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Francis Bacon.

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BACON'S ESSAYS

AND

WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS

WITH

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

By A. SPIERS

A PREFACE

By B. MONTAGU

AND

NOTES BY DIFFERENT WRITERS

1106

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

In preparing the present volume for the press, use has been freely made of several publications which have recently appeared in England. The Biographical Notice of the author is taken from an edition of the Essays, by A. Spiers, Ph. D. To this has been added the Preface to Pickering's edition of the Essays and Wisdom of the Ancients, by Basil Montagu, Esq. Parker's edition, by Thomas Markby, M. A., has furnished the arrangement of the Table prefixed to the Essays, and also "the references to the most important quotations." The Notes, including the translations of the Latin, are chiefly copied from Bohn's edition, prepared by Joseph Devey, M. A. We have given the modern translation of the Wisdom of the Ancients contained in Bohn's edition, in preference to that "done by Sir Arthur Gorges," although the last mentioned has a claim upon regard, as having been made by a contemporary of Lord Bacon, and published in his lifetime. Its language is in the style of English current in the author's age, and for this reason may resemble more nearly what the philosopher himself would have used, had he composed the work in his own tongue instead of Latin.

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PREFACE.

In the early part of the year 1597, Lord Bacon's first publication appeared. It is a small 12mo. volume, entitled "Essayes, Religious Meditations, Places of Perswasion and Disswasion." It is dedicated

"*To M. Anthony Bacon, his deare Brother.*

"Louing and beloued Brother, I doe nowe like some that have an Orcharde ill Neighbored, that gather their Fruit before it is ripe, to preuent stealing. These Fragments of my Conceites were going to print, To labour the staie of them had bin troublesome, and subiect to interpretation; to let them passe had beene to aduenture the wrong they mought receiue by vntrue Coppies, or by some Garnishmént, which it mought please any that should set them forth to bestow vpon them. Therefore I helde it best as they passed long agoe from my Pen. without any further disgrace, then the weaknesse of the Author. And as I did euer hold, there mought be as great a vanitie in retiring and withdrawing mens conceites (except they bee of some nature) from the World, as in obtruding them: So in these particulars I haue played myself the Inquisitor, and find nothing to my vnderstanding in them contrarie or infectious to the state of Religion, or Manners, but rather (as I suppose) medecinable. Only I disliked now to put them out, because they will be like the late new Halfe-

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pence, which, though the Siluer were good, yet the Peeces were small. But since they would not stay with their Master, but would needes trauaile abroade, I haue preferred them to you that are next my selfe, Dedicating them, such as they are, to our Loue, in the depth whereof (I assure you) I sometimes wish your Infirmities translated vppon my selfe, that her Maiestie mought haue the Seruice of so actiue and able a Mind, and I mought be with excuse confined to these Contemplations and Studies for which I am fittest, so commeud I you to the Preseruation of the Diuine Maiestie: From my Chamber at Graies Inne, this 30 of Januarie, 1597. Your entire Louing Brother, FRAN. BACON."

The Essays, which are ten in number, abound with condensed thought and practical wisdom, neatly, pressly, and weightily stated, and, like all his early works, are simple, without imagery. They are written in his favorite style of aphorisms, although each essay is apparently a continued work, and without that love of antithesis and false glitter to which truth and justness of thought are frequently sacrificed by the writers of maxims.

A second edition, with a translation of the *Meditationes Sacræ*, was published in the next year; and another edition enlarged in 1612, when he was solicitor-general, containing thirty-eight essays; and one still more enlarged in 1625, containing fifty-eight essays, the year before his death.

The Essays in the subsequent editions are much augmented, according to his own words: "I always alter when I add, so that nothing is finished till all is finished," and they are adorned by happy and familiar illustration, as in the essay of Wisdom for a Man's Self, which concludes, in the edition of 1625, with the

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following extract, not to be found in the previous edition: "Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are *Sui Amantes sine Rivali* 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."

So in the essay upon Adversity, on which he had deeply reflected before the edition of 1625, when it first appeared, he says: "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 great benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favor. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored 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 needle-works 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

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pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly, virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed, or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

The Essays were immediately translated into French and Italian, and into Latin, by some of his friends, amongst whom were Hacket, Bishop of Lichfield, and his constant, affectionate friend, Ben Jonson.

His own estimate of the value of this work is thus stated in his letter to the Bishop of Winchester: "As for my Essays, and some other particulars of that nature, I count them but as the recreations of my other studies, and in that manner purpose to continue them; though I am not ignorant that these kind of writings would, with less pains and assiduity, perhaps yield more lustre and reputation to my name than the others I have in hand."

Although it was not likely that such lustre and reputation would dazzle him, the admirer of Phocion, who, when applauded, turned to one of his friends, and asked, "What have I said amiss?" although popular judgment was not likely to mislead him who concludes his observations upon the objections to learning and the advantages of knowledge by saying: "Nevertheless, I do not pretend, and I know it will be impossible for me, by any pleading of mine, to reverse the judgment either of Æsop's cock, that preferred the barleycorn before the gem; or of Midas, that being chosen judge between Apollo, president of the Muses, and Pan, god of the flocks, judged for plenty; or of Paris, that judged for beauty and love against wisdom and power. For these things continue as they have been; but so will that also

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continue whereupon learning hath ever relied and which faileth not, *Justificata est sapientia a filiis suis:*" yet he seems to have undervalued this little work, which for two centuries has been favorably received by every lover of knowledge and of beauty, and is now so well appreciated that a celebrated professor of our own times truly says: "The small volume to which he has given the title of 'Essays,' the best known and the most popular of all his works, is 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 overlooked before. This, indeed, is a characteristic of all Bacon's writings, and is 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."

During his life six or more editions, which seem to have been pirated, were published; and after his death, two spurious essays, "Of Death," and "Of a King," the only authentic posthumous essay being the Fragment of an Essay on Fame, which was published by his friend and chaplain, Dr. Rawley.

This edition is a transcript of the edition of 1625, with the posthumous essays. In the life of Bacon[1] there is a minute account of the different editions of the Essays and of their contents.

They may shortly be stated as follows:—

[1] By B. Montagu. Appendix, note 3, I.

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First edition, 1597, genuine.

There are two copies of this edition in the university library at Cambridge; and there is Archbishop Sancroft's copy in Emanuel Library; there is a copy in the Bodleian, and I have a copy.

Second edition, 1598, genuine.

Third edition, 1606, pirated.

Fourth edition, entitled "The Essaies of Sir Francis Bacon, Knight, the Kings Solliciter Generall. Imprinted at London by Iohn Beale, 1612," genuine. It was the intention of Sir Francis to have dedicated this edition to Henry, Prince of Wales; but he was prevented by the death of the prince on the 6th of November in that year. This appears by the following letter: —

To the Most High and Excellent Prince, Henry, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester.

It may please your Highness: Having divided my life into the contemplative and active part, I am desirous to give his Majesty and your Highness of the fruits of both, simple though they be. To write just treatises, requireth leisure in the writer and leisure in the reader, and therefore are not so fit, neither in regard of your Highness's princely affairs nor in regard of my continual service; which is the cause that hath made me choose to write certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called Essays. The word is late, but the thing is ancient; for Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, if you mark them well, are but Essays; that is, dispersed meditations though conveyed in the form of epistles. These labors of mine, I know, cannot be worthy of your Highness, for what can be worthy of you? But my hope is, they may be as grains of salt, that will rather give you an appetite than offend you with satiety. And although they handle those things wherein

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both men's lives and their persons are most conversant; yet what I have attained I know not; but I have endeavored to make them not vulgar, but of a nature whereof a man shall find much in experience and little in books; so as they are neither repetitions nor fancies. But, however, I shall most humbly desire your Highness to accept them in gracious part, and to conceive, that if I cannot rest but must show my dutiful and devoted affection to your Highness in these things which proceed from myself, I shall be much more ready to do it in performance of any of your princely commandments. And so wishing your Highness all princely felicity, I rest your Highness's most humble servant,

1612. FR. BACON.

It was dedicated as follows: —

To my loving Brother, Sir John Constable, Knt.

My last Essaies I dedicated to my deare brother Master Anthony Bacon, who is with God. Looking amongst my Papers this vacation, I found others of the same nature: which, if I myselfe shall not suffer to be lost, it seemeth the World will not; by the often printing of the former. Missing my Brother, I found you next; in respect of bond both of neare Alliance, and of straight Friendship and Societie, and particularly of communication in Studies. Wherein I must acknowledge my selfe beholding to you. For as my Businesse found rest in my Contemplations, so my Contemplations ever found rest in your loving Conference and Judgment. So wishing you all good, I remaine your louing Brother and Friend,

FRA. BACON.

Fifth edition, 1612, pirated. Sixth edition, 1613, pirated. Seventh edition, 1624, pirated. Eighth edition, 1624, pirated. Ninth edition, entitled, "The Essayes or Covnsels, Civill and Morall, of Francis Lo. Vervlam,

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Viscovnt St. Alban. Newly enlarged. London, Printed by Iohn Haviland for Hanna Barret and Richard Whitaker, and are to be sold at the Signe of the King's Head in Paul's Churchyard." 1625, genuine.

This edition is a small quarto of 340 pages; it clearly was published by Lord Bacon; and in the next year, 1626, Lord Bacon died. The Dedication is as follows, to the Duke of Buckingham: —

To the Right Honorable my very good Lo. the Duke of Buckingham his Grace, Lo. High Admirall of England.

EXCELLENT LO.: — Salomon saies, A good Name is as a precious Oyntment; and I assure myselfe, such wil your Grace's Name bee, with Posteritie. For your Fortune and Merit both, haue beene eminent. And you haue planted things that are like to last. I doe now publish my Essayes; which, of all my other Workes, have beene most currant: for that, as it seemes, they come home to Mens Businesse and Bosomes. I haue enlarged them both in number and weight, so that they are indeed a new Work. I thought it therefore agreeable to my Affection, aud Obligation to your Grace, to prefix your Name before them, both in English and in Latine. For I doe conceiue, that the Latine Volume of them (being in the vniuersal language) may last as long as Bookes last. My Instauration I dedicated to the King: my Historie of Henry the Seventh (which I haue now also translated into Latine), and my Portions of Naturall History, to the Prince: and these I dedicate to your Grace: being of the best Fruits, that by the good encrease which God gives to my pen and labours, I could yeeld. God leade your Grace by the Hand. Your Graces most obliged and faithfull Seruant.

FR. ST. ALBAN.

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Of this edition, Lord Bacon sent a copy to the Marquis Fiat, with the following letter:[1] —

"MONSIEUR L'AMBASSADEUR MON FILZ: Voyant que vostre Excellence faict et traite Mariages, non seulement entre les Princes d'Angleterre et de France, mais aussi entre les langues (puis que faictes traduire mon Liure de l'Advancement des Sciences en Francois) i'ai bien voulu vous envoyer mon Liure dernierement imprimé que i'avois pourveu pour vous, mais i'estois en doubte, de le vous envoyer, pour ce qu'il estoit escrit en Anglois. Mais a' cest'heure pour la raison susdicte Ie le vous envoye. C'est un Recompilement de mes Essays Morales et Civiles; mais tellement enlargiés et enrichiés, tant de nombre que de poix, que c'est de fait un ouvre nouveau. Ie vous baise les mains, et reste vostre tres affectionée Ami, et tres humble Serviteur.

THE SAME IN ENGLISH.

MY LORD AMBASSADOR, MY SON: Seeing that your Excellency makes and treats of Marriages, not only betwixt the Princes of France and England, but also betwixt their languages (for you have caused my book of the Advancement of Learning to be translated into French), I was much inclined to make you a present of the last book which I published, and which I had in readiness for you. I was sometimes in doubt whether I ought to have sent it to you, because it was written in the English tongue. But now, for that very reason, I send it to you. It is a recompilement of my Essays Moral and Civil; but in such manner enlarged and enriched both in number and weight, that it is in effect a new work. I kiss your hands, and remain your most affectionate friend and most humble servant, &c.

Of the translation of the Essays into Latin, Bacon speaks in the following letter: —

[1] Baconiana, 201.

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"To Mr. Tobie Mathew: It is true my labors are now most set to have those works which I had formerly published, as that of Advancement of Learning, that of Henry VII., that of the Essays, being retractate and made more perfect, well translated into Latin by the help of some good pens which forsake me not. For these modern languages will, at one time or other, play the bankrupt with books; and since I have lost much time with this age, I would be glad, as God shall give me leave, to recover it with posterity. For the Essay of Friendship, while I took your speech of it for a cursory request, I took my promise for a compliment. But since you call for it, I shall perform it."

In his letter to Father Fulgentio, giving some account of his writings, he says: —

"The *Novum Organum* should immediately follow; but my moral and political writings step in between as being more finished. These are, the History of King Henry VII., and the small book, which, in your language, you have called *Saggi Morali*, but I give it a graver title, that of *Sermones Fideles*, or *Interiora Rerum*, and these Essays will not only be enlarged in number, but still more in substance."

The nature of the Latin edition, and of the Essays in general, is thus stated by Archbishop Tenison: —

"The Essays, or Counsels Civil and Moral, though a by-work also, do yet make up a book of greater weight by far than the Apothegms; and coming home to men's business and bosoms, his lordship entertained this persuasion concerning them, that the Latin volume might last as long as books should last. His lordship wrote them in the English tongue, and enlarged them as occasion served, and at last added to them the Colors of Good and Evil, which are likewise found in his book *De Augmentis*. The Latin translation of them was

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a work performed by divers hands: by those of Dr. Hacket (late Bishop of Lichfield), Mr. Benjamin Jonson (the learned and judicious poet,) and some others, whose names I once heard from Dr. Rawley, but I cannot now recall them. To this Latin edition he gave the title of *Sermones Fideles*, after the manner of the Jews, who called the words Adagies, or Observations of the Wise, Faithful Sayings; that is, credible propositions worthy of firm assent and ready acceptance. And (as I think), he alluded more particularly, in this title, to a passage in *Ecclesiastes*, where the preacher saith, that he sought to find out *Verba Delectabilia* (as Tremellius rendereth the Hebrew), pleasant words; (that is, perhaps, his Book of Canticles;) and *Verba Fidelia* (as the same Tremellius), Faithful Sayings; meaning, it may be, his collection of Proverbs. In the next verse, he calls them Words of the Wise, and so many goads and nails given *ab eodem pastore*, from the same shepherd [of the flock of Israel"].

In the year 1638, Rawley published, in folio, a volume containing, amongst other works, *Sermones Fideles, ab ipso Honoratissimo Auctore, præterquam in paucis, Latinitate donati.* In his address to the reader, he says:—

Accedunt, quas priùs Delibationes Civiles *et* Morales *inscripserat; Quas etiam in Linguas plurimas Modernas translatas esse novit; sed eas posteà, et Numero, et Pondere, auxit; In tantum, ut veluti Opus Novum videri possint; Quas mutato Titulo,* Sermones Fideles, *sive* Interiora Rerum, *inscribi placuit.* The title-page and dedication are annexed: *Sermones Fideles sive Interiora Rerum. Per Franciscum Baconum Baronem de Verulamio, Vice-Comitem Sancti Albani. Londini Excusum typis Edwardi Griffin. Prostant ad Insignia Regia in Cœmeterio D. Pauli, apud Richardum Whitakerum,* 1633.

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Illustri et Excellenti Domino *Georgio* Duci *Buckinghamiæ*, Summo *Angliæ* Admirallio.

Honoratissime Domine, *Salomon* inquit, *Nomen bonum est instar Vnguenti fragrantis et pretiosi ;* Neque dubito, quin tale futurum sit *Nomen* tuum apud Posteros. Etenim et Fortuna, et Merita tua, præcelluerunt. Et videris ea plantasse, quæ sint duratura. In lucem jam edere mihi visum est *Delibationes meas*, quæ ex omnibus meis Operibus fuerunt acceptissimæ : Quia forsitan videntur, præ cæteris, *Hominum* Negotia stringere, et in sinus fluere. Eas autem auxi, et Numero, et Pondere ; In tantum, ut planè Opus Novum sint. Consentaneum igitur duxi, Affectui, et Obligationi meæ, erga *Illustrissimam Dominationem* tuam, ut *Nomen* tuum illis præfigam, tam in *Editione Anglicâ*, quam *Latinâ*. Etenim, in bonâ spe sum, Volumen earum in *Latinam* (*Linguam* scilicet universalem), versum, posse durare, quamdiù *Libri* et *Literæ* durent. *Instaurationem* meam *Regi* dicavi : *Historiam Regni Henrici Septimi* (quam etiam in *Latinum* verti et Portiones meas *Naturalis Historiæ*, *Principi*) : Has autem *Delibationes Illustrissimæ Dominationi* tuæ dico, Cùm sint, ex Fructibus optimis, quos Gratia divinâ Calami mei laboribus indulgente, exhibere potui. *Deus illustrissimam Dominationem* tuam manu ducat. *Illustrissimæ Dominationis* tuæ Servus Devinctissimus et Fidelis.

FR. S. ALBAN.

In the year 1618, the Essays, together with the Wisdom of the Ancients, was translated into Italian, and dedicated to *Cosmo de Medici*, by Tobie Mathew ; and in the following year the Essays were translated into French by Sir Arthur Gorges, and printed in London.

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WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS.

In the year 1609, as a relaxation from abstruse speculations, he published in Latin his interesting little work, *De Sapientia Veterum*.

This tract seems, in former times, to have been much valued. The fables, abounding with a union of deep thought and poetic beauty, are thirty-one in number, of which a part of The Sirens, or Pleasures, may be selected as a specimen.

In this fable he explains the common but erroneous supposition that knowledge and the conformity of the will, knowing and acting, are convertible terms. Of this error, he, in his essay of Custom and Education, admonishes his readers, by saying: "Men's thoughts are much according to their inclination; their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions, but their deeds are after as they have been accustomed; Æsop's Damsel, transformed from a cat to a woman, sat very demurely at the board-end till a mouse ran before her." In the fable of the Sirens he exhibits the same truth, saying: "The habitation of the Sirens was in certain pleasant islands, from whence, as soon as out of their watchtower they discovered any ships approaching, with their sweet tunes they would first entice and stay them, and, having them in their power, would destroy them; and, so great were the mischiefs they did, that these isles of the Sirens, even as far off as man can ken them, appeared all over white with the bones of unburied carcasses; by which it is signified that albeit the examples of afflictions be mani-

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fest and eminent, yet they do not sufficiently deter us from the wicked enticements of pleasure."

The following is the account of the different editions of this work: The first was published in 1609. In February 27, 1610, Lord Bacon wrote to Mr. Mathew, upon sending his book *De Sapientia Veterum*:—

"MR. MATHEW: I do very heartily thank you for your letter of the 24th of August, from Salamanca; and in recompense therefore I send you a little work of mine that hath begun to pass the world. They tell me my Latin is turned into silver, and become current: had you been here, you should have been my inquisitor before it came forth; but, I think, the greatest inquisitor in Spain will allow it. But one thing you must pardon me if I make no haste to believe, that the world should be grown to such an ecstasy as to reject truth in philosophy, because the author dissenteth in religion; no more than they do by Aristotle or Averroes. My great work goeth forward; and after my manner, I alter even when I add; so that nothing is finished till all be finished. This I have written in the midst of a term and parliament; thinking no time so possessed, but that I should talk of these matters with so good and dear a friend. And so with my wonted wishes I leave you to God's goodness.

"From Gray's Inn, Feb. 27, 1610."

And in his letter to Father Fulgentio, giving some account of his writings, he says: "My Essays will not only be enlarged in number, but still more in substance. Along with them goes the little piece *De Sapientia Veterum*."

In the Advancement of Learning he says:—

"There remaineth yet another use of poesy parabolical, opposite to that which we last mentioned; for that tendeth

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to demonstrate and illustrate that which is taught or delivered, and this other to retire and obscure it; that is, when the secrets and mysteries of religion, policy, or philosophy are involved in fables or parables. Of this in divine poesy we see the use is authorized. In heathen poesy we see the exposition of fables doth fall out sometimes with great felicity; as in the fable that the giants being overthrown in their war against the gods, the earth, their mother, in revenge thereof brought forth Fame, —

Illam Terra parens, irâ irritata Deorum,
Extremam, ut perhibent, Cœo Enceladoque sororem
Progenuit,

expounded, that when princes and monarchs have suppressed actual and open rebels, then the malignity of the people, which is the mother of rebellion, doth bring forth libels and slanders, and taxations of the State, which is of the same kind with rebellion, but more feminine. So in the fable, that the rest of the gods having conspired to bind Jupiter, Pallas called Briareus, with his hundred hands, to his aid; expounded, that monarchies need not fear any curbing of their absoluteness by mighty subjects, as long as by wisdom they keep the hearts of the people, who will be sure to come in on their side. So in the fable, that Achilles was brought up under Chiron, the centaur, who was part a man and part a beast, expounded ingeniously, but corruptly by Machiavel, that it belongeth to the education and discipline of princes to know as well how to play the part of the lion in violence, and the fox in guile, as of the man in virtue and justice. Nevertheless, in many the like encounters, I do rather think that the fable was first, and the exposition then devised, than that the moral was first, and thereupon the fable framed. For I find it was an ancient vanity in Chrysippus, that troubled himself with great contention to fasten the assertions of the stoics upon the fictions of the ancient poets; but yet that all the fables and fictions of the poets were but pleasure, and not figure, I

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interpose no opinion. Surely, of those poets which are now extant, even Homer himself (notwithstanding he was made a kind of Scripture by the latter schools of the Grecians), yet I should without any difficulty pronounce that his fables had no such inwardness in his own meaning; but what they might have upon a more original tradition, is not easy to affirm; for he was not the inventor of many of them."

In the treatise *De Augmentis* the same sentiments will be found, with a slight alteration in the expressions. He says:—

"There is another use of parabolical poesy opposite to the former, which tendeth to the folding up of those things, the dignity whereof deserves to be retired and distinguished, as with a drawn curtain; that is, when the secrets and mysteries of religion, policy, and philosophy are veiled and invested with fables and parables. But whether there be any mystical sense couched under the ancient fables of the poets, may admit some doubt; and, indeed, for our part, we incline to this opinion, as to think that there was an infused mystery in many of the ancient fables of the poets. Neither doth it move us that these matters are left commonly to school-boys and grammarians, and so are embased, that we should therefore make a slight judgment upon them, but contrariwise, because it is clear that the writings which recite those fables, of all the writings of men, next to sacred writ, are the most ancient; and that the fables themselves are far more ancient than they (being they are alleged by those writers, not as excogitated by them, but as credited and recepted before) seem to be, like a thin rarefied air, which, from the traditions of more ancient nations, fell into the flutes of the Grecians."

Of this tract, Archbishop Tenison, in his *Baconiana*, says:—

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"In the seventh place, I may reckon his book *De Sapientia Veterum*, written by him in Latin, and set forth a second time with enlargement; and translated into English by Sir Arthur Gorges; a book in which the sages of former times are rendered more wise than it may be they were, by so dexterous an interpreter of their fables. It is this book which Mr. Sandys means, in those words which he hath put before his notes on the Metamorphosis of Ovid. 'Of modern writers, I have received the greatest light from Geraldus, Pontanus, Ficinus, Vives, Comes, Scaliger, Sabinus, Pierius, and the crown of the latter, the Viscount of St. Albans.'

"It is true, the design of this book was instruction in natural and civil matters, either couched by the ancients under those fictions, or rather made to seem to be so by his lordship's wit, in the opening and applying of them. But because the first ground of it is poetical story, therefore, let it have this place till a fitter be found for it."

The author of Bacon's Life, in the *Biographia Britannica*, says: —

"That he might relieve himself a little from the severity of these studies, and, as it were, amuse himself with erecting a magnificent pavilion, while his great palace of philosophy was building, he composed and sent abroad, in 1610, his celebrated treatise of the Wisdom of the Ancients, in which he showed that none had studied them more closely, was better acquainted with their beauties, or had pierced deeper into their meaning. There have been very few books published, either in this or any other nation, which either deserved or met with more general applause than this, and scarce any that are like to retain it longer, for in this performance Sir Francis Bacon gave a singular proof of his capacity to please all parties in literature, as in his political conduct he stood fair with all the parties in the nation. The admirers of antiquity were charmed with this discourse, which seems expressly calculated to justify their

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admiration; and, on the other hand, their opposites were no less pleased with a piece from which they thought they could demonstrate that the sagacity of a modern genius had found out much better meanings for the ancients than ever were meant by them."

And Mallet, in his Life of Bacon, says:—

"In 1610 he published another treatise, entitled, Of the Wisdom of the Ancients. This work bears the same stamp of an original and inventive genius with his other performances. Resolving not to tread in the steps of those who had gone before him, men, according to his own expression, not learned beyond certain commonplaces, he strikes out a new tract for himself, and enters into the most secret recesses of this wild and shadowy region, so as to appear new on a known and beaten subject. Upon the whole, if we cannot bring ourselves readily to believe that there is all the physical, moral, and political meaning veiled under those fables of antiquity, which he has discovered in them, we must own that it required no common penetration to be mistaken with so great an appearance of probability on his side. Though it still remains doubtful whether the ancients were so knowing as he attempts to show they were, the variety and depth of his own knowledge are, in that very attempt, unquestionable."

In the year 1619 this tract was translated by Sir Arthur Gorges. Prefixed to the work are two letters; the one to the Earl of Salisbury, the other to the University of Cambridge, which Gorges omits, and dedicates his translation to the high and illustrious princess the Lady Elizabeth of Great Britain, Duchess of Baviare, Countess Palatine of Rheine, and chief electress of the empire.

This translation, it should be noted, was published

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during the life of Lord Bacon by a great admirer of his works.

The editions of this work with which I am acquainted are: —

Year.	Language.	Printer.	Place.	Size.
1609	Latin,	R. Barker,	London,	12mo.
1617	"	J. Bill,	"	"
1618	Italian,	G. Bill,	"	"
1619	English,	J. Bill,	"	"
1620	"	"	"	"
1633	Latin,	F. Maire,	Lug. Bat.,	"
1634	"	F. Kingston,	London,	"
1638	"	E. Griffin,	"	Folio.
1691	"	H. Wetstein,	Amsterdam,	12mo.
1804	French,	H. Frantin,	Dijon,	8vo.

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NOTICE

OF

FRANCIS BACON.

FRANCIS BACON, the subject of the following memoir, was the youngest son of highly remarkable parents. His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was an eminent lawyer, and for twenty years Keeper of the Seals and Privy Counsellor to Queen Elizabeth. Sir Nicholas was styled by Camden *sacris conciliis alterum columen;* he was the author of some unpublished discourses on law and politics, and of a commentary on the minor prophets. He discharged the duties of his high office with exemplary propriety and wisdom; he preserved through life the integrity of a good man, and the moderation and simplicity of a great one. He had inscribed over the entrance of his hall, at Gorhambury, the motto, *mediocria firma;* and when the Queen, in a progress, paid him a visit there, she remarked to him that his house was too small for him. "Madam," answered the Lord Keeper, "my house is well, but it is you

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that have made me too great for my house." This anecdote has been preserved by his son,[1] who, had he as carefully retained the lesson of practical wisdom it contained, might have avoided the misfortunes and sorrows of his checkered life.

Bacon's mother, Anne Cooke, was the daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, tutor to King Edward the Sixth; like the young ladies of her time, like Lady Jane Grey, like Queen Elizabeth, she received an excellent classical education; her sister, Lady Burleigh, was pronounced by Roger Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's preceptor, to be, with the exception of Lady Jane Grey, the best Greek scholar among the young women of England.[2] Anne Cooke, the future Lady Bacon, corresponded in Greek with Bishop Jewel, and translated from the Latin this divine's *Apologia;* a task which she performed so well that it is said the good prelate could not discover an inaccuracy or suggest an alteration. She also translated from the Italian a volume of sermons on fate and freewill, written by Bernardo Ochino, an Italian reformer. Francis Bacon, the youngest of five sons,

[1] Bacon's Apophthegms.

[2] It is not surprising that ladies then received an education rare in our own times. It should be remembered that in the sixteenth century Latin was the language of courts and schools, of diplomacy, politics, and theology; it was the universal language, and there was then no literature in the modern tongues, except the Italian; indeed all knowledge, ancient and modern, was conveyed to the world in the language of the ancients. The great productions of Athens and Rome were the intellectual all of our ancestors down to the middle of the sixteenth century.

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inherited the classical learning and taste of both his parents.

He was born at York House, in the Strand, London, on the 22d of January, 1560–61. His health, when he was a boy, was delicate; a circumstance which may perhaps account for his early love of sedentary pursuits, and probably the early gravity of his demeanor. Queen Elizabeth, he tells us, took particular delight in "trying him with questions," when he was quite a child, and was so much pleased with the sense and manliness of his answers that she used jocularly to call him "her young Lord Keeper of the Seals." Bacon himself relates that while he was a boy, the Queen once asked him his age; the precocious courtier readily replied that he "was just two years younger than her happy reign." He is said, also, when very young, to have stolen away from his playfellows in order to investigate the cause of a singular echo in St. James's Fields, which attracted his attention.

Until the age of thirteen he remained under the tuition of his accomplished mother, aided by a private tutor only; under their care he attained the elements of the classics, that education preliminary to the studies of the University. At thirteen he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where his father had been educated. Here he studied diligently the great models of antiquity, mathematics, and philosophy, worshipped, however, but indevoutly at the shrine of Aristotle, whom, according to Raw-

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ley, his chaplain and biographer, he already derided "for the unfruitfulness of the way, — being only strong for disputation, but barren of the production of works for the life of man." He remained three years at this seat of learning, without, however, taking a degree at his departure.

When he was but sixteen years old he began his travels, the indispensable end of every finished education in England. He repaired to Paris, where he resided some time under the care of Sir Amyas Paulet, the English minister at the court of France.

Here he invented an ingenious method of writing in cipher; an art which he probably cultivated with a view to a diplomatic career.

He visited several of the provinces of France and of the towns of Italy. Italy was then the country in which human knowledge in all its branches was most successfully cultivated. It is related by Signor Cancellieri that Bacon, when at Rome, presented himself as a candidate to the Academy of the *Lincei*, and was not admitted.[1] He remained on the continent for three years, until his father's death, in 1580. The melancholy event, which bereft him of his parent, at the age of nineteen, was fatal to his prospects. His father had intended to purchase an estate for his youngest son, as he had done for his other sons; but he dying before this intention was

[1] *Prospetto delle Memorie aneddote dei Lincei da* F. Cancellieri. Roma, 1823. This fact is quoted by Monsieur Cousin, in a note to his *Fragments de Philosophie Cartésienne.*

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realized, the money was equally divided between all the children; so that Francis inherited but one fifth of that fortune intended for him alone. He was the only one of the sons that was left unprovided for. He had now "to study to live," instead of "living to study." He wished, to use his own language, "to become a true pioneer in that mine of truth which lies so deep." He applied to the government for a provision which his father's interest would easily have secured him, and by which he might dispense with a profession. The Queen must have looked with favor upon the son of a minister, who had served her faithfully for twenty long years, and upon a young man whom, when he was a child, she had caressed, she had distinguished by the appellation of her "young Lord Keeper." But Francis Bacon was abandoned, and perhaps opposed by the colleague and nearest friend of his father, the brother-in-law of his mother, his maternal uncle, Lord Burleigh, then Prime Minister, who feared for his son the rivalry of his all-talented nephew. It is a trick common to envy and detraction, to convert a man's very qualities into their concomitant defects; and because Bacon was a great thinker, he was represented as unfit for the active duties of business, as "a man rather of show than of depth," as "a speculative man, indulging himself in philosophical reveries, and calculated more to perplex than to promote public business."[1] Thus was the future ornament

[1] Sir Robert Cecil.

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of his country and of mankind sacrificed to Robert, afterwards Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, of whose history fame has learned but little, save the execution of Essex and Mary Queen of Scots, the name, and this petty act of mean jealousy of his father! In the disposal of patronage and place, acts and even motives of this species are not so unfrequent as the world would appear to imagine. In all ages, it is to be feared, many and great, as in Shakspeare's time, are,

> the spurns
> That patient merit of th' unworthy takes.

It is, however, but justice to the morals of Lord Burleigh, to add that he was insensible to literary merit; he thought a hundred pounds too great a reward to be given to Spenser for what he termed "an old song," for so he denominated the *Faery Queen.*

Bacon then selected the law as his profession; and in 1580 he was entered of Gray's Inn;[1] he resisted the temptations of his companions and friends, (for his company was much courted), and diligently pursued the study he had chosen; but he did not at this time entirely lose sight of his philosophical speculations, for he then published his *Temporis partus maximus*, or *The Greatest Birth of Time.* This work, notwithstanding its pompous title, was unnoticed or rather fell stillborn from the press; the

[1] Gray's Inn is one of the four Inns or companies for the study of law.

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sole trace of it is found in one of his letters to Father Fulgentio.

In 1586, he was called to the bar; his practice there appears to have been limited, although not without success; for the Queen and the Court are said to have gone to hear him when he was engaged in any celebrated cause. He was, at this period of his life, frequently admitted to the Queen's presence and conversation. He was appointed her Majesty's Counsel Extraordinary,[1] but he had no salary and small fees.

In 1592, his uncle, the Lord Treasurer, procured for him the reversion of the registrarship of the Star Chamber, worth sixteen hundred pounds (forty thousand francs) a year; but the office did not become vacant till twenty years after, so that, as Bacon justly observes, "it might mend his prospects, but did not fill his barns."

A parliament was summoned in 1593, and Bacon was returned to the House of Commons, for the County of Middlesex; he distinguished himself here as a speaker. "The fear of every man who heard him," says his contemporary, Ben Jonson, "was lest he should make an end." He made, however, on one occasion a speech which much displeased the Queen and Court. Elizabeth directed the Lord

[1] King's or Queen's Counsel are barristers that plead for the government; they receive fees but no salary; the first were appointed in the reign of Charles II. Queen's Counsel extraordinary was a title peculiar to Bacon, granted, as the patent specially states, *honoris causa*.

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Keeper to intimate to him that he must expect neither favor nor promotion; the repentant courtier replied in writing, that "her Majesty's favor was dearer to him than his life."[1]

In the following year the situation of Solicitor-General[2] became vacant. Bacon ardently aspired to it. He applied successively to Lord Burleigh, his uncle, to Lord Puckering, his father's successor, to the Earl of Essex, their rival, and finally to the Queen herself, accompanying his letters, as was the custom of the times, with a present, a jewel.[3] But once more he saw mediocrity preferred, and himself rejected. A Serjeant Fleming was appointed her Majesty's Solicitor-General. Bacon, overwhelmed by this disappointment, wished to retire from public life, and to reside abroad. "I hoped," said he in a letter to Sir Robert Cecil, "her Majesty would not be offended that, not able to endure the sun, I fled into the shade."

The Earl of Essex, whose mind, says Mr. Macaulay, "naturally disposed to admiration of all that

[1] Letter to Lord Burleigh.

[2] The Solicitor-General is a law-officer inferior in rank to the Attorney-General, with whom he is associated in the management of the law business of the crown. He pleads also for private individuals, but not against government. He has a small salary, but very considerable fees. The salary in Bacon's time was but seventy pounds.

[3] Bacon was, like other courtiers, in the habit of presenting the Queen with a New Year's gift. On one occasion, it was a white satin petticoat embroidered with snakes and fruitage, as emblems of wisdom and beauty. The donors varied in rank from the Lord Keeper down to the dust-man.

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is great and beautiful, was fascinated by the genius and the accomplishments of Bacon,"[1] had exerted every effort in Bacon's behalf; to use his own language, he "spent all his power, might, authority, and amity;" he now sought to indemnify him, and, with royal munificence, presented him with an estate of the value of nearly two thousand pounds, a sum worth perhaps four or five times the amount in the money of our days. If anything could enhance the benefaction, it was the delicacy with which it was conferred, or, as Bacon himself expresses it, "with so kind and noble circumstances as the manner was worth more than the matter."

Bacon published his *Essays* in 1597; he considered them but as the "recreations of his other studies." The idea of them was probably first suggested by Montaigne's *Essais*, but there is little resemblance between the two works beyond the titles. The first edition contained but ten Essays, which were shorter than they now are. The work was reprinted in 1598, with little or no variation; again in 1606; and in 1612 there was a fourth edition, etc. However, he afterwards, he says, "enlarged it both in number and weight;" but it did not assume its present form until the ninth edition, in 1625, that is, twenty-eight years after its first publication, and one year before the death of the author. It appeared under the new title of *The Essaies or Covnsels Civill and Morall, of Francis Lo. Vervlam,*

[1] Essays.

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Viscovnt St. Alban. Newly enlarged. This is not followed by the *Religious Meditations, Places of Perswasion and Dissuasion, seene and allowed.* The *Essays* were soon translated into Italian with the title of *Saggi Morali del Signore Francesco Bacono, Cavagliero Inglese, Gran Cancelliero d' Inghilterra.* This translation was dedicated to Cosmo de Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany; and was reprinted in London in 1618. Of the three Essays added after Bacon's decease, two of them, *Of a King* and *Of Death*, are not genuine; the *Fragment of an Essay on Fame* alone is Bacon's.

In this same year (1597) he again took his seat in Parliament. He soon made ample amends for his opposition speech in the previous session; but this time he gained the favor of the Court without forfeiting his popularity in the House of Commons.

He now thought of strengthening his interest, or increasing his fortune, by a matrimonial connection; and he sought the hand of a rich widow, Lady Hatton, his second cousin; but here he was again doomed to disappointment; a preference was given to his old rival, the Attorney-General, Sir Edward Coke, notwithstanding the "seven objections to him — his six children and himself." But although Bacon was perhaps unaware of it, the rejection of his suit was one of the happiest events of his life; for the eccentric manners and violent temper of the lady rendered her a torment to all around her, and

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probably most of all to her husband. In reality, as has been wittily observed, the lady was doubly kind to him; "she rejected him, and she accepted his enemy."

Another mortification awaited him at this period. A relentless creditor, a usurer, had him arrested for a debt of three hundred pounds, and he was conveyed to a spunging-house, where he was confined for a few days, until arrangements could be made to satisfy the claim or the claimant.

We now arrive at a painfully sad point in the life of Bacon; a dark foul spot, which should be hidden forever, did not history, like the magistrate of Egypt that interrogated the dead, demand that the truth, the whole truth, should be told.

We have seen that between Bacon and the Earl of Essex, all was disinterested affection on the part of the latter; the Earl employed his good offices for him, exerted heart and soul to insure his success as Solicitor-General, and, on Bacon's failure, conferred on him a princely favor, a gift of no ordinary value.

When Essex's fortunes declined, and the Earl fell into disgrace, Bacon endeavored to mediate between the Queen and her favorite. The case became hopeless. Essex left his command in Ireland without leave, was ordered in confinement, and after a long imprisonment and trial before the Privy Council, he was liberated. Irritated by the refusal of a favor he solicited, he was betrayed into reflections on the

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Queen's age and person, which were never to be forgiven, and he engaged in a conspiracy to seize on the Queen, and to settle a new plan of government. On the failure of this attempt, he was arrested, committed to the Tower, and brought to trial for high treason before the House of Peers. During his long captivity, who does not expect to see Bacon, his friend, a frequent visitor in his cell? Before the two tribunals, can we fail to meet Bacon, his counsel, at his side? We trace Bacon at Court, where, he assures us, after Elizabeth's death, that he endeavored to appease and reconcile the Queen; but the place was too distant from the prison: for he never visited there his fallen friend.

At the first trial, Bacon did indeed make his appearance, but as "her Majesty's Counsel extraordinary," not for the defence, but for the prosecution of the prisoner. But he may be expected at least to have treated him leniently? He admits he did not, on account, as he tells us, of the "superior duty he owed to the Queen's fame and honor in a public proceeding." But hitherto, the Earl's liberty alone had been endangered; now, his life is at stake. Do not the manifold favors, the munificent benefactions all arise in the generous mind of Bacon? Does he not waive all thought of interest and promotion and worldly honor to devote himself wholly to the sacred task of saving his patron, benefactor, and friend? Her Majesty's Counsel extraordinary appeared in the place of the Solicitor-General, to reply

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to Essex's defence; he compared the accused first to Cain, then to Pisistratus. The Earl made a pathetic appeal to his judges; Bacon showed he had not answered his objections, and compared him to the Duke of Guise, the most odious comparison he could have instituted. Essex was condemned; the Queen wavered in her resolution to execute him; his friend's intercession might perhaps have been able to save Essex from an ignominious death. Did Bacon, in his turn, "spend all his power, might, and amity?" The Queen's Counsel extraordinary might have offended his sovereign by his importunity, and have been forgotten in the impending vacancy of the office of Solicitor-General! Essex died on the scaffold. But the execution rendered the Queen unpopular, and she was received with mournful silence when she appeared in public. She ordered a pamphlet to be written to justify the execution; she made choice of Bacon as the writer; the courtier did not decline the task, but published *A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons attempted and committed by Robert, late Earle of Essex and his Complices, against her Maiestie and her Kingdoms.* This faithless friend, to use the language of Macaulay, "exerted his professional talents to shed the Earl's blood, and his literary talents to blacken the Earl's memory."

The memory of Essex suffered but little from the attack of the pamphlet; the base pamphleteer's memory is blackened forever, and to his fair name of "the

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wisest, brightest," has been appended the "meanest of mankind." But let us cast a pall over this act, this moral murder, perpetrated by the now degraded orator, degraded philosopher, the now most degraded of men.

Elizabeth died in 1601; and before the arrival of James, in England, Bacon wrote him a pedantic letter, probably to gratify the taste of the pedant king; but he did not forget in it, "his late dear sovereign Mistress — a princess happy in all things, but most happy — in such a successor."

Bacon solicited the honor of knighthood, a distinction much lavished at this period. At the King's coronation, he knelt down in company with above three hundred gentlemen; but "he rose Sir Francis." He sought the hand of a rich alderman's daughter, Miss Barnham, who consented to become Lady Bacon.

The Earl of Southampton, Shakspeare's generous patron and friend, who had been convicted of high treason in the late reign, now received the King's pardon. This called to all men's minds the fate of the unhappy Earl of Essex, and of his odiously ungrateful accuser; the latter unadvisedly published the *Sir Francis Bacon, his Apologie in certaine imputations concerning the late Earle of Essex*; a defence which, in the estimation of one of his biographers, Lord Campbell, has injured him more with posterity than all the attacks of his enemies.

In the new Parliament, he represented the borough

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of Ipswich; he spoke frequently, and obtained the good graces of the King by the support he gave to James's favorite plan of a union of England and Scotland; a measure by no means palatable to the King's new subjects.

The object of all his hopes, the price, perhaps, of his conduct to Essex, seemed in 1606 to be within his reach; but he was once more to be disappointed. His old enemy, Sir Edward Coke, prevented the vacancy. The following year, however, after long and humiliating solicitation, he attained the office to which he had so long aspired, and was appointed Solicitor-General to the Crown.

Official advancement was now the object nearest his heart, and he longed to be Attorney-General.[1]

In 1613, by a master stroke of policy, he created a vacancy for himself as Attorney-General, and managed at the same time to disserve his old enemy, Coke, by getting him preferred in rank, but at the expense of considerable pecuniary loss.

After his new appointment, he was reëlected to his seat in the House of Commons; he had gained

[1] The Attorney-General is the public prosecutor on behalf of the Crown, where the state is actually and not nominally the prosecutor. He pleads also as a barrister in private causes, provided they are not against the government. As he receives a fee for every case in which the government is concerned, his emoluments are considerable; but he has no salary. His official position secures to him the best practice at the bar. The salary was, in Bacon's time, but 81*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum; but the situation yielded him six thousand pounds yearly.

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so much popularity there, that the House admitted him, although it resolved to exclude future Attorneys-General; a resolution rescinded by later Parliaments.

The Attorney-General, as may be supposed, did not lack zeal in his master's service and for his master's prerogative. One case, in particular, was atrocious. An aged clergyman, named Peacham, was prosecuted for high treason for a sermon which he had neither preached nor published; the unfortunate old man was apprehended, put to the torture in presence of the Attorney-General, and as the latter himself tells us, was examined "before torture, between torture, and after torture," although Bacon must have been fully aware that the laws of England did not sanction torture to extort confession. Bacon tampered with the judges, and obtained a conviction; but the government durst not carry the sentence into execution. Peacham languished in prison till the ensuing year, when Providence rescued him from the hands of human justice.

In 1616, Bacon was offered the formal promise of the Chancellorship, or an actual appointment as Privy Councillor; he was too prudent not to prefer an appointment to a promise, and he was accordingly nominated to the functions of member of the Privy Council. His present leisure enabled him to prosecute vigorously his *Novum Organum*, but he turned aside to occupy himself with a proposition for the amendment of the laws of England, on which

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Lord Campbell, assuredly the most competent of judges, passes a high encomiun.

At length, in 1617, Sir Francis Bacon attained the end of the ambition of his life, he became Lord Keeper of the Seals, with the functions, though not the title, of Lord High Chancellor of England. His promotion to this dignity gave general satisfaction; his own university, Cambridge, congratulated him; Oxford imitated the example; the world expected a perfect judge, formed from his own model in his Essay of Judicature. He took his seat in the Court of Chancery with the utmost pomp and parade.

The Lord Keeper now endeavored to "feed fat the ancient grudge" he bore Coke. He deprived him of the office of Chief Justice, and erased his name from the list of privy councillors. Coke imagined a plan of raising his falling fortunes; he projected a marriage between his daughter by his second wife, a very rich heiress, and Sir John Villiers, the brother of Buckingham, the King's favorite. Bacon was alarmed, wrote to the King, and used expressions of disparagement towards the favorite, his new patron, to whom he was indebted for the Seals he held. The King and his minion were equally indignant; and they did not conceal from him their resentment. On the return of the court, Bacon hastened to the residence of Buckingham; being denied admittance, he waited two whole days in the ante-chamber with the Great Seal of England in his hand. When at length he obtained access,

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the Lord Keeper threw himself and the Great Seal on the ground, kissed the favorite's feet, and vowed never to rise till he was forgiven! It must after this have been difficult indeed for him to rise again in the world's esteem or his own.

Bacon was made to purchase at a dear price his reinstatement in the good graces of Buckingham. The favorite constantly wrote to the judge in behalf of one of the parties, and in the end, says Lord Campbell, intimated that he was to dictate the decree. Nor did Bacon once remonstrate against this unwarrantable interference on the part of the man to whom he had himself recommended "by no means to interpose himself, either by word or letter in any cause depending on any court of justice." The Lord Keeper received soon after, in 1618, the reward of his "many faithful services" by the higher title of Lord High Chancellor of England, and by the peerage with the name of Baron of Verulam.

The new Minister of Justice lent himself with his wonted complaisance to a most outrageous act of injustice, which Macaulay stigmatizes as a "dastardly murder," that of the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh, under a sentence pronounced sixteen years before; Sir Walter having been in the interval invested with the high command of Admiral of the fleet. Such an act it was the imperative duty of the first magistrate of the realm not to promote, but to resist to the full extent of his power; and the Chancellor alone could issue the warrant for the execution!

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In 1620, he published what is usually considered his greatest work, his *Novum Organum* (New Instrument or Method), which forms the second part of the *Instauratio Magna* (Great Restoration of the Sciences). This work had occupied Bacon's leisure for nearly thirty years. Such was the care he bestowed on it, that Rawley, his chaplain and biographer, states that he had seen about twelve autograph copies of it, corrected and improved until it assumed the shape in which it appeared. Previous to the publication of the *Novum Organum*, says the illustrious Sir John Herschel, "natural philosophy, in any legitimate and extensive sense of the word, could hardly be said to exist."[1]

It cannot be expected that a work destined completely to change the state of science, we had almost said of nature, should not be assailed by that prejudice which is ever ready to raise its loud but unmeaning voice against whatever is new, how great or good soever it may be. Bacon's doctrine was accused of being calculated to produce "dangerous revolutions," to "subvert governments and the authority of religion." Some called on the present age and posterity to rise high in their resentment against "the Bacon-faced generation," for so were the experimentalists termed. The old cry of irreligion, nay, even of atheism, was raised against the man who had said: "I would rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that

[1] Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy.

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this universal frame is without a mind."[1] But Bacon had to encounter the prejudices even of the learned. Cuffe, the Earl of Essex's secretary, a man celebrated for his attainments, said of the *Instauratio Magna*, "a fool could not have written such a book, and a wise man would not." King James said, it was "like the peace of God, that surpasseth all understanding." And even Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, said to Aubrey: "Bacon is no great philosopher; he writes philosophy like a Lord Chancellor." Rawley, his secretary and his biographer, laments, some years after his friend's death, that "his fame is greater and sounds louder in foreign parts abroad than at home in his own nation; thereby verifying that divine sentence: A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house." Bacon was for some time without honor "in his own country and in his own house." But truth on this, as on all other occasions, triumphs in the end. Bacon's assailants are forgotten; Bacon will be remembered with gratitude and veneration forever.

He was again, in 1621, promoted in the peerage to be Viscount Saint-Albans; his patent particularly celebrating his "integrity in the administration of justice."

In this same year the Parliament assembled. The House of Commons first voted the subsidies demanded by the Crown, and next proceeded, as was

[1] Essay xvi.

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usual in those times, to the redress of grievances. A committee of the House was appointed to inquire into "the abuses of Courts of Justice." A report of this committee charged the Lord Chancellor with corruption, and specified two cases; in the first of which Aubrey, a suitor in his court, stated that he had presented the Lord Chancellor with a hundred pounds; and Egerton, another suitor in his court, with four hundred pounds in addition to a former piece of plate of the value of fifty pounds; in both cases decisions had been given against the parties whose presents had been received. (Lord Campbell asserts that in the case of Egerton both parties had made the Chancellor presents.)[1] His enemies, it is said, estimated his illicit gains at a hundred thousand pounds; a statement which, it is more than probable, is greatly exaggerated.[2] "I never had," said Bacon in his defence, "bribe or reward in my eye or thought when I pronounced sentence or order." This is an acknowledgment of the fact, and perhaps an aggravation of the offence. He

[1] Decisions being given against the parties is no proof of uncorruptness; it is always the party who loses his suit that complains; the gainer receives the price of his bribe, and is silent.

[2] The exactions of his servants appear to have been very great; their indulgence in every kind of extravagance, and the lavish profuseness of his own expenses, were the principal causes of his ruin. Mallet relates that one day, during the investigation into his conduct, the Chancellor passed through a room where several of his servants were sitting; as they arose from their seats to greet him, "Sit down, my masters," exclaimed he, "your rise hath been my fall."

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then addressed "an humbie submission" to the House, a kind of general admission, in which he invoked as a plea of excuse *vitia temporis.*

How widely different from this is his own language! It is fair justice to appeal from the judge to the tribunal of the philosopher and moralist; it is appealing from Philip drunk to Philip sober; unhappily it is likewise

> to have the engineer
> Hoist with his own petar.

He says, in his Essay of Great Place: "For corruption: do not only bind thine own hands, or thy servant's hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors from offering. For integrity 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."[1] He says again, in the same Essay: "Set it down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them."

But the allegation that it was a custom of the times requires examination. It was a custom of the times in reality to make presents to superiors. Queen Elizabeth received them as New Year's gifts from functionaries of all ranks, from her prime minister down to Charles Smith, the dust-man (see note 1, page 7), and this custom probably continued under her successor, and may have been applied to other high functionaries, but it does not appear to have

[1] Essay xi.

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been in legitimate use in the courts of judicature. Coke, himself Chief Justice, was Bacon's principal accuser; and, although an enemy, he has been said to have conducted himself with moderation and propriety on this occasion only. Lord Campbell, Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, and author of the *Lives of the Chancellors and Chief Justices of England*, repels the plea, as inadmissible. It cannot be denied that if Bacon extended the practice to the courts of justice, he has heaped coals of fire on his head; for applied to his own case personally it would be sufficiently odious; but what odium would not that man deserve who should systematize, nay, legitimize a practice that must inevitably poison the stream of justice at its fountain-head! What execration could be too great, if that man were the most intelligent, the wisest of his century, one of the most dignified in rank in the land, clad in spotless ermine, the emblem of purity, in short, the Minister of Justice!

The Lords resolved that Bacon should be called upon to put in a particular answer to each of the special charges preferred against him. The formal articles with proofs in support were communicated to him. The House received the "confession and humble submission of me, the Lord Chancellor." In this document, Bacon acknowledges himself to be guilty of corruption; and in reply to each special charge admits in every instance the receipt of money or valuable things from the suitors in his court; but alleging in some cases that it was after judgment,

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or as New Year's gifts, a custom of the times, or for prior services. A committee of nine temporal and three spiritual lords was appointed to ascertain whether it was he who had subscribed this document. The committee repaired to his residence, were received in the hall where he had been accustomed to sit as judge, and merely asked him if the signature affixed to the paper they exhibited to him was his. He passionately exclaimed: "My lords, it is my act, my hand, my heart. I beseech your lordships to be merciful to a broken reed." The committee withdrew, overwhelmed with grief at the sight of such greatness so fallen.

Four commissioners dispatched by the King demanded the Great Seal of the Chancellor, confined to his bed by sickness and sorrow and want of sustenance; for he refused to take any food. He hid his face in his hand, and delivered up that Great Seal for the attainment of which he "had sullied his integrity, had resigned his independence, had violated the most sacred obligations of friendship and gratitude, had flattered the worthless, had persecuted the innocent, had tampered with judges, had tortured prisoners, had plundered suitors, had wasted on paltry intrigues all the powers of the most exquisitely constructed intellect that has ever been bestowed on any of the children of men."[1]

All this he did to be Lord High Chancellor of England; and, had he not been the unworthy min-

[1] Macaulay's Essays.

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ister of James, he might have been, to use the beautiful language of Hallam, "the high-priest of nature."

On the 3d of May, he was unanimously declared to be guilty, and he was sentenced to a fine of forty thousand pounds, to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure, to be incapable of holding any public office, and of sitting in Parliament or of coming within the verge of the court.[1] Such was the sentence pronounced on the man whom three months before the King *delighted to honor* for "his integrity in the administration of justice."

The fatal verdict affected his health so materially that the judgment could not receive immediate execution; he could not be conveyed to the Tower until the 31st of May; the following day he was liberated. He repaired to the house of Sir John Vaughan, who held a situation in the prince's household.[2] He wished to retire to his own residence at York House; but this was refused. He was ordered to proceed to his seat at Gorhambury, whence he was not to remove, and where he remained, though very reluctantly, till the ensuing spring.

The heavy fine was remitted. But as he had

[1] He was not, as has been erroneously supposed, stripped of his titles of nobility; this was proposed; but it was negatived by the majority formed by means of the bishops.

[2] The Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles the First, was before he ascended the throne the patron of Bacon, who said of him in his will, "my most gracious sovereign, who *ever when he was prince* was my patron."

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lived in great pomp, he had economized naught from his legitimate or ill-gotten gains. As he was now insolvent, a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year was bestowed on him; from his estate and other revenues he derived thirteen hundred pounds per annum more. On the 17th of October, his remaining penalties were remitted. It cannot but strike the reader as a most remarkable circumstance that, within eighteen months of the condemnation, all the penalties were successively remitted. Would this induce the belief that he was but the scape-goat of the court, that the condemnation was purely political? It is, we believe, to be explained ostensibly by the advanced age of Bacon, but really by the circumstance that the King's favorite, Buckingham, was an accomplice.

Bacon discovered, alas! when it was too late, that the talent God had given him he had "misspent in things for which he was least fit;" or as Thomson has beautifully expressed it:[1] —

> Hapless in his choice,
> Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
> And through the smooth barbarity of courts,
> With firm, but pliant virtue, forward still
> To urge his course; him for the studious shade
> Kind Nature form'd; deep, comprehensive, clear,
> Exact, and elegant; in one rich soul,
> Plato, the Stagyrite and Tully join'd.
> The great deliverer he!

It is gratifying to turn from the melancholy scenes exhibited by the political life of Bacon, to behold him

[1] The Seasons.

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in his study in the deep search of truth; no contrast is more striking than that between the chancellor and the philosopher, or, as Macaulay has well termed it, "Bacon seeking for truth, and Bacon seeking for the Seals — Bacon in speculation, and Bacon in action." From amidst clouds and darkness we emerge into the full blaze and splendor of midday light.

We now find Bacon wholly devoting himself to the pursuits for which nature adapted him, and from which no extent of occupation could entirely detach him. The author redeemed the man; in the philosopher and the poet there was no weakness, no corruption.

> Nothing is here for tears; nothing to wail
> Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
> Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair.

Here the writer yielded not to *vitia temporis*; but combated them with might and main, with heart and soul.

In 1623, he published the *Life of Henry VII.* In a letter addressed to the Queen of Bohemia with a copy, he says pathetically: "'Time was I had honor without leisure, and now I have leisure without honor." But his honor without leisure had precipitated him into "bottomless perdition;" his leisure without honor retrieved his name, and raised him again to an unattainable height.

In the following year, he printed his Latin translation of the *Advancement of Learning*, under the title of *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum*.

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This was not, however, a mere translation; for he made in it omissions and alterations; and appears to have added about one third new matter; in short, he remodelled it. His work, replete with poetry and beautiful imagery, was received with applause throughout Europe. It was reprinted in France in 1624, one year after its appearance in England. It was immediately translated into French and Italian, and was published in Holland, the great book-mart of that time, in 1645, 1650, and 1662.

In 1624, he solicited of the King a remission of the sentence, to the end, says he, "that blot of ignominy may be removed from me and from my memory with posterity." The King granted him a full pardon. But he never more took his seat in the House of Lords. When the new Parliament met, after the accession of Charles the First, age, infirmity, and tardy wisdom had extinguished the ambition of Baron Verulam, Viscount St. Albans. When the writ of summons to the Parliament reached him, he exclaimed: "I have done with such vanities!"

But the philosopher pursued his labor of love. He published new editions of his writings, and translated them into Latin, from the mistaken notion that in that language alone could they be rescued from oblivion. His crabbed latinity is now read but by few, or even may be said to be nearly forgotten; while his noble, majestic English is read over the

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whole British empire, on which the sun never sets, is studied and admired throughout the old world and the new, and it will be so by generations still unborn; it will descend to posterity in company with his contemporary, Shakspeare (whose name he never mentions), and will endure as long as the great and glorious language itself; indeed, as he foretold of his Essays, it "will live as long as books last."

In the translation of his works into Latin, he was assisted by Rawley, his future biographer, and his two friends, Ben Jonson, the poet, and Hobbes, the philosopher.

He wrote for his "own recreation," amongst very serious studies, a *Collection of Apophthegms, New and Old*, said to have been dictated in one rainy day, but probably the result of several "rainy days." This contains many excellent jocular anecdotes, and has been, perhaps, with too much indulgence, pronounced by Macaulay to be the best jest-book in the world.

He commenced a *Digest of the Laws of England*, but he soon discontinued it, because it was "a work of assistance, and that which he could not master by his own forces and pen." James the First had not sufficient elevation of mind to afford him the means of securing the assistance he required.

He wrote his will with his own hand on the 19th of December, 1625. He directs that he shall be interred in St. Michael's Church, near St. Albans: "There was my mother buried, and it is the parish

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church of my mansion-house at Gorhambury. . . . . For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and the next ages." This supreme act of filial piety towards his gifted mother is affecting. Let no "uncharitable" word be uttered over his last solemn behest; foreign nations and all ages will not refuse a tribute of homage to his genius! Gassendi presents an analysis of his labors, and pays a tribute of admiration to their author; Descartes has mentioned him with encomium; Malebranche quotes him as an authority; Puffendorff expressed admiration of him; the University of Oxford presented to him, after his fall, an address, in which he is termed "a mighty Hercules, who had by his own hand greatly advanced those pillars in the learned world which by the rest of the world were supposed immovable." Leibnitz ascribed to him the revival of true philosophy; Newton had studied him so closely that he adopted even his phraseology; Voltaire and D'Alembert have rendered him popular in France. The modern philosophers of all Europe regard him reverentially as the father of experimental philosophy.

He attempted at this late period of his life a metrical translation into English of the Psalms of David; although his prose is full of poetry, his verse has but little of the divine art.

He again declined to take his seat as a peer in Charles's second Parliament; but the last stage of his life displayed more dignity and real greatness

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than the "pride, pomp, and circumstance" of his high offices and honors. The public of England and of "foreign nations" forgot the necessity of "charitable speeches" and anticipated "the next ages." The most distinguished foreigners repaired to Gray's Inn to pay their respects to him. The Marquis d'Effiat, who brought over to England the Princess Henrietta Maria, the wife of Charles the First, went to see him. Bacon, confined to his bed, but unwilling to decline the visit, received him with the curtains drawn. "You resemble the angels," said the French minister to him, "we hear those beings continually talked of; we believe them superior to mankind; and we never have the consolation to see them."

But in ill health and infirmity he continued his studies and experiments; as it occurred to him that snow might preserve animal substances from putrefaction as well as salt, he tried the experiment, and stuffed a fowl with snow with his own hands. "The great apostle of experimental philosophy was destined to become its martyr;" he took cold. From his bed he dictated a letter to the Earl of Arundel, to whose house he had been conveyed. "I was likely to have had the fortune of Caïus Plinius the Elder, who lost his life by trying an experiment about the burning of the Mount Vesuvius. For I was also desirous to try an experiment or two touching the conservation and induration of bodies. As for the experiment itself, it succeeded excellently

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well." He had, indeed, the fortune of Pliny the Elder; for he never recovered from the effects of his cold, which brought on fever and a complaint of the chest; and he expired on the 9th of April, 1626, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. Thus died, a victim to his devotion to science, Francis Bacon, whose noble death is an expiation of the errors of his life, and who was, as has been justly observed, notwithstanding all his faults, one of the greatest ornaments and benefactors of the human race.

No account has been preserved of his funeral; but probably it was private. Sir Thomas Meautys, his faithful secretary, erected at his own expense a monument to Bacon's memory. Bacon is represented sitting, reclining on his hand, and absorbed in meditation. The effigy bears the inscription: *sic sedebat.*

The singular fact ought not to be omitted, that notwithstanding the immense sums that had been received by him, legitimately or otherwise, he died insolvent. The fault of his life had been that he never adapted his expenses to his income; perhaps even he never calculated them. To what irretrievable ruin did not this lead him? To disgrace and dishonor, in the midst of his career; to insolvency at its end. His love of worldly grandeur was uncontrollable, or at least uncontrolled. "The virtue of prosperity is temperance," says he himself; but this virtue he did not possess. His stately bark rode proudly over the waves, unmindful of the rocks; on one of these, alas! it split and foundered.

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Bacon was very prepossessing in his person; he was in stature above the middle size; his forehead was broad and high, of an intellectual appearance; his eye was lively and expressive; and his countenance bore early the marks of deep thought.

It might be mentioned here with instruction to the reader, that few men were more impressed than Bacon with the value of time, the most precious element of life. He assiduously employed the smallest portions of it; considering justly that the days, the hours, nay minutes of existence require the greatest care at our hands; the weeks, months, and years have been wisely said to take care of themselves. His chaplain, Rawley, remarks: "*Nullum momentum aut temporis segmentum perire et intercidere passus est,*" he suffered no moment nor fragment of time to pass away unprofitably. It is this circumstance that explains to us the great things he accomplished even in the most busy part of his life.

The whole of Bacon's biography has been admirably recapitulated by Lord Campbell [1] in the following paragraph: —

"We have seen him taught his alphabet by his mother; patted on the head by Queen Elizabeth; mocking the worshippers of Aristotle at Cambridge; catching the first glimpses of his great discoveries, and yet uncertain whether the light was from heaven; associating with the learned and the gay at the court of France; devoting himself to Bracton [2] and

[1] Lives of the Lord Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal of England.

[2] Bracton is one of the earliest writers of English law. He

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the Year Books in Gray's Inn; throwing aside the musty folios of the law to write a moral Essay, to make an experiment in natural philosophy, or to detect the fallacies which had hitherto obstructed the progress of useful truth; contented for a time with taking "all knowledge for his province;" roused from these speculations by the stings of vulgar ambition; plying all the arts of flattery to gain official advancement by royal and courtly favor; entering the House of Commons, and displaying powers of oratory of which he had been unconscious; being seduced by the love of popular applause, for a brief space becoming a patriot; making amends, by defending all the worst excesses of prerogative; publishing to the world lucubrations on morals, which show the nicest perception of what is honorable and beautiful as well as prudent, in the conduct of life; yet the son of a Lord Keeper, the nephew of the prime minister, a Queen's counsel, with the first practice at the bar, arrested for debt, and languishing in a spunging-house; tired with vain solicitations to his own kindred for promotion, joining the party of their opponent, and after experiencing the most generous kindness from the young and chivalrous head of it, assisting to bring him to the scaffold, and to blacken his memory; seeking, by a mercenary marriage to repair his broken fortunes; on the accession of a new sovereign offering up the most servile adulation to a pedant whom he utterly despised; infinitely gratified by being permitted to kneel down, with three hundred others, to receive the honor of knighthood; truckling to a worthless favorite with the most slavish subserviency that he might be appointed a law-officer of the Crown; then giving the most admirable advice for the compilation and emendation of the laws of England, and helping to inflict torture on a poor parson whom he wished to hang as a traitor for writing an unpublished and

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flourished in the thirteenth century. The title of his work is *De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliæ*, first printed in 1569.

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unpreached sermon; attracting the notice of all Europe by his philosophical works, which established a new era in the mode of investigating the phenomena both of matter and mind; basely intriguing in the meanwhile for further promotion, and writing secret letters to his sovereign to disparage his rivals; riding proudly between the Lord High Treasurer and Lord Privy Seal, preceded by his mace-bearer and purse-bearer, and followed by a long line of nobles and judges, to be installed in the office of Lord High Chancellor; by and by, settling with his servants the account of the bribes they had received for him; a little embarrassed by being obliged, out of decency, the case being so clear, to decide against the party whose money he had pocketed, but stifling the misgivings of conscience by the splendor and flattery which he now commanded; struck to the earth by the discovery of his corruption; taking to his bed, and refusing sustenance; confessing the truth of the charges brought against him, and abjectly imploring mercy; nobly rallying from his disgrace, and engaging in new literary undertakings, which have added to the splendor of his name; still exhibiting a touch of his ancient vanity, and, in the midst of pecuniary embarrassment, refusing to 'be stripped of his feathers;'[1] inspired, nevertheless, with all his youthful zeal for science, in conducting his last experiment of 'stuffing a fowl with snow to preserve it,' which succeeded 'excellently well,' but brought him to his grave; and, as the closing act of a life so checkered, making his will, whereby, conscious of the shame he had incurred among his contemporaries, but impressed with a swelling conviction of what he had achieved for mankind, he bequeathed his 'name and memory to men's charitable speeches, to foreign nations, and the next ages.'"

After this brilliant recapitulation of the principal facts of Bacon's eventful life, there remains the

[1] The woods on his estate of Gorhambury.

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difficult task of examining his character as a writer and philosopher; and then of presenting some observations on his principal works. As these subjects have occupied the attention of the master minds and most elegant writers of England, we shall unhesitatingly present the reader with the opinions of these, the most competent judges in each special department.

But first, let the philosopher speak for himself.

The end and aim of the writings of Bacon are best described by himself, as these descriptions may be gleaned from his various works. He taught, to use his own language, the means, not of the "amplification of the power of one man over his country, nor of the amplification of the power of that country over other nations; but the amplification of the power and kingdom of mankind over the world."[1] "A restitution of man to the sovereignty of nature."[2] "The enlarging the bounds of human empire to the effecting of all things possible."[3] From the enlargement of reason, he did not separate the growth of virtue; for he thought that "truth and goodness were one, differing but as the seal and the print, for truth prints goodness."[4]

The art which Bacon taught, has been well said to be "the art of inventing arts."

The great qualities of his mind, as they are exhibited in his works, have been well portrayed by the

[1] Of the Interpretation of Nature. [2] Ibid.
[3] New Atlantis. [4] Advancement of Learning.

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pen of Sir James Mackintosh. We subjoin the opinion of this elegant writer in his own words:

"It is easy to describe his transcendant merit in general terms of commendation: for some of his great qualities lie on the surface of his writings. But that in which he most excelled all other men, was in the range and compass of his intellectual view — the power of contemplating many and distant objects together, without indistinctness or confusion — which he himself has called the discursive or comprehensive understanding. 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 splendor 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.

"It is not so easy to conceive, or at least to describe, other equally essential elements of his greatness, and conditions of his success. He is probably a single instance of a mind which, in philosophizing, always reaches the point of elevation whence the whole prospect is commanded, without ever rising to such a distance as to lose a distinct perception of every part of it."[1]

Mr. Macaulay speaks of the following peculiarity of Bacon's understanding:[2] —

"With great minuteness of observation he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being. The small fine mind of La Bruyère had not a more delicate tact than the large intel-

[1] Edinburgh Review. [2] Essays.

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lect of Bacon. The "Essays" contain abundant proofs that no nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a house, a garden, or a court-masque, could escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to prince Ahmed. Fold it, and it seemed a toy for the hand of the lady. Spread it, and the armies of powerful sultans might repose beneath its shade.

"In keenness of observation he has been equalled, though, perhaps, never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was all his own. The glance with which he surveyed the intellectual universe, resembled that which the archangel, from the golden threshold of heaven, darted down into the new creation.

> "Round he surveyed and well might, where he stood
> So high above the circling canopy
> Of night's extended shade — from eastern point
> Of Libra, to the fleecy star which bears
> Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
> Beyond the horizon."

Bacon's philosophy is, to use an expression of his own, "the servant and interpreter of nature;" he cultivated it in the leisure left him by the assiduous study and practice of the law and by the willing duties of a courtier; it was rather the recreation than the business of his life; "my business," said he, "found rest in my contemplations;" but his very recreations rendered him, according to Leibnitz, the father of experimental philosophy, and, according to all, the originator of all its results, of all later discoveries in chemistry and the arts, in short, of all modern science and its applications.

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Mr. Macaulay is of opinion that the two leading principles of his philosophy are *utility* and *progress*; that the ethics of his inductive method are to do good, to do more and more good, to mankind.

Lord Campbell believes that a most perfect body of ethics might be made out from the writings of Bacon.

The origin of his philosophy was the conviction with which he was impressed of the insufficiency of that of the ancients, or rather of that of Aristotle, which reigned with almost undisputed sway throughout Europe. He reverenced antiquity for its great works, its great men; but not because of its ancientness; he deemed its decrees worthy of reverential consideration, but did not think they admitted of no appeal; he was not a bigot to antiquity or a contemner of modern times. He happily combated that undue and blind submission to the authority of ancient times for the mere reason that they are older than our own, alleging truly that "ANTIQUITAS SECULI JUVENTUS MUNDI, that our 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."[1]

Throwing off, then, all allegiance to antiquity, he appealed directly from Aristotle to nature, from reasoning to experiment.

But let us invoke the testimony of an eminent philosopher, Sir John Herschel:—

[1] Advancement of Learning.

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"By the discoveries of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo, the errors of the Aristotelian philosophy were effectually overturned on a plain appeal to the facts of nature; but it remained to show, on broad and general principles, how and why Aristotle was in the wrong; to set in evidence the peculiar weakness of his method of philosophizing, and to substitute in its place a stronger and better. This important task was executed by Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, who will therefore justly be looked upon in all future ages as the great reformer of philosophy, though his own actual contributions to the stock of physical truths were small, and his ideas of particular points strongly tinctured with mistakes and errors, which were the fault rather of the general want of physical information of the age than of any narrowness of view on his own part; of this he was fully aware. It has been attempted by some to lessen the merit of this great achievement, by showing that the inductive method had been practised in many instances, both ancient and modern, by the mere instinct of mankind; but it is not the introduction of inductive reasoning, as a new and hitherto untried process, which characterizes the Baconian philosophy, but his keen perception, and his broad and spirit-stirring, almost enthusiastic, announcement of its paramount importance, as the alpha and omega of science, as the grand and only chain for the linking together of physical truths, and the eventual key to every discovery and every application. Those who would deny him his just glory on such grounds would refuse to Jenner or to Howard their civic crowns, because a few farmers in a remote province had, time out of mind, been acquainted with vaccination, or philanthropists, in all ages, had occasionally visited the prisoner in his dungeon."

"It is to our immortal countryman Bacon," says he, again, "that we owe the broad announcement of this grand and fertile principle; and the development of the idea, that the whole of natural philosophy consists entirely of a series of

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inductive generalizations, commencing with the most circumstantially stated particulars, and carried up to universal laws, or axioms, which comprehend in their statements every subordinate degree of generality and of a corresponding series of inverted reasoning from generals to particulars, by which these axioms are traced back into their remotest consequences, and all particular propositions deduced from them, as well those by whose immediate consideration we rose to their discovery, as those of which we had no previous knowledge. . . .

"It would seem that a union of two qualities almost opposite to each other — a going forth of the thoughts in two directions, and a sudden transfer of ideas from a remote station in one to an equally distant one in the other — is required to start the first idea of *applying science*. Among the Greeks, this point was attained by Archimedes, but attained too late, on the eve of that great eclipse of science which was destined to continue for nearly eighteen centuries, till Galileo in Italy, and Bacon in England, at once dispelled the darkness; the one, by his inventions and discoveries; the other, by the irresistible force of his arguments and eloquence." [1]

His style is copious, comprehensive, and smooth; it does not flow with the softness of the purling rill, but rather with the strength, fulness, and swelling of a majestic river, and the rude harmony of the mountain stream. His images are replete with poetry and thought; they always illustrate his subject. Hallam is of opinion that the modern writer that comes nearest to him is Burke. "He had," said Addison, "the sound, distinct, comprehensive knowledge of Aristotle, with all the beautiful lights, graces, and embel-

[1] Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy.

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lishments of Cicero. One does not know which to admire most in his writings, the strength of reason, force of style, or brightness of imagination."[1]

Bacon improved so much the melody, elegance, and force of English prose, that we may apply to him what was said of Augustus with regard to Rome: *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit;* he found it brick, and he left it marble. Mr. Hallam's opinion differs somewhat from this; it is as follows:—

"The style of Bacon has an idiosyncrasy which we might expect from his genius. It can rarely indeed happen, and only in men of secondary talents, that the language they use is not, by its very choice and collocation, as well as its meaning, the representative of an individuality that distinguishes their turn of thought. Bacon is elaborate, sententious, often witty, often metaphorical; nothing could be spared; his analogies are generally striking and novel; his style is clear, precise, forcible; yet there is some degree of stiffness about it, and in mere language he is inferior to Raleigh."[2]

It is a most remarkable characteristic of Bacon, and one in which Burke resembled him, that his imagination grew stronger with his increasing years, and his style richer and softer. "The fruit came first," says Mr. Macaulay, "and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. In eloquence, in sweetness and variety of expression, and in richness of illustration, his later writings are far

[1] Tattler, No. 267.

[2] Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.

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superior to those of his youth." His earliest Essays have as much truth and cogent reasoning as his latest; but these are far superior in grace and beauty. A most striking illustration of this is afforded by one of the last Essays, added a year before Bacon's death, that of *Adversity* (Essay V.), than which naught can be more graceful and beautiful.

The account of Bacon's works will necessarily be very succinct, and, we fear, imperfect. We shall, however, for each of them, call in the aid of the most competent judges, whose award public opinion will not reverse.

ESSAYS.

Bacon published his *Essays* in 1597. They were, in the estimation of Mr. Hallam, the first in time and in excellence of English writings on moral prudence. Of the fifty-eight Essays, of which the work is now composed, ten only appeared in the first edition. But to these were added *Religious Meditations, Places of Perswasion and Disswasion, Seene and allowed;* many of which were afterwards embodied in the Essays. These Essays were: 1. Of Studie; 2. Of Discourse; 3. Of Ceremonies and Respects; 4. Of Followers and Friends; 5. Of Sutors; 6. Of Expence; 7. Of Regiment of Health; 8. Of Honor and Reputation; 9. Of Faction; 10. Of Negociating. In the edition of 1612, "The Essaies of S^{r} Francis Bacon Knight, the King's Atturny Generall," were increased to forty-one.

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The new Essays added are: 1. Of Religion; 2. Of Death; 3. Of Goodnesse, and Goodnesse of Nature; 4. Of Cunning; 5. Of Marriage and Single Life; 6. Of Parents and Children; 7. Of Nobility; 8. Of Great Place; 9. Of Empire; 10. Of Counsell; 11. Of Dispatch; 12. Of Love; 13. Of Friendship; 14. Of Atheism; 15. Of Superstition; 16. Of Wisedome for a Man's selfe; 20. Of seeming wise; 21. Of Riches; 22. Of Ambition; 23. Of Young Men and Age; 24. Of Beauty; 25. Of Deformity; 26. Of Nature in Men; 27. Of Custom and Education; 28. Of Fortune; 35. Of Praise; 36. Of Judicature; 37. of Vaine-Glory; 38. Of Greatnesse of Kingdomes; 39. Of the Publique; 40. Of Warre and Peace.

These forty-one Essays were afterwards again augmented to fifty-eight, with the new title of *The Essaies or Covnsels, Civill and Morall;* they were likewise improved by corrections, additions, and illustrations. By the peculiarity of Bacon, already noticed, the later Essays rise in beauty and interest.

Bacon considered his Essays but as "the recreations of his other studies." He has entitled them, in the Latin translation, *Sermones fideles, sive Interiora rerum.* The idea of them, as has been already mentioned, was suggested by those of Montaigne; but there is but little resemblance between the two productions. Montaigne is natural, ingenuous, sportive. Bacon's "*Essays or Counsels, civil and moral,*" "the fragments of his conceits," as he styles them, are all study, art, and gravity; but the reflections in them

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are true and profound. Montaigne confessedly painted himself, declared that he was the matter of his own book,[1] while with Bacon the man was merged in the author and the philosopher, who pro pounded like Seneca, and somewhat in Seneca's style, the maxims of practical wisdom, that, to use Bacon's own language, "come home to men's business and bosoms," and clothed them in a garb, new, elegant, and rich, hitherto unknown in England. But our author, if we may judge by the matter and even manner of his Essays, may have had in view, not so much Montaigne's *Essais* as Seneca's *Letters to Lucilius*. The Essay of *Death* is obviously founded on Seneca's Epistles on this subject. That he was well acquainted with Seneca's *Letters*, is incontrovertible. He alludes to them thus in the dedication to Prince Henry, in 1612: "The word (Essays)," says he, "is late, but the thing is ancient; for Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, if you mark them well, are but Essays, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles." Bacon justly foretold of his Essays that they "would live as long as books last."

[1] Montaigne says, in his author's address to the reader: —

"*Ie veulx qu'on m'y veoye en ma façon simple, naturelle et ordinaire, sans estude et artifice; car c'est moi que je peinds.*" He says again elsewhere: "*Ie n'ay pas plus faict mon livre, que mon livre m'a faict; livre consubstantiel à son aucteur, d'une occupation propre, membre de ma vie, non d'une occupation et fin tierce et estrangiere, comme touts aultres livres.*" (Livre ii. ch. xviii.)

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The following is the opinion of Dugald Stewart, himself an eminent philosopher and elegant writer:

"His *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 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."[1]

The reader will, perhaps, be rather gratified than wearied with another appreciation of this valuable production of our young moralist of twenty-six. It is of no incompetent judge, — Mr. Hallam.

"The transcendent strength of Bacon's mind is visible in the whole tenor of these Essays, unequal as they must be from the very nature of such compositions. They are deeper and more discriminating than any earlier, or almost any later work in the English language, full of recondite observation, long matured and carefully sifted. It is true that we might wish for more vivacity and ease; Bacon, who had much wit, had little gayety; his Essays are consequently stiff and grave where the subject might have been touched with a lively hand; thus it is in those on Gardens and on Building. The sentences have sometimes too apophthegmatic a form and want coherence; the historical instances, though far less frequent than with Montaigne, have a little the look of pedantry to our eyes. But it is from this condensation, from this

[1] Introduction to the Encyclopædia.

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gravity, that the work derives its peculiar impressiveness. Few books are more quoted, and what is not always the case with such books, we may add that few are more generally read. In this respect they lead the van of our prose literature; for no gentleman is ashamed of owning that he has not read the Elizabethan writers; but it would be somewhat derogatory to a man of the slightest claim to polite letters, were he unacquainted with the Essays of Bacon. It is, indeed, little worth while to read this or any other book for reputation sake; but very few in our language so well repay the pains, or afford more nourishment to the thoughts. They might be judiciously introduced, with a small number more, into a sound method of education, one that should make wisdom, rather than mere knowledge, its object, and might become a text-book of examination in our schools."[1]

ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING.

The *Advancement of Learning* was published in 1605. It has usually been considered that the whole of Bacon's philosophy is contained in this work, excepting, however, the second book of the *Novum Organum*. Of the *Advancement of Learning* he made a Latin translation, under the title of *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum*, which, however, contains about one third of new matter and some slight interpolations; a few omissions have been remarked in it.

The *Advancement of Learning* is, as it were, to use his own language, "a small globe of the

[1] Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.

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intellectual world, as truly and faithfully as I could discover with a note and description of those facts which seem to me not constantly occupate or not well converted by the labor of man. In which, if I have in any point receded from that which is commonly received, it hath been with a purpose of proceeding *in melius* and not *in aliud*, a mind of amendment and proficience, and not of change and difference. For I could not be true and constant to the argument I handle, if I were not willing to go beyond others, but yet not more willing than to have others go beyond me."

The *Advancement of Learning* is divided into two parts; the former of which is intended to remove prejudices against the search after truth, by pointing out the causes which obstruct it; in the second, learning is divided into history, poetry, and philosophy, according to the faculties of the mind from which they emanate — memory, imagination, and reason. Our author states the deficiencies he observes in each.

All the peculiar qualities of his style are fully developed in this noble monument of genius, one of the finest in English, or perhaps any other language; it is full of deep thought, keen observation, rich imagery, Attic wit, and apt illustration. Dugald Stewart and Hallam have both expressed their just admiration of the short paragraph on poesy; but, with all due deference, we must consider that the beautiful passage on the dignity and excellency of

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knowledge is surpassed by none. Can aught excel the noble comparison of the ship? The reader shall judge for himself.

"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?"

DE SAPIENTIA VETERUM.

The *Wisdom of the Ancients*, or rather, *De sapientia veterum* (for it was written in Latin), is a short treatise on the mythology of the ancients, by which Bacon endeavors to discover and to show the physical, moral, and political meanings it concealed. If the reader is not convinced that the ancients understood by these fables all that Bacon discovers in them, he must at least admit the probability of it, and be impressed with the penetration of the author and the variety and depth of his knowledge.

INSTAURATIO MAGNA.

The *Instauratio Magna* was published in 1620, while Bacon was still chancellor.

In his dedication of it to James the First, in 1620, in which he says he has been engaged in it nearly thirty years, he pathetically remarks: "The reason

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why I have published it now, specially being imperfect, is, to speak plainly, because I number my days, and would have it saved." His country and the world participate in the opinion of the philosopher, and would have deemed its loss one of the greatest to mankind.

Such was the care with which it was composed, that Bacon transcribed it twelve times with his own hand.

It is divided into six parts. The first entitled *Partitiones Scientiarum*, or the divisions of knowledge possessed by mankind, in which the author has noted the deficiencies and imperfections of each. This he had already accomplished by his *Advancement of Learning*.

Part 2 is the *Novum Organum Scientiarum*, or new method of studying the sciences, a name probably suggested by Aristotle's *Organon* (treatises on Logic). He intended it to be "the science of a better and more perfect use of reason in the investigation of things and of the true end of understanding." This has been generally denominated the *inductive method*, i. e. the experimental method, from the principle of *induction*, or bringing together facts and drawing from them general principles or truths, by which the author proposes the advancement of all kinds of knowledge. In this consists preëminently the philosophy of Bacon. Not reasoning upon conjecture on the laws and properties of nature, but, as Bacon quaintly terms it, "asking

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questions of nature," that is, making experiments, laboriously collecting facts first, and, after a sufficient number has been brought together, then forming systems or theories founded on them.

But this work is rather the summary of a more extensive one he designed, the aphorisms of it being rather, according to Hallam, "the heads or theses of chapters." But some of these principles are of paramount importance. An instance may be afforded of this, extracted from the "Interpretation of Nature, and Man's dominion over it." It is the very first sentence in the *Novum Organum*. "Man, the servant and interpreter of nature, can only understand and act in proportion as he observes and contemplates the order of nature; more, he can neither know nor do." This, as has justly been observed, is undoubtedly the foundation of all our real knowledge.

The *Novum Organum* is so important, that we deem it desirable to present some more detailed accounts of it.

The body of the work is divided into two parts; the former of which is intended to serve as an introduction to the other, a preparation of the mind for receiving the doctrine.

Bacon begins by endeavoring to remove the prejudices and to obtain fair attention to his doctrine. He compares philosophy to "a vast pyramid, which ought to have the history of nature for its basis;" he likens those who strive to erect by the force of abstract speculation to the giants of old, who,

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according to the poets, endeavored to throw Mount Ossa upon Pelion, and Olympus upon Ossa. The method of "anticipating nature," he denounces "as rash, hasty, and unphilosophical;" whereas, "interpretations of nature, or real truths arrived at by deduction, cannot so suddenly arrest the mind; and when the conclusion actually arrives, it may so oppose prejudice, and appear so paradoxical as to be in danger of not being received, notwithstanding the evidence that supports it, like mysteries of faith."

Bacon first attacks the "Idols of the Mind," i. e. the great sources of prejudice, then the different false philosophical theories; he afterwards proceeds to show what are the characteristics of false systems, the causes of error in philosophy, and lastly the grounds of hope regarding the advancement of science.

He now aspires, to use his own language, "only to sow the seeds of pure truth for posterity, and not to be wanting in his assistance to the first beginning of great undertakings." "Let the human race," says he further, "regain their dominion over nature, which belongs to them by the bounty of their Maker, and right reason and sound religion will direct the use."

The second part of the *Novum Organum* may be divided into three sections. The first is on the discovery of forms, i. e. causes in nature. The second section is composed of *tables* illustrative of the inductive method, and the third and last is

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styled the *doctrine of instances*, i. e. facts regarding the discovery of causes.

Part the third of the *Instauratio Magna* was to be a Natural History, as he termed it, or rather a history of natural substances, in which the art of man had been employed, which would have been a history of universal nature.

Part 4, to be called *Scala intellectus*, or *Intellectual Ladder*, was intended to be, to use his own words, "types and models which place before our eyes the entire process of the mind in the discovery of truth, selecting various and remarkable instances."

He had designed in the fifth part to give specimens of the new philosophy; a few fragments only of this have been published. It was to be "the fragment of interest till the principal could be raised."

The sixth and last part was "to display a perfect system of philosophy deduced and confirmed by a legitimate, sober, and exact inquiry according to the method he had laid down and invented." "To perfect this last part," says Bacon, "is above our powers and beyond our hopes."

Let us return, however, for a moment to the commencement, to remark that he concludes the introduction by an eloquent prayer that his exertions may be rendered effectual to the attainment of truth and happiness. But he feels his own inability, for "his days are numbered," to conduct mankind to the hoped for goal. It was given to him to point out the road to the promised land; but,

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like Moses, after having descried it from afar, it was denied him to enter the land to which he had led the way.

LIFE OF HENRY VII.

The *Life of Henry VII.*, published in 1622, is, in the opinion of Hallam, "the first instance in our language of the application of philosophy to reasoning on public events in the manner of the ancients and the Italians. Praise upon Henry is too largely bestowed; but it was in the nature of Bacon to admire too much a crafty and selfish policy; and he thought also, no doubt, that so near an ancestor of his own sovereign should not be treated with severe impartiality."[1]

LETTERS.

His *Letters* published in his works are numerous; they are written in a stiff, ungraceful, formal style; but still, they frequently bear the impress of the writer's greatness and genius. Fragments of them have been frequently quoted in the course of this notice; they have, perhaps, best served to exhibit more fully the man in all the relations of his public and private life.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

Amongst his miscellaneous papers there was found after his death a remarkable prayer, which Addison

[1] Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries.

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deemed sufficiently beautiful to be published in the *Tatler*[1] for Christmas, 1710. We extract a passage or two, that may serve to illustrate Bacon's position or his character.

"I have, though in a despised weed, procured the good of all men. If any have been my enemies, I thought not of them, neither hath the sun almost set upon my displeasure; but I have been as a dove, free from superfluity of maliciousness."

"Just are thy judgments upon me for my sins, which are more iu number than the sands of the sea, but have no proportion to thy mercies; for what are the sands of the sea? Earth, heaven, and all these are nothing to thy mercies."

Addison observes of this prayer, that for elevation of thought and greatness of expression, "it seems — rather the devotion of an angel than a man."

In taking leave of the life and the works of the greatest of philosophers, and alas! the least of men, we have endeavored to present a succinct but faithful narrative — "his glory not extenuated wherein he was worthy, nor his offences enforced, for which he suffered" merited obloquy with his own contemporaries and all posterity. Our endeavor has been

Verba animi proferre et vitam impendere vero.

But his failings, great as they were, are forgotten through his transcendent merit; his faults injured but few, and in his own time alone; his genius has benefited all mankind. The new direction he gave to philosophy was the indirect cause of all the modern

[1] No. 267.

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conquests of science over matter, or, as it were, over nature. What it has already accomplished, and may yet effect for the whole human race, is incalculable. Macaulay, the historian of England, has been likewise the eloquent narrator of the progress, that owes its origin to the genius of Francis Bacon.

"Ask a follower of Bacon," says Macaulay, "what the new philosophy, as it was called in the time of Charles the Second, has effected for mankind, and his answer is ready: 'It hath lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of the soil: it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendor of the day; it has extended the range of the human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscle; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all dispatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land on cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which sail against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its first-fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A point which yesterday was invisible is its goal to-day, and will be its starting-post to-morrow.'" [1]

[1] Essays.

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ESSAYS.

I.—OF TRUTH.

WHAT is truth? said jesting Pilate;[1] and would not stay for an answer. Certainly, (there be that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting freewill in thinking as well as in acting.) And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing 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 labor 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 favor; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later schools[2] of the Grecians examin-

[1] He refers to the following passage in the Gospel of St. John, xviii. 38: "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all."

[2] He probably refers to the "New Academy," a sect of Greek philosophers, one of whose moot questions was, "What is truth?" Upon which they came to the unsatisfactory conclusion, that mankind has no criterion by which to form a judgment.

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eth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it that men should love lies; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets; nor for advantage, as with the merchant, but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell; this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. (Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day, but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights.) A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. (Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?) One of the fathers,[1] in great severity, called poesy "vinum dæmonum,"[2] 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,

[1] Perhaps he was thinking of St. Augustine. — See *Aug. Confess.* i. 25, 26.

[2] "The wine of evil spirits."

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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;[1] the last was the light of reason;[2] 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[3] that beautified the sect,[4] that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: "It is a

[1] Genesis i. 3: "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

[2] At the moment when "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." — *Genesis* ii. 7.

[3] Lucretius, the Roman poet and Epicurean philosopher, is alluded to. — *Lucret.* ii. *init.* Comp. *Adv. of Learning*, i. 8, 5.

[4] He refers to the sect which followed the doctrines of Epicurus. The life of Epicurus himself was pure and abstemious in the extreme. One of his leading tenets was, that the aim of all speculation should be to enable men to judge with certainty what course is to be chosen, in order to secure health of body and tranquillity of mind. The adoption, however, of the term "pleasure," as denoting this object, has at all periods subjected the Epicurean system to great reproach; which, in fact, is due rather to the conduct of many who, for their own purposes, have taken shelter under the system in name only, than to the tenets themselves, which did not inculcate libertinism. Epicurus admitted the existence of the Gods, but he deprived them of the characteristics of Divinity, either as creators or preservers of the world.

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pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below; but (no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage-ground of truth" (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), "and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below;"[1] so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. (Certainly it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.)

(To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business;) it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and that (mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin

[1] Lord Bacon has either translated this passage of Lucretius from memory or has purposely paraphrased it. The following is the literal translation of the original: "'T is a pleasant thing, from the shore, to behold the dangers of another upon the mighty ocean, when the winds are lashing the main; not because it is a grateful pleasure for any one to be in misery, but because it is a pleasant thing to see those misfortunes from which you yourself are free: 't is also a pleasant thing to behold the mighty contests of warfare, arrayed upon the plains, without a share in the danger; but nothing is there more delightful than to occupy the elevated temples of the wise, well fortified by tranquil learning, whence you may be able to look down upon others, and see them straying in every direction, and wandering in search of the path of life."

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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." [2]

[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 following quotation is from the second book of the *Essays*, c. 18: "Lying is a disgraceful vice, and one that Plutarch, an ancient writer, paints in most disgraceful colors, 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 anything more vile than to be cowards with regard to men, and brave with regard to God?"

[2] St. Luke xviii. 8: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?"

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II. — OF DEATH.[1]

MEN fear death as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification, that a man should think with himself, what the pain is, if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured; and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb, for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense. And by him that spake only as a philosopher and natural man, it was well said, "Pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa."[2] Groans and convulsions, and a discolored face, and friends weeping, and blacks[3] and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion

[1] A portion of this *Essay* is borrowed from the writings of Seneca. See his *Letters to Lucilius*, B. iv. Ep. 24 and 82.

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

[3] He probably alludes to the custom of hanging the room in black where the body of the deceased lay, a practice much more usual in Bacon's time than at the present day.

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in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear preoccupateth 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.[1] Nay, Seneca[2] adds niceness and satiety: "Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest."[3] 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."[4] Tiberius in dissimulation, as Tacitus saith of him, "Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant:"[5] Vespasian in a jest, sitting

[1] Tacit, Hist. ii. 49.

[2] Ad Lucil. 77.

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

[4] "Livia, mindful of our union, live on, and fare thee well." — *Suet. Aug. Vit.* c. 100.

[5] "His bodily strength and vitality were now forsaking Tiberius, but not his duplicity." — *Ann.* vi. 50.

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upon the stool,[1] "Ut puto Deus fio;"[2] Galba with a sentence, "Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani,"[3] holding forth his neck; Septimus Severus in dispatch, "Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum,"[4] and the like. Certainly, the Stoics[5] bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better, saith he, "qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponit naturæ."[6] 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

[1] This was said as a reproof to his flatterers, and in spirit is not unlike the rebuke administered by Canute to his retinue. — *Suet. Vespas. Vit.* c. 23.

[2] "I am become a Divinity, I suppose."

[3] "If it be for the advantage of the Roman people, strike." — *Tac. Hist.* i. 41.

[4] "If aught remains to be done by me, dispatch. — *Dio Cass.* 76, *ad fin.*

[5] These were the followers of Zeno, a philosopher of Citium, in Cyprus, who founded the Stoic school, or "School of the Portico," at Athens. The basis of his doctrines was the duty of making virtue the object of all our researches. According to him, the pleasures of the mind were preferable to those of the body, and his disciples were taught to view with indifference health or sickness, riches or poverty, pain or pleasure.

[6] "Who reckons the close of his life among the boons of nature." Lord Bacon here quotes from memory; the passage is in the tenth Satire of Juvenal, and runs thus: —

> "Fortem posce animum, mortis terrore carentem,
> Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
> Naturæ" —

"Pray for strong resolve, void of the fear of death, that reckons the closing period of life among the boons of nature."

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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 dolors of death; but, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is "Nunc dimittis,"[1] 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."[2]

III.—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.

[1] He alludes to the song of Simeon, to whom the Holy Ghost had revealed, "that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." When he beheld the infant Jesus in the temple, he took the child in his arms and burst forth into a song of thanksgiving, commencing, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—*St. Luke* ii. 29.

[2] "When dead, the same person shall be beloved."—*Hor. Ep.* ii. 1, 14.

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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 is worse than a corrupt humor, 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,"[1] another saith, "Ecce in penetralibus;"[2] that is, when some men seek 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 drew him to have a special care of those without) saith: "If a heathen[3] come

[1] "Behold, he is in the desert." — *St. Matthew* xxiv. 26.

[2] "Behold, he is in the secret chambers." — *Ib.*

[3] He alludes to 1 Corinthians xiv. 23: "If, therefore, the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with

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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 them from the church, and maketh them "to sit down in the chair of the scorners."[1] 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, that, in his catalogue of books of a feigned library, sets down this title of a book, "The Morris-Dance[2] of Heretics;" for, indeed, every sect of them hath a diverse posture, or cringe, by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings and depraved politicians, 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

tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?"

[1] Psalm i. 1: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

[2] 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 armor, and which is mentioned as still existing in Greece, in Byron's "Song of the Greek Captive:" —

"You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet."

Attitude and gesture formed one of the characteristics of the dance. It is still practised in some parts of England. — *Rabelais, Pantag.* ii. 7.

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peace of the church distilleth into peace of conscience, and it turneth the labors of writing and reading of controversies into treatises of mortification and devotion.

Concerning the bounds of unity, the true placing of them importeth exceedingly. 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."[1] Peace is not the matter, but following, and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans[2] and lukewarm persons think they may accommodate points of religion by middle ways, and taking part of both, and witty reconcilements, as if they would make an arbitrament 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 us is against us;"[3] and again, "He that is not against us, is with us;" that is, if the points fundamental, and of substance in religion,

[1] 2 Kings ix. 18.

[2] He alludes to the words in Revelation, c. iii. v. 14, 15, 16: "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. — I will spue thee out of my mouth." Laodicea was a city of Asia Minor. St. Paul established the church there which is here referred to.

[3] St. Matthew xii. 30.

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were truly discerned and distinguished from points not merely of faith, but of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trivial, and done already; but if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed of rending God's church by two kinds of controversies; the one is, when the matter of the point controverted is too small and light, not worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contradiction; for, as it is noted by one of the fathers, "Christ's coat indeed had no seam, but the church's vesture was of divers colors;" whereupon he saith, "In veste varietas sit, scissura non sit,"[1] they be two things, unity and uniformity; the other is, when the matter of the point controverted is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty and obscurity, so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself, that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree; and if it come so to pass in that distance of judgment, which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men, in some of their contradictions,

[1] "In the garment there may be many colors, but let there be no rending of it."

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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, 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 colors will agree in the dark; the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points; for truth and falsehood, in such things, are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image;[2] they may cleave, but they will not incorporate.

Concerning the means of procuring unity, men must beware that, in the procuring or muniting of religious unity, they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and temporal, and both have their due office and place in the maintenance of religion; but we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet's sword,[3]

[1] "Avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called." — 1 *Tim.* vi. 20.

[2] He alludes to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, significant of the limited duration of his kingdom. — See *Daniel* ii. 33, 41.

[3] Mahomet proselytized by giving to the nations which he conquered, the option of the Koran or the sword.

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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."[1]

What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France,[2] or the powder treason of England?[3] He would have been seven times more epicure and atheist than he was; for as the tempo-

[1] "To deeds so dreadful could religion prompt." The poet refers to the sacrifice by Agamemnon, the Grecian leader, of his daughter Iphigenia, with the view of appeasing the wrath of Diana. — *Lucret.* i. 95.

[2] He alludes to the massacre of the Huguenots, or Protestants, 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. On this occasion about 60,000 persons perished, including the Admiral De Coligny, one of the most virtuous men that France possessed, and the main stay of the Protestant cause.

[3] More generally known as "The Gunpowder Plot."

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ral sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion, so it is a thing monstrous to put it into the hands of the common people; let that be left unto the Anabaptists, and other furies. It was great blasphemy when the devil said, "I will ascend and be like the Highest;"[1] but it is greater blasphemy to personate God, and bring him in saying, "I will descend, and be like the prince of darkness;" and what is it better, to make the cause of religion to 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,[2] do damn and send to hell forever those facts and opinions tending to the support of the same, as hath been already in good part done. Surely, in counsels concerning religion, that counsel of the apostle would be prefixed: "Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei;"[3] and it was

[1] Isa. xiv. 14.

[2] Allusion is made to the "caduceus," with which Mercury, the messenger of the Gods, summoned the souls of the departed to the infernal regions.

[3] "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." — *James* i. 20.

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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.

IV. — 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 labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake, but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, 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

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there is no law to remedy; but then, let a man take heed the revenge be such as 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,[1] 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?"[2] 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]

[1] He alludes to Cosmo de Medici, or Cosmo I., chief of the Republic of Florence, the encourager of literature and the fine arts.

[2] Job ii. 10. — "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

[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 Anthony 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.

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for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France;[1] 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.

V. — 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.")[2] 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 God." ("Vere magnum habere fragilitatem hominis securitatem Dei.")[3] This would have done

[1] Henry III. of France was assassinated in 1599, 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; so truly does the Poet say: —

"neque enim lex æquior ulla
Quam necis artifices arte perire suâ."

[2] Sen. Ad Lucil. 66.

[3] Ibid. 53.

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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,[1] which seemeth not to be without mystery; 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, 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 favor. Yet even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs[2] as carols; and the pencil of the

[1] Stesichorus, Apollodorus, and others. Lord Bacon makes a similar reference to this myth in his treatise "On the Wisdom of the Ancients." "It is added with great elegance, to console and strengthen the minds of men, that this mighty hero (Hercules) sailed in a cup or 'urceus,' in order that they may not too much fear and allege the narrowness of their nature and its frailty; as if it were not capable of such fortitude and constancy; of which very thing Seneca argued well, when he said, 'It is a great thing to have at the same time the frailty of a man, and the security of a God.'"

[2] Funereal airs. It must be remembered that many of the Psalms of David were written by him when persecuted by Saul,

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Holy Ghost hath labored 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 odors, most fragrant when they are incensed, or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.[1]

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] This fine passage, beginning at "Prosperity is the blessing," which was not published till 1625, twenty-eight years after the first Essays, has been quoted by Macaulay, with considerable justice, as a proof that the writer's fancy did not decay with the advance of old age, and that his style in his later years became richer and softer. The learned critic contrasts this passage with the terse style of the Essay of Studies (Essay 50), which was published in 1597.

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VI. — OF SIMULATION AND DISSIMULATION.

DISSIMULATION is but a faint kind of policy, or wisdom; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth, and to do it; therefore it is the weaker sort of politicians that are the great dissemblers.

Tacitus saith, "Livia sorted well with the arts of her husband, and dissimulation of her son;[1] attributing arts or policy to Augustus, and dissimulation to Tiberius:" and again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, "We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus, nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius."[2] These properties of arts or policy, and dissimulation or closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several, and to be distinguished; for if a man have that penetration of judgment as he can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be showed at half-lights, and to whom and when (which indeed are arts of state, and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them), to him a habit of dissimulation is a hinderance and a poorness. But if a man cannot obtain to that judgment, then it is left to him generally to be close, and a dissembler; for where a man cannot choose or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general, like the going softly by one

[1] Tac. Ann. v. 1.

[2] Tac. Hist. ii. 76.

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that cannot well see. Certainly, the ablest men that ever were, have had all an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity: but then they were like horses well managed, for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn; and at such times, when they thought the case indeed required dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad, of their good faith and clearness of dealing, made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self: the first, closeness, reservation, and secrecy; when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken, what he is: the second, dissimulation in the negative; when a man lets fall signs and arguments, that he is not that he is: and the third, simulation in the affirmative; when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that he is not.

For the first of these, secrecy, it is indeed the virtue of a confessor; and assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions; for who will open himself to a blab or a babbler? But if a man be thought secret, it inviteth discovery, as the more close air sucketh in the more open; and, as in confession, the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart, so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind; while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides

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(to say truth), nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal; for he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not; therefore set it down, that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral: and in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak; for the discovery of a man's self by the tracts [1] of his countenance, is a great weakness and betraying, by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's words.

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

But for the third degree, which is simulation and

[1] A word now unused, signifying the "traits," or "features."

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

The advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three: first, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise; for, where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarum to call up all that are against them: the second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat; for if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through or take a fall: the third is, the better to discover the mind of another; for to him that opens himself men will hardly show themselves adverse; but will (fair) let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought; and therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, "Tell a lie, and find a troth;"[1] as if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages to set it even; the first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a show of fearfulness, which, in any business, doth spoil the feathers of round flying up to the mark; the second, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many, that, perhaps, would otherwise coöperate with him, and

[1] A truth. — *A. L.* II. xxiii, 14.

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makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends: the third, and greatest, is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action, which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature is, to have openness in fame and opinion, secrecy in habit, dissimulation in seasonable use, and a power to feign if there be no remedy.

VII. — 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 labors, but they make misfortunes more bitter; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death. The perpetuity by generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit, and noble works, are proper to men: and surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men, which have sought to express the images of their minds where those of their bodies have failed; so the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity. They 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 some-

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times unworthy, especially in the mother; as Solomon saith, "A wise son rejoiceth the father, but an ungracious son shames the mother."[1] A man shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest respected, and the youngest made wantons;[2] 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 with mean company, and makes them surfeit more when they come to plenty; and, therefore, the proof[3] is best 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[4] to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families.[5] The Italians

[1] Proverbs x. 1: "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

[2] Petted — spoiled.

[3] This word seems here to mean "a plan," or "method," as proved by its results.

[4] Ends in.

[5] There is considerable 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 companions have failed to secure, and of being led to think themselves superior to their companions. When launched upon the world, emulation will be quite sufficiently forced upon them by stern necessity.

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make little 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."[1] — Younger brothers are commonly fortunate, but seldom or never where the elder are disinherited.

VIII. — 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,

[1] "Select *that course of life* which is the most advantageous; habit will soon render it pleasant and easily endured."

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which, both in affection and means, have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are who, though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences; nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges; nay more, there are some foolish, rich, covetous men, that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer; for, perhaps they have heard some talk, "Such an one is a great rich man," and another except to it, "Yea, but he hath a great charge of children;" as if it were an abatement to his riches. But the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles. Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants; but not always best subjects, for they are light to run away, and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool.[1] It is indifferent for judges and magistrates; for if they be facile

[1] His 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.

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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, 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 praetulit immortalitati."[1] 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[2] 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

[1] "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. — *Plut. Gryll.* 1.

[2] "May have a pretext," or "excuse."

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man not at all."[1] 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 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.

IX. — OF ENVY.

THERE be none of the affections which have been noted to fascinate or bewitch, but love and envy. They both have vehement wishes; they frame themselves readily into imaginations and suggestions, and they come easily into the eye, especially upon the presence of the objects which are the points that conduce to fascination, if any such thing there be. We see, likewise, the Scripture calleth envy an evil eye;[2] and the astrologers call the evil influences of

[1] Thales, *Vide* Diog. Laert. i. 26.

[2] So prevalent in ancient times was the notion of the injurious effects of the eye of envy, that, in common parlance, the Romans generally used the word "*præfiscini*," — "without risk of enchantment," or "fascination," when they spoke in high terms of themselves. They supposed that they thereby averted the effects of enchantment produced by the evil eye of any envious person who might at that moment possibly be looking upon them. Lord Bacon probably here alludes to St. Mark vii. 21, 22: "Out of the heart of men proceedeth — deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye." Solomon also speaks of the evil eye, Prov. xxiii. 6, and xxviii. 22.

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the stars evil aspects; so that still there seemeth to be acknowledged, in the act of envy, an ejaculation, or irradiation of the eye; nay, some have been so curious as to note that the times, when the stroke or percussion of an envious eye doth most hurt, are, when the party envied is beheld in glory or triumph, for that sets an edge upon envy; and besides, at such times, the spirits of the person envied do come forth most into the outward parts, and so meet the blow.

But, leaving these curiosities (though not unworthy to be thought on in fit place), we will handle what persons are apt to envy others; what persons are most subject to be envied themselves; and what is the difference between public and private envy.

A man that hath no virtue in himself, ever envieth virtue in others; for men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon others' evil; and who wanteth the one will prey upon the other; and whoso is out of hope to attain to another's virtue, will seek to come at even hand[1] by depressing another's fortune.

A man that is busy and inquisitive, is commonly envious; for to know much of other men's matters cannot be, because all that ado may concern his own estate; therefore, it must needs be that he taketh a kind of play-pleasure in looking upon the fortunes of others; neither can he that mindeth but his own business find much matter for envy; for

[1] To be even with him.

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envy is a gadding passion, and walketh the streets, and doth not keep home: "Non est curiosus, quin idem sit malevolus."[1]

Men of noble birth are noted to be envious towards new men when they rise, for the distance is altered; and it is like a deceit of the eye, that when others come on they think themselves go back.

Deformed persons and eunuchs, and old men and bastards, are envious; for he that cannot possibly mend his own case, will do what he can to impair another's; except these defects light upon a very brave and heroical nature, which thinketh to make his natural wants part of his honor; in that it should be said, "That a eunuch, or a lame man, did such great matters," affecting the honor of a miracle; as it was in Narses[2] the eunuch, and Agesilaus and Tamerlane,[3] that were lame men.

[1] "There is no person a busybody, but what he is ill-natured too." This passage is from the Stichus of Plautus.

[2] Narses superseded Belisarius in the command of the armies of Italy, by the orders of the Emperor Justinian. He defeated Totila, the king of the Goths (who had taken Rome), in a decisive engagement, in which the latter was slain. He governed Italy with consummate ability for thirteen years, when he was ungratefully recalled by Justin the Second, the successor of Justinian.

[3] Tamerlane, or Timour, was a native of Samarcand, of which territory he was elected emperor. He overran Persia, Georgia, Hindostan, and captured Bajazet, the valiant Sultan of the Turks, at the battle of Angora, 1402, whom he is said to have inclosed in a cage of iron. His conquests extended from the Irtish and Volga to the Persian Gulf, and from the Ganges to the Grecian Archipelago. While preparing for the invasion of China, he died, in the 70th year of his age, A. D. 1405. He was tall and corpulent

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The same is the case of men that rise after calamities and misfortunes; for they are as men fallen out with the times, and think other men's harms a redemption of their own sufferings.

They that desire to excel in too many matters, out of levity and vainglory, are ever envious, for they cannot want work; it being impossible but many, in some one of those things, should surpass them; which was the character of Adrian the emperor, that mortally envied poets and painters, and artificers in works, wherein he had a vein to excel.[1]

Lastly, near kinsfolk and fellows in office, and those that have been bred together, are more apt to envy their equals when they are raised; for it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and pointeth at them, and cometh oftener into their remembrance, and incurreth likewise more into the note[2] of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame. Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel, because when his sacrifice was better accepted, there was nobody to look on. Thus much for those that are apt to envy.

Concerning those that are more or less subject to envy: First, persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied, for their fortune seemeth but due unto them; and no man envieth

in person, but was maimed in one hand, and lame on the right side.

[1] Spartian Vit. Adrian, 15.

[2] Comes under the observation.

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

Persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising; for it seemeth but right done to their birth: besides, there seemeth not so much added to their fortune; and envy is as the sunbeams, that beat hotter upon a bank or steep rising ground, than upon a flat; and, for the same reason, those that are advanced by degrees are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly, and *per saltum*.[1]

Those that have joined with their honor great travels, cares, or perils, are less subject to envy; for men think that they earn their honors hardly, and pity them sometimes, and pity ever healeth envy. Wherefore you shall observe, that the more deep and sober sort of politic persons, in their greatness, are ever bemoaning themselves what a life they lead, chanting a *quanta patimur*;[2] not that they feel

[1] "By a leap," *i. e.* over the heads of others.
[2] "How vast *the evils* we endure."

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it so, but only to abate the edge of envy; but this is to be understood of business that is laid upon men, and not such as they call unto themselves; for nothing increaseth envy more than an unnecessary and ambitious engrossing of business; and nothing doth extinguish envy more than for a great person to preserve all other inferior officers in their full rights and preëminences of their places; for, by that means, there be so many screens between him and envy.

Above all, those are most subject to envy, which carry the greatness of their fortunes in an insolent and proud manner; being never well but while they are showing how great they are, either by outward pomp, or by triumphing over all opposition or competition. Whereas wise men will rather do sacrifice to envy, in suffering themselves, sometimes of purpose, to be crossed and overborne in things that do not much concern them. Notwithstanding, so much is true, that the carriage of greatness in a plain and open manner (so it be without arrogancy and vainglory), doth draw less envy than if it be in a more crafty and cunning fashion; for in that course a man doth but disavow fortune, and seemeth to be conscious of his own want in worth, and doth but teach others to envy him.

Lastly, to conclude this part, as we said in the beginning that the act of envy had somewhat in it of witchcraft, so there is no other cure of envy but the cure of witchcraft; and that is, to remove

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the lot (as they call it), and to lay it upon another; for which purpose, the wiser sort of great persons bring in ever upon the stage somebody upon whom to derive the envy that would come upon themselves; sometimes upon ministers and servants, sometimes upon colleagues and associates, and the like; and, for that turn, there are never wanting some persons of violent and undertaking natures, who, so they may have power and business, will take it at any cost.

Now, to speak of public envy: there is yet some good in public envy, whereas in private there is none; for public envy is as an ostracism,[1] that eclipseth men when they grow too great; and therefore it is a bridle also to great ones, to keep them within bounds.

This envy, being in the Latin word *invidia*,[2] goeth in the modern languages by the name of discontentment, of which we shall speak in handling sedition. It is a disease in a state like to infection; for as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound, and tainteth it, so, when envy is gotten once into a state, it traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill odor; and therefore there is little won by intermingling of plausible actions; for that doth argue but a weakness and fear of envy,

[1] He probably alludes to the custom of the Athenians, who frequently ostracized or banished by vote their public men, lest they should become too powerful.

[2] From *in* and *video*, — "to look upon;" with reference to the so-called "evil eye" of the envious.

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which hurteth so much the more, as it is likewise usual in infections, which, if you fear them, you call them upon you.

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

We will add this in general, touching the affection of envy, that, of all other affections, it is the most importune and continual; for of other affections there is occasion given but now and then; and therefore it was well said, "Invidia festos dies non agit:"[1] for it is ever working upon some or other. And it is also noted, that love and envy do make a man pine, which other affections do not, because they are not so continual. It is also the vilest affection, and the most depraved; for which cause it is the proper attribute of the devil, who is called "The envious man, that soweth tares amongst the wheat by night;"[2] as it always cometh to pass that envy worketh subtilely, and in the dark, and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat.

[1] "Envy keeps no holidays." [2] See St. Matthew xiii. 25.

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X.—OF LOVE.

THE stage is more beholding[1] to love than the life of man; for as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief, sometimes like a Siren, sometimes like a Fury. You may observe, that, amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent), there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love, which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius,[2] the decemvir and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate, but the latter was an austere and wise man; and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus, "Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus;"[3] as if man,

[1] Beholden.

[2] He iniquitously attempted to obtain possession of the person of Virginia, who was killed by her father Virginius, to prevent her from falling a victim to his lust. This circumstance caused the fall of the Decemviri at Rome, who had been employed in framing the code of laws afterwards known as "The Laws of the Twelve Tables." They narrowly escaped being burned alive by the infuriated populace.

[3] "We are a sufficient theme for contemplation, the one for

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made for the contemplation of heaven and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are) yet of the eye, which was given him for higher purposes. It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature and value of things, by this, that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but in love, neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said, "That the arch flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self;" certainly, the lover is more; for there was never proud man thought so absurdly well of himself as the lover doth of the person loved; and therefore it was well said, "That it is impossible to love and to be wise." [1] Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved, but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciprocal; for it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded, either with the

the other." —*Sen. Epist. Mor.* 1. 7. (A. L. l. iii. 6.) Pope seems, notwithstanding this censure of Bacon, to have been of the same opinion with Epicurus: —

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study for mankind is man."

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. 1. 2.

Indeed, Lord Bacon seems to have misunderstood the saying of Epicurus, who did not mean to recommend man as the sole object of the bodily vision, but as the proper theme for mental contemplation.

[1] Amare et sapere vix Deo conceditur. — *Pub. Syr. Sent.* 15. (A. L. ii. præ. 10.)

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reciprocal, or with an inward and secret contempt; by how much the more men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation [1] doth well figure them: "That he that preferred Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas;" for whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom. This passion hath his floods in the very times of weakness, which are, great prosperity and great adversity, though this latter hath been less observed; both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter, and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life; for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can nowise be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love; I think it is, but as they are given to wine, for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. There is in man's nature a secret inclination and motion towards love of others, which, if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable, as it is seen sometimes in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind, friendly love perfecteth it, but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

[1] He refers here to the judgment of Paris, mentioned by Ovid in his Epistles, of the Heroines.

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XI. — OF GREAT PLACE.[1]

MEN in great place are thrice servants — servants of the sovereign or state, servants of fame, and servants of business; so as they have no freedom, neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire to seek power and to lose liberty; or to seek power over others, and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains; and it is sometimes base, and by indignities men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall, or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing: "Cum non sis qui fueris, non esse cur velis vivere."[2] Nay, retire men cannot when they would, neither will they when it were reason; but are impatient of privateness even in age and sickness, which require the shadow; like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly, great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions to think themselves happy; for if they judge by their own feeling, they cannot find it; but if they think with themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are

[1] Montaigne has treated this subject before Bacon, under the title of *De l'incommodité de la Grandeur* (B. iii. ch. vii.).

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

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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." [1]

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; and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works are the end of man's motion, and conscience of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest; for if a man can be partaker of God's theatre, he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest. "Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera, quæ fecerunt manus suæ, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis;" [2] and then the Sabbath.

[1] "Death presses heavily upon him, who, well known to all others, dies unknown to himself." — *Sen. Thyest.* ii. 401.

[2] "And God turned to behold the works which his hands had made, and he saw that everything was very good." — See *Gen.* i. 31.

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In the discharge of thy place, set before thee the best examples; for imitation is a globe 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 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 latter 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*,[1] than voice it with claims and challenges. Preserve likewise the rights of inferior places; and think it more honor 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. For delays,

[1] "As a matter of course."

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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 servant's hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering; for integrity 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. A servant or a favorite, if he be inward, and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close 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,[1] it is worse than bribery, for bribes come but now and then; but if importunity or idle respects[2] 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."[3]

[1] Too great easiness of access.

[2] Predilections that are undeserved.

[3] Proverbs xxviii. 21. The whole passage stands thus in our version: "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent. To have respect of persons is not good; for, for a piece of bread, that man will transgress."

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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,"[1] saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, "Solus imperantium, Vespasianus mutatus in melius;"[2] 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 honor amends; for honor 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."

[1] "By the consent of all he was fit to govern, if he had not governed."

[2] "Of the emperors, Vespasian alone changed for the better *after his accession*." — *Tac. Hist.* i. 49, 50 (A. L. ii. xxii. 5).

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XII. — 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.[1] 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 man 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

[1] Plut. vit. Demosth. 17. 18.

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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; but this

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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.

XIII. — 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;[1] the desire of knowledge

[1] It is not improbable that this passage suggested Pope's beautiful lines in the *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 125–28.

> "Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
> Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
> Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,
> Aspiring to be angels, men rebel."

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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 [1] reporteth, a Christian boy in Constantinople had like to have been stoned for gagging in a waggishness a long-billed fowl.[2] Errors, indeed, in this

[1] Auger Gislen Busbec, or Busbequius, a learned traveller, born at Comines, in Flanders, in 1522. He was employed by the Emperor Ferdinand as ambassador to the Sultan Solyman II. He was afterwards ambassador to France, where he died, in 1592. 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, and are highly praised by him.

[2] In this instance the stork or crane was probably protected, not on the abstract grounds mentioned in the text, but for reasons of state 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 we learn from a letter written from Adrianople, by Lady Montagu, in 1718, that storks were "held there in a sort of religious reverence, because they are supposed to make every winter the pilgrimage to Mecca. To say truth, they are the happiest subjects under the Turkish government, and are so sensible of their privileges, that they walk the streets without fear, and generally build their nests in the lower parts of the houses. Happy are those whose houses are so distinguished, as the vulgar Turks are perfectly persuaded that they will not be that year attacked either

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virtue, of goodness or charity, may be committed. The Italians have an ungracious proverb: "Tanto buon che val niente;" "So good, that he is good for nothing;" and one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel,[1] 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;"[2] 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 by fire or pestilence." Storks are still protected, by municipal law, in Holland, and roam unmolested about the market-places.

[1] 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, "Il Principe," "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. Though its precepts are no doubt based upon the actual practice of the Italian politicians of that day, it has been suggested by some writers that the work was a covert exposure of the deformity of the shocking maxims that it professes to inculcate. The question of his motives has been much discussed, and is still considered open. The word "Machiavellism" has, however, been adopted to denote all that is deformed, insincere, and perfidious in politics. He died in great poverty, in the year 1527.

[2] *Vide* Disc. Sop. Liv. ii. 2.

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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;"[1] but he doth not rain wealth, nor shine honor 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 neighbors but the portraiture: "Sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor, and follow me;"[2] 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

[1] St. Matthew v. 45. "For he maketh his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

[2] This is a portion of our Saviour's reply to the rich man who asked him what he should do to inherit eternal life: "Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me." — *St. Mark* x. 21.

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others. The lighter sort of malignity turneth but to a crossness, or frowardness, or aptness to oppose, or difficileness, or the like; but the deeper sort to envy, and mere mischief. Such men in other men's calamities are, as it were, in season, and are ever on the loading part; not so good as the dogs that licked Lazarus's sores,[1] 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,

[1] See St. Luke xvi. 21.

[2] Timon of Athens, as he is generally called (being so styled by Shakspeare in the play which he has founded on his story), was surnamed the "Misanthrope," from the hatred which he bore to his fellow-men. He was attached to Apemantus, another Athenian of similar character to himself, and he professed to esteem Alcibiades, because he foresaw that he would one day bring ruin on his country. 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 all such as were inclined, 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.

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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;[1] 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[2] from Christ for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself.

XIV.—OF NOBILITY.

We will speak of nobility, first, as a portion of an estate, then as a condition of particular persons. A monarchy, where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny as that of the Turks; for nobility attempers sovereignty, and draws the

[1] 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.

[2] "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: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

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eyes of the people somewhat aside from the line royal: but for democracies they need it not; and they are commonly more quiet and less subject to sedition than where there are stirps of nobles; for men's eyes are upon the business, and not upon the persons; or if upon the persons, it is for the business sake, as fittest, and not for flags and pedigree. We see the Switzers last well, notwithstanding their diversity of religion and of cantons; for utility is their bond, and not respects.[1] The United Provinces of the Low Countries[2] in their government excel; for where there is an equality the consultations are more indifferent, and the payments and tributes more cheerful. A great and potent nobility addeth majesty to a monarch, but diminisheth power, and putteth life and spirit into the people, but presseth their fortune. It is well when nobles are not too great for sovereiguty nor for justice; and yet maintained in that height, as the insolency of inferiors may be broken upon them, before it come on too fast upon the majesty of kings. A numerous nobility causeth poverty and inconvenience in a state, for it is a surcharge of expense; and besides, it being of necessity that many of the nobility fall in time to be weak in fortune, it maketh a kind of disproportion between honor and means.

[1] Consideration of, or predilection for, particular persons.

[2] The Low Countries had then recently emancipated themselves from the galling yoke of Spain. They were called the Seven United Provinces of the Netherlands.

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As for nobility in particular persons, it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay, or to see a fair timber-tree sound and perfect; how much more to behold an ancient noble family, which hath stood against the waves and weathers of time! For new nobility is but the act of power, but ancient nobility is the act of time. Those that are first raised to nobility are commonly more virtuous,[1] but less innocent than their descendants; for there is rarely any rising but by a commixture of good and evil arts; but it is reason the memory of their virtues remain to their posterity, and their faults die with themselves. Nobility of birth commonly abateth industry, and he that is not industrious, envieth him that is; besides, noble persons cannot go much higher; and he that standeth at a stay when others rise, can hardly avoid motions of envy. On the other side, nobility extinguisheth the passive envy from others towards them, because they are in possession of honor. Certainly, kings that have able men of their nobility shall find ease in employing them, and a better slide into their business; for people naturally bend to them, as born in some sort to command.

[1] This passage may at first sight appear somewhat contradictory; but he means to say, that those who are first ennobled will commonly be found more conspicuous for the prominence of their qualities, both good and bad.

[2] Consistent with reason and justice.

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XV. — OF SEDITIONS AND TROUBLES.

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

"Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet, fraudesque et operta tumescere bella." [2]

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

"Illam Terra parens, irâ irritata Deorum,
Extremam (ut perhibent) Cœo Enceladoque sororem
Progenuit." [3]

As if fames were the relics of seditions past; but they are no less indeed the preludes of seditions to come. Howsoever, he noteth it right, that

[1] The periods of the Equinoxes.

[2] "He often warns, too, that secret revolt is impending, that treachery and open warfare are ready to burst forth." — *Virg. Georg.* i. 465.

[3] "Mother Earth, exasperated at the wrath of the Deities, produced her, as they tell, a last birth, a sister to the giants Cœus, and Enceladus." — *Virg. Æn.* iv. 179.

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seditious tumults and seditious fames differ no more but as brother and sister, masculine and feminine; especially if it come to that, that the best actions of a state, and the most plausible, and which ought to give greatest contentment, are taken in ill sense, and traduced; for that shows the envy great, as Tacitus saith, "Conflatâ magnâ invidiâ, seu bene, seu male, gesta premunt."[1] Neither doth it follow, that because these fames are a sign of troubles, that the suppressing of them with too much severity should be a remedy of troubles; for the despising of them many times checks them best, and the going about to stop them doth but make a wonder long-lived. Also that kind of obedience, which Tacitus speaketh of, is to be held suspected: "Erant in officio, sed tamen qui mallent imperantium mandata interpretari, quam exsequi;"[2] disputing, excusing, cavilling upon mandates and directions, is a kind of shaking off the yoke, and assay of disobedience; especially if, in those disputings, they which are for the direction speak fearfully and tenderly, and those that are against it audaciously.

[1] "Great public odium once excited, his deeds, whether good or whether bad, cause his downfall." Bacon has here quoted incorrectly, probably from memory. The words of Tacitus are (*Hist.* B. i. C. 7): "Inviso semel principe, seu bene, seu male, facta premunt," — "The ruler once detested, his actions, whether good or whether bad, cause his downfall."

[2] "They attended to their duties; but still, as preferring rather to discuss the commands of their rulers, than to obey them." — *Tac. Hist.* ii. 39.

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Also, as Machiavel noteth well, when princes, that ought to be common parents, make themselves as a party, and lean to a side; it is as a boat that is overthrown by uneven weight on the one side, as was well seen in the time of Henry the Third of France; for first himself entered league [1] for the extirpation of the Protestants, and presently after the same league was turned upon himself; for when the authority of princes is made but an accessary to a cause, and that there be other bands that tie faster than the band of sovereignty, kings begin to be put almost out of possession.

Also, when discords, and quarrels, and factions are carried openly and audaciously, it is a sign the reverence of government is lost; for the motions of the greatest persons in a government ought to be as the motions of the planets under "primum mobile," [2] according to the old opinion, which is, that every of them is carried swiftly by the highest motion, and softly in their own motion; and therefore, when great ones in their own particular motion move violently, and as Tacitus expresseth it well, "liberius

[1] He alludes to the bad policy of Henry the Third of France, who espoused the part of "The League," which was formed by the Duke of Guise and other Catholics for the extirpation of the Protestant faith. When too late he discovered his error, and finding his own authority entirely superseded, he caused the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal De Lorraine, his brother, to be assassinated.

[2] "The primary motive power." He alludes to an imaginary centre of gravitation, or central body, which was supposed to set all the other heavenly bodies in motion.

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quam ut imperantium meminissent,"[1] it is a sign the orbs are out of frame; for reverence is that wherewith princes are girt from God, who threateneth the dissolving thereof: "Solvam cingula regum."[2]

So when any of the four pillars of government are mainly shaken or weakened (which are religion, justice, counsel, and treasure), men had need to pray for fair weather. But let us pass from this part of predictions (concerning which, nevertheless, more light may be taken from that which followeth), and let us speak first of the materials of seditions; then of the motives of them; and thirdly of the remedies.

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

> "Hinc usura vorax, rapidumque in tempore fœnus,
> Hinc concussa fides, et multis utile bellum."[3]

[1] "Too freely to remember their own rulers."

[2] "I will unloose the girdles of kings." He probably alludes here to the first verse of the 45th chapter of Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates."

[3] "Hence devouring usury, and interest accumulating in lapse

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This same "multis utile bellum,"[1] is an assured and infallible sign of a state disposed to seditions and troubles; and if this poverty and broken estate in the better sort be joined with a want and necessity in the mean people, the danger is imminent and great; for the rebellions of the belly are the worst. As for discontentments, they are in the politic body like to humors in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat and to inflame; and let no prince measure the danger of them by this, whether they be just or unjust; for that were to imagine people to be too reasonable, who do often spurn at their own good; nor yet by this, whether the griefs whereupon they rise be in fact great or small; for they are the most dangerous discontentments where the fear is greater than the feeling: "Dolendi modus, timendi non item."[2] Besides, in great oppressions, the same things that provoke the patience, do withal mate[3] the courage; but in fears it is not so; neither let any prince or state be secure concerning discontentments, because they have been often or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued; for as it is true that every vapor or fume doth not turn into a storm, so it is nevertheless true that storms, though they blow

of time; hence shaken credit, and warfare, profitable to the many."
— *Lucan. Phars.* i. 181.

1 "Warfare profitable to the many."

2 "To grief there is a limit, not so to fear."

3 "Check," or "daunt."

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over divers times, yet may fall at last; and, as the Spanish proverb noteth well, "The cord breaketh at the last by the weakest pull."[1]

The causes and motives of seditions are, innovation in religion, taxes, alteration of laws and customs, breaking of privileges, general oppression, advancement of unworthy persons, strangers, dearths, disbanded soldiers, factions grown desperate, and whatsoever in offending people joineth and knitteth them in a common cause.

For the remedies, there may be some general preservatives, whereof we will speak; as for the just cure, it must answer to the particular disease, and so be left to counsel rather than rule.

The first remedy, or prevention, is to remove, by all means possible, that material cause of sedition whereof we spake, which is, want and poverty in the estate;[2] to which purpose serveth the opening and well-balancing of trade; the cherishing of manufactures; the banishing of idleness; the repressing of waste and excess by sumptuary laws;[3] the improvement and husbanding of the soil; the regulating of prices of things vendible; the moderating of taxes and tributes, and the like. Generally, it is

[1] This is similar to the proverb now in common use: "'T is the last feather that breaks the back of the camel."

[2] The state.

[3] Though sumptuary laws are probably just in theory, they have been found impracticable in any other than infant states. Their principle, however, is certainly recognized in such countries as by statutory enactment discountenance gaming. Those who are

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to be foreseen that the population of a kingdom (especially if it be not mown down by wars) do not exceed the stock of the kingdom which should maintain them; neither is the population to be reckoned only by number; for a smaller number, that spend more and earn less, do wear out an estate sooner than a greater number that live lower and gather more. Therefore the multiplying of nobility and other degrees of quality, in an over-proportion to the common people, doth speedily bring a state to necessity; and so doth likewise an overgrown clergy, for they bring nothing to the stock;[1] and in like manner, when more are bred scholars than preferments can take off.

It is likewise to be remembered, that, forasmuch as the increase of any estate must be upon the foreigner[2] (for whatsoever is somewhere gotten is somewhere lost), there be but three things which one nation selleth unto another; the commodity, as nature yieldeth it; the manufacture; and the vecture, or carriage; so that, if these three wheels go, wealth will flow as in a spring tide. And it cometh many times to pass, that, "materiam superabit

opposed to such laws upon principle, would do well to look into Bernard Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees," or "Private Vices Public Benefits." The Romans had numerous sumptuary laws, and in the Middle Ages there were many enactments in this country against excess of expenditure upon wearing apparel and the pleasures of the table.

[1] He means that they do not add to the capital of the country.

[2] At the expense of foreign countries.

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opus,"[1] that the work and carriage is more worth than the material, and enricheth a state more; as is notably seen in the Low Countrymen, who have the best mines[2] above ground in the world.

Above all things, good policy is to be used, that the treasure and moneys in a state be not gathered into few hands; for, otherwise, a state may have a great stock, and yet starve. And money is like muck,[3] not good except it be spread. This is done chiefly by suppressing, or, at the least, keeping a strait hand upon the devouring trades of usury, engrossing[4] great pasturages, and the like.

For removing discontentments, or, at least, the danger of them, there is in every state (as we know) two portions of subjects, the nobles and the commonalty. When one of these is discontent, the danger is not great; for common people are of slow motion, if they be not excited by the greater sort; and the greater sort are of small strength, except the multitude be apt and ready to move of themselves; then is the danger, when the greater sort

[1] "The workmanship will surpass the material." — *Ovid, Met.* B. ii. l. 5.

[2] He alludes to the manufactures of the Low Countries.

[3] Like manure.

[4] Sometimes printed *engrossing, great pasturages.* By *engrossing*, is meant the trade of *engrossers* — men who buy up all that can be got of a particular commodity, then raise the price. By *great pasturages* is meant turning corn land into pasture. Of this practice great complaints had been made for near a century before Bacon's time, and a law passed to prevent it. — See *Lord Herbert of Cherbury's History of Henry VIII.*

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do but wait for the troubling of the waters amongst the meaner, that then they may declare themselves. The poets feign that the rest of the gods would have bound Jupiter, which he hearing of, by the counsel of Pallas, sent for Briareus, with his hundred hands, to come in to his aid; an emblem, no doubt, to show how safe it is for monarchs to make sure of the good-will of common people.

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

The part of Epimetheus[1] might well become Prometheus, in the case of discontentments, for there is not a better provision against them. Epimetheus, when griefs and evils flew abroad, at last shut the lid, and kept Hope in the bottom of the vessel. Certainly, the politic and artificial nourish-

[1] The myth of Pandora's box, which is here referred to, is related in the *Works and Days* of Hesiod. Epimetheus was the personification of "Afterthought," while his brother Prometheus represented "Forethought," or prudence. It was not Epimetheus that opened the box, but Pandora — "All-gift," whom, contrary to the advice of his brother, he had received at the hands of Mercury, and had made his wife. In their house stood a closed jar, which they were forbidden to open. Till her arrival, this had been kept untouched; but her curiosity prompting her to open the lid, all the evils hitherto unknown to man flew out and spread over the earth, and she only shut it down in time to prevent the escape of Hope.

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

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

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I have noted, that some witty and sharp speeches, which have fallen from princes, have given fire to seditions. Cæsar did himself infinite hurt in that speech — "Sylla nescivit literas, non potuit dictare,"[1] for it did utterly cut off that hope which men had entertained, that he would, at one time or other, give over his dictatorship. Galba undid himself by that speech, "Legi a se militem, non emi;"[2] for it put the soldiers out of hope of the donative. Probus, likewise, by that speech, "Si vixero, non opus erit amplius Romano imperio militibus;"[3] a speech of great despair for the soldiers, and many the like. Surely princes had need, in tender matters and ticklish times, to beware what they say, especially in these short speeches, which fly abroad like darts, and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions; for as for large discourses, they are flat things, and not so much noted.

[1] "Sylla did not know his letters, *and so* he could not dictate." This saying is attributed by Suetonius to Julius Cæsar. It is a play on the Latin verb *dictare*, which means either "to dictate," or "to act the part of Dictator," according to the context. As this saying was presumed to be a reflection on Sylla's ignorance, and to imply that by reason thereof he was unable to maintain his power, it was concluded by the Roman people that Cæsar, who was an elegant scholar, feeling himself subject to no such inability, did not intend speedily to yield the reins of power. — *Suet. Vit. C. Jul. Cæs.* 77, i. and *Cf. A. L.* i. vii. 12.

[2] "That soldiers were levied by him, not bought." — *Tac. Hist.* i. 5.

[3] "If I live, there shall no longer be need of soldiers in the Roman empire." — *Flav. Vop. Vit. Prob.* 20.

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Lastly, let princes, against all events, not be without some great person, one or rather more, of military valor, near unto them, for the repressing of seditions in their beginnings; for without that, there useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of troubles than were fit, and the state runneth the danger of that which Tacitus saith: "Atque is habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur:"[1] but let such military persons be assured, and well reputed of, rather than factious and popular; holding also good correspondence with the other great men in the state, or else the remedy is worse than the disease.

XVI. — OF ATHEISM.

I HAD rather believe all the fables in the legends,[2] and the Talmud,[3] and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind; and, therefore, God never wrought miracle to convince atheism,

[1] "And such was the state of feeling, that a few dared to perpetrate the worst of crimes; more wished to do so; all submitted to it." — *Hist.* i. 28.

[2] He probably alludes to the legends or miraculous stories of the saints; such as walking with their heads off, preaching to the fishes, sailing over the sea on a cloak, &c. &c.

[3] This is a book that contains the Jewish traditions, and the rabbinical explanations of the law. It is replete with wonderful narratives.

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because his ordinary works convince it. It is true, that a little philosophy[1] 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,[2] and Democritus,[3] and Epicurus; for it is a thousand times more credible that four mutable elements, and one immutable fifth essence,[4] duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshal. The Scripture saith, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no

[1] This passage not improbably contains the germ of Pope's famous lines: —

> "A little learning is a dangerous thing;
> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring."

[2] A philosopher of Abdera; the first who taught the system of atoms, which was afterwards more fully developed by Democritus and Epicurus.

[3] 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.

[4] Spirit.

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God;"[1] it is not said, "The fool hath thought in his heart;" so as he rather saith it by rote to himself, as that he would have, than that he can thoroughly believe it, or be persuaded of it; for none deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh[2] that there were no God. It appeareth in nothing more, that atheism is rather in the lip than in the heart of man, than by this, that atheists will ever be talking of that their opinion, as if they fainted in it within themselves, and would be glad to be strengthened by the consent of others; nay more, you shall have atheists strive to get disciples, as it fareth with other sects; and, which is most of all, you shall have of them that will suffer for atheism, and not recant; whereas, if they did truly think that there were no such thing as God, why should they trouble themselves? Epicurus is charged, that he did but dissemble for his credit's sake, when he affirmed there were blessed natures, but such as enjoyed themselves without having respect to the government of the world. Wherein they say he did temporize, though in secret he thought there was no God; but certainly he is traduced, for his words are noble and divine: "Non Deos vulgi negare profanum; sed vulgi opiniones Diis applicare profanum."[3] Plato could have said

[1] Psalm xiv. 1, and liii. 1.

[2] To whose (seeming) advantage it is; the wish being father to the thought.

[3] "It is not profane to deny *the existence of* the deities of the vulgar; but, to apply to the divinities the received notions of the vulgar, is profane." — *Diog. Laert.* x. 123.

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no more; and, although he had the confidence to deny the administration, he had not the power to deny the nature. The Indians[1] 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 subtlest philosophers. The contemplative atheist is rare; a Diagoras,[2] a Bion,[3] a Lucian,[4] 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

[1] He alludes to the native tribes of the continent of America and the West Indies.

[2] He was an Athenian philosopher, who, from the greatest superstition, became an avowed atheist. He was proscribed by the Areiopagus for speaking against the gods with ridicule and contempt, and is supposed to have died at Corinth.

[3] A Greek philosopher, a disciple of Theodorus the atheist, to whose opinions he adhered. His life was said to have been profligate, and his death superstitious.

[4] Lucian ridiculed the follies and pretensions of some of the ancient philosophers; but though the freedom of his style was such as to cause him to be censured for impiety, he hardly deserves the stigma of atheism here cast upon him by the learned author.

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cauterized in the end. The causes of atheism are: divisions in religion, if they be many; for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides, but many divisions introduce atheism. Another is, scandal of priests, when it is come to that which St. Bernard saith: "Non est jam dicere, ut populus, sic sacerdos; quia nec sic populus, ut sacerdos."[1] A third is, custom of profane scoffing in holy matters, which doth by little and little deface the reverence of religion: and lastly, learned times, specially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversities do more bow men's minds to religion. They that deny a God destroy a man's nobility, for certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. It destroys likewise magnanimity, and the raising of human nature; for, take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man, who, to him, is instead of a God, or "melior natura;"[2] which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So

[1] "It is not for us now to say, 'Like priest like people,' for the people are not even so *bad* as the priest." St. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, preached the second Crusade against the Saracens, and was unsparing in his censures of the sins then prevalent among the Christian priesthood. His writings are voluminous, and by some he has been considered as the latest of the fathers of the Church.

[2] "A superior nature."

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man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favor, 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 hâc unâ sapientiâ, quod Deorum immortalium numine omnia regi, gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes, nationesque superavimus."[1]

[1] "We may admire ourselves, conscript fathers, as much as we please; still, neither by numbers *did we vanquish* the Spaniards, nor by bodily strength the Gauls, nor by cunning the Carthaginians, nor through the arts the Greeks, nor, in fine, by the inborn and native good sense of this *our* nation, and this *our* race and soil, the Italians and Latins themselves; but through our devotion and our religious feeling, and this, the sole *true* wisdom, the having perceived that all things are regulated and governed by the providence of the immortal Gods, have we subdued all races and nations." — *Cic. de. Harus. Respon.* 9.

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XVII. — 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,[1] and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: "Surely," saith 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[2] as soon as they were born," as the poets speak of Saturn; 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 states; 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; but superstition hath been the confusion

[1] The justice of this position is, perhaps, somewhat doubtful. The superstitious man *must* have *some* scruples, while he who believes not in a God (if there is such a person), *needs* have *none*.

[2] Time was personified in Saturn, and by this story was meant its tendency to destroy whatever it has brought into existence. — *Plut. de Superstit.* x.

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of many states, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile*,[1] 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,[2] where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics[3] and epicyles,[4] and such engines of orbs to save[5] the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things; and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtle 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 favoring 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

[1] The primary motive power.

[2] This Council commenced in 1545, and lasted eighteen years. It was convened for the purpose of opposing the rising spirit of Protestantism, and of discussing and settling the disputed points of the Catholic faith.

[3] Irregular or anomalous movements.

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

[5] To account for.

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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 furthest from the superstition formerly received; therefore care would 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.

XVIII. — 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 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

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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[1] 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 harbors, 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, burses, 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, masks, 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

[1] Synods, or councils.

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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 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 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 favor 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[1] 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

[1] At the present day called *attachés*.

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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,[1] 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 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.

XIX. — OF EMPIRE.

It is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire, and many things to fear; and yet that commonly is the case of kings, who, being, at the highest, want matter of desire,[2] which makes their

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

[2] Something to create excitement.

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minds more languishing; and have many representations of perils and shadows, which makes their minds the less clear; and this is one reason, also, of that effect which the Scripture speaketh of, "that the king's heart is inscrutable;"[1] for multitude of jealousies, and lack of some predominant desire, that should marshal and put in order all the rest, maketh any man's heart hard to find or sound. Hence it comes, likewise, that princes many times make themselves desires, and set their hearts upon toys: sometimes upon a building; sometimes upon erecting of an order; sometimes upon the advancing of a person; sometimes upon obtaining excellency in some art or feat of the hand, — as Nero for playing on the harp; Domitian for certainty of the hand with the arrow; Commodus for playing at fence;[2] Caracalla for driving chariots, and the like. This seemeth incredible unto those that know not the principle, that the mind of man is more cheered and refreshed by profiting in small things than by standing at a stay[3] in great. We see, also, that kings that have been fortunate conquerors in their first years, it being not possible for them to go forward infinitely, but that they must have some check or arrest in their fortunes, turn in their latter years to be superstitious and melancholy; as did

[1] "The heart of kings is unsearchable." — *Prov.* v. 3.

[2] Commodus fought naked in public as a gladiator, and prided himself on his skill as a swordsman.

[3] Making a stop at, or dwelling too long upon.

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Alexander the Great, Diocletian,[1] and, in our memory, Charles the Fifth,[2] and others; for he that is used to go forward, and findeth a stop, falleth out of his own favor, and is not the thing he was.

To speak now of the true temper of empire, it is a thing rare and hard to keep, for both temper and distemper consist of contraries; but it is one thing to mingle contraries, another to interchange them. The answer of Apollonius to Vespasian is full of excellent instruction. Vespasian asked him, "What was Nero's overthrow?" He answered, "Nero could touch and tune the harp well; but in government sometimes he used to wind the pins too high, sometimes to let them down too low."[3] And certain it is, that nothing destroyeth authority so much as the unequal and untimely interchange of power pressed too far, and relaxed too much.

This is true, that the wisdom of all these latter times in princes' affairs is rather fine deliveries, and shiftings of dangers and mischiefs, when they are near, than solid and grounded courses to keep them aloof; but this is but to try masteries with fortune, and let men beware how they neglect and suffer matter of trouble to be prepared. For no man can forbid the spark, nor tell whence it may come.

[1] After a prosperous reign of twenty-one years, Diocletian abdicated the throne, and retired to a private station.

[2] After having reigned thirty-five years, he abdicated the thrones of Spain and Germany, and passed the last two years of his life in retirement at St. Just, a convent in Estremadura.

[3] Philost. vit. Apoll. Tyan. v. 28.

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The difficulties in princes' business are many and great; but the greatest difficulty is often in their own mind. For it is common with princes (saith Tacitus) to will contradictories: "Sunt plerumque regum voluntates vehementes, et inter se contrariæ;"[1] for it is the solecism of power to think to command the end, and yet not to endure the mean.

Kings have to deal with their neighbors, their wives, their children, their prelates or clergy, their nobles, their second nobles or gentlemen, their merchants, their commons, and their men of war; and from all these arise dangers, if care and circumspection be not used.

First, for their neighbors, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable), save one which ever holdeth; which is, that princes do keep due sentinel, that none of their neighbors do overgrow so (by increase of territory, by embracing of trade, by approaches, or the like), as they become more able to annoy them than they were; and this is generally the work of standing counsels to foresee and to hinder it. During that triumvirate of kings, King Henry the Eighth of England, Francis the First, King of France,[2] and Charles the Fifth, Emperor, there was such a watch kept that

[1] "The desires of monarchs are generally impetuous and conflicting among themselves." — Quoted rightly, *A. L.* ii. xxii. 5, from *Sallust* (B. J. 113).

[2] He was especially the rival of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and was one of the most distinguished sovereigns that ever ruled over France.

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none of the three could win a palm of ground, but the other two would straightways balance it, either by confederation, or, if need were, by a war; and would not, in any wise, take up peace at interest; and the like was done by that league (which Guicciardini[1] saith was the security of Italy) made between Ferdinando, King of Naples, Lorenzius Medicis, and Ludovicus Sforza, potentates, the one of Florence, the other of Milan. Neither is the opinion of some of the schoolmen to be received, that a war cannot justly be made, but upon a precedent injury or provocation; for there is no question, but a just fear of an imminent danger, though there be no blow given, is a lawful cause of a war.

For their wives, there are cruel examples of them. Livia is infamed[2] for the poisoning of her husband; Roxolana, Solyman's wife,[3] was the destruction of

[1] An eminent historian of Florence. His great work, which is here alluded to, is, "The History of Italy during his own Time," which is considered one of the most valuable productions of that age.

[2] Spoken badly of. Livia was said to have hastened the death of Augustus, to prepare the accession of her son Tiberius to the throne.

[3] Solyman the Magnificent was one of the most celebrated of the Ottoman monarchs. He took the Isle of Rhodes from the Knights of St. John. He also subdued Moldavia, Wallachia, and the greatest part of Hungary, and took from the Persians Georgia and Bagdad. He died A. D. 1566. His wife Roxolana (who was originally a slave called Rosa or Hazathya), with the Pasha Rustan, conspired against the life of his son Mustapha, and by their instigation this distinguished prince was strangled in his father's presence.

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that renowned prince, Sultan Mustapha, and otherwise troubled his house and succession; Edward the Second of England's Queen [1] had the principal hand in the deposing and murder of her husband.

This kind of danger is then to be feared chiefly when the wives have plots for the raising of their own children, or else that they be advoutresses.[2]

For their children, the tragedies likewise of dangers from them have been many; and generally the entering of fathers into suspicion of their children hath been ever unfortunate. The destruction of Mustapha (that we named before) was so fatal to Solyman's line, as the succession of the Turks from Solyman until this day is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood; for that Selymus the Second was thought to be supposititious.[3] The destruction of Crispus, a young prince of rare towardness, by Constantinus the Great, his father, was in like manner fatal to his house; for both Constantinus and Constance, his sons, died violent deaths; and Constantius, his other son, did little better, who died indeed of sickness, but after that Julianus had taken arms against him. The destruction of Demetrius,[4] son to Philip the Second of Macedon, turned upon

[1] The infamous Isabella of Anjou.

[2] Adulteresses.

[3] He, however, distinguished himself by taking Cyprus from the Venetians in the year 1571.

[4] He was falsely accused by his brother Perseus of attempting to dethrone his father, on which he was put to death by the order of Philip, B. C. 180.

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the father, who died of repentance. And many like examples there are; but few or none where the fathers had good by such distrust, except it were where the sons were up in open arms against them; as was Selymus the First against Bajazet, and the three sons of Henry the Second, King of England.

For their prelates, when they are proud and great, there is also danger from them; as it was in the times of Anselmus [1] and Thomas Becket, Archbishops of Canterbury, who, with their crosiers, did almost try it with the king's sword; and yet they had to deal with stout and haughty kings; William Rufus, Henry the First, and Henry the Second. The danger is not from that state, but where it hath a dependence of foreign authority; or where the churchmen come in and are elected, not by the collation of the King, or particular patrons, but by the people.

For their nobles, to keep them at a distance it is not amiss; but to depress them may make a king more absolute, but less safe, and less able to perform anything that he desires. I have noted it in my History of King Henry the Seventh of England, who depressed his nobility, whereupon it came to pass that his times were full of difficulties and

[1] Anselm was Archbishop of Canterbury in the time of William Rufus and Henry the First. Though his private life was pious and exemplary, through his rigid assertion of the rights of the clergy he was continually embroiled with his sovereign. Thomas à Becket pursued a similar course, but with still greater violence.

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troubles; for the nobility, though they continued loyal unto him, yet did they not coöperate with him in his business; so that, in effect, he was fain to do all things himself.

For their second nobles, there is not much danger from them, being a body dispersed. They may sometimes discourse high, but that doth little hurt; besides, they are a counterpoise to the higher nobility, that they grow not too potent; and, lastly, being the most immediate in authority with the common people, they do best temper popular commotions.

For their merchants, they are "vena porta:"[1] and if they flourish not, a kingdom may have good limbs, but will have empty veins, and nourish little. Taxes and imposts upon them do seldom good to the king's revenue, for that which he wins[2] in the hundred[3] he loseth in the shire; the particular rates being increased, but the total bulk of trading rather decreased.

For their commons, there is little danger from them, except it be where they have great and potent heads; or where you meddle with the point of religion, or their customs, or means of life.

For their men of war, it is a dangerous state

[1] The great vessel that conveys the blood to the liver, after it has been enriched by the absorption of nutriment from the intestines.

[2] This is an expression similar to our proverb, "Penny-wise and pound-foolish."

[3] A subdivision of the shire.

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where they live and remain in a body, and are used to donatives; whereof we see examples in the Janizaries [1] and Prætorian bands of Rome; but trainings of men, and arming them in several places, and under several commanders, and without donatives, are things of defence and no danger.

Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times; and which have much veneration, but no rest. All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two remembrances, "Memento quod es homo;" [2] and "Memento quod es Deus," [3] or "vice Dei;" [4] the one bridleth their power and the other their will.

XX. — OF COUNSEL.

THE greatest trust between man and man is the trust of giving counsel; for in other confidences men commit the parts of life, their lands, their goods, their children, their credit, some particular affair; but to such as they make their counsellors they commit the whole; by how much the more they

[1] The Janizaries were the body-guards of the Turkish sultans, and enacted the same disgraceful part in making and unmaking monarchs, as the mercenary Prætorian guards of the Roman Empire.

[2] "Remember that thou art a man."

[3] "Remember that thou art a God."

[4] "The representative of God."

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are obliged to all faith and integrity. The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness, or derogation to their sufficiency to rely upon counsel. God himself is not without, but hath made it one of the great names of his blessed Son, "The Counsellor."[1] Solomon hath pronounced that, "in counsel is stability."[2] Things will have their first or second agitation: if they be not tossed upon the arguments of counsel, they will be tossed upon the waves of fortune, and be full of inconstancy, doing and undoing, like the reeling of a drunken man. Solomon's son[3] found the force of counsel, as his father saw the necessity of it; for the beloved kingdom of God was first rent and broken by ill counsel; upon which counsel there are set for our instruction the two marks whereby bad counsel is forever best discerned, that it was young counsel for the persons, and violent counsel for the matter.

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

[1] Isaiah ix. 6: "His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

[2] Prov. xx. 18: "Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war."

[3] The wicked Rehoboam, from whom the ten tribes of Israel revolted, and elected Jeroboam their king. — See 1 *Kings* xii.

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other in that which followeth, which was thus: they say, after Jupiter was married to Metis, she conceived by him and was with child; but Jupiter suffered her not to stay till she brought forth, but eat her up; whereby he became himself with child, and was delivered of Pallas armed, out of his head.[1] Which monstrous fable containeth a secret of empire, how kings are to make use of their council of state; that first, they ought to refer matters unto them, which is the first begetting or impregnation; but when they are elaborate, moulded, and shaped in the womb of their counsel, and grow ripe and ready to be brought forth, that then they suffer not their council to go through with the resolution and direction, as if it depended on them; but take the matter back into their own hands, and make it appear to the world, that the decrees and final directions (which, because they come forth with prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas armed), proceeded from themselves; and not only from their authority, but (the more to add reputation to themselves) from their head and device.

Let us now speak of the inconveniences of counsel, and of the remedies. The inconveniences that have been noted in calling and using counsel are three: first, the revealing of affairs, whereby they become less secret; secondly, the weakening of the authority of princes, as if they were less of themselves; thirdly, the danger of being unfaithfully

[1] Hesiod, Theog. 886.

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counselled, and more for the good of them that counsel than of him that is counselled; for which inconveniences, the doctrine of Italy, and practice of France, in some kings' times, hath introduced cabinet councils; a remedy worse than the disease.[1]

As to secrecy, princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select; neither is it necessary that he that consulteth what he should do, should declare what he will do; but let princes beware that the unsecreting of their affairs comes not from themselves; and, as for cabinet councils, it may be their motto, "Plenus rimarum sum:"[2] one futile person, that maketh it his glory to tell, will do more hurt than many that know it their duty to conceal. It is true, there be some affairs which require extreme secrecy, which will hardly go beyond one or two persons besides the king. Neither are those counsels unprosperous; for, besides the secrecy, they commonly go on constantly in one spirit of direction without distraction; but then it must be a prudent king, such as is able to grind with a hand-mill;[3] and those inward counsellors had need also to be wise men, and especially true and trusty to the king's ends; as it was with King Henry the

[1] The political world has not been convinced of the truth of this doctrine of Lord Bacon; as cabinet councils are now held probably by every sovereign in Europe.

[2] "I am full of outlets." — *Ter. Eun.* I. ii. 25.

[3] That is, without a complicated machinery of government.

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Seventh of England, who, in his greatest business, imparted himself to none, except it were to Morton [1] and Fox.[2]

For weakening of authority, the fable [3] showeth the remedy; nay, the majesty of kings is rather exalted than diminished when they are in the chair of council; neither was there ever prince bereaved of his dependencies by his council, except where there hath been either an over-greatness in one counsellor, or an over-strict combination in divers, which are things soon found and holpen.[4]

For the last inconvenience, that men will counsel with an eye to themselves; certainly, "non inveniet fidem super terram," [5] is meant of the nature of times,[6] and not of all particular persons. There be

[1] Master of the Rolls and Privy Councillor under Henry VI., to whose cause he faithfully adhered. Edward IV. promoted him to the See of Ely, and made him Lord Chancellor. He was elevated to the See of Canterbury by Henry VII., and in 1493 received the Cardinal's hat.

[2] Privy Councillor and Keeper of the Privy Seal to Henry VII., and, after enjoying several bishoprics in succession, translated to the See of Winchester. He was an able statesman, and highly valued by Henry VII. On the accession of Henry VIII. his political influence was counteracted by Wolsey; on which he retired to his diocese, and devoted the rest of his life to acts of piety and munificence.

[3] Before mentioned, relative to Jupiter and Metis.

[4] Remedied.

[5] "He shall not find faith upon the earth." Lord Bacon probably alludes to the words of our Saviour, St. Luke xviii. 8: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?"

[6] He means to say, that this remark was only applicable to a

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that are in nature faithful and sincere, and plain and direct, not crafty and involved: let princes, above all, draw to themselves such natures. Besides, counsellors are not commonly so united, but that one counsellor keepeth sentinel over another; so that if any do counsel out of faction or private ends, it commonly comes to the king's ear; but the best remedy is, if princes know their counsellors, as well as their counsellors know them: —

"Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos."[1]

And on the other side, counsellors should not be too speculative into their sovereign's person. The true composition of a counsellor is, rather to be skilful in their master's business than in his nature;[2] for then he is like to advise him, and not to feed his humor. It is of singular use to princes, if they take the opinions of their council both separately and together; for private opinion is more free, but opinion before others is more reverend. In private, men are more bold in their own humors; and in consort, men are more obnoxious[3] to others' humors; therefore it is good to take both; and of the inferior sort rather in private, to preserve freedom; of the greater, rather in consort, to preserve respect. It is in vain for princes to take counsel

particular time, namely, the coming of Christ. The period of the destruction of Jerusalem was probably referred to.

1 "'T is the especial virtue of a prince to know his own men."

2 In his disposition, or inclination.

3 Liable to opposition from.

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concerning matters, if they take no counsel likewise concerning persons; for all matters are as dead images; and the life of the execution of affairs resteth in the good choice of persons. Neither is it enough to consult concerning persons, "secundum genera,"[1] as in an idea or mathematical description, what the kind and character of the person should be; for the greatest errors are committed, and the most judgment is shown, in the choice of individuals. It was truly said, "Optimi consiliarii mortui:"[2] "books will speak plain when counsellors blanch;"[3] therefore it is good to be conversant in them, specially the books of such as themselves have been actors upon the stage.

The councils at this day in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated; and they run too swift to the order or act of council. It were better that in causes of weight, the matter were propounded one day and not spoken to till the next day; "In nocte consilium;"[4] so was it done in the commission of

[1] "According to classes," or, as we vulgarly say, "in the lump." Lord Bacon means that princes are not, as a matter of course, to take counsellors merely on the presumption of talent, from their rank and station; but that, on the contrary, they are to select such as are tried men, and with regard to whom there can be no mistake.

[2] "The best counsellors are the dead."

[3] "Are afraid" to open their mouths.

[4] "Night-time for counsel." — ἐν νυκτὶ βουλή. *Gaisf. Par. Gr.* B. 359.

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union[1] between England and Scotland, which was a grave and orderly assembly. I commend set days for petitions; for both it gives the suitors more certainty for their attendance, and it frees the meetings for matters of estate, that they may "hoc agere."[2] In choice of committees for ripening business for the council, it is better to choose indifferent persons, than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides. I commend, also, standing commissions; as for trade, for treasure, for war, for suits, for some provinces; for where there be divers particular councils, and but one council of estate (as it is in Spain), they are in effect no more than standing commissions, save that they have greater authority. Let such as are to inform councils out of their particular professions (as lawyers, seamen, mintmen, and the like) be first heard before committees; and then, as occasion serves, before the council; and let them not come in multitudes, or in a tribunitious[3] manner; for that is to clamor councils, not to inform them. A long table and a square table, or seats about the walls, seem things of form, but are things of substance; for at a long table a few at the upper end, in effect, sway all the business; but in the

[1] On the accession of James the Sixth of Scotland to the throne of England in 1603.

[2] A phrase much in use with the Romans, signifying, "to attend to the business in hand."

[3] A tribunitial or declamatory manner.

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other form there is more use of the counsellors' opinions that sit lower. A king, when he presides in council, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth; for else counsellors will but take the wind of him, and, instead of giving free counsel, will sing him a song of "placebo."[1]

XXI. — OF DELAYS.

FORTUNE is like the market, where, many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall; and again, it is sometimes like Sibylla's offer,[2] which at first

[1] "I'll follow the bent of your humor."

[2] The Sibyl alluded to here is the Cumæan, the most celebrated, who offered the Sibylline Books for sale to Tarquin the Proud.

"At this time, an unknown woman appeared at court, loaded with nine volumes, which she offered to sell, but at a very considerable price. Tarquin refusing to give it, she withdrew and burnt three of the nine. Some time after she returned to court, and demanded the same price for the remaining six. This made her looked upon as a mad woman, and she was driven away with scorn. Nevertheless, having burnt the half of what were left, she came a third time, and demanded for the remaining three the same price which she had asked for the whole nine. The novelty of such a proceeding, made Tarquin curious to have the books examined. They were put, therefore, into the hands of the augurs, who, finding them to be the oracles of the Sybil of Cumæ, declared them to be an invaluable treasure. Upon this the woman was paid the sum she demanded, and she soon after disappeared, having first exhorted the Romans to preserve her books with care." — *Hooke's Roman History.*

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offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the price; for occasion (as it is in the common verse) "turneth a bald noddle,[1] after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken;" or, at least, turneth the handle of the bottle first to be received, and after the belly, which is hard to clasp.[2] There is surely no greater wisdom than well to time the beginnings and onsets of things. Dangers are no more light, if they once seem light; and more dangers have deceived men than forced them; nay, it were better to meet some dangers half-way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their approaches; for if a man watch too long, it is odds he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long shadows (as some have been when the moon was low, and shone on their enemies' back), and so to shoot off before the time; or to teach dangers to come on by over early buckling towards them, is another extreme. The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion (as we said) must ever be well weighed; and generally it is good to commit the beginnings of all great actions to Argus with his hundred eyes, and the ends to Briareus with his hundred hands, first to watch and then to speed; for the helmet of Pluto,[3] which maketh the politic man go invisible, is secrecy in the council, and celerity in

[1] Bald head. He alludes to the common saying: "Take time by the forelock."

[2] Phæd. viii.

[3] Hom. Il. v. 845.

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the execution; for when things are once come to the execution, there is no secrecy comparable to celerity; like the motion of a bullet in the air, which flieth so swift as it outruns the eye.

XXII. — OF CUNNING.

We take cunning for a sinister, or crooked wisdom; and, certainly, there is great difference between a cunning man and a wise man, not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability. There be that can pack the cards,[1] and yet cannot play well; so there are some that are good in canvasses and factions, that are otherwise weak men. Again, it is one thing to understand persons, and another thing to understand matters; for many are perfect in men's humors that are not greatly capable of the real part of business, which is the constitution of one that hath studied men more than books. Such men are fitter for practice than for counsel, and they are good but in their own alley. Turn them to new men, and they have lost their aim; so as the old rule, to know a fool from a wise man, "Mitte ambos nudos ad ignotos, et videbis,"[2] doth scarce hold

[1] Packing the cards is an admirable illustration of the author's meaning. It is a cheating exploit, by which knaves, who, perhaps, are inferior players, insure to themselves the certainty of good hands.

[2] "Send them both naked among strangers, and *then* you will see."

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for them; and, because these cunning men are like haberdashers[1] of small wares, it is not amiss to set forth their shop.

It is a point of cunning to wait upon[2] him with whom you speak with your eye, as the Jesuits give it in precept; for there be many wise men that have secret hearts and transparent countenances; yet this would be done with a demure abasing of your eye sometimes, as the Jesuits also do use.

Another is, that when you have any thing to obtain of present dispatch, you entertain and amuse the party with whom you deal with some other discourse, that he be not too much awake to make objections. I knew a counsellor and secretary that never came to Queen Elizabeth of England, with bills to sign, but he would always first put her into some discourse of estate,[3] that she might the less mind the bills.

The like surprise may be made by moving things[4] when the party is in haste, and cannot stay to consider advisedly of that is moved.

• If a man would cross a business that he doubts some other would handsomely and effectually move, let him pretend to wish it well, and move it himself, in such sort as may foil it.

[1] This word is used here in its primitive sense of "retail dealers." It is said to have been derived from a custom of the Flemings, who first settled in this country in the fourteenth century, stopping the passengers as they passed their shops, and saying to them, "Haber das, herr?" — "Will you take this, sir?" The word is now generally used as synonymous with linen-draper.

[2] To watch.

[3] State.

[4] Discussing matters.

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The breaking off in the midst of that one was about to say, as if he took himself up, breeds a greater appetite in him with whom you confer to know more.

And because it works better when any thing seemeth to be gotten from you by question than if you offer it of yourself, you may lay a bait for a question, by showing another visage and countenance than you are wont; to the end, to give occasion for the party to ask what the matter is of the change, as Nehemiah[1] did: "And I had not, before that time, been sad before the king."

In things that are tender and unpleasing, it is good to break the ice by some whose words are of less weight, and to reserve the more weighty voice to come in as by chance, so that he may be asked the question upon the other's speech; as Narcissus did, in relating to Claudius the marriage[2] of Messalina and Silius.

In things that a man would not be seen in himself, it is a point of cunning to borrow the name of the

[1] He refers to the occasion when Nehemiah, on presenting the wine, as cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes, appeared sorrowful, and, on being asked the reason of it, entreated the king to allow Jerusalem to be rebuilt. — *Nehemiah* ii. 1.

[2] This can hardly be called a marriage, as, at the time of the intrigue, Messalina was the wife of Claudius; but she forced Caius Silius, of whom she was deeply enamored, to divorce his own wife, that she herself might enjoy his society. The intrigue was disclosed to Claudius by Narcissus, who was his freedman, and the pander to his infamous vices; on which Silius was put to death. Vide *Tac. Ann.* xi. 29, *seq.*

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world; as to say, "The world says," or "There is a speech abroad."

I knew one, that when he wrote a letter, he would put that which was most material in a postscript, as if it had been a by-matter.

I knew another, that when he came to have speech,[1] he would pass over that that he intended most; and go forth and come back again, and speak of it as a thing that he had almost forgot.

Some procure themselves to be surprised at such times as it is like the party that they work upon will suddenly come upon them, and to be found with a letter in their hand, or doing somewhat which they are not accustomed, to the end they may be apposed of[2] those things which of themselves they are desirous to utter.

It is a point of cunning to let fall those words in a man's own name, which he would have another man learn and use, and thereupon take advantage. I knew two that were competitors for the secretary's place in Queen Elizabeth's time, and yet kept good quarter[3] between themselves, and would confer one with another upon the business; and the one of them said, that to be a secretary in the declination of a monarchy was a ticklish thing, and that he did not affect it;[4] the other straight caught up those words, and discoursed with divers of his friends, that he had no reason to desire to be secretary in the

[1] To speak in his turn.
[2] Be questioned upon.
[3] Kept on good terms.
[4] Desire it.

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declination of a monarchy. The first man took hold of it, and found means it was told the queen, who, hearing of a declination of a monarchy, took it so ill, as she would never after hear of the other's suit.

There is a cunning, which we in England call "the turning of the cat in the pan;" which is, when that which a man says to another, he lays it as if another had said it to him; and, to say truth, it is not easy, when such a matter passed between two, to make it appear from which of them it first moved and began.

It is a way that some men have, to glance and dart at others by justifying themselves by negatives; as to say, "This I do not;" as Tigellinus did towards Burrhus: "Se non diversas spes, sed incolumitatem imperatoris simpliciter spectare."[1]

Some have in readiness so many tales and stories, as there is nothing they would insinuate, but they can wrap it into a tale;[2] which serveth both to keep themselves more in guard, and to make others carry it with more pleasure.

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

[1] "That he did not have various hopes in view, but solely the safety of the emperor." Tigellinus was the profligate minister of Nero, and Africanus Burrhus was the chief of the Prætorian Guards. — *Tac. Ann.* xiv. 57.

[2] As Nathan did, when he reproved David for his criminality with Bathsheba. — 2 *Samuel* xii.

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It is strange how long some men will lie in wait to speak somewhat they desire to say; and how far about they will fetch,[1] and how many other matters they will beat over to come near it. It is a thing of great patience, but yet of much use.

A sudden, bold, and unexpected question doth many times surprise a man, and lay him open. Like to him, that, having changed his name, and walking in Paul's,[2] another suddenly came behind him and called him by his true name, whereat straightways he looked back.

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

But certainly, some there are that know the resorts[3] and falls[4] of business that cannot sink into the main of it;[5] like a house that hath convenient stairs and entries, but never a fair room. Therefore you shall see them find out pretty looses[6] in the conclusion, but are noways able to examine or debate matters; and yet commonly they take advantage of their inability, and would be thought wits of direction. Some build rather upon the

[1] Use indirect stratagems.

[2] He alludes to the old Cathedral of St. Paul, in London, which, in the sixteenth century, was a common lounge for idlers.

[3] Movements, or springs.

[4] Chances, or vicissitudes.

[5] Enter deeply into.

[6] Faults, or weak points.

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abusing of others, and (as we now say) putting tricks upon them, than upon soundness of their own proceedings; but Solomon saith: "Prudens advertit ad gressus suos; stultus divertit ad dolos."[1]

XXIII.—OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF.

An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd[2] thing in an orchard or garden; and certainly, men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others, specially to thy king and 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;[3] 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

[1] "The wise man gives heed to his own footsteps; the fool turneth aside to the snare." No doubt he here alludes to Ecclesiastes xiv. 2, which passage is thus rendered in our version: "The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness."

[2] Mischievous.

[3] It must be remembered that Bacon was not a favorer of the Copernican system.

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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. 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, 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 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

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it fall; it is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger who digged and made room for him; it is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are "sui amantes, sine rivali,"[1] are many times unfortunate; and whereas they have all their times sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

XXIV. — 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 honor 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[2] 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,

[1] "Lovers of themselves without a rival." — *Ad. Qu. Fr.* iii. 8.

[2] Remedy.

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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;[1] 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 favored. All this is true, if time stood still, which, contrariwise, moveth so round, that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times are but a scorn to the new. It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived; for, otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for, and ever it mends some and pairs[2] other; and he that is holpen, takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author. It is good, also, not to 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; and lastly, that the novelty, though it be not rejected, yet be held for a suspect,[3] and, as

[1] Adapted to each other.
[2] Injures or impairs.
[3] A thing suspected.

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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.[1]

XXV. — OF DISPATCH.

AFFECTED dispatch is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be; it is like that which the physicians call predigestion, or hasty digestion, which is sure to fill the body full of crudities, and secret seeds of diseases. Therefore, measure not dispatch by the times of sitting, but by the advancement of the business; and as in races, it is not the large stride, or high lift, that makes the speed, so in business, the keeping close to the matter, and not taking of it too much at once, procureth dispatch. It is the care of some, only to come off speedily for the time, or to contrive some false periods of business, because they may seem men of dispatch; but it is one thing to abbreviate by contracting,[2] another by cutting off; and business so handled at several sittings, or meetings, goeth commonly backward and forward in an unsteady manner. I knew a wise

[1] He probably alludes to Jeremiah vi. 16: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

[2] That is, by means of good management.

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man [1] that had it for a byword, when he saw men hasten to a conclusion, "Stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner."

On the other side, true dispatch is a rich thing; for time is the measure of business, as money is of wares; and business is bought at a dear hand where there is small dispatch. The Spartans and Spaniards have been noted to be of small dispatch: "Mi venga la muerte de Spagna;" "Let my death come from Spain;" for then it will be sure to be long in coming.

Give good hearing to those that give the first information in business, and rather direct them in the beginning, than interrupt them in the continuance of their speeches; for he that is put out of his own order will go forward and backward, and be more tedious while he waits upon his memory, than he could have been if he had gone on in his own course; but sometimes it is seen that the moderator is more troublesome than the actor.

Iterations are commonly loss of time; but there is no such gain of time as to iterate often the state of the question; for it chaseth away many a frivolous speech as it is coming forth. Long and curious speeches are as fit for dispatch as a robe, or mantle, with a long train, is for a race. Prefaces, and passages,[2] and excusations,[3] and other speeches

[1] It is supposed that he here alludes to Sir Amyas Paulet, a very able statesman, and the ambassador of Queen Elizabeth to the court of France.

[2] Quotations.

[3] Apologies.

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of reference to the person, are great wastes of time; and though they seem to proceed of modesty, they are bravery.[1] Yet beware of being too material when there is any impediment, or obstruction in men's wills; for preoccupation of mind[2] ever requireth preface of speech, like a fomentation to make the unguent enter.

Above all things, order and distribution, and singling out of parts, is the life of dispatch, so as the distribution be not too subtile; for he that doth not divide will never enter well into business; and he that divideth too much will never come out of it clearly. To choose time is to save time; and an unseasonable motion is but beating the air. There be three parts of business, — the preparation; the debate, or examination; and the perfection. Whereof, if you look for dispatch, let the middle only be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few. The proceeding, upon somewhat conceived in writing, doth for the most part facilitate dispatch; for though it should be wholly rejected, yet that negative is more pregnant of direction than an indefinite, as ashes are more generative than dust.

[1] Boasting.

[2] Prejudice.

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XXVI. — 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,"[1] so certainly there are, in points of wisdom and sufficiency, that do nothing, or little very solemnly, — "magno conatu nugas."[2] It is a ridiculous thing, and fit for a satire to persons of judgment, to see what shifts these formalists have, and what prospectives 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

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 5.

[2] "Trifles with great effort."

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supercilio; crudelitatem tibi non placere."[1] Some think to bear it 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, and so would have their ignorance seem judgment. Some are never without a difference, and commonly by amusing men with a subtilty, blanch the matter; of whom A. Gellius saith, "Hominem delirum, qui verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera."[2] 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.[3] Generally such men, in all deliberations, find ease to be[4] 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,[5]

[1] "With one brow raised to your forehead, the other bent downward to your chin, you answer that cruelty delights you not." —*In Pis.* 6.

[2] "A foolish man, who fritters away the weight of matters by finespun trifling on words." — Vide *Quint.* x. 1.

[3] Plat. Protag. i. 337.

[4] Find it easier to make difficulties and objections than to originate.

[5] One really in insolvent circumstances, though to the world he does not appear so.

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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.

XXVII. — 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:"[1] for it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards 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 sequester 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,[2] the Candian; Numa, the Roman;

[1] He here quotes from a passage in the *Politica* of Aristotle, book i. "He who is unable to mingle in society, or who requires nothing, by reason of sufficing for himself, is no part of the state, so that he is either a wild beast or a divinity."

[2] Epimenides, a poet of Crete (of which Candia is the modern name), is said by Pliny to have fallen into a sleep which lasted

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Empedocles, the Sicilian; and Apollonius, of Tyana; 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 neighborhoods: but we may go further, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere 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 beasts, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart,

57 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, and to have thrown himself into the crater of Mount Ætna. Apollonius of Tyana, the Pythagorean philosopher, pretended to miraculous powers, and after his death a temple was erected to him at that place. His life is recorded by Philostratus; and some persons, among whom are Hierocles, Dr. More, in his Mystery of Godliness, and recently Strauss, have not hesitated to compare his miracles with those of our Saviour.

[1] "A great city, a great desert."

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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 [1] to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum [2] for the brain, but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak; so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness; for princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions, and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, 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;" [3] for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been

[1] Sarsaparilla.

[2] A liquid matter of a pungent smell, extracted from a portion of the body of the beaver.

[3] "Partakers of cares."

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done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned, who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed the Great) to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch; for when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and, in effect, bade him be quiet; for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting.[1] 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 Calphurnia, 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;[2] and it seemeth his favor was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's

[1] Plutarch (*Vit. Pomp.* 19) relates that Pompey said this upon Sylla's refusal to give him a triumph.

[2] Plut. Vit. J. Cæs. 64.

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Philippics, calleth him *venefica*, "witch," as if he had enchanted Cæsar.[1] 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 amicitiâ nostrâ non occultavi;"[2] 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."[3] Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise,[4] of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers

[1] Cic. Philip. xiii. 11.

[2] "These things, by reason of our friendship, I have not concealed *from you*." — Vide *Tac. Ann.* iv. 40.

[3] Dio Cass. lxxv.

[4] Such infamous men as Tiberius and Sejanus hardly deserve this commendation.

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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; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus [1] observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy,[2] namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none, and, least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith, that towards his latter time, that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding. Surely, Comineus 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 of Pythagoras is dark, but true: "Cor ne edito," "eat not the heart."[3] Certainly, if a

[1] Philip de Comines.

[2] Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, the valiant antagonist of Louis XI. of France. De 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, and had all the bad qualities of his contemporary, Edward IV. of England, without any of his redeeming virtues.

[3] Pythagoras went still further than this, as he forbade his disciples to eat flesh of any kind whatever. See the interesting speech which Ovid attributes to him in the fifteenth book of the Metamorphoses. Sir Thomas Browne, in his Pseudoxia (*Browne's Works*, Bohn's Antiq. ed. vol. i. p. 27, *et seq.*), gives some curious explanations of the doctrines of this philosopher. — *Plut. de Educat. Puer.* 17.

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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 alchemists 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 of alchemists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature; for, in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so it is of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections; 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

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