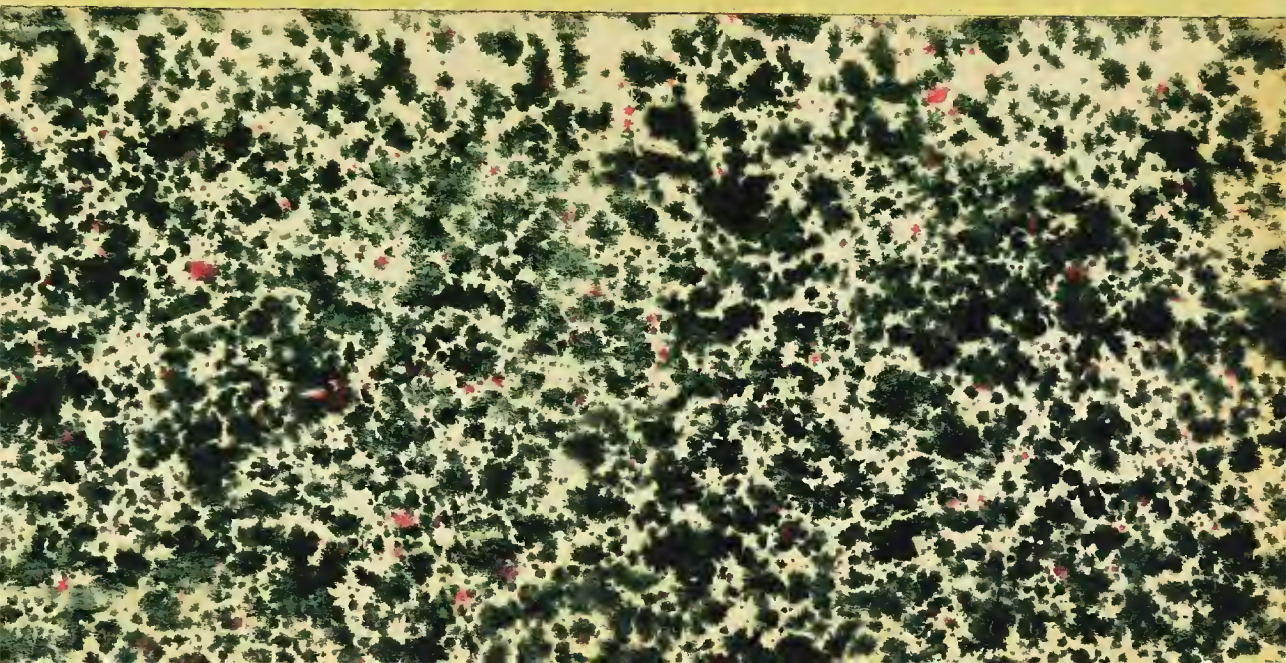

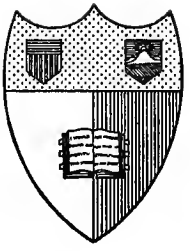

ANNOTATED ENGLISH CLASSICS

BACON

HUDSON

GINN & COMPANY.

TEXT-BOOK OF PROSE;

FROM

BURKE, WEBSTER, AND BACON,

WITH

NOTES, AND SKETCHES OF THE
AUTHORS' LIVES.

FOR USE IN SCHOOLS AND CLASSES.

BY THE

REV. HENRY N. HUDSON, LL.D.

BOSTON, U.S.A.:
PUBLISHED BY GINN & COMPANY.

PREFACE.

THE TEXT-BOOK OF PROSE here offered to the public is intended as a sort of companion-volume to the *Text-Book of Poetry* published a few months ago. Both volumes have originated in the same experiences, and the contents of both are ordered on the same principle, namely, that of teaching English literature by authors, and not by mere literary chips and splinters. Both the method of the work and the reasons for that method are set forth with some fulness in the Preface to the former volume. I have seen no cause to recede at all from the statement there made of them; and as a repetition of them here would be something ungraceful, I must be content with referring the reader to that Preface, merely remarking withal, that the matter was no recent or sudden thing with me, but the slow result of the experience and reflection of many years. And I am moved to renew my protest, if that be the right name for it, against putting young students through a course of mere nibbles and snatches from a multitude of authors, where they cannot stay long enough with any one to develop any real taste for him, or derive any solid benefit from him.

I shall hope to be excused for observing, further, that the miscellaneous selections now so commonly in use involve one error of so gross a character, that it ought not to be left unnoticed. Those selections make a merit, apparently, of ranging over as wide a field of authorship as may be, and value themselves in proportion to the number of authors included. So their method is to treat the giants and the pigmies, the big guns and the popguns of literature on a footing of equality: nay, you shall often find the

smaller made even more prominent than the greater; perhaps because the former are more apt to be popular than the latter. For instance, two pages will be given to Macaulay, or to a writer of still lower grade, where one is given to Jeremy Taylor or Addison or Burke. So, again, some fifth-rate or sixth-rate author, whose name is hardly known out of Boston, comes in for a larger space than is accorded to Daniel Webster. Or, once more, Edgar A. Poe's vapid inanities done into verse, where all is mere juggiery of words, or an exercise in verbal legerdemain, are made quite as much of as the choice workmanship of our best American poets, Bryant, Longfellow, and Whittier. This is an application of the levelling principle so unjust and so inexpedient, that we may well marvel how it should be tolerated in any walks of liberal learning and culture.

No thoughtful person, I take it, will have any difficulty in gathering that this volume is made up, like its predecessor, with a special view to the oldest and ripest pupils in our high-schools and seminaries and academies. These pupils, it may well be supposed, are old enough and ripe enough to unfold at least the beginnings of literary and intellectual taste, so as to be at home and find delight in tasteful and elegant authorship, where the graces may do something towards making the ways of learning ways of pleasantness to them.

Of the three authors here drawn upon, two are, by general suffrage, the very greatest in the prose literature of the English-speaking world, while the third is, I believe, generally and justly held to be, by all odds, the first in the prose literature of our own country. In the case of Burke and Webster, the works from which I had to select are somewhat voluminous, and it is quite likely that my selections are not in all cases the most judicious that might have been made. On this point I can but plead that, after an acquaintance of many years with those authors, I have used my best care and diligence in looking out such portions as seemed to me to combine, in the greatest degree, the two qualities of literary excellence and of fitness to the

purposes of this volume. Nor, perhaps, will it be amiss to add, in reference to Burke and Webster, that I often found it not easy to choose between several pieces, and that I was compelled by lack of room to omit a considerable number of pieces which I would have liked to retain: an embarrassment naturally springing from a redundancy of wealth.

As to the principle on which the selections proceed, my aim has been, throughout, to unite the culture of high and pure literary tastes with the attainment of useful and liberal knowledge. I think it will not be questioned that there is something of special reason why our young people of both sexes should be early and carefully instructed in the principles of our federal Constitution, and in the structure and working of our august national State. We pride ourselves on the alleged competency of the American people for self-government. Yet it is but too evident that, in political matters, a large majority of them have not advanced beyond the "little learning" which is proverbially "a dangerous thing." The degree of intelligence which naturally issues in conceit and presumption is the utmost that can be affirmed of them. Thus it comes about that, for the seats of public trust, shallow, flashy demagogues are very commonly preferred to solid, judicious, honest men. At this day, our average voter certainly has not more judgment of his own than he had fifty years ago, and he has far less respect for the judgment of wiser men. The popular mind is indeed busy enough with the vulgar politics of the hour; but in the true grounds and forces of social and political well-being it is discouragingly ignorant, while it is more and more casting off those habits of modesty and reverence which might do the work of knowledge.

This may explain why so much of the present volume is occupied with discourses relating to government, and to the duties and interests of men as stockholders in the commonwealth. In the common principles of all social and civil order, Burke is unquestionably our best and wisest teacher. In handling the particular questions of his time, he always involves those principles, and brings them

to their practical bearings, where they most "come home to the business and bosoms of men." And his pages are everywhere bright with the highest and purest political morality, while at the same time he is a consummate master in the intellectual charms and graces of authorship. Webster, also, is abundantly at home in those common principles: his giant grasp wields them with the ease and grace of habitual mastery: therewithal he is by far the ablest and clearest expounder we have of what may be termed the specialties of our American political system. So that you can hardly touch any point of our stupendous National Fabric, but that he will approve himself at once your wisest and your pleasantest teacher. In fact, I hardly know which to commend most, his political wisdom, his ponderous logic, the perfect manliness of his style, or the high-souled enthusiasm which generally animates and tones his discourse; the latter qualities being no less useful to inspire the student with a noble patriotic ardour than the former to arm him with sound and fruitful instruction. And so, between Burke and Webster, if the selections are made with but tolerable judgment, our youth may here learn a good deal of what it highly concerns them to know as citizens of a free republican State.

I am not unmindful that, in thus placing Webster alongside of Burke, I may be inviting upon him a trial something too severe. I do not by any means regard him as the peer of Burke; but it is my deliberate judgment that he comes nearer to Burke, and can better stand a fair comparison with him, than any other English-speaking statesman of modern times. In pure force of intellect, Burke was no doubt something ahead of him, and was far beyond him in strength and richness of imagination; for he was, as Johnson described him, emphatically "a constellation": on the other hand, Burke's tempestuous sensibility sometimes whirled him into exorbitancies, where Webster's cooler temperament and more balanced make-up would probably have held him firm in his propriety. And Webster, though far above imitating any man, abounds in marks of a very

close and diligent study of Burke. It seems specially noteworthy, that he was thoroughly at one with Burke in an intense aversion to political metaphysics, and to those speculative abstractions which, if attempted to be carried into the practical work of government, can never do any thing but mischief.

In regard to the selections from Bacon, I there had nothing to distract my choice, or cause me any embarrassment. The settled verdict of mankind points at once to his *Essays* as a book which no liberally-educated person can rightly afford to be unacquainted with. Other of his works may better illustrate the vast height and compass of his genius; but they are, for the most part, little suited, or rather quite unsuited to the ends of this volume. But his *Essays* everywhere touch the common interests and concerns of human life; they are freighted to the utmost with solid practical sense; and as specimens of moral and civil discourse it is hardly possible to overstate the wisdom and beauty of them. Of the fifty-eight *Essays*, I here give thirty; and I was nowise at a loss which to select. Nor, had my space been ever so large, should I have greatly cared to include any more of them.

I have a good right to know that Bacon and Burke are among our very best authors for the use to which this volume looks. The *Essays*, the *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol*, and the *Speech to the Electors of Bristol*, I have been using several years, with good effect, in some of my own classes. There are many other portions of Burke equally good, and some still better, for such use; which, however, were not to be had in a practicable shape. And I have long been wishing to make a like use of Webster, but have never been able to do so, because none of his works were at hand in a suitable form. I feel right well assured that he will amply reward the same study, and that, if not so good in himself as the other two, he has some obvious points of preference in the education of American youth. Nor can I think it fitting or just to be using only such fragments of him as are commonly served up for mere

exercises in declamation and elocution: in fact, I have little faith in such exercises, save in connection with the attainment of something higher and better. For manner, to be really good, must be held subordinate to matter; and the pursuit of manner for its own sake, or even as a paramount aim, can hardly fail to result in a very bad manner. I submit that the art, or the habit, of pronouncing nothing in such a way as to make it pass for something grand, is not so little known among us as to call for special encouragement and aid by books and teachers. At present we seem to be in no little danger of educating people into a good deal more tongue than mind.

In conclusion, it may not be amiss to say that this volume is not designed for any "auction of popularity." The thought of popular favour has had no part or lot in the preparation of it. For I know right well that, in preparations of this sort, a great many people altogether prefer something which may seem to teach a little of every thing, while really giving no true instruction whatever. So the most I venture to hope for is, that the book may commend itself to the judicious; the number of whom, I fear, is not large enough to make up any thing like a popularity. And this leads me to remark that our young students, it seems to me, can be better occupied than with the transient, shifting literary fashions and popularities of the day. I am not myself a very aged man, yet I am old enough to have outlived two generations of "immortal" writers who have already sunk into oblivion; and of the popular authors now living probably very few will be heard of thirty years hence. Surely, in forming the mind and taste of the young, it is better to use authors who have already lived long enough to afford some guaranty that they may survive the next twenty years.

BOSTON, *January*, 1876.

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BURKE.

WEBSTER.

BACON.

FRANCIS BACON:

SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

Francis Bacon, the great Light of modern Philosophy, was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who for twenty years held the office of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. He was born at York House, London, the residence of his father, on the 22d of January, 1561. His mother, Anne Cooke, was his father's second wife, and had one other son, Anthony, two years older than Francis. As her oldest sister was the wife of Lord Treasurer Burleigh, Francis stood, from his birth, in a sort of double relation to the Court. Both Lady Burleigh and Lady Bacon were highly educated women; their father, Sir Anthony Cooke, being the preceptor of King Edward the Sixth. Lady Bacon, before her marriage, translated Bishop Jewel's *Apology* into Latin, and is said to have done it so well, that the good prelate could discover no error in it, nor suggest any alteration.

Of the childhood of Francis and his brother little is known. Their early education was superintended by their accomplished mother. The health of Francis was delicate and fragile; which may partly account for the studious and thoughtful turn which seems to have marked his boyhood. Queen Elizabeth, it is said, took special delight in "trying him with questions," when he was a little boy; and was so much pleased with the sense and gravity of his answers, that she used to call him in sport her "young Lord Keeper." And Bacon himself tells us that, in his boyhood, the Queen once asked him how old he was, and that he promptly replied, "Two years younger than your Majesty's reign." It is also said that, when very young, he stole away from his playfellows, to investigate the cause of a singular echo in St. James's Fields, which had excited his curiosity.

At the age of thirteen, Bacon entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained three years, and then left without taking a degree. It is said that, while in college, he studied diligently the great models of antiquity; but even at that early age he took a dislike to the philosophy of Aristotle, not on account of the author, to whom he ascribed all high attributes, but for the unfruitfulness of the method; it being a philosophy strong only for disputations and contentions, but barren of works for the benefit of the life of man.

The Lord Keeper had designed his son Francis for a public career as a statesman or diplomatist, and with that view took him out of college, at the age of sixteen, and sent him to Paris where he spent some time under the care of Sir Amyas Paulet, the English ambassador at the French Court. It is said that while there he invented an ingenious method of writing in cipher. The main purpose in sending him abroad was, that he might study men; and with that view he travelled to various places in France and Italy; but it well appears that, though he was a keen observer of men, he could not withdraw his mind altogether from the investigation of natural phenomena. After about three years spent on the Continent, he was called home by the sudden death of his father. This event changed the whole course of his life. Sir Nicholas had intended to purchase an estate for Francis, as he had done for his other sons; but, as death came upon

him before this intention was carried out, the money was divided equally among all his children, the youngest son being thus left with only one fifth of what was intended for him: so that, instead of living only to study, he was under the necessity of studying how to live.

Bacon now fixed upon the law as his profession, and in 1580 became a member of Gray's Inn, which was one of the four principal schools or colleges for students of the law in London. As he had great power of application in whatever he undertook, his all-gifted mind made swift advances in legal studies, and in June, 1582, he was admitted as an utter barrister, which was the first degree in legal practice. February, 1586, saw him advanced to what was called the high table of Gray's Inn, and he soon after became a bencher. Meanwhile he had kept up his philosophical studies, and published the first fruits thereof in a work rather ambitiously entitled *The Greatest Birth of Time;* which, however, fell so dead upon the world that it is now heard of only in one of his letters, written long afterwards, to Father Fulgentio; and its only effect at the time was to mark him out as a rash speculatist.

In 1584, while yet a student of Gray's Inn, Bacon was elected to Parliament by one of the borough constituencies of Dorsetshire. On this great stage he continued to figure conspicuously for upwards of thirty years. In the Fall of 1586 he took his seat in the House of Commons for Taunton; and in the next Parliament we find him representing Liverpool. In February, 1593, he was member for the County of Middlesex; and from that time onward his reputation as a statesman stood so high, that various constituencies appear to have striven for the honour of having him as their representative; and in some instances he was elected for several places at the same time. Bacon was an exceedingly industrious and useful member of Parliament. As a practical legislator, he was probably second to no man of his time. His great skill and diligence in the business of his place caused him to be put upon many important committees; and whenever he addressed the whole House, as he very often did, he appears to have surpassed all the others both in commanding and rewarding the attention of the members. Ben Jonson tells us that "the fear of every man who heard him was, lest he should make an end."

One passage in his parliamentary life seems to call for some special notice. In the Parliament of 1593, upon a question of granting supplies, the two Houses appointed each a committee, to confer together, and make a joint report. When the result of that conference came up, Bacon opposed the action, claiming for the Commons the exclusive right to originate bills of that nature; and he moved that the House should "proceed herein by themselves apart from their Lordships." Thus his opposition went upon the ground of privilege. Nevertheless, both on that point, and also on the terms of the subsidy, he was outvoted, and he acquiesced. His conduct was very offensive to the Queen; and he is charged with having met her reprimand with "the most abject apologies." Even if this were true, it was nothing more than the whole House of Commons had often done before. But we have two letters from Bacon on the subject, addressed to Burleigh and Essex; both in a tone of manly self-justification. The Queen was angry at his speeches, and he expressed his grief that she should "retain an hard conceit of them." He adds the following: "It might please her sacred Majesty to think what my end should be in those speeches, if it were not duty, and duty alone. *I am not so simple but I know the common beaten way to please.* And whereas popularity hath been objected, I muse what care I should take to please many, that taketh a course of life to deal with few."

Up to this time, and for some years longer, Bacon gained no lucrative position. For reasons which I cannot stay to explain, his uncle, the Lord Treasurer, lent him but scanty and grudging help. The only thing indeed

which his Lordship did for this illustrious kinsman was to procure for him, in 1589, the reversion of the clerkship of the Star Chamber, which was worth some £1600 a year, but which did not fall vacant till twenty years after. Though Bacon did his work well, both as a lawyer and a legislator, still his thoughts and aspirations pointed elsewhere. He had indeed a strong desire of office, but it was not a selfish desire: it was rather the instructive yearning of his most original and comprehensive genius for leave to range in its proper home. His highest ambition was for a place which should supply his needs, and at the same time give him leisure to prosecute his intellectual conquests. Having taken all knowledge to be his province, with his vast contemplative ends he united but moderate civil ends. He had indeed an ardent, admiring, and steadfast friend in the Earl of Essex, who did all he could to help him in the matter of office and salary; but Essex was so rash in his temper, so ill-judging and so headstrong in his proceedings, that his friendship proved rather a hindrance than a help.

In 1593 the office of Attorney-General became vacant. Bacon had hopes of the place, and Essex lent his influence in that behalf; but the Queen's displeasure could not be overcome. After a delay of many months, during which Bacon was kept in suspense, the office was given to Sir Edward Coke. By this promotion, the place of Solicitor-General fell vacant. Bacon then fixed his eye on that office, and Essex worked for him with all his might; but, after a suspense of a year and a half, his hopes were again blasted by the appointment of Sergeant Fleming. Chagrined and mortified at the failure of his suit, the generous Essex next conceived the design of compensating Bacon with a liberal share of his own property. He accordingly proposed to give him an estate worth about £1800, equivalent to some $50,000 in our time. But Bacon's insight of character naturally made him reluctant to incur such obligations, as he could not but see that the Earl was likely to mar all by his violent courses. He declined the offer. Essex insisted, and Bacon at last yielded, but with such words as show that he had too just a presentiment of what the Earl was coming to. "My Lord," said he, "I see I must be your homager and hold land of your gift: but do you know the manner of doing homage by law? Always it is with a saving of his faith to the King and his other lords; and therefore, my Lord, I can be no more yours than I was, and it must be with the ancient savings."

In April, 1596, the Mastership of the Rolls — an office having charge of all patents that pass the Great Seal, and of the records of the Chancery Court — became vacant, and Bacon was a candidate for the place. Essex again supported his claims, but with the same result as before,— suspense and final disappointment. This was followed, the next year, by an estrangement between Bacon and Essex. The Earl's rash and impetuous nature was carrying him into dangerous ways, and Bacon's wise counsels and friendly warnings were naturally distasteful to a man so averse to any self-restraint. In the Spring of 1599, before Essex set out on his expedition to Ireland, Bacon had so far renewed his intercourse with him as to write him several friendly letters of advice, warning him that "merit is worthier than fame," and that "obedience is better than sacrifice." In September following, the Earl suddenly returned from that ill-starred expedition, covered with dishonour, and not free from disloyal and defiant thoughts.

I now come to what is commonly regarded as the darkest passage in Bacon's life. In some respects it is rather dark indeed; yet the indictment, it seems to me, has sometimes been greatly overcharged,— an error which I would fain avoid. Some years before this time, Bacon had been appointed by the Queen one of her counsel learned in the law. This office he still held, and was of course bound to its duties. The crisis, which he had long foreboded, and had done his utmost to prevent, had now come. In the Spring of 1600 the Queen was for proceeding against Essex by public in

formation. Bacon dissuaded her from this, but not without giving her offence. She finally resolved that the matter should be heard before a commission, and her counsel had their parts assigned them. Bacon begged to be excused, but held himself ready to obey the Queen's commands, thinking that by yielding so far he might be in a better position to serve Essex. At this time he knew nothing of the Earl's treasonable designs, and looked upon the affair as a storm that would soon blow over. Essex was acquitted of disloyalty, but censured for contempt and disobedience. By the Queen's order, Bacon drew up a narrative of what had passed, in which he touched the Earl's faults so tenderly, that the Queen told him "she perceived old love would not easily be forgotten"; and he with great adroitness replied that he hoped she meant that of herself. And in a letter written about this time, he speaks as follows: "For my Lord of Essex, I am not servile to him, having regard to my superior duty. I have been much bound to him. And, on the other side, I have spent more time and more thoughts about his well-doing than I ever did about mine own."

Essex was again at large, and had his fate once more in his own hands. But it soon appeared that he was rather emboldened than checked in his fatal career. While he was driving on his plots in secret, the Queen had sources of information which Bacon knew not of. In his ignorance of the whole truth, Bacon still kept up his defence of Essex, till at last the Queen, supposing him to know as much as herself, got so angry at his importunity that she would no longer see him. This was in the Fall of 1600. Early in January, 1601, Bacon was again admitted to the Queen's presence, and spoke his mind to her as follows: "Madam, I see you withdraw your favour from me, and now that I have lost many friends for your sake, I shall lose you too. A great many love me not, because they think I have been against my Lord Essex; and you love me not, because you know I have been for him: yet will I never repent me that I have dealt in simplicity of heart towards you both, without respect of cautions to myself." The Queen was moved by his earnestness, and spoke kindly to him, but said nothing of Essex. Bacon then determined to meddle no more in the matter, and did not see the Queen again till the Earl had put himself beyond the reach of intercession.

Thenceforth Essex seems to have cast off all restraint. Left to his own head, and perhaps to the bad counsels of some who were using him as a tool, he plunged into crime with the recklessness of downright infatuation. Of his doings suffice it to say that they were clearly treasonable, and that nothing less than treason could possibly be made out of them. On the 19th of February he was formally arraigned and brought to trial. Bacon, as one of the Queen's counsel, took the part assigned to him. The defence broke down at all points, and Essex was of course condemned. Bacon spoke twice in the trial; and of his course the worst that can fairly be said appears to be, that the dues of personal gratitude did not withhold him from pressing the argument against the Earl somewhat more harshly than his duty to the Crown absolutely required. On the one hand, it is allowed that Essex had "spent all his power, might, authority, and amity" in Bacon's behalf. On the other hand, Bacon had tried his utmost to serve Essex; he had stuck by him to the great and manifest peril of himself, and never ceased to plead his cause, till that cause became utterly hopeless. How much a man ought to stake in such a case, or whether he ought to stake his all, is a question not easy to decide; and in such a sharp conflict between personal gratitude and public duty, there will always be differences of opinion.

Much the same is to be said touching the part sustained by Bacon after the execution. Essex was something of a favourite with the people, and his fate drew forth some marks of popular odium against the Queen. It was deemed necessary to vindicate the action of the government, and to

Bacon was assigned the task of drawing up, or of dressing into shape, "A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons attempted and committed by Robert late Earl of Essex," &c., which was published in 1601. His instructions for the writing were very precise, and his first draft was submitted to certain councillors, "who made almost a new writing," so that Bacon himself "gave only words and form of style." In reference to this paper it has been said that Bacon "exercised his literary talents to blacken the Earl's memory." But it does not appear that he carried the blackening process any further than a fair and just statement of the case would have that effect. Soon after the publication, a parliamentary election was held, and Bacon was returned both by Ipswich and St. Albans; which infers that he had not lost ground in the public confidence. Upon the whole, that Bacon was enthusiastic in his friendship, probably none will affirm. But then neither was he bitter in his enmities. And if there was little nobleness of soul, there was surely nothing of malice, in his composition. In his treatment of Essex there is indeed nothing to praise; nor, as it seems to me, is there very much to be positively blamed. To pronounce him "the meanest of mankind," is surely going too far; but that there was more than enough of meanness in him, must, I fear, be granted; for of that article "a little more than a little is by much too much."

The death of the Queen, in March, 1603, and the accession of James the First made no considerable change in Bacon's prospects. He was anxious to be knighted, his chief reason being, "because I have found out an alderman's daughter, an handsome maiden, to my liking." Accordingly, in July he was dubbed a knight by the King; but it was rather the reverse of an honour, as some three hundred others were dubbed at the same time. He was also elected to the new Parliament, both at Ipswich and St. Albans, and continued to take a very prominent part in the business of the House. In August, his office, as one of the learned counsel, was confirmed to him by patent, together with a pension of £60 a year. In May, 1606, he was married to Alice Barnham, the "handsome maiden" already mentioned. She was the daughter of a London merchant, and had a fortune of £220 a-year, which was settled upon herself, with an addition of £500 a-year from her husband.

The accession of King James naturally drew on a proposal for uniting the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. This most wise measure was strongly opposed by many of the English; but Bacon supported it with all the weight of his name and talents, and doubtless thereby recommended himself not a little to the King's favour. In June, 1607, he attained the long-sought office of Solicitor-General; and the next year the clerkship of the Star-Chamber became vacant. Bacon had waited for it nearly twenty years. In October, 1613, the place of Attorney-General again fell vacant, and Bacon succeeded to it. The duties of this office brought him into connection with the celebrated case of Peachman, which has entailed another blot on his name. Peachman was an aged clergyman who, for some ecclesiastical offence, had been cited before the Court of High Commission, and deprived of his orders. Before the sentence, his house was searched, and an unpublished sermon was found, which was alleged to contain treasonable matter. Peachman was believed to have accomplices, and, as he would not reveal them, the Council resolved on putting him to torture. By the common law, the use of torture for extracting evidence was deemed illegal; but such use was held to be justified in this case on the ground of its being for the purpose of discovery, and not of evidence. But it does not appear that Bacon was at all responsible for this outrage, any further than that, as Attorney-General, he was one of the commission appointed to attend the examination of the prisoner. And his letters show that he engaged in the affair with reluctance, and that the step was taken against his advice. It is also alleged that, to procure a capital sentence, Bacon

tampered with the judges of the King's Bench; but as the case was not to be tried by any of those judges, it does not well appear why he should have tampered with them for that purpose. In August, 1615, Peachman was tried at Taunton, and was convicted of high treason; but the capital sentence was never carried out, because "many of the judges were of opinion that it was not treason."

In June, 1616, Bacon was made a member of the Privy Council, and was formally congratulated thereupon by the University of Cambridge, which he then represented in Parliament. In March, 1617, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere resigned, and Bacon was appointed Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. A week later the King set out for Scotland, leaving his new Lord Keeper at the head of the Council, to manage affairs in his absence. In January, 1618, Sir Francis became Lord Chancellor, and in the following July was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Verulam. In the work of Chancery, his energy and dispatch were something prodigious. Within three months after he became Lord Keeper, he made a clean sweep of all the accumulated cases then on hand, and reported that there was not one cause remaining unheard. Seldom, if ever, before, had the work of that high court been so promptly done, or done more to the satisfaction of the public. In January, 1621, Bacon was created Viscount of St. Albans, and in the patent of promotion was particularly commended for his "integrity in the administration of justice."

Unfortunately, during this period, Bacon could not make headway in political life without paying court to a bold, insolent, and unscrupulous upstart. England had a weak though learned King, and that King was mainly governed by a greedy and prodigal favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, whom James had raised to that height for his handsome person and dashing manners. Buckingham had set his heart upon what was called "the Spanish match," that is, the marriage of Charles, Prince of Wales, afterwards King Charles the First, to a Spanish Princess. Bacon wisely used his influence with the King against that match, and probably was in a great measure the means of defeating it. He thereby incurred the resentment of Buckingham, though he had specially laid himself out in wise advice to him; and he stooped to very unworthy atonements in order to appease his anger and regain his favour. But Buckingham was all-powerful with the King, and he greatly abused that power, to the oppression of the people and the misgovernment of the kingdom. In his need and greed and vainglory, he availed himself of whatever twist he had on the too supple Chancellor, and doubtless did all he could to pervert justice in the Chancery, in order to repair the waste of his boundless prodigality. Hence Bacon became involved in practices which wrought his downfall, and have covered his name with dishonour.

In January, 1621, three days after Bacon's last promotion, Parliament met, and was not in a mood to be trifled with. A few days later, a committee was appointed, to report concerning the courts of justice. Their report, made on the 15th of March, fell like a thunderclap: the Lord Chancellor was charged with corruption in his office, and instances were alleged in proof. Measures were forthwith taken for his impeachment. Before the time of trial came, twenty-two cases of bribery were drawn up against him. Bacon, sick unto death, as he thought himself, felt that his enemies had closed upon him, and begged only a fair hearing, that he might give them an ingennous answer. To the King he wrote as follows: "For the briberies and gifts wherewith I am charged, when the books of hearts shall be opened, I hope I shall not be found to have the troubled fountain of a corrupt heart, in a depraved habit of taking rewards to pervert justice; howsoever I may be frail, and partake of the abuses of the times." And in his answer he says,— "I never had bribe or reward in my eye or thought when I gave sentence or order." These, to be sure, are substantially tanta-

mount to a confession of the matter charged. Nevertheless he was for proceeding with his defence, but from this the King and Buckingham dissnaded him; for what cause, or by what arguments, is not known. Instead of standing trial, he wrote to the Lords,—"I find matter sufficient and full, both to move me to desert my defence, and to move your Lordships to condemn and censnre me." So, on the 30th of April, his full confession was read before the Lords, in which he says,—"I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence." One of the charges was, that he had given way to great exactions by his servants; and "he confessed it to be a great fault, that he had looked no better to his servants." The sentenee was, a fine of £40,000, imprisonment dnring the King's pleasnre, incapability of holding any offiee in the State, or of sitting in Parliament, and prohibition to come within the verge of the Court. His own comment on this verdiet is, "I was the jnstest judge that was in England these fifty years; but it was the jnstest censnre in Parliament that was these two hnndred years." The severest parts of the sentence were very soon remitted; and within a year the whole was remitted, and also a pension of £1300 a-year conferred upon him by the King.

Such is the npshot of this sad tale. Still it does not appear, nor is it alleged, that Bacon took bribes for the perversion of justice. During his Chancellorship he made orders and decrees at the rate of two thousand a-year. Of these decrees not one was ever set aside. None of his judgments were reversed. Even those who first charged him with taking money admitted that he decided against them. The truth seems to be, that in this case the accumnlated faults of the office were visited on the individnal incnmbent. Nor, perhaps, could they have been effectually cured but by the destrnction of the very man who was the greatest that had complied with them: by snch a sacrifice, they might indeed become so unspeakably odious, that even the worst men would take care to shun them. The Parliament was hot and stont, as it had reason to be, against the maladministration of the State. But they were more just in their anger than discriminating as to its objects. They demanded victims; and Bacon, in some respects, would be a most acceptable sacrifice, since the very height whereon he stood would make his fall the more exemplary. Besides, if Parliament eonld not get at the Chancellor, they might entertain the thonght of striking higher. And indeed the King and Buckingham seem to have been apprehensive that Bacon might triumph, should he proceed in his own defence, (for who could be expected to withstand so potent an enchanter, coming to the rescne of his good name?) in which case the public resentment, sharpened by defeat, might turn to other objects, and demand a dearer sacrifice.

Henceforth Bacon lived in strict retirement, and gave himself up unreservedly to labonrs in which his heart was at home. He was among the Peers snmmoned to the first Parliament of Charles the First; but he did not take his seat. For the last five years his health was very feeble, and he was constantly looking death in the face. At last, a cold, caught in an experiment to test the preserving qualities of snow, resulted in a fever; and, after lingering a week, he died on the morning of Easter-day, April 9, 1626.

If Bacon's political life was, in some respects, ignoble and false, his intellectnal life was altogether noble and true, and has perhaps been more fruitful in substantial help to mankind than that of any other man. The first instalment of his *Essays*, ten in number, was published in 1597, in a small volume, which also contained his *Colours of Good and Evil*, and his *Meditationes Sacræ*. Some of these *Essays* were afterwards enlarged, and others added to them from time to time, in repeated editions, till at last the whole fifty-eight appeared together in 1625. In 1605, was published his *Advancement of Learning*, which was afterwards recast, enlarged, trans-

lated into Latin, and published in 1623, with the title *De Augmentis Scientiarum*. In 1609, his *Wisdom of the Ancients* came forth, translated into Latin. His *Novum Organum* made its appearance in the Fall of 1620. The proper English of this title is *The New Instrument;* but the work is occupied with setting forth what is known as the Baconian, that is, the Inductive or Experimental Method of Scientific Investigation. It was the great work of his life, and so he regarded it, and kept toiling at it for thirty years. The object of the work, as stated by himself, was to "enlarge the bounds of reason and endow man's estate with new value." As his plan contemplated a much larger work, of which this was but a part, he gave, as his reason for publishing it, that he felt his life hastening to its close, and wished that portion of his work at least to be saved. The *Novum Organum* was followed, in 1622, by his *History of Henry the Seventh*. Besides these, he has various other works, both professional and philosophical, but which my space does not permit me to mention in detail.

Bacon appears to have been specially inspired with the faith, that a true and genuine knowledge of Nature would arm its possessor with Nature's power, by enabling him to harness up her forces and put them to work for the service of man. To this faith he clung with a tenacity that nothing could relax. And so strong was he in this faith, that he could not admit any knowledge of Nature to be real, which did not confer such power. Thus in his view power is the test and measure of knowledge; and this I take to be the true sense of the Baconian axiom, "knowledge is power." And this great idea, together with the method which it involves, was itself a prophecy, or rather the seminal principle, of all the stupendous achievements which Science has since made in the mastery of Nature.

I quote from Sir James Mackintosh: "That in which Bacon most excelled all other men was the range and compass of his intellectual view, and the power of contemplating many and distant objects together without indistinctness or confusion. This wide-ranging intellect was illuminated by the brightest Fancy that ever contented itself with the office of only ministering to Reason; and from this singular relation of the two grand faculties of man it has resulted, that his philosophy, though illustrated still more than adorned by the utmost splendour of imagery, continues still subject to the undivided supremacy of Intellect. In the midst of all the prodigality of an imagination which, had it been independent, would have been poetical, his opinions remained severely rational."

But, with all his greatness and beauty of intellect, Bacon was sadly wanting in moral elevation. In his position, a high and delicate honour, the sensitive chastity of principle which feels a stain as a wound, was especially needful for his safety; but it evidently had no ruling place in his breast. Still, though his intellectual merits can hardly be overdrawn, it is easy to overdraw his moral defects. He was not only greatly admired as a thinker, but deeply loved and honoured as a man, by many of the best and purest men of the time; which could hardly have been the case but that, with all his blemishes, he had great moral and social virtues. Though often straitened for means, he was always generous to his servants: his temper and carriage were eminently gentle and humane: he was never accused of insolence to any human being, which is the common pleasure of mean-spirited men: his conduct in Parliament was manly, his views as a legislator were liberal, and leaning strongly towards improvement: it is not pretended that he ever gave an unjust or illegal judgment as Chancellor: his private life was blameless, and abounding in works of piety and charity: and his losing the favour of the King and Buckingham, when they were in the full career of rapacity and corruption, fairly infers him to have resisted them as much as he could without losing the power to resist them at all.

FRANCIS BACON.

ESSAYS.*

OF TRUTH.

"WHAT is truth?" said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer.[1] Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing[2] wits, 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 schools of the Grecians 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,[3] 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 daylight, that doth not show the masques 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 showeth best by day, but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best

* Bacon's *Essays* are the best-known and most popular of all his works. It is also one of those where the superiority of his genius appears to the greatest advantage; the novelty and depth of his reflections often receiving a strong relief from the triteness of the subject. It may be read from beginning to end in a few hours; and yet, after the twentieth perusal, one seldom fails to remark in it something unobserved before. This indeed is a characteristic of all Bacon's writings, and only to be accounted for by the inexhaustible aliment they furnish to our own thoughts, and the sympathetic activity they impart to our torpid faculties.—DUGALD STEWART.

1 Bacon, I think, mistakes here. Pilate seems to be in any thing but a jesting mood. He is evidently much interested in the Prisoner before him, and is surprised, for an instant, out of his official propriety; but presently bethinks himself that the question is altogether beside his official duty, and proceeds at once to the business in hand.

2 *Discoursing* in the sense of *discursive*; that is, *roving* or *unsettled*.

3 Bacon here supposes a *fiction* to be the same thing as a *lie*. But, properly speaking, poetry is antithetic, not to truth, but to matter of fact.

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, 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, in great severity, called poesy *vinum dæmonum*,[4] 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 poet that beautified the sect,[5] 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,[6] and where the air is always clear and serene,) "and to see the errors and wanderings, and mists and tempests, in the vale below:"[7] so always that this prospect[8] 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.

4 "The wine of evil spirits."

5 The allusion is to Lucretius, the Roman poet, and to the Epicurean sect of philosophers, whose doctrines Lucretius clothed in their most attractive garb. Epicurus himself was of a pure and blameless life; but his leading tenet was that the chief aim of all philosophy should be to secure health of body and tranquillity of mind. The using, however, of the term *pleasure*, to express this object, has at all times exposed the system to reproach; and, in fact, the name of the sect has too often served as a cloak for luxury and libertinism.

6 That is, a hill having no *higher* hill in its neighbourhood. So, in a military sense, a higher hill commands a lower one standing near it.

7 This is rather a paraphrase than a translation of the fine passage in Lucretius.

8 *Prospect* is here used actively; that is, in the sense of *overlooking* or *looking down upon*.

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[9] dealing is the honour of man's nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy 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[1] 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 as to say 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."

OF DEATH.[2]

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

9 *Plain, direct, downright* are among the old senses of *round*.

1 Michael de Montaigne, the celebrated French Essayist. His *Essays* embrace a variety of topics, which are treated in a sprightly and entertaining manner, and are replete with remarks indicative of strong native good sense. He died in 1592. The quotation is from the second book of his *Essays*: "Lying is a disgraceful vice, and one that Plutarch, an ancient writer, paints in most disgraceful colours, when he says that it is 'affording testimony that one *first* despises God, and then fears men.' It is not possible more happily to describe its horrible, disgusting, and abandoned nature; for can we imagine any thing more vile than to be cowards with regard to men, and brave with regard to God?"

2 A portion of this Essay is borrowed from the writings of Seneca.

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 philosopher and natural man, it was well said, *Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa.*[3] Groans and convulsions, and a discoloured face, and friends weeping, and blacks[4] and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak but it mates[5] 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 preoccupateth[6] 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.*[7] 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:*[8] Tiberius in dissimulation, as Tacitus saith of him: *Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant:*[9] Vespasian in a jest, sitting upon a stool: *Ut puto, Deus fio:*[1] Galba with a sentence, *Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani,*[2] holding forth his neck: Septimus Severus in despatch: *Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum;*[3] and the like. Certainly the Stoics bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better

3 "The array of the death-bed has more terrors than death itself." This quotation is from Seneca.

4 He probably alludes to the custom of hanging the room with black where the body of the deceased lay; a practice usual in Bacon's time.

5 To *mate*, or to *amate*, is to *overpower*, to *subdue*. So in *Macbeth*, v., 1: "My mind she has *mated*, and amazed my sight."

6 *Preoccupate* in the Latin sense of *anticipate*.

7 "Reflect how often you do the same things: a man may wish to die, not only because he is either brave or wretched, but even because he is surfeited with life."

8 "Livia, mindful of our union, live on, and fare thee well."

9 "His bodily strength and vitality were now forsaking Tiberius, but not his duplicity."

1 "I am growing into a god, I reckon." This was said as a rebuke of his flatterers, as in the well-known case of Canute reproving his courtiers.

2 "Strike, if it will do the Roman people any good."

3 "Be quick, if there remains any thing for me to do."

saith he, *qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponit naturæ.*[4] It is as natural to die as to be born; and to a little infant perhaps the one is as painful as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit is like one that is wounded in hot blood; who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt; and therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good doth avert the dolours of death: but, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is *Nunc dimittis*, when a man hath obtained worthy ends and expectations. Death hath this also, that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy: *Extinctus amabitur idem.*[5]

OF UNITY IN RELIGION.

RELIGION being the chief band of human society, it is a happy thing when itself is well contained within the true band of unity. The quarrels and divisions about religion were evils unknown to the heathen. The reason was, because the religion of the heathen consisted rather in rites and ceremonies than in any constant belief; for you may imagine what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors and fathers of their church were the poets. But the true God hath this attribute, that He is a jealous God; and therefore His worship and religion will endure no mixture nor partner. We shall therefore speak a few words concerning the unity of the Church: what are the fruits thereof; what the bounds; and what the means.

The fruits of unity (next unto the well-pleasing of God, which is all in all) are two; the one towards those that are without the Church, the other towards those that are within. For the former, it is certain that heresies and schisms are of all others the greatest scandals; yea, more than corruption of manners: for as in the natural body a wound or solution of continuity[6] is worse than a corrupt humour, so in the spiritual. So that nothing doth so much keep men out of the Church, and drive men out of the Church, as breach of unity: and therefore, whensoever it cometh to that pass that one saith, *Ecce in Deserto*,[7] another saith, *Ecce in penetralibus*;[8] that is, when some men seek

4 "Who regards death as one of Nature's boons." The passage is quoted, but with some inaccuracy, from Juvenal.

5 "The same man will be loved when dead."

6 A solution of continuity is, for instance, a severing of a muscle or a sinew by a transverse cut.

7 "Behold, he is in the desert."

8 "Behold, he is in the secret chambers."

Christ in the conventicles of heretics, and others in an outward face of a church; that voice had need continually to sound in men's ears, *nolite exire*, "go not out." The Doctor of the Gentiles (the propriety of whose vocation [9] drew him to have a special care of those without) saith, "If a heathen come in, and hear you speak with several tongues, will he not say that you are mad?" and, certainly, it is little better. When atheists and profane persons do hear of so many discordant and contrary opinions in religion, it doth avert [1] them from the Church, and maketh them "to sit down in the chair of the scorners."

It is but a light thing to be vouched in so serious a matter, but yet it expresseth well the deformity: there is a master of scoffing,[2] that in his catalogue of books of a feigned library sets down this title of a book, *The Morris-Dance of Heretics:* [3] for, indeed, every sect of them hath a diverse posture, or cringe, by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings and depraved politics,[4] who are apt to contemn holy things.

As for the fruit towards those that are within, it is peace, which containeth infinite blessings: it establisheth faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the Church distilleth into peace of conscience, and it turneth the labours of writing and reading of controversies into treatises of mortification and devotion.

Concerning the bounds of unity, the true placing of them importeth exceedingly.[5] There appear to be two extremes; for to certain zealots all speech of pacification is odious. "Is it peace, Jehu?" "What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me." Peace is not the matter,[6] but following and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans and lukewarm persons think they may accommodate points of religion by middle ways, and taking part of both, and witty [7] reconcilements, as if they would make an arbitrement between God and man. Both these extremes are to be avoided; which will be done if the league of Christians, penned by our Saviour himself, were in the two cross clauses thereof soundly and plainly expounded: "He that is not with

9 That is, the *peculiar nature* of whose *calling*.

1 *Avert* in the Latin sense of *turn away*, or *repel*.

2 The allusion is to Rabelais, the great French humorist.

3 This dance, which was originally called the Morisco dance, is supposed to have been derived from the Moors of Spain; the dancers in earlier times blackening their faces to resemble Moors. It was probably a corruption of the ancient Pyrrhic dance, which was performed by men in armour.

4 *Politics* was often used for *politicians*.

5 To *import exceedingly* is to be of the *utmost importance*.

6 That is, peace is not *what they want*.

7 Here *witty* is *ingenious;* and to "accommodate points" is to harmonize differences.

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[8] 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, 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*,[9]—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 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*.[1] Men create oppositions which are not, and put them into new terms so fixed as,[2] 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[3]

8 *Merely* in the sense of *purely, absolutely;* like the Latin *merus*. So in *Ham let*, i., 2: "Things rank and gross in nature possess it *merely*."

9 "In the garment there may be many colours, but let there be no rending of it."

1 "Avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."

2 In all such cases, Bacon uses *as* and *that* indiscriminately.

3 Alluding to Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which signified the short duration of his kingdom. See Daniel, ii., 33.

and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar'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[4] 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 authorize 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 religio potuit suadere malorum.*[5] What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France,[6] or the powder treason of England?[7] 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[8] 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

4 *Muniting* is *fortifying* or *strengthening*.

5 "To deeds so dreadful could religion prompt." The poet refers to Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter Iphigenia, with the view of appeasing the wrath of Diana.

6 He alludes to the massacre of the Huguenots, in France, which took place on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 1572, by the order of Charles IX. and his mother, Catherine de Medici.

7 More generally known as "the Gunpowder Plot."

8 A set of desperate fanatics who appeared at Munster about 1530. Assuming a special and conscious indwelling of the Holy Ghost, they of course set themselves above all law, and often plunged into the grossest sensualities and cruelties. Hooker aptly says of them, "what strange fantastical opinion soever at any time entered into their heads, their use was to think the Spirit taught it them." And again: "These men, in whose mouths at the first sounded nothing but only mortification of the flesh, were come at the length to think they might lawfully have their six or seven wives apiece; they which at the first thought judgment and justice itself to be merciless cruelty, accounted at the length their own hands sanctified with being embrued in Christian blood."

is it better, to make the cause of religion to descend 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 to 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,[9] 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 councils concerning religion, that counsel of the Apostle would be prefixed, *Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei;*[1] and it was a notable observation of a wise father, and no less ingenuously confessed, that those which held and persuaded pressure of consciences were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends.

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 Solomon, 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 because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy; but then let a man take heed the revenge be such as

9 Alluding to the *caduceus*, with which Mercury, the messenger of the gods, summoned the souls of the departed to the infernal regions.

1 "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Observe that *would* here has the sense of *should*. The auxiliaries *could*, *should*, and *would* were often used indiscriminately in Bacon's time.

there is no law to punish, else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh: this is the more generous; for the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent: but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, Duke of Florence,[2] had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. "You shall read," saith he, "that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends." But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune: "Shall we," saith he, "take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" and so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges[3] are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Cæsar;[4] for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France;[5] and many more. But in private revenges it is not so; nay, rather vindictive persons live the life of witches; who, as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.[6]

OF ADVERSITY.

It was a high speech of Seneca, (after the manner of the Stoics), that "the good things which belong to prosperity are to be wished, but the good things that belong to adversity are to be admired,"—*Bona rerum secundarum optabilia, adversarum mirabilia.* Certainly, if miracles be the command over Nature, they appear most in adversity. It is yet a higher speech of his than the other, (much too high for a heathen,) "It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man, and the security of a

2 The allusion is to Cosmo de Medici, chief of the Florentine republic, and much distinguished as an encourager of literature and art.

3 By "public revenges," he means punishment awarded by the State with the sanction of the laws.

4 He alludes to the retribution dealt by Augustus and Antony to the murderers of Julius Cæsar. It is related by ancient historians, as a singular fact, that not one of them died a natural death.

5 Henry III. of France was assassinated in 1589 by Jacques Clement, a Jacobin monk, in the frenzy of fanaticism. Although Clement justly suffered punishment, the end of this bloodthirsty and bigoted tyrant may be justly deemed a retribution dealt by the hand of an offended Providence.

6 For some excellent remarks on the subject of this Essay, see a passage from Burke, page 320 of this volume.

god,"—*Vere magnum habere fragilitatem hominis, securitatem dei.* This would have done better in poesy, where transcendencies are more allowed; and the poets indeed have been busy with it; for it is in effect the thing which is figured in that strange fiction of the ancient poets, which seemeth not to be without mystery;[7] nay, and to have some approach to the state of a Christian; "that Hercules, when he went to unbind Prometheus, (by whom human nature is represented,) sailed the length of the great ocean in an earthen pot or pitcher," lively describing Christian resolution, that saileth in the frail bark of the flesh through the waves of the world. But, to speak in a mean,[8] the virtue of prosperity is temperance, the virtue of adversity is fortitude, which in morals is the more heroical virtue. Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favour. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs[9] as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground: judge, therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed,[1] or crushed: for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.

7 *Mystery*, here is *secret meaning;* like the hidden moral of a fable or myth.

8 "Speaking in a mean" is speaking with moderation. So in one of Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Sonnets:* "The golden *mean* and quiet flow of truths that soften hatred, temper strife."

9 Funereal airs. It must be remembered that many of the Psalms of David were written by him when persecuted by Saul, as also in the tribulation caused by the wicked conduct of his son Absalom. Some of them, too, though called "The Psalms of David," were really composed by the Jews in their captivity at Babylon; as, for instance, the 137th Psalm, which so beautifully commences, "By the waters of Babylon there we sat down." One of them is supposed to be the composition of Moses.

1 *Incensed* is *set on fire* or *burned.*

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 [2] 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 that are the first raisers of their Houses are most indulgent towards their children, beholding them as the continuance, not only of their kind, but of their work; and so both children and creatures.

The difference in affection of parents towards their several children is many times unequal, and sometimes unworthy, especially in the mother; as Solomon saith, "A wise son rejoiceth the father, but an ungracious son shames the mother." A man shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest respected, and the youngest made wantons;[3] but in the midst some that are as it were forgotten, who, many times, nevertheless, prove the best. The illiberality of parents, in allowance towards their children, is a harmful error, makes them base, acquaints them with shifts, makes them sort[4] with mean company, and makes them surfeit more when they come to plenty: and therefore the proof is best[5] when men keep their authority towards their children, but not their purse. Men have a foolish manner (both parents and schoolmasters and servants) in creating and breeding an emulation between brothers during childhood, which many times sorteth[6] to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families.[7] The Italians make little

2 *Foundations*, as the word is here used, are institutions or establishments, such as hospitals and other charitable endowments.

3 That is, petted into self-indulgent and petulant triflers.

4 *Sort* is *consort*, or *associate*. So in *Hamlet*, ii., 2: "I will not *sort* you with the rest of my servants."

5 *Proof* is sometimes equivalent to *fact*, *instance*, or *result*. Here "the proof is best" means it proves, or turns out, best. So in *Julius Cæsar*, ii., 1: "'Tis a common *proof* that lowliness is young ambition's ladder."

6 Sometimes to *sort* is to *fall out*, to *happen*, to *come*. So in *Much Ado about Nothing*, v., 4: "I am glad that all things *sort* so well."

7 There is much justice in this remark. Children should be taught to do what is right for its own sake, and because it is their duty to do so, and not that they may have the selfish gratification of obtaining the reward which their com

difference between children and nephews, or near kinsfolk; but, so they be of the lump, they care not, though they pass not through their own body; and, to say truth, in nature it is much a like matter; insomuch that we see a nephew sometimes resembleth an uncle or a kinsman more than his own parent, as the blood happens. Let parents choose betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take, for then they are most flexible; and let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children, as thinking they will take best to that which they have most mind to. It is true, that if the affection or aptness of the children be extraordinary, then it is good not to cross it; but generally the precept is good, *Optimum elige, suave et facile illud faciet consuetudo.*[8] Younger brothers are commonly fortunate, but seldom or never where the elder are disinherited.

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;[9] 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[1] 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 cer-

panions have failed to secure, and of being led to think themselves superior to their companions.

8 "Select *that course of life* which is the most advantageous: habit will soon render it pleasant and easily endured."

9 *Impertinence* in its original sense; things *irrelevant*.

1 *Because* is here equivalent to *in order that*. So in St. Matthew, xx., 31 "And the multitude rebuked them, *because* they should hold their peace."

tain self-pleasing and humorous[2] 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,[3] for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool.[4] 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 be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust,[5] yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hard-hearted, (good to make severe inquisitors,) because their tenderness is not so oft called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands, as was said of Ulysses, *Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati.*[6] Chaste women are often proud and froward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds, both of chastity and obedience, in the wife, if she think her husband wise, which she will never do if she find him jealous. Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses; so as a man may have a quarrel[7] to marry when he will: but yet he was reputed one of the wise men that made answer to the question when a man should marry, "A young man not yet, an elder man not at all." It is often seen that bad husbands have very good wives; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husbands' kindness when it comes, or that the

2 *Humorous* was much used in the sense of *whimsical* or *crotchety;* governed by humours.

3 *Churchman* for *clergyman;* a frequent usage. So in Shakespeare often.

4 The meaning is, that, if clergymen have the expenses of a family to support, they will hardly find means for the exercise of benevolence toward their parishioners.

5 *Exhaust* for *exhausted.* Many preterites were formed in like manner Shakespeare abounds in them. Also in the Psalter: "And be ye *lift* up, ye everlasting doors."

6 "He preferred his aged wife *Penelope* to immortality." This was when Ulysses was entreated by the goddess Calypso to give up all thoughts of returning to Ithaca, and to remain with her in the enjoyment of immortality.

7 *Quarrel* was often equivalent to *cause, reason,* or *excuse.* So in Holinshed: "He thought he had a good *quarrel* to attack him." And in *Macbeth,* iv., 3. "The chance of goodness be like our warranted *quarrel*"; that is, "May virtue's chance of success be as good, as well warranted, as our *cause* is just."

wives take a pride in their patience: but this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own choosing, against their friends' consent; for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

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[8] 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.*[9] 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;[1] 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.*[2] In place there is license 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;

8 *Indignities* for *basenesses* or *meannesses*.

9 "Since you are not what you were, there is no reason why you should wish to live."

1 *Shadow* for *shade*; that is, *retirement*.

2 "Death presses heavily upon him who, too well known to all others, dies unknown to himself."

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[3] 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;*[4] and then the Sabbath.

In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples, for imitation is a globe[5] of precepts; and after a time set before thee thine own example, and examine thyself strictly whether thou didst not best at first. Neglect not, also, the examples of those that have carried themselves ill in the same place; not to set off thyself by taxing their memory, but to direct thyself what to avoid. Reform, therefore, without bravery[6] or scandal of former times and persons; but yet set it down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them. Reduce things to the first institution, and observe wherein and how they have degenerated; but yet ask counsel of both times,—of the ancient time what is best, and of the later time what is fittest. Seek to make thy course regular, that men may know beforehand what they may expect; but be not too positive and peremptory; and express thyself well when thou digressest from thy rule. Preserve the right of thy place, but stir not questions of jurisdiction; and rather assume thy right in silence, and *de facto*,[7] than voice it with claims and challenges. Perserve likewise the rights of inferior places; and think it more honour to direct in chief than to be busy in all. Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy place; and do not drive away such as bring thee information as meddlers, but accept of them in good part.

The vices of authority are chiefly four,—delays, corruption, roughness, and facility.[8] For delays, give easy access; keep times appointed; go through with that which is in hand, and interlace not business but of necessity. For corruption, do not only bind thine own hands or thy servants' hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering; for integrity

3 *Conscience* for *consciousness*. So Hooker: "The reason why the simpler sort are moved with authority is the *conscience* of their own ignorance."

4 "And God turned to behold the works which his hands had made, and he saw that every thing was very good."

5 *Globe* for *circle*. So in *Paradise Lost*, ii., 512: "Him a *globe* of fiery seraphim enclosed with bright emblazonry."

6 *Bravery* in the sense of *bravado* or *proud defiance*. So in *Julius Cæsar*, v., 1: "They come down with fearful *bravery*, thinking by this face to fasten in our thoughts that they have courage."

7 That is, "as matter of fact," or as a thing of course.

8 *Facility* here means *easiness of access*, or pliability.

used doth the one, but integrity professed, and with a manifest detestation of bribery, doth the other; and avoid not only the fault, but the suspicion. Whosoever is found variable, and changeth manifestly without manifest cause, giveth suspicion of corruption: therefore always, when thou changest thine opinion or course, profess it plainly, and declare it, together with the reasons that move thee to change, and do not think to steal it.[9] A servant or a favourite, if he be inward,[1] and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close[2] corruption. For 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[3] lead a man, he shall never be without; as Solomon 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 showeth the man;" and it showeth some to the better and some to the worse. *Omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset,*[4] *saith* Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, *Solus imperantium, Vespasianus mutatus in melius*;[5] though the one was meant of sufficiency, 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."

9 To *steal* is to *do a thing secretly*. So in *The Taming of the Shrew*, iii., 2: "'Twere good, methinks, to *steal* our marriage."

1 *Inward* for *intimate*. So in *King Richard the Third*, iii., 4: "Who is most *inward* with the noble duke?"

2 *Close* in the sense of *secret* or *hidden*; a frequent usage.

3 *Respects* for *considerations*; also a frequent usage.

4 "All would have agreed in pronouncing him fit to govern, if he had not governed."

5 "Of the emperors, Vespasian alone changed for the better *after his accession*."

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. what next? action: what next again? action. He said it that knew it best, and had by nature himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay, almost alone, as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain. There is in human nature generally more of the fool than of the wise; and therefore those faculties by which the foolish part of men's minds is taken are most potent. Wonderful like is the case of boldness in civil business: what first? boldness; what second and third? boldness. And yet boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, far inferior to other parts; but, nevertheless, it doth fascinate, and bind hand and foot those that are either shallow in judgment or weak in courage, which are the greatest part; yea, and prevaileth with wise men at weak times: therefore we see it hath done wonders in popular States, but with senates and princes less; and more, ever upon the first entrance of bold persons into action, than soon after; for boldness is an ill keeper of promise. Surely, as there are mountebanks for the natural body, so are there mountebanks for the politic body,—men that undertake great cures, and perhaps have been lucky in two or three experiments, but want the grounds of science, and therefore cannot hold out; nay, you shall see a bold fellow many times do Mahomet's miracle. Mahomet made the people believe that he would call a hill to him, and from the top of it offer up his prayers for the observers of his law. The people assembled: Mahomet called the hill to come to him again and again; and when the hill stood still, he was never a whit abashed, but said, "If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill." So these men, when they have promised great matters and failed most shamefully, yet (if they have the perfection of boldness) they will but slight it over, and make a turn, and no more ado. Certainly, to men of great judgment, bold persons are a sport to behold; nay, and to the vulgar also boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous; for, if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity: especially it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance, for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture, as

needs it must: for in bashfulness the spirits do a little go and come; but with bold men, upon like occasion, they stand at a stay; like a stale at chess, where it is no mate, but yet the game cannot stir:[6] but this last were fitter for a satire than for a serious observation. This is well to be weighed, that boldness is ever blind; for it seeth not dangers and inconveniences: therefore it is ill in counsel, good in execution; so that the right use of bold persons is, that they never command in chief, but be seconds and under the direction of others; for in counsel it is good to see dangers, and in execution not to see them except they be very great.

OF GOODNESS, AND GOODNESS OF NATURE.

I TAKE goodness in this sense,—the affecting of the weal of men, which is that the Grecians call *Philanthropia;* and the word humanity (as it is used) is a little too light to express it. Goodness I call the habit, and goodness of nature the inclination. This, of all virtues and dignities of the mind, is the greatest, being the character of the Deity; and without it man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin. Goodness answers to the theological virtue charity, and admits no excess but error. The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall; but in charity there is no excess, neither can angel or man come in danger by it. The inclination to goodness is imprinted deeply in the nature of man; insomuch that, if it issue not towards men, it will take unto other living creatures; as it is seen in the Turks, a cruel people, who nevertheless are kind to beasts, and give alms to dogs and birds; insomuch as Busbechius[7] reporteth, a Christian boy in Constantinople had like to have been stoned for gagging in a waggishness a long-billed fowl.[8] Errors, indeed, in this virtue, of

6 *Stale-mate* was a term in chess; used when the game was ended by the king being alone and unchecked, and then forced into a situation from which he was unable to move without going into check. A rather ignominious predicament.

7 A learned traveller, born in Flanders, in 1522. He was employed by the Emperor Ferdinand as ambassador to the Sultan Solyman II. His *Letters* relative to his travels in the East, which are written in Latin, contain much interesting information. They were the pocket companion of Gibbon.

8 In this instance the stork or crane was probably protected, not on the abstract grounds mentioned in the text, but for reasons of policy and gratitude combined. In Eastern climates the cranes and dogs are far more efficacious than human agency in removing filth and offal, and thereby diminishing the chances of pestilence. Superstition, also, may have formed another motive, as

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,[9] 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 a 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 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 the 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 difficileness,[1] 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

we learn that storks were held there in a sort of religious reverence, because they were supposed to make every Winter the pilgrimage to Mecca.

9 Nicolo Machiavelli, a Florentine statesman. He wrote "Discourses on the first Decade of Livy," which were conspicuous for their liberality of sentiment, and just and profound reflections. This work was succeeded by his famous treatise, *The Prince*, his patron, Cæsar Borgia, being the model of the perfect prince there described by him. The whole scope of this work is directed to one object—the maintenance of power, however acquired. The word *Machiavelism* has been adopted to denote all that is deformed, insincere, and perfidious in politics. He died in 1527.

1 This hard word comes pretty near meaning *unreasonableness*, or *unpersuadableness*.

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, and yet have never a tree for the purpose in their gardens, as Timon[2] had. Such dispositions are the very errors of human nature, and yet they are the fittest timber to make great politics of; like to knee-timber,[3] 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 shows 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 shows that his heart is like the noble tree that is wounded itself when it gives the balm:[4] if he easily pardons and remits offences, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries, so that he cannot be shot: if he be thankful for small benefits, it shows 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[5] from Christ for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a Divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself.

OF ATHEISM.

I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend,[6] and the Talmud,[7] and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind; and therefore God never wrought miracles to convince atheism, because His ordinary works convince it. It

2 Timon of Athens, as he is generally called, was surnamed the *Misanthrope*, from the hatred which he bore to his fellow-men. Going to the public assembly on one occasion, he mounted the Rostrum, and stated that he had a fig-tree on which many worthy citizens had ended their days by the halter; that he was going to cut it down for the purpose of building on the spot, and therefore recommended them to avail themselves of it before it was too late.

3 A piece of timber that has grown crooked, and has been so cut that the trunk and branch form an angle.

4 He probably here refers to the myrrh-tree. Incision is the method usually adopted for extracting the resinous juices of trees: as in the india-rubber and gutta-percha trees.

5 A votive, and in the present instance a vicarious offering. He alludes to the words of St. Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy, ii., 10.

6 The Legend was a collection of miraculous and wonderful stories; so called because the book was appointed *to be read* in churches on certain days.

7 This is the book that contains the Jewish traditions, and the Rabbinical explanations of the law. It is replete with wonderful narratives.

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 school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion; that is, the school of Leucippus,[8] and Democritus,[9] and Epicurus: for it is a thousand times more credible that four mutable elements and one immutable fifth essence,[1] duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds unplaced,[2] should have produced this order or 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[3] 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[4] 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 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 dis-

8 A Philosopher of Abdera; the first who taught the system of atoms, which was afterwards more fully developed by Democritus and Epicurus.

9 He was a disciple of the last-named philosopher, and held the same principles: he also denied the existence of the soul after death. He is considered to have been the parent of experimental Philosophy, and was the first to teach, what is now confirmed by science, that the Milky Way is an accumulation of stars.

1 The "four mutable elements" are earth, water, air, and fire, of which all visible things were thought to be composed. The "fifth essence," commonly called *quintessence*, was an immaterial principle, superior to the four elements, a spirit-power.

2 The Epicureans held that the Universe consisted, originally, of atoms diffused chaotically through space, and that, after infinite trials and encounters, without any counsel or design, these did at last, by a lucky chance, "entangle and settle themselves in this beautiful and regular frame of the world which we now see." In other words, that old chaos grew into the present order by a *fortuitous concourse* of these atoms.

3 Here *that* is equivalent to the compound relative *what, that which*. The usage was very common.

4 That is, whose ends it serves, or whose interest it is.

semble 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.*[5] 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 shows 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 subtilest 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 there 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:*[6] 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, especially 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

5 "It is not profane to deny the gods of the common people; but to apply to the gods the notions of the common people, is profane."

6 "It is not now to be said, As the people so the priest, for the people are not so bad as the priests."—St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, founded a hundred and sixty convents, and died in 1153. He was unsparing in his censures of the priests of his time. Gibbon speaks of him as follows: "Princes and pontiffs trembled at the freedom of his apostolical censures: France, England, and Milan consulted and obeyed his judgment in a schism of the Church: the debt was repayed by the gratitude of Innocent the Second; and his successor, Eugenius the Third, was the friend and disciple of the holy Bernard."

man, who to him is instead of a God, or *melior natura*;[7] 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 Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis et terræ domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos et Latinos; sed pietate, ac religione, atque hac una sapientia, quod Deorum immortalium numine omnia regi, gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.*[8]

OF SUPERSTITION.

It were better to have no opinion of God at all than such an opinion as is unworthy of Him; for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely: and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: "Surely," said he, "I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born"; as the poets speak of Saturn:[9] and as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men: therefore atheism did never perturb

7 That is, "a superior nature."

8 "Let us be as partial to ourselves as we will, Conscript Fathers, yet we have not surpassed the Spaniards in number, nor the Gauls in strength, nor the Carthaginians in cunning, nor the Greeks in the arts, nor, lastly, the Latins and Italians of this nation and land, in natural intelligence about home-affairs; but we have excelled all nations and people in piety and religion, and in this one wisdom of fully recognizing that all things are ordered and governed by the power of the immortal gods."

9 Time was personified in Saturn, and by this story was meant its tendency to destroy whatever it has brought into existence.

States:[1] for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further. And we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil times;[2] but superstition hath been the confusion of many States, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile*,[3] that ravisheth all the spheres of government. The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order. It was gravely said by some of the prelates in the Council of Trent, where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles,[4] and such engines of orbs, to save the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things; and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtile and intricate axioms and theorems, to save the practice of the Church.

The causes of superstition are, pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness; over-great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the Church; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre; the favouring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties; the taking an aim at Divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations; and, lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition, without a veil, is a deformed thing; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed; and as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go farthest from the superstition formerly received;[5] therefore care would[6] be had that (as it fareth in ill purgings) the good be not taken away with the bad, which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.

1 Bacon would hardly have written this passage, had he lived after the French Revolution. See some of the pieces from Burke in this volume; especially that on page 296.

2 And yet in those very times human society was, through sheer profligacy, going to ruin faster in Rome, was rotting inwards more deeply, than it has ever done in any modern nation.

3 In the astronomical language of Bacon's time, *primum mobile* meant a body drawing all others into its own sphere.

4 An epicycle is a smaller circle, whose centre is in the circumference of a greater one.

5 So, for example, in Bacon's time, there was a class of people who had a superstitious dread of such things as the ring in marriage, and kneeling at the Lord's Supper.

6 *Would* for *should*. See page 568, note 1.

OF TRAVEL.

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow[7] well; so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth; for else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing that, in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land-travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation: let diaries, therefore, be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are, the Courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns; and so the havens and harbours, antiquities and ruins, libraries, colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure near great cities; armories, arsenals, magazines, exchanges, bourses,[8] warehouses, exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go; after all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs,[9] masques, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them; yet they are not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do: first, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth; then he must have such a servant, or tutor, as knoweth the country, as was likewise said: let him carry with him also some card, or book, describing the

7 *Approve* is the old meaning of *allow*. Often so in Shakespeare. Also in the Psalms: "The Lord *alloweth* the righteous."

8 *Bourse* is French for *purse;* and the sign of a purse was anciently set over the places where merchants met.

9 Public shows of any kind were often called *triumphs*.

country where he travelleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry; let him keep also a diary; let him not stay long in one city or town, more or less as the place deserveth, but not long; nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great adamant[1] of acquaintance; let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth; let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth, that he may use his favour in those things he desireth to see or know; thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel, that which is most of all profitable is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men[2] of ambassadors; for so in travelling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad, that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame: for quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided; they are commonly for mistresses, healths,[3] place, and words: and let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth; and let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised[4] in his answers than forward to tell stories: and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country

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OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF.

An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd[5] thing in an orchard or garden: and certainly men that are great lovers

1 *Adamant* is the old name for the loadstone.

2 What are now called *attachés*.

3 He probably means the refusing to join on the occasion of drinking healths when taking wine.

4 *Advised* is *circumspect, deliberate.* Often so in Shakespeare.

5 *Shrewd*, here, is *ill* or *mischievous*. So in *King Henry the Eighth*, v., 2 "Do my Lord of Canterbury a *shrewd* turn, and he is your friend for ever."

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 country. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth; for that only stands fast upon his own centre;[6] 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 accessary. 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,[7] 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 a house on fire, an[8] 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*

6 Bacon adhered to the old astronomy, which made the Earth the centre of the system. The Copernican system was not generally received in England till many years later.

7 A *bias* is, properly, a weight placed in one side of a bowl, which deflects it from the straight line.

8 *An*, for *if*, occurs continually in Shakespeare.

rivali,[9] are many times unfortunate; and whereas they have all their time 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.

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[1] 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 course 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,[2] 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 pairs[3] other; and he that is holpen[4] takes it for a fortune, and

9 "Lovers of themselves, without a competitor."

1 *Medicine* and *remedy* are here used as synonymous.

2 *Round*, as applied to speech or action, means *plain, bold, downright, decided.* So Polonius, in *Hamlet*, says, "I went *round* to work." But the word sometimes appeare to have the sense of *rapid.* And so Addison seems to use it: "Sir Roger heard them on a *round* trot"; though here it may very well mean *downright* or *decided.*

3 To *pair* is, properly, to *make less* or *worse.* So the Earl of Somerset to King James: "I only cleave to that which is so little, as that it will suffer no *pairing* or diminution." The word has long been out of use except in *impair.*

4 *Holpen*, or *holp*, is the old preterito of *help.* Used continually in the Psalter; often in Shakespeare also.

thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author. It is good also not to try experiments in States, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation:[5] and lastly, that the novelty, though it be not rejected, yet be held for a suspect;[6] and, as the Scripture saith, "That we make a stand upon the ancient way, and then look about us, and discover what is the straight and right way, and so to walk in it."

OF SEEMING WISE.

It hath been an opinion, that the French are wiser than they seem, and the Spaniards seem wiser than they are; but, howsoever it be between nations, certainly it is so between man and man; for, as the apostle saith of godliness, "Having a show of godliness, but denying the power thereof"; so certainly there are, in points of wisdom and sufficiency,[7] that do nothing or little very solemnly; *magno conatu nugas*.[8] It is a ridiculous thing, and fit for a satire to persons of judgment, to see what shifts these formalists have, and what prospectives[9] to make superficies to seem body, that hath depth and bulk. Some are so close and reserved, as they will not show their wares but by a dark light, and seem always to keep back somewhat; and when they know within themselves they speak of that they do not well know, would nevertheless seem to others to know of that which they may not well speak. Some help themselves with countenance and gesture, and are wise by signs; as Cicero saith of Piso, that when he answered him he fetched one of his brows up to his forehead, and bent the other down to his chin; *Respondes, altero ad frontem sublato, altero ad mentum depresso supercilio, crudelitatem tibi non placere.*[1] Some think to bear it

5 For some capital observations on this subject, see, among the pieces from Burke, page 213; also, pages 257—259.

6 "Held for a *suspect*" of course means the same as "held in *suspicion*." Shakespeare has a like usage repeatedly. So in *The Comedy of Errors*, iii., 1: "You draw within the compass of *suspect* th' unviolated honour of your wife."

7 *Sufficiency* appears to be used here in the sense of *authority*, or *full power*. So Shakespeare, in *Measure for Measure*, i., 1: "Then no more remains but t' add *sufficiency*, as your worth is able, and let them work."

8 "Achieve nothing with a mighty effort."

9 *Prospective* is an old term for a perspective glass. So Daniel, as quoted by Nares: "Take here this *prospective*, and therein note and tell what thou seest, for well mayest thou there observe their shadows." Through such prospectives things were often made to seem very different from what they really were.

1 "With one brow raised to your forehead, the other bent downward to your chin, you answer that cruelty delights you not."

by speaking a great word, and being peremptory; and go on, and take by admittance that which they cannot make good Some, whatsoever is beyond their reach, will seem to despise, or make light of it, as impertinent or curious;[2] and so would have their ignorance seem judgment. Some are never without a difference,[3] and commonly, by amusing men with a subtilty, blanch[4] the matter; of whom A. Gellius saith, *Hominem delirum, qui verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera.*[5] Of which kind also Plato, in his *Protagoras*, bringeth in Prodicus in scorn, and maketh him make a speech that consisteth of distinctions from the beginning to the end. Generally, such men, in all deliberations, find ease to be of the negative side, and affect a credit to object and foretell difficulties; for, when propositions are denied, there is an end of them; but if they be allowed, it requireth a new work; which false point of wisdom is the bane of business. To conclude, there is no decaying merchant, or inward beggar,[6] hath so many tricks to uphold the credit of their wealth as these empty persons have to maintain the credit of their sufficiency. Seeming wise men may make shift to get opinion; but let no man choose them for employment; for, certainly, you were better take for business a man somewhat absurd than over-formal.

OF FRIENDSHIP.

It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech, "Whosoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god":[7] for it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred and aversation towards[8] society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the Divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to seques-

2 *Impertinent* is *irrelevant;* and *curious* is *over-nice.*

3 *Difference* in the sense of *subtile distinction.*

4 *Blanch*, here, is *evade* or *elude.* So Bacon, again, in his *Henry the Seventh:* "The judges of that time thought it was a dangerous thing to admit *ifs* and *ans* to qualify the words of treason, whereby every man might express his malice, and *blanch* his danger." So too in *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ:* "I suppose you will not *blanch* Paris in your way."

5 "A foolish man, who fritters away weighty matters by fine-spun trifling with words."

6 One really insolvent, though to the world he does not appear so.

7 The quotation is from Aristotle's *Ethics.*

8 *Aversation towards* is the same as *aversion to.*

ter a man's self for a higher conversation; such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen,—as Epimenides, the Candian; Numa, the Roman; Empedocles, the Sicilian; and Apollonius, of Tyana;[9] and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: *Magna civitas, magna solitudo;*[1] because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighbourhoods: but we may go further, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere[2] and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and, even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all 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[3] 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

9 Epimenides, a poet of Crete, is said to have fallen into a sleep which lasted fifty-seven years. He was also said to have lived 299 years. Numa pretended that he was instructed in the art of legislation by the divine nymph Egeria, who dwelt in the Arician grove. Empedocles, the Sicilian philosopher, declared himself to be immortal, and to be able to cure all evils: he is said by some to have retired from society, that his death might not be known. Apollonius, of Tyana, the Pythagorean philosopher, pretended to miraculous powers, and after his death a temple was erected to him at that place.

1 "A great city is a great desert."

2 *Mere*, again, for *absolute* or *utter*. See page 567, note 8.

3 *Sarza* is the old name for sarsaparilla.

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*; 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. Sulla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed The Great) to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sulla's overmatch; for when he had carried the Consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sulla, and that Sulla 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 seemed 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 nostra non occultavi*;[4] and the whole Senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness 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 Aure-

4 "On account of our friendship, I have not concealed these things."

lius, 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 might have a friend to make it entire: and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; 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,[5] 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[6] his understanding. Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Louis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable[7] 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 used 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[8] 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 is it of[9] minds.

5 Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, the antagonist of Louis XI. of France. Comines spent his early years at his Court, but afterwards passed into the service of Louis XI. This monarch was notorious for his cruelty, treachery, and dissimulation.

6 The use of *perish* as a transitive verb is not peculiar to Bacon. Beaumont and Fletcher have it in *The Maid's Tragedy*, iv., 1: "Let not my sins *perish* your noble youth." Also in *The Honest Man's Fortune*, i., 2: "His wants and miseries have *perish'd* his good face."

7 *Parable* and *proverb* were formerly synonymous.

8 To *pray in aid* is an old law phrase for calling one in to help who has an interest in the cause.

9 *Of* was, as it still is often equivalent to *in respect of*

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections; 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;[1] 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 statue 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[2] 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 sometimes too

1 That is, like *tapestries*, opened and *spread out*. Many of the tapestries or hangings formerly used for lining rooms had pictures and sentences embroidered in them. This is characteristically alluded to by Falstaff in 1 *Henry the Fourth*, iv., 2: "Slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the *painted cloth*."

2 *Vulgar* and *common* are used interchangeably by old writers.

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;[3] or, that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond[4] 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 a 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,[5] 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

3 He alludes to the recommendation which moralists have often given, that a person in anger should go through the alphabet to himself before he allows himself to speak.

4 *Fond* is often *foolish* in old writers. So in Shakespeare, *passom.*

5 *Estate* in the sense of *state*, that is, *condition*. Often so.

to cast and see how many things there are which a man can not 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[6] 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[7] with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless: I have given the rule, where a man can fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

OF EXPENSE.

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 show, that the bills may be less than the estimation abroad. Certainly, if a man will keep but of even hand,[8] 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 baseness for the greatest to descend and look into their own estate. Some

6 Equivalent to *because*, or *inasmuch as*. A very frequent usage.

7 Here *sort* is *suit* or *accord*. So in *King Henry the Fifth*, iv., 1, speaking of the name *Pistol*: "It *sorts* well with your fierceness."

8 "Of even hand" is equivalent to *in an equal balance*.

forbear it, not upon negligence alone, but doubting[9] to bring themselves into melancholy, in respect they shall find it broken; but wounds cannot be cured without searching. He that cannot look into his own estate at all had need both choose well those whom he employeth, and change them often; for new are more timorous and less subtle. He that can look into his estate but seldom, it behoveth him to turn all to certainties. A man had need, if he be plentiful in some kind of expense, to be as saving again in some other: as,[1] if he be plentiful in diet, to be saving in apparel; if he be plentiful in the hall, to be saving in the stable, and the like; for he that is plentiful in expenses of all kinds will hardly be preserved from decay. In clearing of a man's estate, he may as well hurt himself in being too sudden, as in letting it run on too long; for hasty selling is commonly as disadvantageable as interest. Besides, he that clears at once will relapse; for, finding himself out of straits, he will revert to his customs; but he that cleareth by degrees induceth a habit of frugality, and gaineth as well upon his mind as upon his estate. Certainly, who hath a state to repair, may not despise small things: and, commonly, it is less dishonourable to abridge petty charges than to stoop to petty gettings. A man ought warily to begin charges which, once begun, will continue; but in matters that return not he may be more magnificent.

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 lose friends, and they check[2] 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 in the brain; for they take place in the stoutest natures, as in the example of Henry the Seventh of England. There was not a more suspicious man nor a more stout:[3] and in such a composition they do small hurt; for commonly they are not admitted, but with examination, whether they be likely or no; but in fearful natures they gain ground too fast. There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little; and

9 To *doubt* was often used in the sense of to *fear*.
1 *As* here has the force of *for instance*. Often so.
2 That is, *clash*, or *interfere*.
3 *Stout*, in old language, is *stubborn*, or, sometimes, *haughty*.

therefore men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more, and not to keep their suspicions in smother. What would men have? Do they think those they employ and deal with are saints? Do they not think they will have their own ends, and be truer to themselves than to them? Therefore there is no better way to moderate suspicions, than to account upon such suspicions as true, and yet to bridle them as false: for so far a man ought to make use of suspicions as to provide, as if that should be true that he suspects, yet it may do him no hurt. Suspicions that the mind of itself gathers are but buzzes; but suspicions that are artificially nourished, and put into men's heads by the tales and whisperings of others, have stings. Certainly, the best mean to clear the way in this same wood of suspicions, is frankly to communicate them with the party that he suspects; for thereby he shall be sure to know more of the truth of them than he did before; and withal shall make that party more circumspect, not to give further cause of suspicion. But this would not be done to men of base natures; for they, if they find themselves once suspected, will never be true. The Italian says, *Sospetto licentia fede*;[4] as if suspicion did give a passport to faith; but it ought rather to kindle it to discharge itself.

OF DISCOURSE.

Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought. Some have certain commonplaces and themes wherein they are good, and want variety; which kind of poverty is for the most part tedious, and, when it is once perceived, ridiculous. The honourablest part of talk is to give the occasion; and again to moderate and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads the dance. It is good in discourse, and speech of conversation, to vary, and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and jest with earnest; for it is a dull thing to tire, and, as we say now, to jade any thing too far. As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it, namely, religion, matters of State, great persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity; yet there be some that think their wits have been asleep, except they dart out somewhat that is piquant, and to the quick. That is a vein which would be bridled: *Parce, puer,*

4 "Suspicion dissolves the obligation to fidelity."

stimulis, et fortius utere loris.[5] And, generally, men ought to find the difference between saltness and bitterness. Certainly, he that hath a satirical vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid of others' memory. He that questioneth much shall learn much, and content much, but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh; for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge: but let his questions not be troublesome, for that is fit for a poser;[6] and let him be sure to leave other men their turns to speak: nay, if there be any that would reign and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off, and to bring others on, as musicians use to do with those that dance too long galliards.[7] If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought, another time, to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen. I knew one was wont to say in scorn, "He must needs be a wise man, 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 touch[8] 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 blow 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, shows slowness; and a good reply, or second speech, without a good settled speech, showeth 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.

5 "Boy, spare the spur, and more tightly hold the reins."

6 A *poser* is one who tests or oxamines.

7 The galliard was a sprightly dance much used in Bacon's time.

8 Personal hits, or glances at particular individuals.

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 Solomon, "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[9] 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 Solomon saith, "Riches are as a stronghold 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 proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly: yet have no abstract nor friarly contempt of them; but distinguish, as Cicero saith well of Rabirius Posthumus, *In studio rei amplificandæ apparebat, non avaritiæ prædam, sed instrumentum bonitati quæri.*[1] Hearken also to Solomon, and beware of hasty gathering of riches: *Qui festinat ad divitias, non erit insons.*[2] The poets feign, that when Plutus (which is riches) is sent from Jupiter, he limps, and goes slowly; but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs, and is swift of foot; meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labour pace slowly; but when they come by the death of others, (as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like,) they come tumbling upon a man: but it might be applied likewise to Pluto, taking him for the Devil; for when riches come from the Devil, (as by fraud and oppression, and unjust means,) they come upon speed. The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul: parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent; for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of

9 Here *because* is *in order that*. See page 573, note 1.

1 "In his anxiety to increase his fortune, it was evident that not the gratification of avarice was sought, but the means of doing good."

2 "He who hastens to riches will not be without guilt."

riches, for it is our great mother's blessing, the Earth; but it is slow; and yet, where men of great wealth do stoop to husbandry, it multiplieth riches exceedingly. I knew a nobleman in England that had the greatest audits[3] of any man in my time,—a great grazier, a great sheep-master, a great timberman, a great collier, a great corn-man, a great lead-man, and so of iron, and a number of the like points of husbandry; so as the earth seemed a sea to him in respect of the perpetual importation. It was truly observed by one, that himself "came very hardly to a little riches, and very easily to great riches"; for when a man's stock is come to that, that he can expect the prime of markets,[4] and overcome[5] those bargains which for their greatness are few men's money, and be partner in the industries of younger men, he cannot but increase mainly.[6] The gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest, and furthered by two things, chiefly,—by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing; but the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature, when men shall wait upon others' necessity; broke[7] by servants and instruments to draw them on; put off others cunningly that would be better chapmen,[8] and the like practices, which are crafty and naught: as for the chopping[9] of bargains, when a man buys not to hold, but to sell over again, that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer. Sharings do greatly enrich, if the hands be well chosen that are trusted. Usury is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst; as that whereby a man doth eat his bread, *in sudore vultûs alieni;*[1] and, besides, doth plough upon Sundays: but yet, certain though it be, it hath flaws; for that the scriveners and brokers do value unsound

3 *Audit* here means a rent-roll, or account of income.

4 That is, *wait* till the markets are at their best. The use of *expect* for *await* was common. So in *Hebrews*, x., 13: "*Expecting*, till his enemies be made his footstool." And in *The Merchant of Venice*, v., 1: "Sweet soul, let's in, and there *expect* their coming."

5 *Overcome* in the sense of *overtake*, or *come upon*.

6 Here *mainly* is *greatly*. So in *Hamlet*, iv., 7: "As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else, you *mainly* were stirr'd up."

7 To *broke*, as the word is here used, is to *deal meanly*, to *pander*, or *employ panders*. So in *All's Well that Ends Well*, iii., 5: "He *brokes* with all that can in such a suit corrupt the tender honour of a maid."

8 *Chapmen* for *purchasers*, or *traders;* the old meaning of the word. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, iv., 1: "You do as *chapmen* do, dispraise the thing that you desire to buy."

9 To *chop*, as the word is here used, is to *change*, to *traffic*, as in buying to sell again. Hence the phrase "a chopping wind," or "a chopping sea." So Dryden, in *The Hind and Panther:* "Every hour your form is *chopp'd* and changed, like winds before a storm."

1 "In the sweat of another's brow."

men to serve their own turn.[2] The fortune in being the first in an invention, or in a privilege, doth cause sometimes a wonderful overgrowth in riches, as it was with the first sugar-man[3] in the Canaries: therefore, if a man can play the true logician, to have as well judgment as invention, he may do great matters, especially if the times be fit. He that resteth upon gains certain shall hardly grow to great riches; and he that puts all upon adventures doth oftentimes break and come to poverty: it is good, therefore, to guard adventures with certainties that may uphold losses. Monopolies, and coemption of wares for re-sale, where they are not restrained, are great means to enrich; especially if the party have intelligence what things are like to come into request, and so store himself beforehand. Riches gotten by service, though it be of the best rise, yet when they are gotten by flattery, feeding humours, and other servile conditions, they may be placed amongst the worst.[4] As for fishing for testaments and executorships, (as Tacitus saith of Seneca, *Testamenta et orbos tanquam indagine capi*,[5]) it is yet worse, by how much men submit themselves to meaner persons than in service.

Believe not much them that seem to despise riches, for they despise them that despair of them; and none worse when they come to them. Be not penny-wise: riches have wings, and sometimes they fly away of themselves, sometimes they must be set flying to bring in more. Men leave their riches either to their kindred or to the public; and moderate portions prosper best in both. A great state left to an heir is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better stablished in years and judgment: likewise, glorious[6] gifts and foundations are like sacrifices without salt; and but the painted sepulchres of alms, which soon will putrefy and corrupt inwardly. Therefore measure not thine advancements[7] by quantity, but frame them by measure: and defer not charities till death; for, certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own.

2 That is, as *crafty penmen* and *panders* falsely represent *knaves* as trustworthy, in order to catch victims. See note 7, just above.

3 The first planters of the sugar-cane.

4 This is obscure; but the meaning may come something thus: "Riches gotten by service, though the service be of the highest *price*, or of the most lucrative sort, yet, if it proceed by sinister arts and base compliances, are to be reckoned among the worst." This use of *rise* seems odd, but is the same at bottom as in the phrase, "a *rise* of value," or "a *rise* of prices."

5 "Wills and childless parents, taken as with a net."

6 *Glorious* in the sense of the Latin *gloriosus*; that is, *boastful*, or *ostentatious*. A frequent usage.

7 *Advances*; gifts of money or property.

OF NATURE IN MEN.

NATURE is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return, doctrine and discourse maketh nature less importune,[8] but custom only doth alter and subdue nature. He that seeketh victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great nor too small tasks; for the first will make him dejected by often failings, and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailings. And, at the first, let him practise with helps, as swimmers do with bladders or rushes; but, after a time, let him practise with disadvantages, as dancers do with thick shoes; for it breeds great perfection if the practice be harder than the use. Where nature is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time; (like to him that would say over the four and-twenty letters when he was angry;) then to go less in quantity; as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths to a draught at a meal; and, lastly, to discontinue altogether: but if a man have the fortitude and resolution to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best:

> "Optimus ille animi vindex lædentia pectus
> Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel."[9]

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature as a wand to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right; understanding it where the contrary extreme is no vice. Let not a man force a habit upon himself with a perpetual continuance, but with some intermission; for the pause reinforceth the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors as his abilities, and induce one habit of both; and there is no means to help this but by seasonable intermissions. But let not a man trust his victory over his nature too far, for nature will lie buried a great time, and yet revive upon the occasion or temptation; like as it was with Æsop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end till a mouse ran before her: therefore let a man either avoid the occasion altogether, or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it. A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that putteth a man out of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him. They

8 *Importune* for *importunate*; that is, troublesome.

9 "He is the best assertor of the soul, who bursts the bonds that gall him and grieves it out at once." The quotation is from Ovid's *Remedy for Love*.

are happy men whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, *Multum incola fuit anima mea*,[1] when they converse in those things they do not affect.[2] 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.

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[3] 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 a one as hath had his hands formerly in blood: but Machiavel knew not of a Friar Clement, nor a Ravillac,[4] nor a Jaureguy,[5] nor a Baltazar Gerard;[6] 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 in the first blood are as firm as butchers by occupation; and votary resolution[7] is made equipollent to custom, even in matter of blood. In other things, the predominancy of custom is everywhere 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 sect of

1 "My soul has long been a sojourner."

2 That is, "when their *course of life* is in those things which they do not *like*." Here the verb *converse* has the same sense as the substantive in *Philippians*, i., 27: "Let your *conversation* be as becometh the Gospel of Christ."

3 A good instance of *after* used in the sense of *according*.

4 The assassin of Henry the Fourth of France, in 1610.

5 He attempted to assassinate William, Prince of Orange, and wounded him severely. Philip the Second, in 1582, set a price upon the Prince's head.

6 He assassinated the Prince of Orange in 1584; a crime which he is supposed to have meditated for six years.

7 A resolution confirmed and consecrated by a solemn vow.

their wise men) lay themselves quietly upon a stack of wood, and so sacrifice themselves by fire: nay, the wives strive to be burned with the corpses of their husbands. The lads of Sparta, of ancient time, were wont to be scourged upon the altar of Diana, without so much as quecching.[8] I remember, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's time of England, an Irish rebel, condemned, put up a petition to the deputy that he might be hanged in a withe, and not in a halter, because it had been so used with former rebels. There be monks in Russia for penance, that will sit a whole night in a vessel of water, till they be engaged with hard ice.

Many examples may be put of the force of custom, both upon mind and body; therefore, since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavour to obtain good customs. Certainly, custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years: this we call education, which is, in effect, but an early custom. So we see, in languages, the tongue is more pliant to all expressions and sounds, the joints are more supple to all feats of activity and motions, in youth than afterwards; for it is true, that late learners cannot so well take the ply,[9] except it be in some minds that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment, which is exceeding rare: but if the force of custom, simple and separate, be great, the force of custom, copulate and conjoined and collegiate, is far greater; for there example teacheth, company comforteth,[1] emulation quickeneth, glory raiseth; so as in such places the force of custom is in his[2] exaltation.[3] Certainly, the great multiplication of virtues upon human nature resteth upon societies well ordained and disciplined; for commonwealths and good governments do nourish virtue grown, but do not much mend the seeds: but the misery is, that the most effectual means are now applied to the ends least to be desired.

8 To *quech*, or to *quich*, is an old word for to *move*, to *stir*, to *flinch*.

9 *Ply* is *bent*, *turn*, or *direction*. So used by Macaulay: "The Czar's mind had taken a strange *ply*, which it retained to the last."

1 To *comfort* is here used in its original sense, to *make strong*. So in the Litany: "That it may please Thee to *comfort* and help the weak-hearted."

2 *His* for *its*, referring to *custom*; *its* not being then an accepted word. Shakespeare and the English Bible are full of like instances; as, "if the salt have lost *his* savour," and "the fruit-tree yielding fruit after *his* kind."

3 *Exaltation* is here used in its old astrological sense; a planet being said to be in its *exaltation* when it was in the sign where its influence was supposed to be the strongest.

OF YOUTH AND AGE.

A MAN that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time; but that happeneth rarely. Generally, youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second, for there is a youth in thoughts, as well as in ages; and yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old, and imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely. Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years; as it was with Julius Cæsar and Septimius Severus, of the latter of whom it is said, *Juventutem egit erroribus, imo furoribus plenam;*[4] and yet he was the ablest emperor, almost, of all the list: but reposed natures may do well in youth, as it is seen in Augustus Cæsar, Cosmos duke of Florence, Gaston de Foix,[5] and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge, fitter for execution than for counsel, and fitter for new projects than for settled business; for the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them; but in new things abuseth them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner.

Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon, absurdly; care not to innovate,[6] which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first, and, that which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them; like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with a mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compound employments of both; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both; and good for succession, that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors; and, lastly, good for extern accidents, because authority followeth old men,

4 "His youth was full of errors, and even of frantic passions."

5 A nephew of Louis the Twelfth: he commanded the French armies in Italy against the Spaniards, and was killed in the battle of Ravenna, in 1512.

6 That is, are not *cautious in innovating*, or are not careful how they innovate. This use of the infinitive was very common.

and favour and popularity youth: but, for the moral part, perhaps youth will have the preëminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain rabbin, upon the text, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams," inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream; and, certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit rather in the powers of understanding than in the virtues of the will and affections. There be some have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes: these are, first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned; such as was Hermogenes[7] the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtile, who afterwards waxed stupid: a second sort is of those that have some natural dispositions, which have better grace in youth than in age; such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech, which becomes youth well, but not age: so Tully saith of Hortensius, *Idem manebat, neque idem decebat:*[8] the third is of such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous more than tract of years can uphold; as was Scipio Africanus, of whom Livy saith, in effect, *Ultima primis cedebant.*[9]

OF BEAUTY.

VIRTUE is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features, and that hath rather dignity of presence than beauty of aspect; neither is it almost[1] seen that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue, as if nature were rather busy not to err than in labour to produce excellency; and therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit; and study rather behaviour than virtue. But this holds not always; for Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward the Fourth of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits, and yet the most beautiful men of their times. In beauty, that of favour is more than that of colour, and that of decent and gracious[2] motion more than that of favour. That is the best part of beauty which

7 He lived in the second century after Christ, and is said to have lost his memory at the age of twenty-five.

8 "He remained the same, but the same was no longer becoming to him."

9 "His last deeds fell short of the first."

1 *Almost*, here, has the force of *generally*. The usage was not uncommon.

2 Here *decent* and *gracious* are *becoming* and *graceful*.

a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Durer were the more[3] trifler; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions, the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made them; not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of felicity, (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music,) and not by rule. A man shall see faces that, if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet all together do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel though persons in years seem many times more amiable: *Pulchrorum autumnus pulcher:*[4] for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer-fruits, which are easy to corrupt, and cannot last; and, for the most part, it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance; but yet certainly, again, if it light well, it maketh virtues shine, and vices blush.

OF DEFORMITY.

DEFORMED persons are commonly even with Nature; for as Nature hath done ill by them, so do they by Nature, being for the most part (as the Scripture saith) "void of natural affection": and so they have their revenge of Nature. Certainly there is a consent between the body and the mind, and where Nature erreth in the one, she ventureth in the other: *Ubi peccat in uno, periclitatur in altero:* but, because there is in man an election touching the frame of his mind, and a necessity in the frame of body, the stars of natural inclination are sometimes obscured by the Sun of discipline and virtue; therefore it is good to consider of deformity, not as a sign which is more deceivable,[5] but as a cause which seldom faileth of the effect. Whosoever hath any thing fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn; therefore all deformed persons are extreme bold;

3 *More* in the sense of *greater*. So Shakespeare, repeatedly.

4 "The Autumn of the beautiful is beautiful."

5 *Deceivable* for *deceptive;* the passive form with the active sense. So in *King Richard the Second*, ii., 3: "Show me thy humble heart, and not thy knee, whose duty is *deceivable and false*. Also, in *As You Like It*, we have *disputable* for *disputatious*.

first, as in their own defence, as being exposed to scorn, but in process of time by a general habit. Also it stirreth in them industry, and especially of this kind, to watch and observe the weakness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay. Again, in their superiors, it quencheth jealousy towards them, as persons that they think they may at pleasure despise; and it layeth their competitors and emulators asleep, as never believing they should be in possibility of advancement till they see them in possession: so that upon the matter, in a great wit, deformity is an advantage to rising. Kings in ancient times (and at this present in some countries) were wont to put great trust in eunuchs, because they that are envious towards all are more obnoxious[6] and officious towards one; but yet their trust towards them hath rather 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 Agesilaüs, Zanger the son of Solyman, Æsop, Gasca president of Peru; and Socrates may go likewise amongst them, with others.

OF STUDIES.

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business: for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar: they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some

6 *Obnoxious* in the Latin sense of *submissive* or *complying*.

books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously;[7] and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man; and therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtile; natural philosophy deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend: *Abeunt studia in mores:*[8] nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises,— bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head and the like;—so, if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics, for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are *Cymini sectores;*[9] if he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases: so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

OF PRAISE.

PRAISE is the reflection of virtue, but it is as the glass or body which giveth the reflection: 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 them astonishment or admiration; but of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving at all; but shows, and *species virtutibus similes,*[1] serve best with them. Certainly fame is like a river, that beareth up things light and swollen, and drowns things weighty and solid; but if

7 *Curiously* in the sense of *attentively* or *inquisitively.*

8 "Studies pass up into manners and habits."

9 "Splitters of cummin," or, as we now say, "hair-splitters."

1 "Appearances resembling virtues."

persons of quality and judgment concur, then it is (as the Scripture saith) *Nomen bonum instar unguenti fragrantis*;[2] 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, *spreta conscientia*.[3] Some praises come of good wishes and respects, which is a form due in civility to kings and great persons, *laudando præcipere*;[4] 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; *Pessimum genus inimicorum laudantium*;[5] insomuch as it was a proverb amongst the Grecians, that "he that was praised to his hurt should have a push[6] 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 doeth the good. Solomon 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, *sherrerie*, which is under-sheriffries, as if they were but matters for under-sheriffs and catchpoles; 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 apostolatum meum*.[7]

2 "A good name is like fragrant ointment."
3 "Conscience being turned out of doors."
4 "To instruct in the act of praising."
5 "Flatterers are the worst kind of enemies."
6 *Push* is an old word for a pimple or pustule.
7 "I will magnify my apostleship."

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, doth not stick to add and alter, and to pronounce that which they do not find, and by show of antiquity to introduce novelty. Judges ought to be more learned than witty, more reverend than plausible, and more advised[8] than confident. Above all things, integrity is their portion and proper virtue. "Cursed," saith the law, "is he that removeth the landmark." The mislayer of a mere stone is to blame; but it is the unjust judge that is the capital remover of landmarks, when he defineth amiss of lands and property. One foul sentence doth more hurt than many foul examples; for these do but corrupt the stream, the other corrupteth the fountain: so saith Solomon, *Fons turbatus et vena corrupta est justus cadens in causa sua coram adversario.*[9]

The office of judges may have reference unto the parties that sue, unto the advocates that plead, unto the clerks and ministers of justice underneath them, and to the sovereign or State above them.

First, for the causes or parties that sue. "There be," saith the Scripture, "that turn judgment into wormwood"; and surely there be, also, that turn it into vinegar; for injustice maketh it bitter, and delays make it sour. The principal duty of a judge is to suppress force and fraud, whereof force is the more pernicious when it is open, and fraud when it is close and disguised. Add thereto contentious suits, which ought to be spewed out, as the surfeit of courts. A judge ought to prepare his way to a just sentence, as God useth to prepare His way, by raising valleys and taking down hills: so, when there appeareth on either side a high hand, violent prosecution, cunning advantages taken, combination, power, great counsel, then is the virtue of a judge seen to make inequality equal; that he may plant his judgment as upon an even ground. *Qui fortiter emungit, elicit sanguinem*;[1] and where the wine-press is hard wrought, it yields a harsh wine, that tastes of the grape-stone. Judges must beware of hard constructions and strained inferences; for there is no worse torture than the torture of laws: especially, in case of laws penal, they ought to have care that that which

8 Here, again, *advised* is *careful, considerate.* See page 587, note 4.

9 "A righteous man falling in his cause before his adversary is as a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring."

1 "He who wrings the nose hard brings blood."

was meant for terror be not turned into rigour; and that they bring not upon the people that shower whereof the Scripture speaketh, *Pluet super eos laqueos;*[2] for penal laws pressed are a shower of snares upon the people: therefore let penal laws, if they have been sleepers of long, or if they be grown unfit for the present time, be by wise judges confined in the execution: *Judicis officium est, ut res, ita tempora rerum, &c.*[3] In causes of life and death, judges ought (as far as the law permitteth) in justice to remember mercy, and to cast a severe eye upon the example, but a merciful eye upon the person.

Secondly, for the advocates and counsel that plead. Patience and gravity of hearing is an essential part of justice; and an over-speaking judge is no well-tuned cymbal. It is no grace to a judge first to find that which he might have heard in due time from the bar; or to show quickness of conceit in cutting off evidence or counsel too short, or to prevent[4] information by questions, though pertinent. The parts of a judge in hearing are four,—to direct the evidence; to moderate length, repetition, or impertinency of speech; to recapitulate, select, and collate the material points of that which hath been said; and to give the rule or sentence. Whatsoever is above these is too much, and proceedeth either of glory,[5] and willingness to speak, or of impatience to hear, or of shortness of memory, or of want of a staid and equal attention. It is a strange thing to see that the boldness of advocates should prevail with judges, whereas they should imitate God, in whose seat they sit, who represseth the presumptuous, and giveth grace[6] to the modest; but it is more strange that judges should have noted favourites, which cannot but cause multiplication of fees, and suspicion of by-ways. There is due from the judge to the advocate some commendation and gracing, where causes are well handled and fair pleaded, especially towards the side which obtaineth not; for that upholds in the client the reputation of his counsel, and beats down in him the conceit of his cause.[7] There is likewise due to the public a civil reprehension of advocates, where there appeareth cunning counsel, gross neglect, slight informa-

2 "He will rain snares upon them."

3 "It is the duty of a judge to consider not only the facts but the circumstances of the case."

4 *Prevent* in its old sense of *anticipate* or *forestall.*

5 *Glory* here is *vain-glory;* that is *vaunting* or *display.* See page 603, note 6.

6 *Grace* in the sense of *favour.* So in St. James, iv., 6: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth *grace* unto the humble."

7 That is, abates his confidence in the goodness of his cause. *Conceit* for *opinion.* So in *King Henry the Eighth*, ii., 3: "I shall not fail to approve the fair *conceit* the King hath of you." Also in the Scripture saying: "Seest thou a man wise in his own *conceit?*"

tion, indiscreet pressing, or an over-bold defence. And let not the counsel at the bar chop[8] 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 to the party to say his counsel or proofs were not heard.

Thirdly, for that that concerns clerks and ministers. The place of justice is a hallowed place; and therefore not only the bench, but the footpace[9] and precincts and purprise[1] 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 polling[2] 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*, but *parasiti curiæ*,[3] 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*;[4] 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 a

8 To *chop*, here, is to *bandy words*. See page 602, note 9.

9 The *footpace* is what we call the *lobby*.

1 The *purprise* is the *enclosure*. So in Holland's Plutarch: "Their wives and children were to assemble all together unto a certain place in Phocis, and environ the whole *purprise* and precinct thereof with a huge quantity of wood."

2 To *poll* is an old word for to *pillage*, to *plunder*. *Poller*, a little further on, has the same sense. So Burton: "He may rail downright at a spoiler of countries, and yet in office be a most grievous *poller* himself."

3 Not "friends of the court," but "parasites of the court."

4 "The safety of the people is the supreme law."

happy thing in a State, when kings and states[5] 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. 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 Solomon's throne was supported by lions on both sides: let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne; being circumspect 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 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 eâ utatur legitime.*[6]

OF ANGER.

To seek to extinguish anger utterly is but a bravery[7] 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 speak how the natural inclination and habit "to be angry" may be attempered and calmed; secondly, how the particular motions of anger may be repressed, or at least refrained from doing mischief; thirdly, how to raise anger, or appease anger in another.

For the first, there is no other way but to meditate and ruminate well upon the effects of anger, how it troubles man's life; and the best time to do this, is to look back upon anger when the fit is thoroughly over. Seneca saith well, that "anger is like ruin, which breaks itself upon that it falls." The Scripture exhorteth us "to possess our souls in patience"; whosoever is out of patience, is out of possession of his soul. Men must not turn bees, *animasque in vulnere ponunt.*[8] Anger is certainly a

5 *States* for *orders*. See page 193, note 2.

6 "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully."

7 *Bravery*, again, for *boast* or *bravado*. See page 576, note 6.

8 "And sting their lives into the wound."

kind of baseness, as it appears well in the weakness of those subjects in whom it reigns, children, women, old folks, sick folks. Only men must beware that they carry their anger rather with scorn than with fear; so that they may seem rather to be above the injury than below it; which is a thing easily done, if a man will give law to himself in it.

For the second point, the causes and motives of anger are chiefly three: first, to be too sensible of hurt; for no man is angry that feels not himself hurt; and therefore tender and delicate persons must needs be oft angry, they have so many things to trouble them, which more robust natures have little sense of: the next is, the apprehension and construction of the injury offered, to be, in the circumstances thereof, full of contempt; for contempt is that which putteth an edge upon anger, as much or more than the hurt itself; and therefore, when men are ingenious in picking out circumstances of contempt, they do kindle their anger much: lastly, opinion of the touch[9] of a man's reputation doth multiply and sharpen anger; wherein the remedy is, that a man should have, as Gonsalvo was wont to say, *telam honoris crassiorim*.[1] 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[2] 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;[3] for *communia maledicta*[4] 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 show bitterness, do not act any thing that is not revocable.

For raising or 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

9 A peculiar use of *touch*, but meaning, apparently, about the same as *stain* or *stigma*: "the notion that one's reputation is *touched*." So in the often-quoted but misunderstood passage in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii., 3: "One *touch* of nature makes the whole world kin"; where the context shows that "one touch of nature" is equivalent to one *natural blemish*, *weakness*, or *folly*.

1 "A thicker covering of honour."

2 *Contain*, *refrain*, and *restrain* are often used indiscriminately by old writers. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, v., 2: "O, *contain* yourself; your passion draws ears hither."

3 That is, *pointed*, or *stinging*, and *personal*.

4 "General reproaches."

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.

DISCREDITS OF LEARNING.

HERE is the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter. And how is it possible but this should have an operation to discredit learning, even with vulgar capacities, when they see learned men's works like the first letter of a patent, or limned book; which though it hath large flourishes, yet it is but a letter? It seems to me that Pygmalion's frenzy[5] is a good emblem or portraiture of this vanity: for words are but the images of matter; and except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture.

But yet notwithstanding it is a thing not hastily to be condemned, to clothe and adorn the obscurity even of philosophy itself with sensible and plausible elocution. For hereof we have great examples in Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and of Plato also in some degree; and hereof likewise there is great use: for, surely, to the severe inquisition of truth and the deep progress into philosophy, it is some hindrance, because it is too early satisfactory to the mind of man, and quencheth the desire of further search, before we come to a just period; but then, if a man be to have any use of such knowledge in civil occasions of conference, counsel, persuasion, discourse, or the like, then 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 sacrum es;* 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 for-

5 Pygmalion is said to have made an image of a maiden so beautiful, that he went mad with love for it, and prayed Aphrodite to breathe life into it. The prayer being granted, he then married the maiden.

ner: 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 prophetical for the times following; and not only respective to divinity, but extensive[6] to all knowledge: *Devita profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ.*[7] 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 matter, 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 subtilty 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 confu-

6 *Extensive* for *extensible;* the active form with the passive sense. This indiscriminate use of active and passive forms was very common.

7 "Shun flippant novelties of speech, and oppositions of science falsely so called."

tation 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*,[8] so a man may truly say of the schoolmen, *Quæstionum minutiis scientiarum frangunt soliditatem*.[9] 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 as 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 monstris*;[1] 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 contemn 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 subtilties, and matters of no use or moment, they easily fall upon that judgment of Dionysius of Syracusa, *Verba ista sunt senum otiosorum*.[2]

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.[3] 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

8 "He breaks down the strength of things with nice verbal distinctions."

9 "They fritter away the solid mass of the sciences with minute questions."

1 "Having her fair loins girded about with barking monsters."

2 "Those are the words of idle old men."

3 That is, as certain animals are made fierce by being kept in the dark. Bacon seems to mean that the minds of the schoolmen grew rabid from being imprisoned in one idea, or in a narrow cell of thought.

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*,[4] 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*:[5] so great an affinity hath fiction and belief.

As for the overmuch credit that hath been given unto authors in sciences, in making them dictators, that their words should stand, and not consuls 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 come, that in arts mechanical the first deviser comes shortest, and time addeth and perfecteth; but in sciences the first author goeth farthest, and time loseth 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 latter 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, *Oportet discentem credere*, yet

4 "Shun the prying questioner, for he is also talkative."

5 "They fabricate tales, and at the same time believe them."

it must be coupled with this, *Oportet edoctum judicare*;[6] for disciples do owe unto masters only a temporary belief and a suspension of their own judgment till 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 prophet is the true direction in this matter, *State super vias antiquas, et videte quænam sit via recta et bona et ambulate in ea.*[7] 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 juventus mundi.*[8] 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, that hath also some affinity with the former, is a conceit that of former opinions or sects after variety and examination the best hath still prevailed and suppressed the rest; so as, if a man should begin the labour of a new search, he were but like to light upon somewhat formerly rejected, and by rejection brought into oblivion: as if the multitude, or the wisest for the multitude's sake, were not ready to give passage rather to that which is popular and superficial than to that which is substantial and profound; for the truth is, that time seemeth to be of the nature of a river or stream, which carrieth down to us that which is light and blown up, and sinketh and drowneth that which is weighty and solid.

Another error hath proceeded from too great a reverence, and

6 "The learner ought to believe," and, "the learned ought to judge."

7 "Take your stand upon the ancient ways, and search which is the right and good way, and walk therein."

8 "The antiquity of time is the youth of the world."

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 invocate their own spirits to divine and give oracles unto them, whereby they are deservedly deluded.

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, quam ne dubitare aliqua de re videretur;*[9] nor on the other side into Socrates' 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 farthest end of knowledge. For men have

9 "His greatest fear was, lest he should seem to doubt of any thing."

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.*[1] 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 courtesan, 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.

DIGNITY AND VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE.

FIRST let us seek the dignity of knowledge in the archetype 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;

1 "She turns aside from her course, and picks up the rolling gold."

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 appeareth 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 concurreth, 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.

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 reluctation 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 Paradise consisted of the two summary parts of knowledge; the view of creatures, and the imposition of names. As for the knowledge which induced the fall, it was not the natural knowledge of creatures, but the moral knowledge of good and evil; wherein the supposition was, that God's commandments or prohibitions were not the originals of good and evil, but that they had other beginnings, which man aspired to know; to the end to make a total defection from God and to depend wholly upon himself.

To descend to Moses the lawgiver, and God's first pen: he is adorned by the Scriptures with this addition and commendation, "That he was seen in all the learning of the Egyptians"; which nation we know was one of the most ancient schools of the world: for so Plato brings in the Egyptian priest saying unto Solon, "You Grecians are ever children; you have no knowledge of antiquity, nor antiquity of knowledge." Take a view of the ceremonial law of Moses: you shall find, besides the prefiguration of Christ, the badge or difference of the people of God, the exercise and impression of obedience, and other divine uses

and fruits thereof, that some of the most learned Rabbins have travailed profitably and profoundly to observe, some of them a natural, some of them a moral sense, or reduction of many of the ceremonies and ordinances. As in the law of the leprosy, where it is said, "If the whiteness have overspread the flesh, the patient may pass abroad for clean; but if there be any whole flesh remaining, he is to be shut up for unclean"; one of them noteth a principle of Nature, that putrefaction is more contagious before maturity than after: and another noteth a position of moral philosophy, that men abandoned to vice do not so much corrupt manners, as those that are half good and half evil. So in this and very many other places in that law, there is to be found, besides the theological sense, much aspersion of philosophy.

So likewise in the person of Solomon the King, we see the gift or endowment of wisdom and learning, both in Solomon's petition and in God's assent thereunto, preferred before all other terrene and temporal felicity. By virtue of which grant or donative of God, Solomon became enabled not only to write those excellent parables or aphorisms concerning divine and moral philosophy; but also to compile a natural history of all verdure, from the cedar upon the mountain to the moss upon the wall, (which is but a rudiment between putrefaction and an herb,) and also of all things that breathe or move. Nay, the same Solomon the King, although he excelled in the glory of treasure and magnificent buildings, of shipping and navigation, of service and attendance, of fame and renown, and the like, yet he maketh no claim to any of those glories, but only to the glory of inquisition of truth; for so he saith expressly, "The glory of God is to conceal a thing, but the glory of the king is to find it out"; as if, according to the innocent play of children, the Divine Majesty took delight to hide His works, to the end to have them found out; and as if kings could not obtain a greater honour than to be God's playfellows in that game; considering the great commandment of wits and means, whereby nothing needeth to be hidden from them.

Neither did the dispensation of God vary in the times after our Saviour came into the world; for our Saviour himself did first show His power to subdue ignorance, by His conference with the priests and doctors of the law, before He showed His power to subdue Nature by His miracles. And the coming of the Holy Spirit was chiefly figured and expressed in the similitude and gift of tongues, which are but *vehicula scientiæ*.

So in the election of those instruments which it pleased God to use for the plantation of the faith, notwithstanding that at the first He did employ persons altogether unlearned, otherwise

than by inspiration, more evidently to declare His immediate working, and to abase all human wisdom and knowledge; yet nevertheless that counsel of His was no sooner performed, but in the next vicissitude and succession He did send His divine truth into the world, waited on with other learnings, as with servants and handmaids: for so we see St. Paul, who was only learned amongst the Apostles, had his pen most used in the Scriptures of the New Testament.

So again we find that many of the ancient bishops and fathers of the Church were excellently read and studied in all the learning of the heathen; insomuch that the edict of the Emperor Julianus (whereby it was interdicted unto Christians to be admitted into schools, lectures, or exercises of learning) was esteemed and accounted a more pernicious engine and machination against the Christian Faith than were all the sanguinary persecutions of his predecessors; neither could the emulation and jealousy of Gregory the first of that name, Bishop of Rome, ever obtain the opinion of piety or devotion; but, contrariwise, received the censure of humour, malignity, and pusillanimity, even amongst holy men; in that he designed to obliterate and extinguish the memory of heathen antiquity and authors. But, contrariwise, it was the Christian Church, which, amidst the inundations of the Scythians on the one side from the North-west, and the Saracens from the East, did preserve in the sacred lap and bosom thereof the precious relics even of heathen learning, which otherwise had been extinguished as if no such thing had ever been.

Wherefore, to conclude this part, let it be observed, that there be two principal duties and services, besides ornament and illustration, which philosophy and human learning do perform to faith and religion. The one, because they are an effectual inducement to the exaltation of the glory of God. For, as the Psalms and other Scriptures do often invite us to consider and magnify the great and wonderful works of God, so, if we should rest only in the contemplation of the exterior of them as they first offer themselves to our senses, we should do a like injury unto the majesty of God, as if we should judge or construe of the store of some excellent jeweller, by that only which is set out toward the street in his shop. The other, because they minister a singular help and preservative against unbelief and error. For our Saviour saith, "You err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God"; laying before us two books or volumes to study, if we will be secured from error; first the Scriptures, revealing the will of God, and then the creatures, expressing His power; whereof the latter is a key unto the former: not only opening our understanding to conceive the

true sense of the Scriptures, by the general notions of reason and rules of speech; but chiefly opening our belief, in drawing us into a due meditation of the omnipotency of God, which is chiefly signed and engraven upon His works. Thus much therefore for Divine testimony and evidence concerning the true dignity and value of learning.

As for human proofs, it is so large a field, as in a discourse of this nature and brevity it is fit rather to use choice of those things which we shall produce, than to embrace the variety of them. First, therefore, in the degrees of human honour amongst the heathen, it was the highest to obtain to a veneration and adoration as a god. This unto the Christians is as the forbidden fruit. But we speak now separately of human testimony; according to which, that which the Grecians call *apotheosis*, and the Latins *relatio inter divos*, was the supreme honour which man could attribute unto man; specially when it was given, not by a formal decree or Act of State, as it was used among the Roman Emperors, but by an inward assent and belief. Which honour, being so high, had also a degree or middle term: for there were reckoned, above human honours, honours heroical and divine; in the attribution and distribution of which honours we see antiquity made this difference: that whereas founders and uniters of States and cities, lawgivers, extirpers of tyrants, fathers of the people, and other eminent persons in civil merit, were honoured but with the titles of worthies or demi-gods; such as were Hercules, Theseus, Minos, Romulus, and the like; on the other side, such as were inventors and authors of new arts, endowments, and commodities towards man's life, were ever consecrated amongst the gods themselves; as was Ceres, Bacchus, Mercurius, Apollo, and others: and justly; for the merit of the former is confined within the circle of an age or a nation; and is like fruitful showers, which, though they be profitable and good, yet serve but for that season, and for a latitude of ground where they fall; but the other is indeed like the benefits of Heaven, which are permanent and universal. The former again is mixed with strife and perturbation; but the latter hath the true character of Divine Presence, coming in *aura leni*, without noise or agitation.

Neither is certainly that other merit of learning, in repressing the inconveniences which grow from man to man, much inferior to the former, of relieving the necessities which arise from nature; which merit was lively set forth 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,[2] 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.

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;* 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.*[3] The good parts he hath he will learn to show to the full, and use them dexterously, but not much to increase

2 *Estate* and *state* were used indiscriminately in Bacon's time.

3 "The greatest delight of life is to feel that one is growing better every day."

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* and *Bonitas* 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 herdmen 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[4] 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. 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 as, 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.

Again, for the pleasure and delight of knowledge and learning, it far surpasseth all other in Nature. For, shall the pleas-

4 *Generosity* in the Latin sense of *nobleness, excellence*, or *magnanimity*.

ures of the affections so exceed the pleasure of the sense, 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 showeth 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 it appeareth to be good in itself simply, without fallacy or accident.

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 tend 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 lose 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[5] 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, fur

[5] *In* and *into* were often used interchangeably.

ther; 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 affections; so immortal and incorruptible a thing did knowledge seem unto them to be.

MISCELLANEOUS.

If such be the capacity and receipt of the mind of man, it is manifest that there is no danger at all in the proportion or quantity of knowledge, how large soever, lest it should make the mind swell or out-compass itself: no; but it is merely the quality of knowledge, which, be it in quantity more or less, if it be taken without the true corrective thereof, hath in it some nature of venom or malignity, and some effects of that venom, which is ventosity[6] or swelling. This corrective spice, the mixture whereof maketh knowledge so sovereign, is charity, which the Apostle addeth: for so he saith, "Knowledge bloweth up, but charity buildeth up"; not unlike unto that which he delivereth in another place: "If I spake with the tongues of men and angels, and had not charity, it were but as a tinkling cymbal"; not but that it is an excellent thing to speak with the tongues of men and angels, but because, if it be severed from charity, and not referred to the good of men and mankind, it hath rather a sounding and unworthy glory, than a meriting and substantial virtue.

As for the conceit[7] that too much knowledge should incline a man to atheism, and that the ignorance of second causes should make a more devout dependence upon God, which is the first cause; first, it is good to ask the question which Job asked of his friends: "Will you lie for God, as one man will do for another, to gratify him?" For certain it is that God worketh nothing in Nature but by second causes: and if they would have it otherwise believed, it is mere imposture, as it were in favour towards God; and nothing else but to offer to the

6 *Ventosity* is *windiness:* here it has the sense of *blown up with pride* or *conceit.*

7 In Bacon's time, *conceit* was always used in a good sense,—*conception, imagination,* or *judgment.*

Author of truth the unclean sacrifice of a lie. But, further, it is an assured truth, and a conclusion of experience, that a little or superficial knowledge of philosophy may incline the mind of man to atheism, but a further proceeding therein doth bring the mind back again to religion. For, in the entrance of philosophy, when the second causes, which are next unto the senses, do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there it may induce some oblivion of the highest cause; but when a man passeth on further, and seeth the dependence of causes, and the works of Providence; then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of Nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair. To conclude, therefore, let no man upon a weak conceit of sobriety or an ill-applied moderation think or maintain, that a man can search too far, or be too well studied 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 proficience 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.

LEARNING endueth men's minds with a true sense of the frailty of their persons, the casualty of their fortunes, and the dignity of their soul and vocation: so that it is impossible for them to esteem that any greatness of their own fortune can be a true or worthy end of their being and ordainment; and therefore are desirous to give their account to God, and so likewise to their masters under God: whereas the corrupter sort of mere politiques, that have not their thoughts established by learning in the love and apprehension of duty, nor never look abroad into universality, do refer all things to themselves, and thrust themselves into the centre of the world, as if all lines should meet in them and their fortunes; never caring in all tempests what becomes of the ship of Estate, so they may save themselves in the cockboat of their own fortune.

POESY is a part of learning in measure of words for the most part restrained, but in all other points extremely licensed, and doth truly refer to the imagination; which, being not tied to the laws of matter, may at pleasure join that which Nature hath severed, and sever that which Nature hath joined. It is taken in two senses in respect of words or matter. In the first sense it is but a character of style, and belongeth to arts of speech. In the latter it is one of the principal portions of learning, and

is nothing else but feigned history, which may be styled[8] as well in prose as in verse.

The use of this feigned history hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being in proportion inferior 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. Therefore, because the acts or events of true history have not that magnitude which satisfieth the mind of man, poesy feigneth acts and events greater and more heroical. Because true history propoundeth the successes and issues of actions not so agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, therefore poesy feigns them more just in retribution, and more according to revealed providence. Because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary and less interchanged, therefore poesy endueth them with more rareness, and more unexpected and alternative variations. So as it appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation. And therefore it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind;[9] whereas reason doth buckle[10] and bow the mind unto the nature of things. And we see that by these insinuations and congruities with man's nature and pleasure, joined also with the agreement and consort it hath with music, it hath had access and estimation in rude times and barbarous regions, where other learning stood excluded.

As all works do show forth the power and skill of the workman, and not his image, so it is of the works of God, which do show the omnipotency and wisdom of the Maker, but not His image. And therefore therein the heathen opinion differeth from the sacred truth; for they supposed the world to be the image of God, and man to be an extract or compendious image of the world; but the Scriptures never vouchsafe to attribute to the world that honour, as to be the image of God, but only *the work of His hands;* neither do they speak of any other image of

8 *Styled* is here used in the sense of *written* or *penned*, as the *stilus* was the instrument of writing, the ancient pen.

9 Sir Philip Sydney describes poetry as "the sweet food of sweetly-uttered knowledge," which "lifts the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying its own divine essence."

10 To *buckle* is to *bend*. Shakespeare uses it intransitively in 2 *Henry IV.*, i., 1: "And as a wretch, whose fever-weaken'd joints, like strengthless hinges, *buckle* under life," &c.

God but man. Wherefore, by the contemplation of Nature to induce and enforce the acknowledgment of God, and to demonstrate His power, providence, and goodness, is an excellent argument, and hath been excellently handled by divers. But, on the other side, out of the contemplation of Nature, or ground of human knowledges, to induce any verity or persuasion concerning the points of faith, is in my judgment not safe. For the heathen themselves conclude as much in that excellent and divine fable of the golden chain, — that "men and gods were not able to draw Jupiter down to the Earth; but, contrariwise, Jupiter was able to draw them up to Heaven." So as we ought not to attempt to draw down or submit the mysteries of God to our reason; but, contrariwise, to raise and advance our reason to the Divine truth.

Of all other means the most compendious and summary, and, again, the most noble and effectual, to the reducing of the mind unto virtue and good estate, is the electing and propounding unto a man's self good and virtuous ends of his life, such as may be in a reasonable sort within his compass to attain. For, if these two things be supposed, that a man set before him honest and good ends, and again, that he be resolute, constant, and true unto them; it will follow that he shall mould himself into all virtue at once. And this indeed is like a work of Nature; whereas the other course is like the work of the hand. For so, when a carver makes an image, he shapes only that part whereupon he worketh; as, if he be upon the face, that part which shall be the body is but a rude stone still, till such time as he comes to it. But, contrariwise, when Nature makes a flower or living creature, she formeth rudiments of all the parts at one time. So, in obtaining virtue by habit, while a man practiseth temperance, he doth not profit much to fortitude, nor the like: but when he dedicateth and applieth himself to good ends, look, what virtue soever the pursuit and passage towards those ends doth commend unto him, he is invested of a precedent disposition to conform himself thereunto. Which state of mind Aristotle doth excellently express himself, that it ought not to be called virtuous, but divine. But the heathen and profane passages have but a shadow of that divine state of mind which religion and the holy faith doth conduct men unto, by imprinting upon their souls charity, which is excellently called the bond of perfection, because it comprehendeth and fasteneth all virtues together. Certainly, if a man's mind be truly inflamed with charity, it doth work him suddenly into greater perfection than all the doctrine of morality can do.

As *dead flies cause the best ointment to send forth an ill odour, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.* — The condition of men eminent for virtue is, as this aphorism excellently observes, exceeding hard and miserable, because their errors, though ever so small, are not overlooked. But, as in a clear diamond every little grain or speck strikes the eye disagreeably, though it would scarce be observed in a duller stone; so, in men of eminent virtue, their smallest vices are readily spied, talked of, and severely censured; whilst, in an ordinary man, they would either have lain concealed, or been easily excused. Whence a little folly in a very wise man, a small slip in a very good man, and a little indecency in a polite and elegant man, greatly diminish their characters and reputations. It might, therefore, be no bad policy, for men of uncommon excellencies to intermix with their actions a few absurdities, that may be committed without vice; in order to reserve a liberty, and confound the observation of little defects.

A PRUDENT *man looks well to his steps; but a fool turns aside to deceit.* — There are two kinds of prudence; the one true and sound; the other degenerate and false: the latter Solomon calls by the name of folly. The candidate for the former has an eye to his footings, looking out for dangers, contriving remedies, and, by the assistance of good men, defending himself against the bad: he is wary in entering upon business, and not unprovided of a retreat; watchful for opportunities; powerful against opposition, &c. But the follower of the other is wholly patched up of fallacy and cunning; placing all his hope in the circumventing of others, and forming them to his fancy. And this the aphorism justly rejects as a vicious, and even a weak kind of prudence. For, first, it is by no means a thing in our own power, nor depending upon any constant rule; but is daily inventing of new stratagems, as the old ones fail and grow useless. Secondly, he who has once the character of a crafty, tricking man, is entirely deprived of a principal instrument of business, trust; whence he will find nothing succeed to his wish. Lastly, however specious and pleasing these arts may seem, yet they are often frustrated; as was well observed by Tacitus, when he said that crafty and bold counsels, though pleasant in the expectation, are hard to execute, and unhappy in the event.

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