

Pierce's Supererogation,
or
A New Praise of the Old Ass.

A Preparative to certain larger discourses, entitled *Nashe's St. Fame*

Gabriel Harvey

Il vostro malignare non Giova nulla.

London

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1593

To my very gentle and liberal friends, M. Barnabe Barnes, M. John Thorius, M. Anthony Chewt, and every favourable reader.

Loving M. Barnabe, M. John, and M. Anthony (for the rest of my partial commendators must pardon me, till the print be better acquainted with their names), I have lately received your thrice-courteous letters, with the overplus of your thrice-sweet sonnets annexed, the liberallest gifts, I believe, that ever you bestowed upon so slight occasion, and the very prodigallest fruits of your flourishing wits. Whose only default is, not your, but my, default, that the matter is nothing correspondent to the manner, and myself must either grossly forget myself, or frankly acknowledge my simple self an unworthy subject of so worthy commendations. Which I cannot read without blushing, repeat without shame, or remember without grief, that I come so exceeding short in so excessive great accounts, the sums of your rich largess, not of my poor desert, and percase devised to advertise me what I should be, or to signify what you wish to be, not to declare what I am, or to insinuate what I may be. Eloquence and courtesy were ever bountiful in the amplifying vein, and it hath been reputed a friendly policy to encourage their loving acquaintance to labour the attainment of those perfections which they blazon in them, as already achieved. Either some such intention you have by way of stratagem, to awaken my negligence or enkindle my confidence, or you are disposed by way of civility to make me unreasonably beholding unto you for your extreme affection. Which I must either leave unrequited, or recompense affection with affection, & recommend me unto you with your own stratagem, fitter to animate fresher spirits, or to whet finer edges. Little other use can I or the world reap of those great great commendations wherewith you, and divers other Orient wits, have newly surcharged me by tendering so many kind apologies in my behalf, and presenting so many sharp invectives against my adversaries, unless also you purposed to make me notably ashamed of my confessed insufficiency, guilty of so manifold imperfections in respect of the least semblance of those imputed singularities. Whatsoever your intendment in an overflowing affection was, I am none of those that greedily surfeit of self-conceit, or sottishly hug their own babies. Narcissus was a fair boy, but a boy; Suffenus a noble braggart, but a braggart; Nestor a sweet-tongued old man, but an old man; and Tully (whom I honour in his virtues, and excuse in his oversights) an eloquent self-lover, but a self-lover. He that thought to make himself famous with his overweening and braving *I'll, I'll, I'll* might perhaps nourish an aspiring imagination to imitate his *Ego, Ego, Ego*, so gloriously reiterated in his gallant orations. Some smirking minions are fine fellows in their own heads, and some crank princocks jolly men in their own humours, as desperate in resolution as the doughtiest rank of errant knights, and as coy in fantasy as the nicest sort of simpering damosels, that in their own glasses find no creature so beautiful or amiable as their delicious selves. I have beheld, & who hath not seen, some lofty conceits towering very high, & coying themselves sweetly on their own amounting wings, young feathers of old Icarus. The gay peacock is wondrously enamoured upon the glittering fan of his own gorgeous tail, and weeneth himself worthy to be crowned the prince of birds, and to be enthronized in the chair of supreme excellency. Would Christ the green popinjay, with his newfangled jests, as new as Newgate, were not as much to say as his own idol. Quaint wits must have a privilege to prank up their dainty limbs, & to fawn upon their own tricky devises. But they that unpartially know themselves severely examine their own abilities, uprightly counterpoise defects with sufficiencies, frankly confess the greatest part of their knowledge to be the least part of their ignorance, advisedly weigh the difficulties of the painful and toilsome way, the hard maintenance of credit easily gotten, the impossible satisfaction of unsatisfiable expectation, the uncertain fickleness of private fantasy, & the certain brittleness of public fame, are not lightly bewitched with a fond doting upon their own plumes. And they that deeply consider upon the weakness of inward frailty, the casualty of outward fortune, the detraction of envy, the virulency of malice, the counter-policy of ambition, and a hundred hundred impeachments of growing reputation, that as well divinely as philosophically have learned to love the gentleness of humanity, to embrace the mildness of

modesty, to kiss the meekness of humility, to loathe the odiousness of pride, to assuage the eagerness of spite, to prevent the vengeance of hatred, to reap the sweet fruits of temperance, to tread the smooth path of security, to take the firm course of assurance, and to enjoy the felicity of contentment, that judiciously have framed themselves to carry minds like their bodies and fortunes, as appertaineth unto them, that would be loath to overreach in presumptuous conceit, they, I say, and all they that would rather underlie the reproach of obscurity than overcharge their mediocrity with an illusive opinion of extraordinary furniture, and I wot not what imaginary complements, are readier, and a thousand times readier, to return the greatest praises where they are debt than to accept the meanest where they are alms. And I could nominate some that in effect make the same reckoning of letters, sonnets, orations, or other writings commendatory that they do of meat without nourishment, of herbs without virtue, of plants without fruit, of a lamp without oil, a link without light, or a fire without heat. Only some of us are not so devoid of good manner but we conceive what belongeth to civil duty, and will ever be pressed to entertain courtesy with courtesy, & to requite any friendship with friendship, unfeignedly desirous rather to recompense in deeds than to gloze or paint in words. You may easily persuade me to publish that was long sithence finished in writing, and is now almost dispatched in print (the amends must be addressed in some other more material treatise or more formal discourse, and haply *Nashe's St. Fame* may supply some defects of *Pierce's Supererogation*), but to suffer your thrice-affectionate letters and sonnets, or rather your thrice-lavish benevolences, to be published, which so far surmount not only the mediocrity of my present endeavour, but even the possibility of any my future improvement, I could not be persuaded by any eloquence or importunacy in the world, were I not as monstrously reviled by some other without reason as I am excessively extolled by you without cause. In which case he may seem to a discreet enemy excusable, to an indifferent friend justifiable, that is not transported with his own passion, but relieth on the judgement of the learnedest, and referreth himself to the practice of the wisest, in the one esteeming Plutarch or Homer as an hundred authors, in the other valuing Cato or Scipio as a thousand examples. I never read or heard of any respective or considerate person, under the degree of those that might revenge at pleasure, contemn with authority, as secure themselves from common obloquy, or command public reputation (mighty men may find it a policy to take a singular or extraordinary course), so careless of his own credit, so reckless of the present time, so senseless of the posterity, so negligent in occurrents of consequence, so dissolute in his proceedings, so prodigal of his name, so devoid of all regard, so bereft of common sense, so vilely base, or so hugely haughty of mind, that in case of infamous imputation, or unworthy reproach notoriously scattered abroad, thought it not requisite, or rather necessary, to stand upon his own defence according to equity, and even to labour his own commendation according to the presented occasion. Discourses yield plenty of reasons and histories afford store of examples. It is no vainglory to permit with consideration that abused modesty hath affected with discretion. It is vanity to control that true honour hath practised, and folly to condemn that right wisdom hath allowed. If any dislike immodesty indeed, despise vanity indeed, reprove arrogancy indeed, or loathe vainglory indeed, I am as forward with tongue and heart as the foremost of the forwardest, and were my pen answerable, perhaps at occasion it should not greatly lag behind. To accomplish or advance any virtuous purpose (sith it is now enforced to be stirring), it might easily be entreated, even to the uttermost extent of that little little possibility wherewith it hath pleased the Greatest to endow it. Howbeit courtesy is as ready to overload with praise as malice eager to overthrow with reproach. Both overshoot, as the manner is, but malice is the devil. For my poor part, I hope the one shall do me as little harm as fair weather in my journey; I am sure the other hath done me more good than was intended, and shall never puddle or annoy the course of the clear-running water. Albeit I have studied much and learned little, yet I have learned to glean some handfuls of corn out of the rankest cockle, to make choice of the most fragrant flowers of humanity, the most virtuous herbs of philosophy, the most sovereign fruits of government, and the most heavenly manna of divinity, to be acquainted with the fairest,

provided for the foulest, delighted with the temperatest, pleased with the meanest, and contented with all weather. Greater men may profess, and can achieve, greater matters; I thank God I know the length, that is, the shortness, of mine own foot. If it be any man's pleasure to extenuate my sufficiency in other knowledge or practice, to impeach my ability in words or deeds, to debase my fortune, to abridge my commendations, or to annihilate my fame, he shall find a cold adversary of him that hath laid hot passions a-watering, and might easily be induced to be the invective of his own non-proficiency. Only he craveth leave to estimate his credit and to value his honesty, as behooveth every man that regardeth any good, and if withal it be his unfeigned request that order should repeal disorder, moderation restrain licentiousness, discretion abandon vanity, mildness assuage choler, meekness allay arrogancy, consideration reclaim rashness, indifferency attemper passion, courtesy mitigate, charity appease, and unity atone debate, pardon him. Or in case nothing will prevail with fury but fury, and nothing can win desired amity but pretended hostility, that must drive out one nail with another & beat away one wedge with another according to the Latin proverb, pardon him also that in the resolution of a good mind will command what he cannot entreat, and extort what he cannot persuade. That little may be done with no great ado, and, seeing it may as surely as easily be done, I am humbly to beseech established wisdom to wink at one experiment of adventurous folly, never before embarked in any such action, and ever to eschew the like with a chary regard where any other mediation may purchase redress. I will not urge what connivance hath been noted in as disfavoured cases; it is sufficient for me to plead mine own acquittal. Other praise he affecteth not, that in a deep insight into his innermost parts findeth not the highest pitch of his hope equivalent to the lowest pit of your commendation. And if by a gentle construction or a favourable encouragement he seemeth anything in others' opinion that is nothing in his own censure, the lesser his merit, the greater their mercy, and the barrener his desert, the fruitfuller your liberality. Whose unmeasureable praises I am to interpret, not as they may seem in some bounteous conceit, but as they are in mine own knowledge: good words, but unfitly applied; friendly benevolences, but wastefully bestowed; gallant amplifications, but slenderly deserved; what but terms of civility, or favours of courtesy, or hyperboles of love, whose frank allowance I shall not be able to earn with the study of twenty years more; in brief, nothing but partial witnesses, prejudicate judgements, idle preambles, and, in effect, mere words. And even so, as I found them, I leave them. Yet let me not dismiss so extensive courtesy with an empty hand. Whatsoever I am (that am the least little of my thoughts, and the greatest contempt of mine own heart), *Parthenophil and Parthenope* embellished, *The Spanish Counsellor* Englished, and *Shore's Wife* eternized shall everlastingly testify what you are: go forward in maturity as ye have begun in pregnancy, and behold Parthenopoeus, the son of the brave Meleager, Homer himself, and of the swift Atalanta, Calliope herself; be thou, Barnabe, the gallant poet, like Spenser, or the valiant soldier, like Baskerville, and ever remember thy French service under the brave Earl of Essex. Be thou, John, the many-tongued linguist like Andrews, or the curious intelligencer, like Bodley, and never forget thy Netherlandish train under him that taught the Prince of Navarre, now the valorous King of France. Be thou, Anthony, the flowing orator, like Dove, or the skilful herald, like Clarentius, and ever remember thy Portugal voyage under Don Antonio. The beginning of virtuous proceedings is the one half of honourable actions. Be yourselves in hope, and what yourselves desire in effect, and I have attained some portion of my request. For you cannot wish so exceeding well unto me, but I am as ready with tongue and mind to wish a great deal better unto you, and to reacquite you with a large usury of most affectionate prayers, recommending you to the divine gifts and gracious blessings of heaven.

May it please the favourable reader to vouchsafe me the courtesy of his patience until he hath thoroughly perused the whole discourse at his hours of leisure (for such scribblings are hardly worth the vacantest hours); I am not to importune him any farther, but would be glad he might find the whole less tedious in the end than some parts in the beginning or midst, or, at least, that one piece might help to furnish out amends for another. And so

taking my leave with the kindest farewell of a most thankful mind, I desist from wearying him with a tedious preface whom I am likely to tire with so many superfluous discourses. Howbeit, might it happily please the sweetest intercessor to ensweeten the bitterest gall of spite, and to encalm the roughest tempest of rage, I could cordially wish that *Nashe's St. Fame* might be the period of my invectives, and the excellent gentlewoman, my patroness, or rather championess, in this quarrel, is meeter by nature, and fitter by nurture, to be an enchanting angel with her white quill than a tormenting fury with her black ink. It remaineth at the election of one, whom God endue with more discretion.

At London, this 16th of July, 1593. The inviolable friend of his entire friends, Gabriel Harvey.

Her own prologue, or demur.

O muses, may a woman poor and blind,
 A lion-dragon or a bull-bear bind?
 Is't possible for puling wench to tame
 The furibundal champion of Fame?
 He brandisheth the whirlwind in his mouth,
 And thunderbolteth so confounding shot;
 Where such a bombard-goblin, north or south,
 With dread pen-powder, and the conquerous pot?
 Silly it is, that I can sing or say,
 And shall I venture such a blusterous fray?
 Hazard not, panting quill, thy aspen self;
 He'll murder thy conceit, and brain thy brain.
 Spare me, O super-domineering elf,
 And most railipotent forever reign.

Si tibi vis ipsi parcere, parce Mihi.

Her counter-sonnet, or correction of her own preamble.

Scorn, frump, the meacock verse that dares not sing,
 Drooping, so like a flagging flower in rain;
 Where doth the Urany or Fury ring
 That shall enfreight my stomach with disdain?
 Shall friend put up such braggardous affronts?
 Are milksop muses such white-livered tronts?
 Shall boy the gibbet be of writers all,
 And none hang up the gibbet on the wall?
 If dreary hobbling rime heart-broken be,
 And quake for dread of Danter's scarecrow press,
 Shrew prose thy pluck-crow implements address,
 And pay the hangman pen his double fee.
 Be spite a sprite, a termagant, a bug,
 Truth fears no ruth, and can the great devil tug.

Ultrix accincta flagello.

Her Old Comedy, newly entitled.

My prose is resolute as Bevis' sword;

March, rampant beast in formidable hide,
Supererogation squire on cock-horse ride;
Zeal shapes an answer to the bloodiest word.
If nothing can the booted soldier tame,
Nor rime, nor prose, nor honesty, nor shame,
But Swash will still his trumpery advance,
I'll lead the gag-toothed fop a new-found dance.
Dear hours were ever cheap to piddling me;
I knew a glorious and braving knight,
That would be deemed a truculental wight,
Of him I scrawled a doughty comedy,
Sir Bombarduccio was his cruel name,
But Gnasharduccio the sole bruit of Fame.

L'Envoy

See, how he brays and fumes at me, poor lass,
That must immortalize the kill-cow ass.

To the right worshipful, his especial dear friend, M. Gabriel Harvey, Doctor of Law.

Sweet M. Doctor Harvey (for I cannot entitle you with an epithet of less value than that which the Grecian and Roman orators ascribed to Theophrastus, in respect of so many your excellent labours, garnished with the garland of matchless oratory), if at any time either the most earnest persuasion of a dear friend, and unusually most dear and constant, adjured thereunto by the singular virtue of your most praiseworthy and unmatched wit, or the wonderful admiration of your peerless conceit embraved with so many gorgeous ornaments of divine rhetoric, or the doubtless successive benefit thereof, devoted to the glory of our English eloquence and our vulgar Tuscanism (if I may so term it), may work any plausible or respective motions with you to beautify and enrich our age with those most praiseworthy works full of gallantest discourse and reason which I understand by some assured intelligence be now glowing upon the anvil, ready to receive the right artificial form of divinest workmanship, then let, I beseech you, nay, by all our mutual friendships I conjure you (love and admiration of them arming me with the placard of farther confidence), those and other your incomparable writings speedily, or rather presently, show themselves in the shining light of the sun. That by this publication of so rare & rich discourses our English ravens, the spiteful enemies to all birds of more beautiful wing and more harmonious note than themselves, may shroud themselves in their nests of basest obscurity, & keep hospitality with bats and owls, fit consorts for such vile carrions. Good sir, arise and confound those viperous critical monsters and those profane atheists of our commonwealth which endeavour, with their mutinous and serpentine hissing, like geese, not to arm the senators and orators of Rome, but to daunt, astonish, and, if it were possible, to overthrow them. And sithence the very thunder-lightning of your admirable eloquence is sufficiently available to strike them with a lame palsy of tongue (if they be not already smitten with a senseless apoplexy in head, which may easily ensue such contagious catarrhs and rheums as I am privy some of them have been grievously diseased withal), miss not, but hit them surely home, as they deserve, with supererogation. You have been reputed evermore, since first I heard of you in Oxford and elsewhere, to have been as much given to favour, commend, and frequent such as were approved or toward in learning, wit, kind behaviour, or any good quality as may be required in any man of your demerit, an undoubted sign how much you loathe invectives or any needless contentions. I would (as many your affectionate friends would) it had been your fortune to have encountered some other paranymphs than such as you are now to discipline, most unwillingly, I perceive, but most necessarily, & not without especial consideration, being so manifestly urged and grossly provoked to defend yourself. But you have ere now been acquainted with patience perforce, and I hope the most desperate swasher of them will one day learn to show himself honest or wiser. And thus recommending your sweet endeavours, with your graver studies, to the highest treasury of heavenly muses, I right heartily take my leave with a sonnet of that muse that honoureth the Urany of du Bartas, and yourself. Of du Bartas elsewhere; here of him whose excellent pages of the French king, the Scottish king, the brave Monsieur de la Noe, the aforesaid Lord du Bartas, Sir Philip Sidney, and sundry other worthy personages deserve immortal commendation. I thank him very heartily that imparted unto me those few sheets, and if all be like them, truly all is passing notable, and right singular.

SONNET

Those learned orators, Rome's ancient sages,
Persuasion's pith, directors of affection,
The mind's chief counsel, rhetoric's perfection,
The pleasant balms of peace, war's fierce outrages;
Sweet Grecian prophets, whose smooth muse assuages
The Furies' powerful wrath, poison's infection;

Philosophers (by causes' due connection
 Matched with th' effects of nature) future ages
 Embraving with rich documents of art;
 The wisest statesmen of calm commonweals;
 The learned general councils, which impart
 Divinest laws, whose wholesome physic heals
 Both church and laity: all in one behold
 Ennobled arts, as precious stones in gold.

From my lodging in Holborn, this [] of June. 1593. Your most affectionate, Barnabe Barnes.

Having perused my former sonnet, if it may please you, sir, to do as much for your dear friends Parthenophil and Parthenope, they shall have the desired fruit of their short exercise, and will rest beholding to your courteous acceptance, which they would be glad to reacquite in the lovingest manner they may. And so most affectionately recommend themselves unto your good self, whose unblemished fame they will evermore maintain with the best blood of their hearts, tongues and pens. We will not say how much we long to see the whole praises of your two notorious enemies, the ass and the fox.

SONNET

Nashe, or the confuting gentleman.

The muses' scorn, the courtier's laughing-stock,
 The country's coxcomb, printers' proper new,
 The city's leprosy, the pander's stew,
 Virtue's disdain, honesty's adverse rock,
 Envy's vile champion, slander's stumbling-block,
 Grand orator of cony-catcher's crew,
 Base broaching tapster of reports untrue,
 Our modern viper, and our country's mock,
 True valour's cankerworm, sweet learning's rust.
 Where shall I find meet colours, and fit words,
 For such a counterfeit and worthless matter?
 Him, whom thou railest on at thine own lust,
 Sith Bodin and sweet Sidney did not flatter,
 His invective thee too much grace affords.

Parthenophil.

SONNET

Harvey, or the sweet Doctor.

Sidney, sweet cygnet, pride of Thamesis,
 Apollo's laurel, Mars his proud prowess;
 Bodin, register of realm's happiness,
 Which Italy's and France's wonder is;
 Hatcher, with silence whom I may not miss,
 Nor Lewen, rhetoric's richest noblesse,
 Nor Wilson, whose discretion did redress

Our English barbarism; adjoin to this
Divinest moral Spenser: let these speak
By their sweet letters, which do best unfold
Harvey's deserved praise, since my muse weak
Cannot relate so much as hath been told
By these forenamed; then vain it were to bring
New feather to his fame's swift-feathered wing.

Parthenophe.

The Printer's Advertisement to the Gentleman Reader.

Courteous gentlemen, it seemed good to M. Doctor Harvey, for brevity's sake, and because he liked not over-long preambles or postambles to short discourses, to omit the commendatory letters and sonnets of M. Thorius, M. Chute and divers other his affectionate friends of London, and both the universities. Which nevertheless are reserved to be prefixed, inserted or annexed, either in his defensive letters, enlarged with certain new epistles of more special note, or in his discourses of Nashe's St. Fame, already finished & presently to be published, as these shall like their entertainment, of whose favourable & plausible welcome divers learned and fine wits have presumed the best. Howbeit finally it was thought not amiss, upon conference with some his advised acquaintance, to make choice of some two or three of the reasonablest and temperatest sonnets (but for variety, and to avoid tediousness in the entrance, rather to be annexed in the end, than prefixed in the beginning of the present discourses), one of the foresaid M. Thorius, another of M. Chute, and the third of a learned French gentleman, Monsieur Fregeville Gautius, who hath published some weighty treatises, as well politic as religious, both in Latin and French, and hath acquainted M. Doctor Harvey with certain most profitable mathematical devises of his own invention. The residue is not added by me, but annexed by the author himself, whom I humbly recommend to your courteous censure, and so rest from over troubling you with my unpolished lines.

Pierce's Supererogation, or A New Praise Of The Old Ass.

A Preparative to certain larger discourses, entitled Nashe's St. Fame.

I was ever unwilling to undertake any enterprise that was unmeet for me, or to play any part, either in earnest or in jest, that might ill beseem me, and never more unwilling than at this instant, when I must needs do it, or put something in hazard that I would be loath to commit to the courtesy of adventure. Not because my confuters' swords or my enemies' daggers carry any credit with the wise, or because my *Letters* fear any discredit with the honest, or because I cannot abide to be confuted, that daily confute myself and contemn every mine own default with rigour, but because silence may seem suspicious to many; patience contemptible to some; a good mind, a bad heart, to those that value all by courage; a known forbearer of libellers, a continual bearer of coals; and there is no end of abuses upon abuses, of injuries upon injuries, of contempt upon contempt, where presumptuous impudency and odious slander, the two errantest vagabonds in the world, may safe-conduct themselves and frankly pass uncontrolled. Yet were that either all, or the worst of all, I could still vow silence in brawls, and would still profess patience in wrongs (I hate brawls with my heart, and can turn over a volume of wrongs with a wet finger), but some cunning men that carry honey in their mouths and gall in their hearts, not so sweet in the premises as bitter in the conclusion, can smoothly and finely descant upon the least advantage, howsoever injurious, and certain pretty experiences by way of sensible instruction have taught some that malice was never such an hypocrite as now, and the world never such a Scogan as now, & the devil never such a knave as now, & what a desperate dissoluteness were it in him that regardeth his good name to abandon himself, or to relinquish the dearest thing in this life (I know no dearer thing than honest credit), to the favour of envy or to the discretion of fortune? Gentlemen, he is hardly bestead for a patron that relieth on the tuition of envy, or reposeth his affiance in the protection of fortune, and he must not take it unkindly to be forsaken of other by the way, that forsaketh himself in the way. Even he that loveth not to be his own defender, much less his own praiser (do him no wrong, my masters, though ye do him no right), yet hateth to be his own traitor, and hath reason to experiment some round conclusions before he offer his throat to the blade of villainy, or his forehead to the brand of defamation. And although he be the subject of his own contempt, and the argument of his own satires (surely no man less doteth upon himself, or more severely censureth his own imperfections), yet he in some respects disdaineth to be reviled by the abjects of the world, whose dispraise in some age were a commendation, and whose praise an invective, but this is a quaint world, and needeth no April showers to furnish May-games. I protest, I have these many years, not in pride, but in judgement, scorned to appear in the rank of this scribbling generation, and could not have been hired with a great fee to publish any pamphlet of whatsoever nature in mine own name had I not been intolerably provoked, first by one rake-hell, and now by another, the two impudentest mates that ever haunted the press (some have called them knaves in gross; I have found them fools in retail), but when it came to this desperate point, that I must needs either be a base writer, or a vile ass in print, the less of the two evils was to be chosen, and I compelled rather to alter my resolution for a time, than to prejudice myself forever. They that list may feed at the manger with the sons of the mule; it is another table philosophy that I fancy. Howbeit amongst all the misfortunes that ever happened unto me, I account it my greatest affliction that I am constrained to busy my pen without ground or substance of discourse meet for an active and industrious world. Every man hath his crosses in one accident or other, but I know not a grievouser persecution than a base employment of precious time, necessarily enforced. Other crosses may someway edify; this is a plague without remedy, a torment without end, a hell without redemption. As in the course of my study it was always my reckoning, *He loseth nothing, whatsoever he loseth, that gaineth time*, so in the task of my writing or other exercise it is my account, *He gaineth nothing, whatsoever he gaineth, that loseth time*. A good matter, delivered in good manner, winneth some estimation with good minds, but no manner

sufficient to countenance a contemptible theme, & a rascal subject abaseth any form, or what hath drowned the memory of the trimmest and daintiest trifles that fine conceit hath devised? Were it mine own election, I might worthily incur many reproofs, and justly impute them to my simple choice, but necessity hath as little free will as law, and compelleth like a tyrant where it cannot persuade like an orator, or advise like a counsellor. Any virtue an honourable commonplace, and a flourishing branch of an heavenly tree; politic and militar affairs the worthiest matters of consultations, and the two Hercules pillars of noble states; the private lives of excellent personages in sundry courses, and the public actions of puissant nations in sundry governments, shining mirrors of notable use for the present time and future ages. Were it at my appointment to dispose freely of mine own hours, O how willingly and cheerfully could I spend the freshest & dearest part of my life in such arguments of valour! Learning is a goodly and gallant creature in many parts, & divers members of that beautiful body upbraid the most exquisite pen, and most curious pencil, of insufficiency; no diligence too much where no labour enough; the fruitfullest sciences require painfullest industry, and some lively principles would be touched to the quick; whatsoever book-case or school-point is found by experience to be essential and practicable in the world deserveth to be discussed with sharp invention and sound judgement. I could yet take pleasure and profit in canvassing some problems of natural philosophy, of the mathematics, of geography and hydrography, of other commodious experiments fit to advance many valorous actions, and I would, upon mine own charges, travel into any part of Europe to hear some pregnant paradoxes and certain singular questions in the highest professions of learning in physic, in law, in divinity, effectually and thoroughly disputed *pro & contra*, and would think my travel as advantageously bestowed to some purposes of importance as they that have adventurously discovered new-found lands, or bravely surprised Indies. What conferences or disputations, what parliaments or councils, like those that deliberate upon the best government of commonwealths and the best discipline of churches, the double anchor of the mighty ship, and the two great luminaries of the world? Other extravagant discourses not material, or quarrellous contentions not available, are but wafting of wind, or blotting of paper. What should exercise or study burn the sun or the candle in vain, or what should I do against myself in speaking for myself, if outward respects did not inwardly gripe, and a present exigence lay violent hands upon me? Though extremity be powerable, yet an unwilling will is excusable. Philosophers and lawyers can best argue the case of involuntary acts, but what so forcible as compulsion, or so pardonable as a passive action? Blame him not, or blame him gently, that would be a little loath to be dieted at the rack of the old ass, or to be bitten of the young dog. He is no party in the cause that pleadeth thus against Aristogiton. Sweet gentlemen, imagine it to be a speech addressed unto yourselves: *Peradventure the viper did never bite any of you, and the gods forbid it should ever bite you, but when you espy any such pernicious creature, you presently dispatch it; in like manner, when you behold a sycophant, and a man of a viperous nature, look not till he hath bitten some of you, but so soon as he starteth up, pull him down.* And again in another place of the same sententious and politic oration: *He that maintaineth a sycophant is by nature and kind an enemy of the good, unless somebody imagine that the seed and root of a naughty sycophant ought to remain in the city, as it were for store, or good husbandry.* Demosthenes was as deeply wise as highly eloquent, and hath many such notable sentences, as it were caveats or provisos against the dangerous enemies of that flourishing city, and especially against calumniators, whose viperous sting he could by no means avoid, albeit otherwise such an orator as could allure hearts with persuasion, or conjure minds with astonishment. I would no other city loved figs, or must another city of necessity love figs because it is grown another Athens, a mother of eloquence, a nurse of learning, a grandam of valour, a seat of honour, and, as Aristotle termed Athens, a garden of Alcinous, wherein one fruit ripeneth upon another, one pear upon another, one grape upon another, and one fig upon another. The sycophant be his own interpreter, & if he may be licenced, or permitted to be his own carver too, much good may it do him, and sweet digestion give him joy of his dainty fig. I must have a little care of

one that cannot easily brook unreasonable sauciness, & would be loath to see the garden of Alcinous made the garden of Greene, or motley. It was wont to be said by way of a proverb, *He that will be made a sheep shall find wolves enough*, but forsooth this exceeding wise world is a great ass-maker, and he that will suffer himself to be proclaimed an ass in print shall be sure never to want load, and load enough. Who so ready to call her neighbour a scold as the rankest scold of the parish, or who so forward to accuse, to debase, to revile, to crow-tread another as the arrantest fellow in a country? Let his own mouth be his passport, or his own pen his warrant, and who so lewd as his greatest adversary, modesty; or so honest as his dearest friend, villainy; or so learned as his learnedest counsel, vanity; or so wise as his profoundest author, young Apuleius? What familiar sprite of the air or fire like the glib & nimble wit of young Apuleius, or where is the eloquence that should describe the particular perfections of young Apuleius? Prudence may borrow discretion; logic, arguments; rhetoric, colours; fantasy, conceits; steel, an edge; and gold, a lustre, of young Apuleius. O the rare and quaint invention, O the gallant and gorgeous elocution, O the brave and admirable amplifications, O the artificial and fine extenuations, O the lively portraitures of egregious praises and dispraises, O the cunning and strange mingle-mangles, O the pithy jests and marvellous girds of young Apuleius, the very prodigality of art and nature. What greater impossibility than to decipher the high and mighty style of young Apuleius without a liberal portion of the same elevate spirit? Happy the old father that begat, and thrice happy the sweet muses that suckled and fostered, young Apuleius. Till admiration hath found out a smoother and tricksier quill for the purpose, desire must be content to leave the supple and tidy constitution of his omnisufficient wit undisplayed. Only it becometh gentle minds to yield themselves thankful, and to tender their bounden duty to that inestimable pearl of eloquence for this precious glimpse of his incomprehensible valour, one short maxim but more worth than all the axioms of Aristotle, or the ideas of Plato, or the aphorisms of Hippocrates, or the paragraphs of Justinian. He knoweth not to manage his pen that was not born with an ass in his mouth, a fool in his throat, and a knave in his whole body. Simple men may write against other, or plead for themselves, but they cannot confute cuttingly, like a hackster of Queenhithe, or bellow lustily, like the foreman of the herd. I go not about to discover an ass in an ox's hide; he needeth no other to pull him by the famous ears that is so hasty to descry, and so busy to bestir, his wisest parts, but what a notable ass indeed was I, that sought the wings of a mounting Pegasus, or a flying phoenix, where I found the head & feet of a braying creature? Some promises are desperate debts, and many threatenings empty clouds, or rather armies fighting in the air, terrible visions. Simplicity cannot double, and plain-dealing will not dissemble. I looked either for a fine-witted man, as quick as quicksilver, that with a nimble dexterity of lively conceit and exquisite secretaryship would outrun me many hundred miles in the course of his dainty devises, a delicate minion, or some terrible bombarder of terms, as wild as wildfire, that at the first flash of his fury would leave me thunderstricken upon the ground, or at the last volley of his outrage would batter me to dust and ashes. A redoubted adversary. But the trim silkworm I looked for (as it were in a proper contempt of common fineness), proveth but a silly glow-worm, and the dreadful engineer of phrases, instead of thunderbolts, shooteth nothing but dogbolts, and catbolts, and the homeliest bolts of rude folly. Such arrant confuting stuff as never print saw compiled together till Master Villainy became an author, and Sir Nashe a gentleman. Printers, take heed how ye play the heralds: some lusty gentlemen of the maker can no sooner bear a goose-quill, or a woodcock's feather, in their shield but they are like the renowned Lobbelinus when he had gotten a new coat, and take upon them without pity or mercy like the only lords of the field. If ever esquire raved with conceit of his new arms, it is Danter's gentleman, that mightily despiseth whatsoever he beholdeth from the high turret of his crest, and crankly spitteth upon the heads of some that were not greatly acquainted with such familiar entertainment. His best friend be his judge, and I appeal to my worst enemy, whether he never read a more pestilent example of prostituted impudency? Were he not a kinsman of the foresaid viper, a dog in malice, a calf in wit, an ox in learning, and an

ass in discretion (time shall chronicle him as he is), was it possible that any man should have bestowed some broad and loud terms as he hath done? Who could abide it without actual revenge but he that entertaineth spite with a smile, maketh a pastime of *Strange News*, turneth choler into sanguine, vinegar into wine, vexation into sport, and hath a salve for a greater sore.

Come, young sophisters, you that affect railing in your disputations, and with a clamorous hoot would set the philosophy schools nonplus; come old cutters, you that use to make doughty frays in the streets, and would hack it terribly; come he-and she-scolds, you that love to plead it out invincibly at the bar of the dunghill, & will rather lose your lives than the last word; come, busy commotioners, you that carry a world of quarrellous wits and mutinous tongues in your heads; come, most-redoubted Momus, you that will sternly keep heaven and earth in awe; come, running heads and giddy pens of all humours, you that dance attendance upon oddest fashions, and learn a perfect method to pass other and excel yourselves, such a new-devised model as never saw sun before, & may make the gayest mould of antiquity to blush. Old Archilochus and Theon were but botchers in their railing faculty; Stesichorus but a gross bungler; Aristarchus but a curious and nice fool; Aristophanes and Lucian but merry jesters; Ibis against Ovid, Mevius against Horace, Carbilius Pictor against Virgil, Lavinius against Terence, Crateva against Euripides, Zoilus against Homer, but rank souters. Salust did but dally with Tully, Demades but toy with Demosthenes, Pericles but sport with Thucydides, and so forth. For examples are infinite, and no exercise more ancient than iambics amongst poets, invectives amongst orators, confutations amongst philosophers, satires amongst carpers, libels amongst factioners, pasquils amongst malcontents, and quarrels amongst all. But the old ass was an infant in wit, and a grammar-scholar in art; Lucian's *Rhetor*, never so bravely furnished, will be heard with an echo; Julian will rattle Christendom; Arrius will shake the church; Machiavel will yerk the commonwealth; Unico Aretino will scourge princes; and here is a lusty lad of the castle that will bind bears, and ride golden asses to death. Were the pith of courage lost, it might be found in his pen, or were the marrow of conceit to seek, where should wit look for wit but in his ink-bottle? Art was a dunce till he was a writer, and the quickest confuter a drowsy dreamer till he put a life into the dead quill, & a fly into the wooden box of forlorn Pandora. A point for the satirist whose conceit is not a ruffian in folio, and a fig for the confuter that is not a swashbuckler with his pen. Old whim-whams have plodded on long enough; fresh invention from the tap must have his frisks & careers another-while, and what comparable to this spout of yarking eloquence? Give me the fellow that is as peerless as Penillesse, and can oppose all the libraries in Paul's Churchyard with one wonderful work of supererogation, such an unmatchable piece of learning as no books can countervail but his own, the only records of the singularities of this age. Did I speak at a venture, I might deceive and be deceived, but where experience is a witness, and judgement the judge, I hope the error will not be unreasonably great.

There was a time when I floated in a sea of encountering waves, and devoured many famous confutations with an eager and insatiable appetite, especially Aristotle against Plato and the old philosophers; divers excellent Platonists, endued with rare & divine wits (of whom elsewhere at large), Justinus Martyr, Philoponus, Valla, Vives, Ramus, against Aristotle. Oh, but the great master of the schools and high chancellor of universities could not want pregnant defence: Perionius, Gallandius, Carpentarius, Sceggius, Lieblerus against Ramus. What, hath the royal professor of eloquence and philosophy no favourites? Talaeus, Ossatus, Freigius, Minos, Rodingus, Scribonius, for Ramus against them, and so forth, in that hot contradictory course of logic and philosophy. But alas, silly me, simple Aristotle, more simple Ramus, most simple the rest, either ye never knew what a sharp-edged & cutting confutation meant, or the date of your stale oppositions is expired, and a new-found land of confuting commodities discovered by this brave Columbus of terms, and this only merchant-venturer of quarrels, that detecteth new Indies of invention, & hath the winds of

Aeolus at commandment. Happy you flourishing youths that follow his incomparable learned steps, and unhappy we old dunces that wanted such a worthy precedent of all nimble and lively dexterities. What should I appeal infinite other, to their perpetual shame, or summon such and such, to their foul disgrace? Erasmus in Latin and Sir Thomas More in English were supposed fine and pleasant confuters in their time, and were accordingly embraced of the forwardest and trimmest wits, but alack, how unlike this dainty minion? Agrippa was reputed a giant in confutation, a demigod in omnisufficiency of knowledge, a devil in the practice of horrible arts, oh, but Agrippa was an urchin, Copernicus a shrimp, Cardan a puppy, Scaliger a baby, Paracelsus a scab, Erastus a patch, Sigonius a toy, Cuiacius a babe, to this termagant, that fighteth not with simple words, but with double swords; not with the trickling water of Helicon, but with piercing aquafortis; not with the sorry powder of experience, but with terrible gunpowder; not with the small shot of contention, but with the main ordinance of fury. For brevity I overskip many notable men and valorous confuters in their several veins, had not affection otherwhiles swung their reason where reason should have swayed their affection. But partiality was ever the busiest actor, and passion the hottest confuter, whatsoever plausible cause otherwise pretended, and he is rather to be esteemed an angel than a man, or a man of heaven not earth, that tendereth integrity in his heart, equity in his tongue, and reason in his pen. Flesh and blood are frail creatures and partial discoursers, but he approacheth nearest unto God, & yieldeth sweetest fruit of a divine disposition, that is not transported with wrath or any blind passion, but guided with clear and pure reason, the sovereign principle of sound proceeding. It is not the affirmative or negative of the writer, but the truth of the matter written, that carrieth meat in the mouth and victory in the hand. There is nothing so exceeding foolish but hath been defended by some wise man, nor anything so passing wise but hath been confuted by some fool. Man's will, no safe rule, as Aristotle saith; good Homer sometime sleepeth; St. Augustine was not ashamed of his retractions; St. Bernard saw not all things, and the best chart may eftsoons overthrow. He that taketh a confutation in hand must bring the standard of judgement with him, & make wisdom the moderator of wit. But I might as well have overpassed the censure as the persons, & I have to do with a party that valueth both alike, and can fancy no author but his own fancy. It is neither reason, nor rime, nor wit, nor art, nor any imitation that he regardeth; he hath builded towers of supererogation in his own head, and they must stand, whosoever fall. Howbeit I cannot overslip some, without manifest injury, that deserve to have their names enrolled in the first rank of valiant confuters; worthy men, but subject to imperfections, to error, to mutual reproof, some more, some less, as the manner is. Harding and Jewel were our Eschines and Demosthenes, and scarcely any language in the Christian world hath afforded a pair of adversaries equivalent to Harding and Jewel, two thundering and lightning orators in divinity, but now at last infinitely overmatched by this hideous thunderbolt in humanity, that hath the only right terms invective, and triumpheth over all the spirits of contradiction. You that have read Luther against the pope; Sandolet [sic], Longolius, Omphalius, Osorius, against Luther; Calvin against Sadolet; Melanchthon against Longolius; Sturmius against Omphalius; Haddon against Osorius; Baldwin against Calvin; Beza against Baldwin; Erastus against Beza; Travers against Erastus; Sutcliffe against Travers, and so forth (for there is no end of endless controversies, nor Bellarmine shall ever satisfy the protestants nor Whitaker content the papists, nor Bancroft appease the precisians, nor any reason pacify affection, nor any authority resolve obstinacy), you that have most diligently read these and sundry other, reputed excellent in their kinds, cast them all away, and read him alone that can school them all in their terms invective, and teacheth a new-found art of confuting, his all-only art. Martin himself but a meacock, and Pap-hatchet himself but a milksop, to him that inditeth with a pen of fury and the ink of vengeance, and hath cartloads of paper-shot and chain-shot at commandment. Tush, no man can blazon his arms but himself. Behold the mighty champion, the double sword-bearer, the redoubtable fighter with both hands, that hath robbed William Conqueror of his surname, and, in the very first page of his *Strange News*, choppeth off the head of *Four Letters* at a blow. He it is that hath it rightly in him indeed,

and can roundly do the feat with a witness. Why, man, he is worth a thousand of these piddling and dribbling confuters, that sit all day buzzing upon a blunt point or two, and with much ado drizzle out as many sentences in a week as he will pour down in an hour. It is not long since the goodliest graces of the most noble commonwealths upon earth, eloquence in speech and civility in manners, arrived in these remote parts of the world; it was a happy revolution of the heavens, and worthy to be chronicled in an English Livy, when Tiberis flowed into the Thames, Athens removed to London, pure Italy and fine Greece planted themselves in rich England, Apollo with his delicate troop of muses forsook his old mountains and rivers and frequented a new Parnassus and another Helicon, nothing inferior to the old when they were most solemnly haunted of divine wits that taught rhetoric to speak with applause, and poetry to sing with admiration. But even since that flourishing transplantation of the daintiest and sweetest learning that humanity ever tasted, art did but spring in such as Sir John Cheke and M. Ascham, & wit bud in such as Sir Philip Sidney & M. Spenser, which were but the violets of March or the primroses of May, till the one began to sprout in M. Robert Greene, as in a sweating imp of the evergreen laurel, the other to blossom in M. Pierce Penilesse, as in the rich garden of poor Adonis, both to grow to perfection in M. Thomas Nashe, whose prime is a harvest, whose art a mystery, whose wit a miracle, whose style the only life of the press and the very heart-blood of the grape. There was a kind of smooth and cleanly and neat and fine elegance before (proper men, handsome gifts), but alack, nothing lively and mighty, like the brave *vino de monte*, till his frisking pen began to play the sprite of the buttery, and to teach his mother tongue such lusty gambols as may make the gallantest French, Italian, or Spanish galliards to blush for extreme shame of their idiot simplicity. The difference of wits is exceeding strange, and almost incredible. Good lord, how may one man pass a thousand, and a thousand not compare with one? Art may give out precepts and directories in *communi forma*, but it is superexcellent wit that is the mother pearl of precious invention, and the golden mine of gorgeous elocution. Nay, it is a certain pregnant and lively thing without name, but a quaint mystery of mounting conceit, as it were a knack of dexterity, or the nippitate of the nappiest grape, that infinitely surpasseth all the invention and elocution in the world, and will bung Demosthenes' own mouth with newfangled figures of the right stamp, maugre all the thundering and lightning periods of his eloquentest orations, forlorn creatures. I have had some pretty trial of the finest Tuscanism in grain, and have curiously observed the cunningest experiments and bravest complements of aspiring emulation, but must give the bell of singularity to the humorous wit, and the garland of victory to the domineering eloquence. I come not yet to the praise of the old ass; it is young Apuleius that feedeth upon this glory, and having enclosed these rank commons to the proper use of himself & the capricious flock, adopteth whom he listeth without exception, as Alexander the Great had a huge intention to have all men his subjects, and all his subjects called Alexanders. It was strange news for some to be so assified, and a work of supererogation for him so bountifully to vouchsafe his golden name, the appropriate cognizance of his noble style. Goodnight poor rhetoric of sorry books; adieu good old humanity; gentle arts and liberal sciences, content yourselves; farewell, my dear mothers, sometime flourishing universities: some that have long continued your sons in nature, your apprentices in art, your servants in exercise, your lovers in affection, and your vassals in duty, must either take their leaves of their sweetest friends, or become the slaves of that domineering eloquence, that knoweth no art but the cutting art, nor acknowledgeth any school but the courtesan school. The rest is pure natural, or wondrous supernatural. Would it were not an infectious bane, or an encroaching pock. Let me not be mistaken by sinister construction, that wresteth and wriggleteth every syllable to the worst. I have no reference to myself, but to my superiors by incomparable degrees. To be a Ciceronian is a flouting-stock; poor Homer, a woeful wight, may put his finger in a hole, or in his blind eye; the excellentest histories and worthiest chronicles (inestimable monuments of wisdom and valour), what but stale antics? The flowers and fruits of delicate humanity, that were wont to be daintily and tenderly conserved, now preserved with dust, as it were with sugar, and with hoar, as it were with honey. That frisking wine, & that lively knack in

the right capricious vein, the only book that holdeth out with a countenance, and will be heard when worm-tongued orators, dull-footed poets, and weather-wise historians shall not be allowed a word to cast at a dog. There is a fatal period of whatsoever we term flourishing; the world runneth on wheels, and there must be a vent for all things. The Ciceronian may sleep till the Scoganist hath played his part; one sure cony-catcher worthy twenty philosophers; a fantastical rimester more vendible than the notablest mathematician; no profession to the faculty of railing; all harsh, or obscure, that tickleth not idle fantasies with wanton dalliance or ruffianly jests. Robin Good-fellow the meetest author for Robin Hood's library; the less of Cambridge or Oxford, the fitter to compile works of supererogation, and we that were simply trained after the Athenian and Roman guise must be content to make room for roisters that know their place, and will take it. Titles and terms are but words of course; the right fellow, that beareth a brain, can knock twenty titles on the head at a stroke, and, with a juggling shift of that same invincible knack, defend himself manfully at the paper-bar. Though I be not greatly employed, yet my leisure will scarcely serve to moralize fables of bears, apes, and foxes (for some men can give a shrewd guess at a courtly allegory), but where lords in express terms are magnifically contemned, doctors in the same style may be courageously confuted. Liberty of tongue and pen is no bondman; nippitate will not be tied to a post; there is a cap of maintenance called impudency, and what say to him that, in a superabundance of that same odd capricious humour, findeth *no such want in England as of an Aretine, that might strip these golden asses out of their gay trappings, and after he had ridden them to death with railing, leave them on the dunghill for carrion?* A frolic mind and a brave spirit to be employed with his stripping instrument, in supply of that only want of a divine Aretine, the great rider of golden asses. Were his pen as supererogatory a workman as his heart, or his lines such transcendents as his thoughts, Lord, what an egregious Aretine should we shortly have, how excessively exceeding Aretine himself, that bestowed the surmountingest amplifications at his pleasure, and was a mere hyperbole incarnate. Time may work an accomplishment of wonders, and his grand intentions seem to prognosticate no less than the uttermost possibilities of capacity or fury extended; would God, or could the devil, give him that unmeasurable allowance of wit and art that he extremely affecteth, and infinitely wanteth, there were no encounter but of admiration and honour. But it may very well beseem me to conceal defects, and I were best to let him run out his jolly race, and to attend his pleasure at all assays, for fear he degrade me, or call me a letter-monger. Oh, would that were the worst. Gallant gentlemen, did you ever see the blades of two brandished swords in the hands of a fury? See them now, and, lo, how the victorious duellist stretcheth out the arms of his prowess, to run upon those poor *Letters* with a main career. *Aut nunc, aut nunquam*; now the deadly stroke must be stricken, now, now, he will surely lay about him like a lusty thrasher, and beat all to powder that cometh to the mighty swing of his double flail. But I know not what astonishing terror may bedim my sight, and peradventure the one of those unlawful weapons is no sword, but a shaken fire-brand in the hand of Alecto. All the worse, and he twice woe-begone, poor fool, that is at once assaulted with fire and iron, the two unmerciful instruments of Mars enraged. God shield quiet men from the hands of such cruel confuters, whose arguments are swords; whose sentences, murdering bullets; whose phrases, cross-bars; whose terms no less than serpentine powder; whose very breath, the fire of the match, all exceedingly fearful, save his footing, which may haply give him the slip. He that standeth upon a wheel, let him beware he fall not. I have heard of some feat stratagems as sly as the slyest in Frontine or Polyen, & could tell you a pretty tale of a slippery ground that would make somebody's ears glow, but he that revealeth the secret of his own advantage may have scope enough to beshrew himself. The Egyptian Mercury would provide to plant his foot upon a square, and his image in Athens was quadrangular, whatsoever was the figure of his hat, and although he were sometime a ball of fortune (who can assure himself of fortune?), yet was he never a wheel of folly or an eel of Ely. The glibbest tongue must consult with his wit, & the roundest head with his feet, or peradventure he will not greatly thank his tickle devise. The wheelwright may be as honest a man as the

cutler, the drawer as the cutter, the deviser as the printer, the worst of the six as the author, but some tools are false prophets, and some shops fuller of sophistry than Aristotle's *Elenchs*, and if never any witty deviser did subtly undermine himself, good enough. I can tell you, the wheel was an ancient hieroglyphic of the most cunning Egyptians, & figured none of their highest mysteries of triumph or glory. But when again I lift up mine eyes and behold the glorious picture of that most threatening slasher, is it possible so courageous a confuter should be less terrible than the basilisk of Orus Apollo, that with his only hissing killed the poor snakes, his neighbours? Can any *Letters* live, that he will slay? Were not patience, or submission, or any course, better than farther discourse? What fonder business than to trouble the print with pamphlets that cannot possibly live, whiles the basilisk hisseth death? Was I wont to jest at Elderton's ballading, Gascoigne's sonneting, Greene's pamphleting, Martin's libelling, Holinshed's engrossing, somebody's abridging, and whatchicalt's translating, & shall I now become a scribbling creature with fragments of shame, that might long sithence have been a fresh writer with discourses of applause? The very whole matter, what but a thing of nothing? The method, what but a hotchpot for a gallimaufry? By the one or other, what hope of public use, or private credit? Socrates' mind could as lightly digest poison as Mithridates' body, and how easily have the greatest stomachs of all ages, or rather the valiantest courages of the world, concocted the harshest and rankest injuries? Politic Philip, victorious Alexander, invincible Scipio, triumphant Caesar, happy Augustus, magnificent Titus, and the flower of the noblest minds that immortality honoureth, with a sweet facility gave many bitter reprehensions the slip, and finely rid their hands of roughest obloquies. Philosophy professeth more, and the philosopher of emperors, or rather the emperor of philosophers, Marcus Antoninus, when he deserved best, could with a felicity hear the worst. Cherish an inward contentment in thyself, my mind, and outward occurrences, whom they will not make, shall not mar. It is as great a praise to be discommended of the dishonest as to be commended of the virtuous; say, affirm, confirm, approve, justify what you can, the captain-scolld hath vowed the last word; none so bold to adventure anything as he that hath no good thing to lose. Let him forge or coin, who will believe him? Lay open his vanity or foolery, who knoweth it not? Yet who so eager to defend, or offend, with tooth or nail, by hook or crook? The art of figs had ever a dapper wit, a deft conceit, a slick forehead, a smug countenance, a stinging tongue, a nipping hand, a biting pen, and a bottomless pit of invention, stored with never-failing shifts of counterfeit cranks, and my betters by many degrees have been fain to be the godson of young Apuleius. Divers excellent men have praised the old ass; give the young ass leave to praise himself, and to practise his minion rhetoric upon other. There is no dealing where there is no healing. To strive with dirt is filthy; to play with edged tools, dangerous; to encounter Demosthenes' viper, or Apollo's basilisk, deadly. To intend your own intentions with an inviolable constancy, and to level continually at your own determined scope without respect of extravagant ends or cumbersome interruptions, the best course of proceeding, and only firm, cheerful, gallant, and happy resolution. Every by-way that strayeth or gaddeth from that direct path, a wandering error and a perilous or threatening by-way, a forest of wild beasts. Handle, touch not the rankling boil, and throw away the lancing instrument.

I could conceive no less than thus and thus, when I began first to surviue that braving empress, and ever methought, *Aut nunc, aut nunquam*, seemed to prognosticate great tempests at hand, and even such valorous works of supererogation as would make an employed man of Florence or Venice to break day with any other important business of state or traffic. I went on & on, still and still looking for those presaged wonderments, & thought it Plato's great year till I had run through the armed pikes, and felt the whole dint of the two vengeable unlawful weapons. But I believe never poor man found his imagination so hugely mocked as this confuting juggler cozened my expectation without measure, as if his whole drift had been nothing else but with a pleasurable comedy, or a mad stratagem (like those of Bacchus and Pan), quaintly devised, to defeat the opinion of his credulous

reader, and to surprise simple minds with a most unlikely event. A fine piece of conveyance in some pageants, and a brave design in fit place. Art knoweth the pageants, and policy the place. In earnest, I expected neither an orator of the stews, nor a poet of Bedlam, nor a knight of the ale-house, nor a quean of the cucking-stool, nor a broker of baggage stuff, nor a peddler of strange news, nor any base trumpery or mean matters, when Pierce should rack his wit, and Penillesse stretch out his courage to the uttermost extent of his possibility. But without more circumlocution, pride hath a fall, and as of a A [sic] cat, so of Pierce himself, howsoever inspired or enraged, you can have but his skin, puffed up with wind, and bombasted with vanity. Even when he striveth for life to show himself bravest in the flaunt-a-flaunt of his courage, and when a man could verily believe he should now behold the stately personage of heroical eloquence face to face, or see such an unseen frame of the miracles of art as might amaze the heavenly eye of astronomy, holla, sir, the sweet spheres are not too prodigal of their sovereign influences. Pardon me, St. Fame. What the first pang of his divine fury, but notable vanity? What the second fit, but worthy vanity? What the third career, but egregious vanity? What the glory of his ruffian rhetoric and courtesan philosophy, but excellent vanity? That, that is Pierce's Supererogation, and were Penillesse a person of any reckoning, as he is a man of notorious fame, that, that perhaps, in regard of the outrageous singularity, might be supposed a tragical or heroical villainy, if ever any villainy were so entitled. The present consideration of which singularity occasioneth me to bethink me of one that this other day very soberly commended some extraordinary gifts in Nashe, and when he had gravely maintained that in the resolution of his conscience he was such a fellow as some ways had few fellows, at last concluded somewhat more roundly:

Well, my masters, you may talk your pleasures of Tom Nashe, who yet sleepeth secure, not without prejudice to some that might be more jealous of their name, but assure yourselves, if M. Penillesse had not been deeply plunged in a profound ecstasy of knavery, M. Pierce had never written that famous work of supererogation that now staineth all the books in Paul's Churchyard, and setteth both the universities to school. Till I see your finest humanity bestow such a liberal exhibition of conceit and courage upon your neatest wits, pardon me though I prefer one smart pamphlet of knavery before ten blundering volumes of the nine muses. Dreaming and smoke amount alike; life is a gaming, a juggling, a scolding, a lawing, a skirmishing, a war, a comedy, a tragedy; the stirring wit, a quintessence of quicksilver, and there is no dead flesh in affection or courage. You may discourse of Hermes' ascending spirit, of Orpheus' enchanting harp, of Homer's divine fury, of Tyrtaeus' enraging trumpet, of Pericles' bouncing thunderclaps, of Plato's enthusiastical ravishment, and I wot not what marvellous eggs in moonshine, but a fie for all your flying speculations when one good-fellow with his odd jests, or one mad knave with his awk hibber-gibber, is able to put down twenty of your smuggest artificial men, that simper it so nicely and coyly in their curious points. Try, when you mean to be disgraced, & never give me credit if sanguine wit put not melancholy art to bed. I had almost said, all the figures of rhetoric must abate me an ace of Pierce's Supererogation, and Penillesse hath a certain nimble and climbing reach of invention, as good as a long pole and a hook, that never faileth at a pinch. It were unnatural, as the sweet emperor Marcus Antoninus said, that the fig-tree should ever want juice. You that purpose with great sums of study & candles to purchase the worshipful names of dunces & doddypolls may closely sit, or soakingly lie at your books, but you that intend to be fine companionable gentlemen, smirking wits and whipsters in the world, betake ye timely to the lively practice of the minion profession, and enure your Mercurial fingers to frame semblable works of supererogation. Certes other rules are fopperies, and they that will seek out the arch-mystery of the busiest modernists shall find it neither more nor less than a certain pragmatical secret called villainy, the very science of sciences, and the familiar spirit of Pierce's supererogation. Cozen not yourselves with the gay nothings of children & scholars; no privity of learning, or inspiration of wit, or revelation of mysteries, or art notary countervailable with Pierce's supererogation, which, having none of them, hath

them all, and can make them all asses at his pleasure. The book-worm was never but a peak-goose; it is the multiplying spirit, not of the alchemist, but of the villainist, that knocketh the nail on the head, and spurreth cut farther in a day than the quickest artist in a week. Whiles other are reading, writing, conferring, arguing, discoursing, experimenting, platforming, musing, buzzing, or I know not what, that is the spirit that, with a wondrous dexterity, shapeth exquisite works, and achieveth puissant exploits of supererogation. O my good friends, as ye love the sweet world, or tender you dear selves, be not unmindful what is good for the advancement of your commendable parts. All is nothing without advancement. Though my experience be a cipher in these causes, yet having studiously perused the new art-notory, that is, the foresaid supererogation, and having shaken so many learned asses by the ears, as it were by the hands, I could say no less, and might think more.

Something else was uttered the same time by the same gentleman, as well concerning the present state of France, which he termed the most unchristian kingdom of the most Christian king, as touching certain other news of I wot not what dependence, but my mind was running on my halfpenny, and my head so full of the foresaid round discourse, that my hand was never quiet until I had altered the title of the pamphlet, and newly christened it *Pierce's Supererogation*, as well in remembrance of the said discourse, as in honour of the appropriate virtues of Pierce himself, who, above all the writers that ever I knew, shall go for my money where the currentest forgery, impudency, arrogance, fantasticality, vanity, and great store of little discretion may go for payment, and the filthiest corruption of abominable villainy pass unlanced. His other miraculous perfections are still in abeyance, and his monstrous excellencies in the predicament of chimera. The bird of Arabia is long in hatching, and mighty works of supererogation are not plotted & accomplished at once. It is pity for [sic?] so hyperbolical a conceit, over-haughty for the surmounting rage of Tasso in his furious agony, should be humbled with so diminutive a wit, base enough for Elderton and the riff-raff of the scribbling rascality. I have heard of many disparagements in fellowship, but never saw so great impudency married to so little wit, or so huge presumption allied to so petty performance. I must not paint, though he daub. Pontan, decipher thy vaunting Alopantius Ausimarchides anew, and Terence, display thy boasting Thraso anew, and Plautus, address thy vainglorious Pyrgopolynices anew; here is the brat of arrogance, a gosling of the printing-house, that can teach your braggarts to play their parts in the print of wonder, & to exploit redoubtable works of supererogation, such as were never achieved in Latin or Greek, which deserve to be looked for with such a longing expectation as the Jews look for their kingly Messiah, or as I look for Agrippa's dreadful pyromachy; for Cardan's multiplied matter, that shall delude the force of the cannon; for Acontius' perfect art of fortifying little towns against the greatest battery; for the Iliads of all courtly stratagems, that Anthony magnifically promiseth; for this universal repertory of all histories, containing the memorable acts of all ages, all places, and all persons; for the new calepin of all learned and vulgar languages, written or spoken, whereof a loud rumour was lately published at Basel; for a general pandect of the laws and statutes of all nations and commonwealths in the world, largely promised by Doctor Peter Gregorius, but compendiously performed in his *Syntagma Juris Universi*; for sundry such famous volumes of huge miracles in the clouds. Do not such arch-wonderments of supernatural furniture deserve arch-expectation? What should the sons of art dream of the philosopher's stone that, like Midas, turneth into gold whatsoever it toucheth, or of the sovereign and divine quintessence that, like Aesculapius, restoreth health to sickness; like Medea, youth to old age; like Apollonius, life to death? No philosopher's stone or sovereign quintessence, howsoever precious, equivalent to such divine works of supererogation. O high-minded Pierce, had the train of your words and sentences been answerable to the retinue of your brags and threats, or the robes of your apparance in person suitable to the weeds of your ostentation in terms, I would surely have been the first that should have proclaimed you the most singular secretary of this language and the heavenliest creature under the

spheres. Sweet M. Ascham, that was a flowing spring of humanity, and worthy Sir Philip Sidney, that was a flourishing spring of nobility, must have pardoned me; I would directly have discharged my conscience. But you must give plain men leave to utter their opinion without courting; I honour high heads that stand upon low feet, & have no great affection to the gay fellows that build up with their clambering hearts, and pull down with their untoward hands. Give me the man that is meek in spirit, lofty in zeal; simple in presumption, gallant in endeavour; poor in profession, rich in performance. Some such I know, and all such I value highly. They glory not of the golden stone or the youthful quintessence, but industry is their golden stone, action their youthful quintessence, and valour their divine work of supererogation. Everyone may think as he listeth, & speak as he findeth occasion, but in my fancy they are simply the simplest fellows of all other, that boast they will exploit miracles, & come short in ordinary reckonings. Great matters are no wonders when they are menaced or promised with big oaths, and small things are marvels when they were not expected or suspected. I wondered to hear that Kelley had gotten the golden fleece, and by virtue thereof was suddenly advanced unto so honourable reputation with the emperor's Majesty, but would have wondered more to have seen a work of supererogation from Nashe, whose wit must not enter the lists of comparison with Kelley's alchemy, howsoever he would seem to have the green lion and the flying eagle in a box. But Kelley will bid him look to the swollen toad, & the daunting fool. Kelley knoweth his *lutum sapientiae*, and useth his terms of art. Silence is a great mystery, and loud words but a cowherd's horn. He that breedeth mountains of hope, and with much ado begetteth a molehill (shall I tell him a new tale in old English?), beginneth like a mighty ox, & endeth like a sorry ass. To achieve it without ostentation is a notable praise, but to vaunt it without achievement, or to threaten it without effect, is but a double proof of a simple wit. Execution showeth the ability of the man; presumption bewrayeth the vanity of the mind. The sun saith not: I will thus and thus display my glorious beams, but shineth indeed; the spring braggeth not of gallant flowers, but flourisheth indeed; the harvest boasteth not of plentiful fruit, but fructifieth indeed. Aesop's fellows, being asked what they could do, answered they could do anything, but Aesop, making a small show, could do much indeed; the Greek sophisters, knowing nothing in comparison (knowledge is a dry water), professed a skill in all things, but Socrates, knowing in a manner all things (Socrates was a springing rock), professed a skill in nothing; Lullius and his sectaries have the signet of Hermes and the admirable art of disputing infinitely *de omni scibili*, but Agrippa, one of the universallest scholars that Europe hath yielded, and such a one as some learned men of Germany, France, & Italy entitled the omniscious Doctor, Socratically declaimeth against the vanity of sciences, and for my comfort penneth the apology of the ass. Never any of these prating vagabonds had the virtuous elixir, or other important secret (yet who such monarchs for phisic, chirurgery, spagyric, astrology, palmistry, natural & supernatural magic, necromancy, familiar-spiritship, and all profound cunning, as some of these arrant impostors?); he is a Pythagorean, and a close fellow of his tongue & pen, that hath the right magisterium indeed, and can dispatch with the finger of art that they promise with the mouth of cozenage. They that vaunt, do it not, & they that pretend least, accomplish most. High-spirited Pierce, do it indeed, that thou crakest in vain, and I will honour thy work, that scorn thy word. When there was no need, thy breath was the mouth of Aetna, & like a Cyclops, thou didst forge thunder in Mongibello; now the warring planet was expected in person, and the fiery trigon seemed to give the alarm, thou *talkest of cat's-meat and dog's-meat enough*, and wilt try it out by the teeth at the sign of the dog's-head in the pot. Oh, what a chattering monkey is here, & oh, what a dog-fly is the dog-star proved? Elderton would have answered this gear out of cry, or had I the wit of Scogan, I could say something to it, but I looked for cat's-meat in aquafortis, & dog's-meat in gunpowder, & can no skill of these terms steeped in thy mother's gutter, & thy father's kennel. Nay, if you will needs strike it as dead as a door-nail, and run upon me with the blade of cat's-meat, & the fire-brand of dog's-meat, I have done. Or in case your meaning be, as you stoutly protest, to trounce me after twenty in the hundred, *and to have about* [sic] *with me with two staves and a pike*, like a tall fellow of

Cracovia, there is no dealing for short weapons. Young Martin was an old hackster, & had you played your master's prizes in his time, he peradventure durst have looked those two staves in the face, and would have desired that pike of some more acquaintance, but truce keep me out of his hands that fighteth furiously with two staves of cat's-meat and a pike of dog's-meat, and is resolutely bent the best blood of the brothers shall pledge him in vinegar. Happy it is no worse than vinegar, a good sauce for cat's-meat and dog's-meat. Gentlemen, you that think promise a bond, and use to perform more than you threaten, never believe braggadocio again for his sake. When he hath done his best and his worst, trust me, or credit your own eyes, his best best is but cat's-meat, & his worst worst but dog's-meat enough. What should I go circuiting about the bush? He taketh the shortest cut to the wood, and dispatcheth all controversies in a few significant terms, not those of gunpowder, which would ask some charging and discharging, but these of dog's-meat, which are up with a vomit. He that is not so little as the third Cato from heaven, or the eighth wise man upon earth, may speak with authority, and christen me *a dunce, a fool, an idiot, a dolt, a goose-cap, an ass*, and I wot not what, as filthy as filthy may be. Dogged impudency hath his proper idiotism, & very clerkly schooleth the ears of modesty to spell fa-fe-fi-fo-fu. Simple wits would be dealt plainly withal; I stand not upon coy or nice points, but am one of those that would gladly learn their own imperfections, errors and follies, *in specialissima specie*: Be it known unto all men by these presents that Thomas Nashe, from the top of his wit, looking down upon simple creatures, calleth Gabriel Harvey a dunce, a fool, an idiot, a dolt, a goose-cap, an ass, and so forth (for some of the residue is not to be spoken but with his own mannerly mouth), but the wise man in print should have done well in his learned confutation to have showed particularly which words in my *Letters* were the words of a dunce; which sentences, the sentences of a fool; which arguments, the arguments of an idiot; which opinions, the opinions of a dolt; which conclusions, the conclusions of an ass. Either this would be done (for I suppose he would be loath to prove some asses that in favour have written otherwise, and in reason are to verify their own testimonies), or he must be fain himself to eat his own cat's-meat, & dog's-meat, and swallow down a dunce, a fool, an idiot, a dolt, a goose-cap, an ass in his own throat, the proper case of his filthiest excrements, and the sink of the famous rascal that had rather be a polecat with a stinking stir than a musk-cat with gracious favour. Pardon me, gentle civility; if I did not tender you, & disclaim impudency, I could do him some piece of right, & show him his well-favoured face in a crystal, as true as Gascoigne's steel glass. But *trust him not for a dodkin* (it is his own request) *if ever I did my Doctor's acts*, which a thousand heard in Oxford, and some knew to be done with as little premeditation as ever such acts were done (for I answered upon the questions that were given me by Doctor Cathedrae but two days before, and read my cursory lecture with a day's warning), or if I be not *a fawn-guest messenger between M. Christopher Bird*, in whose company I never dined or supped these six years, and *M. Emmanuel Demetrius*, with whom I never drank to this day. Other matters, touching *her Highness' affability toward scholars* (so her Majesty's favour towards me must be interpreted); the *privy watchword of honourable men* in their letters commendatory, *even in the highest degree of praising* (so our high chancellor's commendation must be qualified); Nashe's grave censure of *public invectives and satires* (so Harvey's slight opinion of contentious and seditious libels must be crossbitten); his testimony of *Cicero's consolation ad Dolabellam*, which he will needs father upon me in reproach, though his betters will never pen such a piece of Latin, whosoever were the step-Tully); his derision of the most profitable and valorous *mathematical arts* (whose industry hath achieved wonders of mightier puissance than the labours of Hercules); his contempt of *the worthiest persons* in every faculty (which he always censureth as his punies and underlings); *his palpable atheism, and drinking a cup of lamb's-wool to the Lamb of God*; his gibing at *heaven* (the haven where my deceased brother is arrived); with a deep cut out of his grammar rules, *Astra petit disertus*, the very stars are scars where he listeth; and a hundred such and such particularities that require some larger discourse, show him to be a young man of the greenest spring, as beardless in judgement as in face, and as Penillesse in wit as in purse. It

is the least of his famous adventures that he undertaketh to be *Greene's advocate*, as divine Plato assayed to defend Socrates at the bar, and I know not whether it be the least of his doughty exploits that he salveth his friend's credit as that excellent disciple saved his master's life. He may declare his dear affection to his paramour, or his pure honesty to the world, or his constant zeal to play the devil's orator, but no apology of Greene like *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*, and when Nashe will indeed accomplish a work of supererogation, let him publish Nashe's Pennyworth of Discretion. If he be learned or wiser than other in so large an assize as should appear by the report of his own mouth, it is the better for him, but it were not amiss he should sometime look back to the budget of ignorance and folly that hangeth behind him, as otherwhiles he condescendeth to glance at the satchel of his grammar books. Calumny & her cousin-german, impudency, will not always hold out rubbers, and they need not greatly brag of their harvest that make fantasy the root, vanity the stalk, folly the ear, penury the crop, and shame the whole substance of their studies. To be over-bold with one or two is something, to be saucy with many is much, to spare few or none is odious, to be impudent with all is intolerable. There were fair play enough though foul play were debarred, but boys, fools, and knaves take all in snuff when the variance might be debated in the language of courtesy, and nothing but horse-play will serve, where the colt is disposed to play the jade. Did I list to persecute him in his own vein, or were I not restrained with respective terms of divine and civil moderation, O Aretine, how pleurably might I canvass the bawling cur in a tossing-sheet of paper, or O Gryson, who could more easily discover a new art of riding a headstrong beast? But that which Nashe accounteth the bravery of his wit, and the double crest of his style, I am in discretion to cut off, and in modesty yield it his only glory to have the foulest mouth that I ever saw, and the strongest breath that I ever smelled. When witty girding faileth, as it pitifully faileth in every page of that supererogatory work, Lord, what odious baggage, what rascal stuff, what villainous trumpery filleth up the leaf, and how egregiously would he play the vengeable sycophant if the conveyance of his art or wit were in any measure of proportion correspondent to his pestilent stomach? But in the fellest fit of his fury, even when he runneth upon me with openest mouth, & his spite, like a poisonous toad, swelleth in the full, as if some huge tympany of wit would presently possess his brain, or some horrible fiery sprite would fly in my face, and blast me to nothing, then good Dick Tarleton is dead, & nothing alive but cat's-meat & dog's-meat enough. Nay, were it not that he had dealt politicly in providing himself an authentical surety, or rather a mighty protector at a pinch, such a devoted friend and inseparable companion as Aeneas was to Achates, Pylades to Orestes, Diomedes to Ulysses, Achilles to Patroclus, and Hercules to Theseus, doubtless he had been utterly undone. Compare old and new histories of far & near countries, and you shall find the late manner of *sworn brothers* to be no new fashion, but an ancient guise and heroical order, devised for necessity, continued for security, and maintained for profit and pleasure. One man, nobody, and a daily friend as necessary as our daily bread. No treasure more precious, no bond more indefeasible, no castle more impregnable, no force more invincible, no truth more infallible, no element more needful, than an entire & assured associate, ever pressed, as well in calamity to comfort or in adversity to relieve, as in prosperity to congratulate or in advancement to honour. Life is sweet, but not without sweet society, & an inward affectionate friend (as it were *another the same, or a second self*), the very life of life, and the sweetheart of the heart. Nashe is learned, and knoweth his liripoop. Where was Euryalus, there was Nisus; where Damon, there Pythias; where Scipio, there Laelius; where Apollonius, there Damides; where Proclus, there Archiadas; where Pyrocles, there Musidorus; where Nashe, there his Nisus, his Pythias, his Laelius, his Damides, his Archiadas, his Musidorus, his indivisible companion, with whose puissant help he conquereth, wheresoever he rangeth. Nay, Homer not such an author for Alexander, nor Xenophon for Scipio, nor Virgil for Augustus, nor Justin for Marcus Aurelius, nor Livy for Theodosius Magnus, nor Caesar for Selimus, nor Philip de Comines for Charles the Fifth, nor Machiavel for some late princes, nor Aretine for some late courtesans, as his author for him, the sole author of renowned victory. Marvel not that Erasmus hath penned the

encomium of folly, or that so many singular learned men have laboured the commendation of the ass; he it is that is the godfather of writers, the superintendent of the press, the muster-master of innumerable bands, the general of the great field; he and Nashe will confute the world. And where is the eagle's quill that can sufficiently advance the first spoils of their new conquests? Whist, sorry pen, and be advised how thou presume above the highest pitch of thy possibility. He that hath christened so many notable authors, censured so many eloquent pens, enrolled so many worthy garrisons, & encamped so many noble and reverend lords, may be bold with me. If I be an ass, I have company enough, and if I be an ass, I have favour to be installed in such company. The name will shortly grow in request, as it sometime flourished in glorious Rome, and who then will not sue to be free of that honourable company? Whiles they are ridden, I desire not to be spared; when the hotspur is a-weary with tiring them, he will scarcely trouble himself with a skin. Or if he do, I may chance acquaint him with a secret indistillation; he that drinketh oil of pricks shall have much ado to void syrup of roses, and he that eateth nettles for provender hath a privilege to piss upon lilies for litter. Paul's Wharf honour the memory of old John Hester, that would not stick with his friend for twenty such experiments, & would often tell me of a magistral unguent for all sores. Who knoweth not that magistral unguent, knoweth nothing, and who hath that magistral unguent, feareth no gun-shot. The confuter meant to be famous like Poggius, that all-to be-assed Valla, Trapezuntius, and their defendants, many learned Italians, or might have given a guess at some possible afterclaps, as good as a prognostication of an after-winter. Though Pierce Penillesse, for a spurt, were a rank rider, and like an arrant knight over-ran nations with a career, yet Thomas Nashe might have been advised, and in policy have spared them that in compassion favoured him, and were unfeignedly sorry to find his miserable estate, as well in his style as in his purse, and in his wit as in his fortune. Some complexions have much ado to alter their nature, & Nashe will carry a tache of Pierce to his grave (we have worse proverbs in English), yet who seeth not what apparent good my *Letters* have done him, that before over-crowed all comers and goers with like discretion, but now, forsooth, hath learned some few handsome terms of respect, and very mannerly beclaweth a few, that he might the more licentious besmear one. St. Fame give him joy of his black [coal], and his white chalk.

Who is not limned with some default, or who readier to confess his own imperfections than myself? But when in professed hatred, liked a mortal feudist, he hath uttered his very uttermost spite, & wholly disgorged his rancorous stomach, yet can he not so much as devise any particular action of trespass, or object any certain vice against me, but only one grievous crime called pumps and pantofles (which indeed I have worn, ever since I knew Cambridge), & his own dearest heart-root, pride, which, I protest before God and man, my soul in judgement as much detesteth as my body in nature loatheth poison, or anything abhorreth his deadly enemy, even amongst those creatures which are found fatally contrary by natural antipathy. It is not excess, but defect, of pride that hath broken the head of some men's preferment. Aspiring minds can soar aloft, and self-conceit, with the countenance of audacity, the tongue of impudency, & the hand of dexterity, presseth boldly into the forwardest throng of the shouldering rank, whiles discretion hath leisure to discourse whether somedeal of modesty were meeter for many that presume above their condition, and somedeal of self-liking fitter for some that have felt no greater want than want of pride. It may seem a rude disposition that sorteth not with the quality of the age, & policy deemeth that virtue a vice; that modesty, simplicity; that resoluteness, dissoluteness; that conformeth not itself with a supple & deft correspondence to the present time, but no such ox in my mind as Tarquinius Superbus, no such calf as Spurius Maelius, no such colt as Publius Clodius, no such ape as Lucian's rhetorician, or the devil's orator. Blind ambition, a noble bayard; proud arrogancy, a golden ass; vain conceit, a gaudy peacock; all bravery that is not effectual, a gay nothing. He upbraideth me with his own good nature, but where such an insolent braggart, or such a puffing thing, as himself, that in magnifying his own bauble, & debasing me, revileth them whose books or pantofles he is not worthy to bear. If I be an

ass, what asses were those courteous friends, those excellent learned men, those worshipful & honourable personages, whose letters of undeserved but singular commendation may be shown? What an ass was thyself, when thou didst publish my praise amongst the notablest writers of this realm? Or what an ass art thyself, that in the spitefullest outrage of thy maddest confutation, dost otherwhiles interlace some remembrances of more account than I can acknowledge without vanity, or desire without ambition? The truth is, I stand as little upon others' commendation or mine own titles as any man in England whosoever if there be nothing else to solicit my cause, but being so shamefully and intolerably provoked in the most villainous terms of reproach, I were indeed a notorious insensate ass in case I should either sottishly neglect the reputation of so worthy favourers, or utterly abandon mine own credit. Sweet gentlemen, renowned knights, and honourable lords, be not ashamed of your letters, unprinted or written; if I live, seeing I must either live in *tenebris* with obloquy, or in *luce* with proof, by the leave of God I will prove myself no ass. I speak not only to M. Bird, M. Spenser, or Monsieur Bodin, whom he nothing regardeth (yet I would his own learning or judgement were any way matchable with the worst of the three), but, amongst a number of sundry other learned and gallant gentlemen, to M. Thomas Watson, a notable poet; to M. Thomas Hatcher, a rare antiquary; to M. Daniel Rogers of the court; to Doctor Griffin Floyd, the Queen's professor of law at Oxford; to Doctor Peter Baro, a professor of divinity in Cambridge; to Doctor Bartholomew Clerke, late Dean of the Arches; to Doctor William Lewen, judge of the Prerogative Court; to Doctor John Thomas Freigius, a famous writer of Germany; to Sir Philip Sidney; to M. Secretary Wilson; to Sir Thomas Smith; to Sir Walter Mildmay; to milord the bishop of Rochester; to milord Treasurer; to milord the Earl of Leicester, unto whose worshipful and honourable favours I have been exceedingly beholding for letters of extraordinary commendation, such as some of good experience have doubted whether they ever vouchsafed the like unto any of either university. I beseech God I may deserve the least part of their good opinion, either in effectual proof or in dutiful thankfulness, but how little soever I presume of mine own sufficiency (he that knoweth himself hath small cause to conceive any high hope of low means), as in reason I was not to flatter myself with their bountiful commendation, so in judgement I am not to aggrieve myself with the odious detraction of this pestilent libeller, or any like despiteous slanderer, but in patience am to digest the one with moderation, as in temperance I qualified the other with modesty. Some would say, *What is the peevish grudge of one beggarly rake-hell to so honourable liking of so many excellent, & some singular, men*, but God in heaven teach me to take good by my adversary's invective, and no harm by my favourers' approbation. It is neither the one nor the other that deserveth evil or well, but the thing itself that edifieth, without which praise is smoke, and with which dispraise is fire. Let me enjoy that essential point, & hawk, or hunt, or fish after praise, you that list. Many contumelious and more glorious reports have passed from enemies & friends without cause, or upon small occasion; that is the only infamy that cannot acquit itself from guiltiness, & that the only honour that is grounded upon desert. Other winds of defamation want matter to uphold it, and other shadows of glory lack a body to support it. In unhappiness they are happy of whose bad amounteth good, & in happiness they unhappy whose good proveth bad, as glory eftsoons followeth them that fly from it, and flieth from them that follow it. There is a term probatory that will not lie, and commendations are never authentical until they be signed with the seal of approved desert, the only infallible testimonial. Desert (maugre envy, the companion of virtue), Socrates' highway of honour, & the total sum of Osorius' *De Gloria*. I will not enter into Machiavel's discourses, Jovius' elegies, Cardan's nativities, Cosmopolite's dialogues, or later histories in divers languages, but some worthily continue honourable whom they make dishonourable, & contrariwise, reason hath an even hand, and dispenseth to everyone his right. Art amplifieth, or extenuateth, at occasion. The residue is the liberality of the pen, or the poison of the ink; in logic, sophistry; in law, injury; in history, a fable; in divinity, a lie. Horace, a sharp and sententious poet, after his pithy manner compriseth much in few words:

*Falsus honor iuuat, & mendax infamia terret,
Quem nisi mendacem, & mendosum?*

For mine own part, I am reasonably resolute both ways, & stand afraid of fantastical discredit as I esteem imaginative credit, or a contemplative banquet. It fitteth not with the profession of a philosopher, or the constancy of a man, to carry the mind of a child, or an youth, or a woman, or a slave, or a tyrant, or a beast. That resteth not in my power to reform or alter, I were very unwise if I should not endure with patience, mitigate with reason, & contemn with pleasure. Only I can be content in certain behooveful respects to yield a piece of a satisfaction unto some that require it in affectionate terms, and what honest mind, in case of mortality, hath not a care how the posterity may be informed of him? Other reasons I have elsewhere assigned, and am here to present a vow to humility, in detestation of that which my disposition abhorreth.

As for his lewd supposals & imputations of counterfeit praises, without any probability of circumstance, or the least suspicion but in his own vengeable malicious head, the common forge of pestilent surmises and arrant slanders, they are, like my imprisonment in the Fleet, of his own strong fantasy, and do but intimate his own skill in falsifying of evidence and suborning of witnesses to his purpose; he museth as he useth, & the goodwife her mother would never have sought her daughter in the oven if herself had not been acquainted with such shifts of cunning conveyance. He was never a non-proficient in good matters, and hath not studied his fellow's *Art of Cony-Catching* for nothing. Examine the printer's gentle preamble before the *Supplication to the Devil*, and tell me in good sooth, by the verdict of the touchstone, whether Pierce Penillesse commend Pierce Penillesse, or no, and whether that sorry praise of the author Thomas Nashe be not loathsome from the printer Thomas Nashe. In conjectural causes I am not to avouch anything, and I mentioned not any such supposition before, but the tenor of the style, &, as it were, the identity of the phrase, together with this new descant of his profound insight into forgery, may after a sort tell tales out of the title *De Secretis non reuelandis*, & yield a certain strong savour of a vehement presumption. There is pregnant evidence enough, though I leave probable conjectures & violent presumption where I found them. His life daily feedeth his style, and his style notoriously bewrayeth his life. But what is that to me, or the world, how Nashe liveth, or how the poor fellow his father hath put him to his foisting and scribbling shifts, his only *gloria patri*, when all is done. Rule thy desperate infamous pen, & be the son of a mule, or the printer's gentleman, or what thou wilt for me. If thou wilt needs derive thy pedigree from the noble blood of the kill-pricks and child-beards, kings of France, what commission have I to sit upon genealogies, or to call nobility in question? If thou beest disposed to speak as thou livest, & to live like Tonosconcoleros, the famous Babylonian king, in courtesy or in policy forbear one that is not over-hasty to trouble himself with troubling other. What I have heard credibly reported, I can yet be content to smother in silence, & neither threaten thee with Tyburn, nor Newgate, nor Oldgate, nor Counter, nor Fleet, nor any public penance, but wish thy amendment, and dare not be too saucy with your good qualities, lest you confute my Mastership of Art as you have done my Doctorship of Law. Never poor doctorship was so confuted. The best is, I dote not upon it, and would rather be actually degraded than any way disparage the degree, or derogate from them that are worthier of it. Rest you quiet, and I will not only not struggle with you for a title, but offer here to renounce the whole advantage of a late inquisition upon a clamorous denunciation of St. Fame herself, who presumed she might be as bold to play the blab with you, as you were to play the sloven with her. Or if your pen be so rank that it cannot stand upon any ground but the soil of calumny in the muck-yard of impudency, or your tongue so laxative that it must utterly utter a great horrible deal more than all, whist awhile, and for your instruction, till some pregnanter lessons come abroad, I will briefly tell you in your ear a certain familiar history of more than one or two breakfasts wherein some eight or nine eggs, & a pound of butter, for your poor part, with God's plenty of other victuals, & wine enough, poured in by

quarts and pottles, was a scant pittance for an invincible stomach, two hours before his ordinary. I have read of Apicius' and Epicure's philosophy, but I perceive you mean not to be accounted a Phythagorean or a Stoic. What, gorge upon gorge, eggs upon eggs, & sack upon sack, at these years? Byrlady, Sir Kill-prick, you must provide for a hot kitchen against you grow old, if you purpose to live Doctor Perne's or Doctor Kenold's years. Such egging and whittling may happen bring you acquainted with the triumphant chariot of rotten eggs, if you take not the better order in time with one or two of the seven deadly sins. I will not offend your stomach with the nice and quaint regiment of the dainty Platonists or pure Pythagoreans; fine theurgy, too gaunt and meagre a doctrine for the devil's orator; if the art-notory cannot be gotten without fasting and praying, muchgodich them that have it; let fantastical or superstitious abstinence dance in the air like Aristophanes' clouds or Apuleius' witches; your own method of those deadly sins be your *Castle of Health*. No remedy, you must be dieted, & let blood in the cephalica vein of asses, fools, dolts, idiots, dunces, doddypolls, and so forth infinitely, & never trust me if you be not as tame-tongued and barren-witted as other honest men of Lombardy & the Low Countries. Tush, man, I see deeper into thee than thou seest into thyself; thou hast a superficial tang of some little something, as good as nothing, and a running wit, as fisking as any fisgig, but as shallow as Trumpington ford, and as slight as the new workmanship of gewgaws to please children, or of toys to mock apes, or of trinkets to conquer savages. Only in that singular vein of asses thou art incomparable, and such an egregious arrant fool-monger as liveth not again. She knew what she said that entitled Pierce the hogshead of wit; Penillesse, the tospot of eloquence; & Nashe, the very inventor of asses. She it is that must broach the barrel of thy frisking conceit, and canonize the patriarch of new writers.

I will not here decipher thy unprinted packet of bawdry and filthy rimes in the nastiest kind; there is a fitter place for that discovery of thy foulest shame, & the whole ruffianism of thy brothel muse, if she still prostitute her obscene ballads, and will needs be a young courtesan of old knavery. Yet better a confuter of *Letters* than a confounder of manners, and better the dog's-meat of Agrippa, or cat's-meat of Poggius, than the swine's-meat of Martial, or goat's-meat of Aretine. Cannot an Italian ribald vomit out the infectious poison of the world, but an English horel-lorel must lick it up for a restorative, and attempt to putrify gentle minds with the vilest impostumes of lewd corruption? Fie on impure Ganymedes, hermaphrodites, Neronists, Messalinists, dodecomechanists, capricians, inventors of new, or revivers of old, lecheries, and the whole brood of venereous libertines, that know no reason but appetite, no law but lust, no humanity but villainy, no divinity but atheism. Such riotous and incestuous humours would be lanced, not feasted; the devil is eloquent enough to play his own orator; his dam, an old bawd, wanteth not the brokage of a young poet. Wanton spirits were always busy, & Duke Allocer on his lusty cock-horse is a hot familiar. The sons of Adam & the daughters of Eve have no need of the serpent's carouse to set them agog; Sodom still burneth, and although fire from heaven spare Gomorra, yet Gomorra still consumeth itself. Even amorous sonnets in the gallantest and sweetest civil vein are but dainties of a pleasurable wit, or junkets of a wanton liver, or buds of an idle head; whatsoever sprouteth farther would be lopped. Petrarch's invention is pure love itself, and Petrarch's elocution, pure beauty itself; his Laura was the Daphne of Apollo, not the Thisbe of Pyramus; a delicious Sappho, not a lascivious Lais; a saving Hester, not a destroying Helena; a nymph of Diana, not a courtesan of Venus. Aretine's muse was an egregious bawd, & a haggish witch of Thessalia, but Petrarch's verse a fine lover, that learneth of Mercury to exercise his fairest gifts in a fair subject, & teacheth wit to be enamoured upon beauty, as quicksilver embraceth gold, or as virtue affecteth honour, or as astronomy gazeth upon heaven, to make art more excellent by contemplation of excellentest nature. Petrarch was a delicate man, and with an elegant judgement graciously confined love within the limits of honour, wit within the bounds of discretion, eloquence within the terms of civility, as not many years sithence an English Petrarch did, a singular gentleman and a sweet poet, whose verse singeth as valour might speak, and whose ditty is an image of the sun, vouchsafing to represent his

glorious face in a cloud. What speak I of one or two English paragons? Or what should I blazon the gallant and brave metres of Ariosto and Tasso, always notable, sometimes admirable? All the noblest Italian, French, and Spanish poets have, in their several veins, Petrarchified, that is, loved wittily, not grossly; lived civilly, not lewdly; and written deliciously, not wantonly. And it is no dishonour for the daintiest or divinest muse to be his scholar whom the amiablest invention and beautifullest elocution acknowledge their master. All posterity honour Petrarch, that was the harmony of heaven, the life of poetry, the grace of art, a precious tablet of rare conceits, & a curious frame of exquisite workmanship, nothing but neat wit and refined eloquence. Were the amorous muse of my enemy such a lively spring of sweetest flowers, & such a living harvest of ripest fruits, I would abandon other loves to dote upon that most lovely muse, and would debase the diamond in comparison of that most diamond muse. But out upon rank & loathsome ribaldry, that putrieth where it should purify, and presumeth to deflower the most flourishing wits with whom it consorteth, either in familiarity, or by favour. One Ovid was too much for Rome, and one Greene too much for London, but one Nashe more intolerable than both, not because his wit is anything comparable, but because his will is more outrageous. Ferrara could scarcely brook Manardus, a poisonous physician; Mantua hardly bear Pomponatius, a poisonous philosopher; Florence more hardly tolerate Machiavel, a poisonous politician; Venice most hardly endure Aretine, a poisonous ribald; had they lived in absolute monarchies, they would have seemed utterly insupportable. Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, Muscovy, are no soils of any such wits, but neither France, nor Spain, nor Turkey, nor any puissant kingdom in one or other monarchy of the old or new world could ever abide any such pernicious writers, depravers of common discipline. England, since it was England, never bred more honourable minds, more adventurous hearts, more valorous hands, or more excellent wits, than of late; it is enough for filly-folly to intoxicate itself, though it be not suffered to defile the land which the water environeth, the earth enricheth, the air ensweeteneth, and the heaven blesseth. The bounteous graces of God are sown thick, but come up thin. Corruption had little need to be fostered; wantonness will be a nurse, a bawd, a poet, a legend to itself; virtue hath much ado to hold out inviolably her purposed course. Resolution is a forward fellow, and valour a brave man, but affections are infectious, and appetite must sometime have his swing. Were appetite a loyal subject to reason, and will an affectionate servant to wisdom, as labour is a dutiful vassal to commodity, and travail a flying post to honour, O heavens, what exploits of worth, or rather what miracles of excellency, might be achieved in an age of policy, & a world of industry. The date of idle vanities is expired; away with these scribbling paltries; there is another Sparta in hand, that indeed requireth Spartan temperance, Spartan frugality, Spartan exercise, Spartan valiancy, Spartan perseverance, Spartan invincibility, and hath no wanton leisure for the comedies of Athens, nor any bawdy hours for the songs of Priapus, or the rimes of Nashe. Had he begun to Aretinize when Elderton began to ballad, Gascoigne to sonnet, Turberville to madrigal, Drant to versify, or Tarleton to extemporize, some part of his fantastical bibble-babbles and capricious pangs might have been tolerated in a green and wild youth, but the wind is changed, & there is a busier pageant upon the stage. M. Ascham's *Toxophilus* long sithence shot at a fairer mark, and M. Gascoigne himself, after some riper experience, was glad to try other conclusions in the Low Countries, and bestowed an honourable commendation upon Sir Humfrey Gilbert's gallant discourse of a discovery for a new passage to the East Indies. But read the report of the worthy western discoveries by the said Sir Humfrey Gilbert; the report of the brave West Indian voyage by the conduction of Sir Francis Drake; the report of the horrible septentrional discoveries by the travel of Sir Martin Frobisher; the report of the politic discovery of Virginia by the colony of Sir Walter Raleigh; the report of sundry other famous discoveries & adventures published by M. Richard Hakluyt in one volume, a work of importance; the report of the hot welcome of the terrible Spanish Armada to the coast of England, that came in glory and went in dishonour; the report of the redoubted voyage into Spain and Portugal, whence the brave Earl of Essex, and the two valorous generals, Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake,

returned with honour; the report of the resolute encounter about the Isles Azores, betwixt the Revenge of England and an armada of Spain, in which encounter brave Sir Richard Grenville most vigorously & impetuously attempted the extremest possibilities of valour and fury. For brevity, I overskip many excellent tracts of the same, or the like, nature, but read these, and M. William Burgh's notable discourse of the variation of the compass, or magnetical needle, annexed to the new *Attractive* of Robert Norman, hydrographer, unto which two England, in some respects, is as much beholding as Spain unto Martin Cortez & Peter de Medina for the *Art of Navigation*, and when you have observed the course of industry, examined the antecedents and consequents of travail, compared English and Spanish valour, measured the forces of both parties, weighed every circumstance of advantage, considered the means of our assurance, and finally found profit to be our pleasure, provision our security, labour our honour, warfare our welfare, who of reckoning can spare any lewd or vain time for corrupt pamphlets, or who of judgement will not cry, *Away with these paltering fiddle-faddles!* When Alexander in his conquerous expeditions visited the ruins of Troy, and revolved in his mind the valiant acts of the heroical worthies there achieved, one offered to bring his Majesty the harp of Paris. *Let it alone*, quote [sic?] he, *it is the harp of Achilles that must serve my turn*. Paris upon his harp sang voluptuous & lascivious carols; Achilles' harp was an instrument of glory, and a choir of divine hymns consecrated to the honour of valorous captains and mighty conquerors. He regarded not the dainty Lydian, Ionian, or Aeolian melody, but the brave Dorian and impetuous Phrygian music, and waged Zenophantus to inflame and enrage his courage with the furious notes of battle. One Alexander was a thousand examples of prowess, but Pyrrhus, the redoubted king of the Epirots, was another Alexander in tempestuous execution, and in a most noble resolution contemned the vanities of un noble pastimes, insomuch that, when one of his barons asked his Majesty whether of the two musicians, Charisius or Python, pleased his Highness better, *Whether of the two*, quoth Pyrrhus, *marry, Polysperces shall go for my money*. He was a brave captain for the eye, & a fit musician for the ear, of Pyrrhus. Happy Polysperces, that served such a master, and happy Pyrrhus, that commanded such a servant. Were some demanded whether Greene's or Nashe's pamphlets were better penned, I believe they would answer, Sir Roger Williams' *Discourse of War* for militar doctrine *in esse*, and M. Thomas Digges' *Stratiticos* for militar discipline *in esse*. And whiles I remember the princely ear of Gelo, a famous tyrant of Sicil (many tyrants of Sicil were very politic), that commanded his great horse to be brought into the banqueting house, where other lords called for the harp, other knights for the waits, I cannot forget the gallant discourses of horsemanship penned by a rare gentleman, M. John Astley, of the court, whom I dare entitle our English Xenophon, and marvel not that Pietro Bizzaro, a learned Italian, proposeth him for a perfect pattern of Castilio's *Courtier*. And thinking upon worthy M. Astley, I cannot overpass the like labour of good M. Thomas Blundeville without due commendation, whose painful and skilful books of horsemanship serve also to be registered in the catalogue of Xenophontean works. What should I speak of the two brave knights, Musidorus and Pyrocles, combined in one excellent knight, Sir Philip Sidney, at the remembrance of whose worthy and sweet virtues my heart melteth? Will you needs have a written palace of pleasure, or rather a printed court of honour? Read *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, a gallant legendary, full of pleasurable accidents and profitable discourses, for three things especially very notable: for amorous courting (he was young in years), for sage counselling (he was ripe in judgement), and for valorous fighting (his sovereign profession was arms), and delightful pastime by way of pastoral exercise may pass for the fourth. He that will love, let him learn to love of him, that will teach him to live, & furnish him with many pithy and effectual instructions, delectably interlaced by way of proper descriptions of excellent personages, and common narrations of other notable occurrences, in the vein of Salust, Livy, Cornelius Tacitus, Justine, Eutropius, Philip de Comines, Guicciardine, and the most sententious historians, that have powdered their style with the salt of discretion, and seasoned their judgement with the leaven of experience. There want not some little stratagems of importance, and some politic secrets of privity, and he that would skilfully and

bravely manage his weapon with a cunning fury may find lively precepts in the gallant examples of his valiantest duellists, especially of Palladius and Daiphantus, Zelmaine and Amphialus, Phalantus and Amphialus, but chiefly of Argalus and Amphialus, Pyrocles and Anaxius, Musidorus and Amphialus, whose lusty combats may seem heroical monomachies. And that the valour of such redoubted men may appear the more conspicuous and admirable by comparison and interview of their contraries, smile at the ridiculous encounters of Dametas & Dorus, of Dametas and Clinias, and ever when you think upon Dametas, remember the confuting champion, more surquidrous than Anaxius, and more absurd than Dametas, and if I should always hereafter call him Dametas, I should fit him with a name as naturally proper unto him as his own. Gallant gentlemen, you that honour virtue, and would enkindle a noble courage in your minds to every excellent purpose, if Homer be not at hand (whom I have often termed the prince of poets, and the poet of princes), you may read his furious *Iliads* & cunning *Odysseys* in the brave adventures of Pyrocles and Musidorus, where Pyrocles playeth the doughty fighter, like Hector or Achilles; Musidorus the valiant captain, like Pandarus or Diomedes; both, the famous errant knights, like Aeneas or Ulysses. Lord, what would himself have proved in fine, that was the gentleman of courtesy, the esquire of industry, and the knight of valour at those years? Live ever, sweet book, the silver image of his gentle wit and the golden pillar of his noble courage, and ever notify unto the world that thy writer was the secretary of eloquence, the breath of the muses, the honey-bee of the daintiest flowers of wit and art, the pith of moral & intellectual virtues, the arm of Bellona in the field, the tongue of Suada in the chamber, the spirit of practice *in esse*, and the paragon of excellency in print. And now whiles I consider what a trumpet of honour Homer hath been to stir up many worthy princes, I cannot forget the worthy prince that is a Homer in himself, a golden spur to nobility, a sceptre to virtue, a verdure to the spring, a sun to the day, and hath not only translated the two divine poems of Salustius du Bartas, his heavenly *Urany* and his hellish *Furies*, but hath read a most valorous marital lecture unto himself in his own victorious *Lepanto*, a short but heroical work in metre, but royal metre, fit for David's harp. Lepanto, first the glory of Christendom against the Turk, and now the garland of a sovereign crown. When young kings have such a care of their flourishing prime, and like Cato are ready to render an account of their vacant hours, as if April were their July, and May their August, how should gentlemen of years employ the golden talent of their industry and travail, with what fervency, with what vigour, with what zeal, with what incessant and indefatigable endeavour? Fie upon fooleries! There be honourable works to do, and notable works to read. The afore-named Bartas (whom elsewhere I have styled the treasurer of humanity, and the jeweller of divinity), for the highness of his subject and the majesty of his verse nothing inferior unto Dante (whom some Italians prefer before Virgil or Homer), a right inspired and enravished poet, full of chosen, grave, profound, venerable, and stately matter, even in the next degree to the sacred and reverend style of heavenly divinity itself. In a manner the only poet whom Urany hath vouchsafed to laureate with her own heavenly hand, and worthy to be alleged of divines and counsellors, as Homer is quoted of philosophers & orators. Many of his solemn verses are oracles, & one Bartas, that is, one French Solomon, more weighty in stern and mighty counsel than the seven sages of Greece. Never more beauty in vulgar languages, but his style addeth favour and grace to beauty, and in a goodly body representeth a puissant soul. How few verses carry such a personage of state, or how few arguments such a spirit of majesty? Or where is the divine instinct that can sufficiently commend such a volume of celestial inspiration? What a judgement hath the noble youth, the harvest of the spring, the sap of Apollo's tree, the diadem of the muses, that leaveth the enticingest flowers of delight to reap the maturest fruits of wisdom? Happy plants, that speedily show forth their generous nature, and a sovereign good possesseth those worthy minds that suffer not their affections to be inveigled or entangled with any unworthy thought. Great exercises become great personages, as the magnes approveth his nobility in commanding iron, and taming the sea; baser or meaner pastimes belong unto meaner persons, as jet discovereth his gentry in drawing chaff, hairs, and such trifles. A meet

quality for jet, or a pretty feat for amber, to juggle chaff, fescues, or the like weighty burdens, but excellent minds are employed like the noble magnes, and ever conversant either in effecting, or in perusing, or in penning, excellent works. It were an impossible attempt to do right unto the great captain, Monsieur de la Noë, and the brave soldier, the French King himself, two terrible thunderbolts of war, and two impetuous whirlwinds of the field, whose writings are like their actions, resolute, effectual, valiant, politic, vigorous, full of aery & fiery spirit, honourable, renowned, wheresoever valour hath a mouth, or virtue a pen. Could the warly horse speak, as he can run and fight, he would tell them they are hot knights, and could the bloody sword write, as it can shear, it would dedicate a volume of fury unto the one, and a monument of victory unto the other. Albeit men should be malicious or forgetful (spite is malicious, and ingratitude forgetful), yet prowess hath a cloven tongue, and teacheth admiration in a fiery language to plead the glorious honour of improved valiancy.

Some accuse their destiny, but blessed key that openeth such locks, and lucky, most lucky fortune, that yieldeth such virtue. Brave chivalry, a continual witness of their valour and terribility in war, and gallant industry the daily bread of their life, in peace or truce. Report, shining sun, the day's work of the king, and, burning candle, relate his night's study, and both rid me of an endless labour. For whoever praised the wonders of heaven?

And what an infinite course were it, to run through the particular commendations of the famous redoubted actors, or the notable pregnant writers, of this age, even in the most puissant heroical and Argonautical kind?

Nimble entelechy hath been a stranger in some countries, albeit a renowned citizen of Greece, and a free denizen of Italy, Spain, France, and Germany, but welcome the most natural inhabitant of the world, the sail of the ship, the flight of the bow, the shot of the gun, the wing of the eagle, the quintessence of the mind, the course of the sun, the motion of the heavens, the influence of the stars, the heat of the fire, the lightness of the air, the swiftness of the wind, the stream of the water, the fruitfulness of the earth, the singularity of this age, and thank thy most vigorous self for so many precious works of divine fury and powerable consequence, respectively comparable with the richest treasuries and bravest armories of antiquity. Thrice happy, or rather a thousand times happy, creature, that with most advantage of all honourable opportunities, & with the extremest possibility of his whole powers, inward, or outward, employeth the most excellent excellency of human or divine nature. Other secrets of nature and art deserve an high reputation in their several degrees, and may challenge a sovereign entertainment in their special kinds, but entelechy is the mystery of mysteries under heaven, and the headspring of the powerfullest virtues that divinity infuseth, humanity embraceth, philosophy admireth, wisdom practiseth, industry improveth, valour extendeth, or he conceived, that, conceiving the wonderful faculties of the mind, & astonished with the incredible force of a ravished & enthusiastical spirit, in a profound contemplation of that elevate and transcendent capacity (as it were in a deep ecstasy, or seraphical vision), most pathetically cried out, *O magnum miraculum Homo*. No marvel, O great miracle, & O most powerful entelechy, though thou seemest a pilgrim to Dametas, that art the familiar spirit of Musidorus, & what wonder though he impeach thy estimation, that despiseth the graces of God, flouteth the constellations of heaven, frumpeth the operations of nature, mocketh the effectuallest & availablest arts, disdaineth the name of industry or honesty, scorneth whatsoever may appear virtuous, fawneth only upon his own conceits, claweth only his own favourites, and quippeth, bourdeth, girdeth, asseth, the excellentest writers of whatsoever note, that tickle not his wanton sense. Nothing memorable or remarkable with him that feasteth not the riotous appetite of the ribald, or the humorous conceit of the fantast. It is his St. Fame to be the infamy of learning; his reformation to be the corruption of his reader; his felicity to be the misery of youth; his health to be the scurf of the city, the scab of the university, the bile of the realm; his salvation to be the damnation of whatsoever is termed good, or accounted honest. Sweet gentlemen

and flourishing youths, ever aim at the right line of art and virtue, of the one for knowledge, of the other for valour, and let the crooked rectify itself. Resolution wandereth not, like an ignorant traveller, but in every enterprise, in every affair, in every study, in every cogitation, levelleth at some certainty, and always hath an eye to use, an ear to good report, a regard to worth, a respect to assurance, and a reference to the end. He that erreth, erreth against truth and himself, and he that sinneth, sinneth against God and himself. He is none of my charge; it suffiseth me to be the curate of mine own actions, the master of mine own passions, the friend of my friends, the pitier of my enemies, the lover of good wits and honest minds, the affectionate servant of arts & virtues, the humble orator of noble valour, the commender of the foresaid honourable writings, or any commendable works. Reason is no man's tyrant, & duty every man's vassal that deserveth well. Would this pen were worthy to be the slave of the worthiest actors, or the bondman of the above-mentioned, and the like, important authors.

Such mercurial and martial discourses in the active and chivalrous vein plead their own eternal honour, and write everlasting shame in the forehead of a thousand frivolous, & ten thousand fantastical, pamphlets. I would to Christ some of them were but idle toys, or vain trifles, but impurity never presumed so much of impunity, and licentious folly by privilege, lewd ribaldry by permission, and rank villainy by connivance are become famous authors, not in a popular state or a petty principality, but in a sovereign monarchy, that tendereth politic government, & is to fortify itself against foreign hostility. If wisdom say not fie for shame, & authority take not other order in convenient time, who can tell what general plague may ensue of a special infection? Or when the king's evil is past cure, who can say, we will now heal it? The baddest weed groweth fastest, and no gangrene so pregnantly dispreadeth itself as riot. And what riot so pestiferous as that which, in sugared baits, presenteth most poisonous hooks? Sir Skelton and Master Scogan were but innocents to Signior Capriccio and Monsieur Madness, whose pestilent canker scorneth all the medicine of earth or heaven.

My writing is but a private note for the public advertisement of some few whose youth asketh instruction, & whose frailty needeth admonition. In the cure of a canker, it is a general rule with surgeons, it never healeth unless the roots and all be utterly extirped, and the flesh regenerate. But the soundest principle is *Principiis obsta*, & it goeth best with them that never knew what a canker or leper meant.

I still hope for some grasses of better fruit, but this grand confuter of my *Letters*, and all honesty, still proceedeth from worse to worse, from the wilding tree to the withy, from the dog to the goat, from the cat to the swine, from Primrose hill to Coleman hedge, and is so rooted in deep vanity that there is no end of his profound folly. Which deserveth a more famous encomiastical oration than Erasmus' renowned Folly, and more gloriously disdaineth any cure than the gout. I may answer his hot raving in cold terms, and convince him of what notorious falsehood or villainy I can, but see the frank spirit of a full stomach, & who ever was so parlously matched? Were not my simplicity, or his omnisufficiency, exceeding great, I had never been thus terribly over-challenged. *Gabriel, if there be any wit or industry in thee, now I will dare it to the uttermost; write of what thou wilt, in what language thou wilt, and I will confute it, and answer it. Take truth's part, & I will prove truth to be no truth, marching out of thy dung-voiding mouth, & so forth, in the braving tenor of the same redoubtable style.* Good gentlemen, you see the sweet disposition of the man, & need no other window into the closet of his conscience but his own gloss upon his own text. Whatsoever poor I say in any matter, or in any language, albeit truth aver and justify the same, he will flatly deny and confute, even because I say it, & only because, in a frolic and doughty jollity, he will have the last word of me. His grammar is his catechism *Si ais, nego*; his stomach, his dictionary in any language; and his quarrel, his logic in any argument: *Lucian, Julian, Aretine, I protest, were you aught else but abominable atheists, that I would obstinately defend you, only because Laureate Gabriel articles against you.*

Were there not otherwise a marvellous odds and incomprehensible difference betwixt our abilities, he would never dare me, like a bold pander, with such stout challenges and glorious protestations, but singular wits have a great advantage of simple men, and cunning falsehood is a mighty confuter of plain truth. No such champion as he that fighteth obstinately with the target of confidence, and the long sword of impudence. If anything extraordinarily improveth valour, it is confidence, and if anything miraculously singularizeth wit, it is impudence. Distrust is a natural fool, and modesty an artificial fool; he that will exploit wonderments, and carry all before him like a sweepstake, must have a heart of iron, a forehead of brass, and a tongue of adamant. Pelting circumstances mar brave executions; look into the proceedings of the greatest doers, and what have they more than other men, but audacity and fortune?

Audendum est aliquid, Vinculis, & carcere dignum, Si vis esse aliquid. Simplicity may have a guess at the principles of the world, and Nashe affecteth to seem a compound of such elements, as bold, as eager, and as eager as a mad dog. He will confute me because he will, and he can conquer me because he can. If I come upon him with a gentle reply, he will welcome me with a fierce rejoinder; for any my brief triplication, he will provide a quadruplication at large, & so forth in *infinitum*, with an undauntable courage, for he sweareth *he will never leave me as long as he is able to lift a pen*. Twenty such famous depositions proclaim his doughty resolution, and indefatigable hand at a pight field. Were I to begin again, or could I handsomely devise to give him the cleanly slip, I would never deal with a sprite of Coleman hedge, or a May-lord of Primrose hill, that hath all humours in his livery, & can put conscience in a vice's coat. Nay, he will achieve impossibilities, and, in contempt of my simplicity, prove truth a counterfeit, and himself a true witness of falsest lies. But Lord, that so invincible a gentleman should make so solemn account of confuting, and reconfuting, a person of so little worth in his valuation! Sweet man, what should you think of troubling yourself with so tedious a course, when you might so blithely have taken a quicker order, and may yet proceed more compendiously? It had been a worthy exploit, and beseeming a wit of supererogation, to have dipped a sop in a goblet of Rhenish wine, and, naming it Gabriel (for you are now grown into great familiarity with that name), to have devoured him up at one bit, or taking a pickle-herring by the throat, and, christening it Richard (for you can christen him at your pleasure), to have swallowed him down with a stomach. Did you never hear of detestable Jews, that made a picture of Christ, and then buffeted, cudgelled, scourged, crucified, stabbed, pierced, and mangled the same most unmercifully? Now you have a pattern, I doubt not but you can, with a dexterity, chop off the head of a dead honey-bee, and boast you have stricken John as dead as a door-nail. Other spoil or victory (by the leave of the foresaid redoubted daring) will prove a busy piece of work for the son of a mule, a raw grammarian, a brabbling sophister, a counterfeit crank, a stale rake-hell, a piperly rimer, a stump-worn railer, a dodkin author, whose two swords are like the horns of a hodmandod; whose courage, like the fury of a gad-bee; and whose surmounting bravery, like the wings of a butterfly. I take no pleasure to call thee an ass, but thou provest thyself a haddock, and although I say not, *Thou art a fool*, yet thou wilt needs bewray thy diet, and disgorge thy stomach of the lobster and cod's-head wherewith thou didst englut thyself since thy notorious surfeit of pickle-herring and dogfish. Thou art neither *Dorbel*, nor *Duns*, nor *Thomas of Aquine*; they were three sharp-edged and quick-scented schoolmen, full of nimble wit, and intricate quiddities in their arguing kind, especially *Duns and Thomas*, but by some of thy cavilling *ergos* thou shouldst seem to be the spawn of Javell or Tartaret, & as very a crabfish at an *ergo* as ever crawled over carter's logic, or the *Posteriorums of Johannes de Lapide*. When I look upon thy first page (as I daily behold that terrible empress for a recreation), still methinks there should come flushing out the great Atlas of logic and astronomy, that supported the orbs of the heavens by art, or the mighty Hercules of rhetoric and poetry, that with certain marvelous fine and delicate chains drew after him the vassals of the world by the ears. But examine his subtlest *ergos*, & taste his nappiest invention, or daintiest elocution (he that hath nothing else to do

may hold himself occupied), and art will soon find the huge behemoth of conceit to be the sprat of a pickle-herring, and the hideous leviathan of vainglory to be a shrimp in wit, a periwinkle in art, a dandiprat in industry, a dodkin in value, and such a toy of toys as every right scholar hisseth at in judgement, and every fine gentleman maketh the object of his scorn. He can rail (what mad bedlam cannot rail?), but the savour of his railing is grossly fell, and smelleth noisomely of the pump, or a nastier thing. His gayest flourishes are but Gascoigne's weeds, or Tarleton's tricks, or Greene's cranks, or Marlowe's bravados; his jests but the dregs of common scurrility, the shreds of the theater, or the off-scouring of new pamphlets; his freshest nippitate but the froth of stale inventions, long since loathsome to quick tastes; his shroving ware but lenten stuff, like the old pickle-herring; his lustiest verdure but rank ordure, not to be named in civility or rhetoric; his only art, and the vengeable drift of his whole cunning, to mangle my sentences, hack my arguments, chop and change my phrases, wrench my words, and hale every syllable most extremely, even to the disjuncting and maiming of my whole meaning. O times, O pastimes, O monstrous knavery. The residue, whatsoever, hath nothing more in it than is usually in every ruffianly copesmate that hath been a grammar-scholar, readeth riotous books, haunteth roisterly company, delighteth in rude scoffing, & carrieth a desperate mind. Let him be thoroughly perused by any indifferent reader whomsoever, that can judiciously discern what is what, and will uprightly censure him according to his skill, without partiality pro and contra, and I dare undertake he will affirm no less, upon the credit of his judgement, but will definitively pronounce him the very baggage of new writers. I could nominate the person that under his handwriting hath styled him the cockish challenger, the lewd scribbler, the offal of corruptest mouths, the draff of filthiest pens, the bag pudding of fools, & the very pudding-pits of the wise or honest. He might have read of four notable things which many a jolly man weeneth he hath at will, when he hath nothing less: much knowledge, sound wisdom, great power, & many friends. And he might have heard of other four special things, that work the destruction or confusion of the forwardest practitioners: a headlong desire to know much hastily, a greedy thirst to have much suddenly, an overweening conceit of themselves, and a surly contempt of other. I could peradventure aread him his fortune in a fatal book, as verifiable as peremptory, but I love not to insult upon misery, & divinity is a judge whose sentence needeth no other execution but itself. No prevention but deep repentance, an impossible remedy where deep obstinacy is grounded, and high presumption aspireth above the moon. Haughty minds may fly aloft, and hasten their own overthrow, but it is not the wainscot forehead of a Rudhuddibras that can arear such an huge opinion as himself, in a strong conceit of a mighty conception, seemeth to travail withal, as it were with a flying Bladud, attempting wonderments in the air, or a Simon Magus, experimenting impossibilities from the top of the Capitol. He must either accomplish some greater work of supererogation, with actual achievement (that is now a principal point), or immortalize himself the proudest vain sot that ever abused the world with foppish ostentation, not in one or two pages, but in the first, the last, & every leaf of his *Strange News*. For the end is like the beginning, the midst like both, and every part like the whole. Railing, railing, railing; bragging, bragging, bragging; and nothing else but foul railing upon railing, and vain bragging upon bragging, as rudely, grossly, odiously, filthily, beastly, as ever shamed print. Unless he meant to set up a railing school, as the only regal professor of that and that faculty, now other shifts begin to fail. I wonder his own mouth can abide it without a phah! You have heard some worthy premises; behold a brave conclusion:

*Await the world the tragedy of wrath,
What next I paint shall tread no common path.*

with another double *aut* for a gallant emblem, or a glorious farewell: *Aut nunquam tentes, aut perfice*. Subscribed with his own hand: *Thomas Nashe*. Not expect, or attend, but *await*; not some few, or the city, or the university, or this land, or Europe, but *the world*; not a comedy, or a declamation, or an invective, or a satire, or any like elenctical discourse, but a

tragedy, and the very tragedy of wrath, that shall dash the direfullest tragedies of Seneca, Euripides, or Sophocles out of conceit. The next piece, not of his rhetoric or poetry, but of his *painture*, shall not tread the way to Paul's, or Westminster, or the Royal Exchange, but at least shall perfect the Venus face of Apelles, or set the world an everlasting sample of inimitable artificiality. Other men's writing in prose or verse may plod on as before, but *his painting* will now tread a *rare path*, and by the way bestow a new lesson upon rhetoric, how to continue a metaphor, or uphold an allegory with advantage. *The treading of that rare path* by that exquisite *painting* (his works are miracles, and his painting can *tread*, like his dancing, or frisking, *no common but a proper path*), who expecteth not with an attentive, a serviceable, a covetous, a longing expectation? *Await world*, and, Apelles, tender thy most affectionate devotion to learn a wonderful piece of curious workmanship, when it shall please his next *painting to tread the path* of his most singular singularity. Meanwhile it hath pleased some sweet wits of my acquaintance (whom heaven hath baptized the spirits of harmony, and the muses have entertained for their paramours), to reacquite sonnets with sonnets, and to snib the thrasonical rimester with angelical metre, that may haply appear in fit place, and finely discover young Apuleius in his ramping robe, the fourth fury in his tragical pageant, the new sprite in his proper haunt or buttery, and the confuting devil in the horologe. One she, and two hes, have vowed they will pump his railing ink-horn as dry as ever was Holborn conduit, and squeeze his craking quill to as empty a sponge as any in Hosier Lane. Which of you gallant gentlemen hath not stripped *his stale jests* into their threadbare rags, or so seldom as an hundred times pitied his crest-fallen style, & his socket-worn invention? Who would have thought, or could have imagined, to have found the wit of Pierce so starved and clunged, the conceit of an adversary so weather-beaten and tired, the learning of a scholar so purblind and lame, the elocution of the devil's orator so lank, so wan, so meagre, so blunt, so dull, so fordead, so ghastly, where the masculine fury meant to play his grisliest and horriest part? Well fare a good visage in a bad cause, or farewell hope, the kindest cozener of forlorn hearts. The desperate mind that assayeth impossibilities in nature, or undertaketh incredibilities in art, must be content to speed thereafter. When every attempt faileth in performance, and every extremity foileth the enterpriser, at last even impudency itself must be fain to give over in the plain field, and never yield credit to the word of that most credible gentlewoman, if the very brazen buckler prove not finally a notorious dash-Nashe. He summed all in a brief but material sum that called *the old ass* the great A, and the est Amen, of the new supererogation. And were I here compelled to dispatch abruptly (as I am presently called to a more commodious exercise), should I not sufficiently have discharged my task, and plentifully have commended that famous creature whose praise the title of the pamphlet professeth? He that would honour Alexander may crown him the great A of puissance, but Pyrrhus, Hannibal, Scipio, Pompey, Caesar, divers other mighty conquerors, & even some modern worthies, would disdain to have him sceptred the est Amen of valour. What a brave and incomparable Alexander is that great A that is also the est Amen of supererogation, a more miraculous and impossible piece of work than the doughtiest puissance, or worthiest valour, in the old or new world! Shall I say blessed, or peerless, young Apuleius, that from the swathing-bands of his infancy in print was suckled of the sweetest nurses, lulled of the dearest grooms, cockered of the finest minions, colled of the daintiest paramours, hugged of the enticingest darlings, and more than tenderly tendered of the most delicious muses, the most amiable graces, and the most powerful virtues of the said unmatched great A, the grand founder of supererogation, and the sole patron of such meritorious clients. As for other remarkable particulars in the *Strange News*, ink is so like ink, spite so like spite, impudency so like impudency, brokage so like brokage, and Tom-Penillesse now so like Pap-hatchet when the time was, that I need but overrun an old censure of the one by way of new application to the other. The notes of Martinism appertain unto those whom they concern. Pierce would laugh to be charged with Martinism, or any religion, though Martin himself, for a challenging, ruffling, and railing style, not such a Martin. Two contraries, but two such contraries as can teach extremities to play the contraries, and to confound themselves.

Pap-Hatchet, desirous for his benefit to curry favour with a noble Earl, and, in defect of other means of commendation, labouring to insinuate himself by smooth glozing & counterfeit suggestions (it is a courtly feat to snatch the least occasionet of advantage with a nimble dexterity), some years since provoked me, to make the best of it, inconsiderately; to speak like a friend, unfriendly; to say, as it was, intolerably; without private cause of any reason in the world (for in truth I loved him, in hope praised him, many ways favoured him, and never any way offended him), and notwithstanding that spiteful provocation, and even that odious threatening of ten years' provision, he had ever passed untouched with any syllable of revenge in print had not Greene and this dogfish abominably misused the verb passive, as should appear by his procurement or encouragement, assuredly most undeserved and most injurious. For what other quarrel could Greene or this dogfish ever pick with me, whom I never so much as twitched by the sleeve before I found myself and my dearest friends unsufferably quipped in most contumelious and opprobrious terms. But now there is no remedy, have amongst you, blind harpers of the printing-house, for I fear not six hundred crowders, were all your wits assembled in one cap of vanity, or all your galls united in one bladder of choler. I have lost more labour than the transcribing of this censure, which I dedicate neither to lord not lady, but to truth and equity, on whose sovereign patronage I rely.

An Advertisement for Pap-Hatchet and Martin Marprelate

Pap-hatchet (for the name of thy good nature is pitifully grown out of request), thy old acquaintance in the Savoy when young Euphues hatched the eggs that his elder friends laid (surely Euphues was someway a pretty fellow; would God Lyly had always been Euphues, and never Pap-hatchet), that old acquaintance, now somewhat strangely saluted with a new remembrance, is neither lubbabied with thy sweet pap, nor scarecrowed with thy sour hatchet. And although in self-conceit thou knowest not thyself, yet in experience thou mightest have known him that can unbutton thy vanity and unlace thy folly, but in pity spareth thy childish simplicity, that in judgement scorneth thy roisterly bravery, and never thought so basely of thee as since thou beganst to disguise thy wit, and disgrace thy art with ruffianly foolery. He winneth not most abroad that weeneth most at home, and in my poor fancy it were not greatly amiss, even for the pertest and gayest companions (notwithstanding whatsoever courtly holy water or plausible hopes of preferment), to deign their old familiars the continuance of their former courtesies, without contempt of the barrenest gifts, or impeachment of the meanest persons. The simplest man in a parish is a shrewd fool, and humanity an image of divinity, that pulleth down the haughty, and setteth up the meek. Euphues, it is good to be merry, and Lyly, it is good to be wise, and Pap-hatchet, it is better to lose a new jest than an old friend, that can cram the capon with his own pap, and hew down the woodcock with his own hatchet. Bold men and merchant-venturers have sometimes good luck, but haphazard hath oftentimes good leave to beshrew his own pate, and to embark the hardy fool in the famous ship of wise men. I cannot stand nosing of candlesticks, or euphuing of similes, *alla Sauoica*, but it might haply be done with a trice. But every man hath not the gift of Albertus Magnus; rare birds are dainty, and they are quaint creatures that are privileged to create new creatures. When I have a mint of precious stones, & strange foals, beasts, and fishes of mine own coining (I could name the party that, in comparison of his own natural inventions, termed Pliny a barren womb), I may peradventure bless you with your own crosses, & pay you with the usury of your own coin. In the meanwhile, bear with a plain man, as plain as old Accursius, or Barthol de Saxo Ferrato, that will make his censure good upon the carrion of thy unsavoury and stinking pamphlet, a fit book to be joined with Scogan's works, or the French *Mirror of Madness*. The very title discovereth the wisdom of the young man, as an old fox not long since bewrayed himself by a flap of his tail, and a lion, they say, is soon descried by his paw, a cock by his comb, a goat by his beard, an ass by his ear, and a wise man by his tale, an artist by his terms.

*Pap With An Hatchet, Alias, A Fig For My Godson,
Or, Crack Me This Nut, Or, A country Cuff,
that is, A sound box of the ear, & cetera.
Written by one that dares call a dog a dog.
Imprinted by John-a-'noke, and John-a-stile, for the Bailiff
of Withernam, cum priuilegio perennitatis,
And are to be sold at the sign of the crab-tree cudgel
in Thwack-Coat Lane.*

What devise of Martin, or what invention of any other, could have set a fairer oriental star upon the forehead of that foul libel? Now you see the brand, and know the Blackamoor by his face, turn over the leaf, and by the wittiness of his first sentence, aim at the rest. Milk is like milk; honey like honey; pap like pap, and he like himself; in the whole, a notable ruffler, and in every part a doughty braggart. *Room for a roister! So, that's well said; itch a little further for a good-fellow. Now have at you all, my gaffers of the railing religion, 'tis I that must take you a peg lower. I'll make such a splinter run into your wits, and so forth in the same lusty tenor. A very artificial beginning to move attention, or to procure good-liking in the reader, unless he wrote only to roister-doisters & hacksters, or at least to jesters and*

vices. Oh, but in his preamble to the indifferent reader, he approveth himself a marvellous discreet and modest man of the soberest sort, were he not provoked in conscience to answer contrary to his nature and manner. You may see how grave men may be made light, to defend the church. I perceive they were wise that, at riotous times, when youth was wantonest, and knavery lustiest, as in Christmas, at Shrove-tide, in May, at the end of harvest, and by such wild fits, created a certain extraordinary officer, called a Lord of Misrule, as a needful governor or dictator to set things in order, and to rule unruly people with whom otherwise there were no ho. So when revel-rout beginneth to be a current author, or hurly-burly a busy promoter, *room for a roister* that will bore them through the noses with a cushion, that will bung up their mouths with a collyrium of all the stale jests in a country, that will suffer none to play the rex but himself. For that is the very depth of his plot, and whoever began with more roisterly terms, or proceeded with more ruffianly scoffs, or concluded with more hare-brained tricks, or tired himself with more weather-beaten cranks? What scholar or gentleman can read such ale-house and tinkerly stuff without blushing? They were much deceived in him at Oxford and in the Savoy, when Master Absolon lived, that took him only for a dapper & deft companion, or a pert-conceited youth, that had gathered together a few pretty sentences, and could handsomely help young Euphues to an old simile, & never thought him any such mighty doer at the sharp. But *I'll, I'll, I'll* is a parlous fellow at a hatchet; *he's like death; he'll spare none; he'll show them an Irish trick; he'll make them weep Irish; he's good at the sticking blow; his posy, What care I? Vie stabs* good ecclesiastical learning in his apology, and good Christian charity in his homily. Muster his arrant braveries together, and where such a terrible kill-cow, or such a vengeable bull-beggar, to deal withal? O dreadful Double V, that carriest the double stoccado in thy pen, what a double stabber wouldst thou be were thy hand as tall a fellow as thy heart, or thy wit as lusty a lad as thy mind? Other good-fellows may tell tales of Gawain; thou art Sir Gawain revived, or rather, terror in person. Yet shall I put a bean into Gawain's rattling skull, and tell thee where thy slashing long sword cometh short? Thou professest railing, and emprovest thyself in very deed an egregious railer, as disdainng to yield unto any he- or she-scolld of this age, but what saith my particular analysis? Double V is old excellent at his *cornu copiae*, and, I warrant you, never to seek in his horn-book, but debar those same whoreson tales of a tub, and put him beside his horning, gaming, fooling and knaving, and he is nobody but a few pilfered similes, a little pedantical Latin, and the highest pitch of his wit, *Bull's motion*, alias *the hangman's apron*. His rime forestalled by Elderton, that hath ballads *lying a-steep in ale*; his reason by *a Cambridge wag*, a twiggng sophister that will *ergo Martin into an ague*, and concludeth peremptorily: *Therefore Tyburn must be furred with Martins*; nothing left for the third disputer but railing through all the moods and figures of knavery, as they come fresh and fresh to his hand. All three jump *in eodem tertio*; nothing but a certain exercise, termed hanging, will serve their turn (if it be his destiny, what remedy?); they must draw cuts who shall play the hangman, and that is the argument of the tragedy, and the very pap of the hatchet. These are yet all the commonplaces of his great paper-book, & the whole inventory of his wit, though in time he may haply learn to play at ninehole-nidgets, or to canvass a livery flout through all the predicaments of *the four & twenty orders*. When I first took a glancing view of *I'll, I'll, I'll*, & durst scarcely be so hardy to look the hatchet in the face, methought his imagination was headed like a Saracen, his stomach bellied like the great globe of Orontius, & his breath like the blast of Boreas in the great map of Mercator. But when we began to renew our old acquaintance, and to shake the hands of discontinued familiarity, alas, good gentleman, his mandilion was over-cropped, his wit paunched like his wife's spindle, his art shanked like a lath, his conceit as lank as a shotten herring, and that same blustering eloquence as bleak and wan as the picture of a forlorn lover. Nothing but pure mammaday, and a few morsels of fly-blown euphuism, somewhat nicely minced for puling stomachs. But there be painters enough, though I go roundly to work, and it is my only purpose to speak to the purpose. I long sithence found by experience how Dranting of verses and euphuing of sentences did edify. But had I consulted with the prognostication of John Securis, I might peradventure

have saved some loose ends for afterclaps. Now his nephew Hatchet must be content to accept of such spare entertainment as he findeth.

It was Martin's folly to begin that cutting vein; some others' oversight to continue it, and Double V's triumph to set it agog. If the world should applaud to such roister-doisterly vanity (as impudency hath been prettily suffered to set up the crest of his vainglory), what good could grow out of it, but to make every man mad-brained and desperate; but a general contempt of all good order; in saying or doing, but an universal topsy-turvy? He were a very simple orator, a more simple politician, and a most simple divine, that should favour Martinizing, but had I been Martin (as for a time I was vainly suspected by such mad copesmates that can surmise anything for their purpose, howsoever unlikely or monstrous), I would have been so far from being moved by such a fantastical confuter, that it should have been one of my May-games or August triumphs to have driven officials, commissaries, archdeacons, deans, chancellors, suffragans, bishops and archbishops (so Martin would have flourished at the least) to entertain such an odd, light-headed fellow for their defence: a professed jester, a hickscorner, a scoff-master, a play-monger, an interluder, once the foil of Oxford, now the stale of London, and ever the ape's-clog of the press, *cum privilegio perennitatis*. Had it not been a better course to have followed Aristotle's doctrine, and to have confuted levity with gravity, vanity with discretion, rashness with advice, madness with sobriety, fire with water, ridiculous Martin with reverend Cooper? Especially in ecclesiastical causes, where it goeth hard when Scogan, the jovial fool, or Skelton, the melancholy fool, or Elderton, the bibbing fool, or Will Sommer, the choleric fool, must play the feat, and church matters cannot be discussed without rank scurrility, and, as it were, a synod of diapason fools. Some few have a civil pleasant vein, and a dainty spleen without scandal; some such percase might have repaid the mar-prelate home to good purpose; other obscenity or vanity confuteth itself, and impeacheth the cause. As good forbear an irregular fool as bear a fool heteroclitical, and better abide a comparative knave, that pretendeth religion, than suffer a knave superlative, that setteth cock-a-hoop. Serious matters would be handled seriously, not upon simplicity, but upon choice; not to flesh or animate, but to disgrace and shame, levity. A gleeking pro, and a frumping contra, shall have much ado to shake hands in the *ergo*. There is no end of girds & bobs; it is sound arguments and grounded authorities that must strike the definitive stroke, and decide the controversy with mutual satisfaction. Martin, be wise, though Browne were a fool; and Pap-hatchet, be honest, though Barrow be a knave; it is not your heaving or hoising coil that buildeth up the walls of the temple. Alas, poor miserable, desolate, most woeful church, had it no other builders but such architects of their own fantasies, and such masons of infinite contradiction? Time, informed by secret intelligence, or resolved by curious discovery, spareth no cost or travail to prevent mischief, but employeth her two worthy generals, knowledge & industry, to clear the coast of vagrant errors in doctrine, and to scour the sea of roving corruptions in discipline. Rome was not reared up in one day, nor cannot be pulled down in one day. A perfect ecclesiastical discipline, or authentic policy of the church (that may avow I have neither more nor less than enough, but just the number, weight, and measure of exact government), is not the work of one man whosoever, or of one age whatsoever; it requireth an incredible great judgement, exceeding much reading in ecclesiastical histories, councils, decrees, laws; long and ripe practice in church causes. Platforms offer themselves to every working conceit, and a few tables or abridgments are soon dispatched, but whatsoever pretext may colourably be alleged, undoubtedly they attempt they know not what, and enterprise above the possibility of their reach, that imagine they can, in a pamphlet or two, contrive such an omnisufficient and incorruptible method of ecclesiastical government as could not, by any private meditation or public occasion, be found out with the study or practice of fifteen hundred years. I am not to dispute as a professed divine, or to determine as a severe censor, but a scholar may deliver his opinion with reason, and a friend may lend his advice at occasion, especially when he is urged to speak, or suspected for silence. They must licence me to dissent from them, that authorize

themselves to disagree from so many notable and worthy men, in the common reputation of so long a space. They condemn superstitious & credulous simplicity; it were a fond simplicity to defend it where it swerveth from the truth, or strayeth out of the way, but discretion can as little commend opinative and prejudicate assertions, that strive for a needless and dangerous innovation. It is neither the excess nor the defect, but the mean, that edifieth. Plato comparing Aristotle and Xenocrates together, *Xenocrates*, quoth he, *needeth a spur; Aristotle, a bridle*. And if princes or parliaments want a goad, may not subjects, or admonitions, want a snaffle? Is there pretence for liberty to advise the wisest, or for zeal to prick forward the highest, and no reason for prudence to curb rashness, or for authority to rein licentiousness? May judgement be hoodwinked with frivolous traditions, and cannot fantasy be inveigled with newfangled conceits? Superstition and credulity are simple creatures, but what are contempt and tumult? What is the principal cause of this whole Numantine war, but affection of novelty without ground? If all without exception, from the very scholars of the primitive and heroical school, wanted knowledge or zeal, how rare and singular are their blessings that have both in so plentiful and incomparable measure? Assuredly there were many excellent wits, illuminate minds, and devout souls before them; if nothing matchable with them, what greater marvel in this age? Or if they were not rightly disciplined, that lived so virtuously and Christianly together, what an inestimable treasure is found, & what a clear fountain of holy life? Where are godly minds become, that they embrace not that sacred society? What ail religious hands, that they stay from building up the City of God? Can Plato's republic, and More's Utopia, win hearts, and cannot the heavenly Jerusalem conquer souls? Can there be a greater impiety than to hinder the rearing up of those celestial walls? Why forgetteth the gross church that it ought to be the pure kingdom of heaven? To zeal, even speed is delay, and a year, an age. But how maturely and judiciously some busy motions have been considered upon by their hot solicitors, it would not pass unexamined. A strong discipline standeth not upon feeble feet, and a weak foundation will never bear the weight of a mighty Jerusalem. The great shoulders of Atlas oftentimes shrink and faint under the great burden of heaven. The tabernacle of Moses, the temple of Solomon, the golden age of the primitive church, and the silver regiment of Constantine, would be looked into with a sharper and clearer eye. The difference of commonwealths, or regiments, requireth a difference of laws and orders, and those laws and orders are most sovereign that are most agreeable to the regiment, and best proportioned to the commonwealth. The matter of elections and offices is a principal matter in question, and how many not only ignorant or curious, but learned and considerate, wits have lost themselves, and found error, in the discourse of that subject? But how compendiously might it be concluded, that is so infinitely argued, or how quietly decided, that is so tumultuously debated? I rely not upon the uncertainty of disputable rules, or the subtlety of intricate arguments, or the ambiguity of doubtful allegations, or the casualty of fallible experiments, but ground my resolution upon the assurance of such politic and ecclesiastical principles as, in my opinion, can neither be deceived grossly, nor deceive dangerously. Popular elections and offices, as well in churches as in commonwealths, are for popular states. Monarchies and aristocracies are to celebrate their elections and offices according to their form of government, and the best correspondence of their states, civil and ecclesiastical, and may justify their good proceeding by good divinity, as they gravely and religiously proved that, in the flourishing propagation and mighty increase of the Catholic Church under princes before, in, and after the empire of Constantine, were driven to vary from some primitive examples, not by unlawful corruption, as is ignorantly surmised, but by lawful provisions, according to the exigence of occasions & necessities of alteration in those overruling cases, as appeareth by pregnant evidence of ecclesiastical histories and canons, wherewith they are to consult that affect a deep insight in the decision of such controversies, & not to leap at all adventures before they have looked about them, as well backward as forward, & as well of the one side as of the other. Consideration is a good counsellor, & reading no bad remembrancer, especially in the most essential commonplaces of doctrine, and the most important matters of government. Ignorance may someway be the father of

zeal, as it was wont to be termed the mother of devotion, but blind men swallow down many flies, and none more than many of them that imagine they know all, and conceit an absolute omnisufficiency in their own platforms, with an universal contempt of whatsoever contradiction, special or general, modern or ancient, when undoubtedly they are to seek in a thousand points of requisite and necessary consideration. Lord, that men should so please and flatter themselves in their own devises, as if none had eyes but they. God never bestowed his divine gifts in vain; they are not so lightly to be rejected, that so gravely demeaned themselves, instructed their brethren, reclaimed infidels, conquered countries, planted churches, confounded heretics, and incessantly travailed in God's causes with the whole devotion of their souls, howsoever some can be content to think that since the apostles none ever had the spirit of understanding, or the minds of sincerity, but themselves. Pardon me, pure intelligences and incorruptible minds. The ancient fathers and doctors of the church wanted neither learning, nor judgement, nor conscience, nor zeal, as some of their Greek and Latin works very notably declare (if they were blind, happy men that see), and what wiser senates, or holier congregations, or any way more reverent assemblies, than some general, and some provincial, councils. Where they, to a superficial opinion, seem to set up a gloss against or beside the text, it would be considered what their considerations were, and whether it can appear that they directly, or indirectly, proceeded with a respective regard of the commonwealth, or a tender care of the church, or a reverend examination of that text. For I pray God we love the text no worse, from the bottom of our hearts, than some of them did. They are not the simplest, or dissolutest men, that think discretion might have leave to cut his coat according to his cloth, and commend their humility, patience, wisdom, and whole conformity, that were ready to accept any requisite order not unlawful, and to admit any decent or seemly rites of indifferent nature. Put the case just as it was then, and in those countries, and what if some suppose that even M. Calvin, M. Beza, M. Melvin, or M. Cartwright (notwithstanding their new designments), being in the same estate wherein they were then, and in those countries, would have resolved no otherwise in effect than they determined. Or if they did not so perfectly well, I pray God we may. Howbeit none so fit to reconcile contradictions, or to accord differences, as he that distinguisheth times, places, occasions, and other swaying circumstances, high points in government, either civil or ecclesiastical. As in the doubtful paragraphs and canons of the law of man, so in the mystical oracles of the law of God: *Qui bene distinguit, bene docet*, in the one, when he useth no distinction but of the law, or some reason equipollent to the law; in the other, when he interpreteth the scripture by the scripture, either expressly, by conference of text with text, or collectively, by the rule of analogy. In cases indifferent or arbitrary, what so equal in general as indifferency, or so requisite in special as conformity to the positive law, to the custom of the country, or to the present occasion? To be perverse or obstinate without necessary cause is a peevish folly, when by such a dutiful and justifiable order of proceeding, as by a sacred league, so infinite variances and contentions may be compounded. To the clean, all things are clean. St. Paul, that laid his foundation like a wise architect, and was a singular frame of divinity (omnisufficiently furnished to be a doctor of the nations, & a converter of people), became all unto all, and, as it were, a Christian Mercury, to win some. Oh, that his knowledge and zeal were as rife as his name, and I would to God some could learn to behave themselves toward princes and magistrates as Paul demeaned himself, not only before the King Agrippa, but also before the two Roman procurators of that province, Felix and Festus, whom he entreated in honourable terms, albeit ethnic governors. Were none more scrupulous than St. Paul, how easily and graciously might divers confutations be reconciled, that now rage like civil wars? The chiefest matter in question is no article of belief, but a point of policy or government, wherein a judicial equity being duly observed, what letteth but the particular laws, ordinances, injunctions, and whole manner of jurisdiction may rest in the disposition of sovereign authority, whose immediate or mediate acts are to be revered with obedience, not countermanded with sedition, or controlled with contention. He is a bold subject that attempteth to bind the hands of sacred Majesty, and they love controversies well, I trow, that

call their prince's proceedings into controversy. Altercations and paradoxes, as well in discipline as in doctrine, were never so curiously curious, or so infinitely infinite, but when all is done, and when innovation hath set the best countenance of proof or persuasion upon the matter, kingdoms will stand, and free cities must be content. Their courts are no precedents for royal courts; their councils no instructions for the councils of kings or queens; their consistories, that would master princes, no informations for the consistories under princes; their discipline no canon or platform for sovereign government, either in causes temporal or spiritual. And can you blame them that marvel how, of all other tribunals or benches, that Jewish synedrion, or pontifical consistory, should so exceedingly grow in request, that put Christ himself to death, and was a whip for his dearest apostles? I am loath to enter the lists of argumentation or discourse with any obstinate mind or violent wit, that weeneth his own conceit a clear sun without eclipse, or a full moon without wanes, but sith importunacy will never lin molesting parliaments and princes with admonitions, advertisements, motions, petitions, repetitions, solicitations, declamations, discourses, methods, flatteries, menaces, and all possible instant means of enforcing and extorting the present practice of their incorruptible theory, it would be somebody's task to hold them a little occupied, till a greater resolution begin to subscribe, & a surer provision to execute. May it therefore please the busiest of those that debar ecclesiastical persons of all civil jurisdiction or temporal function to consider how every petty *parish* in England, to the number of about 5200, more or less, may be made a Jerusalem, or metropolitan see, like the noblest city of the Orient (for so Pliny calleth Jerusalem); how every *minister* of the said parishes may be promoted to be an high-priest, and to have a pontifical consistory; how every *assistant* of that consistory may emprove himself an honourable or worshipful senior, according to his reverend calling (for not only the princes of families, or the princes of tribes, but the princes of cities, or judges, the decurions, the quinquagenarians, the centurions, the chiliarchs, were inferior officers to the seniors); how a *princely and capital court*, and even the high council of parliament, or supreme tribunal of the royal city (for there was no seniory in Judaea but at Jerusalem, saving when the proconsul Gabinius, in a Roman policy, divided that nation into five parts, and appointed four other consistories); how such a princely and stately court should be the pattern of a *presbytery in a poor parish*; how the principality or *pontificality* of a *minister*, according to the degenerate sanhedrim, should be set up, when the *lordship of a bishop* or archbishop, according to their position, is to be pulled down; finally, how the supremacy over kings and emperors should be taken from the highest priest, or *pope*, to be bestowed upon an *ordinary minister* or curate, and how that minister should dispense with Aristotle's *law of instruments* [], or become more mighty than Hercules, that could not encounter *two charges at once*, or at least how that civil court, that *mere civil court* (for so it was before it declined from the first institution, even as merely civil as the Roman Senate) should be transformed into a court *merely ecclesiastical*. When these points are considered, if withal it be determined by evident demonstration, as clear as the sun, and as invincible as God's Word, that whatsoever the apostles did for their time is immutably perpetual and necessary for all times, and that nothing by way of special respect, or present occasion, is left to the ordinance, disposition, or provision of the church but the strict and precise practice of their primitive discipline, according to some precepts in St. Paul's Epistles, and a few examples in the Acts of the Apostles, *so be it*, must be the suffrage of us that have no voice in the sanhedrim. All is concluded in a few pregnant propositions; we shall not need to trouble or entangle our wits with many articles, injunctions, statutes, or other ordinances. The general, provincial, and episcopal councils lost much good labour in their canons, decrees, and whatsoever ecclesiastical constitutions; the works of the fathers and doctors, howsoever ancient, learned, or orthodox, are little or nothing worth; infinite studies, writings, commentaries, treatises, conferences, consultations, disputations, distinctions, conclusions of the most notable scholars in Christendom, altogether superfluous. Well worth a few resolute aphorisms, that dispatch more in a word than could be bouted out in fifteen hundred years, and roundly determine all with an *upside down*. No reformation without an upside down. Indeed, that is

one of Machiavel's positions, and seeing it is proved a piece of sound doctrine, it must not be gainsaid. Every head that hath a hand, pull down the pride of bishops, and set up the humility of ministers. Diogenes tread upon Plato's pomp. An universal reformation be proclaimed with the sound of a Jew's-trump. Let the pontifical consistory be erected in every parish; let the high priest, or archbishop, of every parish be installed in Moses' chair (it was Moses', not Aaron's, chair that they challenge in their senate, & he must be greater than Hercules that can fulfil both); let the ministry be a royal priesthood, and the dominion of his seniory reign like a Prester John; let it everlastingly be recorded for a sovereign rule, as dear as a Jew's eye, that Josephus allegeth out of the law: *Nihil agat Rex, sine Pontificis, & Seniorum sententia*. Only let the said pontiff beware he prove not a great pope in a little room, or discover not the humour of aspiring Stukeley, that would rather be the king of a molehill than the second in Ireland or England. Some Stoics and melancholy persons have a spice of ambition by themselves, and even *Junius Brutus* the first was someway a kind of *Tarquinius Superbus*, and *Junius Brutus* the second is not altogether a mortified creature, but bewrayeth, as it were, some relics of flesh and blood, as well as his inwardest friend, *Eusebius Philadelphus*. I dare come no nearer, yet Greenwood and Barrow begin already to complain of surly and solemn brethren, and God knoweth how that pontifical chair of estate might work in man, as he is man. Mercury sublimed is somewhat a coy and stout fellow, and I believe those high and mighty peers would not stick to look for a low and humble leg. Every man must have his due in his place, and honour allially belongeth to redoubted seniors. That is their proper title at Geneva. Now if it seems as clear a case in policy as in divinity, that one and the same discipline may serve divers and contrary forms of regiment, and be as fit for the head of England as for the foot of Geneva, the worst is, Aristotle's *Politics* must be burned for heretics. But how happy is the age that, instead of a thousand positive laws and Lesbian canons, hath found one standing canon of Polycletus, an immutable law of sacred government? And what a blissful destiny had the commonwealth that must be the model of all other commonwealths, and the very centre of the Christian world? Let it be so forever, and ever, if that pamphlet of the laws and statutes of Geneva, as well concerning the ecclesiastical discipline as civil regiment, deserve any such singular or extraordinary estimation, either for the one or for the other. If not, are they not busy men that will needs bear a rule, and strike a main stroke, where they have nothing to do, or are to be ruled? It were a good hearing in my ear that some of them could govern themselves but in reasonable wise sort, that are so forward to sway kingdoms and to swing churches after their new fashion, and can stand upon no ground but their own. If certain of them be goodlier or learneded than many other (according to their favourablest reputation), it is the better for them; I would also they were wiser than some of them whom they impugn. Surely I fear they will be found more peremptory in censure than sound in judgement, and more smart in reproof than sharp in proof. And may it not be a probable doubt how they have compared together the law of God's people, and the gospel of Christ's church in the Bible, or how they have studied Josephus, Philo, & Egesippus of the Jewish affairs, or Sigonius of the Hebrew commonwealth, or Freigius his *Mosaicus*, or their own Bonaventura of the Judaical policy, that fetch their jurisdiction from the Sanhedrim corrupted, and ground their reformation upon the Jews' Talmud, the next neighbor to the Turk's Alcoran? Had Ramus' *Treatise of Discipline* come to light, they would long ere this have been ashamed of their Sanhedrim, and have blushed to foist in the Talmud instead of the Bible. God help poor discipline if the water be like the conduit, the oil like the lamp, and the plant like the tree. Abraham was the beginning, David the midst, and Christ the end of the Hebrew history; his gospel, not his enemies' Talmud, the pure fountain of reformation, and the only clear resplendishing sun that giveth light to the stars of heaven & earth, unto which the church, his most dear and sweet spouse, is more deeply and more incomprehensibly bounden than the day unto the sun, that shineth from his glistering chariot. It is not for a pontifical seniory, or a mechanical eldership, to stop the course of any river that successively floweth from that liquid fountain, or to put out any candle that was originally lighted at that inextinguible lamp. The church hath small cause to dote upon the

cousin-german of tyranny, and the commonwealth hath no great affection to the sworn brother of anarchy. Certainly states need not long to entertain tumultuous and never satisfied innovation. And I hope he was not greatly unadvised, that, being demanded his opinion of the eldership in question, answered, he conceived of the eldership (as it is intended and motioned in England) as he thought of the elder tree, that whatsoever it appeared in show, it would in trial prove fruitless, seedless, bitter, frail, troublous, and a friend to surging waves and tempestuous storms. And being further pressed touching the forward zeal of doughty Martin Senior, lively Martin Junior, pert Penry, lusty Barrow, and some other brag reformists (for that rolling stone of innovation was never so tirdled and tumbled as since those busy limbs began to rouse and bestir them more than all the pragmatics in Europe), when young Phaeton, quoth he, in a presumptuous resolution would needs rule the chariot of the sun, as it might be the temple of Apollo, or the church of St. Paul, or some greater province (for the greater province, commonwealth, or monarchy, the fitter for Phaeton's reformation), his sudden ruin ministered matter of most lamentable tears to his dear mother and loving sisters, insomuch that they were pitifully changed as some write, into *elder trees*, as some, into *poplars*. *Sic fleuit Clymene: sic & Clymeneides altae*, as it might be the mournful church and her wailing members, woefully transmewed into *elders* or *poplars*. Good my masters, either make it an evident and infallible case, without sophistical wrangling or personal brawling, that your unexperienced discipline, not the order approved, is the pure well of that divine spring, and the clear light of that heavenly sun, or, I beseech you, pacify yourselves, and surcease to endanger kingdoms with unneedful uproars. Crooked proceedings would be rectified by a right, not a crooked, line, and abuses reformed, not by abusing the persons, but by well using the things themselves. I spare my ancients, as well at home as abroad, yet Beza might have been good to some doctors of the church, and better than he is to *Ramus*, *Erastus*, *Kemnitius*, and sundry other excellent men of this age (neither can it sufficiently appear that the two famous lawyers, *Gribaldus* and *Baldwinus*, were such monstrous apostatas, or poisonous heretics, as he reporteth), and whether some other, nearer hand, have not been too familiarly bold with their superiors, of approved learning and wisdom, meet for their reverend and honourable calling, my betters judge.

Modesty is a civil virtue, and humility a Christian quality. Surely Martin is too too malapert to be discreet, and Barrow too too hot to be wise; if they be godly, God help charity, but in my opinion they little wot what a chaos of disorders, confusions, & absurdities they breed, that sweat to build a reformation in a monarchy upon a popular foundation, or a mechanical plot, & will needs be as fiery in execution, even to wring the club out of Hercules' hand, as they were aery in resolution. Alas, that wise men, and reformers of states (I know not a weightier province), should once imagine to find it a matter of as light consequence to seniorize in a realm over the greatest lords, and even over the highness of majesty, as in a town, over a company of mean merchants and meaner artificers. I will not stick to make the best of it. M. Calvin, the founder of the plot (whom Beza styleth the great Calvin), had reason to establish his ministry against inconstancy, and to fortify himself against faction (as he could best devise and compass with the assistance of his French party, and other favourites), by encroaching upon a mechanical and mutinous people, from whose variable and fickle mutability he could no otherwise assecure himself. As he sensibly found, not only by daily experiences of their giddy and factious nature, but also by his own expulsion and banishment, whom, after a little trial (as it were for a dainty novelty, or sly experiment), they could be content to use as kindly and loyally as they had used the old bishop, their lawful prince. Could M. Cartwright or M. Travers seize upon such a city, or any like popular town, Helvetian or other, where democracy ruleth the roost, they should have somebody's good leave to provide for their own security, and to take their best advantage upon tickle cantons. Someone peradventure in time would canton them well enough, and give a shrewd pull at a metropolitan see, as sovereign as the old bishopric of Geneva. It were not the first time that a democracy by degrees hath proved an aristocracy, an

aristocracy degenerated into an oligarchy, an oligarchy amounted to a tyranny, or principality. No rhetoric climax so artificial as that politic gradation. But in a just kingdom, where is other good assurance for ministers, and meeter councils for princes than such swarms of imperious elderships, it is not for subjects to usurp, as commanders may tyrannize in a small territory. Unless they mean to set up a general deformation, in lieu of an universal reformation, and to bring in an order that would soon prove a deluge of disorder, an overflow of anarchy, and an open floodgate to drown policy with licentiousness, nobility with obscurity, and the honour of realms with the baseness of cantons. They that long for the bane and plague of their country pray for that many-headed and cantonish reformation, in issue good for none but the high judges of the consistory and their appropriate creatures, as I will justify at large, in case I be ever particularly challenged. I am no pleader for the regiment of the feet over the head, or the government of the stomach over the heart; surely nothing can be more pernicious in practice, or more miserable in conclusion, than a commanding authority in them that are born to obey, ordained to live in private condition, made to follow their occupations, and bound to homage. You that be scholars, moderate your invention with judgement, and you that be reasonable gentlemen, pacify yourselves with reason. If it be an injury to enclose commons, what justice is it to lay open enclosures? And if monarchies must suffer popular states to enjoy their free liberties and amplest franchises without the least infringement or abridgment, is there no congruence of reason that popular states should give monarchies leave to use their positive laws, established orders, and royal prerogatives without disturbance or confutation? Because meaner ministers than lords may become a popular city or territory, must it therefore be an absurdity in the majesty of a kingdom to have some lords spiritual amongst so many temporal, as well for the fitter correspondence and combination of both degrees, their more reverend private direction in matters of conscience, their weightier public counsel in parliaments and synods, the firmer assurance of the clergy in their causes, and the more honourable estimation of religion in all respects, as for the solemner visitation of their diocese, & other competent jurisdiction? It is tyranny or vainglory, not reverend lordship, that the scripture condemneth. There were bishops, or as some will have them termed, superintendents, with episcopal superiority and jurisdiction in the golden age of the apostles: *Timothy* of Ephesus; *Titus* of Crete; *Mark* of Alexandria; *James* of Jerusalem; *Philemon* of Gaza; the eloquent *Apollos* of Caesarea; *Euodius* of Antioch; *Sosipater* of Iconium according to Dorotheus, of Thessalonica according to Origen; *Tychichus* of Chalcedon; *Ananias* of Damascus, and so forth. Divers of the ancient fathers and doctors, as well of the oriental as of the occidental churches, were bishops, reverend fathers in Christ, and spiritual lords. The same style or title of reverence hath successively continued to this age, without any impeachment of value, or contradiction of note, saving that of the angry malcontent and proud heretic Aerius, scarcely worth the naming. What cruel outrage hath it lately committed, or what heinous indignity hath it newly admitted (more than other advancements of virtue, or styles of honour), that it should now be cancelled, or abandoned, in all haste? Would God some were not stouter or haughtier without the title, than some are with it. Many temporal lords, dukes, princes, kings, and emperors have shown very notable effectual examples of Christian humility, and may not spiritual lords carry spiritual minds? I hope they do; I know some do; I am sure all may, notwithstanding their ordinary title, or an hundred plausible epithets. I would the lordship or pomp of bishops were the greatest abuse in commonwealths or churches. I fear me I shall never live to see so happy a world upon the earth, that advised reformation should have nothing worse to complain of than that lordship or pomp. What may be, or is, amiss in any degree, I defend not (the delict of some one or two prelates, were it manifest, ought not to redound to the damage or detriment of the church); what may stand with the honour of the realm, with the benefit of the church, with the approbation of antiquity, and with the canon of the scripture, I have no reason to impugn or abridge. I have more cause to suspect that some earnest dealers might be persuaded to dispense with the name of lordship in bishops on condition themselves might be the parties that would not secularly abuse the title to any private pomp or vanity, but religiously apply it

to the public administration of the church, according to the first institution. Were dalliance safe in such cases, I could wish the experiment in a person or two in whose complexions I have some insight. Doctor Humphrey of Oxford, and Doctor Fulke of Cambridge, two of their standard-bearers a long time, grew conformable in the end, as they grew riper in experience and sager in judgement, and why may not such and such, in the like or weightier respects, condescend to a like toleration of matters adiaphoral? Sith it will be no otherwise (maugre all admonitions, or whatsoever zealous motives), better relent with favour than resist in vain. Were any fair offer of preferment handsomely tendered unto some that gape not greedily after promotion, nor can away with this same servile waiting, or plausible courting, for living, I doubt not but wise men would see what were good for themselves, commodious for their friends, and convenient for the church. If they should obstinately refuse deaneries and bishoprics, I should verily believe they are moved with stronger arguments and pregnant authorities than any they have yet published in print, or uttered in disputation, and I would be very glad to confer with them for my instruction. Sound reasons, or authentical quotations, may prevail much, & no such invincible defence as the armour of proof. In the meantime, the cause may be remembered that incensed the foresaid factious malcontent, Aenius, to maintain the equality of bishops and other priests, when himself failed in his ambitious suit for a bishopric, and all resteth upon a case of conscience, as nice and squeamish a scruple with some zealous mar-prelates as whether the fox in some good respects might be won to eat grapes. They that would pregnantly try conclusions might peradventure find such a temptation the materiallest and learnedest confutation that hath yet been imprinted. Melancholy is deeply wise, and choler resolutely stout; they must persuade them essentially, and feelingly, that will move them effectually. Were they entreated to yield, other arguments would subscribe of their own gentle accord, and ingenuously confess that opinion is not to prejudice the truth, or faction to derogate from authority. Possession was ever a strong defendant, and a just title maketh a puissant adversary. Bishops will govern with reputation when mar-prelates must obey with reverence, or resist with contumacy. Errors in doctrine, corruptions in manners, and abuses in offices would be reformed, but degrees of superiority and orders of obedience are needful in all estates, and especially in the clergy as necessary as the sun in the day or the moon in the night, or cock-a-hoop with a hundred thousand curates in the world would prove a mad discipline. Let order be the golden rule of proportion, & I am as forward an admonitioner as any precisian in England. If disorder must be the discipline, and confusion the reformation (as, without difference of degrees, it must needs), I crave pardon. Anarchy was never yet a good statesman, and ataxy will ever be a bad churchman. That same lusty downfall is too hot a policy for my learning. They were best to be content to let bishoprics stand, that would be loath to see religion fall, or the clergy trodden underfoot. He conceiveth little that perceiveth not what bonds hold the world in order, and what tenures maintain an assurance in estates. Were ministers stipendiaries or pensioners (which hath also been a wise motion), and all without distinction alike esteemed, that is, all without regard alike contemned & abjected (which would be the issue of unequal equality), woe to the poor ministry, and the cunningest practice of the consistory should have much ado to stop those gaps, and recure those sores. Never a more succourless orphan, or a more desolate widow, or a more distressed pilgrim, than such a ministry, until, in a thirsty & hungry zeal, it should eftsoons retire to former provisions, & recover that ancient economy ecclesiastical, the surest revenue & honourablest salary of that coat, much better, iwis, than the soldier's pay or the serving-man's wages. Equality, in things equal, is a just law, but a respective valuation of persons is the rule of equity, & they little know into what incongruities & absurdities they run headlong, that are weary of geometrical proportion, or distributive justice, in the collation of public functions, offices, or promotions, civil or spiritual. God bestoweth his blessings with difference, and teacheth his lieutenant the prince to estimate, and prefer his subjects accordingly. When better authors are alleged for equality in persons unequal, I will live and die in defence of that equality, and honour arithmetical proportion as the only balance of justice, and sole standard of government. Meanwhile, they that will be wiser than God, and their prince, may continue a peevish

scrupulosity in subscribing to their ordinances, and nourish a rebellious contumacy in refusing their orders. I wish unto my friends as unto myself, and recommend learning to discretion, conceit to judgement, zeal to knowledge, duty to obedience, confusion to order, uncertainty to assurance, and unlawful novelty to lawful uniformity, the sweetest repose that the commonwealth or church can enjoy. *Regnum divisum*, a sovereign text, and what notabler gloss upon a thousand texts? Or what more cordial restorative of body or soul than *Ecce quam bonum, & quam iucundum*? Sweet my masters, be sweet, and without the least bitterness of unnecessary strife, tender your affectionatest devotions of zeal and honour to the best contentment of your friends, your patrons, your prince, the commonwealth, the church, the Almighty, which so dearly love, so bountifully maintain, so mightily protect, so graciously favour, and so indulgentially tender you. Confound not yourselves, and what people this day more blessed, or what nation more flourishing? Some fervent, and many counterfeit, lovers adore their mistresses, and commit idolatry to the least of their beauties; oh, that we knew what a sacrifice obedience were, and what a jewel of jewels he offereth that presenteth charity, without which we may talk of doctrine, and discourse of discipline, but doctrine is a parrot, discipline an echo, reformation a shadow, sanctification a dream without charity, in whose sweet bosom reconciliation harboureth, the dearest friend of the church, and the only est Amen of so infinite controversies. That reconciliation settle itself to examine matters barely, without their veles or habiliments, according to the counsel of Marcus Aurelius, and to define things simply, without any colours or embellishments, according to the precepts of Aristotle and the examples of Ramus, and the most endless altercations, being generally rather verbal than real, and more circumstantial than substantial, will soon grow to an end, which end humanity hasten, if there be any spice of humanity; divinity dispatch, if there be any remnant of divinity; heaven accomplish, if the graces of heaven be not locked up, and earth embrace, if reconciliation hath not forsaken the earth. If falsehood be weak, as it is weak, why should it longer hold up head, and if truth be truth, that is, great and mighty, why should it not prevail? Most excellent truth, show thyself in thy victorious majesty, and maugre whatsoever encounter of wit, learning, or fury, prevail puissantly.

These notes, if they happen to see light, are especially intended to the particular use of a few, whom in affectionate goodwill I would wish to stay their wisdoms. Did I not entirely pity their case, and extraordinarily favour some commendable parts in them, they should not easily have cost me half thus many lines, every one worse bestowed than other if constancy in error be a credit; in disobedience, a bond; in vice, a virtue; in misery, a felicity. He that writ the premises affecteth truth as precisely as any precisian in Cambridge or Oxford, and hateth even love itself, in comparison of truth, which he is ever to tender with a curious devotion, but a man may be as blind in overseeing as in seeing nothing, and he may shoot farther from the mark, that overshooteth, than he that shooteth short or wide, as always some mote-spying heads have so scrupulously ordered the matter, *Vt intelligendo nihil intelligerent*. I would be loath to fall into the hands of any such captious and mutinous wits, but if it be my fortune to light upon hard entertainment, what remedy? I have had some little tampering with a kind of extortioners and barrators in my time, and fear not greatly any bugs, but in charity, or in duty. Wrong him not that would gladly be well taken where he meaneth well, and once for all protesteth he loveth humanity with his heart, and reverenceth divinity with his soul, as he would rather declare in deed, than profess in word. If he erreth, it is for want of knowledge, not for want of zeal. Howbeit for his fuller contentment he hath also done his endeavour to know something on both sides, and, laying aside partiality to the persons, hath privately made the most equal & sincere analysis of their several allegations and proofs that his logic and divinity could set down. For other analyses he overpassed, as impertinent, or not specially material. After such examination of their authorities and arguments, not with a rigorous censure of either, but with a favourable construction of both, pardon him though he presume to deliver some part of his animadversions in such terms as the instant occasion presenteth, not for any contentious or sinister purpose (the world is too

full of litigious and barratous pens), but for the satisfaction of those that desire them, & the advertisement of those that regard them, who, according to any indifferent or reasonable analysis, shall find the sharpest inventions, & weightiest judgements, of their leaders nothing so authentical or current as was prejudicately expected. It is no piece of my intention to instruct where I may learn, or to control any superior of quality that in conscience may affect, or in policy seem to countenance, that side. With Martin and his applauders, Browne and his adherents, Barrow and his complices, Kett and his sectaries, or whatsoever commotioners of like disposition (for never such a flush of schismatic heads, or heretic wits), that like the notorious H.N., or the presumptuous David Gorge, or that execrable Servetus, or other turbulent rebels in religion, would be Turkessing and innovating they wot not what, I hope it may become me to be almost as bold as they have been with judges, bishops, archbishops, princes, and with whom not, howsoever learned, wise, virtuous, reverend, honourable, or sovereign. Or if my cool dealing with them be insupportable, I believe their hot practising with lords and princes was not greatly tolerable. Be as it may, that is done on both sides cannot be undone, and if they ween they may offend outrageously without injury, other are sure they may defend moderately with justice. When that sevenfold shield faileth, my plea is at an end, albeit my making or marring were the client. Whiles the sevenfold shield holdeth out, he can do little, that cannot hold it up. A strong apology enableth a weak hand, and a good cause is the best advocate. Some sleep not to all, and I watch not to everyone. If I be understood with effect where I wish at least a demurrer with stayed advisement & consultation, I have my desire, & will not tediously importune other. I doubt not of many contrary instigations, & some bold examples of turbulent spirits, but heat is not the meetest judge on the bench, or the soundest divine in disputation, & in matters of government, but especially in motions of altercation, that run their heads against a strong wall, *take heed* is a fair thing. Were there no other considerations, the place and the time are two weighty and mighty circumstances. It is a very nimble feather that will needs outrun the wing of the time, and leave the sails of regiment behind. Men are men, and ever had, and ever will have, their imperfections. Paradise tasted of imperfections; the golden age, whensoever it was most golden, had some dross of imperfections; the patriarchs felt some fits of imperfections; Moses' tabernacle was made acquainted with imperfections; Solomon's temple could not clear itself from imperfections; the primitive church wanted not imperfections; Constantine's devotion found imperfections; what reformation could ever say, *I have no imperfections*, or will they that dub themselves the little flock, and the only remnant of Israel say, *We have no imperfections*? Had they none, as none have more than some of those Luciferian spirits, it is an unkind bird that defileth his kind nest, and a proud husbandman that can abide no tares amongst wheat, or upbraideth the corn with the cockle. There is a God above, that heareth prayers; a prince beneath, that tendereth supplications; lords on both sides, that patronize good causes; learned men, that desire conference; time, to consider upon essential points; knowledge, that loveth zeal, as zeal must reverence knowledge; truth, that displayeth & investeth itself; conscience, that is a thousand witnesses, even against itself. When the question is *de re*, to dispute *de homine* is sophistical, or when the matter dependeth in controversy, to cavil at the form is captious; the abuse of the one, were it proved, abolisheth not the use of the other. What should impertinent secrecies be revealed, or needless quarrels picked, or every proposition wrenched to the harshest sense? What should honest minds, and excellent wits, be taunted and boured without rime or reason? What should insolent and monstrous fantasticality extol and glorify itself above the clouds without cause or effect? When, where, and how should Martin Junior be purified, Martin Senior saintified, Browne evangelistified, Barrow apostolified, Kett angelified, or the patriarch of the lovely Familists, H.N., deified, more than all the world beside? Were it possible that this age should afford a divine and miraculous Elias, yet, when Elias himself deemed himself most desolate, and complained he was left all alone, there remained thousands living that never bowed their knees unto Baal? But faction is as sure a keeper of counsel as a sieve; spite, as close a secretary as a scummer; innovation, at the least a bright angel from heaven, & the foresaid abstracts of pure divinity will needs know why Junius

Brutus, or Eusebius Philadelphus, should rather be Pasquils incarnate than they. If there be one Abraham in Ur, one Lot in Sodom, one Daniel in Babylon, one Jonas in Nineveh, one Job in Huz, or if there be one David in the court of Saul, one Obadia in the court of Achab, one Jeremy in the court of Zedechias, one Zorobabel in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, one Nehemias in the court of Artaxerxes, or any singular blessed one in any good, or bad, court, city, state, kingdom, or nation, it must be one of them; all other, of whatsoever dignity or desert, what but reprobates, apostates, monsters, tyrants, Pharisees, hypocrites, false prophets, belly-gods, worldlings, ravenous wolves, crafty foxes, dogs to their vomit, a generation of vipers, limbs of Satan, devils incarnate, or suchlike. For Erasmus' poor *Copia Verborum*, and Omphalius' sorry furniture of invective and declamatory phrases, must come short in this comparison of the railing faculty. I know no remedy but the prayer of charity, and the order of authority, whom it concerneth to deal with libels as with thorns, with fancies as with weeds, and with heresies, or schisms, as with hydra's heads. It hath been always one of my observations, but especially of later years, since these Numantine schisms: The better scholar indeed, the colder schismatic, & the hotter schismatic, the worse scholar. What an hideous and incredible opinion did David Gorge conceive of himself? H.N. was not afraid to insult over all the fathers, doctors, schoolmen, & new writers ever since the evangelists & apostles; Browne challenged all the doctors & other notablest graduates of Cambridge and Oxford; Kett, though something in astrology and physic, yet a raw divine, how obstinate and untractable in his fantastic assertions? Barrow taketh upon him, not only above Luther, Zuinglius, Oecolampadius, Brentius, and all the vehementest German protestants, but also above Calvin, Viret, Beza, Marlorat, Knox, Melvin, Cartwright, Travers, Fenner, Penry, and all our importunatest solicitors of reformation, howsoever qualified with gifts, or reputed amongst their favourites. Illuminate understanding is the rare bird of the church, and grand intendiments come by a certain extraordinary and supernatural revelation. One unlearned singularist hath more in him than ten learned precisians; give me the brave fellow that can carry a dragon's tail after him. Tush, university learning is a dunce, and school-divinity a Sorbonist. It is not art, or modesty, that maketh a Rabbi Alphas, or a ringleader of multitudes. David Gorge, the arch-prophet of the world; H.N., the arch-evangelist of Christ; and Barrow, the arch-apostle of the church. Superhappy creatures, that have illuminate understanding, and grand intendiments at the best hand. Miraculous Barrow, that so hugely exceedeth his ancients in the pure art of reformation. But undoubtedly his kingdom cannot flourish long; as he hath blessed his seniors, so he must be annointed of his juniors. Methinks I see another and another head suddenly starting up upon hydra's shoulders. Farewell, H.N., and welcome Barrow; adieu Barrow, and all hail, thou angelical spirit of the gospel whose face I see in a crystal, more pure than purity itself; the depression of one, the exaltation of another; the corruption of one, the generation of another; no seed so fertile or rank as the seed of schism, and the sperm of heresy. Christ aid his assaulted fort, and bless the seed of Abraham, and in honour of excellent arts and worthy professions be it ever said: *The best learned are best advised.* Even Cardinal Sadolet, Cardinal Pole, and Omphalius commended the mild and discreet disposition of Melancthon, Bucer, and Sturmius, when they first stirred in Germany; the Queen Mother of France, and the Cardinal of Lorraine, praised Ramus, albeit he was known to favour the Prince of Conde; Jovius praised Rueclin and Camerarius, as Peucer praised Jovius and Bembus; Osorius praised Ascham, as Ascham praised Watson; and who praised not Sir John Cheke, how exceedingly did Cardan praise him? Sir Thomas Smith, her Majesty's ambassador in France in the reign of Henry the Second, Francis the Second, and Charles the Ninth, was honoured of none more than of some French and Italian cardinals and bishops; the king's sons favoured his son as well after, as before, their coronation. Neander, in his late *Chronicle*, and later *Geography*, praiseth here & there certain papists, and did not Agrippa, Erasmus, Duarene, and Bodin occasionally praise as many protestants? It was a sweet and divine virtue that stirred up love & admiration in such adversaries, & doubtless they carried an honest & honourable mind, that forgot themselves and their friends to do their enemies reason, and virtue right. A virtue that I often seek, seldom find, wish for in many, hope for in some, look for in few, reverence

in a superior, honour in an inferior, admire in a friend, love in a foe, joy to see or hear in one or other. Perverse natures are forward to disguise themselves, and to condemn, not only courtesy or humanity, but even humility, & charity itself, with a nickname of neutrality or ambidexterity. Term it what you list, and miscall it at your pleasure; certes it is an excellent and sovereign quality, that in a firm resolution never to abandon virtue, or to betray the truth, stealeth entertainment from displeasure, favour from offence, love from enmity, grace from indignation, and, not like Homer's siren, but like Homer's Minerva, traineth partiality to a liking of the adverse party; dissension to a commendation of his contrary; error to an embracement of truth; and even corruption himself to an advancement of valour, of desert, of integrity, of that moral and intellectual good that so graciously insinuateth, and so forcibly improveth, itself. Oh, that learning were ever married to such discretion, wit to such wisdom, zeal to such virtue, contention to such morality, and oh, that such private government might appear in those that plead most importunately for public government. Oh, that Plato could teach Xenocrates; Aristotle, Callisthenes; Theophrastus, Aristotle; Eunapius, Iamblicus, to sacrifice to the sweet graces of Mercury. What should I veil, or shadow, a good purpose? Oh, a thousand times that Melancthon could train Junius Brutus; Sturmius, Philadelphus; Ramus, Beza; Jewel, Cartwright; Deering, Martin; Baro, Barrow, to embrace the heavenly graces of Christ, and to kiss the hand of that divine creature that passeth all understanding. What a felicity were it to see such heads as pregnant as hydra's heads, or hydra's heads as rare as such heads?

It is not my meaning to deface, or prejudice, any that unfeignedly meaneth well; if perchance I happen to touch some painted walls and godly hypocrites (godliness is become a strange creature, should they be truly godly), let them keep their own counsel, and cease to affect new reputation by old heresies. The Jews had their holy-holy-holy Essaeans; their separate, and precise Pharisees; their daily regenerate & puritan Hemerobaptists; their fervent, and illuminate, zelotists, only in shape, men; in conversation, saints; in insinuation, angels; in profession, demigods, as descended from heaven to bless the earth, and to make the city a paradise, that washed their feet. Jesus bless good minds from the black enemy, when he attireth himself like an angel of light. Judas the Gaulonite, in the reign of Herod the Great, was an hot toast, and a marvellous zelotist; when the emperor Octavian, taxing the world, and assessing Judaea, like other nations, who but he, in the abundance of his mighty zeal, was the man that set it down for a canonical doctrine, that the people of God was to acknowledge no other lord but God, and that it was a slavish bondage to pay any such exaction or imposition to Augustus, and having given out that principle for an infallible rule, or rather a sacred law, very vehemently solicited and importuned the people (as the manner is), to live and die in the cause of their God and their liberty. But sweet Christ was of a milder & meeker spirit, & both paid tribute himself to avoid offence, and set it down for an eternal maxim in his gospel: *Give unto Caesar that belongeth unto Caesar, and unto God that belongeth unto God.* Zealous Judas the Gaulonite, and fervent Simon the Galilean, two singular reformers of the Judaical synagogue, pretended fair for a pure type, or exquisite platform, of the soundest, exactest, and precisest Hebraical discipline, but what profane idolatry so plagued that divine commonwealth as that same scrupulous zeal, or what made that blessed state utterly miserable but that same unruly and tumultuous zeal, that would not be content with reason until it was too late? For a time, they supposed themselves the worthiest & rarest creatures in Judaea, or rather the only men of that state, and in a deep conceit of a neat & undefiled purity, divorced or sequestered themselves from the corrupt society of other, but alas that any purified minds should pay so dearly and smartly for their fine fancies, which cost them no less than the most lamentable overthrow of their whole commonwealth. You that have languages and arts more than divers others of good quality, and can use them with method, and a certain plausible opinion of great learning, be as excellent and singular as you possibly can for your lives in a direct course, but be not peevish or odd in a crooked balk, that leadeth out of the king's highway, and Christ's own path, into a maze of confusion, and a wilderness of desolation, the final end of these endless

contentions, if they be not otherwise calmed by private discretion, or cut short by public order. The first example of division was perilous, and what ranks or swarms of insatiable schism incontinently followed? It is a mad world when every crew of conceited punies, puffed up with a presumptuous or fantastical imagination, must have their several complot or faction, as it were a certain Punical war, whose victory will be like that of Carthage against Rome, if it be not the sooner quieted. Remember Judas the Gaulonite, and forget not yourselves; inordinate zeal is a pernicious reformer, and destruction a dear purchase of plots in moonshine. St. Paul, the heroical apostle, could not find a more excellent way than charity, the most sovereign way of faith and hope; any other design of purity, or singularity, buildeth not up, but pulleth down, and of more than a million in hope, proveth less than a cipher in effect. What the salvation of David Gorge? A nullity. What the deification of H.N.? A nullity. What the glorification of Kett? A nullity. What the sanctification of Browne? A nullity. What the community of Barrow? A nullity. And what the plausibility of Martin? A nullity. What a thousand such popular motives, allectives, incensives, aggravations of the least corruption, amplifications of the highest felicity, new lands of promise overflowing with milk and honey, fool's paradises, glorious innovations, but present shame, wretched confusion, utter ruin, everlasting infamy, horrible damnation, & a most hideous nullity? Even the great hurly-burly of the church, the imagined heavenly discipline, and the very topsy-turvy of the state, the pretended divine reformation, of two mighty giants, what can they possibly emprove themselves, but silly pygmies, and a most pitiful nullity? Sweet charity, ensweeten these bitter garboils, and seeing they so instantly and importunately affect a perfect platform, give them a most curious and exquisite table of pure reformation, even the true picture of thysself. Surer prevention of mischief and ruin, I know none.

I had here bidden Martin in the Vintry farewell, and taken my leave of this tedious discourse (for no man taketh less delight in invectives), were I not newly certified of certain fresh & frantic practices for the erection of the synedrion in all haste, whose complotters are weary of melancholy projects, and begin to resolve on a choleric course. Hot arguments are fiercely threatened in case the discipline be not the sooner entertained, but methinks that warm course should scarcely be the style of pure mortification, and haply softer fire would make sweeter malt. A little advisement doth not much amiss in capital or dangerous attempts. It were well the blowing bellows might be entreated to keep their wind for a fitter opportunity, or if fire boiling in the stomach must needs break out at the mouth, the best comfort is, the country affordeth sufficient provision of water to encounter the terriblest vulcanist that brandisheth a burning sword, or a fiery tongue, howbeit some lookers-on, that fear not greatly the flame, cannot but marvel at the smoke, and had rather see them breathing out the fume of divine tobacco than of furious rage. I have read of politic Jews that, for their commodity, have become Christians, whom in Spain & Italy they term *retaliados*, but that politic Christians, for any benefit, promotion, or other regard whatsoever, should practice to become Jews in doctrine or in discipline, in earnest or in devise, in whole or in part, it were strange & almost incredible, if the world were not grown a monstrous *retaliado* for his advantage, & the voice of Jacob proved a more gainful stratagem for the hands of Esau than ever the hands of Esau were for the voice of Jacob. I charge not any that are clear (would there were not more Jewish Pharisees than Hebrew worthies), but let not them accuse me for speaking, that condemn themselves for doing, or show themselves saints in the premises, that will scantily prove honest men in the conclusion. All are not led with the same respects that hang on the same string. Some are carried with one consideration, some with another; some tender divinity as their soul, some love religion as their body, some favour the gospel as their fortune; I doubt not but some desire discipline for conscience, and do not covet reformation for gain, or were it impossible to point out a *retaliado* convert in the hottest throng of those fresh proselytes. If there be no *retaliados* in Christendom, I am glad I have said nothing; if there be, they may so long mock other in words, that at last they will most deceive themselves in deeds. I am beholding to the old Jewry, but have no great fancy to a

new, either in London or elsewhere, when, amongst divers other histories of Jewish enormities, I remember how an ancient Archbishop of Canterbury, one John Peckham, was fain to take order with the Bishop of London then being, for the dissolution and destruction of all the synagogues in his diocese. The less need of any such order at this instant, all the better. I will not dispute whether a synedrion presuppose a synagogue, or whether it be not as insupportable a yoke for any king or mighty state as it was for king Herod or the Romans, that found it intolerable (methinks the wisest sanhedrist of a thousand should hardly persuade me that he is a friend of princes, or no enemy of monarchies), but I know so much by some, none of the meanest scholars or obscurest men in Europe, touching their opinion of the Old and New Testament, of the Talmud, of the Alcoran, of the Hebrew, Christian, and Turkish histories, that I deem anything suspicious and perilous that any way inclineth to Judaism, as fell an adversary to Christianity as the wolf to the lamb, or the goshawk to the dove. Grant them an inch, and they will soon take an ell with the advantage, and were any part of their discipline one foot, could the body of their doctrine want an head, or might not the parish prove a disorderly congregation, as bad as a synagogue, where the judicial bench were a synedrion? The Jews are a subtle and mischievous people, and have cunningly inveigled some students of the holy tongue with their miraculous cabbala from Moses, their omniscious cosmology from Solomon, their Chaldean sapience from Daniel, and other profound secrets of great pretence, but their liberal gifts bite like their usury, and they are finally found to entertain them best that shut them quite out of doors with their sanhedrim and all. They can tell a precious tale of their divine senate, and of their venerable Meokekim, as from speaking oracles; might not these, and their other metaphysical mysteries, be enregistered in the same Talmud, or might it not prove a pinching reformation for Christendom? I have tasted of their verbal miracles, and cannot greatly commend their personal virtues, but their real usury is known throughout the Christian world to be an unmerciful tyrant, & I fear me their consistorial jurisdiction would grow a cruel griper, especially being so universally extended in every parish as is intended by the promoters thereof, and powerably armed with that supreme & uncontrollable authority which they affect in causes ecclesiastical. A brave spiritual motion, and worthy not only of these piddling stirs, but even of a Trojan war. Yet their precedent, the Mosaical synedrion, was a civil court (as is afore mentioned, & would be reconsidered), *cum mero imperio*, and when it became mixed, it was not merely ecclesiastical, & when it became merely ecclesiastical, of a political consistory it soon proved a tyrannical court, and, by your good leave, was as nimble to encroach upon civil causes, being an ecclesiastical court, as ever it was to intermeddle with ecclesiastical causes, being a civil court. The finest methodists, according to Aristotle's golden rule of artificial bounds, condemn geometrical precepts in arithmetic, or arithmetical precepts in geometry, as irregular and abusive, but never artist so licentiously heterogenized, or so extravagantly exceeded, his prescribed limits as ambition or covetise. Every miller is ready to convey the water to his own mill, and neither the high-priests of Jerusalem, nor the popes of Rome, nor the patriarchs of Constantinople, nor the pastors of Geneva, were ever hasty to bind their own hands. They that research antiquities, and inquire into the privities of practices, shall find an act of *praemunire* is a necessary bridle in some cases. The first bishops of Rome were undoubtedly virtuous men and godly pastors; from bishops they grew to be popes. What more reverend than some of those bishops, or what more tyrannical than some of those popes? Aaron and the high-priests of Jerusalem and of other ceremonial nations were their glorious mirror, and they deemed nothing too magnificent or pompous to breed an universal reverence of their sacred authority and hierarchy. We are so far alienated from imitating or allowing them that we cannot abide our own bishops, yet withal would have every minister a bishop, and would also be fetching a new pattern from old Jerusalem, the mother see of the high-priesthood. So the world (as the manner is), will needs run about in a circle: pull down bishops, set up the minister, make him bishop of his parish, and head of the consistory (call him how you list, that must be his place). What will become of him within a few generations, but a high-priest in a new Jerusalem, or a great pope in a small room? And then where is the difference between him and a bishop, or

rather, between him and a pope, not so much in the quality of his jurisdiction, when in effect he may be his own judge, as in the quantity of his diocese, or temporalities? Or in case he be politic, as some popes have been, glad for their advantage to tyrannize popularly, so he may chance be content for his advancement to popularize tyrannically, and shall not be the first of the clergy that hath cunningly done it with a comely grace. Something there must be of a monarchy in free states, and something there will be of free states in a monarchy. The discreeter and uprighter the curate is, the more circumspectly he will walk, and degenerate the less. Yet what generation without degeneration, or what revolution without irregularity? One inconvenience begetteth another; enormities grow like evil weeds. Take heed of a mischief, and where then will be the corruptions? Or how shall defection (acknowledging no primacy or superiority in any person or court), retire to his first institution if perchance there should grow a conspiracy in fellowship, one consistory justify another for advantage, and their whole synods fall out in consequence, to be like their parts? Men may err, and frailty may slip. What should I allege histories, or authorities? It is no news for infirmity to fall when it should stand, or for appetite to rebel when it should obey. Every son of Adam a reed shaken with the wind of passion, a weak vessel, a scholar of imperfection, a master of ignorance, a doctor of error, a pastor of concupiscence, a superintendent of avarice, a lord of ambition, a prince of sin, a slave of mortality. Flesh is flesh, and blood a wanton, a changeling, a compound of contrary elements, a revolting and retrograde planet, a sophister, an hypocrite, an impostor, an apostata, an heretic, as convertible as mercury, as variable as the weathercock, as lunatic as the moon, a generation of corruption, a whore of Babylon, a limb of the world, and an imp of the devil. It is their own argument in other men's case, and why should it not be other men's argument in their case, unless they can show a personal privilege *ad imprimendum solum*? They may speak as they list; terms of sanctification and mortification are free for them that will use them, but the common opinion is, even of the forwardest skirmishers at this day, they do like other men, and live like the children of the world, and the brethren of themselves. Some of them have their neighbours' good leave to be their own proctors or advocates, if they please. Yet how probable is it they are now at their very best, and even in the neatest and purest plight of their incorruption, whiles their minds are abstracted from worldly thoughts to a high meditation of their supposed heavenly reformation, and whiles it necessarily behooveth them to stand charily and nicely upon the credit of their integrity, sincerity, preciseness, godliness, zeal, and other virtues? When such respects are over, and their purpose compassed according to their hearts' desire, who can tell how they, or their successors, may use the keys, or how they will bestir them with the sword? If flesh prove not a Pope Joan, and blood a Pope Hildebrand, good enough. Accidents that have happened may happen again, and all things under the sun are subject to casualty, mutability, and corruption. At all adventures, it is a brave position to maintain a sovereign and supreme authority in every consistory, and to except the minister from superior censure, like the high-priest, or greatest pontiff, whom Dionysius Halicarnassus called []. He had need be a wise and conscionable man, that should be a parliament or a chancery unto himself, and what a furniture of divine perfections were requisite in the church where so many ministers, so many spiritual high justices of oyer and terminer, and every one a supreme tribunal, a synod, a general council, a canon law, a heavenly law, and gospel unto himself? If no serpent can come within his paradise, safe enough. Or were it possible that the pastor (although a man, yet a divine man), should, as it were by inheritance or succession, continue a saint from generation to generation, is it also necessary that the whole company of the redoubted seniors should wage everlasting war with the flesh, the world, and the devil, and eternally remain an incorruptible areopage, without wound or scar? Never such a college or fraternity upon earth, if that be their inviolable order. But God help conceit, that buildeth churches in the air, and platformeth disciplines without stain or spot.

They complain of corruptions, and worthily, where corruptions encroach (I am no patron of corruptions), but what a surging sea of corruption would overflow within a few years, in case the sword of so great and ample authority as that at Jerusalem most capital, or this at

Geneva most redoubted, were put into the hand of so little capacity in government, so little discretion in discipline, so little judgement in causes, so little moderation in living, so little constancy in saying or doing, so little gravity in behaviour, or so little whatsoever should procure reverence in a magistrate, or establish good order in a commonwealth. Travel through ten thousand parishes in England, and when you have taken a favourable view of their substantiallest and sufficientest alderman, tell me, in good sooth, what a comely show they would make in a consistory, or with how solemn a presence they would furnish a council table. I believe Grimaldus did little think of any such senators when he writ *De Optimo Senatore*, or did Doctor Bartholomew Philip, in his *Perfect Counsellor*, ever dream of any such counsellors? Petty principalities, petty tyrants, & such senates, such senators. Wit might devise a pleasurable dialogue betwixt the leather pilch and the velvet coat, and help to persuade the better to deal neighbourly with the other; the other to content himself with his own calling. I deny not but the short apron may be as honest a man, or as good a Christian, as the long gown, but methinks he should scantily be so good a judge or assistant in doubtful causes, and I suppose *Ne sutor ultra crepidam* is as fit a proverb now as ever it was, since that excellent painter rebuked that saucy cobbler. Every subject is not born to be a magistrate or officer, and who knoweth not whose creature superior power is? They are very wise that are wiser than he by whose divine permission everyone is that he is. The Laconical ephory hath lately borne a great swing in some resolute discourses of princes and magistrates, that thought they saved the world from the abomination of desolation when they found out a bridle or yoke for princes, but old Aristotle was a deep politician *in diebus illis*, and his reasons against that ephory (for Aristotle confuted the ephory with sounder arguments than ever it was confirmed to this day), would not yet perhaps be altogether condemned: that so great judicial causes were committed to men endued with so little, or no, virtue; that the poor plebians, for very penury, were easily bribed and corrupted; that there ensued an alteration of the state, the good kings being fain to curry favour with their great masters, and to become popular. Whether this would be the end, and may be the mark of those, or our populars, I offer it to their consideration that are most interested in such motions of ephories and seniories. The world is beholding to brave and heroical minds that, like Hercules, would practise means to pull down tyranny, small or great, and reform whole empires and churches, like the three victorious emperors surnamed *Magni*, Constantine, Theodosius, and Charles. Thanks were an insufficient recompense for so noble intentions. It must be a guerdon of value that should countervail their desert, that pretend so fatherly and patronly a care of re-edifying commonwealths and churches. Some voluntary counsellors do well in a state, and men of extraordinary vocation, singularly qualified for the purpose, are worth their double weight in gold. When other sleep, they watch; when other play, they work; when other feast, they fast; when other laugh, they sigh; whiles other are content to be lulled in security, and nuzzled in abuse, they occupy themselves in devising pregnant bonds of assurance, and exquisite models of reformation, which must presently be advanced without farther consultation, or they have courage, and will use it in maintenance of so divine abstracts. Melancholy is peremptory in resolution, and choler an eager executioner. Were it not for those two invincible arguments, there might still be order taken with other reasons and authorities whatsoever. They do well to presuppose the best of their own designs, and to give out cards of fortunate islands, artificially drawn, but as I never read or heard of any people that committed swords into such hands, but bought their experience with loss, and had a hard pennyworth of their soft cushion, so, in my simple consideration, I cannot conceive how ignorance should become a meeter officer than knowledge; affection a more incorrupt magistrate than reason; headlong rashness, or wilful stubbornness, a more upright judge than mature deliberation; base occupations enact, and establish, better orders than liberal sciences or honourable professions (any traffic, howsoever current, or advantageous, hath been judged undecent for a senator); tag & rag administer all things absolutely well, with due provision against whatsoever possible inconveniences, where so many faults are found with persons of better quality, that incomparably have more skill in the administration of public affairs, more knowledge and experience in causes, more respect

in proceeding, more regard of their credit, more sense of dangerous enormities or contagious abuses, more care of the flourishing and durable state of the prince, the commonwealth, and the church. Nay, I can see no reason, according to the best grounds of policy that ever I read, but for every civil tyranny or petty misdemeanour that can possibly happen now, the government standing as it doth, there must needs upstart a hundred and a hundred barbarous tyrannies and huge outrages, were the new platforms acts of parliament, and the complotters such high commissioners as are described in their own projects, the flourishes of unexperienced wits. When they have nothing else to allege that should make them superior, or equal to the present officers, conscience must be their text, their gloss, their sanctuary, their tenure, and their stronghold. Indeed conscience, grounded upon science, is a double anchor, that neither deceiveth nor is deceived, and no better rule than a regular, or public, conscience, in divinity ruled by divinity; in law, by law; in art, by art; in reason, by reason; in experience, by experience. Other irregular or private conscience, in public functions, will fall out to be but a lawless church, a shipman's hose, a juggler's stick, a fantastical freehold, and a conceited tenure *in capite*, as interchangeable as the moon, and as fallible as the wind. How barratous and mutinous, at every puff of suggestion, let the world judge. I would there lacked a present example as hot as fresh, but hot love, soon cold, and the fits of youth like the showers of April. There goeth a pretty fable of the moon, that on a time she earnestly besought her mother to provide her a comely garment, fit and handsome for her body. How can that be, sweet daughter (quoth the mother), sith your body never keepeth at one certain state, but changeth every day in the month? That private conscience, the sweet daughter of fancy, be the moral, and the assurance of the common people, where there wanteth a curb, the application. What chameleon so changeth his colour as affection, or what polypus so variable as *Populus, chorus, fluius*? Doctor Kelke, when he was vice-chancellor in Cambridge, would often tell the advocates and proctors in the consistory there, that he had a knack of conscience for their knack of law. Truly the man, as he was known to be learned and religious, so seemed to carry a right honest and harmless mind, and would many times be pleasantly disposed after his blunt manner, but in very deed his conscience (be it spoken without appeachment of his good memory), otherwhiles proved a knack, and admitted more inconveniences (some would have said, committed more absurdities), than became the gravity and reputation of that judicious consistory. Yet were this new-plotted consistory erected, according to the map of their own imagination, even upon the top of the presumed Mount Sion, by the favour of that goodly prospect I dare undertake, amongst so many thousand ministers with episcopal, or more than episcopal, authority, there must be but a few hundred judges like Doctor Kelke, and a very great dearth of such assistants, or seniors, as that flourishing university affordeth. Alas, many thousands of them, unworthy to carry the beadle's staff before the one, or their books after the other, how meet for supreme, or free, jurisdiction, I report me unto you. It is notably said of Aristotle in the *Politics*: *He that would have the law to rule, would have a god to rule, but he that committeth the rule to a man, committeth the rule to a beast.* The law is a mind without appetite, a soul without a body, a judge without flesh and blood, a balance without partiality, a mean without extremes. Where conscience is such a law, I am for conscience. Let us profess no other law; let us build us consistories and tabernacles upon that hill of equity; let us dwell in those Elysian fields of integrity; let us honour that incorruptible sceptre of sincerity; let us set the imperial crown upon the head of that policy, and let that discipline wear the pontifical mitre. The world wrongeth itself infinitely if it runneth not to the gaze of that beautiful Belvedere, or refuseth any order from that sacred oracle. Otherwise, if men be men, & that consistory no choir of angels or tribunal of saints, but a meeting of neighbours, some of them rude and gross enough, after the homeliest guise (for without miraculous illumination, it must necessarily be so in most parishes), now, I beseech you, hath not consideration some reason to fear the Delphical sword? And the convented party that was nothing afraid of the dean or the canons, *They*, quoth he, *are good gentlemen, and my favourable friends, but the chapter is the devil*, would peradventure go nigh hand to say as much for the new consistory as for the old chapter. *Our minister is a zealous preacher, and such and such my honest*

neighbours, but God bless me from the curst consistory. They that skill of popular humours, and know the course of mechanical dealings, or artisan governments, or what you please, can hardly hope for any such paradise or All-Hallows in Honey Lane as is plausibly portrayed in some late draughts of reformation, sweeter in discourse than in practice. I will not prophesy of contingents in speculation, but were their complot a matter *in esse*, it is possible that even the platformers themselves should have no such exceeding cause to joy in their redoubted seniors. Some potestates are quaint men, and will by fits bear a brain, maugre the best reason or purest conscience in a consistory. And God knoweth how the people would digest it (especially after some little trial of their inexorable rigour, and other surly dealing), that their neighbour Whatchicalt, sometime no wiser than his fellows, and such and such a freeholder of this and that homely occupation (somewhat base for a senator), should so jollily perk on the bench amongst the fathers conscript, when some that have a state of inheritance, or maintain themselves upon civiller trades, must humbly wait at the bar, and yield themselves obedient to the stern commandments of those sage benchers. Iwis the penny is a strong argument with such natures, and he that carrieth the heaviest purse, how unmeet soever he may seem for a consistory, thinketh himself mightily wronged unless he be taken for the best, or one of the best, in the parish, and if for his countenance, or other charitable respect, he will not stick sometime to pleasure a good-fellow or a poor neighbour (some good-fellows are kill-cows, and some poor neighbours all heart), he may perhaps get some hardy partakers, & bear himself for as mighty a man in the borough or village as some of the foresaid redoubted potestates. How that would be allowed in consistory, or how a thousand suits, quarrels, uproars, & hurly-burlies might be pacified, yet unprovided for, or unthought upon, by the compendious Summists, it would be considered in time, whiles there is leisure from practice. For after the consistory is once up, in such a sweating harvest of most busy business, a simple pragmatic may easily prognosticate how small a remnant of leisure will remain for consideration. There was much ado, & otherwhiles little help, first at Jerusalem with one synedrion, and then at Geneva with one seniory, the two only exemplary presbyteries (for other primitive elderships will not fit the turn); what a wonderful stir would one and some 52,000 consistories make in England? Were not our reformation likely to prove a greater sweat, and a mightier drought, than any in Grafton's, Stow's, or Holinshed's *Chronicle*? Martin, under correction of your high court of conscience, give me leave to bethink me at once upon the firework of your discipline, and Phaeton's regiment in the hot countries of the Orient. When his brave design came to the execution, *solitaque iugum grauitate carebat*, a light beginning, a heavy ending.

Nec scit, quid sit iter; nec si sciat, imperet illis, and so forth (it is not conceit, or courage, but skill, and authority, that manageth government with honour); what was the issue of that younkerly & presumptuous enterprise, but a deluge of fire, as ruthless and horrible as Deucalion's deluge of water.

*Magnae pereunt cum moenibus vrbes:
Cumq.; suis totas populis incendai Gentes
In cinerem vertunt.*

You can best translate it yourself, and I leave the warm application to the hot interpreter, with addition of that short, but weighty, and most remarkable advertisement: *Poenam Phaeton, pro munere poscis*. Phaeton, thou desirest thy ruin for thy advancement, and Martin, thou affectest thou wottest not what: a discipline? a confusion; a reformation? a deformation; a salve? a plague; a bliss? a curse; a commonwealth? a common woe; a happy and heavenly church? a wretched and hellish synagogue. Amount in imagination as high as the haughtiest conceit can aspire, and platform the most exquisite designs of pure perfection that the nicest curiosity can devise, were not the wisest on your side most simply-simple in weighing the consequents of such antecedents, they would never so inconsiderately labour their own shame, the misery of their brethren, the desolation of the ministry, & the

destruction of the church. Good Martin, be good to the church, to the ministry, to the state, to thy country, to thy patrons, to thy friends, to thy brethren, to thyself, and as thou lovest thyself, take heed of old puritanism, new anabaptism, & final barbarism. Thou art young in years, I suppose, but younger in enterprise, I am assured. Thy age in some sort pleadeth thy pardon, and couldst thou with any reasonable temperance advise thyself in time, as it is high time to assuage thy stomachous and overlashing outrage, there be few wise men of quality but would pity thy rash proceeding, and impute thy wanton scurrilous vein to want of experience and judgement, which is seldom ripe in the spring. I will not stand to examine the spirit that speaketh or inditeth in such a phrase, but if that were the tenor of a godly or zealous style, methinks some other saint or godly man should someway have used the like elocution before, unless you meant to be as singular in your form of writing as in your manner of censuring, & to publish as grave an innovation in words as in other matters. Some spiritual motion it was that caused you so sensibly to apply your ruffling speech, and whole method, to the feeding and tickling of that humour that is none of the greatest students of divinity, unless it be your divinity, nor any of the likeliest creatures to advance reformation, unless it be your reformation. But whatsoever your motion were, or howsoever you persuaded yourself that a plausible and roisterly course would win the hearts of good-fellows, and make ruffians become precisians, in hope to mount higher than Highgate by the fall of Bishopsgate, some of your well-willers hold a certain charitable opinion that to reform yourself were your best reformation. Good discipline would do many good, and do Martin no harm, had he leisure from training of other to train himself, and, as one termed it, to trim his own beard. Howbeit in my method, knowledge would go before practice, and doctrine before discipline. I challenge few, or none, for learning, which I rather love as my friend, or honour as my patron, than profess as my faculty, but some approved good scholars of both universities, and some honourable wise men of a higher university, take Martin to be none of the greatest clerks in England, and marvel how he should presume to be a doctor of discipline, that hath much ado to show himself a master of doctrine. For mine own part, I hope he is a better doctrinist than disciplinist, or else I must needs conclude pride is a busy man, and a deeper counsellor of states than of himself. Public projects become public persons, and may do well in some other, being well employed, but private persons, and the common crews of platformers, might have most use of private designments appropriate to their own vocation, profession, or quality. When I find Martin as neat a reformer of his own life as of other men's actions, it shall go hard but I will in some measure proportion my commendation to the singularity of his desert, which I would be glad to crown with a garland of present, and a diadem of future, praise. For I long to see a lark without a crest, and would travel far to discover a reformer without a fault, or only with such a fault as for the rareness should deserve, or for the strangeness might challenge, to be chronicled like the eclipse of the sun. The state demonstrative, not over-laboured at this instant, would fain be employed in blazoning a creature of such perfections, and the very soul of charity thirsteth to drink of that clear aqua-vitae. It is not the first time that I have preferred a gentleman of deeds before a lord of words, and what if I once by way of familiar discourse said I was a protestant in the antecedent, but a papist in the consequent, for I liked faith in the premises, but wished works in the conclusion, as St. Paul beginneth with justification, but endeth with sanctification, & the schoolmen reconcile many confutations in one distinction: we are justified by faith apprehensively, by works declaratively, by the blood of Christ effectively. I hope it is no evil sign for the flower to flourish, for the tree to fructify, for the fire to warm, for the sun to shine, for truth to embrace virtue, for the intellectual good to practise the moral good, for the cause to effect. He meant honestly that said merrily, he took St. Austin's and St. Gregory's by Paul's to be the good friends of St. Faith's under Paul's. What needeth more? If your reformation be such a restorative as you pretend, what letteth but that the world should presently behold a visible difference between the fruits of the pure and the corrupt diet? Why ceaseth the heavenly discipline to pen her own apology, not in one or two scribbled pamphlets of counterfeit compliments, but in a thousand living volumes of heavenly virtues? Divine causes were ever wont to fortify

themselves, and weaken their adversaries, with divine effects, as conspicuous as the brightest sunshine. The apostles and primitive founders of churches were not railers or scoffers, but painful travellers, but zealous preachers, but holy livers, but fair-spoken, mild, and loving men, even like Moses, like David, like the son of David, the three gentlest persons that ever walked upon earth. Wheresoever they became, it appeared by the whole manner of their meek and sweet proceeding that they had been the servants of a meek lord, and the disciples of a sweet master, insomuch that many nations, which knew not God, entertained them as the ambassadors or orators of some God, and were mightily persuaded to conceive a divine opinion of him whom they so divinely preached, & even to believe that he could be no less than the son of the great God. Their miracles got the hearts of numbers, but their sermons and orations were greater wonders than their miracles, and won more ravished souls to heaven. Their doctrine was full of power; their discipline full of charity; their eloquence, celestial; their zeal, invincible; their life, inviolable; their conversation, loving; their profession, humility; their practice, humility; their conquest, humility. Read the sweet ecclesiastical histories, replenished with many cordial narrations of their sovereign virtues, and peruse the most rigorous censures of their professed enemies, Pliny, Suetonius, Tacitus, Antoninus, Symachus, Lucian, Libanius, Philostratus, Eunapius, or any like Latinist or Grecian (I except not Porphyry, Hierocles, or Julian himself), and what Christian or heathen judgement with any indifferency can deny but they always demeaned themselves like well-affected, fair-conditioned, innocent and kind persons, many ways gracious, and someways admirable? Peace was their war; unity their multiplication; good words and good deeds, their edifying instruments; a general humanity toward all, wherever they travelled, and a special beneficence toward everyone with whom they conversed, one of the sovereign means for the propagation of Christianity. They knew his merciful and Godful meaning, that, in an infinite and incomprehensible love, descended from heaven to save all upon earth, and remembered how graciously his divine self vouchsafed to converse with publicans and other sinners; what a sweet and peerless example of humblest humility he gave his disciples, when with his own immaculate hands he washed their feet; how applicably he framed himself to the proper disposition of every nation in drawing unto him the magicians of the east with the wondrous sight of a new star, in moving the Jews with miracles and parables, in showing himself a prophet & the very Messiah to the Samaritans, in sending eloquent Paul to the eloquent Grecians, zealous Peter to the devout Hebrews and virtuous Romans, his brother Andrew to the stout Scythians, incredulous Thomas to the infidel Parthians, and so forth; what a loving and precious dear testament he left behind him, and with how unspeakable favour he bequeathed and disposed the rich hereditaments and inestimable goods of his kingdom; how nearly it concerned the members of one body, without the least intestine disagreement or faction, to tender and cherish one another with mutual indulgence; how fruitfully the militant church had already increased by concord, like a plant of the triumphant church, whose blissful consort incomparably passeth the sweetest harmony. The effect of such divine motions was heavenly, and whiles that celestial course continued, with an inviolable consent of united minds, even in some dissension of opinions (for there was ever some difference of opinions), the gospel reigned, and the church flourished miraculously. It would make the heart of piety to weep for joyful compassion to remember how the blood of those and those most patient, but more glorious, martyrs, that might be slain, but not vanquished, was the seed of the church, the church that grew victorious and mighty by the beheading of Paul and James; by the crucifying of Peter, Andrew, Philip, and Simon; by the stoning of Stephen; by the burning of Mark and Barnabas; by the slaying of Bartholomew; by the murdering of Thomas with a dart, of Matthew with a sword, of Matthias with an ax, of James Alphaeus with how many cruel and tyrannical torments, immortal monuments of their invincible faith, and most honourable constancy. When asperity and discord, degenerating from that primitive order, took another course, and began to proceed more like furies of hell, than saints of the church, or honest neighbours of the world, alas, what followed? And unless we retire to our principles, although mischief upon mischief be bad enough, yet ruin upon ruin will be worse. It is not a ruffianly style, or a tumultuous plot,

that will amend the matter; some apostolical virtues would do well, and that same evangelical humility were much worth. In the mean season, surely reverend bishops and learned doctors, albeit corruptible men, should be meeter to administer or govern churches than lusty cutters, or insufficient plotters, albeit reformed creatures. Sweet Martin, as well Junior as Senior (for juniors and seniors are all one, as old Master Raye said in his mayoralty), and you sweet whirlwinds that so fiercely bestir you at this instant, now again and again I beseech you, either be content to take a sweet course, or take all for me. My interest in these causes is small, and howsoever some busy heads love to set themselves a-work, when they might be otherwise occupied, yet, by their favours, there is a certain thing that passeth all understanding, which I commend universally unto all, especially unto my friends, and singularly unto myself, *Nulla salus bello: pacem te poscimus omnes*. No law to the fetial law, nor any conquest to pacification. Would Christ reformation could be entreated to begin at itself, and discipline would be so good as to show by example of her own house where she inhabiteth and consorteth, what a precious and heavenly thing it were for a whole kingdom to live in such a celestial harmony of pure virtues, and all perfections. Theorics, and ideas, are quickly imagined in an aspiring fantasy, but an inviolable practice of a divine excellency in human frailty, without excess, defect, or abuse, doubtless were a crystal worth the seeing, and a glorious mirror of eternal imitation. When contemplation hath a little more experience, it shall find that action is scantily so smooth and nimble a creature as speculation, two notable precedents *in concreto* more rare than twenty singular types *in abstracto*. They that shoot beyond the mark in imagination, come short in trial; good intentions were never too rife, & the best intentions have gone astray. All men are not of one mould; there is as great difference of ministers and aldermen as of other persons; even where the spirit is strong, the flesh is sometime found weak enough, and the world is a world of temptations, murmurings, offences, quarrels, treasons, crimes, and continual troubles in one sort or other.

If the precisest and most scrupulous treatises have much ado to uphold the credit of any perfection or estimation with their own associates (how many heads, so many plots), what may reason conceive of the assurance, or maturity, of their judicial or other moral proceedings *in esse*? When his and his scripture, after some pretty pausing, is become apocryphal with his and his own adherents, whose writing was scripture with many of them, how can any of them ascertain, or resolve themselves, of the canonical incorruption, or authentical omnisufficiency of his or his actual government? When even he, that within these few years was alleged for text, hath so emproved his authority with a number of his ferventest brethren, that he will not be scantily allowed for a current gloss, why should defeated affection any longer delude itself with a prejudicate & vain imagination of an alchemical discipline, not so sweet in conceit, as sour in proof, and as defective in needful provision, as excessive in unneedful presumption? If second cogitations be riper and sounder than the first, may not a third, or fourth, consultations take more & more advisement? If Bishopsgate be infected, is it impossible for Aldersgate to be attained? And if neither can be long clear in an universal plague of corruption, what reason hath zeal to fly from God's blessing into a warm sun? What a wisdom were it to change for the worse, or what a notorious folly were it to innovate without infallible assurance of the better? What politic state, or considerate people, ever laboured any alteration, civil or ecclesiastical, without pregnant evidence of some singular or notable good, as certain in consequence as important in estimation? To be short (for I have already been over-long, and shall hardly qualify those heady youngers with any discourse), had Martin his lust, or Penry his wish, or Udall his mind, or Browne his will, or Kett his fancy, or Barrow his pleasure, or Greenwood his heart's desire, or the freshest practitioners their longing (even to be judges of the consistory, or fathers conscript of senate, or *Domine fac totum*, or themselves wot not what), there might fall out five hundred practicable cases, and a thousand disputable questions, in a year (the world must be reframed anew, or such points decided), wherewith they never disquieted their brains, and wherein the learnedest of them could not say A to the Arches, or B to a battledore. If the graver motioners of discipline (who no doubt are learned men, and

might be wiser, but M. Travers, M. Cartwright, Doctor Chapman, and all the greyer heads begin to be stale with these novelists), have bethought themselves upon all cases and cautions in practice, of whatsoever nature, and have thoroughly provided against all possible mischiefs, inconveniences, and irregularities, as well future as present, I am glad they come so well prepared; surely some of the earnestest and eagerest solicitors are not yet so furnished. Words are good-fellows and merry men, but in my poor opinion it were not amiss for some sweating and fierce doers at this instant, that would down with Clement, and up with Hildebrand, either to know more at home, or to stir less abroad. It is no trifling matter, in a monarchy, to hoise up a new authority like that of the Jewish consistory above kings, or that of the Lacedemonian ephory above tyrants, or that of the Roman senate above emperors. Howbeit if there be no remedy but M. Fire must be the pastor, M. Air the doctor, goodman Water the deacon, and goodman Earth the alderman of the church, let the young calf and the old ass draw cuts whether of their heads shall wear the garland. And thus much in generality touching Martinizing, being urged to defend it if I durst, but for fear of indignation I durst not. The several particularities, and more gingerly niceties, of rites, signs, terms, and what not, I refer to the discussion of professed divines, or reserve for more leisure and fitter occasion.

As for that new-created spirit whom Double V, like another Doctor Faustus, threateneth to conjure up at leisure (for I must return to the terrible creature that subscribeth himself Martin's Double V, and will needs also be my tittle-tittle), were that spirit disposed to appear in his former likeness, and to put the necromancer to his purgation, he could peradventure make the conjuring wizard forsake the centre of his circle, and betake him to the circumference of his heels. Simple creature, iwis thou art too young an artist *to conjure him up*, that can exorcise thee down, or to *lamback him* with *ten years'* preparation, that can lambkin thee with a day's warning. Out upon thee for a cowardly lambacker, that stealest in at the backdoor, and thinkest to filch advantage on the back wing. Knaves are backbiters; whores, belly-biters; and both, sheep-biters. Pedomancy fitter for such conjurers than either chiromancy, necromancy, or any familiar spirit but contempt. It is somebody's fortune to be haunted with backfriends, and I could report a strange dialogue between the clerk of Backchurch and the chanter of Pancras that would make the better vizard of the two to blush, but I favour modest ears, and a thousand honest tongues will justify it to thy face, Thou art, as it were, a gross idiot, and a very *Asse in presenti*, to imagine that thou couldst go scot-free in this saucy reckoning, although the party conjured should say nothing but mum. Honesty goeth never unbacked, and truth is a sufficient patron to itself, and I know one that hath written a pamphlet entitled *Cock-a-lily*, or *The White Son of the Black Art*. But he that can *massacre Martin's wit* (thou remembrest thine own phrase), can rot Pap-hatchet's brain, and he that can *tickle Marprelate with taunts* can twitch Double V to the quick, albeit he threaten no less than the siege of Troy in his note-book, and his pen resound like the harnessed womb of the Trojan horse. I have seen a broadsword stand at the door when a poignado hath entered, and although I am neither Ulysses nor Outis, yet perhaps I can tell how Nobody may do that somebody cannot do. Polyphemus was a mighty fellow, and conjured Ulysses' companions into excrements (few giants ever so hideous as Polyphemus), but poor Outis was even with him, and Nobody conjured his goggle eye as well. I pray thee, sweet Pap, insult not overmuch upon quiet men; though my pen be nobody at a hatchet, and my tongue less than nobody at a beetle, yet patience loveth not to be made a cart of Croydon, and no such libbard for a lively ape, as for dead silence. The merry gentleman deviseth to disport himself and his copesmates with a pleasurable conceit of *quaking ears*, and *all my works, at least six sheets in quarto, called by myself, The first tome of my familiar epistle*, two impudent lies, and so known notoriously. He might as truly forge any lewd or villainous report of any man in England, and for his labour challenge to be preferred to the clerkship of whetstone, which he is able to maintain sumptuously with a mint of quaint and uncouth similes, dainty monsters of nature. I must deal plainly with the spawn of rank calumny; his knavish & foolish malice palpably

bewrayeth itself in most odious fictions, meet to garnish the foresaid famous office of the whetstone. But what saith his own courageous pen of his own adventurous ears? *If ripping up of lives make sport, have with thee knuckle-deep; it shall never be said that I dare not venture mine ears where Martin hazards his neck.* Some men are not so prodigal of their ears, how lavish soever Martin may seem of his neck, & albeit every man cannot compile such grand volumes as Euphues, or rear such mighty tomes as Pap-hatchet, yet he might have thought other poor men have tongues and pens to speak something yet, when they are provoked unreasonably. But losers may have their words, and comedians their acts; such dry-bobbers can lustily strike at other, and cunningly rap themselves. He hath not played the vice-master of Paul's, and the fool-master of the Theater, for naughts. Himself a mad lad as ever twanged, never troubled with any substance of wit or circumstance of honesty, sometime the fiddlestick of Oxford, now the very bauble of London, would fain, forsooth, have some other esteemed as all men value him. A workman is easily descried by his terms; every man speaketh according to his art. I am threatened with a bauble, and Martin menaced with a comedy, a fit motion for a jester and a player, to try what may be done by employment of his faculty; baubles & comedies are parlous fellows *to decipher, and discourage men* (that is the point), with their witty flouts and learned jerks, enough to lash any man out of countenance. Nay, if you shake the painted scabbard at me, I have done, and all you that tender the preservation of your good names were best to please Pap-hatchet, and fee Euphues betimes, for fear lest he be moved, or some one of his apes hired, to make a play of you, and then is your credit quite undone forever and ever, such is the public reputation of their plays. He must needs *be discouraged* who they *decipher*. Better anger an hundred other, than two such, that have the stage at commandment, and can furnish out vices and devils at their pleasure. Gentlemen, beware of a *chafing pen, that sweateth out whole reams of paper*, and whole Theaters of jests; tis aventure if he die not of the paper-sweat, should he chance to be never so little over-chafed. For the jest-dropsy is not so peremptory. But no point of cunning to the *Tale of the Tub*, that is the profound mystery and the very secret of secrets. The sweet sister's answer, *that in her conscience thought lechery the superficialities of sin* (a rare word with women, but by her answer she should seem to be learned); the true tale of one of Martin's godly sons, *that having the company of one of his sisters in the open fields, said he would not smother up sin, and deal in hugger-mugger against his conscience* (the historiographer hath many privy intelligences); the sober tale of *the eldest elder, that received forty angels at his table, where he sat with no less than forty good dishes of the greatest dainties, in more pomp than a pope* (he was not of the starved Pythagorean, or Platonical, diet, but liberal exhibition may maintain good hospitality); the zealous *love-letter, or a Corinthian epistle to the widow, as honest a woman as ever burnt malt* (the wooer, or the register, of Aretine's religion); *the holy oath of the Martinist, that thinking to swear by his conscience, swore by his concupiscence* (did not he forget himself, that expressly affirmed: *Martin will not swear but with indeed, in sooth, and in truth; he'll cog the die of deceit*); these, and the rest of those bawdy inventions wherewith that brothellish pamphlet floweth, smell somewhat strongly of the pump, and show the credibility of the author, that dareth allege any impudent, profane, or blasphemous fiction to serve his turn. So he may soon make up the authentical legend of his *Hundred Merry Tales*, as true, peradventure, as Lucian's true narrations, or the heriocal history of Rabelais, or the brave legends of errant knights, or the egregious pranks of Owl-glass, Friar Rush, Friar Tuck, and suchlike, the renowned *bugiale* of Poggius, Racellus, Luscus Cincius, and that whole Italian crew of merry secretaries in the time of Pope Martin the Fifth, of whom our worshipful clerks of the whetstone, Doctor Clare, Doctor Bourne, M. Scogan, M. Skelton, M. Wakefield, divers late historiologers, and haply this new tale-founder himself, learned their most wonderful faculty. *Committing matrimony, carousing the sap of the church, cutting at the bum-card of conscience, besmearing of conscience, spelling of Our Father in a horn-book, the railing religion*, and a whole sink of such arrant phrases, savour hotly of the same Lucianical breath, & discover the minion secretary aloof. *Faith*, quoth himself, *thou wilt be caught by the style*; indeed, what more easy than to find the man by his

humour, the Midas by his ears, the calf by his tongue, the goose by his quill, the play-maker by his style, the hatchet by the Pap? Albertus' secrets, Poggius' fables, Bebelius' jests, Scogan's tales, Wakefield's lies, Parson Darcy's knaveries, Tarleton's tricks, Elderton's ballads, Greene's pamphlets, Euphues' similes, Double V's phrases, are too well known to go unknown. Where the vein Braggadocio is famous, the artery of Pappadocio cannot be obscure. Gentlemen, I have given you a taste of his sugar-loaf, that weeneth Sidney's dainties, Ascham's comfits, Cheke's succates, Smith's conserves, and More's junkets, nothing comparable to his pap. Some of you dreamed of electuaries of gems, and other precious restoratives; of the quintessence of amber, & pearl dissolved; of I wot not what incredible delicacies, but his gem-mint is not always current, and as busy men, so painted boxes and gallipots, must have a vacation. Yet well fare the sweet heart of dia-pap, dia-fig, and dia-nut, three sovereign defensatives of the commonwealth, and three cordial confortatives of the church. It is a good hearing when good-fellows have a care of the commonwealth and the church, and a godly motion when interluders leave penning their pleasurable plays to become zealous ecclesiastical writers. *Bona fide*, some have written notably against Martinism (it were a busy task for the crediblest precisian to impeach the credit of Doctor Bancroft, or Doctor Sutcliffe), but this mammaday hath excellently knocked himself on the sconce with his own hatchet. I will cast away no more ink upon a compound of simples. The pap is like the hatchet; the fig like the nut, the country-cuff like the hangman's apron; the dog like the dog; John-a-'noke, and John-a-stile, like the bailiff of Withernam; the sign of the crab-tree cudgel like Thwack-Coat Lane; Martin's hanging like Pappadocio's mowing; Huff, Ruff, and Snuff, the three tame ruffians of the church, like Double V, never a lay in the barrel better herring; the beginning, the midst, and the end, all in one pickle. Some roses amongst pricks do well, and some lilies amongst thorns would have done no harm. But envy hath no fancy to the rose of the garden, and what careth malice for the lily of the valley? Would fair names were spells and charms against foul affections, and in some respects I could wish that civility would give humanity leave to conclude otherwise than I must. I could in courtesy be content, and in hope of reconciliation desirous, to mitigate the harshest sentences, and mollify the hardest terms. But can truth lie, or discretion approve folly, or judgement allow vanity, or modesty abide impudency, or good manners soothe bad speeches? He that penned the above-mentioned *Cock-a-lily* saw reason to display the black artist in his collier colours, and thought it most unreasonable to suffer such light and empty vessels to make such a loud and proud rumbling in the air. Other had rather hear the learned nightingale than the unlearned parrot, or taste the wing of a lark than the leg of a raven. The finest wits prefer the loosest period in M. Ascham, or Sir Philip Sidney, before the tricksiest page in Euphues, or Pap-hatchet. The muses shame to remember some fresh quaffers of Helicon, and which of the graces or virtues blusheth not to name some lusty tosspots of rhetoric? The stately tragedy scorneth the trifling comedy, and the trifling comedy flouteth the new ruffianism. Wantonness was never such a swill-bowl of ribaldry, nor idleness ever such a carouser of knavery. What honest mind, or civil disposition, is not acloyed with these noisome & nasty gargarisms? Where is the polished and refined eloquence that was wont to bedeck and embellish humanity? Why should learning be a niggard of his excellent gifts, when impudency is so prodigal of his rascal trish-trash? What dainty or neat judgement beginneth not to hate his old love, and loathe his ancient delight, the press, the most honourable press, the most villainous press? Who smileth not at those and those trim-trams of gaudy wits, how flourishing wits, how fading wits? Who laugheth not at *I'll, I'll, I'll*, or gibeth not at some hundred piebald fooleries in that hare-brained declamation? They whom it nearest pincheth cannot silence their just disdain, and I am forcibly urged to intimate my whole censure, though without hatred to the person, or derogation from any of his commendable gift [sic], yet not without special dislike of the bad matter, and general condemnation of the vile form. The whole work a bald toy, full of stale and wooden jests, and one of the most paltry things that ever was published by graduate of either university, good for nothing but to stop mustard-pots, or rub gridirons, or feather rats' nests, or suchlike homely use. For stationers are already too full of such reams

and commonwealths of waste-paper, and find more gain in the lily-pot blank than in the lily-pot euphued, a day or two fine for sheets, and afterward good for grocers. *Vanitas vanitatum*, the sum of grudge, the froth of levity, the scum of corruption, and the very scurf of rascality; nothing worthy of a scholar, or a civil gentleman; altogether fantastical and fond, without rime or reason, so oddly huddled and bungled together, in so madbrain sort, and with so brainsick stuff, that in an overflow of so many frivolous and ridiculous pamphlets, I scarcely know anyone in all points so incomparably vain and absurd, whereunto I may resemble that most toyish and piperly trifle, the fruit of an addle and lewd wit, long since dedicated to a dissolute and desperate licentiousness. Oh, what a *magnifico* would he be, were his purse as heavy as his head is light, and his heart frank? Even that same very *Mirror of Madness* hangeth together with some more coherence of reason, and smelleth not so rankly of the tavern, the ale-house, the stews, the cucking-stool, or other such honest places, as that drunk and shameless declamation, unbeseeming any but an orator of Bedlam, a rhetorician of Bridewell, or a discourser of Primrose Hill. And although that same French *Mirror* be *ex professo* devised in a mad garish vein, and stuffed with gear homely enough, fit for a libertine & frantic theme, yet doth it not so basely borrow of the ruffian's bag, the tapster's spigot, the peddler's pack, the tinker's budget, the knave's truss, and the rogue's fardel, unto all which, and other authors of like reputation, but chiefly to the hangman's apron (that that is the biggin of his wit) this worthy author is deeply beholding for great part of his fine conceits and dainty learning, precious ware for euphued creatures, and fantastical colts, whose wild and madbrain humour nothing fitteth so just as the stalest dudgeon or absurdest balductum that they, or their mates, can invent, in odd and awk speeches, disguisedly shapen after the antic fashion, & monstrously shorn, like old Captain Lister's spaniel. They that affect such ruffianish braveries, and divide their roister-doistering jests into cuts, flashes, and foins, may bestow the reading; for any other of whatsoever quality or calling, it will do them as much good as dirt in their shoes, or draff in their bellies, and in good sooth there is all the use, civil or ecclesiastical, that I can find of this baby Pap, whom for his sweet entertainment with pap, fig, and nut, I officiously recommend to the *Ship of Fools*, and the galliass of knaves. When he useth himself with more discretion, I may alter my style (let him change, and I am changed), or if already he be ashamed of that conjuring lease, foisted in like a bombard, I have said nothing. Till he disclaimeth his injury in print, or confesseth his oversight in writing, or signifieth his penitence in speech, the abused party, that had reason to set down the premises without favour, hath cause to justify his own hand without fear, and as well in equity to avow truth, as in charity to disavow malice. At Trinity Hall, this fifth of November, 1589.

So then of Pappadocio, whom nevertheless I esteem a hundred times learned, and a thousand times honest, than this other Braggadocio, that hath more learning than honesty, and more money than learning, although he truly entitle himself Pierce Penilesse, and be elsewhere styled the gentleman ragamuffin. Nashe, the ape of Greene; Greene, the ape of Euphues; Euphues, the ape of envy, the three famous maumets of the press, and my three notorious feudists, draw all in a yoke, but some scholars excel their masters, and some lusty blood will do more at a deadly pull than two or three of his yoke-fellows. It must go hard, but he will improve himself the incomparable darling of immortal vanity. Howbeit his friends could have wished he had not shown himself to the world such a ridiculous Suffenus or Shakerley to himself, by advancing the triumphal garland upon his own head before the least skirmish for the victory, which if he ever obtain by any valiancy, or bravure (as he weeneth himself the valiantest and bravest actor that ever managed pen), I am his bondman in fetters, and refuse not the humblest vassalage to the sole of his boot. Much may be done, by close confederacy, in all sorts of cozenage and legerdemain; *Monsieur Pontalais* in French, or *Messer Unico* in Italian, never devised such a nipping comedy as might be made in English of some leaguers in the quaint practics of the crossbiting art, but I have seen many bearwards and butchers in my time, and have heard of the one what belongeth to apes, and have learned of the other not to be afraid of a dozen horned beasts, albeit some one of them should seem as dreadful as the furious dun cow of Dunsmore heath, the terriblest foeman of Sir Guy. Aesop's ox, though he be a sure ploughman, is but a slow workman, and Greene's ape, though he be a nimble juggler, is no sure executioner. Yet well worth the master-ape and captain-maumet that had a hatchet as well as Pap, a country cuff as well as a fig; a crab-tree cudgel as well as a nut; something of a man's face, with more of an ape's face. Had his pen been muzzled at the first, as his mouth hath been bunged since, these fresh Euphuists would never have adventured upon the whip or the bob, but silence is a slave in a chain, and patience the common pack-horse of the world. Even this brat of an ape's-clog, that can but mow with his mouth, gnash with his teeth, quaver with his ten bones, and brandish his goose-quill, presuming of my former sufferance, layeth about him with the said quill as if it were possessed with the sprite of *Orlando Furioso*, or would teach the club of Gargantua to speak English. For the flail of *Ajax* distraught, or the club of Hercules enraged, were but hedge-stakes of the old world, and unworth the naming in an age of puissance improved horribly. The newest legends of most hideous exploits may learn a new art to kill-cow men with peremptory terms, and bug's-words of certain death. Poor I must needs be plagued. Plagued? Nay, brayed and squeezed to nothing, that am matched with such a Gargantuist as can devour me quick in a salad, and thundereth more direful threatenings against me, that only touched him, than huge Polyphemus roared against Ulysses, that blinded him: *Genus irritabile Vatum*. The generation of raving poets is a swarm of gad-bees, and the anger of a moody rimester, the fury of a wasp. A mad tiger not like a mad wasp, and a chafed wild boar not comparable to a chafed gad-bee. Take heed of the man whom nature hath marked with a gag-tooth, art furnished with a gag-tongue, and exercise armed with a gag-pen, as cruel and murderous weapons as ever drew blood. The best is, who hath time, hath life. He meaneth not to come upon me with a cowardly stratagem of Scarborough warning; he useth a certain gallant Homerial figure called hysteron proteron, or the cart before the horse, & with a resolution menaceth the effect before the causes be begotten. When the iron cart is made, and the fiery horses foaled, they shall bring the mighty battering-ram of terms, and the great ordinance of miracles, to town; ask not then how he will plague me. In the mean season, it is a wonder to see how courageously he taketh on with his hostess's needles and his botcher's bodkins. Indeed, a good soldier will make a shrewd shift with any weapons, but it is a marvellous heart that threateneth ruin, ruin, ruin, with the dint of a bodkin, and the blade of an awl. Where such another Rodomont, so furious, so valorous, so redoubtable? There is a piece of a good old song, peradventure as ancient as the noble legend of Sir Bevis, or Sir Lancelot du Lake:

Dubba-dubba-dub, kill him with a club,

And he will not die, kill him with a fly.

He that made the rime in jest, little considered what a gad-fly may do in earnest. It is small wisdom to condemn the smallest enemy; the gad-fly is a little creature, but some little creatures be stingers; never falchion better managed than some tiny penknives, and what will he do when he rusheth upon me with the tempestuous engines of his own wit, that keepeth such a horrible coil with his school-fellow's poignado? An ape is never to seek of a good face to set upon the matter. Blessed Euphues, thou only happy, that hast a train of such good countenances in thy flourishing Greene motley livery; miserable I, the unhappiest on earth, that am left desolate. Ah, but that might be endured. Every man is not born to be the leader of a band, every bird carrieth not Argus' eyes displayed in her tail, fame is not everybody's saint. To be forsaken is no great matter; to be utterly undone is miserable. That, and the unmercifullest persecution that may be invented, is cruelly proclaimed against quiet him, that was once thronged and pestered with followers, but when he began to give over that green haunt, and betook himself to a riper profession, Diomedes' companions were changed into birds. Times alter, and as fortune hath more sectaries than virtue, so pleasure hath more adherents than profit. I had no sooner shaken off my young troop, whom I could not associate as before, but they were festively re-entertained by some nimble wights that could take the advantage of opportunity (with good visages you may be sure), and had purposely lain in wait to climb in print by the fall of their seniors, like ambitious planets, that enhance their own dignities by the combustion, or retrogradation, of their fellow-planets. Much good may that advancement do them, and many dainty webs may I see of those fine spiders, but although I dote upon curious workmanship, yet I love not artificial poison, and am almost angry with the trimmest spinners when they extort venom out of flowers, and will needs defile their friends' libraries with those encroaching cobwebs. Iwis it were purer euphuism to win honey out of the thistle, to sweeten aloe with sugar, to perfume the stinking sagapenum with musk, and to mitigate the heat of eusorbium with the juice of the lily. Tush, you are a silly humanitian of the old world; that was the simplicity of the age that loved friendship more than gold, & esteemed everything fine that was neat & wholesome; all was pure that was seasoned with a little salt, & all trim that was besprinkled with a few flowers; now the fiercest gunpowder, and the rankest pike sauce, are the bravest figures of rhetoric *in esse*, and he the only man at the scrivener's pistol, that will *so incessantly haunt the civilian and divine, that to avoid the hot chase of his fiery quill, they shall be constrained to ensconce themselves in an old urinal case*. Give me such a *Bonifacius*. Now well worth some terms of *aquafortis*, at a pinch, and welcome urinal case, a fit sconce for such valiant terms, and a meet bulwark against that fiery quill. I have already felt his pulse, and cannot well cast his water without an urinal, either old or new. But an old urinal will not so handsomely serve the turn; it would be as new as the cap-case of *Strange News*, but a *pure mirror* of an impure stale, *neither gross*, the clearer to represent a gross substance, *nor green*, the livelier to express some green colours & other wanton accidents, *nor any way a harlot*, the trulier to discover the state of a harlotry. I have seen as hot an agent made a tame patient, and glad to ensconce the dregs of his shame in an old urinal. It is a blab, but not every man's blab, that casteth a sheep's eye out of a calf's head, but a blab with judgement, but a blab that can make excrements blush, and teach Chaucer to retell a Canterbury tale. But such great judicials require some little study, and St. Fame is disposed to make it holiday. She hath already put on her wispen garland over her pouting cross-cloth, and behold with what an imperial majesty she cometh riding in the ducking-chariot of her triumph. I was never so sick of the milt but I could laugh at him that would seem a merry man, & cannot for his life keep in the breath of a fumish fool. Fie, Long Meg of Westminster would have been ashamed to disgrace her Sunday bonnet with her Saturday wit. She knew some rules of decorum, and although she were a lusty bouncing ramp, somewhat like Gallemella, or Maid Marian, yet was she not such a roinish rannell, or such a dissolute gillian-flirt, as this wainscot-faced tomboy, that will needs be Danter's malkin, and the only hag of the press. I was not wont to indite in this style, but for terming his fellow

Greene, as he was notoriously known, the scrivener of crossbiters, the founder of ugly oaths, the Greene master of the black art, the mocker of the simple world, et cetera, see, how the daggled-tailed rampallion bustleth for the frank-tenement of the dunghill. I confess I never knew my invective principles or confuting terms before, and perhaps some better scholars are nigh hand as far to seek in the kind rudiments and proper phrases of pure Nashery. *Why, thou arrant butter-whore* (quoth he, or rather, she), *thou cotquean and scratop of scolds, wilt thou never leave afflicting a dead carcass, continually read the rhetoric lecture of Ram Alley? A wisp, a wisp, a wisp, rip rip, you kitchen-stuff wrangler.* Holla, sir, sweeter words would do no harm. Doubtless these emphatical terms of the alley were laid a-steep for some other acquaintance, not for me (good-fellows must be furnished with oratory meet for their company), but it is some men's evil luck to stumble in the way when Will Sommer's weapon is ready drawn, and yet more possible for him to stay the swing of his eager hand, than for malkin to stay the dint of her moody tongue, that can teach the storm-wind to scold English, and pleadeth natural possession of the cucking-stool. It is good policy to yield to the fury of the tempest (the resolute hearts are fain to yield to the imperious jurisdiction of storms, and shrews), and the stamping fiend, in the hothouse of her foaming oratory, will have the last word. Sweet gossip, disquiet not your lovely self: the dunghill is your freehold, and the cucking-stool, your copyhold; I know none so rank-minded to enter upon your proper possessions by riot, and in case thou wilt needs also be the schoolmistress of Ram Alley, certainly thou desirest but thy right, that canst read a rhetoric, or logic, lecture to Hecuba in the art of raving, and instruct Tisiphone herself in her own gnashing language. Other he- or she-drabs of the curstest, or vengeablest, ranks are but dipped or dyed in the art; not such a beldam in the whole kingdom of frogs, as thy croaking and most clamorous self. Even Martin's unbridled style, and Pap-hatchet's resty eloquence, is but a curtailed jade to thy long-tailed colt. Let the clock strike; I have lost more hours, and lose nothing, if I find equity. Should the butter-whore bestir herself like an arrant knight, and try all the conclusions of her churn, she might peradventure in some sort pay thee home with school-butter, but undoubtedly she should have much ado to stop thy oven-mouth with a lid of butter; thou hast swapped down a pound of butter at a piece of a breakfast, or else there be lies, and art such a witch for a churn or a cheese-press as is not to be found in the *Mallet of Witches*, or in Monsieur Bodin's *Daemonomania*. Three meals of a Lazarello, make the fourth a woolner [sic], and it is a craven frying-pan this is afraid of a butter-whore. No, no, the butter-whore is thy bondmaid in a bunch of keys, and take heed, sirrah, the cheese-knave be not her bondman in a load of logs. She cometh not of the blood of the threateners, but kitchen-stuff and a cole-rake have in times past been of some familiar acquaintance, and it is a bad pair of tongs that cannot make as good sport at a pinch as a pair of bellows. Though a dish of buttered peas be no great warrior, yet a mess of buttered artichokes may perhaps hold you some pretty tack. Only I bar those same whoreson unlawful terms steeped in cisterns of aquafortis and gunpowder, and have at you a gentle crash, when it shall please the urinal and the dairy to give me leave to play with a butterfly. I do you the uttermost credit in the world, that am ever glad to seek dilatory excuses, and to crave a term *ad deliberandum*. The fortune of the field, with pike or pen, is like the luck of navigation, or the hap of marriage, and I love not greatly to chop upon main chances. Nothing venture, nothing lose: none of the worst rules or cautels for their security that can tell stories of haphazard, and have known some gallants more hardy than wise. Humanity is desirous of peace with the best, and of truce with the worst, and truly I never longed to fight it out with flat strokes until I must needlessly needs, but if there be no remedy by treaty, or amicable composition, although I was ever a slow-worm in the morning, yet I cannot abide to go to bed with a dromedary. I cannot marvel enough how the nimble bee should be engendered of the sluggish ox, or the lively wasp of the dead horse, but nature is a miraculous and omnipotent workman, and I find it true by experience that I must learn to imitate by example, or prejudice myself by favouring other. To prejudice were a small matter where the party levelleth at no great matter, but when a man's credit is assaulted with bug's-words, and his wit beleaguered with the ever-playing shot of the press, wisdom must

pardon him whom folly assaileth, and humanity dispense with a necessary apology. I would I might make it a policy to make my adversary much and much and much better than he is, that I might re-encounter him with the more reputation, or the less disparagement, but it is his glory to shame himself notoriously, and he will needs proclaim his own vanities in a thousand sentences, and whole volumes of ribaldry, not to be read but upon a muckhill, or in the priviest privy of the bordello. Let his vices sleep on a down pillow; would I could awaken his virtues, and stop their mouths that wish me, in sober earnest, not to soil my hands upon such a contemptible rascal, but to let the reckless villain play with his own shadow (truth is my witness, divers honest men of good reckoning, and sundry worshipful gentlemen, have advised me in those very terms expressly), but sithence I can do him no good by persuasion, it were folly to suffer him to do me harm by detraction. You that are not ascertained of the lewd and vile disposition of the man, imagine as favourably of him as charity can possibly conceive of an impudent railer, and a profane mouth, but you that can skill of learning, and love scholarship, give him his desert; do equity right, and him no wrong, that wrongeth whom he listeth. They that have leisure to cast away (who hath not some idle hours to lose?) may peruse his gewgaws with indifferency, and find no art but euphuism, no wit but Tarletonism, no honesty but pure Scoganism, no religion but precise Marlowism, no consideration but mere Nashery: in brief, no substance but light feathers; no accidents, but lighter colours; no transcendentals, but lightest fantasies, that fly above the highest region of the clouds, and purpose to have a saying to the man in the moon. His mountains of imagination are too apparent; his designments of vanity, too visible; his plots of ribaldry, too palpable; his forms of libelling, too outrageous; St. Fame, the goddess of his devotion; St. Blaze, the idol of his zeal; St. Audrey, the lady of his love; and the young vicar of St. Fools, his ghostly father. I have heard of many notable proud fools, read of many egregious aspiring fools, seen many haughty vainglorious fools, wondered at many busy tumultuous fools, but never such a famous arrogant conceited fool, the very transcendent fool of the *Ship*, that hugely contemneth all the world but his own flim-flams, and, against all policy, maketh his adversary more than an ass, and less than nothing, whose victory otherwise might peradventure have seemed something. But to overcrow an ass is a sorry conquest, and a miserable trophy for so doughty a squire. There were ways enough of answering or confuting with variety and reason, to his own credit, the satisfaction of other, and my contentment, although he had not desperately and scurrilously broken out into the foulest and filthiest scurf of odious terms that villainy could invent, or impudency utter. Iwis he might have spied a difference between staring, and stark blind; between raging, and stark mad; between confuting, and rank railing in the grossest sort. Had he seasoned his style with the least spice of discretion, or tempered his unmeasurable licentiousness with any moderation in the world, or had he not most arrantly laboured to show himself the very brazen forehead of impudency, and the iron mouth of malediction, without all respect, he might easily have found me the calmest and tractablest adversary that ever he provoked, as reasonable for him as for myself in causes of equity, and as partial to foe as to friend in controversies of truth. But it is the topgallant of his bravest bravure to be a creator of asses, a confuter of asses, and a conqueror of asses; asses are born to bear, and birds to soar aloft. No wings to the wings of self-conceit, nor any sails to the sails of words, but haggard wings are sometimes clipped, and hoised sails oftentimes humbled. Words amount, like castles of vapours, or pillars of smoke, that make a mighty show in the air, and straight vanish away. Howbeit envy is a soaking register, and spite, a remembrancer of trust. That would be written in a glass of wine is otherwhiles found in tables of marble, and indentures of wainscot. The ostrich can devour the rust of iron, and the gall of present obloquy may be brooked, but the note-book of malice is a monument of touchstone, and the memorial of feud, the claw of an adamant. Pride swelleth in the pen of arrogancy, vanity bubbleth in the mouth of folly, rancour boileth in the heart of vengeance, mischief hammereth in the head of villainy, and no such art memorative as a crab-tree desk. But in contempt of pride, I will speak one proud word: Vain Nashe, whom all posterity shall call vain Nashe, were thou the wisest man in England, though wouldst not, or were thou the valiantest man in England, thou

durst not, have written as thou hast desperately written, according to thy green wit, but thou art the boldest bayard in print, a hare-brained fool in thy head, a vile swad in thy heart, a foul lie in thy throat, and a vainglorious ass in thy pen, as I will prove upon the carcass of thy wit and courage throughout all the predicaments of proof. I hate malice in myself, but love not to be an upholster of stuffed and bombasted malice in other. And because thou termost me an old fencer (indeed, I was once Tom Burley's scholar), and needest displing as much as any rake-hell in England, wheresoever I meet thee next, after my first knowledge of thy person (not for mine own revenge, but for thy correction), I will make thee a simple fool and a double swad as well with my hand as with my tongue, & will engrave such an epitaph, with such a *Kyrie eleison*, upon thy skull, as shall make thee remembered when Sir Gawain's skull shall be forgotten. Some bibber of Helicon will deem it worth eternal record. And if thou entreat me not the fairer (hope of amendment preventeth many ruins), trust me, I will batter thy carrion to dirt, whence thou camest, and squeeze thy brain to snivel, whereof it was curdled; nay, before I leave powdering thee, I will make [sic?] swear thy father was a rope-maker, and proclaim thyself the basest drudge of the press, with such a strange confutation of thine own *Strange News* as shall bring Sir Vainglory on his knees, and make Master Impudency blush like a virgin. Thy wit already maketh buttons, but I must have St. Fame disclaim her black *sanctus*, and Nashe's devout supplication to God to forgive Pierce's reprobate *Supplication to the Devil*. It must be roundly done, or I will, with a charm for a full stomach, make the gorge of thy belching rhetoric, & the paunch of thy surfeiting poetry, fling figures upward and downward. Fie, what need that be spoken? True, there is choice enough of sweeter flowers, & neat oratory entertaineth neatest civility (what relish so pleasant as the breath of Suada, or what smell so aromatical as the voice of the muses?), but the mouth of a rude ass can taste no other lettuce, and the spawn of a beastly dogfish will understand no other language but his own. Fury must be tamed with fury, according to Homer, that teacheth the god of the field to strike home; obstinacy awed with obstinacy; force mastered with force; threatenings cooled with threatenings; contempt answered in his own tongue, and seeing the wild colt is so unreasonably lusty, I mean percase either to make his courage crouch forward, or his art winch backward. I have twenty and twenty charms for the breaking of stubborn jades, for the biting of mad dogs, for the stinging of scorpions, for the darting of urchins, for the haunting of sprites, for the storming of tempests, for the blazing of lightning, for the rattling of thunder, and so forth, even for the craking of an hundred Pap-hatchets, or a thousand Greenes, or ten thousand Nashe's pea-gooses. And in case all happen to fail (for it must be a mighty exorcism that can conjure down spite), I have a *probatum est*, of a rare and powerable virtue, that will hold the nose of his or his conceit to the grindstone, and make gentle villainy confess all the shreds and rags of his flashingest terms are worn to the stumps. The desperate fool may claw-back himself awhile, but it is possible he may soon find, by sound experience, he brayeth open war against him that can bray the ass-drum in a mortar, & stamp his Jew's-trump to pin-dust. Tom Drum, reconcile thyself with a counter-supplication, or surely it is fatally done, and thy St. Fame utterly undone world without end. As savoury a saint, by the verdict of that excellent gentlewoman, as the cleanly disbursing of the dirt-purse of Sir Gargantua, that made King Charlemagne and his worthy chivalry laugh so merrily that their heads ached eight days after. A meet idol for such a beadman. I have digressed from my purpose, and wandered out of my accustomed way, but when the buttermilk goeth on pilgrimage, you must give the butter-whore leave to play the arrant knight a crash, and to make it ganging week for once. Ganging week? Nay, a ganging day, I trow, is a large allowance, and enough to betire a poor stragging wench, for all her brags. Never sorry lass so pitifully aware of her ragged petticoat and daggled tail, the tattered livery of the confuting gentleman. Let it go, and the wisp go with it. I honour the meekest humility, but scorn the insolentest arrogancy under my foot, and say to the highest imagination of vanity, thou art a proud fop. When thou carriest thy wit loftiest, and prankest up thy self-love in his gaudiest colours, thou art but an ass's head, and peacock's tail. Love other, and thou mayest be loved of other for pure charity; hate other, and thou art one of the most odious

pads in the world, a Turk for M. Ascham's archers to shoot at, and a Jew's eye for Christian needles. Now a little breathing pause will do no harm.

Were not malice as wilful in maintaining abuse as rash in offering the same, & arrogancy as obstinate in the conclusion as violent in the premises, I readily could, & willingly would, undertake a more temperate and pleasing course, but the fairest offer is foully contemned, the gentlest suit unkindly repulsed. Say I what I can, malice will be itself; or do I what I can, arrogancy will be itself, and no other impression can sink into the heart of spite, or the ear of pride, but instigations of spite, or suggestions of pride. Other motives are mere simplicities, and every treaty of pacification, or parley of reconciliation, the shaking of an aspen leaf. The devil's orator is an herald of war, not a legate of peace, and his dam's poet, the rankest challenger at short or long that ever sent defiance in white, or black. To refuse the trial would, in the common opinion, seem a shame; to accept the offer, in the best judgements, is a shame; to take the foil were a discredit; to give the foil is no credit. A hard case, where patience may be supposed simple, and avengement will be reputed unwise; where I cannot hold my peace without war upon war, nor speak without blame upon blame; where I must either be a passive, or an active, ass in print. I stand not upon the point of honour, or upon terms of reputation, but as it is a glory for the inferior to offer the combat, like the champion of prowess, or the duellist of courage, so I would the superior might refuse that without prejudice which he cannot undertake without disparagement, or perform without obloquy. To spoil Pierce Penilesse were a poor booty, and to make Thomas Nashe kiss the rod (by her favour that hath pleasurably made him a Sultan Tomumboius, & another Almanus Hercules, the great captain of the boys), were as sorry a victory, but only in her Bello Euboico, or in her main battle of scolds. Yet seeing he provoketh me so malapertly hand to hand, & seeing the infancy of his fancy will not otherwise be weaned from his crank conceit, better such a victory with some inconvenience (for I hope I may without arrogancy presume of the victory), than continual disturbance with more and more mischief. Hector never raged amongst the Grecians, nor Achilles amongst the Trojans, as Meridarpax, the most furious and thrice-redoubted captain of the mice, rushed upon the woeful frogs in that heroical battle. But Meridarpax himself, in his impetuous and massacrous sallies, never made such a havoc of the miserable frogs as this swash-pen would make of all English writers, howsoever garnished with eloquence, or stored with matter, might he be suffered to hew them down like stocks, or shrubs, without controlment. He will soon be ripe, that already giveth so lusty onsets, & threateneth such desperate main careers, as surpass the fiercest cavalcades of Bellerophon, or Don Alonso d'Avalos. Nothing curtaileth the courage of his bravery, or daunteth the swelling chivalry in his nostrils, but that excellent learning is not esteemed as it deserveth, nor singular men advanced according to the merits of their worthiness. Might Penilesse, singular Penilesse, be the preferrer of his own virtue, or judge of his own cause (as he courageously contendeth), I believe a velvet coat were scanty good enough for his wearing, that now remaineth most humbly, and thrice-affectionately, bounden to the right honourable printing-house for his poor shifts of apparel, and his rich cap of maintenance. An anatomy of the mind and fortune were respectively as behooveful and necessary as an anatomy of the body, but this captain confuter (like gallant Lobbellines in a new livery), neither knoweth himself nor other, yet presumeth he knoweth all things, with an overplus of somewhat more, in knowing his railing grammar, his raving poetry, his roisting rhetoric, and his chopping logic, with whose help he hath thwittled the mill-post of his huge and omnipotent conceit to a pudding-prick of *Strange News*. Strange news indeed, that Pierce Penilesse should create more asses in an hour than the brave king of France (now the mightiest warrior in Christendom, and a great advancer of valour), hath dubbed knights in his reign. The ironies of Socrates, Aristophanes, Epicharmus, Lucian, are but carterly derisions; the ironies of Tully, Quintilian, Petrarch, Pontan, Sanazarius, King Alphonsus, but the sorry jests of the council-table ass, Richard Clerke; the ironies of Erasmus in his praise of folly, of Agrippa in his dispraise of sciences, of Cardan in his apology of Nero, like Isocrates' commendation of Busiris, or Lucian's defence of Phalaris the tyrant, but *good*

bear, bite not; the ironies of Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*, poems, letters and other writings, or of any their imitators at occasion, but the girds of every milkmaid. They were silly country fellows that commended the bald pate, the fever quartan, the fly, the flea, the gnat, the sparrow, the wren, the goose, the ass; flattery, hypocrisy, cozenage, bawdry, lechery, buggery, madness itself. What dunce or Sorbonist cannot maintain a paradox? What peasant cannot say to a glorious soldier, *Puchre me hercule dictum, & sapienter, or Laute, lepide, nihil supra, or Regem elegantem narras*, or a man is a man, though he have but a hose upon his head, or so forth. *No such light payment, Gabriel*, at Pierce Penilesse, or Thomas Nashe's, hand. They are rare and dainty wits that can roundly call a man *ass* at every third word, and make not nice to befool him in good sullen earnest, that can strangle the proudest breath of their pens, and meaneth to borrow a sight of their giddiest brains for a perfect anatomy of vanity and folly. Though strong drink fumeth, & aquafortis fretteth, yet I will not exchange my milkmaid's irony for his draff-maid's assery. It is not the first time that I have disputed *du umbra asini*, and proved the fox the finder, as wily a pigeon as the cunning goldsmith that accused his neighbour, and condemned himself. A melancholy body is not the kindest nurse for a cheerly mind (the jovial complexion is sovereignly beholding to nature), but I know not a finer transformation in Ovid than the metamorphosis of dudgeon earnest into sport, of harsh sour into sweet, of loss into gain, of reproach into credit, of whatsoever bad occurrence into some good. I was never a splenetic when I was most dumpish but I could smile at a frieze jest when the goodman would be pleasurable, and laugh at fustian earnest when the merry man would be surly. *Strange News* will be as pleasant as a cricket by cat's pangs, and where such a terlerie ginks of conceit, or such a gibberish of pastime, as *Strange News*? But fillip him or twitch him never so little, and not such a pouting wasp in Ram Alley, or such a winching jade in Smithfield. Then, *ass, and worse than a Cumane ass, and fool, and dolt, and idiot, and dunce, and Dorbel, and doddypoll, and Gibraltar, and Gamaliel Hobgoblin, and Gilgils Hoberdehoy*, and all the rusty-dusty jests in a country are too little for his great confutation, that is lineally descended *ab equis ad asinos*, and taketh on like Hob-all-as, a stout king of the Saracens. When I am better grammared in the accidents of his proper idiotism, and grown into some more acquaintance with his confuting dictionary, I may peradventure construe and pierce the whole alphabet of his sweet eloquence a little better, and make some farther trial of M. Ascham's double translation, a pretty exercise in a fit subject. Meanwhile I am glad to see him swim up to the beardless chin in a sea of honey and hippocras, that so lately was plunged in a gulf of other liquor, and parlously dashed upon the horrible rock of desperation. It is good, they say, to be merry, and wise.

Poggius was merry, and Panormitan wise; Marot was merry, and Bellay wise; Scogan was merry, and the lord Cromwell wise; Greene was merry, and Sir Christopher Hatton wise; Nashe is merry, and there be enough wise, though his mother's son be Pierce Penilesse. Or, if thou beest wise, or wouldst seem no fool, beware of casualties, & a new attractive. Thy tongue is a mighty loadstone of asses, and must do as much for thine own natural ears as the magnes doth for iron. As good do it at first as at last, and better voluntary confession with favour, than enforced profession with more shameful penance. *Balaam's ass* was wise, that would not run upon the angel's sword; *Aesop's ass* no fool, that was glad to fawn upon his master like a dog; *Lucian's ass*, albeit he could not fly, like the witch his hostess (whose miracles he thought to imitate, had not her gentle maid cozened him with a wrong box), yet could he politicly save himself, please or ease his masters, delight his mistresses, show many artificial feats, amaze the beholders, drink the purest wine in Thessalonica, and finally eat roses, as well as thistles; *Apuleius' ass* was a pregnant Lucianist, a cunning ape, a loving worm, and (what worthier praise?), a golden ass; *Machiavel's ass* of the same metal, and a deep politician like his founder, could provide for one better than the sparrow or the lily; *Agrippa's ass*, a beast, knew all things, like Solomon, and bore all burdens, like Atlas. The great library of King Ptolemy in Egypt, reported to have been replenished with seventy thousand volumes, not such a library of books, or such or such an university of arts &

sciences as Agrippa's ass. They that reverence the wondrous prophecies of the Cumane Sibyl Amalthea, the chiefest of the ten inspired Sibyls, defend or favour the excellent qualities of the *Cumane ass*, esteemed by Varro the most profitable servant of that country, and by Columella the most necessary instrument of all countries. *Every ass* is naturally a well disposed creature, and (as the learned rabbins have written), a mirror of clemency, patience, abstinence, labour, constancy, and divine wisdom. No such schoolmaster for a wild boy, or a rash fool, as the sober and staid ass, the countryman of the wise Apollo, and the seven wise masters.

Venerat & senior pando Silenus asello. Silenus, the tender foster-father and sage tutor of the wanton and frolic Bacchus, afterward how brave and fruitful? What an oriental worthy! What an Indian conqueror! What a festival god! When Priapus, the shameless god of the garden (so gentility called that lecherous devil), attempting to surprise Vesta sleeping, what an honourable piece of service performed *the honest ass*, that with his loud braying detected that villainous assault? What heathen memorial more shameful to that infamous god than *the solemn sacrifice of that famous beast*, celebrated by the Lampsacens in revengement and reproach of that treasonable enterprise? But what treason like the treason of politic Achitophel, and plausible Absolon, that most disloyally and desperately rebelled against the sacred majesty of the most valorous and incomparable worthy, King David? And what reward or advancement meeter for such treason, than hanging? And who carried the wise Achitophel to hanging *but his own foolish ass*? And what carried the desperate Absolon to hanging *but his own sober mule*? What should I surcharge your memory with more histories at once? He that remembreth the government of Balaam's ass, Aesop's ass, Lucian's ass, Apuleius' ass, Machiavel's ass, Agrippa's ass, the Cumane ass, the rabbins' ass, Apollo's ass, the seven sages' ass, Silenus' ass, Priapus' ass, Achitophel's ass, and Absolon's mule, little needeth any other tutor or counsellor. Some would presume to allege the singular and peerless example of the Christian poet:

*Ille viam ostendit, vili qua vectus asello
Rerum Opifex.*

Agrippa, Cardan, Trithemius, Erasmus, and divers other notable scholars, affecting to show the variety of their reading, and the omnisufficiency of their learning, have been bolder in quoting such reverend examples upon as light, or lighter, occasion, but humanity must not be too saucy with divinity, & enough is better than a feast. Sweet Apuleius, when thou hast wiped thy mouth with thine own ass-dung, and thine own tongue hath said unto thy pen, *Pen, thou art an ass*, then fellow-asses may shake hands, and they clap their hands that have heard the comedy of *Adelphi*, or the two asses, a more notable pageant than the interlude of the two Sofias, of the two Amphitryos, or the two Mendechmi [sic], or the two Martin Guerras, or any such famous pair of the true person and the counterfeit. But asses carry mysteries, and what a riddle is this, that the true man should be the counterfeit, and the false fellow, the true ass. Or what a secret in philosophy shall I reveal, as unto the sons of the art, when I tell you ass's milk is restorative, good for the gout, for the bloody flux, for the clearness of the skin; ass's blood, good for the fever lurdan; ass's flesh sodden, good for the leprosy; ass's liver rotted, good for the falling sickness; ass's hooves burned to ashes, good also for the same sickness, for the king's evil, for women labouring with a dead burden; ass's bones well boiled, good against the empoisonment of the sea-hare; ass's stale, good for the reins of the back, and a fine decorative to beautify the face by taking of spots and blemishes; ass's dung, a sweet nosegay to staunch blood, a sovereign fumigation to expel a dead birth out of the mother's womb, and a fair emplaster for a foul mouth, as it might be for the mouth of bawdry in rime, or of blasphemy in prose. No Homerial Machaon or Podalirius comparable to the right ass, that teacheth the greatest empirics, spagyrics, cabbalists, alchemists, magicians, and occult philosophers to wrap up their profoundest and unrevealable mysteries in the thickest skin, or rather in the closest entrails, of an ass. I

would some open-mouthed libertines, and professed atheists, had as deeply learned that cunning lesson. Even the dead carcass of the ass engendreth the flying scarab, or soaring beetle, the noble and unreconcilable feudist of the eagle, of whom my brave adversary, the famousest dor-beetle of this age, hath learned to contemn and deprave the two mounting eagles of the heavenly art of poetry, Buchanan in Latin verse, and Bartas in French metre, whose gross imperfections he hath also vowed to publish, with an irrefragable confutation of Beza, and our flourishingest new writers, as well in divinity, as in humanity, only divine Aretine excepted. But no thunder-blazing affrighteth or toucheth the right eagle, and the least feather of the right eagle can soon devour the bastard wings of other envious and quarrellous birds. What carrion ass was the sire of the unappeasable scarab, or what scarab shall be the son and heir of this carrion ass, I leave it wholly to the discourse of the learned eagles that were ever molested with the buzzing fly, and shall ever be haunted with the braying beast. I must spin up my task. And because the wild ass wanteth a picke-devant, let him drink his own urine, tempered with spikenard, as he carouseth Helicon, and according to the tradition of Vitalis de Furno, it will procure and increase hair, as kindly as the artificial liniment of Doctor Levinus Lemnius for a comely beard. And in case he feareth his fellow Greene's sluttish disease, let him read the natural histories of the ass and the sheep in Aristotle, Pliny, or Gesner, and he shall find it one of their special privileges to be arrested from the arrest of the six-footed sergeant, a continual haunter of other hairy beasts, and only favourable to the good ass, and the gentle sheep. Or if haply he would be shod with a pair of everlasting shoes, like the talaria of Mercury (for alas that any gentleman of worth, or corrector of the Lord du Bartas, should lie in the Counter in his boots for want of shoes), Albertus and Cardan will teach him to make incorruptible shoes of the durablest part of an ass's hide, immortal leather. And O, sweet muses of Parnassus, are not the sweetest pipes and pleasantest instruments made of ass's bones, or do not the skilful geographers, Strabo and Pliny, call dainty Arcadia in Peloponnesus (the native country of the great Apollo), *the land of asses*? Was not the renowned Pan, the politic captain of the conquerous Bacchus, & a supposed god in the paynim world, an Arcadian ass? Was not Prince Arcas, the brave son of king Jupiter, after his death honoured with the glorious memorial of the *Great Bear* in heaven, an Arcadian ass? Was not the *Little Bear*, his mother Callisto, an Arcadian ass? Was not her father, the dread tyrant Lycaon, an Arcadian fox, an Arcadian wolf, an Arcadian ass? Was not the mighty Atlas, the father of Maia, and grandfather of Mercury, an Arcadian ass? Was not Mercury himself, the most nimble and super-eloquent god, an Arcadian ass? Was not Astrophil, excellent Astrophil (another Mercury at all dexterities, and how delicious a planet of heavenly harmony), by his own adoption an Arcadian ass? Histories are no snudges in matters of note, and asses had never less cause to be ashamed of asses. When wise Apollo, when valorous Pan, when employable Mercury, when surmounting Atlas, when the *Great* and *Little Bear* of heaven, when excellent Astrophil, glory in the honourable title of Arcadian asses, who would not covet to be recounted in that memorable catalogue? What generous or noble antiquity may wage comparison with Statius' Arcadians, *Astris, Lunaque priores*? Sweetness itself was the daughter and darling of Arcadia, and Arcadia the mother, the nurse, the dug, the sweetheart of sweetness itself. O, the sugar-candy of the delicate bagpipe there, and O, the licorice of the divine dulcimers there. No marvel though his music be sweeter and sweeter, that is as fine an *asinas ad lyram* as the famous disciple of the worthy Ammonius, and hath Greene's mellifluous Arcadia at his fingers' ends, the very funeral of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. His other habiliments and complements be innumerable, and I know not an ass but hath some good quality, that is, some special property of an ass, either profitable for commodity, or pleasurable for delight, as an ass may be profitable or pleasurable either simply, or in some respect. It was not for nothing that the bravest king that ever reigned upon earth, Alexander the Great, even greater than any Mars or Jupiter that ever brandished sceptre in the world, in his royal and valorous judgement preferred the ass before the man, when, being solemnly commanded by oracle to slay the first living creature he should fortune to meet withal, if, after his puissant and conquerous manner, he would that day obtain the victory, he happened to meet a good honest

countryman riding upon an ass, whose present sacrifice, as a most acceptable oblation, made him victorious. Less marvel of the archbishop's answer, in *Mensa Philosophica*, and Pontan's *Dialogues*, that, having reverently and devoutly preached on Palm Sunday of the she-ass whereupon Christ, in humility, vouchsafed to ride, and after his lowly sermon mounting upon the lofty palfrey, was riding his way, somewhat fatherly and graciously stayed awhile to hear the old woman's suit, that came hastily running towards him, and boldly taking his horse by the bridle, Now I beseech your grace, quoth she, is this the she-ass whereupon Christ in humility rode? No, mother, quoth he, but a poor foal of that rich ass, and I a humble servant of that high Lord. Good enough, quoth the woman, I knew not before that the gentle she-ass your grace preached of had such goodly foals. Yes, mother, quoth the bishop, and a great deal goodlier than mine, and so departed, leaving behind him an everlasting memory of that devout sermon, and that weighty communication with the woman, in honour of the ass, a fruitful parent of many goodly and pompous foals. I will not trouble Boccace, or Poggius, for tales. He was a natural fool that would have given his livery again unto his lord, because it was embroidered with ass's heads, which made a comely show upon his garment, and might full well have beseemed some richer coats. Could the mill, the plough, the pack, the hamper, the pannier, the cloak-bag, the burden, the fardel, the bag and baggage, the cudgel, the goad, penury, famine, patience, labour itself speak, all other apologies were superfluous; they would frame a substantial and necessary defence of the ass, and experience would declaim in commendation of his perpetual exercise, travail, industry, valour, temperance, sufferance, magnanimity, and constancy, the honourablest and invinciblest virtues in the world. The wisest economy maketh especial account of three singular members; a merchant's ear, a pig's mouth, and an ass's back. A short note, but worth all Tusser's, or Cato's, husbandry. Had I more experience in some cases, I could say more, & as my experience in those cases may happen to increase, or amount, I will not fail to tender my devoir. I have penned large discourses in praise of study, meditation, conference, exercise, industry, vigilance, & perseverance, the worthiest things in the circuit of the earth (nothing under heaven equivalent to labour), and whatsoever I have addressed in their behalf, I may in sort allege in honour of the ass, and compile whole volumes in his commendation, more available for commodity, and more necessary for use, than the works of some great commentators in humanity, philosophy, history, and other higher professions. He that can kindly play the right ass, in ignorance will find knowledge; in poverty, wealth; in displeasure, favour; in jeopardy, security; in bondage, freedom; in war, peace; in misery, felicity. Who so thoroughly provided for both fortunes as he; or who so strongly armed against all casualties as he; or what Seneca, Epictetus, Boetius, Petrarch, or Cardan, so effectual a schoolmaster of *Sustine, et Abstine*, as he; or who such an economer to live, as he; or who such a philosopher to die, as he; or what physician for the body, like him; or what lawyer for the substance, like him; or what divine for the mind, like him; or where such a practitioner of virtue as he; or where such a fortune-wright as he; or, finally, where such an apt subject for the civil and moral reformation of the prudent Augustus, the good Trajan, the gentle Marcus Antoninus, the virtuous Alexander Severus, the dread Septimius Severus, or any honourable prince, or politic tyrant, that with a reverend authority would establish virtuous and awful orders of government in his dominions?

But what an ass am I, that proceed so coldly and dully in the apology of so worthy a creature? What will you say, gentlemen, if I can prove with pregnant arguments, artificially drawn from all the places of invention, according to Ramus', Rodolophes', or Aristotle's logic, that the fire-breathing oxen and mighty dragon which kept the most famous golden fleece, the glorious prize of brave Jason, were asses of Colchos; that the watchful and dreadful dragon which kept the goodly golden apples in the occidental islands of the ocean, called Hesperides, one of the renowned prizes of doughty Hercules, was a West Indian ass; that the golden-horned and brazen-footed Maenalian hart, the fierce Erymanthean boar, the hideous birds Stymphalides, the puissant Nemean lion, and the seven-headed Lernaean hydra, which Hercules slew, were asses of Arcadia, and other adjacent countries of Morea

(for Maenalus and Erymanthus were hills in Arcadia, Stymphalus a lake in Arcadia, Nemea a wood in Argolis, and Lerna a fen in Argolis, another shire of Morea); that the serpent with the golden crest, which kept the rich fountain of Mars in Greece, and was slain of valiant Cadmus, was an ass of Boeotia, so called *a boue*, where the prophet Amphiaraus breathed oracles; that the huge serpent Python *de monte*, engendered shortly after Deucalion's deluge, which the Arcadian god of wisdom killed with his arrow, the first founders of the Pythian games, was a mighty ass of the mountains; that the mounting eagle into which king Jupiter turned, not himself, but Ganymedes (whom he took with him as his flying page, and used as his standing cup-bearer), was a faithful servant, and a perpetual ass; that the hundred-eyed Argus, whom Queen Juno appointed the keeper of Io, the fairest creature of the Arcadian herd, and whom Mercury lulled asleep with a sweet syrinx, or Arcadian pipe (many stratagems and mysteries in that Arcadian pipe), was a blind ass of Arcadia; I skip a thousand memorable histories; that all they, by whatsoever noble or glorious names entitled, that having charge of greatest importance and inestimable value committed to their vigilant and zealous custody, did at once forego their treasure, their honour, and their life (as many great personages, for want of circumspection, have done), were notorious arch-asses. If I cannot substantially prove all this, and, for a need, evict by necessary and immediate demonstration, that the great world is a great ass, as well *actu* as *potentia*, and the microcosm a little ass, as well *habitu* as *affectione*, say I am a notable ass, as well *re* as *nomine*. The philosopher that, seeking about with a candle at high noon, could not find a man in a populous market, without a candle would soon have pointed at a fair of asses, and could quickly have discovered a fruitful generation in every element, in the water, in the earth, about the fire, in the air. And the wise man that said without exception, *Stultorum plena sunt omnia*, might easily have been entreated to have set it down for a sovereign maxim, or general rule, *Asinorum plena sunt omnia*. The thundering orator Demosthenes was not afraid to taunt Minerva, the armed goddess of fine Athens, for exhibiting favour to three unreasonable beasts, the owl, the dragon, and the people, counting the people the most importunate and intolerable beast of the three, by whose appointment he was banished the dainty city, the only seat of his reigning eloquence. If the people of fine Athens were such a barbarous and senseless brute as their excellentest orators, philosophers, captains, counsellors, and magistrates found, to their cost, and if the people of brave Rome, the lady and empress of the world, were such a bellowing beast of many heads as Horace called it, Tully proved it, Scipio felt it, and Caesar himself rued it, what may be said of other people? Flourishing Greece in many hundred years acknowledged but seven wise men of special note, as the ancient world acknowledged but seven miracles, or magnificent spectacles worth the seeing, & Callimachus, a sweet poet, recording the memorable and wonderful things of Peloponnesus, termed them paradoxes. Virtuous Italy, in a longer term of dominion, with much ado bred two Catos and one Regulus, but how many Sylvios, Porcios, Brutos, Bestias, Tauros, Vitellios, Capras, Capellas, Asinios, and so forth? Other singularities, meet matter for Tully's *Paradoxes*. The world was never given to singularities, and no such monster as excellency. He that speaketh as other use to speak, avoideth trouble, and he that doth as most men do shall be least wondered at. The ox and the ass are good-fellows; the leopard and the fox, quaint wizards; whatsoever is above the common capacity or usual ability, a paradox. I will not bethink myself of the vigorous sentences of stoical philosophers, or the biting apothegms of seditious malcontents, or the angry sayings of froward saturnists, or the tumultuous proverbs of mutinous people (I have small affection to the reasons that are drawn from affection), but were not the world an universal ox, and man a general ass, how were it possible that so many counterfeit sleights, crafty conveyances, subtle sophistications, wily cozenages, cunning impostures, and deep hypocrisies should overflow all; so many opinions, paradoxes, sects, schisms, heresies, apostacies, idolatries, atheisms, should pester the church; so many frauds, shifts, collusions, covens, falsifications, subornations, treacheries, treasons, factions, commotions, rebellions, should disturb the commonwealth? It is a world to consider what a world of follies and villainies possesseth the world, only because the world is a world, *id est*, an ass. And would the press suffer this scribbling ass

to domineer in print, if it were not a press, *id est*, an ass? Might it please his confuting ass-ship, by his honourable permission, to suffer one to rest quiet, he might, with my good leave, be the grand general of asses, or reign alone in his proper dominion, like the mighty Assyrian king, even Phul Assar himself, the famous son of the renowned Phul Bullochus. For so the gentlewoman hath entitled him in a place or two, that hath vowed the canonization of Nashe's St. Fame in certain discourses of regard, already dispatched to my satisfaction, & almost accomplished to her own intention. It may peradventure be his fortune to leave as glorious a nephew behind him as ever was the redoubted Lob-Assar-Duck, another noble king of Assyria, not forgotten by the said excellent gentlewoman, but remembered with such a grace as beautifieth divine wits. Kind-heart hath already offered fair for it, & were it not that the great Phul Assur himself had forestalled and engrossed all the commodities of Assyria, with the whole encomium of asses, into one hand, it should have gone very hard, but this redoubted Lob-Assar-Duck would have retailed, and regrated, some precious part of the said commodities and advancements. He may haply in time, by especial favour and approved desert (what means of preferment to especial favour and approved desert?), be entertained as a chapman of choice, or employed as a factor of trust, and have some stables of asses at his appointment, as may seem meetest for his carriages, and conveyances. For mine own part, I must be contented to remain at his devotion, that hath the whole generation of Assyrians at commandment, with a certain personal privilege, or rather an imperial prerogative, to create and install asses at pleasure. Had I not lately revisited the *Assyrian History* with the said virtuous gentlewoman, one of the gallantest ornaments of her sex, I might perchance have omitted this small parcel of his great honour, and left the commendation of the ass more unperfect, which, notwithstanding, I must still leave most unperfect, in respect of his unspeakable beau-desert. Unto whom, for a farewell, I can wish no more than accomplished honour, nor no less than athletical health. A short exhortation will serve Socrates to continue like himself. A roach not sounder than a haddock, or the stockfish that Pliny termeth *asellus*, & nothing so unkindly hurteth an ass as the two melancholy beasts, cold and the drowsy sickness, the cause why asses cannot abide to inhabit the most cold & frozen territories of Scythia, but are glad to seek their fortunes in other countries, & to colonize in warmer seats. Blame him not that saith, *The weather is cold, and I am weary with confuting*, & in another place, *Had I my health, now I had leisure to be merry, for I have almost washed my hands of the Doctor*. Now I see thou art a good-fellow by thine own confession, & wilt not give the ass's head for the washing. Cold and the drowsy sickness are thy two mortal enemies; when they are fled the country, like fugitive and dismal birds, let us have a flitch of mirth, with a fiddle of the purest ass-bone, only I bar the cheek-bone, for fear of Samson's tune, more than heroical. But the spring-tooth in the law will do us no harm, although it were a fountain of muscadel, or a conduit of hippocras. Many are the miracles of right virtue, and he entereth into an infinite labyrinth that goeth about to praise Hercules, or the ass, whose labours exceed the labours of Hercules, and whose glory surmounteth the top of Olympus. I were best to end before I begin, and to leave the author of asses where I found the ass of authors. When I am better furnished with competent provision (what provision sufficient for so mighty a province?), I may haply assay to fulfil the proverb, by washing the ass's head, and setting the crown of highest praise upon the crown of young Apuleius, the heir apparent of the old ass, the most glorious old ass.

I have written in all sorts of humours privately, I am persuaded more than any young man of my age in England. They be the words of his own honourable mouth, and the golden ass, in the superabundance of his rich humours, promiseth many other golden mountains, but hath never a scrat of silver. Had Aristophanes' Plutus been outwardly as liberal as Greene's Mercury was inwardly prodigal, he must needs have been the only oriental star of this language, and all other writers, old or new, in prose or verse, in one humour or other, but sorry occidental stars. Only external defects, quoth himself, are cast in his dish; for internal graces, and excellentest perfections of an accomplished mind, who but he? Come, divine

poets and sweet orators, the silver-streaming fountains of flowingest wit and shiningest art; come, Chaucer and Spenser, More and Cheke, Ascham and Astley, Sidney and Dyer; come, the dearest sister of the dearest brother, the sweetest daughter of the sweetest muses, only one excepted, the brightest diamond of the richest eloquence, only one excepted, the resplendentest mirror of feminine valour, only one excepted, the gentlewoman of courtesy, the lady of virtue, the countess of excellency, and the madam of immortal honour; come, all the daintiest dainties of this tongue, and do homage to your vertical star, that hath all the sovereign influences of the eloquent and learned constellations at a beck, and paradiseth the earth with the ambrosial dewes of his incomprehensible wit. But what should I dally with honey-bees, or presume upon the patience of the gentlest spirits that English humanity affordeth? Pardon me, excellent minds, and I will here dismiss my poor milkmaid, nothing appliant to the delicate humour of this minion humorist, and courtesan secretary. Shall I say? Fie upon arrant knavery, that hath never sucked his fill of most odious malice, or, out upon scurrilous & obscene villainy, nuzzled in the bosom of filthiest filth, and hugged in the arms of the abominablest hags of hell. Be it nothing to have railed upon doctors of the university, or upon lords of the court (whom he abuseth most infamously, & abjecteth as contemptuously as me), but what other desperate varlet of the world durst so villainously have defamed London & the court, as he notoriously hath done in these rascal terms? *Tell me, is there any place so lewd as this Lady London? Not a wench sooner creeps out of the shell but she is of the religion. The court I dare not touch, but surely there be many falling-stars, and but one true Diana. Not a wench,* a very universal proposition in so large and honourable a city, and *but one,* a very short exception to a general rule of the court. Flourishing London, the staple of wealth, & madam town of the realm, *is there no place so lewd, as thyself,* and noble court, the palace of honour, and seat of majesty, hast thou *but one true Diana?* Is it not right hand time the young haddock were caught, that can already nibble so prettily? Was he, think you, lodged in Cappadocia, for sleeping by the sun, and studying by the moon? Whom, or what, will not he shortly confute with an overrunning fury, that so bravely adventureth upon London and the court at once? Honour, regard thy good reputation, and staunch the rank blood of this arrant author, as honest a man as some honest woman I could name, that keepeth her honesty as she doth her Friday fast. Suffer him to proceed as he presumeth, & to end as he beginneth, and look for a rarer beast in England than a wolf, and a stranger monster in print than the divine ruffian that entitled himself *Flagellum Principum,* and proved *Pestis Rerum publicarum.* My tongue is an infant in this idiotism, and I had rather bless my pestilentest enemy than curse any, but some little plain-dealing doth not otherwhiles amiss, where nothing but flat and rank grossness blotteth the paper, infecteth the air, depraveth the good, encourageth the bad, corrupteth youth, accloyeth age, and annoyeth the world. Good faith is my witness, I neither affect to obscure any light in an adversary, nor desire to quench any honest courage in an enemy, but wish every gift of heaven or earth, of mind or body, of nature, of fortune, redoubled in both, even in the greenest adversary and wildest enemy, in whom I honour the highest, and love the lowest, degree of excellency, but am not easily cozened by imperfection, branded with the counterfeit mark of perfection. I am over-ready to pardon young oversights, and forgive inconsiderate offences, but cannot flatter folly, or fawn upon vanity, or cocker ignorance, or soothe up untruth, or applaud to arrogancy, either in foe, or friend. It concerneth every man to look into his own estate with his own eyes, but the young man that will neither know himself, nor acknowledge other, must be told in brief what the common opinion reporteth at large. He hath little wit; less learning; least judgement; no discretion; vanity enough; stomach at will; superabundance of self-conceit; outward liking to few, inward affection to none (his defence of Greene, a more biting condemnation than my reproof); no reverence to his patrons; no respect to his superiors; no regard to any, but in contemptuous, or censorious, sort; hatred, or disdain to the rest; continual quarrels with one, or other (not such another mutterer, or murmurer, even against his familiarest acquaintance); an ever-grudging & repining mind; a ravenous throat; a gluttonous maw; a drunken head; a blasphemous tongue; a fisking wit; a shittle nature; a revolting and renegade disposition; a broking and

huckstering pen; store of rascal phrases; some little of a brabbling scholar, more of a raving scold, most of a roisterly serving man; nothing of a gentleman; less than nothing of a fine, or cleanly, artist. And as for terms of honesty or civility (without which the sharpest invention is unsavoury, and the daintiest elocution loathsome), they are gibberish unto him, and he a Jewish rabbin or a Latin dunce with him, that useth any such form of monstrous terms. Aretine and the devil's orator would be ashamed to be convicted or indicted of the least respective or ceremonious phrase, but in mockage or cozenage. They neither fear Goodman Satan, nor master Beelzebub, nor Sir Reverence, nor Milord Government himself; O wretched atheism, hell but a scarecrow, and heaven but a wonderclout in their doctrine; all vulgar, stale, and simple, that is not a note above God's forbid. Whom durst not he appeach, revile, or blaspheme, that forged the abominablest book in the world, *De tribus impostoribus mundi*, and whom will he forbear, in any reason or conscience, that hath often protested, in his familiar haunts, to confute the worthy Lord du Bartas, and all the famous modern writers, saving him only who only meriteth to be confuted with unquenchable volumes of heaven-and hell-fire. Perionius deciphereth the foul precepts and reprobate examples of his moral philosophy in an invective declamation generally addressed unto all the princes of Christendom, but especially directed unto the most Christian French king, Henry the Second. Agrippa detecteth his monstrous veneries, and execrable sodomies. Cardan blazoneth him the most impudent ribald that ever took pen in hand. Manutius investeth him the ringleader of the corruptest bawds and miscreantest rake-hells in Italy. His familiar acquaintance, Sansovino, doth him never a whit more credit than needeth. Tasso disdaineth his insolent and insupportable affectation of singularity. Jovius, in his *Elegies*, vouchsafeth him not the naming. Doubtless he was endued with an exceeding odd wit, and I never read a more surpassing hyperbolical style. Castilio's *Courtier*, after a pleasurable sort, graceth him with a deep insight in the highest types and idees of human perfections, whereunto he most curiously and insatiably aspired. His wanton disciples, or vain-conceited favourites (such crows, such eggs), in their fantastical letters, and Bacchanal sonnets, extol him monstrously, that is, absurdly, as the only monarch of wit, that is, the prodigal son of conceit, and the mortal god of all virtue, that is, the immortal devil of all vice. Oh, what grandiloquous epithets, and supereminent titles of incredible and prodigious excellency, have they bestowed upon the arch-miracle of the world, Signior Unico, not so little as the huge Gargantua of prose, and more than the heaven-surmounting Babel of rime. But what approved man of learning, wisdom, or judgement ever deigned him any honour of importance, or commendation of note, but the young darling of St. Fame, Thomas Nashe, alias Pierce Penilesse, the second leviathan of prose, and another behemoth of rime? He it is that is born to glorify Aretine, to disgrace Bartas, and to undo me. Say I, write I, or do I what I can, he will haunt and trounce me perpetually, with spritish works of supererogation, incessant tormentors of the civilian, and the divine. Yet somebody was not wont to indite upon aspen leaves of paper, and take heed, sirrah, of the fatal quill, that scorneth the sting of the busy bee, or the scratch of the kittish shrew. A bee? A drone, a dor, a dor-beetle, a dormouse. A shrew? A drab, a hag, a flibbertigibbet, a makebate, the pickthank of vanity, the pickpocket of foolery, the pickpurse of all the paltries and knaveries in print. She doth him no wrong that doth him right, like Astraea, and hath styled him with an immortal pen, the *bow-wow* of scholars, the *tut* of gentlemen, the *tee-hee* of gentlewomen, the *fie* of citizens, the *blurt* of courtiers, the *pooh* of good letters, the *faph* of good manners, the *whoop hoo* of good boys in London streets. Nashe, Nashe, Nashe (quoth a lover of truth and honesty), vain Nashe, railing Nashe, craking Nashe, bibbing Nashe, baggage Nashe, swaddish Nashe, roguish Nashe, Nashe the bell-wether of the scribbling flock, the swish-swash of the press, the bum of impudency, the shambles of beastliness, the polecat of Paul's Churchyard, the shritch-owl of London, the toadstool of the realm, the scorning-stock of the world, & the horrible confuter of *Four Letters*. Such an antagonist hath fortune allotted me, to purge melancholy, and to thrust me upon the stage, which I must now load, like the old subject of my new praise. There is no warring with destiny, and the lord of my leisure will have it so. Much good may it do the puppy of St. Fame so to confute, and so to be

confuted. Where his intelligence faileth (as God wotteth, it faileth often), he will be so bold, without more inquiry, to check the common sense of reason with the proper sense of his imagination, infinitely more high in conceit than deep in understanding, and where any phrase or word presumeth to approach within his swing, that was not before enrolled in the commonplaces of his paper-book, it is presently mere inkhornism, albeit he might have heard the same from a thousand mouths of judgement, or read it in more than an hundred writings of estimation. Pythagoras' silence was wont to be a rule for ignorance or immaturity (no better bit for unlearned, or unexpert, youth than Pythagoras' silence), but understand, or not understand, both are one; if he understand, it is duncery; if he understand not, it is either cabbalism in matter, or inkhornism in form; whether he be ripe, or unripe, all is raw or rotten that pleaseth not his imperial taste. Had he ever studied any pragmatistical discourse, or perused any treaties of confederacy, of peace, of truce, of intercourse, of other foreign negotiations (that is specially noted for one of my inkhorn words), or researched any acts and monuments, civil or ecclesiastical, or looked into any law, statutes, injunctions, proclamations (nay, it is one of his witty flouts, *He begins like a proclamation*, but few treatises better penned than some proclamations), or had he seen any authentional instruments, pragmatic articles, or other politic tracts, he would rather have wondered I should use so few formal terms (which I have properly avoided, as not so vulgarly familiar), than have marvelled at any which I used. He is of no reading in comparison, that doth not acknowledge every term in those *Letters* to be authentional English, and allow a thousand other ordinary pragmatistical terms, more strange than the strangest in those *Letters*, yet current at occasion. The ignorant idiot (for so I will prove him in very truth), confuteth the artificial words which he never read, but the vain fellow (for so he proveth himself in word and deed), in a fantastical emulation, presumeth to forge a mis-shapen rabblement of absurd and ridiculous words, the proper badges of his newfangled figure called foolerism, such as *inkhornism*, *absonism*, *the most copious carminist*, *thy carminical art*, *a proveditore of young scholars*, *a corrigidore of incongruity*, *a quest of cavalieros*, *inamoratos on their works*, *a theological gimpanado*, *a dromidote ergonist*, *sacriligiously contaminated*, *decrepit capacity*, *fictionate person*, *humour unconvertible*, *merriments unexilable*, *the horrisonant pipe of inveterate antiquity*, and a number of such inkhornish phrases, as it were a pan of outlandish collops, the very bowels of his profoundest scholarism. For his eloquence passeth my intelligence, that clepeth himself a *callimunco* for pleading his companion's cause in his own apology, and me a *pistlepragmos*, for defending my friends in my *Letters*, and very artificially *interfuseth finicality*, *sylogistry*, *disputative right*, *hermaphrodite phrases*, *declamatory styles*, *ensorial moralizers*, *unlineal usurpers of judgement*, *infamizers of vice*, *new infringement to destitute the indictment*, *deriding dunstically*, *banging abominationly*, *unhandsoming of divinityship*, *absurdifying of phrases*, *ratifying truthable and eligible English*, *a calm dilatation of forward harmfulness and backward irefulness*, and how many sundry dishes of such dainty fritters, rare junkets, and a delicate service for him that compiled the most delicious commentaries, *De optimitate triparum*. And what say you, boys, the flatteringest hope of your mothers, to a porch of *paynim pilfries*, *pestered with praises*? Dare the pertest or deftest of you hunt the letter, or hawk a metaphor, with such a tit-tut-tat? He weeneth himself a special penman, as he were the headman of the pamphleting crew, next, and immediately after, Greene, and although he be a harsh orator with his tongue (even the filed Suada of Isocrates wanted the voice of a siren, or the sound of an echo), yet would he seem as fine a secretary with his pen as ever was Bembus in Latin, or Machiavel in Italian, or Guevara in Spanish, or Amiot in French, and with a confidence presseth into the rout of that humorous rake that affecteth the reputation of supreme singularity. But he must crave a little more acquaintance at the hand of art, and serve an apprenticeship of some nine or ten years in the shop of curious imitation (for his wild fantasy will not be allowed to maintain comparison with curious imitation), before he will be able to perform the twentieth, or fortieth, part of that sufficiency whereunto the crankness of his imagination already aspireth, as more exquisite than the Atticism of Isocrates, or more puissant than the fury of Tasso. But how insolently soever

gross ignorance presumeth of itself (none so haughty as the basest buzzard), or how desperately soever foolhardy ambition advanceth his own colours (none so foolhardy as the blindest Hob), I have seldom read a more garish and piebald style in any scribbling inkhornist, or tasted a more unsavoury slampamp of words and sentences in any sluttish pamphleter that denounceth not defiance against the rules of oratory, and the directions of the *English Secretary*. Which may here and there stumble upon some tolerable sentence, neighbourly borrowed, or featly picked out of some fresh pamphlet, but shall never find three sentences together worth any allowance, and as for a fine or neat period, in the dainty and pithy vein of Isocrates or Xenophon, marry, that were a periwig of a siren, or a wing of the very bird of Arabia, an inestimable relic. Tush a point, neither curious Hermogenes, nor trim Isocrates, nor stately Demosthenes are for his tooth, nor painting Tully, nor carving Caesar, nor purple-dyeing Livy for his humour. It is for Cheke or Ascham to stand levelling of colons, or squaring of periods, by measure and number; his pen is like a spigot, and the wine-press a dullard to his ink-press. There is a certain lively and frisking thing, of a quaint and capricious nature, as peerless as nameless, and as admirable as singular, that scorneth to be a book-worm, or to imitate the excellentest artificiality of the most renowned work-masters that antiquity affordeth. The wit of this & that odd modernist is their own, & no such mineral of richest art as pregnant nature, the plentifullest womb of rare invention and exquisite elocution. Whist art, and nature advance thy precious self in thy most gorgeous and magnificent robes, and if thy new descant be so many notes above old ela, good-now be no niggard of thy sweet accents & heavenly harmony, but reach the antic muses their right liripoop. Desolate eloquence, and forlorn poetry, thy most humble suppliants *in forma pauperum*, clad in mournful and dreary weeds, as becometh their lamentable case, lie prostrate at thy dainty foot, and adore the idol-excellency of thy monstrous singularity. O stately Homer, and lofty Pindarus, whose wit mounteth like Pegasus, whose verse streameth like Nilus, whose invention flameth like Aetna, whose elocution rageth like Sirius, whose passion blustereth like Boreas, whose reason breatheth like Zephyrus, whose nature savoureth like Tempe, and whose art perfumeth like paradise; O, the mightiest spirits of courageous vigour, of whom the delicate Grecian, worthy Roman, and gallant vulgar muses learned their shrillest tunes, and hyperbolical notes; O, the fiercest trumpets of heroical valour, that with the strange sympathy of your divine fury, and with those same piercing motions of heavenly inspiration, were wont to ravish the affections, and even to melt the bowels, of bravest minds, see, see what a wondrous qualm.

But peace, milkmaid, you will still be shaming yourself, and your bringing up. Hadst thou learned to discern the fairest face of eloquence from the foulest visage of barbarism, or the goodliest frame of method from the ill-favoured shape of confusion, as thou canst descry the finest flour from the coarsest bran, or the sweetest cream from the sourest whey, peradventure thou wouldst dote indeed upon the beautiful and dainty feature of that natural style, that appropriate style, upon which himself is so deeply enamoured. I would it were out of peradventure; no man more greedy to behold that miraculous art of emproved nature. He may malapertly brag in the vain ostentation of his own natural conceit, and, if it please him, make a golden calf of his wooden stuff, but show me any half-page without piperly phrases and tinkery composition, and say I am the simplest artist that ever looked fair rhetoric and sweet poetry in the face. It is the destiny of our language to be pestered with a rabblement of botchers in print, but what a shameful shame is it for him, that maketh an idol of his own pen, and raiseth up an huge expectation of paper miracles (as if Hermes Trismegist were newly risen from the dead, and personally mounted upon Danter's press, to emprove himself as rank a bungler in his mightiest work of supererogation as the starkest patch-panel of them all, or the grossest hammer-drudge in a country). He disdaineth Thomas Deloney, Philip Stubbes, Robert Armin, and the common pamphleters of London, even the painfulest chroniclers too, because they stand in his way, hinder his scribbling traffic, obscure his resplendishing fame, or have not chronicled him in their catalogues of the renowned modern authors, as he meritoriously meriteth, and may peradventure be

remembered hereafter. But may not Thomas Deloney, Philip Stubbes, Robert Armin, and the rest of those misused persons, more disdainfully disdain him, because he is so much vainer, so little learned, so nothing eleganter, than they, and they so much honester, so little obscurer, so nothing contemptibler, than he? Surely, Thomas, it were policy to boast less with Thomas Deloney, or to achieve more with Thomas More. If vaunting, or craking, may make thee singular, thy art is incomparable, thy wit superexcellent, thy learning omnisufficient, thy memory infinite, thy dexterity incomprehensible, thy force horrible, thy other gifts more than admirable, but when thou hast gloried thy uttermost, and struggled with might and main to seem the Great Turk of secretaries, if my eyesight be anything in the art of inditing (wherein it hath pleased favour to repute me something), upon my credit forever, thou hast nothing in thee of valour but a railing gall, and a swelling bladder. For thy pen is as very a gentleman foist as any pickpocket living, and, that which is most miserable, not a more famous neck-verse than thy choice, to thyself pernicious, to youth dangerous, to thy friends grievous, to thy adversaries pitiful, to virtue odious, to learning ignominious, to humanity noxious, to divinity intolerable, to authority punishable, to the world contemptible. I longed to see thy best amendment, or worst avengement, but thy gay best, *ut supra*, proveth nothing, and thy main worst, *ut infra*, less than nothing. Never silly man's expectation so deluded with contrary events upon the stage (yet fortune sometime is a quaint comedian, far beyond the *Supposes* of Ariosto), as these *Strange News* have cony-caught my conjecture; more deceived than my prognostication of the last year, which happened to be a true prophet of some dismal contingents. Though I never fancied tautologies, yet I cannot repeat it enough: I looked for a treaty of pacification, or imagined thou wouldst arm thy quill, like a stout champion, with the complete harness of wit and art; nay, I feared the brazen shield and the brazen boots of Goliath, and that same hideous spear, like a weaver's beam, but it is only thy fell stomach, that blustereth like a northern wind. Alas, thy wit is as tame as a duck; thy art as fresh as sour ale in summer; thy brazen shield in thy forehead; thy brazen boots in thy heart; thy weaver's beam in thy tongue, a more terrible lance than the hideous spear, were the most of thy power equivalent to the least of thy spite. I say not, what aileth thy Gorgon's head, or what is become of thy Samson's locks (yet where miracles were promised, and achievements of supererogation threatened, they had reason, that dreaded unknown forces), but, O blasts of divine fury, where is your supernatural prowess, and O horn of abundance, what meaneth this dearth of plenty, this penury of superfluity, this infancy of eloquence, this simplicity of cunning, this stupidity of nimbleness, this obscurity of bravery, this nullity of omnisufficiency? Was Pegasus ever a cow in a cage, or Mercury a mouse in a cheese, or industry a snail in a shell, or dexterity a dog in a doublet, or legerdemain a slow-worm, or vivacity a lazy-bones, or entelechy a slugplum? Can lively and winged spirits suppress the divinity of their ethereal and seraphical nature? Can the thunder tongue-tie, or the lightning smother, or the tempest calm, or love quench, or zeal lukewarm, or valour manacle, or excellency mew up, or perfection geld, or supererogation comb-cut itself? Is it not impossible for humanity to be a spittle-man, rhetoric a dummerell, poetry a tumbler, history a bankrupt, philosophy a broker, wit a cripple, courage a jade? How could the sweet mermaids, or dainty nymphs, find in their tender hearts to be so far divorced from their quaintest and galliardest minion? Art, take heed of an eager appetite, if a little greedy devouring of singularity will so soon get the hicket, and make thee (as it were) belch the sloven's oratory, and (as a man would say), parbreak the slut's poetry. Pure singularity, wrong not thy arch-excellent self, but embrace him with both thy arms, that huggeth thee with his fine wits, and cowl him with thy two coral bracelets, that busseth thee with his two ruby lips, and his three diamond powers, natural, animal, and vital. Precious singularity, how canst thou choose but dote upon his alabaster neck, whose inventive part can be no less than a sky-coloured sapphire, like the heavenly devises of the delicious poetess Sappho, the godmother of that azure gem; whose rhetorical figures, sanguine and resplendishing carbuncles, like the flamy pyropes of the glistening palace of the sun; whose alluring persuasions, amethysts; whose cutting girds, adamants; whose conquering ergos, loadstones; whose whole conceit as green as the greenest jasper; whose Orient wit, the

renowned achates of King Pyrrhus, that is, the tabernacle or chancel of the muses, Apollo sitting in the midst, and playing upon his ivory harp most enchantingly. Is it possible those powerful words of antiquity, whose mighty influence was wont to debase the miraculous operation of the most virtuous stones, herbs, and stars (philosophy knoweth the incredible force of stones, herbs, & stars), should be to seek in a panting inspired breast, the closet of revealed mysteries, and garden of infused graces? What locks, or bars of iron, can hold that quicksilver Mercury, whose nimble vigour disdaineth the prison, and will display itself in his likeness, maugre whatsoever impeachment of iron Vulcan, or wooden Daedalus? I hoped to find that I lusted to see, the very singular subject of that invincible & omnipotent eloquence, that in the worthiest age of the world, entitled heroical, put the most barbarous tyranny of men, and the most savage wildness of beasts, to silence, and areared wonderful admiration in the heart-root of obstinatest rebellion, otherwise how untractable? Had I not cause to platform new theoric, and idees of monstrous excellency, when the parturient mountain of miracles was to be delivered of his mighty burden of supererogation? Who would not ride post to behold the chariot of his triumph, that glorieth as if he had won both the Indies from the Spaniard, or Constantinople from the Turk, or Babylon from the Sophy? But holla, brave gentlemen, and alack, sweet gentlewomen, that would so fain behold St. Fame in the pomp of her majesty; never poor suckling hope so incredibly crossbitten with more than excessive discretion. I looked and looked for a shining sun of singularity, that should amaze the eyes, and astonish the hearts of the beholders, but never poor shimmering sun of singularity so horribly eclipsed. I perceive one good honest acre of performance may be more worth than a whole land of promise. Take heed, aspiring minds, you that deem yourselves the paragon wits of the world, lest your hills of jollity be converted into dales of obscurity, and the pomp of your glory become like this pump of shame. Even when envy boiled his ink, malice scotched his pen, pride parched his paper, fury inflamed his heart, St. Fame raged like St. George's dragon, mark the conclusion: the weather was cold, his style frost-bitten, and his wit nipped in the head. Take away the flaunting and huffing braveries of his railing tropes and craking figures, and you see the whole galliard of his rhetoric, that flouteth the poor *Philippics* of Tully and Demosthenes, and mocketh him that chanced to name them once in *Four Letters*, as he used their word entelechy, now a vulgar French and English word, once in four and twenty sonnets. The wise priest could not tell whether epiphany were a man-saint, or a woman-saint, or what the devil it was. Such an epiphany to this learned man is entelechy, the only quintessence of excellent and divine minds, as is above mentioned, showing whence they came by their heavenly and perpetual motion. What other word could express that noble and vigorous motion, quicker than quicksilver, and the lively spring, or rather the vestal fire, of the ever-stirring virtue of Caesar, *Nescia stare loco*, a mystery, and a very chimera, to this swad of swads, that beginneth like a bull-bear, goeth on like a bullock, endeth like a bullfinch, and hath never a sparkle of pure entelechy. Gentlemen, now you know the good nature and handsome art of the man, if you happen upon a feather or some morsel for your liking (it is a very sorry book that yieldeth nothing for your liking), thank the true author, of whose provision you have tasted, and say not but Thomas Nashe has read something, that, affecting to seem an university of sciences, and a Royal Exchange of tongues, would be thought to have devoured libraries, and to know all things, like Iarchas and Syfarion, nay, like Adam and Solomon, the arch-patrons of our new omniscians. If he did so in verity, it were the better for him, and not the worse for me, but you see his doing, and my suffering. Neither I nor my betters can please all, nor he, nor his punies, will displease all, but as in the best something remaineth that may be amended, without derogation to their credit, so in the worst there may appear something worth the allowance, with no great commendation to their person. Were I disposed to discourse, as sometime I have been forward upon less occasion, for the only exercise of my style, and some practice of my reading, I could with a facility declare at large that may only be touched. Amongst so many notable works of divine wits, excepting the works of God's own finger, there is not any so absolutely excellent wherein some blemish of imperfection may not be noted, nor amongst so many contemptible pamphlets, any so simply base but

may yield some little fruit of advertisement, or some few blossoms of discourse. In the sovereign workmanship of nature herself, what garden of flowers without weeds, what orchard of trees without worms, what field of corn without cockle, what pond of fishes without frogs, what sky of light without darkness, what mirror of knowledge without ignorance, what man of earth without frailty, what commodity of the world without discommodity? Oh, what an honourable and wonderful creature were perfection, were there any such visible creature under heaven! But pure excellency dwelleth only above, and what mortal wisdom can acclear itself from error, or what heroical virtue can justify, I have no vice? The most precious things under the sun have their defaults, and the vilest things upon earth want not their graces. Virgil could enrich himself with the rubbish of Ennius; to how many rusty-dusty wains was brave Livy beholding? Tully, that was as fine as the crusado, disdained not some furniture of his predecessors, that were as coarse as canvass, and he that will diligently seek, may assuredly find treasure in marl, corn in straw, gold in dross, pearls in shell-fishes, precious stones in the dunghill of Aesop, rich jewels of learning and wisdom in some poor boxes. He that remembreth Humfrey Cole, a mathematical mechanician; Matthew Baker, a shipwright; John Shute, an architect; Robert Norman, a navigator; William Bourne, a gunner; John Hester, a chemist, or any like cunning and subtle empiric (Cole, Baker, Shute, Norman, Bourne, Hester, will be remembered when greater clerks shall be forgotten), is a proud man if he contemn expert artisans, or any sensible industrious practitioner, howsoever unlectured in schools, or unlettered in books. Even the Lord Vulcan himself, the supposed God of the forge, and thunder-smith of the great king Jupiter, took the repulse at the hands of the Lady Minerva, whom he would in ardent love have taken to wife. Yet what wit or policy honoureth not Vulcan, and what profound mathematician, like Digges, Hariot, or Dee, esteemeth not the pregnant mechanician? Let every man in his degree enjoy his due, and let the brave engineer, fine Daedalist, skilful Neptunist, marvellous vulcanist, and every mercurial occupationer, that is, every master of his craft, and every doctor of his mystery, be respected according to the uttermost extent of his public service, or private industry. I cannot stand to specify particularities. Our late writers are as they are, and albeit they will not suffer me to balance them with the honourable authors of the Romans, Grecians, and Hebrews, yet I will crave no pardon of the highest, to do the simplest no wrong. In Grafton, Holinshed, and Stow; in Heywood, Tusser, and Googe; in Gascoigne, Churchyard, and Floyd; in Riche, Whetstone, and Munday; in Stanyhurst, Fraunce, and Watson; in Kissin, Warner, and Daniel; in an hundred such vulgar writers, many things are commendable, divers things notable, some things excellent. Fraunce, Kissin, Warner, and Daniel, of whom I have elsewhere more especial occasion to entreat, may haply find a thankful remembrance of their laudable travails. For a polished and garnished style, few go beyond Cartwright, and the chiefest of his confuters, furnished writers, and how few may wage comparison with Reynolds, Stubbes, Mulcaster, Norton, Lambert, and the Lord Henry Howard, whose several writings the silver style of the workman recommendeth to the plausible entertainment of the daintiest censure. Who can deny but *The Resolution*, and *Mary Magdalen's Funeral Tears*, are penned elegantly and pathetically? Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft* dismasketh sundry egregious impostures, and in certain principal chapters, & special passages, hitteth the nail on the head with a witness, howsoever I could have wished he had either dealt somewhat more courteously with Monsieur Bodin, or confuted him somewhat more effectually. Let me not forget the *Apology of Sundry Proceedings by Jurisdiction Ecclesiastical*, or the Answer to an Abstract of Certain Acts of Parliament, Injunctions, Canons, Constitutions, and Synodals Provincial, unless I will skip two of the most material and most formal treatises that any English print hath lately yielded. Might I respectively presume to intimate my slender opinion, without flattery, or other undecency, methought ever Doctor Whitgift (whom I name with honour) in his sermons was pithy; Doctor Hutton, profound; Doctor Young, piercing to the quick; Doctor Chadderton, copious; M. Curtes, elegant; M. Wickam, sententious; M. Drant, curious; M. Deering, sweet; Doctor Still, sound; Doctor Underhill, sharp; Doctor Matthew, fine; M. Lawherne, gallant; M. Dove, eloquent; M. Andrews, learned; M. Chadderton,

methodical; M. Smith, pathetic; sundry other in their proper vein notable, some exquisite, a few singular. Yet which of the best hath all perfections (*nihil omni ex parte beatum*), or which of the meanest hath not some excellency? I cannot read over all; I have seldom heard some (it was never my hap to hear Doctor Cooper, Doctor Humfrey, or Doctor Fletcher, but in Latin), and I would be loath to injury, or prejudice, any that deserveth well, *viva voce*, or by pen. I deem him wise that maketh choice of the best, avoideth the worst, reapeth fruit by both, despiseth nothing that is not to be abhorred, accepteth of anything that may be tolerated, entertaineth everything with commendation, favour, contentment, or amendment. Lucian's ass, Apuleius' ass, Agrippa's ass, Machiavel's ass, myself since I was dubbed an ass by the only monarch of asses, have found savoury herbs amongst nettles, roses amongst prickles, berries amongst bushes, marrow amongst bones, grain amongst stubble, a little corn amongst a great deal of chaff. The abjectest naturals have their specifical properties, and some wondrous virtues, and philosophy will not flatter the noblest, or worthiest, naturals in their venoms, or impurities. True alchemy can allege much for her extractions and quintessences, & true physic more for her corrections and purgations. In the best, I cannot commend the bad, and in the baddest, I reject not the good, but precisely play the alchemist, in seeking pure and sweet balms in the rankest poisons. A pithy or filed sentence is to be embraced, whosoever is the author, and for the least benefit received, a good mind will render dutiful thanks, even to his greatest enemy. O humanity, my Lullius, or O divinity, my Paracelsus, how should a man become that peer of alchemy that can turn the ratsbane of villainy into the balm of honesty, or correct the mandrake of scurrility with the myrrh of courtesy, or the saffron of temperance. Conceive a fountain of contentation, as it were of oil, or a bath of delight, as it were of nectar, and prefer that saffron or myrrh, that odoriferous saffron, or aromatical myrrh, before this sovereign oil, and that balm, that divine balm, before this heavenly nectar. No natural restorative like that saffron or myrrh, the very death of contention, nor any artificial cordial like that balm, the very life of humanity, or should I rather say, the very life of life? We have many new methods and platforms, and some no doubt as exquisite as scrupulous, but assuredly it were an excellent method and singular platform to honour the wise, and moderate the fool; to make much of the learned, and instruct the ignorant; to embrace the good, and reform the bad; to wish harm to none, & do well to all; and finally (for that is the scope of this, and some other, discourses), to commend the fox, and praise the ass. Martin himself is not altogether a wasp, nor Browne altogether a cankerworm, nor Barrow altogether a scorpion, nor haply Kett altogether a cockatrice. Take heed of the snake in the grass, or the pad in the straw, and fear no bugs. Be Martin a Martin Guerra, Browne a brown-bill, Barrow a wheelbarrow, Kett a kite, H.N. an O.K.; if any sound judgements find themselves beholding unto them in any point of advisement or consideration (singular men, and namely schismatics and heretics, are ever wont to have something or other extraordinary and remarkable), they may without my contradiction confess their beholdingness, and for so much profess a recognizance of their debt. I thank Nashe for something, Greene for more, Pap-hatchet for much more, Perne for most of all. Of him I learned to know him, to know my enemies, to know my friends, to know myself, to know the world, to know fortune, to know the mutability of times, and slipperiness of occasions, an inestimable knowledge, and incomparably more worth than Doctor Gregory's *Ars mirabilis*, or Politian's *Panepistemon*. He was an old soaker indeed, and had more wit in his hoary head than six hundred of these flourishing greenheads, and lusty curled pates. He would either wisely hold his peace, or smoothly flatter me to my face, or surely pay home with a witness, but commonly in a corner, or in a maze, where the author might be uncertain, or his packing intricate, or his purpose some way excusable. No man could bear a heavy injury more lightly, or forbear a learned adversary more cunningly, or bourd a wilful friend more dryly, or circumvent a dangerous foe more covertly, or countermined the deepest underminer more subtly, or lullaby the circumspectest Argus more sweetly, or transform himself into all shapes more deftly, or play any part more kindly. He had such a patience as might soften the hardest heart; such a sober mood as might ripen the greenest wit; such a sly dexterity as might quicken the dullest spirit; such a scrupulous manner of proceeding in

doubtful cases as might put a deep consideration into the shallowest fantasy; such a suspicious jealousy as might smell out the secretest complot, & defeat any practice; such an inextricable sophistry as might teach an Agathocles to hypocrise profoundly, or a Hieron to tyrannize learnedly. Whereas other carried their hearts in their tongues, and their heads in their pens, he liked no such simplicity, but after a smug and fleering guise, carried his tongue in his heart, his pen in his head, his dagger in his sleeve, his love in his bosom, his spite in his pocket, and when their speech, writing, or countenance betrayed their affection (as the manner is), nothing but his fact discovered his drift, & not the beginning, but the end, was the interpreter of his meaning. Some of us, by way of experiment, assayed to feel his pulse, and to tickle his wily veins in his own vein, with smoothing and glozing as handsomely as we could, but the bottom of his mind was a gulf of the main, & nothing could sound him deeply, but the issue. Iwis elder men had been too young to manage such an enterprise with success, and the finest intelligencer or sagest politician in a state would undoubtedly have been gravelled in the execution of that rash attempt. He could speak by contraries as quaintly as Socrates, and do by contraries as shrewdly as Tiberius; the master of Philip de Comines, Louis the French king, one of the busiest, jealousyest, and craftiest princes that ever reigned in that kingdom, might have borrowed the fox's satchel of him, and peradventure not only Aesop's, or Archilochus' fox, but even Lysander's fox, Aristomenes' fox, Pisistratus' fox, Ulysses' fox, Chiron's fox, and Proteus' own fox might learn of him to play the fox in the hole. For Stephen Gardiner's fox or Machiavel's fox are too young cubs to compare with him, that would seem anything rather than a fox, and be a fox rather than anything else. Legendaries may record wonderments, but examine the subtlest counsels, or the wiliest practices of Gargantua himself, and even Gargantua himself, albeit his gown were furred with two thousand & five hundred fox-skins, might have been his pupil. And I doubt not but he that worshipped *Solem in Leone*, after some few lectures in his astronomy, would have honoured *Solem in Vulpe*. He once kept a cub for his pleasure in Peterhouse in Cambridge (as some keep birds, some squirrels, some puppies, some apes, and so forth), and ministered notable matter to St. Mary's pulpit, with stories of the cub and fox, whose acts and monuments are notorious, but had the young one been as cunning an artist for his part as the old one was for his, I believe all the colleges in both universities, or in the great university of Christendom, could not have patterned the young man with such another bachelor of sophistry, or the old master with such another doctor of hypocrisy. Men may discourse at pleasure, and feed themselves with carps and pikes, but I have known few of so good a nature; so devoid of obstinacy; so far alienated from contumacy; so contrary to frowardness, or restiveness; so tractable, so buxom, so flexible, so applicable to every time, place, and person; so curious in observing the least circumstance of importance, or advantage; so conformable to public proceedings, and private occasions; so respectful to everyone of quality; so courteous to men of worship; so dutiful to men of honour; so ceremonious in tendering his devotion to his good lords, or good ladies; so obedient to authority; so loyal to majesty; so indifferent to all, and in all. He was gentle without familiarity (for he doubted contempt); severe without rigour (for he regarded his estimation); grave without solemnity (for he curred [sic?] popular favour); not rash, but quick; not hasty, but speedy; not hot, but warm; not eager in show, but earnest in deed; no barker at any, but a biter of some, round, and found. The clergy never wanted excellent fortune-wrights, but what bishop or politician in England so great a temporizer as he, whom every alteration found a new man, even as new as the new moon? And as he long yawned to be an archbishop or bishop in the one, or other, church (they wronged him that termed the image of both churches a neuter), so did he not arch-deserve to be installed the puling preacher of humility, humility, humility, and the gaping orator of obedience, obedience, obedience. Was not ever *Pax vobis* one end of his gasping sermon, & the very foot of his warbling song? Be it percase a small matter to temporize in four alterations of kings and queens, but what an ambidexterity, or rather omnidexterity, had the man, that at one and the same meeting had a pleasing tongue for a protestant, a flattering eye for a papist, and a familiar nod for a good-fellow? It was nothing with him to temporize *in genere*, or *in*

specie, according to Machiavel's ground of fortunate success in the world, that could so formally & featly personize *in indiuiduo*. He must know all the sinews of commodity, and acquaint himself with all the joints of advantage, that will live, and teach other to live. *O foelix Cato, tu solus nosti Viuere*. Or if Cato were over-peremptory, and stoical, to enjoy that felicity, *O foelix Perne, tua solius Ars viuendi*. Doubtless it were better for the world, by infinite masses of millions, could the barbarous and tragical tyrants, Saturn and Mars, two devilish gods, moderate their fury as he could do, or the hypocritical and comical tyrants, Jupiter and Mercury, two godly devils, temper their cunning as he could do. It was in him to give instructions unto Ovid for the re-penning of his *Metamorphoses* anew, and he better merited the name of Vertumnus, than Vertumnus himself. His designments were mysteries; his counsels, oracles; his intentions like Minotaur in the labyrinth; his actions like the stratagems of Fabius; his defiance like the welcome of Circe; his menaces, like the song of the sirens; his curses, like the blessings of those witches in Africa, that forspoke what they praised, and destroyed what they wished to be saved. I have seen spaniels, mongrels, leopards, antelopes, scorpions, snakes, cockatrices, vipers, and many other serpents in sugar-work, but to this day never saw such a standing dish of sugar-work as that sweet-tongued doctor, that spake pleasingly whatsoever he thought, and was otherwhiles a fair prognostication of foul weather. Such an authentical irony emproved, as all oratory cannot eftsoons counterpane. Smooth voices do well in most societies, and go currently away in many reckonings, when rough-hewn words do but lay blocks in their own way. He found it in a thousand experiences, and was the precisest practitioner of that soft and tame rhetoric that ever I knew in my dealings. And in case I should prefer any man of whatsoever quality before him, for a staid government of his affections (which he always ruled, as Homer's Minerva bridled Pegasus), or for an infinite and bottomless patience, sib to the patience of Anaxarchus or Job, I should injury him, and mine own conscience, exceedingly. Were he handled as London kennels are used of sluts, or the Thames of slovens, he could pocket it up as handsomely as they, and complain in as few words as any channel or river in England, when they are most contumeliously depraved. His other virtues were colours in grain: his learning, lawn in starch; his wisdom, napery in suds; his conscience, the weather in April, when he was young, the weather in September as he grew elder, the weather in February toward his end, and not such a current prognostication for the fifty years wherein he flourished, as the ephemerides of his conscience. For his smug and canonical countenance, certainly he might have been St. Boniface himself; for his fair and formal speech, St. Benedict, or St. Eulaly; for his merry conceits, St. Hillary; for his good husbandry (he was merry, and wise), St. Servatius; for his invincible sufferance, St. Vincent the Martyr; for his retracting, or recanting, St. Augustine; for his not seeing all things, St. Bernard; for his preaching to geese, St. Francis, or St. Fox; for his praying, a St. Pharisee; for his fasting, a St. Publican; for his chastity, a *Sol in virgine*; for his pastoral devotion, a Shepherd's Calendar; for his fame, an almanac of saints. But if ever any were patience incorporate, it was he, and if ever any were hypocrisy incarnate, it was he, unto whom I promised to dedicate an eternal memorial of his immortal virtues, and have paid some little part of my vows. I twice or thrice tried him to his face, somewhat saucily and smartly, but the picture of Socrates, or the image of St. Andrew, not so unmovable, and I still reverence the honourable remembrance of that grave and most eloquent silence, as the sagest lesson of my youth. Had Nashe a dram of his wit, his answer should have been mum, or his confutation, the sting of the scorpion. Other strange news, like Pap-hatchet's rap with a bauble, are of the nature of that same snout-horned rhinoceros, that biteth himself by the nose, and bestir them like the doughty fencer of Barnwell, that played his taking up with a recumbentibus, and his laying down with a broken pate in some three or four corners of his head. He must revenge himself with a learned discourse of deepest silence, or come better provided than the edge of the razor, that would be valued as wise as that Apollo doctor, whose epitaph none can display accordingly, but some sprite of the air, or the fire. For his zeal to God and the church was an aery triplicity, and his devotion to his prince and the state, a fiery trigon. And surely he was well advised, that comprised a large history in one epithet,

and honoured him with the title of the thrice-learned dean. Only I must needs grant, one such secret and profound enemy, or shall I say, one such thrice-secret and thrice-profound enemy, was incomparably more pernicious than a hundred hatchets, or country cuffs; a thousand Greenes, or cony-catchers; an army of Nashes, or Pierces Penillesse; a forest of wild beasts; or whatsoever Iliad of professed evils. It is not the threatener, but the underminer, that worketh the mischief; not the open assault, but the privy surprise, that terrifieth the old soldier; not the surging flood, but the low water, that affrayeth the expert pilot; not the high, but the hidden, rock, that endangereth the skilful mariner; not the busy pragmatial, but the close politician, that supplanteth the puissant state; not proclaimed war, but pretended peace, that striketh the deadly stroke. What historian remembreth not the subtle stratagems of King Bacchus against the Indians, of King Midas against the Phrygians, of King Romulus against the Sabines, of King Cyrus against the Lydians, of many other politic conquerors against sundry mighty nations, principalities, seignories, cities, castles, fortresses? Brave valour may sometime execute with fury, but prowess is weak in comparison of other practices, & no puissance to policy, no rage to craft, no force to wit, no pretence to religion (what spoils under colour of religion?), no text to the gloss, what will not the gloss maintain by hook or crook? It was not Mercury's wood-knife that could so easily have dispatched Argus, the lieutenant of Queen Juno, had not his enchanting pipe first lulled him asleep. And was not Ulysses in greater jeopardy by the alluring sirens, charming musicians, than by cruel Polyphemus, a boisterous giant? Undoubtedly Caesar was as singularly wise as unmatchably valiant, & rather a fox than a lion, but in his wisdom he was more afraid of Sylla than of Marius, of Cato than of Catiline, or Cassius than of Anthony, of Brutus than of Pompey; to be short, of Saturn than of Mars, of Mercury than of Jupiter himself. It were a long discourse to survey the wily trains and crafty fetches of the old, and the new, world, but whosoever is acquainted with stratagems, ancient or modern, knoweth what an hoard of policies lurketh in the shroud of dissimulation, & what wonders may be achieved by unexpected surprises. The professed enemy rather encumbreth himself, & annoyeth his friends, than overthroweth his adversary, or oppressteth his foes. Alexander's and Caesar's sudden eruptions made them the lords of the world and masters of kings, whiles greatest threateners got nothing but greatest loss, and greater shame. What should I speak of the first founders of monarchies, *Ninus* and *Cyrus*, of the venturous *Argo pilots*, of the worthy *heroes*, of the doughtiest *errant knights*, of the *bravest men* in all ages, whose mightiest engine (notwithstanding whatsoever hyperbole of valour, or fury) was *Scarborough warning*, and whose conquests were as soon known abroad, as their invasions. No power like the unlikely assault, nor any mischief so peremptory as the unlooked for affliction. He that warneth me, armeth me, and it is much that a prepared mind and body may endure, but unsuspected accidents are hardly remedied, and in the fairest weather of security, to offer the foulest play of hostility is an incredible advantage. So Caesar Borgia, the sovereign type of Machiavel's prince, won the dukedom of Urbin in one day. So the Emperor Charles the Fifth's army, passing through Rome, occursively sacked the city, and enriched themselves exceedingly. So many invincible states have been suddenly ruined, and many puissant personages easily vanquished. Brave exploits, where the causer as honourable as the effect admirable. But honourable or dishonourable, policy was ever a privy counsel whose posy, *Dolus, an Virtus*; glory, a ravishing oration; ambition, a courser; love, a hotspur; anger, a fire-brand; hope, a grain of mustard seed; courage, an errant knight; covetise, a merchant-venturer; fury, a fierce executioner, whose word, the sword, and whose law, *Non quam, sed quom*. As monarchies, principalities, and conquests, so petty governments, seignories, lieutenantships, magistracies, masterships, fellowships, have their colourable practices, and nothing is cunning that is apparent. The fox preacheth *Pax vobis* to the capons and geese, and never worse intended, than when the best pretended. Horaces, or rather, Borgias.

Astuta ingenuum Vulpes imitata Leonem, the very deepest ground of highest policies, and the very stratagem of stratagems. The glorious Indian conquests are famously known to the

world, and what was the valorous Duke of Parma in his bravest victories, but *Vulpes imitata Leonem*, and a new compound of old stratagems? Jovius' fox, in his militar and amorous empresses, may call himself a fox, but some learned clerks, and judicious censors, profound politics, like Machiavel, or Perne (for Machiavel never discoursed with his pen, as Perne devised with his mind), would go very nigh to call him a goose that gave for his mot *Simul astu, et dentibus utor*. And his griffin, in some opinions, was never a whit the more terrible for that lusty post, a jolly heroical verse in a grammar school:

Vnguibus, et rostro, atque alis armatus in hostem.

I never read that Alexander's Bucephalus, or Caesar's courageous horse, had any such or such glorious posies, and I believe Bevis's Arundel was no great braggart with mots. The Trojan horse, or rather the Grecian horse, was not such an ass to advance himself with any such proud imprese as *Scandit fatalis machina muros*, but ministered ruthful and tragical matter of that haughty posy to the stately poet. Did the flying Pegasus of the redoubted Bellerophon, before his adventurous expedition against the hideous lion-dragon chimera, that is, against the fierce savages which inhabited that fire-vomiting mountain in Lycia, provide to arm himself with a brave posy, or boast of his horrible mother, Medusa, or of his own Gorgonian wings? Did the fiery horses of the sun, that is, of the hottest East-countries, threaten Prince Phaeton, or the world, with a dreadful verse?

Tunc sciet ignipedum Vires expertus Equorum. May not peradventure the proudest horse to be counter-motted with a poor fragment of Staius, *Seruiet asper Equus*? Or may not haply the doughtiest ass be emblemed with a good old devise, *insulso tribulus sapit asper asello*. The roughest net is not the best catcher of birds, nor the finest policy a professed termagant. Although Lysander's oxen said nothing, yet the fox Lysander could tell which of them was a sluggard, and which laborious. It is not the verbal mot, but the actual imprese, that argueth a generous or noble mind. Children and fools use to crake; action, the only emblem of Jugurth, and the noblest fellows, whose manner is, *Plurimum facere; minimum de se loqui*, the honourablest devise that worthy valour can invent. The tree is known by the fruit, and needeth no other posy; the gallantest mot of a good apple-tree is a good apple; of a good warden-tree, a good warden; of a good lemon-tree, a good lemon; of a good palm, a good date; of a good vine, a good grape, and so forth; their leaves, their prognostications; their blossoms, their boasts; their branches and boughs, their bravery; their fruit, their arms, their emblems, their nobility, their glory. I dare not say that Pittacus was as wise as he that beginneth like front-tufted Occasion (for Occasion is bald behind), and endeth like Ovid's lover (for Ovid's lover must not attempt, but where he will conquer); few resoluter mots than *aut nunc aut nunquam*, and what valianter posy than *Aut numquam tentes, aut perfice*, but Pittacus was one of the seven famous masters, and in his sage wisdom thought it a sober lesson. Foretell not what thou intendest to achieve, lest peradventure, being frustrate, thou be laughed to scorn, and made a notable flouting-stock. Perhaps he was an ass, and speaketh like a fool (for who is not an ass, & a fool, with this Thomas Wisdom?), but some plain men are of his opinion, and will hardly believe that the frankest braggarts are the doughtiest doers. Were I a collector of witty apophthegms, like Plutarch, or of pithy gnomes, like Theognis, or of dainty emblems, like Alciat, surely Pittacus should not be the last, or the least, in that rhapsody. Meanwhile, it is nothing out of my way to praise the close or suspicious ass, that will not trouble any other with his privy counsel, but can be content to be his own secretary. There be more quaint experiments in an university than many a politic head would imagine. I could nominate the man that could teach the Delphical oracle, and the Egyptian crocodile, to play their parts. His civil tongue was a riddle; his ecclesiastical tongue, a hieroglyphic; his face, a vizard; his eyes, cormorants; his ears, martyrs; his wit, a maze; his heart, a juggling-stick; his mind, a mist; his reason, a veil; his affection, a curb; his conscience, a mask; his religion, a triangle in geometry; his charity, a syllogism in celarent; his hospitality, eleven months in the year, as good as Good Friday; for

one month, or very near, he was resident upon his deanery, & kept open house in the Isle like ember-week. Of another man's, no man more liberal; of his own, no man more frugal. He deeply considered (as he did all things), that good economy was good policy; that learning was to be commended, but lucre and preferment to be studied; that he soweth in vain, which moweth not his own advantage; that nothing was to be bestowed without hope of usance; that love, or hatred, avail not, but where they may prevail; that affections were to be squared by occasion, and reasons to be framed by profit; that names of partialities, sects, and divisions, either in civil or religious causes, were but foolish words, or pelting terms, & all men were to be estimated by their valuation in esse; that the true square & right geometrical compass of things is ability, the only thing that, by a sovereign prerogative, deserveth to be called substance; that according to Chaucer's English, there can be little *addling* without much *gabbing*, that is, small getting without great lying and cogging; that it was more wisdom to borrow than to lend *gratis*; that the raven's croaking loseth him many a fat prey; that the forestalling & engrossing of privy commodities was a pretty supply of privy tithes; that many a little, by little & little, maketh a mickle; that often return of gain amounteth; that the fox never fareth better than when he is cursed most; that a silver picklock was good at a pinch, and a golden hook a cunning fisher of men; that every man was nearest to himself, and the skin nearer than the shirt; that there were many principles and precepts in art, but one principal maxim, or sovereign cautel, in practice. *Si non caste, tamen caute*, that there was no security in the world without Epicharmus' incredulity, Dion's apisty, or Heywood's *Fast bind, fast find*; that Bayard in the stable, and *Legem pone*, were substantial points of law; that many things are hypothetically to be practised, which may not categorically be revealed; that two friends, or brethren, may keep counsel when one of the two is away; that *vnum necessarium*, and so forth. For *Vincit, qui patitur* would go nigh hand to open the whole pack, and tell wonderful tales out of school. Pap-hatchet talketh of publishing *a hundred merry tales* of certain poor Martinists, but I could here dismask such a rich mummer, & record such *a hundred wise tales* of memorable note, with such a smart moral, as would undoubtedly make this pamphlet the vendiblest book in London, and the register one of the famousest authors in England. But I am none of those that utter all their learning at once, and the close man (that was no man's friend, but from the teeth outward; no man's foe, but from the heart inward), may percase have some secret friends, or respective acquaintance, that in regard of his calling, or some private consideration, would be loath to have his coat blazed, or his satchel ransacked. Beside, what methodical artist would allow the encomium of the fox in the praise of the ass, unless I would prove by irrefragable demonstration that the false fox was a true ass, as I once heard a learned physician affirm, if a goose were a fox, he was a fox. Yet surely, by his favour who could sharply judge, and durst freely speak, he was a fox and a half in his whole body and in every part of his soul, albeit I will not deny but he might, in some respects, be a goose, and, after a sort (as it were), an ass, especially for defeating one without cause, and troubling the same without effect, that, for aught he knew, might possibly have it in him to requite him alive, and dead. Let the wronged party not be injured, and I dare avow he never did nor ever will injury or prejudice any in deed, word, or intention, but if any whosoever will needs be offering abuse in fact, or snip-snapping in terms, sith other remedy shrinketh, he may peradventure not altogether pass unanswered. He thinketh not now on the booted fool, that always jetteth in his startups, with his steelyard hat in his drowsy eyes, but of another good ancient gentleman, that might have been his father for age, his tutor for learning, his counsellor for wisdom, his creditor for silver, his catechist for religion, and his ghostly father for devotion. He once, in a scold's policy, called me fox, between jest and earnest (it was at the funeral of the honourable Sir Thomas Smith, where he preached, and where it pleased my Lady Smith, and the co-executors, to bestow certain rare manuscript books upon me, which he desired); I answered him, between earnest & jest, I might haply be a cub, as I might be used, but was over-young to be a fox, especially in his presence. He smiled, and replied, after his manner, with a chameleon's gape, and a very emphatical nod of the head. Whosoever or whatsoever he was, certes my old backfriend of Peterhouse was the lock of cunning conveyance, but

such a lock as could not possibly be opened with any key but the key of opportunity, and the hand of advantage. If opportunity were abroad, Iodocus was not at home; where occasion presented advantage, policy wanted no dexterity, and the light-footed fox was not so swift of foot, as nimble of wit, and quick of hand. Some that called him the lukewarm doctor, and likened him to milk from the cow, found him at such a fit over-warm for their ferventest zeal, and I remember a time when one of the hottest furnace, showing himself little better than a cow, he, in a quavering voice, and a lightning spirit, taught the wild roe his lesson. Haste was not so forward to run to a commodity, but speed was swifter to fly to an advantage, and where haste somewhat grossly bewrayed his forwardness, speed very finely marched in a cloud, and found the goddess hypocrisy as sly a conductress as ever was fair Venus to Aeneas, or wise Minerva to Ulysses, in their quaint passages. We may discourse of natural magic, and supernatural cabal, whereof the learnedest and crediblest antiquity hath recorded wonderful histories, but it is the rod of Mercury, and the ring of Gyges, that work miracles, and no mathematician, magician, or cabbalist may countervail him that, in his heroical expeditions, can walk in a cloud, like a vapour, or in his divine practices go invisible, like a spirit. Brave minds and venturous hearts, thank him for this invaluable note, that could teach you to achieve more with the little finger of policy than you can possibly compass with the mighty arm of prowess. Or else, in my curious observation of infinite histories, hypocrisy had never been the great tyrant of the world, & the huge Antichrist of the church. The weapon of the fire and air is lightning; the weapon of the earth & water, cunning. Was not he shrewdly encountered, that was prestigiously besieged, and invisibly undermined, with that that [sic] weapon of weapons? What other supply could have seconded, or rescued, him but death, that had often been the death of his life in his worthiest friends, and was eftsoons the death of his death in his wiliest enemy. Whose spite was intricate, but detected, and whose subtlety marvellous, but disveiled, and he that disclosed the same is perhaps to leave an immortal testimonial of his Indian discovery. In the meantime, as the admirable geometrician Archimedes would have the figure of a cylinder, or roller, engraved upon his tomb, so it were reason the thrice-famous dean should have the three-sided figure, or equilater triangle, imprinted upon his sepulchre, with this, or some worthier, epitaph, devised according to the current method of *Tria sequunter Tria*.

The coffin speaketh.

*Ask not, What news? that come to visit wood,
My treasure is, three faces in one hood,
A changeling triangle, a turncoat rood.*

*A lukewarm trigon, a three-edged tool,
A three-oared galley, a three-footed stool,
A three-winged weathercock, a three-tongued school.*

*Three-headed Cerberus, woe be unto thee:
Here lies the only trey, and rule of three,
Of all triplicities, the A.B.C.*

Somebody oweth the three-shapen Geryon a greater duty, in recognizance of his often-promised courtesies, and will not be found ungrateful at occasion. He were very simple that would fear a conjuring Hatchet, a railing Greene, or a threatening Nashe, but the old dreamer, like the old dog, biteth sore, and no foe to the flattering Perne, or pleasing Titius, that have sugar in their lips, gall in their stomachs; water in one hand, fire in the other; peace in their sayings, war in their doings; sweetness in their exhortations, bitterness in their canvasses; reverence in their titles, coven in their actions; notable men in their kind, but pitch-branded with notorious dissimulation; large promisers, compendious performers; shallow in charity, profound in malice; superficial in theory, deep in practice; masters of

sophistry, doctors of hypocrisy; formal friends; deadly enemies; thrice-excellent impostors. These, these, were the only men that I ever dreaded, especially that same odd man *Trium Litterarum*, that for a linsey-woolsey wit, & a cheverel conscience, was *A per se A*; other braggarts or threateners whatsoever I fear as I fear hobgoblin, & the bugs of the night. When I have sought up my day-charms and night-spells, I hope their power to hurt shall be as ridiculously small as their desire to affright is outrageously great. I never stood stiffly in defence of mine own ability or sufficiency; they that impeach me of imperfection in learning or practice, in discoursing or inditing, in any art or profession, confute me not, but confirm mine own confession. It is only my honesty & credit that I endeavour to maintain; other defects I had rather supply by industry than cloak by excuse, & refer the decision of such points to the arbitrament of indifferency, to which also I prefer the praises of my dispraisers, & beseech equity to render them their due, with a largess of favour. Judgement is the wisest reader of books, and no art of distinctions so infallible as grounded discretion, which will soon discern between white and black, and easily perceive what wanteth, and what superaboundeth; what becometh, what misbecometh; what in this, or that, respect deserveth commendation; what may reasonably, or probably, be excused; what would be marked with an asterisk, what noted with a black coal. As in metals, so in styles, he hath slender skill that cannot descry copper from gold, tin from silver, iron from steel, the refuse from the rich vein, the dross from the pure substance. It is little of value, either *for matter, or manner*, that can be performed in such perfunctory pamphlets on either side, but how little soever it be, or may appear, for mine own part, I refuse not to underlie the verdict of any courteous or equal censure that can discern betwixt chalk and cheese. *Touching the matter*, what wanteth, or might be expected here, shall be particularly and largely recompensed, as well in my discourses entitled *Nashe's St. Fame*, which are already finished, and attend the publication, as also in other supplements thereof, especially those of the above-mentioned gentlewoman, whom, after some advertisement, it pleased to make the *Strange News* of the railing villain the cushionet of her needles and pins. Though my scribblings may fortune to continue awhile, and then have their desert according to the laudable custom (what should toys, or dalliances, live in a world of business?), yet I dare undertake with warrant, whatsoever she writeth must needs remain an immortal work, and will leave, in the activest world, an eternal memory of the silliest vermin that she should vouchsafe to grace with her beautiful and allactive style, as ingenious as elegant. *Touching the manner*, I take it a nice and frivolous curiosity for my person to bestow any cost upon a trifle of no importance, and am so overshadowed with the flourishing branches of that heavenly plant, that I may seem to have purposely prevented all comparison in yielding that homage to her divine wit which at my hands she hath meritoriously deserved. Albeit I protest, she was neither bewitched with entreaty, nor juggled with persuasion, nor charmed with any corruption, but only moved with the reason which the equity of my cause, after some little communication, in her unspotted conscience suggested. They that long to advance their own shame (I always except a phoenix or two), may bravely enter the lists of comparison, & do her the highest honour in despite that they could possibly devise in a serviceable devotion. She hath, in my knowledge, read the notablest histories of the most singular women of all ages, in the Bible, in Homer, in Virgil (her three sovereign books, the divine archetypes of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman valour), in Plutarch, in Polyen, in Petrarch, in Agrippa, in Tyraquel, in whom not, that have specially rendered their diligent devoir to honour the excellentest women that have lived in the world, and, commending the meanest, extolling the worthiest, imitating the rarest, and approving all, according to the proportion of their endowments, envieth none but art in person and virtue incorporate, the two precioussest creatures that ever flourished upon earth. Other women may yield to Penelope, Penelope to Sappho, Sappho to Arachne, Arachne to Minerva, Minerva to Juno, Juno to none of her sex; she to all that use her and hers well; to none of any sex that misuse her, or hers. She is neither the noblest, nor the fairest, nor the finest, nor the richest lady, but the gentlest, and wittiest, and bravest, and invinciblest gentlewoman that I know. Not such a wench in Europe to unswaddle a fair baby, or to swaddle a foul puppy. Some of you may aim at her personage, and it is not the first time

that I have termed her style the tinsel of the daintiest muses and sweetest graces, but I dare not particularize her description, according to my conceit of her beau-desert, without her licence or permission, that standeth upon masculine, not feminine, terms, and is respectively not to be dealt withal, in regard of her courage, rather than her fortune. And what if she can also publish more works in a month than Nashe hath published in his whole life, or the pregnantest of our inspired Heliconists can equal? Could I dispose of her recreations, and some others' exercises, I nothing doubt but it were possible (notwithstanding the most curious curiosity of this age), to breed a new admiration in the mind of contempt, & to restore the excellentest books into their wonted estate, even *in integrum*. Let me be notoriously condemned of partiality, and simplicity, if she fail to accomplish more in gallant performance (now she hath condescended to the spinning up of her silken task), than I ever promised before, or may seem to insinuate now. Yet she is a woman, and for some passions may challenge the general privilege of her sex, and a special dispensation in the cause of an affectionate friend devoted to the service of her excellent desert, whom she hath found no less than the handmaid of art, the mistress of wit, the gentlewoman of right gentleness, and the lady of right virtue. Howbeit even those passions she hath so ordered and managed, with such a witty temper of violent, but advised, motions, full of spirit and blood, but as full of sense and judgement, that they may rather seem the marrow of reason than the froth of affection, and her hottest fury may fitly be resembled to the passing of a brave career by a Pegasus, ruled with the reins of a Minerva's bridle. Her pen is a very Pegasus indeed, and runneth like a winged horse, governed with the hand of exquisite skill. She it is that must return the mighty famous work of supererogation with benet and collect. I have touched the booted Shakerley a little, that is always riding, and never rideth; always confuting, and never confuteth; always ailing something, and railing anything; that shamefully and odiously misuseth every friend or acquaintance, as he hath served some of his favourable patrons (whom for certain respects I am not to name), M. Apis Lapis, Greene, Marlowe, Chettle, and whom not, that saluteth me with a *Gabrielissime Gabriel*, which can give him the farewell with a *Thomassissime Thomas*, or an *assissime ass*, yet have not called him a filthy companion, or a scurvy fellow, as all the world that knoweth him, calleth him, that in his *Pierce Penilesse* and *Strange News*, the bull-beggars of his courage, hath omitted no word or phrase of his railing dictionary, but only *Tu es Starnigogulus*, and hath valiantly vowed to have *the last word*, to die for 't.

*Plaudite Victori, Iuuenes hic quotquot adestis;
Nam me qui vicit, doctior est Nebulo.*

The best is, where my answer is, or may be deemed, insufficient (as it is commonly overtame for so wild a bullock), there she, with as visible an analysis as any anatome, strippeth his art into his doublet, his wit into his shirt, his whole matter & manner into their first principles, his matter *in materia primam*, his manner *in formam primam*, and both in *Priuationem Vltimam*, id est, his *last word*, so gloriously threatened. I desire no other favour at the hands of courtesy, but that art and wit may be her readers, & equity my judge, to whose impartial integrity I humbly appeal in the premises, with dutiful recommendation of *Nashe's St. Fame*, even to St. Fame herself, who, with her own flourishing hands is shortly to erect a maypole in honour of his victorious *last word*. Doubt ye not, gallant gentlemen, he shall find the guerdon of his valour, & the meed of his meritorious work. Though my pen be a slugplum, look for a quill as quick as quicksilver, & pity the sorry swain that hath incurred the indignation of such a quill, and may everlastingly be a miserable spectacle for all libelling rake-hells, that otherwise might desperately presume to venture the foil of their crank folly. The stay of the publication resteth only at my instance, who can conceive small hope of any possible account or regard of mine own discourses, were that fair body of the sweetest Venus in print, as it is redoubtably armed with the complete harness of the bravest Minerva. When his necessary defence hath sufficiently acleared him whom it principally concerneth to acquit himself, she shall no sooner appear in person,

like a new star in Cassiopeia, but every eye of capacity will see a conspicuous difference between her, and other, mirrors of eloquence, and the woeful slave of St. Fame must either blindfold himself with insensible perversity, or behold his own notorious folly with most shameful shame. It will then appear, as it were in a clear urinal, whose wit hath the green-sickness, and I would deem it a greater marvel than the mightiest wonder that happened in the famous year '88, if his cause should not have the falling sickness, that is encountered with an arm of such force. M. Stow, let it be enchronicled for one of the singularities, or miracles, of this age, that a thing lighter than *Tarleton's Toy*, and vainer than Shakerley's conceit, that is, Nashe, should be the subject of so invaluable a work, and be it known to impudency by these presents, that his brazen wall is battered to pin-dust, and his iron gate shaken all to nothing. It is in the least of her energetical lines to do it, more easily than a fine thread cracketh a jangling bell. A pretty experiment, &, not unlike some of her strange inventions and rare devises, as forcible to move, as feat to delight. The issue will resolve the doubtfullest mind, and I am content to refer incredulity to the visible and palpable evidence of the term probatory. When either the light of nature and the sun of art must be in eclipse, or the shining rays of her singular gifts will display themselves in their accustomed brightness, and discover the base obscuring of that mischievous planet that, in a vile ambition, seeketh the exaltation of his fame by the depression of their credit that are able to extinguish the proudest glimpse of his lamp. Her rare perfections can liveliest blazon themselves, and this pen is a very insufficient orator to express the heavenly beauties of her mind, but I never knew virtue a more inviolable virgin than in her excellent self, and the day is yet to come wherein I ever found her wit a defective or ecliptic creature. She knoweth I flatter not her fortune, and if I honour her virtue, whose confirmed modesty I could never see disguised with any gloze of commendation, who can blame me for discharging some little part of a great duty? She hath, in mere gratuity, bestowed largess upon her affectionate servant, that imputeth the same, as an excessive favour, to her hyperbolical courtesy, not to any merit in himself, but the lesser my desert, the greater her liberality, whom I cannot any way reacquite farther than the zeal of a most devoted mind may extend, as incessantly thankful as infinitely debtful. For to address a plausible discourse, or to garnish a panegyric oration, in her praise, as occasion may present, will appear to be a task of civil justice, not any piece of civil courtesy, when her own silver tracts shall publish the precious valour of her golden virtues, and decipher the inestimable worth of the author by her divine handiwork. At the first view whereof, as at the piercing sight of the amiablest beauty, who can tell how sudden passions may work, or what a sting some tickling interjection may leave in the heart and liver of affection? I am ever prone to hope as I wish, even the best of the worst, and although wilful malice be a stiff and stubborn adversary to appease, yet I have seen a greater miracle than the pacification of paper wars, or the atonement of inkhorn foes. There she standeth, that with the finger of industry, and the tongue of affability, hath achieved some stranger wonders, upon as rough and harsh fellows, as:

*The noddy Nashe, whom every serving-swash
With pot-jests dash, and every whip-dog lash.*

(for the rime is more famous than was intended), and with the same causes improved, why may she not directly, or violently, accomplish the same effects, or what is impossible to the persuasive and pathological influence of reason, and affection? It is a very dismal and caitiff planet that can find in his heart to encounter those two gracious stars with malicious aspects, which he must despitefully encounter, that will obstinately oppose his peevish rancour to her sweet civility. In case nothing else will prevail with insatiable envy, and unquenchable malice (for so I am eftsoons informed, whatsoever course be taken for the mitigation of his rage), yet I am vehemently persuaded in physic, and resolved in policy, that the oil of scorpions will finally heal the wounds of scorpions. I know one that experimentally proved what a rod in lye could do with the curstest boy in a city, and found the imperative mood a better orator than the optative. It may fortune, the same man hath such a whipsy-doxy in

store for a Jack-sauce, or unmannerly puppy, as may school him to turn over a new leaf, and to cry the pitifullest peccavi of a woeful penitent. For my part, whom at this instant it smartly behooveth to be resolute, I confess I was never more entangled and intricated in the discourse of mine own reason, than since I had to do with this desperate Dick, that dareth utter, and will cog, anything to serve his turn. Not to confute him, in some respects were perhaps better; to confute him, is necessary. Were it possible to confute him in not confuting him, I am of opinion it would be done (for insolency, or any injury, would be repressed by order of law, where order of law is a sufficient remedy, and silence, in some cases, were the finest eloquence, or scorn, the fittest answer), and haply I could wish not to confute him in confuting him (for the discovery of cony-catchers doth not greatly edify some bad minds), but seeing he is so desperate that he will not be confuted with not confuting, I must desire his patience to be a little content to be confuted with confuting, rather after his, or other's, guise, than after my manner. *Answer not a fool according to his foolishness, lest thou also be like him; answer a fool according to his foolishness, lest he be wise in his own conceit.* They are both proverbs of the wisest master of sentences, of whom also I have learned that to the horse belongeth a whip; to the ass, a snaffle, to the fool's back, a rod. Let no man be wiser than Solomon. The fool's head must not be suffered to coy itself; the colt must feel the whip, or the wand; the ass, the snaffle or the goad; the fool's back, the rod or the cudgel. Let the colt, the ass, the fool, beware in time, or he may peradventure feel them indeed, with such a *Tu autem* as he hath not often been quavered in any language. If peace, or treaty, may not be heard, war shall command peace, and he muzzle the mouth of rankest impudency, or fiercest hostility, that can do it, and do it otherwise than is yet imagined, and yet nothing like that inspired gentlewoman. Whose pen is the shot of the musket, or rather a shaft of heaven, swifter than any arrow, and mightier than any hand-weapon, when courtesy is repulsed, and hostility must enforce amity, but otherwise how graciously amiable, how divinely sweet? Gentlemen, look upon the lovely glistening star of the morning, and look for such an Orient star, when she displayeth the resplendishing beams of her bright wit, and pure bounty. Meanwhile, if some little shimmering light appear at a little crevice, I have my request, and some pretty convenient leisure to take order with another kind of strange news in Westminster Hall. It is some men's fortune to have their hands full of unneedful business at once, and for myself, I should make no great matter of two, or three, such glowing irons in the fire, were it not some small grief or discouragement to consider that nothing can be perfectly, or sufficiently, performed by halves, or fragments. Which necessary interruption hath been the utter disgrace of the premises, and a great hindrance to my larger discourses, more ample trifles. I can but crave pardon, and prepare amends as leisure and occasion may afford opportunity. Learned wits can skilfully examine, and honest minds will uprightly consider, circumstances with courteous regard of favour, or due respect of reason, in whose only indifferency, as in a safe and sweet harbour, I repose my whole affiance and security, as heretofore. And so for this present I surcease to trouble your gentle courtesies, of whose patience I have (according to particular occasions), sometime unmannerly, but modestly; often familiarly, but sincerely; mostwhat freely, but considerately; always confidently, but respectfully; in every part simply, in the whole tediously, presumed under correction. I writ only at idle hours that I dedicate only to *Idle Hours*, or would not have made so unreasonably bold, in no needfuller discourse, than *The Praise, or Supererogation, of an Ass*.

This 27 of April, 1593. Your mindful debtor, G.H.

FINIS

To the right worshipful, my very good friend, M. Doctor Harvey.

Good M. Doctor Harvey, promise I account debt, especially to so especial a friend, and therefore I have now again laboured to discharge myself of it. I would I were of desert to set forth your long-deserved praise, and of ability to express your singular abilities in style, knowledge, and other most commendable virtues. What is in my power, the least of your friends shall command; what is not, I can but wish, which I would most earnestly wish if that might serve, though I never should wish more. I will not trouble your graver studies, but pray for your health's continuance, and will most willingly perform more, if occasion serve.

Oxford, this 10th of July, 1593.

Yours ever to command, John Thorius.

Sonnet

Defamed by one, who most himself defameth,
Write, worthy Harvey, for the wise applaud thee;
Shame be his hire, that foully himself shameth,
And would of thy deserved right defraud thee.
And if you force the undeserved wrong,
Wherewith some simple ignorant disdains thee,
You in your wisdom may exceed as long
As he in folly foolishly disdains thee,
For sharp-eyed equity hath descried to all
Th' injurious vein that sets his pen to school,
Whose railing tends unto your wisdom's fall,
And proves all fond, to prove himself a fool;
Which monstrous folly would be left in haste,
As wisdom's age will make him know at last.

John Thorius.

Enclosed in the same letter.

And that I might not be held last in remembrance, though absent, that in your presence have sought the self-proffering cause of after-memory, I have once more (as he that devoteth himself and his poor labours to your good liking), how badly you may see, but how heartily I wish you could see, or I could say, writ these my pure devotions and zealous lines with as true desire to honour yourself, according to your worth, as I have been wanting the desert which your courteous nature hath afforded me. I request, sir, but your acceptance and your favour, which, if I gain, I have got more than my due, and so wishing your continual bliss, I end, as one with oft prayers desiring to be held,

Your bound by much desert, Antony Chute.

Sonnet.

Proceed, most worthy lines, in your disdain
Against the false suggestions you abuse,

Whose rascal style deserved hath to gain
 The hateful title of a railing muse.
 Doubtless the wisest that shall chance to read you,
 In true judicial of a quiet thought,
 Will give applause unto the wit that bred you,
 And you shall win the good that you have sought.
 Win more, and since the fool defames you still,
 The fool whom shame hath stained with foul blot,
 Perform on him your discontented will.
 Fame shall be your meed, shame shall be his lot;
 And so proceeding, you shall so redeem
 The name that he would drown in black esteem.

Subscribed, Sh: Wy for Shore's Wife.

Sur l'Apologie de Monsieur le tres-docte & tres-eloquent Docteur Harvey, par le Sieur de Fregeuille du Gaut.

Celuy qui prouoque publie sa defence,
 Peut avecques raison so cauase deployer;
 La Loy de Talion ne peut moins, qu'ottroyer
 Just permission de repayer l'offence.
 Mais celuy qui enfle, a escrire commence,
 A diffamer autruy, tachant a s'employer:
 De droit ne peut pretendre adueu our bon loyer,
 Ains l'infame intente luy vient pour recompense.
 J'aime pourtant par tout un stile modere,
 Mesmes si on respond au sot demesure,
 Car on n'a point raison d'imiter sa sottise,
 Marri sui mon d'Haruey de te voir prouoque,
 Mais tres-aise qu'estant indignement pique,
 To Docte response est eloquente & rassise.

His sonnet, that will justify his word, and dedicateth Nashe's St. Fame to immortality.

A dame more sweetly brave than nicely fine,
 Yet fine as finest gentlewomen be,
 Brighter than diamond in every line,
Is Penillesse so witless still? quoth she.
 If Nashe will felly gnash, and rudely slash,
 Snip-snap a crash may lend St. Fame a gash.
 Skill read the rime, and put it in truth's purse;
 (Experience kisseth reconciliation's hand).
 If warning-piece be scorned, spite may hear worse;
 Though love no warrior be, right leads a band.
 How fain would courtesy these jars surcease?
 How glad would charity depart in peace?

But if Sir Rash continue still Sir Swash,
 He lives that will him dash, and lash, and squash.
Haec quoq; culpa tua est: haec quoq; poena tua est.

Another occasional admonition.

*Fame roused herself, and gan to swash about;
Boys swarmed, youths thronged, bloods swore, brutes reared the hoot,
Her meritorious work, a wonderclout;
Did ever Fame so bravely play the lout?
I chanced upon the rime, and wondered much
What courage of the world, or mister wight,
Durst terrible St. Fame so rashly touch,
Or her redoubtable bull-begging knight.
Incontinent I heard a piercing voice,
Not Echo's voice, but shriller than a lark:
*Sith destiny allots no wiser choice,
Pastime appose the pickle-herring clerk.*
Quiet thy rage, imperious Swish-swash,
Or woe be to thy horrible trish-trash.
*Est bene, non potuit dicere: dixit, Erit.**

An apostrophe to the health of his abused friends.

Live, father sweet, and miscreant varlets, die,
That wrong my parent heart and brother eye.
Dearest of eyes, condemn thy caitiff foes,
Kindest of hearts, enjoy thy firm repose.
Sky, with a patron eye, aspect that eye,
That eye espoused to the virgin sky.
Art, with a lover heart preserve that heart,
That heart devoted to the heavenly art.
Blessings, descend from your empyreal throne,
And lend a bounteous ear to suppliant moan.
Ambrosial springs of clearest influence,
Fountains restorative of cordial bliss,
Deign zeal prostrate your tend'rest indulgence,
And sovereignly redress that is amiss.

L'envoy.

Volumes of thanks and praise, your store combine
In passionate hymns, and psalms divine.

The printer's postscript.

Sweet gentlemen, having committed the premises to the press, and acquainting certain learned and fine men with some other of the commendatory letters and sonnets of M. Thorius and M. Chute, there was such an especial liking conceived of two other their writings that I was finally entreated, or rather overtreated, to give them also their welcome in print, as not the unfittest lines that have been published to entertain lazy hours, or to employ drowsy eyes. Sometime in the bravest shows there is little performed, and sometime a poor publican may work as great a work of supererogation as a proud Pharisee. I am not the meetest to blaze other men's arms, and they are best furnished to be their own tongues, that

can so well plead for themselves and their friends. I can but recommend their learned exercise, and mine own unlearned labour, to your gentle acceptation.

To the right worshipful, my very assured friend, M. Doctor Harvey.

My silence thus long, good M. Doctor Harvey, was not occasioned either by forgetfulness or by negligence, but rather for want both of convenient leisure and of sufficient argument, being very unwilling either to spend time often in writing of unmaterial lines, or to trouble any especial friend with reading them. Yet because amity is maintained by this loving kind of intercourse, & because custom hath allowed that affection induced to express a careful memory of the continuance of friendship by writing even upon small, or no, occasion, though the letter were signed with nothing else but *Si vales, bene est: ego valeo*, lest longer silence might cause me to incur just reprehension, and that you may receive some slender token of my often thinking on you, I send you enclosed three stanzas, though simple in conceit or other regard, yet were they equal to my goodwill they would undoubtedly excel, and should be someway suitable to your right excellent gifts. If they please, or not displease you, and may seem worthy, or not altogether unworthy, to serve as foils, with my other sonnets which you received before, to those much worthier verses which you have of much happier poets than myself, you may therein do your pleasure, whereto only they are consecrated. Thus hoping that you are persuaded of me as of one affectionately your own to use and to command at your appointment, I leave you with my most hearty and humble recommendations.

Oxford, the 3rd of August, 1593.

Yours always at command, John Thorius.

Stanzas.

Among the Greeks, sweet Homer's copious verse,
 Foregoing times to Fame's swift wings commended;
 The Latins, Virgil's noble work rehearse,
 Nor yet in these were ancient praises ended;
 Demosthen's rich style through Greece was blazed,
 And Tully's forcing tongue made Rome amazed;
 Our modern age to egall with the past,
 The Italian pleasing muse hath done her best;
 The learned French pens have themselves surpassed,
 And worthy English wits have banished rest,
 Midst whom, who not emblazon Harvey's name,
 Wrong him, themselves, and England's growing fame.
 Yielding, fond Nashe, thy glory shalt not stain,
 But rather shalt increase thy praise hereby;
 Thy friends shall know thy judgment not so vain,
 But thou discerns where true desert doth fly,
 And thy desert by so much shall seem greater,
 By how much thou art known to know thy better.

John Thorius.

Sir, such a pathological ass have I found deciphered in your most learned and witty discourse of that poor creature as I know will prove the eternal memorative of one M. Nashe. Yet I, by experience, have found more, that it is the nature of a true ass (to which ass peradventure this was dedicated) that a *green fig* being handsomely tied to his chaps, he no sooner smelleth it, but he follows his nose so far that he scapeth fair in uneven ground if he breaketh not his neck. And this note I would not but impart unto you as a caveat worthy to be remembered amongst other secrets of that beast. For doubtless your philosophical ass will make alchemy upon it. I pray you, dispose of it at your best pleasure. When any other such memorandum fortunes into my hand, you shall see it, and so in haste recommending you to your better studies, I rest, sir, at your service. An: Ch.

The Ass's Fig.

So long the Rhenish fury of thy brain,
Incensed with hot fume of a Steelyard clime,
Loud-lying Nashe, in liquid terms did reign,
Full of absurdities, and of slanderous rime,

So much thy pot-jests in a tapster's humour,
(For that's the quintessence of thy Newgate fashion),
Thy tosspot majesty, and thy fame did rumour,
In wondrous agonies of an ale-house passion.

So well thy wide-mouth, or thy oyster-whore phrase,
(Yet gentry brags her of thy lousy degree),
Aptly hath known thine armory to blaze,
In terms peculiar unto none but thee.

So soon five pennyworth of thy grosser wit,
(Yet thou art witty, as a woodcock would be),
More than authentical, hath learned to get
Thy muse entitled as it truly should be.

And now so neatly hath thy railing merit,
(I should have said, Ram Alley meditations),
Procured applause unto thy claret spirit,
And sack-sopped miseries of thy confutations,

That now each ivy-bush weeps her tears in ale,
The fishwife's commonwealth, alack, forlorn,
Mourns in small drink, sharp, single, sour, and stale,
And thy long-booted gentry, ragged and torn,
Wails new petitions to the devil's good grace,
Although the last, God knows, got little meed;
But thou'lt to hell, when shifts can have no place,
Perhaps to hanging, too, when time shall need.
Yet first wilt ride, rail, rime me down to hell,
(Oh, but beware strange bugs at such a game),
I have a trick to teach a goose to spell
Himself an ass, out of his ass's name.

An: Ch.

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