to be conversant in them, specially the books of such as themselves have been actors upon the stage.

The counsels at this day in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated. And they run too swift to the order or act of counsel. It were better that in causes of weight, the matter were propounded one day and not spoken to till the next day; *in nocte consilium*: [night is the season for counsel.] So was it done in the Commission of Union between England and Scotland; which was a grave and orderly assembly. I commend set days for petitions; for both it gives the suitors more certainty for their attendance, and it frees the meetings for matters of estate, that they may *hoc agere* [*stick to business]. In choice of committees for ripening business for the counsel, it is better to choose indifferent^e persons, than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides. I commend also standing commissions; as for trade, for treasure, for war, for suits, for some provinces; for where there be divers particular counsels and but one counsel of estate (as it is in Spain), they are, in effect, no

more than standing commissions; save that they have greater authority. Let such as are to inform counsels out of their particular professions, (as lawyers, seamen, mintmen, and the like,) be first heard before committees; and then, as occasion serves, before the counsel. And let them not come in multitudes, or in a tribunitious manner; for that is to clamour counsels, not to inform them. A long table and a square table, or seats about the walls, seem things of form, but are things of substance; for at a long table a few at the upper end, in effect, sway all the business; but in the other form there is more use of the counsellors' opinions that sit lower. A king, when he presides in counsel, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth; for else counsellors will but take the wind of him,⁷ and instead of giving free counsel, sing him a song of *placebo*.⁸

21

OF DELAYS

FORTUNE is like the market; where many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall. And again, it is sometimes like Sibylla's offer;¹ which at first offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the price. For occasion (as it is in the common verse) *turneth a bald noddle, after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken*; or at least turneth the handle of the bottle first to be received, and after the belly, which is hard to clasp. There is surely no greater wisdom than well to time the beginnings and onsets of things. Dangers are no more light, if they once seem light; and more dangers have deceived men than forced them. Nay, it were better to meet some dangers half way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their approaches; for if a man watch too long, it is odds he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long shadows (as some have been when the moon was low and shone on their enemies' back), and so to shoot off before the time; or to teach

dangers to come on, by over early buckling towards them; is another extreme. The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion (as we said) must ever be well weighed; and generally it is good to commit the beginnings of all great actions to Argos with his hundred eyes, and the ends to Briareus with his hundred hands; first to watch, and then to speed. For the helmet of Pluto, which maketh the politic man go invisible, is secrecy in the counsel and celerity in the execution. For when things are once come to the execution, there is no secrecy comparable to celerity; like the motion of a bullet in the air, which flieth so swift as it outruns the eye.

22

OF CUNNING

WE take Cunning for a sinister or crooked wisdom. And certainly there is a great difference between a cunning man and a wise man; not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability. There be that can pack the cards, and yet cannot play well; so there are some that are good in canvasses and factions, that are otherwise weak men. Again, it is one thing to understand persons, and another thing to understand matters; for many are perfect in men's humours, that are not greatly capable of the real part of business; which is the constitution of one that hath studied men more than books. Such men are fitter for practice than for counsel; and they are good but in their own alley: turn them to new men, and they have lost their aim; so as the old rule to know a fool from a wise man, *Mitte ambos nudos ad ignotos, et videbis*, [Send them both naked to those they know not,] doth scarce hold for them. And because these cunning men are like haberdashers of small wares, it is not amiss to set forth their shop.

It is a point of cunning, to wait upon him with whom you speak, with your eye;¹ as the Jesuits give it in precept: for there be many wise men that have secret hearts and transparent countenances. Yet this would be done with a demure abasing of your eye sometimes, as the Jesuits also do use.

It is a good point of cunning, for a man to shape the answer he would have in his own words and propositions; for it makes the other party stick the less.

It is strange how long some men will lie in wait to speak somewhat they desire to say; and how far about they will fetch; and how many other matters they will beat over, to come near it. It is a thing of great patience, but yet of much use.

A sudden, bold, and unexpected question doth many times surprise a man, and lay him open. Like to him that, having changed his name and walking in Paul's, another suddenly came behind him and called him by his true name, whereat straightways he looked back.

But these small wares and petty points of cunning are infinite; and it were a good deed to make a list of them; for that nothing doth more hurt in a state than that cunning men pass for wise.

But certainly some there are that know the resorts and falls of business, that cannot sink into the main of it; like a house that hath convenient stairs and entries, but never a fair room. Therefore you shall see them find out pretty looses in the conclusion, but are no ways able to examine or debate matters. And yet commonly they take advantage of their inability, and would be thought wits of direction. Some build rather upon the abusing of others, and (as we now say) *putting tricks upon them*, than upon soundness of their own proceedings. But Salomon saith, *Prudens advertit ad gressus suos: stultus divertit ad dolos*: [The wise man taketh heed to his steps: the fool turneth aside to deceits.]

AN ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself, as thou be not false to others; specially to thy king and coun-

try. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, *himself*. It is right earth. For that only stands fast upon his own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens, move upon the centre of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince; because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune. But it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a republic. For whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh them to his own ends; which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or state. Therefore let princes, or states, choose such servants as have not this mark; except they mean their service should be made but the necessary. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's. And yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants; which set a bias upon their bowl,¹ of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune; but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as they will set an house on fire, and it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters, because their study is but to please them and profit themselves; and for either respect they will abandon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are

sui amantes, sine rivali, [lovers of themselves without rival,] are many times unfortunate. And whereas they have all their times sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune; whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

24

OF INNOVATIONS

As the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all Innovations, which are the births of time. Yet notwithstanding, as those that first bring honour into their family are commonly more worthy than most that succeed, so the first precedent (if it be good) is seldom attained by imitation. For Ill, to man's nature as it stands perverted, hath a natural motion, strongest in continuance; but Good, as a forced motion, strongest at first. Surely every medicine is an innovation; and he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator; and if time of course¹ alter things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end? It is true, that what is settled by custom, though it be not good, yet at least it is fit; and those things which have long gone together, are as it were confederate within themselves; whereas new things piece not so well; but though they help by their utility, yet they trouble by their inconformity. Besides, they are like strangers; more admired and less favoured. All this is true, if time stood still; which contrariwise moveth so round, that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times, are but a scorn to the new. It were good therefore that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself; which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived. For otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for; and ever it mends some, and pairs² other; and he that is holpen takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author. It is good also not to

kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart, but a true friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak: so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favourites, or privadoes; as if it were matter of grace, or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum* [*sharers of cares]; for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants; whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner; using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed the Great) to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's over-match. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting. With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for

heir in remainder after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Cæsar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia; this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favour was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited *verbatim* in one of Cicero's Philippics, calleth him *venefica, witch*; as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of mean birth) to that height, as when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, *that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life: there was no third way, he had made him so great.* With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, *hæc pro amicitia nostrâ non occultavi*; [these things, as our friendship required, I have not concealed from you;] and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dear-ness of friendship between them two. The like or more was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also in a letter to the senate, by these words: *I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me.* Now if these princes had been as a Trajan or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half piece, except they mought have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus observeth of his

first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith that towards his latter time *that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding*. Surely Comineus mought have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master Lewis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true; *Cor ne edito; Eat not the heart*. Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more: and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is in truth of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and on the other side weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression: and even so it is of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections.³ For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into

words: finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the king of Persia, *That speech was like cloth of Arras,* opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs*. Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel; (they indeed are best;) but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statua or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, *Dry light is ever the best*. And certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self, as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine, sometime, too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case. But the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them; to the great damage both of their fame

and fortune: for, as St. James saith, they are as men *that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favour*. As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four and twenty letters; or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well, (that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all;) but he runneth two dangers; one, that he shall not be faithfully counselled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe, (though with good meaning,) and mixed partly of mischief and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind; and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship, (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment,) followeth the last fruit; which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients, to say, *that a friend*

is another himself; for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are as it were granted to him and his deputy. For he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate or beg; and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

RICHES are for spending, and spending for honour and good actions. Therefore extraordinary expense must be limited by the worth of the occasion; for voluntary undoing may be as well for a man's country as for the kingdom of heaven. But ordinary expense ought to be limited by a man's estate; and governed with such regard, as it be within his compass; and not subject to deceit and abuse of servants; and ordered to the best shew, that the bills may be less than the estimation abroad. Certainly, if a man will keep but of even hand,¹ his ordinary expenses ought to be but to the half of his receipts; and if he think to wax rich, but to the third part. It is no

there may be found (though rarely) those which can make a small state great, and yet cannot fiddle: as on the other side, there will be found a great many that can fiddle very cunningly, but yet are so far from being able to make a small state great, as their gift lieth the other way; to bring a great and flourishing estate to ruin and decay. And, certainly those degenerate arts and shifts, whereby many counselors and governors gain both favour with their masters and estimation with the vulgar, deserve no better name than fiddling; being things rather pleasing for the time, and graceful to themselves only, than tending to the weal and advancement of the state which they serve. There are also (no doubt) counsellors and governors which may be held sufficient (*negotii pares*), able to manage affairs, and to keep them from precipices and manifest inconveniences; which nevertheless are far from the ability to raise and amplify an estate in power, means, and fortune. But be the workmen what they may be, let us speak of the work; that is, the true Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates, and the means thereof. An argument fit for great and mighty princes to have in their hand; to the end that neither by over-measuring their forces, they leese themselves in vain enterprises; nor on the other side, by undervaluing them, they descend to fearful and pusillanimous counsels.

The greatness of an estate in bulk and territory, doth fall under measure; and the greatness of finances and renew doth fall under computation. The population may appear by musters; and the number and greatness of cities and towns by cards and maps. But yet there is not any thing amongst civil affairs more subject to error, than the right valuation and true judgment concerning the power and forces of an estate. The kingdom of heaven is compared, not to any great kernel or nut, but to a grain of mustard-seed; which is one of the least grains, but hath in it a property and spirit hastily to get up and spread. So are there states great in territory, and yet not apt to enlarge or command; and some that have but a small dimension of stem, and yet apt to be the foundations of great monarchies.

Walled towns, stored arsenals and armories, goodly races of horse, chariots of war, elephants, ordnance, artillery, and the like; all this is but a sheep in a lion's skin, except the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike. Nay, number (itself) in armies importeth not much, where the people is of weak courage; for (as Virgil saith) *It never troubles a wolf how many the sheep be*. The army of the Persians in the plains of Arbela was such a vast sea of people, as it did somewhat astonish the commanders in Alexander's army; who came to him therefore, and wished him to set upon them by night; but he answered, *He would not pilfer the victory*. And the defeat was easy. When Tigranes the Armenian, being encamped upon a hill with four hundred thousand men, discovered the army of the Romans, being not above fourteen thousand, marching towards him, he made himself merry with it, and said, *Yonder men are too many for an ambassage, and too few for a fight*. But, before the sun set, he found them enow to give him the chase with infinite slaughter. Many are the examples of the great odds between number and courage: so that a man may truly make a judgment, that the principal point of greatness in any state is to have a race of military men. Neither is money the sinews of war (as it is trivially said), where the sinews of men's arms, in base and effeminate people, are failing. For Solon said well to Croesus (when in ostentation he shewed him his gold), *Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold*. Therefore let any prince or state think soberly of his forces, except his militia of natives be of good and valiant soldiers. And let princes, on the other side, that have subjects of martial disposition, know their own strength; unless they be otherwise wanting unto themselves. As for mercenary forces (which is the help in this case), all examples show that whatsoever estate or prince doth rest upon them, *he may spread his feathers for a time, but he will mew them soon after*.

The blessing of Judah and Issachar will never meet; *that the same people or nation should be both the lion's whelp*

world, but it was the world that spread upon the Romans; and that was the sure way of greatness. I have marvelled sometimes at Spain, how they clasp and contain so large dominions with so few natural Spaniards; but sure the whole compass of Spain is a very great body of a tree; far above Rome and Sparta at the first. And besides, though they have not had that usage to naturalise liberally, yet they have that which is next to it; that is, to employ almost indifferently all nations in their militia of ordinary soldiers; yea and sometimes in their highest commands. Nay it seemeth at this instant they are sensible of this want of natives; as by the Pragmatical Sanction,⁴ now published, appeareth.

It is certain, that sedentary and within-door arts, and delicate manufactures (that require rather the finger than the arm), have in their nature a contrariety to a military disposition. And generally, all warlike people are a little idle, and love danger better than travail. Neither must they be too much broken of it, if they shall be preserved in vigour. Therefore it was great advantage in the ancient states of Sparta, Athens, Rome, and others, that they had the use of slaves, which commonly did rid those manufactures. But that is abolished, in greatest part, by the Christian law. That which cometh nearest to it, is to leave those arts chiefly to strangers (which for that purpose are the more easily to be received), and to contain the principal bulk of the vulgar natives within those three kinds,—tillers of the ground; free servants; and handicraftsmen of strong and manly arts, as smiths, masons, carpenters, &c: not reckoning professed soldiers.

But above all, for empire and greatness, it importeth most, that a nation do profess arms as their principal honour, study, and occupation. For the things which we formerly have spoken of are but habilitations toward arms; and what is habilitation without intention and act? Romulus, after his death (as they report or feign), sent a present to the Romans, that above all they should intend arms; and then they should prove the greatest empire of the world. The fabric of the state of Sparta was wholly (though not

anciently made on the behalf of a kind of party, or tacit conformity of estate, I do not see how they may be well justified: as when the Romans made a war for the liberty of Græcia; or when the Lacedæmonians and Athenians made wars to set up or pull down democracies and oligarchies; or when wars were made by foreigners, under the pretence of justice or protection, to deliver the subjects of others from tyranny and oppression; and the like. Let it suffice, that no estate expect to be great, that is not awake upon any just occasion of arming.

No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic; and certainly to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise. A civil war indeed is like the heat of a fever; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health; for in a slothful peace, both courages will effeminate and manners corrupt. But howsoever it be for happiness, without all question, for greatness it maketh, to be still for the most part in arms; and the strength of a veteran army⁶ (though it be a chargeable business) always on foot, is that which commonly giveth the law, or at least the reputation, amongst all neighbour states; as may well be seen in Spain, which hath had, in one part or other, a veteran army almost continually, now by the space of six score years.

To be master of the sea is an abridgment⁷ of a monarchy. Cicero, writing to Atticus of Pompey his preparation against Cæsar, saith, *Consilium Pompeii plane Themistocleum est; putat enim, qui mari potitur, eum rerum potiri*; [Pompey is going upon the policy of Themistocles; thinking that he who commands the sea commands all.] And, without doubt, Pompey had tired out Cæsar, if upon vain confidence he had not left that way. We see the great effects of battles by sea. The battle of Actium decided the empire of the world. The battle of Lepanto arrested the greatness of the Turk. There be many examples where sea-fights have been final to the war; but this is when princes or states have set up their rest⁸ upon the battles. But thus much is certain, that he that commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much

and as little of the war as he will. Whereas those that be strongest by land are many times nevertheless in great straits. Surely, at this day, with us of Europe, the vantage of strength at sea (which is one of the principal dowries of this kingdom of Great Britain) is great; both because most of the kingdoms of Europe are not merely inland, but girt with the sea most part of their compass; and because the wealth of both Indies seems in great part but an accessory to the command of the seas.

The wars of latter ages seem to be made in the dark, in respect of the glory and honour which reflected upon men from the wars in ancient time. There be now, for martial encouragement, some degrees and orders of chivalry; which nevertheless are conferred promiscuously upon soldiers and no soldiers; and some remembrance perhaps upon the scutcheon; and some hospitals for maimed soldiers; and such like things. But in ancient times, the trophies erected upon the place of the victory; the funeral laudatives and monuments for those that died in the wars; the crowns and garlands personal; the style of Emperor, which the great kings of the world after borrowed; the triumphs of the generals upon their return; the great donatives and largesses upon the disbanding of the armies; were things able to inflame all men's courages. But above all, that of the Triumph, amongst the Romans, was not pageants or gaudery, but one of the wisest and noblest institutions that ever was. For it contained three things; honour to the general; riches to the treasury out of the spoils; and donatives to the army. But that honour perhaps were not fit for monarchies; except it be in the person of the monarch himself, or his sons; as it came to pass in the times of the Roman emperors, who did impropriate the actual triumphs to themselves and their sons, for such wars as they did achieve in person; and left only, for wars achieved by subjects, some triumphal garments and ensigns to the general.

To conclude: no man can *by care taking* (as the Scripture saith) *add a cubit to his stature*, in this little model of a man's body; but in the great frame of kingdoms and com-

monwealths, it is in the power of princes or estates to add amplitude and greatness to their kingdoms; for by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs, as we have now touched, they may sow greatness to their posterity and succession. But these things are commonly not observed, but left to take their chance.

30

OF REGIMENT OF HEALTH

THERE is a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic: a man's own observation, what he finds good of, and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health. But it is a safer conclusion to say, *This agreeth not well with me, therefore I will not continue it*; than this, *I find no offence of this, therefore I may use it*. For strength of nature in youth passeth over many excesses, which are owing a man till his age. Discern of the coming on of years, and think not to do the same things still; for age will not be defied. Beware of sudden change in any great point of diet, and if necessity inforce it, fit the rest to it. For it is a secret both in nature and state, that it is safer to change many things than one. Examine thy customs of diet, sleep, exercise, apparel, and the like; and try, in any thing thou shalt judge hurtful, to discontinue it by little and little but so, as if thou dost find any inconvenience by the change, thou come back to it again: for it is hard to distinguish that which is generally held good and wholesome, from that which is good particularly, and fit for thine own body. To be free-minded and cheerfully disposed at hours of meat and of sleep and of exercise, is one of the best precepts of long lasting. As for the passions and studies of the mind; avoid envy; anxious fears; anger fretting inwards; subtle and knotty inquisitions; joys and exhilarations in excess; sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes; mirth rather than joy; variety of delights, rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contempla-

tions of nature. If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you shall need it. If you make it too familiar, it will work no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I commend rather some diet for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic, except it be grown into a custom. For those diets alter the body more, and trouble it less. Despise no new accident in your body, but ask opinion of it. In sickness, respect health principally; and in health, action. For those that put their bodies to endure in health, may in most sicknesses, which are not very sharp, be cured only with diet and tendering. Celsus could never have spoken it as a physician, had he not been a wise man withal, when he giveth it for one of the great precepts of health and lasting, that a man do vary and interchange contraries, but with an inclination to the more benign extreme: use fasting and full eating, but rather full eating; watching and sleep, but rather sleep; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise; and the like. So shall nature be cherished, and yet taught masteries. Physicians are some of them so pleasing and conformable to the humour of the patient, as they press not the true cure of the disease; and some other are so regular in proceeding according to art for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient. Take one of a middle temper; or if it may not be found in one man, combine two of either sort; and forget not to call as well the best acquainted with your body, as the best reputed of for his faculty.

31

OF SUSPICION

SUSPICIONS amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds, they ever fly by twilight. Certainly they are to be repressed, or at the least well guarded: for they cloud the mind; they leese friends; and they check with business, whereby business cannot go on currently and constantly. They dispose kings to tyranny, husbands to jealousy, wise men to irresolution and melancholy. They are defects, not in the heart, but

he speaks so much of himself: and there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with good grace; and that is in commending virtue in another; especially if it be such a virtue whereunto himself pretendeth. Speech of touch¹ towards others should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen, of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer in his house; the other would ask of those that had been at the other's table, *Tell truly, was there never a flout or dry blow² given?* To which the guest would answer, *Such and such a thing passed.* The lord would say, *I thought he would mar a good dinner.* Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words or in good order. A good continued speech, without a good speech of interlocution,³ shews slowness; and a good reply or second speech, without a good settled speech, sheweth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course, are yet nimblest in the turn; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances ere one come to the matter, is wearisome; to use none at all, is blunt.

33

OF PLANTATIONS

PLANTATIONS are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works. When the world was young it begat more children; but now it is old it begets fewer: for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms. I like a plantation in a pure soil; that is, where people are not displanted to the end to plant in others. For else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation. Planting of countries is like planting of woods; for you must make account to leese almost twenty years profit, and expect your recompense in the end. For the principal thing that hath been the destruction of most plantations, hath been the base and hasty draw-

you plant where savages are, do not only entertain them with trifles and gingles; but use them justly and graciously, with sufficient guard nevertheless; and do not win their favour by helping them to invade their enemies, but for their defence it is not amiss; and send oft of them over to the country that plants, that they may see a better condition than their own, and commend it when they return. When the plantation grows to strength, then it is time to plant with women as well as with men; that the plantation may spread into generations, and not be ever pieced from without. It is the sinfulness thing in the world to forsake or destitute a plantation once in forwardness; for besides the dishonour, it is the guiltiness of blood of many commiserable persons.

34

OF RICHES

I CANNOT call Riches better than the baggage of virtue. The Roman word is better, *impedimenta*. For as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; yea and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory. Of great riches there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit. So saith Salomon, *Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?* The personal fruition in any man cannot reach to feel great riches: there is a custody of them; or a power of dole and donative of them; or a fame of them; but no solid use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rarities? and what works of ostentation are undertaken, because there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then you will say, they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or troubles. As Salomon saith, *Riches are as a strong hold, in the imagination of the rich man*. But this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact. For certainly great riches have sold more men than they have bought out. Seek not

dreams. The second is, that probable conjectures, or obscure traditions, many times turn themselves into prophecies; while the nature of man, which coveteth divination, thinks it no peril to foretell that which indeed they do but collect.³ As that of Seneca's verse. For so much was then subject to demonstration, that the globe of the earth had great parts beyond the Atlantic, which might be probably conceived not to be all sea: and adding thereto the tradition in Plato's Timæus, and his Atlanticus, it might encourage one to turn it to a prediction. The third and last (which is the great one) is, that almost all of them, being infinite in number, have been impostures, and by idle and crafty brains merely contrived and feigned after the event past.

36

OF AMBITION

AMBITION is like choler;¹ which is an humour that maketh men active, earnest, full of alacrity, and stirring, if it be not stopped. But if it be stopped, and cannot have his way, it becometh adust,² and thereby malign and venomous. So ambitious men, if they find the way open for their rising, and still get forward, they are rather busy than dangerous; but if they be checked in their desires, they become secretly discontent, and look upon men and matters with an evil eye, and are best pleased when things go backward; which is the worst property in a servant of a prince or state. Therefore it is good for princes, if they use ambitious men, to handle it so as they be still progressive and not retrograde; which because it cannot be without inconvenience, it is good not to use such natures at all. For if they rise not with their service, they will take order to make their service fall with them. But since we have said it were good not to use men of ambitious natures, except it be upon necessity, it is fit we speak in what cases they are of necessity. Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious; for the use of their service dispenseth with the rest; and to take a soldier without ambition is to pull off his

spurs. There is also great use of ambitious men in being screens to princes in matters of danger and envy; for no man will take that part, except he be like a seeled³ dove, that mounts and mounts because he cannot see about him. There is use also of ambitious men in pulling down the greatness of any subject that overtops; as Tiberius used Macro in the pulling down of Sejanus. Since therefore they must be used in such cases, there resteth to speak how they are to be bridled, that they may be less dangerous. There is less danger of them if they be of mean birth, than if they be noble; and if they be rather harsh of nature, than gracious and popular: and if they be rather new raised, than grown cunning and fortified in their greatness. It is counted by some a weakness in princes to have favourites; but it is of all others the best remedy against ambitious great-ones. For when the way of pleasuring and displeasuring lieth by the favourite, it is impossible any other should be over-great. Another means to curb them, is to balance them by others as proud as they. But then there must be some middle counsellors, to keep things steady; for without that ballast the ship will roll too much. At the least, a prince may animate and inure some meaner persons, to be as it were scourges to ambitious men. As for the having of them obnoxious⁴ to ruin; if they be of fearful natures, it may do well; but if they be stout and daring, it may precipitate their designs, and prove dangerous. As for the pulling of them down, if the affairs require it, and that it may not be done with safety suddenly, the only way is, the interchange continually of favours and disgraces; whereby they may not know what to expect, and be as it were in a wood. Of ambitions, it is less harmful, the ambition to prevail in great things, than that other to appear in every thing; for that breeds confusion, and mars business. But yet it is less danger to have an ambitious man stirring in business, than great in dependances. He that seeketh to be eminent amongst able men hath a great task; but that is ever good for the public. But he that plots to be the only figure amongst ciphers is the decay of a whole age. Honour hath three things in it; the vantage ground to do good; the

discern. Let the songs be loud and cheerful, and not chirpings or pulings. Let the music likewise be sharp and loud, and well placed. The colours that shew best by candle-light, are white, carnation, and a kind of sea-water-green; and æes, or spangs,⁵ as they are of no great cost, so they are of most glory. As for rich embroidery, it is lost and not discerned. Let the suits of the masquers be graceful, and such as become the person when the vizards are off; not after examples of known attires; Turks, soldiers, mariners, and the like. Let anti-masques⁶ not be long; they have been commonly of fools, satyrs, baboons, wild-men, antics, beasts, sprites, witches, Ethiops, pigmies, turquets,⁷ nymphs, rustics, Cupids, statua's moving, and the like. As for angels, it is not comical enough to put them in anti-masques; and any thing that is hideous, as devils, giants, is on the other side as unfit. But chiefly, let the music of them be recreative, and with some strange changes. Some sweet odours suddenly coming forth, without any drops falling, are, in such a company as there is steam and heat, things of great pleasure and refreshment. Double masques, one of men, another of ladies, addeth state and variety. But all is nothing except the room be kept clear and neat.

For justs, and tourneys, and barriers;⁸ the glories of them are chiefly in the chariots, wherein the challengers make their entry; especially if they be drawn with strange beasts: as lions, bears, camels, and the like; or in the devices of their entrance; or in the bravery of their liveries; or in the goodly furniture of their horses and armour. But enough of these toys.

NATURE is often hidden; sometimes overcome; seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse maketh nature less importune; but custom only doth alter and subdue nature. He that seeketh victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great nor

or experiment, for there custom leaveth him. They are happy men whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, *multum incola fuit anima mea*, [my soul hath been a stranger and a sojourner;] when they converse in those things they do not affect.¹ In studies, whatsoever a man commandeth upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it of themselves; so as the spaces of other business or studies will suffice. A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

39

OF CUSTOM AND EDUCATION

MEN's thoughts are much according to their inclination; their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions; but their deeds are after as they have been accustomed. And therefore as Machiavel well noteth (though in an evil-favoured instance,) there is no trusting to the force of nature nor to the bravery of words, except it be corroborate by custom. His instance is, that for the achieving of a desperate conspiracy, a man should not rest upon the fierceness of any man's nature, or his resolute undertakings; but take such an one as hath had his hands formerly in blood. But Machiavel knew not of a friar Clement,¹ nor a Ravillac, nor a Jaureguy, nor a Baltazar Gerard; yet his rule holdeth still, that nature, nor the engagement of words, are not so forcible as custom. Only superstition is now so well advanced, that men of the first blood² are as firm as butchers by occupation; and votary resolution³ is made equipollent to custom even in matter of blood. In other things the predominancy of custom is every where visible; insomuch as a man would wonder to hear men profess, protest, engage, give great words, and then do just as they have done before; as if they were dead images, and engines moved only by the wheels of custom. We see also the reign or tyranny of custom, what it is. The Indians (I mean the

Feeling in book

OF FORTUNE

It cannot be denied, but outward accidents conduce much to fortune; favour, opportunity, death of others, occasion fitting virtue. But chiefly, the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands. *Faber quisque fortunæ suæ* [*every man is the architect of his own fortune], saith the poet. And the most frequent of external causes is, that the folly of one man is the fortune of another. For no man prospers so suddenly as by others' errors. *Serpens nisi serpentem comederit non fit draco*. [A serpent must have eaten another serpent, before he can become a dragon.] Overt and apparent virtues bring forth praise; but there be secret and hidden virtues that bring forth fortune; certain deliveries of a man's self, which have no name. The Spanish name, *desembol-tura*,¹ partly expresseth them; when there be not stonds² nor restiveness in a man's nature; but that the wheels of his mind keep way with the wheels of his fortune. For so Livy (after he had described Cato Major in these words, *In illo viro tantum robur corporis et animi fuit, ut quocunque loco natus esset, fortunam sibi facturus videretur*) [Such was his strength of body and mind, that wherever he had been born he could have made himself a fortune;] falleth upon that, that he had *versatile ingenium*: [a wit that could turn well.] Therefore if a man look sharply and attentively, he shall see Fortune: for though she be blind, yet she is not invisible. The way of fortune is like the milken way in the sky; which is a meeting or knot of a number of small stars; not seen asunder, but giving light together. So are there a number of little and scarce discerned virtues, or rather faculties and customs, that make men fortunate. The Italians note some of them, such as a man would little think. When they speak of one that cannot do amiss, they will throw in into his other conditions, that he hath *Poco di matto* [*a little of the fool]. And certainly there be not two more fortunate properties, than to have a little of the fool, and not too much of the

honest. Therefore extreme lovers of their country or masters were never fortunate, neither can they be. For when a man placeth his thoughts without himself, he goeth not his own way. An hasty fortune maketh an enterpriser and remover; (the French hath it better, *enterprenant*, or *remuant*;) but the exercised fortune maketh the able man. Fortune is to be honoured and respected, and it be but for her daughters, Confidence and Reputation. For those two felicity breedeth, the first within a man's self, the latter in others towards him. All wise men, to decline the envy of their own virtues, use to ascribe them to Providence and Fortune; for so they may the better assume them: and, besides, it is greatness in a man to be the care of the higher powers. So Cæsar said to the pilot in the tempest, *Cæsarem portas, et fortunam ejus* [You carry Cæsar and his fortune.] So Sylla chose the name of *Felix* [*Fortunate], and not of *Magnus* [*Great]. And it hath been noted, that those who ascribe openly too much to their own wisdom and policy, end infortunate. It is written that Timotheus the Athenian, after he had, in the account he gave to the state of his government, often interlaced this speech, *and in this Fortune had no part*, never prospered in any thing he undertook afterwards. Certainly there be, whose fortunes are like Homer's verses, that have a slide and easiness more than the verses of other poets; as Plutarch saith of Timoleon's fortune, in respect of^s that of Agesilaus or Epaminondas. And that this should be, no doubt it is much in a man's self.

41

OF USURY¹

MANY have made witty invectives against Usury. They say that it is a pity the devil should have God's part, which is the tithe.² That the usurer is the greatest sabbath-breaker, because his plough goeth every Sunday. That the usurer is the drone that Virgil speaketh of;

Ignavum fucos pecus a præsepibus arcent.

[*They drive the lazy swarm of drones from the hive.]

been as to good spials and good whisperers, than good magistrates and officers. And much like is the reason of deformed persons. Still the ground is, they will, if they be of spirit, seek to free themselves from scorn; which must be either by virtue or malice; and therefore let it not be marvelled if sometimes they prove excellent persons; as was Agesilaus,² Zanger the son of Solymán, Æsop, Gasca President of Peru; and Socrates may go likewise amongst them; with others.

45

OF BUILDING

HOUSES are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses, for beauty only, to the enchanted palaces of the poets; who build them with small cost. He that builds a fair house upon an ill seat,¹ committeth himself to prison. Neither do I reckon it an ill seat only where the air is unwholesome; but likewise where the air is unequal; as you shall see many fine seats set upon a knap² of ground, environed with higher hills round about it; whereby the heat of the sun is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs; so as you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversity of heat and cold as if you dwelt in several places. Neither is it ill air only that maketh an ill seat, but ill ways, ill markets: and, if you will consult with Momus,³ ill neighbours. I speak not of many more; want of water; want of wood, shade, and shelter; want of fruitfulness, and mixture of grounds of several natures; want of prospect; want of level grounds; want of places at some near distance for sports of hunting, hawking, and races; too near the sea, too remote; [not] having the commodity of navigable rivers, or the discommodity of their overflowing; too far off from great cities, which may hinder business, or too near them, which lurcheth⁴ all provisions, and maketh every thing dear; where a man hath a great living laid together, and where he is scantied: all which, as it is impossible perhaps to find to-

gether, so it is good to know them, and think of them, that a man may take as many as he can; and if he have several dwellings, that he sort them so, that what he wanteth in the one he may find in the other. Lucullus answered Pompey well; who, when he saw his stately galleries, and rooms so large and lightsome, in one of his houses, said, *Surely an excellent place for summer, but how do you in winter?* Lucullus answered, *Why, do you not think me as wise as some fowl are, that ever change their abode towards the winter?*

To pass from the seat to the house itself; we will do as Cicero doth in the orator's art; who writes books *De Oratore*, and a book he entitles *Orator*; whereof the former delivers the precepts of the art, and the latter the perfection. We will therefore describe a princely palace, making a brief model thereof. For it is strange to see, now in Europe, such huge buildings as the Vatican and Escorial and some others be, and yet scarce a very fair room in them.

First therefore, I say you cannot have a perfect palace, except you have two several sides; a side for the banquet, as is spoken of in the book of Hester, and a side for the household; the one for feasts and triumphs, and the other for dwelling. I understand both these sides to be not only returns,⁵ but parts of the front; and to be uniform without, though severally partitioned within; and to be on both sides of a great and stately tower in the midst of the front, that, as it were, joineth them together on either hand. I would have on the side of the banquet, in front, one only goodly room above stairs, of some forty foot high; and under it a room for a dressing or preparing place at times of triumphs. On the other side, which is the household side, I wish it divided at the first into a hall and a chapel, (with a partition between;) both of good state and bigness; and those not to go all the length, but to have at the further end a winter and a summer parlour, both fair. And under these rooms, a fair and large cellar sunk under ground; and likewise some privy kitchens, with butteries and pantries, and the like. As for the tower, I would have it two stories, of eighteen foot high a piece, above the two wings; and a goodly leads upon the

been as to good spials and good whisperers, than good magistrates and officers. And much like is the reason of deformed persons. Still the ground is, they will, if they be of spirit, seek to free themselves from scorn; which must be either by virtue or malice; and therefore let it not be marvelled if sometimes they prove excellent persons; as was Agesilaus,² Zanger the son of Solymán, Æsop, Gasca President of Peru; and Socrates may go likewise amongst them; with others.

45

OF BUILDING

HOUSES are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses, for beauty only, to the enchanted palaces of the poets; who build them with small cost. He that builds a fair house upon an ill seat,¹ committeth himself to prison. Neither do I reckon it an ill seat only where the air is unwholesome; but likewise where the air is unequal; as you shall see many fine seats set upon a knap² of ground, environed with higher hills round about it; whereby the heat of the sun is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs; so as you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversity of heat and cold as if you dwelt in several places. Neither is it ill air only that maketh an ill seat, but ill ways, ill markets: and, if you will consult with Momus,³ ill neighbours. I speak not of many more; want of water; want of wood, shade, and shelter; want of fruitfulness, and mixture of grounds of several natures; want of prospect; want of level grounds; want of places at some near distance for sports of hunting, hawking, and races; too near the sea, too remote; [not] having the commodity of navigable rivers, or the discommodity of their overflowing; too far off from great cities, which may hinder business, or too near them, which lurcheth⁴ all provisions, and maketh every thing dear; where a man hath a great living laid together, and where he is scanted: all which, as it is impossible perhaps to find to-

gether, so it is good to know them, and think of them, that a man may take as many as he can; and if he have several dwellings, that he sort them so, that what he wanteth in the one he may find in the other. Lucullus answered Pompey well; who, when he saw his stately galleries, and rooms so large and lightsome, in one of his houses, said, *Surely an excellent place for summer, but how do you in winter?* Lucullus answered, *Why, do you not think me as wise as some fowl are, that ever change their abode towards the winter?*

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OF GARDENS

GOD ALMIGHTY first planted a Garden. And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handyworks: and a man shall ever see that when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it, in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year; in which severally things of beauty may be then in season. For December, and January, and the latter part of November, you must take such things as are green all winter: holly; ivy; bays; juniper; cypress-trees; yew; pine-apple-trees;¹ fir-trees; rosemary; lavender; periwinkle, the white, the purple, and the blue; germander; flags;² orange-trees; lemon-trees; and myrtles, if they be stoved;³ and sweet marjoram, warm set.⁴ There followeth, for the latter part of January and February, the mezereon-tree,⁵ which then blossoms; crocus vernus, both the yellow and the grey; primroses; anemones; the early tulippa; hyacinthus orientalis; chamaïris;⁶ fritellaria. For March, there come violets, specially the single blue, which are the earliest; the yellow daffodil; the daisy; the almond-tree in blossom; the peach-tree in blossom; the cornelian-tree in blossom; sweet-briar. In April follow, the double white violet; the wall-flower; the stock-gilliflower; the cowslip; flower-de-lices, and lilies of all natures; rosemary-flowers; the tulippa; the double piony; the pale daffodil; the French honeysuckle; the cherry-tree in blossom; the dammasin and plum-trees in blossom; the white thorn in leaf; the lilac-tree. In May and June come pinks of all sorts, specially the blush-pink; roses of all kinds, except the musk, which comes later; honey-suckles; strawberries; bugloss; columbine; the French marigold; flos Africanus; cherry-tree in fruit; ribes;⁷ figs in fruit; rasp;⁸ vine-flowers; lavender in flowers; the sweet satyrian, with

shall still need him in some other thing; or else that he be counted the honester man. All practice¹ is to discover, or to work. Men discover themselves in trust, in passion, at unawares, and of necessity, when they would have somewhat done and cannot find an apt pretext. If you would work any man, you must either know his nature and fashions, and so lead him; or his ends, and so persuade him; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so awe him; or those that have interest in him, and so govern him. In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends, to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow and reap at once; but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

48

OF FOLLOWERS AND FRIENDS

COSTLY followers are not to be liked; lest while a man maketh his train longer, he make his wings shorter. I reckon to be costly, not them alone which charge the purse, but which are wearisome and importune in suits. Ordinary followers ought to challenge no higher conditions than countenance, recommendation, and protection from wrongs. Factious followers are worse to be liked, which follow not upon affection to him with whom they range themselves, but upon discontentment conceived against some other; whereupon commonly ensueth that ill intelligence¹ that we many times see between great personages. Likewise glorious² followers, who make themselves as trumpets of the commendation of those they follow, are full of inconvenience; for they taint business through want of secrecy; and they export honour from a man, and make him a return in envy. There is a kind of followers likewise which are dangerous, being indeed espials; which inquire the secrets of the house, and bear tales of them to others. Yet such men, many times, are in great favour; for they are officious, and commonly exchange

ceremonies at all, is to teach others not to use them again; and so diminisheth respect to himself; especially they be not to be omitted to strangers and formal natures; but the dwelling upon them, and exalting them above the moon, is not only tedious, but doth diminish the faith and credit of him that speaks. And certainly there is a kind of conveying of effectual and imprinting passages amongst compliments, which is of singular use, if a man can hit upon it. Amongst a man's peers a man shall be sure of familiarity; and therefore it is good a little to keep state. Amongst a man's inferiors one shall be sure of reverence; and therefore it is good a little to be familiar. He that is too much in anything, so that he giveth another occasion of satiety, maketh himself cheap. To apply one's self to others is good; so it be with demonstration that a man doth it upon regard, and not upon facility. It is a good precept generally in seconding another, yet to add somewhat of one's own: as if you will grant his opinion, let it be with some distinction; if you will follow his motion, let it be with condition; if you allow his counsel, let it be with alleging further reason. Men had need beware how they be too perfect in compliments; for be they never so sufficient otherwise, their enviers will be sure to give them that attribute, to the disadvantage of their greater virtues. It is loss also in business to be too full of respects, or to be curious in observing times and opportunities. Salomon saith, *He that considereth the wind shall not sow, and he that looketh to the clouds shall not reap.* A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. Men's behaviour should be like their apparel, not too strait or point device,³ but free for exercise or motion.

53

OF PRAISE

PRAISE is the reflexion of virtue. But it is as the glass or body which giveth the reflexion. If it be from the common people, it is commonly false and naught; and rather followeth vain persons than virtuous. For the common people

understand not many excellent virtues. The lowest virtues draw praise from them; the middle virtues work in their astonishment or admiration; but of the highest virtues they have no sense of perceiving at all. But shews, and *species virtutibus similes* [*appearances resembling virtues], serve best with them. Certainly fame is like a river, that beareth up things light and swoln, and drowns things weighty and solid. But if persons of quality and judgment concur, then it is (as the Scripture saith), *Nomen bonum instar unguenti fragrantis*; [a good name like unto a sweet ointment.] It filleth all round about, and will not easily away. For the odours of ointments are more durable than those of flowers. There be so many false points of praise, that a man may justly hold it a suspect. Some praises proceed merely of flattery; and if he be an ordinary flatterer, he will have certain common attributes, which may serve every man; if he be a cunning flatterer, he will follow the arch-flatterer, which is a man's self; and wherein a man thinketh best of himself, therein the flatterer will uphold him most: but if he be an impudent flatterer, look wherein a man is conscious to himself that he is most defective, and is most out of countenance in himself, that will the flatterer entitle him to perforce, *spretâ conscientiâ* [*in spite of his conscience]. Some praises come of good wishes and respects, which is a form due in civility to kings and great persons, *laudando præcipere* [*to teach by praising]; when by telling men what they are, they represent to them what they should be. Some men are praised maliciously to their hurt, thereby to stir envy and jealousy towards them; *perisimum genus inimicorum laudantium*; [the worst kind of enemies are they that praise;] insomuch as it was a proverb amongst the Grecians, that *he that was praised to his hurt, should have a push rise upon his nose*; as we say, *that a blister will rise upon one's tongue that tells a lie*. Certainly moderate praise, used with opportunity, and not vulgar, is that which doth the good. Salomon saith, *He that praiseth his friend aloud, rising early, it shall be to him no better than a curse*. Too much magnifying of man or matter doth

irritate contradiction, and procure envy and scorn. To praise a man's self cannot be decent, except it be in rare cases; but to praise a man's office or profession, he may do it with good grace, and with a kind of magnanimity. The Cardinals of Rome, which are theologues, and friars, and schoolmen, have a phrase of notable contempt and scorn towards civil business: for they call all temporal business of wars, embassages, judicature, and other employments, *shirerie*, which is *under-sheriffries*; as if they were but matters for under-sheriffs and catch-poles:¹ though many times those under-sheriffries do more good than their high speculations. St. Paul, when he boasts of himself, he doth oft interlace, *I speak like a fool*; but speaking of his calling, he saith, *magnificabo apostolatium meum*: [I will magnify my mission.]

54

OF VAIN-GLORY

It was prettily devised of Æsop; *the fly sat upon the axle-tree of the chariot wheel, and said, What a dust do I raise!* So are there some vain persons, that whatsoever goeth alone or moveth upon greater means, if they have never so little hand in it, they think it is they that carry it. They that are glorious¹ must needs be factious; for all bravery² stands upon comparisons. They must needs be violent, to make good their own vaunts. Neither can they be secret, and therefore not effectual; but according to the French proverb, *Beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit*; *Much bruit, little fruit*. Yet certainly there is use of this quality in civil affairs. Where there is an opinion and fame to be created either of virtue or greatness, these men are good trumpeters. Again, as Titus Livius noteth in the case of Antiochus and the Ætolians, *There are sometimes great effects of cross lies*,³ as if a man that negotiates between two princes, to draw them to join in a war against the third, doth extol the forces of either of them above measure, the one to the other: and sometimes he that deals between man and man, raiseth his

less. Glorious men are the scorn of wise men, the admiration of fools, the idols of parasites, and the slaves of their own vaunts.

55

OF HONOUR AND REPUTATION

THE winning of Honour is but the revealing of a man's virtue and worth without disadvantage. For some in their actions do woo and affect honour and reputation; which sort of men are commonly much talked of, but inwardly little admired. And some, contrariwise, darken their virtue in the shew of it; so as they be undervalued in opinion. If a man perform that which hath not been attempted before; or attempted and given over; or hath been achieved, but not with so good circumstance; he shall purchase more honour, than by effecting a matter of greater difficulty or virtue, wherein he is but a follower. If a man so temper his actions, as in some one of them he doth content every faction or combination of people, the music will be the fuller. A man is an ill husband of his honour, that entereth into any action, the failing wherein may disgrace him more than the carrying of it through can honour him. Honour that is gained and broken upon another¹ hath the quickest reflexion, like diamonds cut with fascets. And therefore let a man contend to excel any competitors of his in honour, in outshooting them, if he can, in their own bow. Discreet followers and servants help much to reputation. *Omnis fama a domesticis emanat* [*All fame comes from servants]. Envy, which is the canker of honour, is best extinguished by declaring a man's self in his ends rather to seek merit than fame; and by attributing a man's successes rather to divine Providence and felicity, than to his own virtue or policy. The true marshalling of the degrees of sovereign honour are these. In the first place are *conditores imperiorum*, founders of states and commonwealths; such as were Romulus, Cyrus, Cæsar, Ottoman, Ismael. In the second place are *legislatores*, lawgivers; which are also called sec-

ond founders, or *perpetui principes*, because they govern by their ordinances after they are gone; such were Lycurgus, Solon, Justinian, Eadgar, Alphonsus of Castile, the wise, that made the *Siete partidas*.² In the third place are *liberatores*, or *salvatores*, such as compound the long miseries of civil wars, or deliver their countries from servitude of strangers or tyrants; as Augustus Cæsar, Vespasianus, Aurelianus, Theodoricus, King Henry the Seventh of England, King Henry the Fourth of France. In the fourth place are *propagatores* or *propugnatores imperii* [*extenders or defenders of empire]; such as in honourable wars enlarge their territories, or make noble defence against invaders. And in the last place are *patres patriæ*, [fathers of their country;] which reign justly, and make the times good wherein they live. Both which last kinds need no examples, they are in such number. Degrees of honour in subjects are, first *participes curarum* [*sharers of cares], those upon whom princes do discharge the greatest weight of their affairs; their *right hands*, as we call them. The next are *duces belli*, great leaders; such as are princes' lieutenants, and do them notable services in the wars. The third are *gratiosi*, favourites; such as exceed not this scantling, to be solace to the sovereign, and harmless to the people. And the fourth, *negotii pares* [*those equal to the business]; such as have great places under princes, and execute their places with sufficiency. There is an honour, likewise, which may be ranked amongst the greatest, which happeneth rarely; that is, of such as sacrifice themselves to death or danger for the good of their country; as was M. Regulus, and the two Decii.³

56

OF JUDICATURE

JUDGES ought to remember that their office is *jus dicere*, and not *jus dare*; to interpret law, and not to make law, or give law. Else will it be like the authority claimed by the church of Rome, which under pretext of exposition of Scripture

which obtaineth not; for that upholds in the client the reputation of his counsel, and beats down in him the conceit of his cause. There is likewise due to the public a civil reprehension of advocates, where there appeareth cunning counsel, gross neglect, slight information, indiscreet pressing, or an over-bold defence. And let not the counsel at the bar chop¹ with the judge, nor wind himself into the handling of the cause anew after the judge hath declared his sentence; but on the other side, let not the judge meet the cause half way, nor give occasion for the party to say his counsel or proofs were not heard.

Thirdly, for that that concerns clerks and ministers. The place of justice is an hallowed place; and therefore not only the bench, but the foot-pace and precincts and purprise² thereof, ought to be preserved without scandal and corruption. For certainly *Grapes* (as the Scripture saith) *will not be gathered of thorns or thistles*; neither can justice yield her fruit with sweetness amongst the briars and brambles of catching and polling³ clerks and ministers. The attendance of courts is subject to four bad instruments. First, certain persons that are sowers of suits; which make the court swell, and the country pine. The second sort is of those that engage courts in quarrels of jurisdiction, and are not truly *amici curiæ*, [^{*}friends of the court] but *parasiti curiæ* [^{*}parasites of the court], in puffing a court up beyond her bounds, for their own scraps and advantage. The third sort is of those that may be accounted the left hands of courts; persons that are full of nimble and sinister tricks and shifts, whereby they pervert the plain and direct courses of courts, and bring justice into oblique lines and labyrinths. And the fourth is the poller and exacter of fees; which justifies the common resemblance of the courts of justice to the bush whereunto while the sheep flies for defence in weather, he is sure to lose part of his fleece. On the other side, an ancient clerk, skilful in precedents, wary in proceeding, and understanding in the business of the court, is an excellent finger of a court; and doth many times point the way to the judge himself.

Fourthly, for that which may concern the sovereign and estate. Judges ought above all to remember the conclusion of the Roman Twelve Tables; *Salus populi suprema lex*; [The supreme law of all is the weal of the people;] and to know that laws, except they be in order to that end, are but things captious, and oracles not well inspired. Therefore it is an happy thing in a state when kings and states do often consult with judges; and again when judges do often consult with the king and state: the one, when there is matter of law intervenient in business of state; the other, when there is some consideration of state intervenient in matter of law. For many times the things deduced to judgment may be *meum* and *tuum*, when the reason and consequence thereof may trench to point of estate:⁴ I call matter of estate, not only the parts of sovereignty, but whatsoever introduceth any great alteration or dangerous precedent; or concerneth manifestly any great portion of people. And let no man weakly conceive that just laws and true policy have any antipathy; for they are like the spirits and sinews, that one moves with the other. Let judges also remember, that Salomon's throne was supported by lions on both sides; let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne; being circum-spect that they do not check or oppose any points of sovereignty. Let not judges also be so ignorant of their own right, as to think there is not left to them, as a principal part of their office, a wise use and application of laws. For they may remember what the apostle saith of a greater law than theirs; *Nos scimus quia lex bona est, modo quis ea utatur legitime*. [We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.]

57

OF ANGER

To seek to extinguish Anger utterly is but a bravery of the Stoics. We have better oracles: *Be angry, but sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your anger*. Anger must be limited and confined both in race and in time. We will first

telam honoris crassiozem, [an honour of a stouter web.] But in all refrainings of anger, it is the best remedy to win time; and to make a man's self believe, that the opportunity of his revenge is not yet come, but that he foresees a time for it; and so to still himself in the mean time, and reserve it.

To contain anger from mischief, though it take hold of a man, there be two things whereof you must have special caution. The one, of extreme bitterness of words, especially if they be aculeate and proper; for *communia maledicta* are nothing so much; and again, that in anger a man reveal no secrets; for that makes him not fit for society. The other, that you do not peremptorily break off, in any business, in a fit of anger; but howsoever you shew bitterness, do not act anything that is not revocable.

For raising and appeasing anger in another; it is done chiefly by choosing of times, when men are frowardest and worst disposed, to incense them. Again, by gathering (as was touched before) all that you can find out to aggravate the contempt. And the two remedies are by the contraries. The former to take good times, when first to relate to a man an angry business; for the first impression is much; and the other is, to sever, as much as may be, the construction of the injury from the point of contempt; imputing it to misunderstanding, fear, passion, or what you will.

OF VICISSITUDE OF THINGS

SALOMON saith, *There is no new thing upon the earth.* So that as Plato had an imagination, *That all knowledge was but remembrance*; so Salomon giveth his sentence, *That all novelty is but oblivion.* Whereby you may see that the river of Lethe runneth as well above ground as below. There is an abstruse astrologer that saith, *if it were not for two things that are constant, (the one is, that the fixed stars ever stand at like distance one from another, and never come nearer together, nor go further asunder; the other, that the diurnal motion perpetually keepeth time,) no individual*

would last one moment. Certain it is, that the matter is in a perpetual flux, and never at a stay. The great winding-sheets, that bury all things in oblivion, are two; deluges and earthquakes. As for conflagrations and great droughts, they do not merely dispeople and destroy. Phaëton's car went but a day. And the three years' drought in the time of Elias¹ was but particular, and left people alive. As for the great burnings by lightnings, which are often in the West Indies, they are but narrow. But in the other two destructions, by deluge and earthquake, it is further to be noted, that the remnant of people which hap to be reserved, are commonly ignorant and mountainous people, that can give no account of the time past; so that the oblivion is all one as if none had been left. If you consider well of the people of the West Indies, it is very probable that they are a newer or a younger people than the people of the old world. And it is much more likely that the destruction that hath heretofore been there, was not by earthquakes (as the Ægyptian priest told Solon concerning the island of Atlantis, *that it was swallowed by an earthquake*), but rather that it was desolated by a particular deluge. For earthquakes are seldom in those parts. But on the other side, they have such pouring rivers, as the rivers of Asia and Africk and Europe are but brooks to them. Their Andes likewise, or mountains, are far higher than those with us; whereby it seems that the remnants of generation of men were in such a particular deluge saved. As for the observation that Machiavel hath, that the jealousy of sects doth much extinguish the memory of things; traducing Gregory the Great, that he did what in him lay to extinguish all heathen antiquities; I do not find that those zeals do any great effects, nor last long; as it appeared in the succession of Sabinian,² who did revive the former antiquities.

The vicissitude or mutations in the Superior Globe are no fit matter for this present argument. It may be, Plato's great year,³ if the world should last so long, would have some effect; not in renewing the state of like individuals, (for that is the fume of those that conceive the celestial bodies have

more accurate influences upon these things below than indeed they have,) but in gross. Comets, out of question, have likewise power and effect over the gross and mass of things; but they are rather gazed upon, and waited upon in their journey, than wisely observed in their effects; specially in their respective effects; that is, what kind of comet, for magnitude, colour, version of the beams, placing in the region of heaven, or lasting, produceth what kind of effects.

There is a toy which I have heard, and I would not have it given over, but waited upon a little. They say it is observed in the Low Countries (I know not in what part) that every five and thirty years the same kind and suit of years and weathers comes about again; as great frosts, great wet, great droughts, warm winters, summers with little heat, and the like; and they call it the *Prime*. It is a thing I do the rather mention, because, computing backwards, I have found some concurrence.

But to leave these points of nature, and to come to men. The greatest vicissitude of things amongst men, is the vicissitude of sects and religions. For those orbs rule in men's minds most. The true religion is *built upon the rock*; the rest are tossed upon the waves of time. To speak therefore of the causes of new sects; and to give some counsel concerning them, as far as the weakness of human judgment can give stay to so great revolutions.

When the religion formerly received is rent by discords; and when the holiness of the professors of religion is decayed and full of scandal; and withal the times be stupid, ignorant, and barbarous; you may doubt the springing up of a new sect; if then also there should arise any extravagant and strange spirit to make himself author thereof. All which points held when Mahomet published his law. If a new sect have not two properties, fear it not; for it will not spread. The one is, the supplanting or the opposing of authority established; for nothing is more popular than that. The other is, the giving licence to pleasures and a voluptuous life. For as for speculative heresies, (such as were in ancient times the *Manicheans*, and now the *Arminians*,) though

they work mightily upon men's wits, yet they do not produce any great alterations in states; except it be by the help of civil occasions. There be three manner of plantations of new sects. By the power of signs and miracles; by the eloquence and wisdom of speech and persuasion; and by the sword. For martyrdoms, I reckon them amongst miracles; because they seem to exceed the strength of human nature: and I may do the like of superlative and admirable holiness of life. Surely there is no better way to stop the rising of new sects and schisms, than to reform abuses; to compound the smaller differences; to proceed mildly, and not with sanguinary persecutions; and rather to take off the principal authors by winning and advancing them, than to enrage them by violence and bitterness.

The changes and vicissitude in wars are many; but chiefly in three things; in the seats or stages of the war; in the weapons; and in the manner of the conduct. Wars, in ancient time, seemed more to move from east to west; for the Persians, Assyrians, Arabians, Tartars, (which were the invaders,) were all eastern people. It is true, the Gauls were western; but we read but of two incursions of theirs: the one to Gallo-Græcia, the other to Rome. But East and West have no certain points of heaven; and no more have the wars, either from the east or west, any certainty of observation. But North and South are fixed; and it hath seldom or never been seen that the far southern people have invaded the northern, but contrariwise. Whereby it is manifest that the northern tract of the world is in nature the more martial region: be it in respect of the stars of that hemisphere; or of the great continents that are upon the north, whereas the south part, for aught that is known, is almost all sea; or (which is most apparent) of the cold of the northern parts, which is that which, without aid of discipline, doth make the bodies hardest, and the courages warmest.

Upon the breaking and shivering of a great state and empire, you may be sure to have wars. For great empires, while they stand, do enervate and destroy the forces of the natives which they have subdued, resting upon their

own protecting forces; and then when they fail also, all goes to ruin, and they become a prey. So was it in the decay of the Roman empire; and likewise in the empire of Almaigne, after Charles the Great, every bird taking a feather; and were not unlike to befall to Spain, if it should break. The great accessions and unions of kingdoms do likewise stir up wars: for when a state grows to an over-power, it is like a great flood, that will be sure to overflow. As it hath been seen in the states of Rome, Turkey, Spain, and others. Look when the world hath fewest barbarous peoples, but such as commonly will not marry or generate, except they know means to live, (as it is almost every where at this day, except Tartary,) there is no danger of inundations of people: but when there be great shoals of people, which go on to populate, without foreseeing means of life and sustentation, it is of necessity that once in an age or two they discharge a portion of their people upon other nations; which the ancient northern people were wont to do by lot; casting lots what part should stay at home, and what should seek their fortunes. When a war-like state grows soft and effeminate, they may be sure of a war. For commonly such states are grown rich in the time of their degenerating; and so the prey inviteth, and their decay in valour encourageth a war.

As for the weapons, it hardly falleth under rule and observation: yet we see even they have returns and vicissitudes. For certain it is, that ordnance was known in the city of the Oxidrakes in India; and was that which the Macedonians called thunder and lightning, and magic. And it is well known that the use of ordnance hath been in China above two thousand years. The conditions of weapons, and their improvement, are, First, the fetching afar off; for that outruns the danger; as it is seen in ordnance and muskets. Secondly, the strength of the percussion; wherein likewise ordnance do exceed all arietations^t and ancient inventions. The third is, the commodious use of them; as that they may serve in all weathers; that the carriage may be light and manageable; and the like.

OF THE INTERPRETATION OF NATURE

[DE INTERPRETATIONE NATURAE]

[ca 1603]

PROEM

BELIEVING that I was born for the service of mankind, and regarding the care of the commonwealth as a kind of common property which like the air and the water belongs to everybody, I set myself to consider in what way mankind might be best served, and what service I was myself best fitted by nature to perform.

Now among all the benefits that could be conferred upon mankind, I found none so great as the discovery of new arts, endowments, and commodities for the bettering of man's life. For I saw that among the rude people in the primitive times the authors of rude inventions and discoveries were consecrated and numbered among the Gods. And it was plain that the good effects wrought by founders of cities, law-givers, fathers of the people, extirpers of tyrants, and heroes of that class, extend but over narrow spaces and last but for short times; whereas the work of the Inventor, though a thing of less pomp and shew, is felt everywhere and lasts for ever. But above all, if a man could succeed, not in striking out some particular invention, however useful, but in kindling a light in nature—a light which should in its very rising touch and illuminate all the border-regions that confine upon the circle of our present knowledge; and so spreading further and further should presently

disclose and bring into sight all that is most hidden and secret in the world,—that man (I thought) would be the benefactor indeed of the human race,—the propagator of man's empire over the universe, the champion of liberty, the conqueror and subduer of necessities.

For myself, I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for the study of Truth; as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblances of things (which is the chief point), and at the same time steady enough to fix and distinguish their subtler differences; as being gifted by nature with desire to seek, patience to doubt, fondness to meditate, slowness to assert, readiness to reconsider, carefulness to dispose and set in order; and as being a man that neither affects what is new nor admires what is old, and that hates every kind of imposture. So I thought my nature had a kind of familiarity and relationship with Truth.

Nevertheless, because my birth and education had seasoned me in business of state; and because opinions (so young as I was) would sometimes stagger me; and because I thought that a man's own country has some special claims upon him more than the rest of the world; and because I hoped that, if I rose to any place of honour in the state, I should have a larger command of industry and ability to help me in my work;—for these reasons I both applied myself to acquire the arts of civil life, and commended my service, so far as in modesty and honesty I might, to the favour of such friends as had any influence. In which also I had another motive: for I felt that those things I have spoken of—be they great or small—reach no further than the condition and culture of this mortal life; and I was not without hope (the condition of Religion being at that time not very prosperous) that if I came to hold office in the state, I might get something done too for the good of men's souls.

When I found however that my zeal was mistaken for ambition, and my life had already reached the turning-point, and my breaking health reminded me how ill I could

afford to be so slow, and I reflected moreover that in leaving undone the good that I could do by myself alone, and applying myself to that which could not be done without the help and consent of others, I was by no means discharging the duty that lay upon me,—I put all those thoughts aside, and (in pursuance of my old determination) betook myself wholly to this work. Nor am I discouraged from it because I see signs in the times of the decline and overthrow of that knowledge and erudition which is now in use. Not that I apprehend any more barbarian invasions (unless possibly the Spanish empire should recover its strength, and having crushed other nations by arms should itself sink under its own weight): but the civil wars which may be expected, I think, (judging from certain fashions which have come in of late) to spread through many countries,—together with the malignity of sects, and those compendious artifices and devices which have crept into the place of solid erudition—seem to portend for literature and the sciences a tempest not less fatal, and one against which the Printing-office will be no effectual security. And no doubt but that fair-weather learning which is nursed by leisure, blossoms under reward and praise, which cannot withstand the shock of opinion, and is liable to be abused by tricks and quackery, will sink under such impediments as these. Far otherwise is it with that knowledge, whose dignity is maintained by works of utility and power. For the injuries therefore which should proceed from the times, I am not afraid of them; and for the injuries which proceed from men I am not concerned. For if any one charge me with seeking to be wise overmuch, I answer simply that modesty and civil respect are fit for civil matters; in contemplations nothing is to be respected but Truth. If any one call on me for *works*, and that presently; I tell him frankly, without any imposture at all, that for me—a man not old, of weak health, my hands full of civil business, entering without guide or light upon an argument of all others the most obscure,—I hold it enough to have constructed the machine, though I may not succeed in setting

it on work. Nay with the same candour I profess and declare, that the Interpretation of Nature, rightly conducted, ought in the first steps of the ascent, until a certain stage of Generals¹ be reached, to be kept clear of all application to Works. And this has in fact been the error of all those who have heretofore ventured themselves at all upon the waves of experience—that being either too weak of purpose or too eager for display, they have all at the outset sought prematurely for works, as proofs and pledges of their progress, and upon that rock have been wrecked and cast away. If again any one ask me, not indeed for actual works, yet for definite promises and forecasts of the works that are to be, I would have him know that the knowledge which we now possess will not teach a man even what to *wish*. Lastly—though this is a matter of less moment—if any of our politicians, who use to make their calculations and conjectures according to persons and precedents, must needs interpose his judgment in a thing of this nature,—I would but remind him how (according to the ancient fable) the lame man keeping the course won the race of the swift man who left it: and that there is no thought to be taken about precedents, for the thing is without precedent.

Now for my plan of publication—those parts of the work which have it for their object to find out and bring into correspondence such minds as are prepared and disposed for the argument, and to purge the floors of men's understandings, I wish to be published to the world and circulate from mouth to mouth: the rest I would have passed from hand to hand, with selection and judgment. Not but I know that it is an old trick of impostors to keep a few of their follies back from the public which are indeed no better than those they put forward: but in this case it is no imposture at all, but a sober foresight, which tells me that the formula itself of interpretation, and the discoveries made by the same, will thrive better if committed to the charge of some fit and selected minds, and kept private. This however is other people's concern. For myself, my heart is not set upon any of those things which depend

upon external accidents. I am not hunting for fame: I have no desire to found a sect, after the fashion of heresiarchs; and to look for any private gain from such an undertaking as this, I count both ridiculous and base. Enough for me the consciousness of well-deserving, and those real and effectual results with which Fortune itself cannot interfere.

in the book of God's word or in the book of God's works; divinity or philosophy; but rather let men endeavour an endless progress or proficiencie in both; only let men beware that they apply both to charity, and not to swelling; to use, and not to ostentation; and again, that they do not unwisely mingle or confound these learnings together.

And as for the disgraces which learning receiveth from politiques, they be of this nature; that learning doth soften men's minds, and makes them more unapt for the honour and exercise of arms; that it doth mar and pervert men's dispositions for matter of government and policy, in making them too curious and irresolute by variety of reading, or too peremptory or positive by strictness of rules and axioms, or too immoderate and overweening by reason of the greatness of examples, or too incompatible and differing from the times by reason of the dissimilitude of examples; or at least that it doth divert men's travails from action and business, and bringeth them to a love of leisure and privateness; and that it doth bring into states a relaxation of discipline, whilst every man is more ready to argue than to obey and execute. Out of this conceit Cato surnamed the Censor, one of the wisest men indeed that ever lived, when Carneades the philosopher came in embassage to Rome, and that the young men of Rome began to flock about him, being allured with the sweetness and majesty of his eloquence and learning, gave counsel in open senate that they should give him his dispatch with all speed, lest he should infect and inchant the minds and affections of the youth, and at unawares bring in an alteration of the manners and customs of the state. Out of the same conceit or humour did Virgil, turning his pen to the advantage of his country and the disadvantage of his own profession, make a kind of separation between policy and government and between arts and sciences, in the verses so much renowned, attributing and challenging the one to the Romans, and leaving and yielding the other to the Grecians; *Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento, Hæ tibi erunt artes, &c.*

and all the cautions of application; so that in all these it doth rectify more effectually than it can pervert. And these medicines it conveyeth into men's minds much more forcibly by the quickness and penetration of examples. For let a man look into the errors of Clement the seventh, so lively described by Guicciardine, who served under him, or into the errors of Cicero painted out by his own pencil in his epistles to Atticus, and he will fly apace from being irresolute. Let him look into the errors of Phocion, and he will beware how he be obstinate or inflexible. Let him but read the fable of Ixion, and it will hold him from being vaporous or imaginative. Let him look into the errors of Cato the second, and he will never be one of the Antipodes, to tread opposite to the present world.

And for the conceit¹² that learning should dispose men to leisure and privateness, and make men slothful; it were a strange thing if that which accustometh the mind to a perpetual motion and agitation should induce slothfulness; whereas contrariwise it may be truly affirmed that no kind of men love business for itself but those that are learned; for other persons love it for profit, as an hireling that loves the work for the wages; or for honour, as because it beareth them up in the eyes of men, and refresheth their reputation which otherwise would wear; or because it putteth them in mind of their fortune, and giveth them occasion to pleasure and displeasure; or because it exerciseth some faculty wherein they take pride, and so entertaineth them in good humour and pleasing conceits toward themselves; or because it advanceth any other their ends. So that as it is said of untrue valours that some men's valours are in the eyes of them that look on, so such men's industries are in the eyes of others, or at least in regard of their own designments; only learned men love business as an action according to nature, as agreeable to health of mind as exercise is to health of body, taking pleasure in the action itself, and not in the purchase: so that of all men they are the most indefatigable, if it be towards any business which can hold or detain their mind.

And if any man be laborious in reading and study and yet idle in business and action, it groweth from some weakness of body or softness of spirit, such as Seneca speaketh of; *Quidam tam sunt umbratiles, ut putent in turbido esse quicquid in luce est*, [there are some men so fond of the shade, that they think they are in trouble whenever they are in the light:] and not of learning. Well may it be that such a point of a man's nature may make him give himself to learning, but it is not learning that breedeth any such point in his nature.

And that learning should take up too much time or leisure; I answer, the most active or busy man that hath been or can be hath (no question) many vacant times of leisure, while he expecteth the tides and returns of business, (except he be either tedious and of no dispatch, or lightly and unworthily ambitious to meddle in things that may be better done by others;) and then the question is but how those spaces and times of leisure shall be filled, and spent; whether in pleasures or in studies; as was well answered by Demosthenes to his adversary Æschines, that was a man given to pleasure, and told him *that his orations did smell of the lamp*: Indeed (said Demosthenes) *there is a great difference between the things that you and I do by lamp-light*. So as no man need doubt that learning will expulse business; but rather it will keep and defend the possession of the mind against idleness and pleasure, which otherwise at unawares may enter to the prejudice of both.

Again, for that other conceit that learning should undermine the reverence of laws and government, it is assuredly a mere depravation and calumny without all shadow of truth. For to say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, it is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than a seeing man can by a light. And it is without all controversy that learning doth make the minds of men gentle, generous, maniable,¹³ and pliant to government; whereas ignorance makes them churlish, thwart, and mutinous: and the evidence of time doth clear this assertion, considering

that the most barbarous, rude, and unlearned times have been most subject to tumults, seditions, and changes.

And as to the judgment of Cato the Censor, he was well punished for his blasphemy against learning, in the same kind wherein he offended; for when he was past threescore years old, he was taken with an extreme desire to go to school again and to learn the Greek tongue, to the end to peruse the Greek authors; which doth well demonstrate, that his former censure of the Grecian learning was rather an affected gravity, than according to the inward sense of his own opinion. And as for *Virgil's* verses, though it pleased him to brave the world in taking to the Romans the art of empire, and leaving to others the arts of subjects; yet so much is manifest, that the Romans never ascended to that height of empire till the time they had ascended to the height of other arts; for in the time of the two first Cæsars, which had the art of government in greatest perfection, there lived the best poet, Virgilius Maro; the best historiographer, Titus Livius; the best antiquary, Marcus Varro; and the best, or second orator, Marcus Cicero, that to the memory of man are known. As for the accusation of Socrates, the time must be remembered when it was prosecuted; which was under the thirty tyrants, the most base, bloody, and envious persons that have governed; which revolution of state was no sooner over, but Socrates, whom they had made a person criminal, was made a person heroic, and his memory accumulate with honours divine and human; and those discourses of his, which were then termed corrupting of manners, were after acknowledged for sovereign medicines of the mind and manners, and so have been received ever since till this day. Let this therefore serve for answer to politiques, which in their humorous¹⁴ severity or in their feigned gravity have presumed to throw imputations upon learning; which redargution¹⁵ nevertheless (save that we know not whether our labours may extend to other ages) were not needful for the present, in regard of the love and reverence towards learning which the example and countenance of two so learned princes,

if all lines should meet in them and their fortunes; never caring in all tempests what becomes of the ship of estates, so they may save themselves in the cockboat of their own fortune; whereas men that feel the weight of duty, and know the limits of self-love, use to make good their places and duties, though with peril. And if they stand in seditious and violent alterations, it is rather the reverence which many times both adverse parts do give to honesty, than any versatile advantage of their own carriage. But for this point of tender sense and fast obligation of duty, which learning doth endue the mind withal, howsoever fortune may tax it and many in the depth of their corrupt principles may despise it, yet it will receive an open allowance, and therefore needs the less disproof or excusation.

Another fault incident commonly to learned men, which may be more probably defended than truly denied, is that they fail sometimes in applying themselves to particular persons; which want of exact application ariseth from two causes; the one, because the largeness of their mind can hardly confine itself to dwell in the exquisite observation or examination of the nature and customs of one person: for it is a speech for a lover and not for a wise man, *Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus*, [each is to other a theatre large enough]. Nevertheless I shall yield, that he that cannot contract the sight of his mind as well as disperse and dilate it, wanteth a great faculty. But there is a second cause, which is no inability but a rejection upon choice and judgment. For the honest and just bounds of observation by one person upon another extend no farther but to understand him sufficiently, whereby not to give him offence, or whereby to be able to give him faithful counsel, or whereby to stand upon reasonable guard and caution in respect of a man's self: but to be speculative into another man, to the end to know how to work him or wind him or govern him, proceedeth from a heart that is double and cloven, and not entire and ingenuous; which as in friendship it is want of integrity, so towards princes or superiors is want of duty. For the custom of the Levant, which is,

that subjects do forbear to gaze or fix their eyes upon princes, is in the outward ceremony barbarous; but the moral is good: for men ought not by cunning and bent observations to pierce and penetrate into the hearts of kings, which the Scripture hath declared to be inscrutable.

There is yet another fault (with which I will conclude this part) which is often noted in learned men, that they do many times fail to observe decency and discretion in their behaviour and carriage, and commit errors in small and ordinary points of action; so as the vulgar sort of capacities do make a judgment of them in greater matters by that which they find wanting in them in smaller. But this consequence doth oft deceive men; for which I do refer them over to that which was said by Themistocles, arrogantly and uncivilly being applied to himself out of his own mouth, but being applied to the general state of this question pertinently and justly; when being invited to touch a lute, he said *he could not fiddle, but he could make a small town a great state*. So no doubt many may be well seen in the passages of government and policy, which are to seek in little and punctual occasions. I refer them also to that which Plato said of his master Socrates, whom he compared to the gallypots of apothecaries, which on the outside had apes and owls and antiques, but contained within sovereign and precious liquors and confections; acknowledging that to an external report he was not without superficial levities and deformities, but was inwardly replenished with excellent virtues and powers. And so much touching the point of manners of learned men.

But in the mean time I have no purpose to give allowance to some conditions and courses base and unworthy, wherein divers professors of learning have wronged themselves and gone too far; such as were those trencher philosophers,¹⁸ which in the later age of the Roman state were usually in the houses of great persons, being little better than solemn parasites; of which kind, Lucian maketh a merry description of the philosopher that the great lady took to ride with her in her coach, and would needs have

him carry her little dog, which he doing officiously and yet uncomely, the page scoffed, and said, *That he doubted the philosopher of a Stoic would turn to be a Cynic*.¹⁹ But above all the rest, the gross and palpable flattery whereunto many (not unlearned) have abased and abused their wits and pens, turning (as Du Bartas saith) Hecuba into Helena and Faustina into Lucretia, hath most diminished the price and estimation of learning. Neither is the moral²⁰ dedications of books and writings, as to patrons, to be commended: for that books (such as are worthy the name of books) ought to have no patrons but truth and reason; and the ancient custom was to dedicate them only to private and equal friends, or to intitle the books with their names; or if to kings and great persons, it was to some such as the argument of the book was fit and proper for. But these and the like courses may deserve rather reprehension than defence.

Not that I can tax or condemn the morigeration²¹ or application of learned men to men in fortune. For the answer was good that Diogenes made to one that asked him in mockery, *How it came to pass that philosophers were the followers of rich men, and not rich men of philosophers?* He answered soberly, and yet sharply, *Because the one sort knew what they had need of, and the other did not*. And of the like nature was the answer which Aristippus made, when having a petition to Dionysius and no ear given to him, he fell down at his feet, whereupon Dionysius staid and gave him the hearing and granted it; and afterward some person tender on the behalf of philosophy, reproved Aristippus that he would offer the profession of philosophy such an indignity, as for a private suit to fall at a tyrant's feet: but he answered, *It was not his fault, but it was the fault of Dionysius, that had his ears in his feet*. Neither was it accounted weakness, but discretion, in him that would not dispute his best with Adrianus Cæsar; excusing himself, *That it was reason to yield to him that commanded thirty legions*. These and the like applications and stooping to points of necessity and convenience cannot be disallowed;

for though they may have some outward baseness, yet in a judgment truly made they are to be accounted submissions to the occasion and not to the person.

Now I proceed to those errors and vanities which have intervened amongst the studies themselves of the learned; which is that which is principal and proper to the present argument; wherein my purpose is not to make a justification of the errors, but, by a censure and separation of the errors, to make a justification of that which is good and sound, and to deliver that from the aspersion of the other. For we see that it is the manner of men to scandalize and deprave that which retaineth the state and virtue, by taking advantage upon that which is corrupt and degenerate: as the Heathens in the primitive church used to blemish and taint the Christians with the faults and corruptions of heretics. But nevertheless I have no meaning at this time to make any exact animadversion of the errors and impediments in matters of learning which are more secret and remote from vulgar opinion; but only to speak unto such as do fall under, or near unto, a popular observation.

There be therefore chiefly three vanities in studies, whereby learning hath been most traduced. For those things we do esteem vain, which are either false or frivolous, those which either have no truth or no use: and those persons we esteem vain, which are either credulous or curious; and curiosity is either in matter or words: so that in reason as well as in experience, there fall out to be these three distempers (as I may term them) of learning; the first, fantastical learning; the second, contentious learning; and the last, delicate learning; vain imaginations, vain altercations, and vain affectations; and with the last I will begin. Martin Luther, conducted (no doubt) by an higher Providence, but in discourse of reason finding what a provocation he had undertaken against the Bishop of Rome and the degenerate traditions of the church, and finding his own solitude, being no ways aided by the opinions of his own time, was enforced to awake all antiquity, and to call former times to his succors to make a party against the

present time; so that the ancient authors, both in divinity and in humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revolved. This by consequence did draw on a necessity of a more exquisite travail in the languages original wherein those authors did write, for the better understanding of those authors and the better advantage of pressing and applying their words. And thereof grew again a delight in their manner of style and phrase, and an admiration of that kind of writing; which was much furthered and precipitated by the enmity and opposition that the propounders of those (primitive but seeming new) opinions had against the schoolmen; who were generally of the contrary part, and whose writings were altogether in a differing style and form; taking liberty to coin and frame new terms of art to express their own sense and to avoid circuit of speech, without regard to the pureness, pleasantness, and (as I may call it) lawfulness of the phrase or word. And again, because the great labour then was with the people, (of whom the Pharisees were wont to say, *Execrabilis ista turba, quæ non novit legem*,) [the wretched crowd that has not known the law,] for the winning and persuading of them, there grew of necessity in chief price and request eloquence and variety of discourse, as the fittest and forciblest access into the capacity of the vulgar sort. So that these four causes concurring, the admiration of ancient authors, the hate of the schoolmen, the exact study of languages, and the efficacy of preaching, did bring in an affectionate study of eloquence and copie²² of speech, which then began to flourish. This grew speedily to an excess; for men began to hunt more after words than matter; and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment. Then grew the flowing and watery vein of Osorius, the Portugal bishop, to be in price. Then did Sturmius spend

shall he find it prepared to his hands in those authors which write in that manner. But the excess of this is so justly contemptible, that as Hercules, when he saw the image of Adonis, Venus' minion, in a temple, said in disdain, *Nil sacri es*, [you are no divinity;] so there is none of Hercules' followers in learning, that is, the more severe and laborious sort of inquirers into truth, but will despise those delicacies and affectations, as indeed capable of no divineness. And thus much of the first disease or distemper of learning.

The second, which followeth, is in nature worse than the former; for as substance of matter is better than beauty of words, so contrariwise vain matter is worse than vain words: wherein it seemeth the reprehension of St. Paul was not only proper for those times, but prophetic for the times following; and not only respective to divinity, but extensive to all knowledge: *Devita profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ*: [shun profane novelties of terms and oppositions of science falsely so called]. For he assigneth two marks and badges of suspected and falsified science; the one, the novelty and strangeness of terms; the other, the strictness of positions, which of necessity doth induce oppositions, and so questions and altercations. Surely, like as many substances in nature which are solid do putrefy and corrupt into worms, so it is the property of good and sound knowledge to putrefy and dissolve into a number of subtile, idle, unwholesome, and (as I may term them) vermiculate questions, which have indeed a kind of quickness and life of spirit, but no soundness of matter or goodness of quality. This kind of degenerate learning did chiefly reign amongst the schoolmen; who having sharp and strong wits, and abundance of leisure, and small variety of reading; but their wits being shut up in the cells of a few authors (chiefly Aristotle their dictator) as their persons were shut up in the cells of monasteries and colleges; and knowing little history, either of nature or time; did out of no great quantity of matter, and infinite agitation of wit, spin out unto us those laborious webs of learning which are extant in their books. For the wit and mind of man, if it work upon mat-

ter, which is the contemplation of the creatures of God, worketh according to the stuff, and is limited thereby; but if it work upon itself, as the spider worketh his web, then it is endless, and brings forth indeed cobwebs of learning, admirable for the fineness of thread and work, but of no substance or profit.

This same unprofitable subtlety or curiosity is of two sorts; either in the subject itself that they handle, when it is a fruitless speculation or controversy, (whereof there are no small number both in divinity and philosophy,) or in the manner or method of handling of a knowledge; which amongst them was this; upon every particular position or assertion to frame objections, and to those objections, solutions; which solutions were for the most part not confutations, but distinctions: whereas indeed the strength of all sciences is, as the strength of the old man's faggot, in the bond. For the harmony of a science, supporting each part the other, is and ought to be the true and brief confutation and suppression of all the smaller sort of objections; but on the other side, if you take out every axiom, as the sticks of the faggot, one by one, you may quarrel with them and bend them and break them at your pleasure: so that as was said of Seneca, *Verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera*, [that he broke up the weight and mass of the matter by verbal points and niceties;] so a man may truly say of the schoolmen, *Quæstionum minutiis scientiarum frangunt soliditatem*; [they broke up the solidity and coherency of the sciences by the minuteness and nicety of their questions]. For were it not better for a man in a fair room to set up one great light, or branching candlestick of lights, than to go about with a small watch candle into every corner? And such is their method, that rests not so much upon evidence of truth proved by arguments, authorities, similitudes, examples, as upon particular confutations and solutions of every scruple, cavillation, and objection; breeding for the most part one question as fast it solveth another; even as in the former resemblance, when you carry the light into one corner, you darken the rest: so that the fable and fiction of

Scylla seemeth to be a lively image of this kind of philosophy or knowledge; which was transformed into a comely virgin for the upper parts; but then *Candida succinctam latrantibus inguina monstis*, [there were barking monsters all about her loins:] so the generalities of the schoolmen are for a while good and proportionable; but then when you descend into their distinctions and decisions, instead of a fruitful womb for the use and benefit of man's life, they end in monstrous altercations and barking questions. So as it is not possible but this quality of knowledge must fall under popular contempt, the people being apt to condemn truth upon occasion of controversies and altercations, and to think they are all out of their way which never meet: and when they see such digladiation about subtilities and matter of no use nor moment, they easily fall upon that judgment of Dionysius of Syracusa, *Verba ista sunt senum otiosorum*, [it is the talk of old men that have nothing to do].

Notwithstanding certain it is, that if those schoolmen to their great thirst of truth and unwearied travail of wit had joined variety and universality of reading and contemplation, they had proved excellent lights, to the great advancement of all learning and knowledge. But as they are, they are great undertakers indeed, and fierce with dark keeping; but as in the inquiry of the divine truth their pride inclined to leave the oracle of God's word and to vanish in the mixture of their own inventions, so in the inquisition of nature they ever left the oracle of God's works and adored the deceiving and deformed images which the unequal mirror of their own minds or a few received authors or principles did represent unto them. And thus much for the second disease of learning.

For the third vice or disease of learning, which concerneth deceit or untruth, it is of all the rest the foulest; as that which doth destroy the essential form of knowledge, which is nothing but a representation of truth: for the truth of being and the truth of knowing are one, differing no more than the direct beam and the beam reflected. This vice

therefore brancheth itself into two sorts; delight in deceiving, and aptness to be deceived; imposture and credulity; which, although they appear to be of a diverse nature, the one seeming to proceed of cunning, and the other of simplicity, yet certainly they do for the most part concur: for as the verse noteth,

Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem est,²⁴

an inquisitive man is a prattler, so upon the like reason a credulous man is a deceiver: as we see it in fame, that he that will easily believe rumours will as easily augment rumours and add somewhat to them of his own; which Tacitus wisely noteth, when he saith, *Fingunt simul creduntque*, [as fast as they believe one tale they make another:] so great an affinity hath fiction and belief.

This facility of credit, and accepting or admitting things weakly authorized or warranted, is of two kinds, according to the subject: for it is either a belief of history (as the lawyers speak, matter of fact), or else of matter of art and opinion. As to the former, we see the experience and inconvenience of this error in ecclesiastical history; which hath too easily received and registered reports and narrations of miracles wrought by martyrs, hermits, or monks of the desert, and other holy men, and their relics, shrines, chapels, and images: which though they had a passage for a time, by the ignorance of the people, the superstitious simplicity of some, and the politic toleration of others, holding them but as divine poesies; yet after a period of time, when the mist began to clear up, they grew to be esteemed but as old wives' fables, impostures of the clergy, illusions of spirits, and badges of antichrist, to the great scandal and detriment of religion.

So in natural history, we see there hath not been that choice and judgment used as ought to have been; as may appear in the writings of Plinius, Cardanus, Albertus, and divers of the Arabians; being fraught with much fabulous matter, a great part not only untried but notoriously untrue, to the great derogation of the credit of natural philos-

vines, they had a great vintage the year following: so assuredly the search and stir to make gold hath brought to light a great number of good and fruitful inventions and experiments, as well for the disclosing of nature as for the use of man's life.

And as for the overmuch credit that hath been given unto authors in sciences, in making them dictators, that their words should stand, and not counsels to give advice; the damage is infinite that sciences have received thereby, as the principal cause that hath kept them low, at a stay without growth or advancement. For hence it hath comen that in arts mechanical the first deviser comes shortest, and time addeth and perfecteth; but in sciences the first author goeth furthest, and time leeseth and corrupteth. So we see, artillery, sailing, printing, and the like, were grossly managed at the first, and by time accommodated and refined; but contrariwise the philosophies and sciences of Aristotle, Plato, Democritus, Hippocrates, Euclides, Archimedes, of most vigour at the first, and by time degenerate and imbased; whereof the reason is no other, but that in the former many wits and industries have contributed in one; and in the later many wits and industries have been spent about the wit of some one, whom many times they have rather depraved than illustrated. For as water will not ascend higher than the level of the first spring-head from whence it descendeth, so knowledge derived from Aristotle, and exempted from liberty of examination, will not rise again higher than the knowledge of Aristotle. And therefore, although the position be good, *Oporet discentem credere*, [a man who is learning must be content to believe what he is told,] yet it must be coupled with this, *Oporet edoctum judicare*, [when he has learned it he must exercise his judgment and see whether it be worthy of belief,] for disciples do owe unto masters only a temporary belief and a suspension of their own judgment until they be fully instructed, and not an absolute resignation or perpetual captivity: and therefore to conclude this point, I will say no more but, so let great authors have their due, as time which is the author

of authors be not deprived of his due, which is further and further to discover truth. Thus have I gone over these three diseases of learning; besides the which, there are some other rather peccant humours than formed diseases, which nevertheless are not so secret and intrinsic but that they fall under a popular observation and traducement, and therefore are not to be passed over.

The first of these is the extreme affecting of two extremities; the one Antiquity, the other Novelty: wherein it seemeth the children of time do take after the nature and malice of the father. For as he devoureth his children, so one of them seeketh to devour and suppress the other; while antiquity envieth there should be new additions, and novelty cannot be content to add but it must deface. Surely the advice of the prophet²⁵ is the true direction in this matter, *State super vias antiquas, et videte quænam sit via recta et bona, et ambulate in ea*: [stand ye in the old ways, and see which is the good way, and walk therein]. Antiquity deserveth that reverence, that men should make a stand thereupon, and discover what is the best way; but when the discovery is well taken, then to make progression. And to speak truly, *Antiquitas sæculi juvenus mundi* [*the antiquity of time is the youth of the world]. These times are the ancient times, when the world is ancient, and not those which we account ancient *ordine retrogrado*, by a computation backward from ourselves.

Another error, induced by the former, is a distrust that any thing should be now to be found out, which the world should have missed and passed over so long time; as if the same objection were to be made to time that Lucian maketh to Jupiter and other the heathen gods, of which he wondereth that they begot so many children in old time and begot none in his time, and asketh whether they were become septuagenary, or whether the law *Pappia*, made against old men's marriages, had restrained them. So it seemeth men doubt lest time is become past children and generation; wherein contrariwise we see commonly the levity and unconstancy of men's judgments, which, till a mat-

mentioned, is that after the distribution of particular arts and sciences, men have abandoned universality, or *philosophia prima*; which cannot but cease and stop all progression. For no perfect discovery can be made upon a flat or a level: neither is it possible to discover the more remote and deeper parts of any science, if you stand but upon the level of the same science, and ascend not to a higher science.

Another error hath proceeded from too great a reverence, and a kind of adoration of the mind and understanding of man; by means whereof men have withdrawn themselves too much from the contemplation of nature and the observations of experience, and have tumbled up and down in their own reason and conceits. Upon these intellectualists, which are notwithstanding commonly taken for the most sublime and divine philosophers, Heraclitus gave a just censure, saying, *Men sought truth in their own little worlds, and not in the great and common world*; for they disdain to spell and so by degrees to read in the volume of God's works; and contrariwise by continual meditation and agitation of wit do urge and as it were invoke their own spirits to divine and give oracles unto them, whereby they are deservedly deluded.

Another error that hath some connexion with this later is, that men have used to infect their meditations, opinions, and doctrines, with some conceits which they have most admired, or some sciences which they have most applied; and given all things else a tincture according to them, utterly untrue and improper. So hath Plato intermingled his philosophy with theology, and Aristotle with logic, and the second school of Plato, Proclus and the rest, with the mathematics. For these were the arts which had a kind of primogeniture with them severally. So have the alchemists made a philosophy out of a few experiments of the furnace; and Gilbertus, our countryman, hath made a philosophy out of the observations of a loadstone. So Cicero, when, reciting the several opinions of the nature of the soul, he found a musician that held the soul was but a harmony, saith pleasantly, *Hic ab arte sua non recessit*, &c. [he was

constant to his own art]. But of these conceits Aristotle speaketh seriously and wisely, when he saith, *Qui respectunt ad pauca de facili pronunciant*: [they who take only few points into account find it easy to pronounce judgment].

Another error is an impatience of doubt, and haste to assertion without due and mature suspension of judgment. For the two ways of contemplation are not unlike the two ways of action commonly spoken of by the ancients; the one plain and smooth in the beginning, and in the end impassable; the other rough and troublesome in the entrance, but after a while fair and even. So it is in contemplation; if a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties.

Another error is in the manner of the tradition and delivery of knowledge, which is for the most part magistral and peremptory, and not ingenuous and faithful; in a sort as may be soonest believed, and not easiliest examined. It is true that in compendious treatises for practice that form is not to be disallowed. But in the true handling of knowledge, men ought not to fall either on the one side into the vein of Velleius the Epicurean, *Nil tam metuens, quàm ne dubitare aliqua de re videretur*, [who feared nothing so much as the seeming to be in doubt about anything,] nor on the other side into Socrates his ironical doubting of all things; but to propound things sincerely, with more or less asseveration, as they stand in a man's own judgment proved more or less.

Other errors there are in the scope that men propound to themselves, whereunto they bend their endeavours; for whereas the more constant and devote kind of professors of any science ought to propound to themselves to make some additions to their science, they convert their labours to aspire to certain second prizes; as to be a profound interpreter or commenter, to be a sharp champion or defender, to be a methodical compounder or abridger; and so the patrimony of knowledge cometh to be sometimes improved, but seldom augmented.

But the greatest error of all the rest is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or furthest end of knowledge. For men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession; and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men: as if there were sought in knowledge a couch, whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace, for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state, for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground, for strife and contention; or a shop, for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse, for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate. But this is that which will indeed dignify and exalt knowledge, if contemplation and action may be more nearly and straitly conjoined and united together than they have been; a conjunction like unto that of the two highest planets, Saturn the planet of rest and contemplation, and Jupiter the planet of civil society and action. Howbeit, I do not mean, when I speak of use and action, that end before-mentioned of the applying of knowledge to lucre and profession: for I am not ignorant how much that diverteth and interrupteth the prosecution and advancement of knowledge; like unto the golden ball thrown before Atalanta, which while she goeth aside and stoopeth to take up, the race is hindered,

Declinat cursus, aurumque volubile tollit.

[*She swerves from the race and picks up the golden ball.]

Neither is my meaning, as was spoken of Socrates, to call philosophy down from heaven to converse upon the earth; that is, to leave natural philosophy aside, and to apply knowledge only to manners and policy. But as both heaven and earth do conspire and contribute to the use and benefit of man, so the end ought to be, from both philosophies to

separate and reject vain speculations and whatsoever is empty and void, and to preserve and augment whatsoever is solid and fruitful; that knowledge may not be as a curtesan, for pleasure and vanity only, or as a bond-woman, to acquire and gain to her master's use; but as a spouse, for generation, fruit, and comfort.

Thus have I described and opened, as by a kind of dissection, those peccant humours (the principal of them) which have not only given impediment to the proficience of learning, but have given also occasion to the traducement thereof: wherein if I have been too plain, it must be remembered *Fidelia vulnera amantis, sed dolosa oscula malignantis*: [faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful]. This I think I have gained, that I ought to be the better believed in that which I shall say pertaining to commendation, because I have proceeded so freely in that which concerneth censure. And yet I have no purpose to enter into a laudative of learning, or to make a hymn to the muses, (though I am of opinion that it is long since their rites were duly celebrated:) but my intent is, without varnish or amplification, justly to weigh the dignity of knowledge in the balance with other things, and to take the true value thereof by testimonies and arguments divine and human.

First therefore, let us seek the dignity of knowledge in the arch-type or first platform, which is in the attributes and acts of God, as far as they are revealed to man and may be observed with sobriety; wherein we may not seek it by the name of learning; for all learning is knowledge acquired, and all knowledge in God is original: and therefore we must look for it by another name, that of wisdom or sapience, as the Scriptures call it.

It is so then, that in the work of the creation we see a double emanation of virtue from God; the one referring more properly to power, the other to wisdom; the one expressed in making the subsistence of the matter, and the other in disposing the beauty of the form. This being supposed, it is to be observed, that for any thing which ap-

peareth in the history of the creation, the confused mass and matter of heaven and earth was made in a moment, and the order and disposition of that chaos or mass was the work of six days; such a note of difference it pleased God to put upon the works of power and the works of wisdom; wherewith concurrereth, that in the former it is not set down that God said, *Let there be heaven and earth*, as it is set down of the works following; but actually, that God made heaven and earth: the one carrying the style of a manufacture, and the other of a law, decree, or counsel.

To proceed to that which is next in order, from God to spirits; we find, as far as credit is to be given to the celestial hierarchy of that supposed Dionysius the senator of Athens, the first place or degree is given to the angels of love, which are termed Seraphim; the second to the angels of light, which are termed Cherubim; and the third and so following places to thrones, principalities, and the rest, which are all angels of power and ministry; so as the angels of knowledge and illumination are placed before the angels of office and domination.

To descend from spirits and intellectual forms to sensible and material forms; we read the first form that was created was light, which hath a relation and correspondence in nature and corporal things, to knowledge in spirits and incorporeal things.

So in the distribution of days, we see the day wherein God did rest and contemplate his own works, was blessed above all the days wherein he did effect and accomplish them.

After the creation was finished, it is set down unto us that man was placed in the garden to work therein; which work so appointed to him could be no other than work of contemplation; that is, when the end of work is but for exercise and experiment, not for necessity; for there being then no reluctance of the creature, nor sweat of the brow, man's employment must of consequence have been matter of delight in the experiment, and not matter of labour for the use. Again, the first acts which man performed in Para-

by the ancients in that feigned relation of Orpheus theatre; where all beasts and birds assembled, and forgetting their several appetites, some of prey, some of game, some of quarrel, stood all sociably together listening unto the airs and accords of the harp; the sound whereof no sooner ceased, or was drowned by some louder noise, but every beast returned to his own nature: wherein is aptly described the nature and condition of men; who are full of savage and unreclaimed desires, of profit, of lust, of revenge, which as long as they give ear to precepts, to laws, to religion, sweetly touched with eloquence and persuasion of books, of sermons, of harangues, so long is society and peace maintained; but if these instruments be silent, or that sedition and tumult make them not audible, all things dissolve into anarchy and confusion.

But this appeareth more manifestly, when kings themselves, or persons of authority under them, or other governors in commonwealths and popular estates, are endued with learning. For although he might be thought partial to his own profession, that said *Then should people and estates be happy, when either kings were philosophers, or philosophers kings*; yet so much is verified by experience, that under learned princes and governors there have been ever the best times: for howsoever kings may have their imperfections in their passions and customs, yet if they be illuminate by learning, they have those notions of religion, policy, and morality, which do preserve them and refrain them from all ruinous and peremptory errors and excesses; whispering evermore in their ears, when counsellors and servants stand mute and silent. And senators or counsellors likewise which be learned, do proceed upon more safe and substantial principles than counsellors which are only men of experience; the one sort keeping dangers afar off, whereas the other discover them not till they come near hand, and then trust to the agility of their wit to ward or avoid them.

Which felicity of times under learned princes (to keep still the law of brevity, by using the most eminent and selected examples) doth best appear in the age which

passed from the death of Domitianus the emperor until the reign of Commodus; comprehending a succession of six princes, all learned or singular favourers and advancers of learning; which age, for temporal respects, was the most happy and flourishing that ever the Roman empire (which then was a model of the world) enjoyed: a matter revealed and prefigured unto Domitian in a dream the night before he was slain; for he thought there was grown behind upon his shoulders a neck and a head of gold, which came accordingly to pass in those golden times which succeeded: of which princes we will make some commemoration; wherein although the matter will be vulgar, and may be thought fitter for a declamation than agreeable to a treatise infolded as this is, yet because it is pertinent to the point in hand, *neque semper arcum tendit Apollo*, [and Apollo does not keep his bow always bent,] and to name them only were too naked and cursory, I will not omit it altogether.

The first was Nerva; the excellent temper of whose government is by a glance in Cornelius Tacitus touched to the life: *Postquam divus Nerva res olim insociabiles miscuisset, imperium et libertatem*: [he united and reconciled two things which used not to go together—government and liberty]. And in token of his learning, the last act of his short reign left to memory was a missive to his adopted son Trajan, proceeding upon some inward discontent at the ingratitude of the times, comprehended in a verse of Homer's;

Telis, Phœbe, tuis lacrymas ulciscere nostras.
[O Phœbus, with thy shafts avenge these tears.]

Trajan, who succeeded, was for his person not learned: but if we will hearken to the speech of our Saviour, that saith, *He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall have a prophet's reward*, he deserveth to be placed amongst the most learned princes: for there was not a greater admirer of learning or benefactor of learning; a founder of famous libraries, a perpetual advancer of learned men to office, and a familiar converser with learned profes-

sors and preceptors, who were noted to have then most credit in court. On the other side, how much Trajan's virtue and government was admired and renowned, surely no testimony of grave and faithful history doth more lively set forth, than that legend tale of Gregorius Magnus, bishop of Rome, who was noted for the extreme envy he bare towards all heathen excellency: and yet he is reported, out of the love and estimation of Trajan's moral virtues, to have made unto God passionate and fervent prayers for the delivery of his soul out of hell; and to have obtained it, with a caveat that he should make no more such petitions. In this prince's time also the persecutions against the Christians received intermission, upon the certificate of Plinius Secundus, a man of excellent learning and by Trajan advanced.

Adrian, his successor, was the most curious man that lived, and the most universal inquirer; insomuch as it was noted for an error in his mind, that he desired to comprehend all things, and not to reserve himself for the worthiest things; falling into the like humour that was long before noted in Philip of Macedon, who when he would needs over-rule and put down an excellent musician in an argument touching music, was well answered by him again, *God forbid, Sir, (saith he,) that your fortune should be so bad, as to know these things better than I.* It pleased God likewise to use the curiosity of this emperor as an inducement to the peace of his church in those days. For having Christ in veneration, not as a God or Saviour, but as a wonder or novelty, and having his picture in his gallery matched with Appollonius (with whom in his vain imagination he thought he had some conformity), yet it served the turn to allay the bitter hatred of those times against the Christian names; so as the church had peace during his time. And for his government civil, although he did not attain to that of Trajan's in glory of arms or perfection of justice, yet in deserving of the weal of the subject he did exceed him. For Trajan erected many famous monuments and buildings; insomuch as Constantine the Great in emulation was

went to call him *Parietaria*, wall flower, because his name was upon so many walls: but his buildings and works were more of glory and triumph than use and necessity. But Adrian spent his whole reign, which was peaceable, in a perambulation or survey of the Roman empire; giving order and making assignation where he went for re-edifying of cities, towns, and forts decayed, and for cutting of rivers and streams, and for making bridges and passages, and for policing of cities and commonalties with new ordinances and constitutions, and granting new franchises and incorporations; so that his whole time was a very restoration of all the lapses and decays of former times.

Antoninus Pius, who succeeded him, was a prince excellently learned; and had the patient and subtile wit of a schoolman; insomuch as in common speech (which leaves no virtue untaxed) he was called *cymini sector*, a carver or divider of cummin seed, which is one of the least seeds; such a patience he had and settled spirit to enter into the least and most exact differences of causes; a fruit no doubt of the exceeding tranquillity and serenity of his mind; which being no ways charged or incumbered either with fears, remorses, or scruples, but having been noted for a man of the purest goodness, without all fiction or affectation, that hath reigned or lived, made his mind continually present and entire. He likewise approached a degree nearer unto Christianity, and became, as Agrippa said unto St. Paul, *half a Christian*; holding their religion and law in good opinion, and not only ceasing persecution, but giving way to the advancement of Christians.

There succeeded him the first *Divi fratres* [*divine brothers], the two adoptive brethren, Lucius Commodus Verus, son to Ælius Verus, who delighted much in the softer kind of learning, and was wont to call the poet Martial his Virgil; and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus; whereof the later, who obscured his colleague and survived him long, was named the Philosopher: who as he excelled all the rest in learning, so he excelled them likewise in perfection of all royal virtues; insomuch as Julianus the emperor, in his

book intitled *Cæsares*, being as a pasquil or satire to deride all his predecessors, feigned that they were all invited to a banquet of the gods, and Silenus the jester sat at the nether end of the table and bestowed a scoff on every one as they came in; but when Marcus Philosophus came in, Silenus was gruelled and out of countenance, not knowing where to carp at him; save at the last he gave a glance at his patience towards his wife. And the virtue of this prince, continued with that of his predecessor, made the name of Antoninus so sacred in the world, that though it were extremely dishonoured in Commodus, Caracalla, and Helio-gabalus, who all bare the name, yet when Alexander Severus refused the name because he was a stranger to the family, the Senate with one acclamation said, *Quomodo Augustus, sic et Antoninus*: [let the name of Antoninus be as the name of Augustus:] in such renown and veneration was the name of these two princes in those days, that they would have it as a perpetual addition in all the emperors' style. In this emperor's time also the church for the most part was in peace; so as in this sequence of six princes we do see the blessed effects of learning in sovereignty, painted forth in the greatest table of the world.

But for a tablet or picture of smaller volume, (not presuming to speak of your Majesty that liveth,) in my judgment the most excellent is that of queen Elizabeth, your immediate predecessor in this part of Britain; a prince that, if Plutarch were now alive to write lives by parallels, would trouble him, I think, to find for her a parallel amongst women. This lady was endued with learning in her sex singular, and rare even amongst masculine princes; whether we speak of learning of language or of science; modern or ancient; divinity or humanity. And unto the very last year of her life she accustomed to appoint set hours for reading, scarcely any young student in an university more daily or more dully. As for her government, I assure myself I shall not exceed if I do affirm that this part of the island never had forty-five years of better times; and yet not through the calmness of the season, but through the

wisdom of her regiment. For if there be considered of the one side, the truth of religion established; the constant peace and security; the good administration of justice; the temperate use of the prerogative, not slackened, nor much strained; the flourishing state of learning, sortable^{so} to so excellent a patroness; the convenient estate of wealth and means, both of crown and subject; the habit of obedience, and the moderation of discontents; and there be considered on the other side, the differences of religion, the troubles of neighbour countries, the ambition of Spain, and opposition of Rome; and then that she was solitary and of herself: these things I say considered, as I could not have chosen an instance so recent and so proper, so I suppose I could not have chosen one more remarkable or eminent, to the purpose now in hand; which is concerning the conjunction of learning in the prince with felicity in the people.

Neither hath learning an influence and operation only upon civil merit and moral virtue, and the arts or temperature of peace and peaceable government; but likewise it hath no less power and efficacy in enablement towards martial and military virtue and prowess; as may be notably represented in the examples of Alexander the Great and Cæsar the Dictator, mentioned before, but now in fit place to be resumed; of whose virtues and acts in war there needs no note or recital, having been the wonders of time in that kind; but of their affections towards learning, and perfections in learning, it is pertinent to say somewhat.

Alexander was bred and taught under Aristotle the great philosopher, who dedicated divers of his books of philosophy unto him. He was attended with Callisthenes and divers other learned persons, that followed him in camp, throughout his journeys and conquests. What price and estimation he had learning in doth notably appear in these three particulars: first, in the envy he used to express that he bare towards Achilles, in this that he had so good a trumpet of his praises as Homer's verses; secondly, in the judgment or solution he gave touching that precious cabinet of Darius, which was found among his jewels, whereof

question was made what thing was worthy to be put into it, and he gave his opinion for Homer's works; thirdly, in his letter to Aristotle, after he had set forth his books of nature, wherein he expostulateth with him for publishing the secrets or mysteries of philosophy, and gave him to understand that himself esteemed it more to excel other men in learning and knowledge than in power and empire. And what use he had of learning doth appear, or rather shine, in all his speeches and answers, being full of science and use of science, and that in all variety.

And herein again it may seem a thing scholastical, and somewhat idle, to recite things that every man knoweth; but yet since the argument I handle leadeth me thereunto, I am glad that men shall perceive I am as willing to flatter (if they will so call it) an Alexander or a Cæsar or an Antoninus, that are dead many hundred years since, as any that now liveth: for it is the displaying of the glory of learning in sovereignty that I propound to myself, and not an humour of declaiming in any man's praises. Observe then the speech he used of Diogenes, and see if it tend not to the true state of one of the greatest questions of moral philosophy; whether the enjoying of outward things or the contemning of them be the greatest happiness; for when he saw Diogenes so perfectly contented with so little, he said to those that mocked at his condition, *Were I not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes*. But Seneca inverteth it, and saith, *Plus erat quod hic nollet accipere, quàm quod ille posset dare*. There were more things which Diogenes would have refused, than those were which Alexander could have given or enjoyed.

Observe again that speech which was usual with him, *That he felt his mortality chiefly in two things, sleep and lust*; and see if it were not a speech extracted out of the depth of natural philosophy, and liker to have comen out of the mouth of Aristotle or Democritus than from Alexander.

See again that speech of humanity and poesy; when upon the bleeding of his wounds, he called unto him one of his flatterers that was wont to ascribe to him divine

durius est mihi hoc dicere quàm facere. A speech compounded of the greatest terror and greatest clemency that could proceed out of the mouth of man.

But to return and conclude with him: it is evident himself knew well his own perfection in learning, and took it upon him; as appeared when upon occasion that some spake what a strange resolution it was in Lucius Sylla to resign his dictatorship, he scoffing at him, to his own advantage, answered, *That Sylla could not skill of letters, and therefore knew not how to dictate.*

And here it were fit to leave this point touching the concurrence of military virtue and learning; (for what example would come with any grace after those two of Alexander and Cæsar?) were it not in regard of the rareness of circumstance that I find in one other particular, as that which did so suddenly pass from extreme scorn to extreme wonder; and it is of Xenophon the philosopher, who went from Socrates' school into Asia, in the expedition of Cyrus the younger against king Artaxerxes. This Xenophon at that time was very young, and never had seen the wars before; neither had any command in the army, but only followed the war as a voluntary, for the love and conversation of Proxenus his friend. He was present when Falinus came in message from the great king to the Grecians, after that Cyrus was slain in the field, and they a handful of men left to themselves in the midst of the king's territories, cut off from their country by many navigable rivers, and many hundred miles. The message imported that they should deliver up their arms, and submit themselves to the king's mercy. To which message before answer was made, divers of the army conferred familiarly with Falinus; and amongst the rest Xenophon happened to say, *Why Falinus, we have now but these two things left, our arms and our virtue; and if we yield up our arms, how shall we make use of our virtue?* Whereto Falinus smiling on him, said, *If I be not deceived, young gentleman, you are an Athenian; and I believe you study philosophy, and it is pretty that you say; but you are much abused if you think your virtue can*

withstand the king's power. Here was the scorn; the wonder followed: which was, that this young scholar or philosopher, after all the captains were murdered in parley by treason, conducted those ten thousand foot through the heart of all the king's high countries from Babylon to Græcia in safety, in despite of all the king's forces, to the astonishment of the world, and the encouragement of the Grecians in time succeeding to make invasion upon the kings of Persia; as was after purposed by Jason the Thesalian, attempted by Agesilaus the Spartan, and achieved by Alexander the Macedonian; all upon the ground of the act of that young scholar.

To proceed now from imperial and military virtue to moral and private virtue: first, it is an assured truth which is contained in the verses,

Scilicet ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
Emoluit mores, nec sinit esse feros;

[a true proficiency in liberal learning softens and humanises the manners]. It *taketh away* the wildness and barbarism and fierceness of men's minds: but indeed the accent had need be upon *fideliter*: [it must be a *true* proficiency:] for a little superficial learning doth rather work a contrary effect. It taketh away all levity, temerity, and insolency, by copious suggestion of all doubts and difficulties, and acquainting the mind to balance reasons on both sides, and to turn back the first offers and conceits of the mind, and to accept of nothing but examined and tried. It taketh away vain admiration of any thing, which is the root of all weakness. For all things are admired, either because they are new, or because they are great. For novelty, no man that wadeth in learning or contemplation thoroughly, but will find that printed in his heart *Nil novi super terram*. [there is nothing new under the sun]. Neither can any man marvel at the play of puppets, that goeth behind the curtain and adviseth well of the motion. And for magnitude, as Alexander the Great after that he was used to great armies and the great conquests of the spacious provinces

in Asia, when he received letters out of Greece of some fights and services there, which were commonly for a passage or a fort or some walled town at the most, he said, *It seemed to him that he was advertised of the battles of the frogs and the mice, that the old tales went of*: so certainly if a man meditate much upon the universal frame of nature, the earth with men upon it (the divineness of souls except) will not seem much other than an ant-hill, whereas some ants carry corn, and some carry their young, and some go empty, and all to and fro a little heap of dust. It taketh away or *mitigateth* fear of death or adverse fortune; which is one of the greatest impediments of virtue and imperfections of manners. For if a man's mind be deeply seasoned with the consideration of the mortality and corruptible nature of things, he will easily concur with Epicurus, who went forth one day and saw a woman weeping for her pitcher of earth that was broken, and went forth the next day and saw a woman weeping for her son that was dead; and thereupon said, *Heri vidi fragilem frangi, hodie vidi mortalem mori*: [yesterday I saw a brittle thing broken, to-day a mortal dead]. And therefore Virgil did excellently and profoundly couple the knowledge of causes and the conquest of all fears together, as *concomitantia*.

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
Quique metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.

[Happy the man who doth the causes know
Of all that is: serene he stands, above
All fears; above the inexorable Fate,
And that insatiate gulph that roars below.]

It were too long to go over the particular remedies which learning doth minister to all the diseases of the mind; sometimes purging the ill humours, sometimes opening the obstructions, sometimes helping digestion, sometimes increasing appetite, sometimes healing the wounds and exulcerations thereof, and the like; and therefore I will conclude with that which hath *rationem totius* [*the es-

sence of the whole matter]; which is, that it disposeth the constitution of the mind not to be fixed or settled in the defects thereof, but still to be capable and susceptible of growth and reformation. For the unlearned man knows not what it is to descend into himself or to call himself to account, nor the pleasure of that *suavissima vita*, *indies sentire se fieri meliorem*, [to feel himself each day a better man than he was the day before]. The good parts he hath he will learn to shew to the full and use them dexterously, but not much to increase them: the faults he hath he will learn how to hide and colour them, but not much to amend them; like an ill mower, that mows on still and never whets his scythe: whereas with the learned man it fares otherwise, that he doth ever intermix the correction and amendment of his mind with the use and employment thereof. Nay further, in general and in sum, certain it is that *veritas* [*truth] and *bonitas* [*goodness] differ but as the seal and the print; for truth prints goodness, and they be the clouds of error which descend in the storms of passions and perturbations.

From moral virtue let us pass on to matter of power and commandment, and consider whether in right reason there be any comparable with that wherewith knowledge investeth and crowneth man's nature. We see the dignity of the commandment is according to the dignity of the commanded: to have commandment over beasts, as herdsmen have, is a thing contemptible; to have commandment over children, as schoolmasters have, is a matter of small honour; to have commandment over galley-slaves is a disparagement rather than an honour. Neither is the commandment of tyrants much better, over people which have put off the generosity of their minds: and therefore it was ever holden that honours in free monarchies and commonwealths had a sweetness more than in tyrannies; because the commandment extendeth more over the wills of men, and not only over their deeds and services. And therefore when Virgil putteth himself forth to attribute to Augustus Cæsar the best of human honours, he doth it in these words:

victorque volentes

Per populos dat jura, viamque affectat Olympo:

[Moving in conquest onward, at his will

To willing peoples he gives laws, and shapes

Through worthiest deeds on earth his course to Heaven.]

But yet the commandment of knowledge is yet higher than the commandment over the will; for it is a commandment over the reason, belief, and understanding of man, which is the highest part of the mind, and giveth law to the will itself. For there is no power on earth which setteth up a throne or chair of estate in the spirits and souls of men, and in their cogitations, imaginations, opinions, and beliefs, but knowledge and learning. And therefore we see the detestable and extreme pleasure that arch-heretics and false prophets and impostors are transported with, when they once find in themselves that they have a superiority in the faith and conscience of men; so great, that if they have once tasted of it, it is seldom seen that any torture or persecution can make them relinquish or abandon it. But as this is that which the author of the Revelation calleth the depth or profoundness of Satan; so by argument of contraries, the just and lawful sovereignty over men's understanding, by force of truth rightly interpreted, is that which approacheth nearest to the similitude of the divine rule.

As for fortune and advancement, the beneficence of learning is not so confined to give fortune only to states and commonwealths, as it doth not likewise give fortune to particular persons. For it was well noted long ago, that Homer hath given more men their livings than either Sylla or Cæsar or Augustus ever did, notwithstanding their great largesses and donatives and distributions of lands to so many legions. And no doubt it is hard to say whether arms or learning have advanced greater numbers. And in case of sovereignty, we see that if arms or descent have carried away the kingdom, yet learning hath carried the priest-

hood, which ever hath been in some competition with empire.

Again, for the pleasure and delight of knowledge and learning, it far surpasseth all other in nature: for shall the pleasures of the affections so exceed the senses, as much as the obtaining of desire or victory exceedeth a song or a dinner; and must not of consequence the pleasures of the intellect or understanding exceed the pleasures of the affections? We see in all other pleasures there is satiety, and after they be used, their verdure departeth; which sheweth well they be but deceits of pleasure, and not pleasures; and that it was the novelty which pleased, and not the quality. And therefore we see that voluptuous men turn friars, and ambitious princes turn melancholy. But of knowledge there is no satiety, but satisfaction and appetite are perpetually interchangeable; and therefore appeareth to be good in itself simply, without fallacy or accident. Neither is that pleasure of small efficacy and contentment to the mind of man, which the poet Lucretius describeth elegantly,

Suave mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis, &c.

It is a view of delight (saith he) to stand or walk upon the shore side, and (to see) a ship tossed with tempest upon the sea; or to be in a fortified tower, and to see two battles join upon a plain. But is is a pleasure incomparable, for the mind of man to be settled, landed, and fortified in the certainty of truth; and from thence to descry and behold the errors, perturbations, labours, and wanderings up and down of other men.

Lastly, leaving the vulgar arguments, that by learning man excelleth man in that wherein man excelleth beasts; that by learning man ascendeth to the heavens and their motions, where in body he cannot come; and the like; let us conclude with the dignity and excellency of knowledge and learning in that whereunto man's nature doth most aspire; which is immortality or continuance; for to this tendeth generation, and raising of houses and families; to this buildings, foundations and monuments; to this tendeth

the desire of memory, fame, and celebration; and in effect, the strength of all other human desires. We see then how far the monuments of wit and learning are more durable than the monuments of power or of the hands. For have not the verses of Homer continued twenty-five hundred years or more, without the loss of a syllable or letter; during which time infinite palaces, temples, castles, cities, have been decayed and demolished? It is not possible to have the true pictures or statues of Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, no nor of the kings or great personages of much later years; for the originals cannot last, and the copies cannot but leese of the life and truth. But the images of men's wits and knowledges remain in books, exempted from the wrong of time and capable of perpetual renovation. Neither are they fitly to be called images, because they generate still, and cast their seeds in the minds of others, provoking and causing infinite actions and opinions in succeeding ages. So that if the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions in participation of their fruits, how much more are letters to be magnified, which as ships pass through the vast seas of time, and make ages so distant to participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, the one of the other? Nay further, we see some of the philosophers which were least divine and most immersed in the senses and denied generally the immortality of the soul, yet came to this point, that whatsoever motions the spirit of man could act and perform without the organs of the body they thought might remain after death; which were only those of the understanding, and not of the affection; so immortal and incorruptible a thing did knowledge seem unto them to be. But we, that know by divine revelation that not only the understanding but the affections purified, not only the spirit but the body changed, shall be advanced to immortality, do disclaim in³² these rudiments of the senses. But it must be remembered both in this last point, and so it may likewise be needful in other places, that in probation of the dignity of

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AND
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TO THE KING

It might seem to have more convenience, though it come often otherwise to pass, (excellent King,) that those which are fruitful in their generations, and have in themselves the foresight of immortality in their descendants, should likewise be more careful of the good estate of future times; unto which they know they must transmit and commend over their dearest pledges. Queen Elizabeth was a sojourner in the world in respect of her unmarried life; and was a blessing to her own times; and yet so as the impression of her good government, besides her happy memory, is not without some effect which doth survive her. But to your Majesty, whom God hath already blessed with so much royal issue, worthy to continue and represent you for ever, and whose youthful and fruitful bed doth yet promise many the like renovations, it is proper and agreeable to be conversant not only in the transitory parts of good government, but in those acts also which are in their nature permanent and perpetual. Amongst the which (if

affection do not transport me) there is not any more worthy than the further endowment of the world with sound and fruitful knowledge: for why should a few received authors stand up like Hercules' Columns,¹ beyond which there should be no sailing or discovering, since we have so bright and benign a star as your Majesty to conduct and prosper us? To return therefore where we left, it remaineth to consider of what kind those acts are, which have been undertaken and performed by kings and others for the increase and advancement of learning: wherein I purpose to speak actively without digressing or dilating.

Let this ground therefore be laid, that all works are overcome by amplitude of reward, by soundness of direction, and by the conjunction of labours. The first multiplieth endeavour, the second preventeth error, and the third supplieth the frailty of man. But the principal of these is direction: for *claudus in via antevertit cursorem extra viam*; [the cripple that keeps the way gets to the end of the journey sooner than the runner who goes aside;] and Salomon excellently setteth it down, *If the iron be not sharp, it requireth more strength; but wisdom is that which prevaieth*; signifying that the invention or election of the mean is more effectual than any inforcement or accumulation of endeavours. This I am induced to speak, for that (not derogating from the noble intention of any that have been deservors towards the state of learning) I do observe nevertheless that their works and acts are rather matters of magnificence and memory than of progression and proficiency, and tend rather to augment the mass of learning in the multitude of learned men than to rectify or raise the sciences themselves.

The works or acts of merit towards learning are conversant about three objects; the places of learning, the books of learning, and the persons of the learned. For as water, whether it be the dew of heaven or the springs of the earth, doth scatter and leese itself in the ground, except it be collected into some receptacle, where it may by union comfort and sustain itself; and for that cause the

industry of man hath made and framed spring-heads, conduits, cisterns, and pools, which men have accustomed likewise to beautify and adorn with accomplishments of magnificence and state, as well as of use and necessity; so this excellent liquor of knowledge, whether it descend from divine inspiration or spring from human sense, would soon perish and vanish to oblivion, if it were not preserved in books, traditions, conferences, and places appointed, as universities, colleges, and schools, for the receipt and comforting of the same.

The works which concern the seats and places of learning are four; foundations and buildings, endowments with revenues, endowments with franchises and privileges, institutions and ordinances for government; all tending to quietness and privateness of life, and discharge of cares and troubles; much like the stations which Virgil prescribeth for the hiving of bees:

Principio sedes apibus statioque petenda,
Quo neque sit ventis aditus, &c.

[First for thy bees a quiet station find,
And lodge them under covert of the wind.]

The works touching books are two: first libraries, which are as the shrines where all the relics of the ancient saints, full of true virtue and that without delusion or imposture, are preserved and reposed; secondly, new editions of authors, with more correct impressions, more faithful translations, more profitable glosses, more diligent annotations, and the like.

The works pertaining to the persons of learned men (besides the advancement and countenancing of them in general) are two: the reward and designation of readers in sciences already extant and invented; and the reward and designation of writers and inquirers concerning any parts of learning not sufficiently laboured and prosecuted.

These are summarily the works and acts, wherein the merits of many excellent princes and other worthy personages have been conversant. As for any particular com-

memorations, I call to mind what Cicero said, when he gave general thanks; *Difficile non aliquem, ingratum quendam præterire*: [it were hard to remember all, and yet ungracious to forget any]. Let us rather, according to the Scriptures, look unto that part of the race which is before us than look back to that which is already attained.

First therefore, amongst so many great foundations of colleges in Europe, I find it strange that they are all dedicated to professions, and none left free to arts and sciences at large. For if men judge that learning should be referred to action, they judge well; but in this they fall into the error described in the ancient fable; in which the other parts of the body did suppose the stomach had been idle, because it neither performed the office of motion, as the limbs do, nor of sense, as the head doth; but yet notwithstanding it is the stomach that digesteth and distributeth to all the rest. So if any man think philosophy and universality to be idle studies, he doth not consider that all professions are from thence served and supplied. And this I take to be a great cause that hath hindered the progression of learning, because these fundamental knowledges have been studied but in passage. For if you will have a tree bear more fruit than it hath used to do, it is not any thing you can do to the boughs, but it is the stirring of the earth and putting new mould about the roots that must work it. Neither is it to be forgotten that this dedicating of foundations and dotations to professory learning² hath not only had a malign aspect and influence upon the growth of sciences, but hath also been prejudicial to states and governments. For hence it proceedeth that princes find a solitude in regard of able men to serve them in causes of estate, because there is no education collegiate which is free;³ where such as were so disposed might give themselves to histories, modern languages, books of policy and civil discourse, and other the like enablements unto service of estate.

And because founders of colleges do plant and founders of lectures do water, it followeth well in order to speak of

of gardens for simples of all sorts, and do likewise command the use of dead bodies for anatomies. But these do respect but a few things. In general, there will hardly be any main proficience in the disclosing of nature, except there be some allowance for expenses about experiments; whether they be experiments appertaining to Vulcanus or Dædalus, furnace or engine, or any other kind; and therefore as secretaries and spials of princes and states bring in bills for intelligence,⁶ so you must allow the spials and intelligencers of nature to bring in their bills, or else you shall be ill advertised.⁷

And if Alexander made such a liberal assignation to Aristotle of treasure for the allowance of hunters, fowlers, fishers, and the like, that he might compile an History of nature, much better do they deserve it that travail in Arts of nature.⁸

Another defect which I note, is an intermission or neglect in those which are governors in universities of consultation, and in princes or superior persons of visitation; to enter into account and consideration, whether the readings, exercises, and other customs appertaining unto learning, anciently begun and since continued, be well instituted or no; and thereupon to ground an amendment or reformation in that which shall be found inconvenient. For it is one of your Majesty's own most wise and princely maxims, *that in all usages and precedents, the times be considered wherein they first began; which if they were weak or ignorant, it derogateth from the authority of the usage, and leaveth it for suspect.* And therefore in as much as most of the usages and orders of the universities were derived from more obscure times, it is the more requisite they be re-examined. In this kind I will give an instance or two for example sake, of things that are the most obvious and familiar. The one is a matter which though it be ancient and general, yet I hold to be an error; which is, that scholars in universities come too soon and too unripe to logic and rhetoric; arts fitter for graduates than children and novices: for these two, rightly taken, are the gravest of sciences; being they

arts of arts, the one for judgment, the other for ornament; and they be the rules and directions how to set forth and dispose matter; and therefore for minds empty and unfraught with matter, and which have not gathered that which Cicero calleth *sylva* and *supellex*, stuff and variety, to begin with those arts, (as if one should learn to weigh or to measure or to paint the wind,) doth work but this effect, that the wisdom of those arts, which is great and universal, is almost made contemptible, and is degenerate into childish sophistry and ridiculous affectation. And further, the untimely learning of them hath drawn on by consequence the superficial and unprofitable teaching and writing of them, as fitteth indeed to the capacity of children. Another is a lack I find in the exercises used in the universities, which do make too great a divorce between invention and memory; for their speeches are either premeditate *in verbis conceptis* [*in words already chosen], where nothing is left to invention, or merely *extemporal*, where little is left to memory: whereas in life and action there is least use of either of these, but rather of intermixtures of premeditation and invention, notes and memory; so as the exercise fitteth not the practice, nor the image the life; and it is ever a true rule in exercises, that they be framed as near as may be to the life of practice; for otherwise they do pervert the motions and faculties of the mind, and not prepare them. The truth whereof is not obscure, when scholars come to the practices of professions, or other actions of civil life; which when they set into, this want is soon found by themselves, and sooner by others. But this part, touching the amendment of the institutions and orders of universities, I will conclude with the clause of Cæsar's letter to Oppius and Balbus, *Hoc quemadmodum fieri possit, nonnulla mihi in mentem ventunt, et multa reperiri possunt; de iis rebus rogo vos ut cogitationem suscipiatis*: [how this may be done, some things occur to me and more may be thought of. I would have you take these matters into consideration.]

Another defect which I note, ascendeth a little higher than the precedent. For as the proficience of learning con-

affirm to be wanting. The use and end of which work I do not so much design for curiosity, or satisfaction of those that are the lovers of learning; but chiefly for a more serious and grave purpose, which is this in few words, that it will make learned men wise in the use and administration of learning. For it is not St. Augustine's nor St. Ambrose works that will make so wise a divine, as ecclesiastical history thoroughly read and observed; and the same reason is of learning.

History of Nature is of three sorts; of nature in course, of nature erring or varying, and of nature altered or wrought; that is, history of Creatures, history of Marvels, and history of Arts. The first of these no doubt is extant, and that in good perfection; the two later are handled so weakly and unprofitably, as I am moved to note them as deficient. For

*Historia
Naturæ
Errantis*

I find no sufficient or competent collection of the works of nature which have a digression and deflexion from the ordinary course of generations, productions, and motions; whether they be singularities of place and region, or the strange events of time and chance, or the effects of yet unknown proprieties, or the instances of exception to general kinds. It is true, I find a number of books of fabulous experiments and secrets, and frivolous impostures for pleasure and strangeness. But a substantial and severe collection of the Heteroclitics or Irregulars of nature, well examined and described, I find not; specially not with due rejection of fables and popular errors: for as things now are, if an untruth in nature be once on foot, what by reason of the neglect of examination and countenance of antiquity, and what by reason of the use of the opinion in similitudes and ornaments of speech, it is never called down.

The use of this work, honoured with a precedent in Aristotle, is nothing less than to give contentment to the appetite of curious and vain wits, as the manner of Mirabilaries is to do; but for two reasons, both of great weight; the one to correct the partiality of axioms and opinions, which are commonly framed only upon common and familiar exam-

Socrates, after his wandering manner of inductions, put first an example of a fair virgin, and then of a fair horse, and then of a fair pot well glazed, whereat Hippias was offended, and said, *More than for courtesy's sake, he did think much to dispute with any that did allege such base and sordid instances:* whereunto Socrates answereth, *You have reason, and it becomes you well, being a man so trim in your vestiments, &c.* and so goeth on in an irony. But the truth is, they be not the highest instances that give the securest information; as may be well expressed in the tale so common of the philosopher, that while he gazed upwards to the stars fell into the water; for if he had looked down he might have seen the stars in the water, but looking aloft he could not see the water in the stars. So it cometh often to pass that mean and small things discover great better than great can discover the small; and therefore Aristotle noteth well, *that the nature of every thing is best seen in his smallest portions*, and for that cause he inquireth the nature of a commonwealth, first in a family, and the simple conjugations of man and wife, parent and child, master and servant, which are in every cottage: even so likewise the nature of this great city of the world and the policy thereof must be first sought in mean concordances and small portions. So we see how that secret of nature, of the turning of iron touched with the loadstone towards the north, was found out in needles of iron, not in bars of iron.

But if my judgment be of any weight, the use of History Mechanical is of all others the most radical and fundamental towards natural philosophy; such natural philosophy as shall not vanish in the fume of subtile, sublime, or delectable speculation, but such as shall be operative to the endowment and benefit of man's life: for it will not only minister and suggest for the present many ingenious practices in all trades, by a connexion and transferring of the observations of one art to the use of another, when the experiences of several mysteries shall fall under the consideration of one man's mind; but further it will give a more true and real illumination concerning causes and axioms.

than is hitherto attained. For like as a man's disposition is never well known till he be crossed, nor Proteus ever changed shapes till he was straitened and held fast; so the passages and variations of nature cannot appear so fully in the liberty of nature, as in the trials and vexations of art.

For Civil History, it is of three kinds; not unfitly to be compared with the three kinds of pictures or images. For of pictures or images, we see some are unfinished, some are perfect, and some are defaced. So of histories we may find three kinds, Memorials, Perfect Histories, and Antiquities; for Memorials are history unfinished, or the first or rough draughts of history, and Antiquities are history defaced, or some remnants of history which have casually escaped the shipwrack of time.

Memorials, or Preparatory History, are of two sorts; whereof the one may be termed Commentaries, and the other Registers. Commentaries are they which set down a continuance of the naked events and actions, without the motives or designs, the counsels, the speeches, the pretexts, the occasions, and other passages of action: for this is the true nature of a Commentary; though Cæsar, in modesty mixed with greatness, did for his pleasure apply the name of a Commentary to the best history of the world. Registers are collections of public acts, as decrees of council, judicial proceedings, declarations and letters of estate, orations, and the like, without a perfect continuance or contexture of the thread of the narration.

Antiquities or Remnants of History are, as was said, *tanquam tabula naufragii*, [like the planks of a shipwreck;] when industrious persons by an exact and scrupulous diligence and observation, out of monuments, names, words, proverbs, traditions, private records and evidences, fragments of stories, passages of books that concern not story, and the like, do save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time.

In these kinds of unperfect histories I do assign no deficiency, for they are *tanquam imperfecte mista*, [things imperfectly compounded;] and therefore any deficiency in

pleased God to ordain and illustrate two examplar states of the world, for arms, learning, moral virtue, policy, and laws; the state of Græcia, and the state of Rome; the histories whereof occupying the middle part of time, have more ancient to them, histories which may by one common name be termed the Antiquities of the World; and after them, histories which may be likewise called by the name of Modern History.

Now to speak of the deficiencies. As to the Heathen Antiquities of the world, it is in vain to note them for deficient. Deficient they are no doubt, consisting most of fables and fragments; but the deficiencie cannot be holpen; for antiquity is like fame, *caput inter nubila condit* [*she lifts her head among the clouds], her head is muffled from our sight. For the History of the Exemplar States, it is extant in good perfection. Not but I could wish there were a perfect course of history for Græcia from Theseus to Philopœmen, (what time the affairs of Græcia drowned and extinguished in the affairs of Rome;) and for Rome from Romulus to Justinianus, who may be truly said to be *ultimus Romanorum* [*the last of the Romans]. In which sequences of story the text of Thucydides and Xenophon in the one, and the texts of Livius, Polybius, Sallustius, Cæsar, Appianus, Tacitus, Herodianus in the other, to be kept entire without any diminution at all, and only to be supplied and continued. But this is matter of magnificence, rather to be commended than required: and we speak now of parts of learning supplemental, and not of supererogation.

But for Modern Histories, whereof there are some few very worthy, but the greater part beneath mediocrity, leaving the care of foreign stories to foreign states, because I will not be *curiosus in aliena republica*, [a meddler in other nations' matters,] I cannot fail to represent to your Majesty the unworthiness of the history of England in the main continuance thereof, and the partiality and obliquity of that of Scotland in the latest and largest author that I have seen; supposing that it would be honour for your Majesty and a work very memorable, if this island of Great Britain, as it is

rowing it from Demosthenes, that *bona fama propria possessio defunctorum*; [good fame is all that a dead man can possess;] which possession I cannot but note that in our times it lieth much waste, and that therein there is a deficiency.

For Narrations and Relations of particular actions, there were also to be wished a greater diligence therein; for there is no great action but hath some good pen which attends it. And because it is an ability not common to write a good history, as may well appear by the small number of them; yet if particularity of actions memorable were but tolerably reported as they pass, the compiling of a complete History of Times might be the better expected, when a writer should arise that were fit for it: for the collection of such relations might be as a nursery garden, whereby to plant a fair and stately garden when time should serve.

There is yet another portion of history which Cornelius Tacitus maketh, which is not to be forgotten, specially with that application which he accoupleth it withal, Annals and Journals: appropriating to the former matters of estate, and to the later acts and accidents of a meaner nature. For giving but a touch of certain magnificent buildings, he addeth, *Cum ex dignitate populi Romani repertum sit, res illustres annalibus, talia diurnis urbis actis mandare*: [that it had been thought suitable to the dignity of the Roman people to enter in their *annals* only matters of note and greatness; leaving such things as these to the *journal records* of the city.] So as there is a kind of contemplative heraldry, as well as civil. And as nothing doth derogate from the dignity of a state more than confusion of degrees; so it doth not a little embase the authority of an history, to intermingle matters of triumph or matters of ceremony or matters of novelty with matters of state. But the use of a Journal hath not only been in the history of times, but likewise in the history of persons, and chiefly of actions; for princes in ancient time had, upon point of honour and policy both, journals kept of what passed day by day: for we see the Chronicle which was read before Ahasuerus, when he could not take rest, contained matter of affairs indeed, but

such as had passed in his own time, and very lately before: but the Journal of Alexander's house expressed every small particularity, even concerning his person and court; and it is yet an use well received in enterprises memorable, as expeditions of war, navigations, and the like, to keep diaries of that which passeth continually.

I cannot likewise be ignorant of a form of writing which some grave and wise men have used, containing a scattered history of those actions which they have thought worthy of memory, with politic discourse and observation thereupon; not incorporate into the history, but separately, and as the more principal in their intention; which kind of Ruminated History I think more fit to place amongst books of policy,¹³ whereof we shall hereafter speak, than amongst books of history; for it is the true office of history to represent the events themselves together with the counsels, and to leave the observations and conclusions thereupon to the liberty and faculty of every man's judgment. But mixtures are things irregular, whereof no man can define.

So also is there another kind of history manifoldly mixed, and that is History of Cosmography: being compounded of natural history, in respect of the regions themselves; of history civil, in respect of the habitations, regiments, and manners of the people; and the mathematics, in respect of the climates and configurations towards the heavens: which part of learning of all others in this latter time hath obtained most proficiencie. For it may be truly affirmed to the honour of these times, and in a virtuous emulation with antiquity, that this great building of the world had never through lights made in it, till the age of us and our fathers; for although they had knowledge of the antipodes,

Nosque ubi primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis,
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper:

[And while on us the fresh East breathes from far,
For them the red West lights her evening star:]

yet that might be by demonstration, and not in fact; and if by travel, it requireth the voyage but of half the globe. But

[illegible]

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I trust in]. For
and unblessed.
ques indeed ever
and not to their
himself *Felix*, not
So Cæsar said to
et fortunam ejus,

Faber quisque for-
tuna via virtuti nulla est
of his own fortune;
the wise nothing impossible to
virtue:] and the like, being used as spurs to in-
dustry, and not as stirrups to insolency, rather for resolu-
tion than for presumption or outward declaration, have
been ever thought sound and good, and are no question
imprinted in the greatest minds; who are so sensible of this
opinion as they can scarce contain it within. As we see in

delights of knowledge

the human spirit for his playfellow at that game. Lastly, I would address one general admonition to all; that they consider what are the true ends of knowledge, and that they seek it not either for pleasure of the mind, or for contention, or for superiority to others, or for profit, or fame, or power, or any of these inferior things; but for the benefit and use of life; and that they perfect and govern it in charity. For it was from lust of power that the angels fell, from lust of knowledge that man fell; but of charity there can be no excess, neither did angel or man ever come in danger by it.

The requests I have to make are these. Of myself I say nothing; but in behalf of the business which is in hand I entreat men to believe that it is not an opinion to be held, but a work to be done; and to be well assured that I am labouring to lay the foundation, not of any sect or doctrine, but of human utility and power. Next, I ask them to deal fairly by their own interests, and laying aside all emulations and prejudices in favour of this or that opinion, to join in consultation for the common good; and being now freed and guarded by the securities and helps which I offer from the errors and impediments of the way, to come forward themselves and take part in that which remains to be done. Moreover, to be of good hope, nor to imagine that this Instauration of mine is a thing infinite and beyond the power of man, when it is in fact the true end and termination of infinite error; and seeing also that it is by no means forgetful of the conditions of mortality and humanity, (for it does not suppose that the work can be altogether completed within one generation, but provides for its being taken up by another); and finally that it seeks for the sciences not arrogantly in the little cells of human wit, but with reverence in the greater world. But it is the empty things that are vast: things solid are most contracted and lie in little room. And now I have only one favour more to ask (else injustice to me may perhaps imperil the business itself)—that men will consider well how far, upon that which I must needs assert (if I am to be

not be otherwise than by due and exquisite attempering and adjustment of parts in nature, as by the harmony and perfect modulation of a lyre. And yet being a thing of all others the most difficult, it commonly fails of effect; and fails (it may be) from no cause more than from curious and premature meddling and impatience. Then Philosophy finding that her great work is too much for her, in sorrowful mood, as well becomes her, turns to human affairs; and applying her powers of persuasion and eloquence to insinuate into men's minds the love of virtue and equity and peace, teaches the peoples to assemble and unite and take upon them the yoke of laws and submit to authority, and forget their ungoverned appetites, in listening and conforming to precepts and discipline; whereupon soon follows the building of houses, the founding of cities, the planting of fields and gardens with trees; insomuch that the stones and the woods are not unfitly said to leave their places and come about her. And this application of Philosophy to civil affairs is properly represented, and according to the true order of things, as subsequent to the diligent trial and final frustration of the experiment of restoring the dead body to life. For true it is that the clearer recognition of the inevitable necessity of death sets men upon seeking immortality by merit and renown. Also it is wisely added in the story, that Orpheus was averse from women and from marriage; for the sweets of marriage and the dearness of children commonly draw men away from performing great and lofty services to the commonwealth; being content to be perpetuated in their race and stock, and not in their deeds.

But howsoever the works of wisdom are among human things the most excellent, yet they too have their periods and closes. For so it is that after kingdoms and commonwealths have flourished for a time, there arise perturbations and seditions and wars; amid the uproars of which, first the laws are put to silence, and then men return to the depraved conditions of their nature, and desolation is seen in the fields and cities. And if such troubles last, it is not long before letters also and philosophy are so torn in pieces that

XLI

The Idols of the Tribe have their foundation in human nature itself, and in the tribe or race of men. For it is a false assertion that the sense of man is the measure of things. On the contrary, all perceptions as well of the sense as of the mind are according to the measure of the individual and not according to the measure of the universe. And the human understanding is like a false mirror, which, receiving rays irregularly, distorts and discolours the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it.

XLII

The Idols of the Cave are the idols of the individual man. For every one (besides the errors common to human nature in general) has a cave or den of his own, which refracts and discolours the light of nature; owing either to his own proper and peculiar nature; or to his education and conversation with others; or to the reading of books, and the authority of those whom he esteems and admires; or to the differences of impressions, accordingly as they take place in a mind preoccupied and predisposed or in a mind indifferent and settled; or the like. So that the spirit of man (according as it is meted out to different individuals) is in fact a thing variable and full of perturbation, and governed as it were by chance. Whence it was well observed by Heraclitus that men look for sciences in their own lesser worlds, and not in the greater or common world.

XLIII

There are also Idols formed by the intercourse and association of men with each other, which I call Idols of the Market-place, on account of the commerce and consort of men there. For it is by discourse that men associate; and words are imposed according to the apprehension of the vulgar. And therefore the ill and unfit choice of words wonderfully obstructs the understanding. Nor do the definitions or explanations wherewith in some things learned men are wont

to guard and defend themselves, by any means set the matter right. But words plainly force and overrule the understanding, and throw all into confusion, and lead men away into numberless empty controversies and idle fancies.

XLIV

Lastly, there are Idols which have immigrated into men's minds from the various dogmas of philosophies, and also from wrong laws of demonstration. These I call Idols of the Theatre; because in my judgment all the received systems are but so many stage-plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion. Nor is it only of the systems now in vogue, or only of the ancient sects and philosophies, that I speak; for many more plays of the same kind may yet be composed and in like artificial manner set forth; seeing that errors the most widely different have nevertheless causes for the most part alike. Neither again do I mean this only of entire systems, but also of many principles and axioms in science, which by tradition, credulity, and negligence have come to be received.

But of these several kinds of Idols I must speak more largely and exactly, that the understanding may be duly cautioned.

XLV

The human understanding is of its own nature prone to suppose the existence of more order and regularity in the world than it finds. And though there be many things in nature which are singular and unmatched, yet it devises for them parallels and conjugates and relatives which do not exist. Hence the fiction that all celestial bodies move in perfect circles; spirals and dragons being (except in name) utterly rejected. Hence too the element of Fire with its orb¹ is brought in, to make up the square with the other three which the sense perceives. Hence also the ratio of density² of the so-called elements is arbitrarily fixed at ten to one. And so on of other dreams. And these fancies affect not dogmas only, but simple notions also.