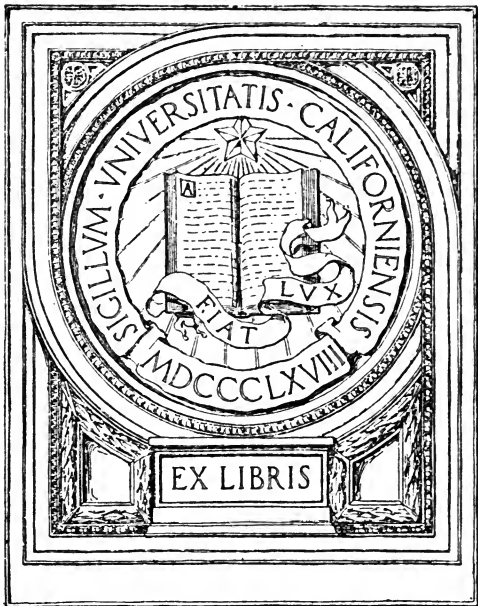


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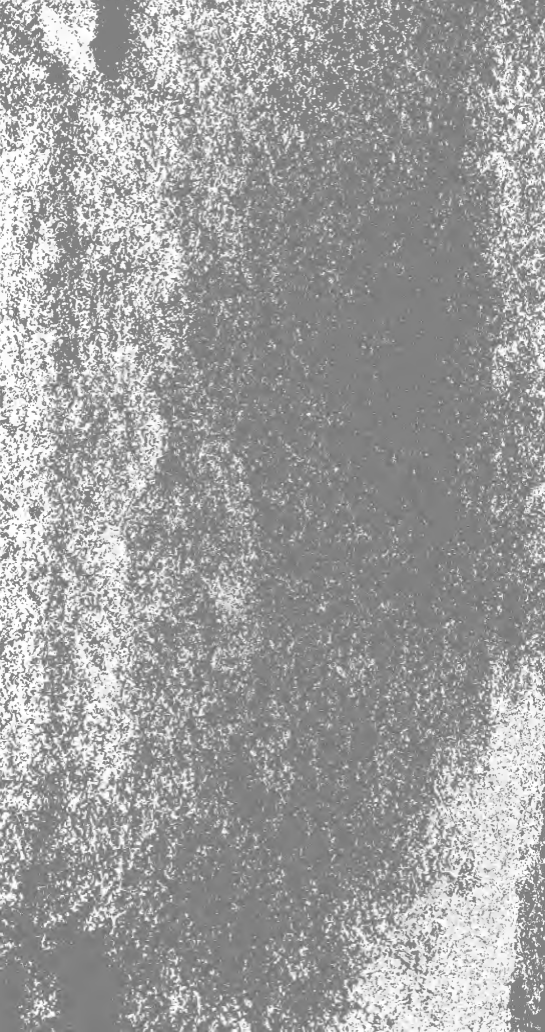


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ESSAYS IN DIVINITY

BY JOHN DONNE, D.D.

SOME TIME DEAN OF ST. PAULS.



EDITED BY

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OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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TO THE
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TO him, who with his wide knowledge is
always able, and in his generous kindness
is always willing, to help and encourage his
less-experienced fellow-labourers in the fields
of English Literature,

PHILIP BLISS, D. C. L.

PRINCIPAL OF ST. MARY'S HALL, OXFORD,

this Edition of *Donne's Essays* is respectfully
dedicated, by

AUGUSTUS JESSOPP.

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SOME NOTICE
OF
THE AUTHOR AND HIS WRITINGS.

JOHAN DONNE, the writer of the Essays contained in this volume, lived in an age more fruitful in great men and stirring events than the world has perhaps ever seen, from the times of Pericles to the days of Queen Victoria.

He was born in 1573—the year after the massacre of St. Bartholomew; he died in 1631, the year after the battle of Lützen, where Gustavus Adolphus fell.

In his childhood Camoens fetched his last sigh in Portugal,—the poet who had laid the *only* firm foundation for his country's literature, condemned to die in penury, hardly finding for his very corpse its last garment—a shroud. In his boyhood, Sir Philip Sidney wrote the *Arcadia*, and he was still in his teens when that gallant hero put away the cup of water from his own parched lips to slake the thirst of the bleeding trooper lying by his side.

It was in his youth too, that Raleigh and Drake sailed out to meet the “Invincible Armada,” when Queen Elizabeth showed herself

worthy to be a queen of England, undaunted in the sight of danger which might have made, and which did make, many a stout heart throb.

Before he reached man's estate, he had travelled over many of the countries of Europe and become proficient in their languages, and it is far from improbable that he heard Galileo lecture at Pisa, while Cervantes was grimly offering his *Don Quixotte* to his reluctant countrymen, and poor Tasso moaning over his sorrows in a madhouse.

While Hooker was sending forth the *Ecclesiastical Polity* book by book—while Spenser was writing the *Faery Queen*—while Shakespeare was meeting Beaumont and Fletcher at the *Mermaid* or playing Ghost in his own *Hamlet*, Donne was courting the muses, securing for himself some fame as a poet, and lashing in his *Satires* the follies and vices of his day.

When, after a long period of religious warfare in France, the Edict of Nantes was published—he was Secretary to the Chancellor of England, and in the year that Tycho Brahe the last stout champion for the Ptolemaic system died, he committed what one has called “the great error of his life”—he married!

A courtier when the gunpowder plot was discovered, a polemic for the first time in the year that the Moors were expelled from Spain, and Ravailac's dagger smote Henry IV to the

heart; he lived to see the publication of the *Novum Organum* and the Petition of rights, and he died the year after Kepler, not long after Cromwell had made his first speech in Parliament—Pym and Hampden as they listened doubtless wondering,—while Richard Baxter was a schoolboy, and John Milton and Jeremy Taylor were at Cambridge,—and Richelieu was uttering his memorable prophecy about Condé's future greatness, and watching the warrior schooling of the young Turenne!—

Rubens and Teniers, Poussin and Salvator, Velasquez and Murillo, were all his contemporaries—it is pretended that Vandyke painted his portrait. Elizabeth of Bohemia, “the queen of hearts,” Ben Jonson and Bishop Andrewes were among his correspondents, and Selden, Bishop Hall, George Herbert and Lord Bacon his most intimate friends.

Though descended from an old and honourable Welsh family, Donne's father was a merchant and ironmonger in London, who amassed a considerable fortune by successful speculations in trade—his mother was a daughter of John Heywood the epigrammatist; she was a woman of some celebrity for her fanatical devotion to the Romish religion, and is spoken of as “a noted Jesuit” who brought herself in her later life to great poverty and complete dependence upon her son, by her profuse largesses to those of her own persuasion.

1575 By the early death of her husband Mrs. Donne was left a widow in 1575, with six children, four daughters and two sons, of whom John was the elder. The education of her young family was watched over very anxiously by their pious mother, and Donne has left on record an affectionate testimony to the blessings which he derived from her constant superintendence and scrupulous discharge of her maternal responsibility.—The boys however were brought up at home, the risk of their being proselytized by “the men of new learning” being too great for a zealous Romanist to allow her sons to be exposed to in those days. The name of the tutor who had the honour of watching over Donne’s earliest studies has not come down to us; it is probable that he was one of the many Jesuit emissaries who were harboured in wealthy families, ill-affected towards the principles of the Reformation, and was most likely a Romish priest who acted as chaplain to the family, and confessor and spiritual adviser to a small circle of sympathising friends.

1584 The first notice that has reached us of Donne’s early life is, when he together with his brother Henry entered at Hart Hall, Oxford, on the 23d of October, 1584; he was then in his 12th year—an age at which few, even then, became members of the Universities, though instances are not wanting to prove that his case was not so extraordinary as has been supposed.

His entry is the only record that remains of his stay at Oxford; it would seem that he remained there but a very short time, and that his rapid development showed itself in other ways besides his early proficiency in his studies; for, by some youthful efforts at verse, which were discovered after his death, and published by his son, it appears that in 1587, he was in 1587 the army of Prince Maurice in the Low Countries, and present at the attempt on Bois-le-Duc and the important engagement outside its walls, which took place on the 13th of June in that year. It is in vain to attempt any explanation of the probable circumstances under which he joined the forces of Prince Maurice; it was no rare thing for boys, even of his age, to be introduced to the soldier's life, and indeed his friend Sir Robert Drury affords a remarkable instance, he having received the honour of knighthood for his bravery at the siege of Rouen, when he was only fourteen years old; but the fact of his being engaged on the *protestant* side is much more inexplicable, and the tenor of the Epigrams in which he celebrates his share in the campaign, shows that he was not deficient in sympathy with those among whom he found himself.

It would seem that shortly afterwards, he spent some years in travelling through France, Spain and Italy, and his biographer assures us that he meditated a journey to the Holy Land,

591 but that circumstances prevented the carrying out of this plan. If it be true that his absence from England was prolonged for a term of five years, it is most likely that he began his wanderings in 1586 and that it was on his return in 1591, the portrait of him in his sword and doublet was painted, from which Marshall executed one of his most successful engravings.

Donne had now arrived at his nineteenth year—if life be measured by the number of years men pass on earth, he was still very young, but in practical wisdom and experience he was mature enough:—travelling two hundred and fifty years ago was a much more serious business than our continental tourists dream of in these days, it was often attended with considerable hardships and even serious dangers; the Englishman who, being professedly a member of the Reformed Church, ventured to push his curiosity to the length of exploring Spain and Southern Italy, was not unlikely to meet with a lifelong imprisonment, or a worse fate, as his reward; and instances are neither few nor rare, of this having actually occurred to some hardy adventurers who presumed too far upon their cunning or good fortune.

Thus when Donne reached home at last he had undergone no contemptible discipline. Naturally precocious he had already experienced the schooling of privation, and learnt the need of self-reliance, and he had now to consider his

plans for the future, and to decide on the course of life which he intended to pursue.

Though far from poor he was not rich enough to be idle ; his tastes, and probably the circle of friends among whom he lived, would make him revolt against embarking in trade as his father had done before him ; he was too old, and had left the university too long, to make the prospect of academical distinction very promising, and with the consciousness of great powers and an ardent and restless temperament, his ambition led him to hope for court favour, if only his ready wit, united as it was to a personal appearance of unusual beauty, could procure for him some notice from those in power.

But while doubtful what course to adopt, and unsettled about his worldly plans, it appears that his mind was perplexed and distressed by serious, and in his case peculiarly painful religious difficulties. His mother's prejudices, tending as they did towards Romish ascetism, had not become weaker during the absence of her son abroad, and the loss of four of her six children could scarcely tend to make her religion less gloomy, or her zeal for her own creed less stern and tenacious ; meanwhile, a nearer view of Romanism abroad does not seem to have inspired Donne with any increased veneration for it, and the question of conforming to the Church established, or of allying himself to that *Recusant* faction, was presented to him, day by day, in his very home.

For him it was no unimportant question, and no easy one to solve. Arrayed against him were his early prejudices, so firmly rooted, so hard to be resisted, so impossible utterly to ignore; there were all the lessons of his childhood, impressed so carefully, so fondly; there was filial affection urging him to obey this bereaved mother, now left alone in the world with her only son to comfort her; and besides her pure and holy example to throw into the scale, there was the additional weight which daily intercourse with the best and most learned of the Romish disputants then in England would give, who would spare no exertions to confirm in young Donne those impressions and convictions of his boyish years; all contributed to make the chances of his uniting himself with the Reformers rather than with the Ultramontanists small indeed:— But the piercing logic, from which the subtlest fallacy could hope for no escape, the keen and commanding intellect which could be content with no superficial inquiry, and the clear calm searching gaze which looked for the light of truth and would not stay its seeking till that light shone out through all the mists and darkness, were too strong for any opposing tendencies to overcome, and after patiently studying the question, as it stood between the doctrines of the Church of England and the claims of the Church of Rome, and “proceeding with humility and diffidence in himself and by frequent prayers

and equal and indifferent affections” and so, applying himself to that controversy with zeal, labour and severe application, apparently *for some years*, he came to the conclusion at length, that the Church of Rome had no claim on his obedience, and indeed that here in England it was a schismatical body.

While pursuing this inquiry he was a student 1593 in Lincoln’s Inn, of which he was admitted a member on the 6th of May, 1592. His chambers were shared by his friend Christopher Brooke, a brother poet, who, because he happened to be a Cambridge man, has given occasion for the story of Donne having at one time belonged to that University, for which however there is no foundation. Donne has told us himself that he never had any serious intention of taking to the bar as a profession, and that while at Lincoln’s Inn, though he applied himself to the study of the law, he was not neglectful at the same time of the study of theology. During his leisure hours he amused himself with occasional exercise of composition, in prose and verse, mere trifles for the most part—clever sallies flowing out from an exuberant wit,—the prose nervous and dexterous, the verse occasionally rugged, but both one and the other characterized by a vigour and grasp of mind which in so young a man is truly wonderful; and though open to the charge of being occasionally obscure (though this is true only of the poems)

yet, the very faults are those of a man who has more power than he knows how to manage, certainly not those of one who is aiming at an originality which he does not possess.

1593 It was at this time that he wrote his Satires, the earliest efforts at this branch of poetry written in our language; they are valuable not only for their poetical merit, which earned for them the warm praise of Suckling, Ben Jonson and Dryden, and even induced Mr. Pope to "versify" (!) them—but they are historically interesting, as picturing the habits and tone of feeling among the upper classes, and especially the frequenters of the court, in the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign. They procured him at once considerable celebrity, and introduced him to the notice of men of influence and power; and when in June 1596, Robert Earl of Essex embarked in the famous expedition to Cadiz, and almost all the high born and chivalrous youth of England gathered round his standard, anxious to take part in an adventure, which it was hoped and expected would be able to give a deadly blow to the maritime power of Spain, Donne was among the volunteers, fashion and love of adventure drawing him abroad.

1596 Among his companions in the fleet which sailed under Lord Essex, and possibly in the same ship with himself, was a son of Sir Thomas Egerton, (who had been appointed Lord Keeper of the great Seal in the month before the

armament left England,) and a step-son, Mr. Francis Woolley of Pyrford in Surrey, who was afterwards knighted by James I. It is likely that Donne, who was about the same age as these young men, may have become intimate with them during the voyage and attracted them to himself by his versatile talents and conversational powers, for on his return in 1597, he was almost immediately appointed secretary to the Lord Keeper, in which situation he continued for upwards of four years.

The circumstances of his being deprived of his post were too romantic not to have obtained some notoriety, even among those who know little else about his history.

The duties of his office necessarily threw him into society with which the circumstances of his low birth did not entitle him to mix; between him and them, there was a great gulf fixed; the aristocracy of birth and wealth was content to recognize the aristocracy of genius up to a certain point, but there was a point beyond which it scorned all thought of confessing an equality—the “Lords of wit” must be Lords of the land, or occasions would be sure to come when they would be rejected as no Lords at all. Donne might be welcome at the tables of the nobility, and find in them oftentimes warm and faithful friends, but to forget that they were above him, and to ignore the distinctions of class, which

existed in their stern reality, though they might not be apparent always—this would be to court and to gain certain humiliation and ruin.

But the young secretary was a poet, with a poet's nature and a poet's heart—enthusiastic, tender, passionate—never at a loss for a brilliant answer—high spirited and eloquent, with the experience of the soldier and the traveller, and the accomplishments of a courtier and a scholar. What wonder that he should forget he was not something more, and that among those who lavished upon him their praise and admiration, there should be one, who should kindle in him a flame too strong for all the dictates of prudence to extinguish, and that he should have found his passion not unrequited by her who was its cause?

And thus it was. Those glorious eyes, bright enough in Lambert's portrait, were only too bright for the peace of mind of a niece of the Lord Chancellor's (a daughter of Sir George More of Losely) they awoke a deep and fond regard,—they told of an affection at least as vehement and overpowering. The passion of the lovers, once confessed to themselves and each other, could not fail to take its course; it did not stop at sighs, and tears, and plighted vows, and stolen meetings—though we hear of all these too—but ended at last in a clandestine marriage.

In Queen Elizabeth's days, the fact of a man

who was at all connected with the higher ranks of Society and moved in the circle which surrounded the court, marrying for love only, was sufficient to provoke her majesty's displeasure and often to bring down stern rebuke and punishment; but, when this man was a tradesman's son who had presumed to love the niece of the Lord Chancellor of England, and not only to love, but to woo and win her without leave or license from queen or subject, the offence became one of enormous magnitude, and the moral guilt of so audacious an action was regarded with an exaggerated horror. No sooner was the affair discovered, than Donne, and all who had been present at the marriage, were imprisoned by a mere tyrannical exercise of arbitrary power; his wife was taken from him, and for a time prevented even from receiving her husband's letters; he was represented as unworthy to continue as secretary to the Chancellor and ignominiously dismissed from that situation; and when at last, after some weeks of confinement, he was released he only gained possession of his bride by an action at law, and won her to himself that she might become the comforter and encourager of a disgraced and ruined man.

More than one evidence exists of the importance attached to this passage in Donne's history—Manningham in his Note Book chronicles the fact, and appropriates the well known witticism of *Donne's* being *undone*. Many

years after we find him, in his Poems, bitterly sighing over the malice, which could not let the remembrance of bygone errors die, and one of his letters expressly says, that a report of the circumstances of his marriage had reached the ears of the king, and stood very seriously in the way of his advancement.

Experience, cold and severe, ever at war with romance, assures us that these love matches, where great sacrifices are made on either side or both, often end unhappily after all, and that a passion which has burnt too strongly for discretion to control at first, is apt to exhaust itself by its own vehemence at last;—it is gratifying to find that it was not so in this instance. Donne loved his wife with a deep and noble affection which never flagged, his letters abound with tender allusions to her, he never remembered how much his love had cost himself, nor ever allowed himself to forget how much it had brought upon her, and when at the age of forty-three, he was left a widower with six young children, he gave his young family an assurance that he would never marry again—a promise which, though doubtless made in the first emotion of grief, was nevertheless faithfully and religiously adhered to.

1601 I have been unable to discover the exact time and place of the celebration of the marriage; Donne, in giving an account of it to

his father-in-law, when the disclosure could not be avoided, says simply that it took place "about three weeks before Christmas" 1601; but his letter is cautiously worded, and he studiously avoids giving any particulars, which might implicate others. The secret was not divulged till the following February; when it did come out the rage of the incensed father knew no bounds. Although some powerful friends interested themselves warmly to avert the expected punishment, among whom Henry Earl of Northumberland was the most active, Sir George More was deaf to reason, and would hear of nothing but revenge. He never rested till he had procured Donne's dismissal from a post of honour and emolument, in which he might have maintained his young wife in comfort and respectability; and thus deprived of all means of livelihood, when he needed it most, and hopeless of any other state employment,—during the reign of Queen Elizabeth at least—his position was most painful and difficult. His misfortunes however only served to show him the sincerity of those professions of attachment which had been made him when his worldly circumstances were brighter. His young friend, Mr. Francis Woolley, at once offered him an asylum in his house at Pyrford, and he, gladly accepting the offer, took up his abode there with his wife, and continued to make it his home for at least two years.

3 In March, 1603, Queen Elizabeth died, and on the 10th of August of that year, James I, in one of his *progresses*, paid a visit to Mr. Woolley at Pyrford, and next day went on from thence to Sir George More, at Losely. It is probable that on one of these occasions, he commended himself to the notice of the king, for his hopes of gaining some post at court once more revived. Still he remained nearly a year before he left Pyrford after this; and two letters have been preserved, which were addressed to him while the Parliament was sitting in the summer of 1604, which urged his
5 speedy return to London, if he expected to obtain any state employment. He appears to have taken the advice, and probably found a home at Peckham with his brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Grymes, for the register shows that one of his children was baptized at Camberwell, on the 9th of May, 1605.¹

6 His stay at Camberwell does not seem to have been a very long one, and he soon removed from thence, and took a house at Mitcham for his wife and children, while he himself had lodgings in London (in the Strand), which was usually his place of abode while the court was in town. Some of his most interesting letters date from this period, and let us into a more familiar knowledge of his character and

¹ Unfortunately the earliest entry in the Register of Pyrford is of the date of 1665.

habits than we could have gained from any other less trustworthy source. They show him to have been at this time deeply engaged in study—watching for and reading the new books on the controversies of the day as they were published, analysing and commenting upon the Romish polemics, not entrapped by their sophistry nor blind to the occasional mistakes of their opponents, now and then borrowing such works as he needed, and occasionally writing some poem or satirical trifle, in the interval of sterner studies. Besides his own books, he had at this time under his charge a considerable collection belonging to Sir Henry Goodere, which he tells us made his study a “very pretty library,” and amongst others on whose stores he occasionally drew, it is interesting to find the names of Bishops Morton and Andrewes. These letters mention too his late hours, when reading—they represent him with his “gamesome children” playing round him, and his wife sitting by his side as he wrote, but they tell too of sad poverty and occasional despondency which, while he confesses, he yet tells us he strove to conceal from her who was content, if only she might be a sharer in his disappointments and his joy.

All this while he was making great and persevering efforts to obtain some situation where his acknowledged powers might be turned to some account. He was certainly in constant

attendance on the nobility, and frequently came under the notice of the king. James, with that discriminating sagacity for which he has seldom received due credit from the historian, saw that if Donne was to serve his country to any great profit, it was not as a layman but as a divine that he ought to be seeking employment. How soon he intimated his wish that Donne should take holy orders does not appear, but as 1606 it is indisputable that it was the king who first suggested this course to him, and as it was in 1607 that Bp. Morton offered to resign a valuable living in his favour if he would consent to be ordained to it, it must have been before this that the royal counsel was given and rejected.

Meanwhile, with no settled employment, spending his nights in study, his days in mournfully dangling about the court, vainly hoping to obtain some situation at last, the years went sadly on, years of hope deferred and dreary disappointments. At one time we find him begging to be made secretary for Ireland, at another he wishes to leave England and to obtain a similar office in the colony of Virginia, and we even hear of his aspiring to be sent as ambassador to Venice or the Low Countries when a vacancy in these posts was talked of at court. But, true to his resolve, James gave no encouragement to these applications, the same answer was returned to them all. "If Mr. Donne chose to take orders he should be provided for, if not

he must look to some other patron than his sovereign.”

But this step he could not persuade himself to take; he revolted at the suggestion to enter the ministry for hire; his life, though strictly pure and blameless in the eyes of man, had been a worldly life after all; he had lived with the gay and thoughtless, joined them in their revels, smiled at their sins; all his friends were men of the world, his position among them too was not without its difficulty; his reputation was that of a brilliant wit, whose clever sayings were repeated in the news-letters of the time, and whose society was courted for his sparkling conversation and a ready dialectic skill which was never at a loss for argument and never lacking in originality—and Donne feared the world would not give him credit for more than these qualities, and though some, who knew the inner man which the bright outside served to hide, might not be scandalized, there would be those who would look upon him as a hireling still, and doubt the sincerity of his motives and the reality of his call; moreover he trembled at the thought of assuming the sacred office and discovering, too late, that its duties were irksome. His standard of what a clergyman's life and qualifications ought to be was higher than he believed he had the ability or learning to attain to; he could not trust his own heart, and so he still hung back.

While he was leading this aimless and distressing life, his family increasing upon him year by year, his means of living probably diminishing, as his hopes of advancement and of bringing up his children respectably were diminishing in the same proportion, a circumstance occurred which proved to be the turning point of his life, and eventually led to his consenting to embrace the clerical profession, of which he became so distinguished an ornament.

1609 It was a custom at the private table of James I, not only for conversation to be carried on in a familiar and unreserved manner on subjects of literary interest, but for learned treatises to be read aloud, and discussions conducted with considerable animation by those who were privileged to be in attendance. The King's fondness for theological controversy naturally brought it about that, at these intellectual contests, the quarrels of Puritans and Romanists, the claims to supremacy urged by the papal see and other kindred questions would be introduced and argued. It was in consequence of the learning and acuteness which Donne had displayed on these occasions, that the king first conceived the idea of advising him to take orders. But when, after the diabolical conspiracy known as the Gunpowder plot, and the consequent irritation of the public mind, the Parliament of 1607-1608 resolved that an oath of allegiance to the sovereign should be administered to the

whole nation, in the disputes which this measure gave rise to, Donne obtained for himself especial distinction by the clear and forcible manner in which he set forth the true merits of the question, and shewed how the administering the oath of allegiance might be defended by arguments which should satisfy all opponents and fortify all allies.

The king, struck by the line marked out, at once ordered Donne to write a book upon the subject, and though it would lead me too far to attempt any adequate analysis of the work here, I cannot refrain from adding a few lines, which may serve to give some idea of its method and design.

The oath of allegiance first framed by the House of Commons was far more stringent than that which was actually administered, it was modified and its severity softened by the king himself, and all that it aimed at was, not to exasperate the English Romanists, with whom James desired to be on the best terms he could, but to serve as a practical protest against the demand upon that absolute submission of all "good catholics," to the Roman pontiff, put forth without reserve by Bellarmine and the Jesuit faction, and further, to obtain an assurance that wholesale murder or private assassination was repudiated by all Englishmen, of whatever creed, as detestable and wicked.

In fact, the question resolved itself into this, Was king-killing a practice which any of this nation would defend because the pope bade them, or was it not? Could James be deposed at the will of the Bishop of Rome, and be branded with a deeper curse than the curse upon the brow of Cain, because a curse, which should expose him to greater peril than the first murderer, and turn every man's hand against him; or was he a king by divine appointment, with a title to his crown which all the thunders of a thousand Vaticans could never annul?

Then, as now, there were two parties among the English Romanists, one a religious party, the other political. The first *believed* sincerely and devoutly all that the Church of Rome taught, they looked upon the creed of Pope Pius as a possession dearer than life a thousand fold, and clung with passionate affection to the ritual which their fathers had handed down to them, hallowed by the blood of martyrs, unstained, as they thought, by a single blemish, sacred and revered as the very gift of God. But these men, with all their deep piety and enthusiasm, were quite willing to remain quiet subjects of the monarch whom the providence of God had placed over them;—longing for communion with the saints and martyrs who had gone before them, and yearning for the joys of paradise, they shrank from the rough warfare of theological controversy, and would gladly have taken the

oath in good faith, had they been allowed—
“asking no questions for conscience sake.”

Far different were the thoughts and feelings of the other Romish party. To them religion, as a matter between God and their own souls, was little or nothing, obedience to their spiritual superiors was a habit, faith but a name. Disciplined in a blind submission of their wills and understandings to a power which never asked for the assent of their conscience or their intellect, they gloried in crushing every feeling of individual responsibility, and counted perfection to have been arrived at when the moral sense which distinguishes between right and wrong was not only paralysed but utterly dead! The assassin chiefs in the Syrian fastnesses have never been served more blindly than the popes of Rome by the Jesuit devotees; men who surrender their consciences to the absolute direction of others know nothing of fear, their zeal becomes terrible because its only fire is a disciplined hatred, and their ferocity is the more to be dreaded because it is heartless and deliberate.

Against such men as these it was necessary to guard.—If by offering them the oath they could but be reminded that they were accountable beings who *could* not cast their own burdens on their brethren's shoulders or rid themselves of their own responsibilities by adding to those of others, some security might

be hoped for, and if every man of them could be pointed out as perjured should the oath be taken and subsequently violated, some check might be given to the spirit which could see nothing revolting and diabolical in the massacre of St. Bartholomew or the gunpowder plot, when such barbarous conspiracies happened to be sanctioned or suggested by the Court of Rome.

The leaders of the ultramontane faction however were prepared for the emergency. The oath of allegiance must be refused, and the reward for the refusal, should be the martyr's crown.—Bellarmine and the Jesuits, only too glad to find some occasion for exhibiting the superfluous fanaticism of their pupils, at once denounced as false to their faith all who should accept the oath. The terrors of everlasting perdition, and the hopes of celestial joys were held out lavishly to scare the weak and confirm the strong; the example of every faithful confessor who resisted unto blood the tyranny of a pagan emperor, and the shame and despair of every weak recreant whose heart had failed him in the hour of trial, was dwelt upon and repeated again and again: 'martyrdom' and 'saintship,' these were the two grand words, and they who desired the glories which they implied must not shrink from declaring that they owed no allegiance to an heretical king, who, in the eye of the true catholic, was a tyrant and a usurper.

Unhappily, too many listened to advice like

this, and eagerly grasped at the bait that was offered them. The fervent exhortations to constancy and endurance which Baronius poured forth in his last work, the Roman Martyrology, and the vehement and uncompromising denunciations which Bellarmine and others hurled against such as advised the recognition of a submission to the royal supremacy, came with a tenfold force when they who were addressed were assured that the martyr's honour, and the martyr's crown, should be the traitor's sure reward. If once the Romanists as a body could be possessed with this notion, and be made to embrace it heartily, the "Catholics" could always be sure of finding devotees enough to die like heroes—the government always be embarrassed by a band of enthusiasts, who only valued their lives for the sake of the notoriety they hoped for in losing them, and whose ostentatious turbulence, while it brought upon themselves the extreme penalty of the law, threatened nevertheless to make treason popular, and bring unmerited odium upon the persons of the king and his advisers.

It was the object of Donne's work which 1610 he entitled *Pseudo Martyr* to confute such polemics as these, by showing that the obligation of no law, national, ecclesiastical or divine, could justify the refusal of the oath of allegiance, and therefore that whatever might

be the sufferings of those who persisted in such refusal, they never could be entitled to the honour of *martyrdom* as their reward.

The tone of the book, when compared with that of almost every theological treatise of the same period, is strikingly gentle and calm; but with a tender avoiding of all that might irritate, there is no shrinking from a thorough examination of the whole question in all its bearings. Donne was not the man to suppress the truth out of a sickly consideration for the feelings of friend or foe; nothing escapes him which could serve for argument or illustration; Jesuit frauds, inquisitorial intolerance, controversial guile, detected long ago, are here held up to the light without reserve; the devotional books of his early years are dragged from their corners, and their hideous profanity rebuked with indignant sorrow; the abominations of the Casuists, the puerile trifling of the Canonists, the wicked tricks of men who as he grandly says "wrote for religion without it," are set down righteously, but with no word of bitterness; the language is remarkable for a melancholy sobriety, not often rising to eloquence, and the whole method throughout that of a man who is expostulating with others whom he longs to convince, not a mere adversary opposing those whom he desires to silence.

It is said the book was finished in six weeks; if so, it may be doubted whether the history of

literature can produce, in any age, a work of such magnitude completed in so short a time. It undoubtedly bears the marks of great haste in its execution. Coryat speaks of it once as having been written in Latin, and I should not be surprised to discover hereafter that it was originally composed in that language; if so, this would account for an occasional stiffness and roughness of style;—it attracted great attention, Donne says that at one time, an answer was meditated to it by the theologians of Louvain; if so it seems they never carried out their purpose. One champion indeed stepped forward to pronounce what he thought fit to call “A censure” upon it; this was Thomas Fitzgerald, a person of some learning and notoriety,—his “censure” consists of an attempt to point out a *single* error which he asserts Donne to have made, in a point of some difficulty. Of course he imputes to his opponent intentional dishonesty on the ground that “surely it is not probable that Mr. Donne being so curious and diligent, as he seems to be, in seeking and sifting of the decretals, extravagants, clementines, glosses, indices, expurgatorii, all sorts of Canonists, yea every mean and obscure Catholic writer, to find somewhat to jest at, would have been so negligent in this point.” The unhappy controversialist could not believe in so much learning and logical power being possessed by a Protestant who could be upright and jealous for

truth. We can afford to bear with the insinuation for the sake of such a testimony. But if such a proof were wanting of the impression which the *Pseudo martyr* produced among the Romanists, there is more than sufficient evidence to show the high appreciation of Donne's work which was felt by those who agreed with him; the University of Oxford on the 10th of October, 1610, conferred upon him the degree of M. A. by decree of convocation, the words of the grace expressing that it was in recompence for his services to the Church of England as a controversialist and for his great learning, that the distinction was conferred.

1611 If when Donne's powers had never been fairly tried James I had foreseen that he would be an ornament to the ecclesiastical profession, and was fitter for that than any other, he was not likely to change his opinion now;—hence we hear of no state employment having been conferred upon him as a reward for his literary performance. In the depression of pecuniary embarrassment, he had no other resource but the old one—literature; to that he appears to have devoted himself with increasing energy. In 1611 he published an English version of a Satire originally written in Latin, entitled “Ignatius his conclave Wherein many things are mingled by way of Satire concerning the disposition of Jesuits, &c. &c.” It was

published without his name in a small 32mo volume, but there was no secret made about the authorship and the writer was perfectly well-known. It is a severe though somewhat stupid production, labouring under a mass of learning of a curious and disagreeable kind. The Latin original is in parts vigorous and spirited, the English dull and dry.

In the same year he appeared in print as a poet again. The only daughter of one of the richest men in England, Sir Robert Drury, died at the age of fifteen to the deep sorrow of her parents. Donne, who till that time knew little or nothing of Sir Robert, touched perhaps by the grief which so irreparable a loss must have occasioned in those who had suffered it, and perhaps desirous of ingratiating himself with a vain man and a rich one, as Sir Robert was, forthwith set to work to write an elegy on the departed. He called it "An Anatomy of the World.—Wherein, by occasion of the religious death of mistress Elizabeth Drury, the frailty and decay of the whole world is represented."

It is written as might be expected, in a strain of extravagant panegyric, and though Donne had never seen his heroine, yet this by no means hindered his imagination from doing its part or made his task at all more difficult. The only copy of the first impression which I know of is in the library of the Earl of Bridgewater, but

another edition appeared the next year, and can hardly be considered scarce. If Donne had no better motive in writing this elegy than that he might be taken into the favour of Sir Robert Drury, he succeeded completely. The compliment was too delicate, and the flattery too eloquent not to be appreciated very highly, and when in November 1611, "Sir Robert Drury and his lady had leave to travel for three years," we find in one of the news-letters that Donne accompanied them. It would seem that the party crossed to Dieppe, proceeded to Amiens where they made some stay, and thence advanced to Paris. Here Donne was attacked by a serious fit of illness, and here probably it was that he saw the vision of his wife with his still-born child in her arms, the story of which is so graphically told by Walton. On his recovery they proceeded to Brussels, and thence to Spa, and finally to Frankfort, to be present at the election of the new emperor. By one or two passages in Donne's letters, written while on this tour, we may gather that Sir Robert, without being regularly commissioned to act as an ambassador, was yet expected in some way to advance the cause of the marriage which was at this time negotiating between the princess Elizabeth and the Count Palatine. But Sir Robert was a weak incompetent man, and managed his business whatever it was, so clumsily as to gain for himself nothing but neglect; and at length

disgusted, "because he found not such entertainment of him and his, as in his vanity he expected," he suddenly returned home at the end of August, 1612.

Whether in consequence of his illness in France or not, it is impossible now to decide, but on his return to England we find Donne suffering from some affection of his eyes which brought on, if not temporary blindness, yet such great weakness of the organs as to be very distressing to him. The troublesome infirmity moreover was not got rid of immediately, and even as late as January 1613, we find him complaining of his eyes as still weak, and liable to fall back into their former condition.—Alas! it had been well, had they continued too weak to serve him in his next undertaking—it was, an Epithalamion on the marriage of the Earl of Somerset to the Countess of Essex, in Dec. 1613.

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But the time was drawing near when Donne 1613 was to begin a life of more seriousness and more usefulness. The courtier and poet and wit, whose splendid powers had hitherto been comparatively trifled away, or turned to wholly unworthy purposes, was to be called on to dedicate them to a nobler end.—God had work for him to do; and however much he might

resist the voice within him, and rebel against the pressure of circumstances from without, yet he was led at last to believe that the calls he had received to enter the ministry were such as ought not to be resisted, and the scruples which made him hesitate so long were not of a kind that ought to be pressed, when all whose opinion and good wishes he valued and revered, were unanimous in condemning them.

Two letters in which he announced his intention of obeying the king, and of eventually taking holy orders, have happily reached us. The first is addressed to Lord Rochester, the other to Lord Hay: to the former he writes: "Having obeyed at last, after much debatement within me, the inspirations, as I hope, of the Spirit of God, and resolved to make my profession divinity, I make account that I do but tell your Lordship what God hath taught me, which is, that in this course, if in any, my service may be of use to this church and state;" and to Lord Hay he says: "I have brought all my distractions together, and find them in a resolution of making Divinity my profession, that I may try whether my poor studies, which have profited me nothing, may profit others."

As Walton assures us that Donne, when he had made up his mind to be ordained, "deferred for almost three years," and as the date of his doing so can be fixed pretty exactly, it would

seem that these letters were written shortly after his return from the Continent, in 1612, and by a passage in another letter unfortunately without date also, that he then retired from the court, "and applied himself to an incessant study of textual divinity, and to the attainment of a greater perfection in the learned languages, Greek and Hebrew." But his circumstances were such at this time, that want of money pressed him very sorely. With a family of young children just at an age when their educational expenses would be heaviest, he found himself in great poverty; and his retirement from the scenes of careless gaiety and extravagance, so far from benefitting him in a pecuniary point of view, had only made his creditors more suspicious, and by removing him from the notice of his wealthy patrons, had removed him in a great measure from his means of support. It is no wonder then if we find him giving way to the temptations of such distress, and coming out again from his privacy to solicit an office of state once more. The prospect was gloomy enough for him, if now he should be taken away, and leave his wife and children unprovided for. The scandal too would not be a small one if it could be said that as a clergyman he was encumbered with debts, which he had no reasonable expectation of discharging. He had just been attacked by 1614 a fit of severe illness, which had brought him

almost to death's door; and some relaxation may have been imposed upon him by his physicians. A few years of state employment entered upon seriously discharged conscientiously and rewarded by a salary which might be husbanded carefully would put him in a very different position, and with increased experience and in a condition of independence, he might at last enter the ministry a more unfettered because a richer man. Thus, when the post of Ambassador to Venice was vacant, by the removal of Sir Dudley Carleton in 1614, Donne came forth from his privacy once again, and made a most touching and earnest application for the post through the Earl of Somerset. As might have been expected, he met with another refusal; the king was immovable as ever; and convinced at last that it was useless to fight with destiny, and vain to kick against the pricks which the providence of God was using to urge him forward in the path best fitted for him, he resisted no longer.—

Meanwhile there was something in the past to repent of, and ask forgiveness for—something too, which if it could be, must be forgotten; and then the duties of the future which seemed to him still so awful, almost so terrible, they must be prepared for by a season of meditation and prayer.

It was at this time that the Essays now presented to the reader were written: they are

a fragment of a work never completed, which would have served as a series of introductions to every book in the Bible. I doubt whether they were ever intended for publication, notwithstanding one passage which seems to imply that they were so, and I doubt still more whether they were ever prepared for press, in the form in which they were first published. Some of those few (for the old copy is a scarce book) who are acquainted with the original edition may think I have taken too great a liberty in subdividing them as boldly, as I have done; but I believe I have only carried out Donne's own original intention, and certainly I have followed the marginal hints, which as they stand in the old book, are strangely out of place, and often quite unmeaning.

Nothing like an allusion to these Essays occurs in any of Donne's letters; he probably thought lightly of them, and intended them as nothing more than the expressions of his private meditations, the outpourings of his heart to God. As such, they would be always interesting, and undeserving of the neglect of two centuries which they have received. But they have a value of quite another kind, they introduce us into the studies and modes of thinking of a theologian whose education had given him all the benefits of a severe training in polemical and scholastic learning, and whose religious prejudices had veered round from Romish

asceticism till they became rather in favour of the Puritanical school. They are the private utterances of a man who had passed through severe mental conflicts in an age when it was believed possible to coerce conviction, and when, intolerance being the rule, any change of religious opinion was the exception. Such a man, one who had drunk somewhat deeply at most of the then known fountains of knowledge, we find here approaching the study of the Scriptures, with the accumulated learning of centuries to help him in his task, though sometimes perhaps with that learning misleading and embarrassing him. If he speak now and then quaintly, startling us with his credulity, or perplexing us with his strange digressions—we may yet be sure that there will be infinitely more corn than chaff, and that if we find these pages barren of instruction, the reader not the writer, is to blame.

The book from which I print, was not published till twenty years after the good dean's death, and nearly forty years after it was composed. When it did appear it was disfigured by fewer errors and misprints than might have been expected; but the beautiful clearness and neatness of Donne's own handwriting preserved his manuscripts from being very much misrepresented in their passage through the press. I need scarcely add, that this book is but little known and has never been reprinted since its first appearance.

The last merely secular work Donne did was to print a collection of his Poems; his chief motive for doing so was to obtain some help from his friends towards the payment of his debts, before his ordination. The edition was a very small one and appears never to have been published.² I suspect that in it would be found the "Farewell to the World," which Walton in his *Angler*, somewhat doubtingly attributes to the authorship of Sir H. Wotton—for a manuscript of this poem in the University library at Cambridge entitles it "Dr. Donne's Farewell." The lines, which in the MS. differ considerably from Walton's version, are not unworthy of Donne's genius.

It is curious that the same difficulty of discovering the exact day of his birth and marriage meets us too, in attempting to fix the precise date of his ordination. A protracted search into the records of the diocese of London has 1615 only convinced me that the registers for about forty years have been either stolen or mutilated, and that it is impossible to recover them now. It is enough however to be assured, as we are by a letter of his own, that Donne was ordained in

² I have not met with a copy of this book, nor is one to be found in any public library that I am acquainted with. Nevertheless Donne so evidently speaks without any hesitation of the proposed collection of the Poems that I have no doubt it was made, and I take this opportunity of saying I shall be thankful to any one who will inform me where I may see it.

January 1615, and to believe on the authority of Walton that he was admitted to the ministry by King, Bishop of London, who had been Sir Thomas Egerton's chaplain when Donne was his secretary.

It is said he shrank at first from preaching before those who would be most curious to hear him, his old associates and friends, and for a time confined himself to the pulpits of the villages round London—his first sermon being preached in Paddington, then a retired suburb and possessing a church rapidly falling into ruins. But he had not been ordained many weeks, before the King sent for him, appointed him his chaplain and commanded him to preach before him. Unfortunately the sermon has not been preserved nor any record of its subject been handed down to us.—In March, 1615, he was admitted D.D. by the University of Cambridge. Some objection was offered at first to this honour being conferred upon him, and a malicious report was circulated that he had obtained the reversion of the deanery of Canterbury; but a threat of a royal mandate, which I am inclined to think must have been carried into execution, procured him the degree.

It is probable that he frequently preached before the king and court in 1615, though only three of his sermons are of this date, for it is said that he was offered as many as fourteen

country livings during the first year after his ordination, but his attachment for London was so great that he refused them all. Nevertheless, his royal master as yet bestowed nothing upon him; every vacancy was bespoken long before it fell; the king was miserably hampered by a lack of money; the people stubborn and irritated were bent upon starving him into a compliance with their demands; the extravagance of the court increased in wild recklessness as the resources of the courtiers diminished, and James yielded to the temptation of selling his patronage for what it would fetch. Donne had to wait more years still for the fulfilment of the promises that had been made to him, his time of anxiety and disappointment had not yet come to an end.

The first situation of emolument which was presented to him was the preachership of Lincoln's Inn, vacant by the death or resignation of Mr. Holloway. The order of the Benchers bears date 24th October, 1616, and by the terms of the order it is plain that the post could have been 1617 no sinecure. A characteristic passage from one of his sermons while discharging his office as preacher has fortunately been handed down to us, from which we learn the method adopted by him for at least two years out of the four of actual work which he was engaged in at the Inn——“as heretofore, I found it a useful and acceptable labour to employ an evening exercise

upon the vindicating of some such places of scripture as our adversaries of the Roman church had detorted, in some point of controversy between them and us, and restoring those places to their true sense (*which course I held constantly for one whole year*) ; so I think it a useful and acceptable labour now, to employ for a time those evening exercises to reconcile some such places of scripture as may at first sight seem to differ from one another.”

1617 Not many months after his appointment to the preachingship (viz. on the 15th Aug. 1617), his beloved wife died in childbed. In the fifteen years that they had been married, she had borne him twelve children ; her wedded life had been very full of anxieties, she had loved her husband too well not to feel deeply his many disappointments ; the long night seemed just about to be breaking at last, and as though she had been only given him to support him in his misfortunes, not to share with him his prosperity, no sooner does the prospect brighten than she is taken from him, and he left alone ! Mrs. Donne was in her thirty-third year at the time of her death ; she was buried in St. Clement Danes Church in the Strand—a monument was shortly afterwards erected to her memory by her bereaved husband, and the original draught of her epitaph,^m which he composed, still exists in manuscript.

The habits of study which he had never

relinquished were not likely to be abandoned now, and Walton tells us that "he betook himself to a most retired and solitary life."—A family of seven children doubtless claimed much of his time and thoughts, and his own ministerial work was enough, when discharged as he discharged it, to allow him small opportunities of being idle. The mere transcribing of his sermons, when a copy of them was asked for, a request not unusually made, took him eight hours, as he has himself told us—and when we see the astonishing care bestowed upon them, and the prodigious amount of reading they give proof of, his conscientious and laborious industry appears a most striking feature in his character.

In the spring of 1619, James Hay Viscount 1619
Doncaster was sent ambassador to Germany. The thirty years war had begun, and James I wished to put a stop to it by diplomacy. Donne was ordered to accompany Lord Hay,—that which he had longed for so eagerly when a layman, he obtained almost unsought as a clergyman; but he needed the relaxation of travel, his health was very bad, his application to his studies had been too severe; a change of scene and employment was absolutely necessary.

Before leaving England he preached a kind of "farewell sermon," or as he calls it, "a sermon of valediction" at Lincoln's Inn. Besides being

a most touching and beautiful sermon, it is interesting as containing some personal allusions to his own broken health, and the high esteem in which he was held by his hearers:— it has been more than once reprinted.

When at Heidelberg he preached occasionally to the princess Elizabeth and the count Palatine, and by a letter from Lord Hay “tending to excuse the stay of Mr. Doctor Donne for services not yet admitting return,” which was read at the council in Lincoln’s Inn on the 14th October, 1619, it would seem that he remained at Heidelberg during the winter, and returned after about a year’s absence probably in the spring of 1620,—for we find ¹⁶²⁰ him once more preaching at Whitehall on the 2d of April in that year.

He had not been back more than eighteen months before the see of Exeter fell vacant, and on Dr. Carey being promoted to it, Donne succeeded him in the deanery of St. Paul’s.

This preferment at first does not seem to have been so great a piece of good fortune as might have been expected, for at the end of a year, he laments to Sir H. Goodere, “I had locked myself, sealed, and secured myself against all possibilities of falling into new debts, and in good faith this year hath thrown me £400 lower than when I entered this house.”— Still though the first entrance upon his deanery might entail expense, there was small fear now

of any more such want as he had known, and the tide of his fortune once turned, set in favourably without interruption till the night came,—say rather the dawn of the everlasting day.

He did not cease to be preacher at Lincoln's 1622 Inn till the 11th February, 1622, when he sent in his resignation, and with it a copy of the Latin Bible in six vols. folio, with the Glossa Ordinaria &c., published in 1617. It is a handsome set of books, and rendered doubly valuable by an autograph Latin inscription on the fly-leaf, which mentions among other points of biographical interest, that he had laid the first stone of the new chapel in that Inn, and had hopes of soon taking part in the laying of the last.

It was in this year that his first *published* sermon appeared; it was preached at Paul's Cross on the 15th of September, by command of the king; its object being to reconcile the people to certain "Directions to Preachers" lately put forth by authority, which had given some offence to many. Donne says "as large a congregation as ever I saw together" assembled to hear it, but the subject was an unpopular one, the listeners not induced to be pleased, and perchance the preacher kept them too long in the open air for so late in the year. A snarl from Mr. Chamberlain has reached us, to the effect that his text (Judges, v, 20) was

“a somewhat strange text for such a business,” and that “he gave no great satisfaction.”—Nevertheless it is a magnificent sermon, in every way worthy of him, and admirably suited to his auditory; but people will not be preached out of their prejudices, even by an orator who keeps them for an hour and a half. A David may still for a while the evil spirit in king Saul, because he is “one that hath a lovely voice, and can play well on an instrument”—but when the many-headed beast is shouting “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” Paul is best absent and silent. The sermon was immediately printed “as it was preached,” and dedicated to the Duke of Buckingham, whose star was then in the ascendancy; but it does not appear to have had by any means a large sale.

In the November of this year, he preached before the Virginian company. He was at the time one of the council of that company, and Nicholas Ferrar was deputy-governor. This sermon is perhaps the earliest “missionary sermon” in the English language—its text was taken from the first chapter of the Acts, v. 8. It would be quite useless to attempt to give any idea of the fervent though perhaps somewhat quaint earnestness and beauty of this discourse, the striking boldness of the preacher tempered always by his graceful caution, was never so signally displayed as during its delivery. The ex-

treme difficulty of handling his subject honestly, and at the same time of avoiding giving offence, will be understood by those who will refer to the beautiful life of Nicholas Ferrar, lately edited by Mr. Mayor, where the conspiracy which was at this time hatching against the Virginian company is exposed. Donne saw what was coming, and that the ruin of the company was inevitable, and in his prayer at the end of his sermon, he closes thus: "Bless it (the company) so in this calm, that when the tempest comes it may ride out safely; bless it so with friends now, that it may stand against enemies hereafter. Prepare thyself a glorious harvest there, and give us leave to be thy labourers; that so the number of thy saints being fulfilled, we may with better assurance join in that prayer, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; and so meet all in that kingdom which the Son of God hath purchased for us with the inestimable price of His incorruptible blood."—This sermon was not printed till the next year, and in the meanwhile another had appeared, which he preached at the opening of the new chapel of Lincoln's Inn, on Ascension day, 1623.—The new chapel "was con- 1623
secrated with much solemnity by the bishop of London, . . . when there was great concourse of noblemen and gentlemen, whereof two or three were endangered, and taken up for dead for the time, with the extreme press and throng-

ing." The sermon, though pronounced at the time an "excellent" one, is one of his least eloquent, but the introductory prayer is incomparably beautiful. It was Izaak Walton's Donne indeed that prayed that prayer! This sermon is very little known, and has never been reprinted.

In the autumn of this year, we hear that "a contagious spotted or purple fever reigned much which took away many of good sort, as well as meaner people." Donne was one of those attacked by it; he must have been taken ill in November, for on the 23d of October, 1623, we hear of him preaching at St. Paul's, on the occasion of fifteen barristers being made sergeants. It was a miserable, rainy day, the sermon only began after six in the evening, and it is not improbable that its delivery was the occasion of Donne's illness—be that as it may, he was in great danger, as one of the writers of the time testifies, and was confined to his room for some weeks. It was then that he composed the most original and beautiful of his works, "Devotions upon emergent occasions, and several steps in any sickness." It is a kind of devotional journal of his prayers and meditations, from the time of his being first taken ill till his recovery. Each day, as the sickness advances the patient is supposed to take notice of some circumstance which has occurred; at one time it is the

opinion given by the physician at another the remedies applied; now the sound of a passing bell; now the signs of amendment which had appeared; and as these are noticed there is a meditation upon them—solemn, devout, mournful—and then what he calls an “expostulation” with God, and at last a prayer suggested by and arising out of what had gone before. I know nothing like this book in form; for the matter I have said enough by speaking of it as the most beautiful and original of Donne’s works. My plan and limits in drawing up this sketch forbid me to give an analysis of it, and there is the less need, because after going through five editions in eleven years, it has been beautifully reprinted in our own days.

It would seem by this work that his illness 1624 lasted about three weeks; and indeed it can scarcely have been of any longer duration, as his daughter Constance was married 3d December, 1623, to Allen the founder of Dulwich college, much to the wonder and amusement of the gossips about the court. In the following February the rectory of Blunham in Bedfordshire fell vacant. The presentation to the living had been given to Donne some years before by Charles (Grey of Ruthyn) Earl of Kent. The dispensation to hold this benefice *and one other hereafter*, is dated the 1st of March 1624. A copy of it is in my possession. By the “one other” was meant the vicarage of St. Dunstan’s in the West, which

fell to him a few weeks after, that having been given to him previously by the Earl of Dorset. His first sermon there was preached on the 11th April 1624, on the rather curious text Deut. xxv, 5.

1625 On the 27th of March 1625, James I died. Charles I was proclaimed the same day, and we read "that the king kept privately his bed or chamber at St James's until [the next] Sunday, and then dined abroad in the privy chamber, being in a plain black coat to the ancle; and so went after dinner into the chapel, Dr. Donne preaching, his majesty looking very pale, his visage being the true glass of his inward, as well as his accoutrements of external mourning." This was on the 3d of April 1625, the text on this occasion was Ps. xi, 3, "If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do." The sermon was immediately published under the title of "The first sermon preached to king Charles." Although one of the most splendid of his sermons, besides being historically a very interesting one, and far from scarce, it has never been reprinted.

In the same month in which this sermon was preached, Donne showed that his muse was not as dead as he had asserted her to be ten years before; by writing the poem which he calls "A Hymn to the Saints, and the Marquis Hamilton." Though confessing it to be "rea-

sonable witty, and well done," Mr. Chamberlain was scandalised that a man of Donne's "years and place" should not "give over versifying:" As if poetry had no higher mission than to please the ear; as if the "sphere-born harmonious sisters" were only then well employed, when they were ministering to folly and frivolity and sin!

The next year he was commanded to publish another sermon, preached before Charles I, on the 24th February. 1626

The week before, there had been held at York House the second of two controversies on the question, Whether the elect could fall from grace. His old friend Dr. Morton, then bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, was one of the disputants, and Donne in his sermon could scarcely help alluding to the subject under discussion; but he does so in the same great and wise manner that he always adopts in approaching such themes, enough to show his own exquisite dialectic subtlety—not enough to make it appear that he thought it necessary to have a decided opinion one way or the other. This sermon has never been reprinted, and is little known.

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The life of a divine whose religion is simply practical, seldom presents many incidents worth recording, especially in an age where polemics are in angry conflict and the meek of the earth

do not choose to brave the *odium theologicum*. Donne spent his last years in alternate intervals of study too severe for his strength, and attempts to recover from the effects of excessive application by retirement amongst his personal friends. Such a course of life could not continue long, and it is evident that his unwearied attention to his ministerial duties, and the ever increasing pains bestowed upon his sermons told seriously upon a frame, which had never been robust, and had more than once been sorely tried. Hence we find him bitterly lamenting, that an unkind murmur had been raised against him in his parish of St. Dunstan's for not preaching oftener. He replies by protesting how undeserved it was, and that though *he had never obtained a shilling* of income from the cure, yet. . . . "my witness is in heaven, that I never left out St. Dunstan's, when I was able to do them that service, nor will now . . . I ever have," he adds, "and ever shall endeavour to rectify [any defectiveness towards that church] by as often preaching there as my condition of body will admit." During these last years, his popularity as a preacher was very much on the increase; he was frequently appointed to occupy the pulpit at St. Paul's and "the cross," and always commanded a large and attentive audience.

But it was in his duty as chaplain to the king that he put forth all his strength and

desired most to make his influence felt. He knew that there was no prospect of any higher preferment than he had obtained; he sought no other, his ambition was that he might be permitted to discharge the duties of his important position effectually as long as he was able to discharge them at all. His chaplaincy obliged him every year at the beginning of Lent to preach at Whitehall. As the strife of parties waxed fiercer and more intolerant, it became ever more and more difficult to avoid the turmoil and to steer clear of angry belligerents. The ultra men who attached themselves to Bishop Laud,—the faction which gathered round the queen, and her Romish advisers,—the Puritans stern, exasperated, goaded to the extreme of bitterness by measures over which every member of the Church of England would gladly draw a veil,—all were keeping a jealous watch over such as refused to pledge themselves to the measures of any one of them, and all were eager to denounce every moderate man as an opponent whom they could not claim as a partizan. It was not to be expected that so distinguished a man as the dean of St. Paul's should be allowed to escape the notice of these harsh and jealous polemics. The Puritans as we have seen insinuated that he was a non-preaching divine in his parish—their opponents bruited that he was not sound at heart in his devotion to the Church of England.

It appears that he had rendered himself an object of some suspicion to the divines of the school of Laud and Montague, by his close intimacy with Archbishop Abbot. The monstrous proceedings against the Archbishop which ended in his being silenced had begun. The fervent piety of the aged primate was not of the kind which was relished by those in power—his constant preachings, his large minded liberality, his resolute protests against what he considered the desecration of the Sabbath, his unflinching firmness in resisting whatever he believed to be impolitic for the church and demoralizing for the people, chafed and irritated those whose zeal tended ever to severity, whose energy could brook no opposition. But Abbot was just the man after Donne's own heart—his mind was more devout than controversial, his theological opinions had been arrived at by hours of prayer and quiet meditation rather than by study and disputation, he had had to suffer for his courageous testimony to what he believed to be right and true on more than one occasion; the conflicts of his earliest years had been with Rome, not Geneva, and the dangers which he dreaded were not those which the new school were afraid of, and provoking by their fear, but those which he rather suspected that that school were braving, and which seemed to him far more to be feared and watched against.

Donne's constant visits at Guildford therefore 1628 did not pass unnoticed, and when on the 1st April, 1628, he presented himself to preach at Whitehall in his usual course, there were not wanting those who were on the watch to make him "an offender for a word."—His text was taken from St. Mark, iv, 24. Nothing could be more judicious than the sermon, nothing better suited to the wants of the time; but this was just its fault.—The same spirit which originated a persecution of such a man as Bishop Davenant and threatened a similar one of Bishop Hall, found cause for offence in the eloquence of Donne :—It is true that his sermon gave more than one handle to his enemies, but none but an enemy resolved to find fault would have readily been able to discover any cause for blame. I conceive that two passages especially may have been those on which the captious among his hearers fastened as giving some colour to the insinuations whereby they forthwith strove to prejudice the mind of Charles I. against his chaplain; in the first, an ingenious adversary might have discovered a sanction of the unlicensed preaching of the Puritans;³ in the second, an allusion to the

³ "So the apostles proceeded; when they came in their peregrinations to a new state, to a new court, to Rome itself, they did not inquire, 'How stands the emperor affected to Christ, and to the preaching of His Gospel? Is there not a sister, or a wife that might be wrought upon to further the preaching of Christ? Are there not some persons, great in power and

1629 mere obscurity, gradually becoming fainter and fainter till the dimness bears them down. Happily it was not so with Donne, the evening of his pilgrimage brought a glorious sunset, the lustre of his very noon-day was less brilliant than the splendour of his decline. Of his last hours I will not speak. One has dwelt upon them in words which are almost awful in their solemn eloquence, one who stood by Donne's deathbed and held his dying head, who heard his last heavenly aspirations and joined in the last prayers. He has shown us how—gradually in those declining years, every great gift of the poet and every sober accomplishment of the scholar was devoted but to one lofty purpose: how the discipline of poverty which he had endured in his youth was not lost upon him in his more affluent age; how he who had experienced the kind offices of friendship when he knew not where to look for a supply of his most pressing wants, did not shut up his bowels of compassion when he was able to help others in need—how the same fascination which had gained him access to every circle, and made him ever welcome to the gay and joyous in his early manhood still remained with him to the last, and gathered round him another circle of admiring friends,—different indeed from those which in earlier life he had mixed with, but not less attached to him,—a circle which numbered such men as George Herbert and

Bishop Hall among its members; men whom the lapse of centuries has not tended to make us forget, but rather taught us to regard with a growing love and reverence. All these things Izaak Walton has told us,—they must be read in no other words than his own.

The end was drawing near.—Donne felt there 1630 was not much work left for him to do, but he desired to continue his preaching to the last: It had been a wish of long standing with him that he might die in the pulpit, and he would not consent to be silent so long as his voice could be heard.—Though in a feeble state he received a command to preach on the 5th Nov. 1630, at Whitehall. The message reached him at his daughter's house in Essex, whither he had retired in August; but he could not obey, and by the end of November a report was circulated that he was dead. He took some pains to contradict this, and was again *appointed* to preach at St. Paul's on Candlemas day. In all probability he again found himself too weak when the day came; but collecting all his remaining strength for a last effort, he appeared at Whitehall on Ash Wednesday, 1631, for the last time. So emaciated was his appearance, and so death-like his demeanour, that when he gave forth his text—"Unto God the Lord belong the issues of death," (Ps. lxxviii, 20), the king said he was preaching his own funeral sermon; and so it must indeed have appeared to those that heard it. Yet solemn as is the

1631 train of thought throughout it, there is nothing like an indication of failing powers.
“It hath been observed of this reverend man,” says the anonymous editor of the sermon (to which Donne gave the title of *Death's Duel*), “that his faculty of preaching continually increased; and that as he exceeded others at first, so at last he exceeded himself.” This is not the language of mere compliment—when the sermon was published the time for that had gone by.

Exhausted by the exertion which this “desired duty” demanded, he felt that now his race was well nigh run. The world had no more to offer, little more to teach—as he had lived so he would die, with the sober dignity which becomes a Christian man. But while looking forward to death as certain and not far distant, an unaccountable fancy took possession of his mind; whether suddenly called into existence by his morbid condition of body or a whim of the past it is impossible to decide, but which at last expressed itself in an act seldom paralleled for its eccentricity. With a strange curiosity, he could not forbear to speculate upon the effects of the coming change. ‘What would it bring, this awful mysterious death, whose step advanced so slowly, whose iron hand though touching could not grasp him?’—As he lay ever thinking over the problem—his thirst for knowledge never flagging, he gave himself for a moment to the indulgence of the fancies

which the question had awakened within him—*he would see how he should look when dead.*—Calling for a painter, he ordered himself to be removed to his study, “his winding-sheet in his hand,” and taking his stand upon a funeral urn which he had made for the purpose, “and having put off all his clothes, he had this sheet put on him, and so tied with knots at his head and feet, and his hands so placed as dead bodies are usually fitted to be shrouded. . . . and with his eyes shut, and so much of the sheet turned aside as might show his lean, pale and death-like face, which was purposely turned towards the east, whence he expected the second coming of his and our Saviour Jesus,” so he was drawn at full length; “and when the picture was fully finished, he caused it to be set by his bedside, where it continued and became his hourly object till his death.” To many minds this would have been a terrible sight, in some the very story of it may cause a shudder—to him the presence of what might almost seem a phantom of his dead self brought thoughts which strengthened his faith, and made his hope the brighter.

Walton has gently introduced us to that bed of death and told us of the saintly converse with God and the lofty angelic meditations with which his friend was preparing for the last summons. It came at last, on the 31st of March 1631.

To him it was a welcome message which he had looked for almost eagerly, with no petulant weariness of this world but with a deep and holy yearning for the rest of the next. He had wished for a private funeral; but he was too highly appreciated and too widely beloved to allow of his mortal remains being committed to their resting place without some of the pomp of sorrow, and a great number of noble and illustrious friends gathered round his grave to pay him this last quiet homage. He was laid in St. Paul's. He wrote his own epitaph; he would not let his tombstone lie.

The love that prompted the graceful honours paid to him when dead, shrank from the vulgar gaze, and we know not now who they were who strewed his burial place from day to day with flowers, or who wrote those four lines to his honour upon the Cathedral wall. Even the friend who sent one hundred marks towards the cost of his monument strove to be hid; the lust of notoriety fell back abashed by the strange sacredness that clung to his memory.

The monument which represents him, as he was taken in his shroud, and which "seemed to breathe faintly" to one who had known and loved him well, is almost the only one which has escaped the ravages of the great fire and the subsequent ravages of time, and may be seen in the crypt of St. Paul's to this day.

It only remains for me to say a few words on the posthumous works of this great man.

In his last illness Donne gathered some of his dearest friends around him and expressed a wish that all his sermons and manuscripts should be delivered to his friend King, Bishop of Chichester: but no mention of this having been made in his will and Charles I. having promised £3000 as the reward for printing a collection of his sermons, his eldest son seized upon all the books and papers and refused to deliver them up to any other claimant. An enormous mass of papers thus fell into the hands of one who, though a beneficed clergyman, was a worthless profligate, and whose unfitness for his task of editing his father's works appeared in every publication which he sent forth.

I. The first publication that was issued after the sermon called *Death's Duel*, was a collection of "Juvenilia" or certain Problems and Paradoxes; mere ephemeral productions, never intended for publication, and long forgotten by the author.

II. These were followed, in 1633, by a collection of his Poems, huddled together without any pretence of arrangement or the least discrimination in their selection.

III. In 1640 appeared the first folio volume of his Sermons—eighty in number—the only work on which the younger Donne bestowed any pains and care.

IV. In 1648, the *Biathanatos* was published. It is a work on suicide, and one of the most extraordinary books ever written, not so much for the conclusion it arrives at (viz. that *if* a man in destroying himself can have a single eye to the glory of God, and be moved by no manner of selfish considerations, he is justified, *in foro conscientiæ*, in committing the act), which is so

guarded and fenced in, that it could never be taken as an excuse for the crime—as for the vast learning and the incomparable subtlety of logic which it displays in every page. I have collated the Bodleian MS. of this book (which received the writer's last corrections) with the printed work, but the labour was scarcely repaid. Donne expressly declared that he never meant that this production should become known to the world.

V. In 1649 a second folio volume of his Sermons was printed, containing 50 more in addition to those already out.

VI. The Essays in this volume were published in 1650 in a small 16mo volume, and soon after incorporated with—

VII. A Collection of Epigrams, Poems, &c., translated from the Latin, and a reprint of the Paradoxes and Ignatius his Conclave, which bears the date of 1653. So careless was the younger Donne, and so ignorant of his father's works, that he proclaims the Ignatius to have been one of his father's *last* writings, even though an edition (probably pirated) had actually been brought out so late as 1635. The epigrams and poems were written in Donne's boyhood. The wretched man who would not even leave them in their Latin dress, could not see that there was anything disgraceful in putting forth this obscene trash in the meretricious garb of a jingling English rhyme, and attaching to the unworthy rubbish his father's revered name.—On the son, not father, the scandal of their publicity must rest.

VIII. In 1654, a 4to volume of Donne's Letters appeared, several of them with wrong dates, one or two of them altered from their originals, and probably many more with wrong superscriptions attached. The

collection is however a valuable contribution to the history of the time, and affords us an insight into Donne's life and character which is to be obtained nowhere else.

IX. In 1660 a third folio volume, professing to contain twenty-six Sermons was published. There are really twenty-seven sermons, but *two* of these are printed twice.

The History of the Septuagint attributed to Donne by *all* the editors of Walton is not his; it was by one *John Done*, a poor and flimsy writer, the author of two or three other trifles.

The six volumes published in 1839 by Mr. Parker professing to be the "Works of Dr. Donne"—I know well. After all that was said of them, at the time they appeared, it is unnecessary for me to speak of them now. Happily Mr. Alford's reputation does not depend upon the way in which he has "edited" an English divine.

I have been engaged for some years in preparing an edition of Donne's collected works, which if possible I desire to make worthy of him—this is of course, a work of time and some labour, the search for thousands of quotations which are made without any reference at all; the verification of references to books long since out of use, and even rare and obscure two centuries ago, the allusions to trifling events which were happening at the time, and the occasional occurrence of passages which force a conscientious editor into new fields of inquiry and research—all these make my self-imposed task no light one. But while labours like this are entered upon every day for writers of Greece and Rome, whose works if they appeared now, would never struggle into notice at all; and while no amount of study is murmured at if devoted to the illustration of an author whose excellence is the excellence of heathenism, I cannot think that a man is wasting his labours, when spending them in an endeavour to introduce his countrymen to the writings of the greatest preacher that England has ever produced, and one of the greatest that the world has ever known.

In conclusion I must beg the readers of this 'Notice,' to pardon the absence of all authorities for the statements I have made. I pledge myself at the proper time to substantiate everything asserted here. In the

meantime I cannot deny myself the pleasure of noticing the new edition of Walton's *Life of Donne*, lately published by Mr. Causton of Gracechurch-street, whose acute and careful notes have made his new edition incomparably superior to all preceding ones, and whose researches discovered for me the particulars relating to Donne's father, which my own inquiries have enabled me to verify. Some of Mr. Causton's conclusions I had myself arrived at, of course independently of him, long before I saw his book—some few of his mistakes, and they are few—I have corrected, but the important discovery alluded to above, it is but fair that he should have the credit of, because at the time I became acquainted with it, I had made one unsuccessful attempt to arrive at some certainty on the matter.

To my very learned friend, Mr. John Mayor, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, I owe my warmest thanks for all the valuable counsel and assistance he has so unreservedly afforded me.

For my own short-comings I have no right to ask indulgence or expect it. Most of my work has been done in the retirement of a country parish, with no other aid than a limited collection of books and such additional help as I could glean at times from friends upon whom I had little or no claim, but of whose

kind and liberal aid I know not how to speak as it deserves.

The way in which I have performed my part even in the publication of these Essays, falls sadly below my idea of the way in which Donne's works should be edited, but I may add too, below the realization of it, which I hope to attain. Yet such as it is, I offer this book to the reader as an earnest of better things, and as a declaration that I will do what I can hereafter to supersede what I have done here.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;

January, 1855.

ESSAYS
IN
DIVINITY;

By the late
D^r. DONNE,
Dean of *St. Paul's*.

BEING
Several DISQUISITIONS,
Interwoven with
MEDITATIONS
AND
PRAYERS:

Before he entred into Holy Orders.

*Now made publick by his Son J. D.
D^r. of the Civil Law.*

LONDON,
Printed by *T. M.* for *Richard Marriot*,
and are to be sold at his Shop in
S^t Dunstan's Church-yard,
Fleet-street. 1651.

“ He has sounded both religions and anchored on the best, and is a Protestant out of judgment not faction, not because his country but his reason is on his side. The ministry is his choice not refuge, and yet the Pulpit not his itch but his fear. In his discourse there is substance not rhetoric, and he utters more things than words He is a main pillar of our Church, and his life our religion’s best apology. His death is his last Sermon, where in the Pulpit of his bed he instructs men to die by his example.”

Bishop Earle’s MICROCOSMOLOGY.

THE GREAT EXAMPLE OF
HONOUR AND DEVOTION,

Sir H. VANE, Junior.

SIR,

SINCE it is acknowledged that if the patrons of scholars had not contributed more to the Commonwealth of learning, than the writers themselves, by giving both encouragement and protection to their labours, *Achilles* had been but an embryo of *Homer's* brain, and *Æneas* proved a false conception of *Virgil's* wit (which are now two of the fairest products in the world); I cannot doubt, Sir, but that in

owning these less, yet more lawful issues of this modern author, you will prove a greater *Mecænas* than those former writers ever had, in giving a livelihood to these offsprings, that had no provision left them by their father.

And to beg this favour, they come, Sir, with the greater confidence, because being writ when the author was obliged in civil business, and had no engagement in that of the Church, the manner of their birth may seem to have some analogy with the course you now seem to steer; who, being so highly interested in the public affairs of the State, can yet allow so much time to the exercise of your private devotions; which, with the help of your active wisdom, hath so settled us, as the tempestuous north winds are not like to blast in the Spring

before it come to a full growth, nor the south to over-ripen, till it arrive at such a perfection as may equal the birth of Pallas, which could be produced from nothing but the very brains of Jupiter; who, although she came armed from thence, yet it had not been sufficient to have had a god for her father, if she had not had Metis to her mother. Which shows us, that the union is so inseparable between counsel and strength, that our armies abroad depend more upon your advice than upon their own force; and that they would prove but a body without a soul, if they were not animated as well as recruited by your direction. And although it be objected, that the sword be no good key to open the gates of heaven, yet it was thought fit to protect and defend *Paradise*, and keep out even

ADAM himself, who was the first and lawful heir, and who had for ever enjoyed his prerogative, if he had not exceeded his commission, in devouring that which he was forbidden to taste. Sir, I have no application but of this book to your protection, and of myself to your commands.

Your most humble Servant,

JOHN DONNE,

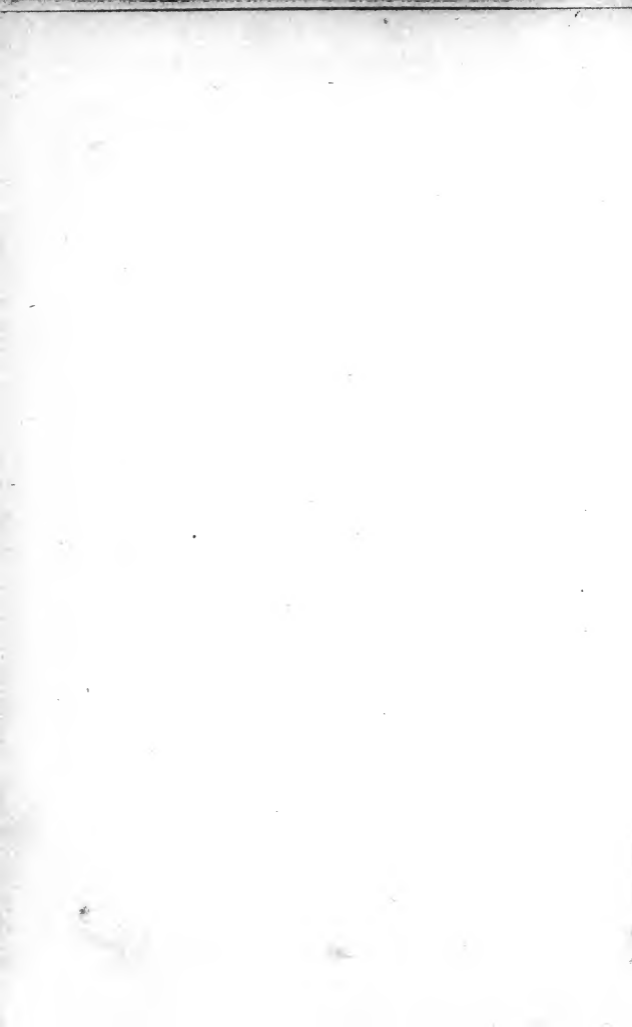
[*The Younger.*]

TO THE READER.



IT is thought fit to let thee know that these ESSAYS were printed from an exact copy, under the author's own hand; and that they were the voluntary sacrifices of several hours, when he had many debates betwixt GOD and himself, whether he were worthy, and competently learned to enter into Holy Orders. They are now published, both to testify his modest valuation of himself, and to show his great abilities; and they may serve to inform thee in many holy curiosities.

FAREWELL.





ESSAYS IN DIVINITY.

[INTRODUCTORY.]

*In the Beginning God created Heaven
and Earth.*

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

I Do not therefore sit at the door,
and meditate upon the threshold,
because I may not enter further; for
He which is "holy and true, and hath
"the key of David, and openeth and no
"man shutteth, and shutteth and no
"man openeth," hath said to all the
humble in one person, "I have set before
"thee an open door, and no man can
"shut it, for thou hast a little strength."

Apoc. iii, 7.

——, 8.

And the Holy Scriptures, signified in
that place, as they have these properties
of a well-ordered castle, that they are

Lyra.¹

¹ [The reference to Lyra will be understood by any one who compares the various passages given in De la Haye's *Biblia Maxima* from the Romish Commentators: they almost all interpret the passage of the key of the Church!]

[Intro.] easily defensible, and safely defend others; so they have also this, that to strangers they open but a little wicket, and he that will enter must stoop and humble himself: To reverend Divines, who, by an ordinary calling, are Officers and Commissioners from God, the great doors are open, let me with Lazarus lie at the threshold, and beg their crumbs.

Discite à me, says our blessed Saviour, "Learn of me," as Saint Augustine enlarges it well, not to do miracles, nor works exceeding humanity; but, *quia mitis sum*; learn to be humble. His humility, to be like us, was a dejection; but ours, to be like Him, is our chiefest exaltation; and yet none other is required at our hands. Where this humility is, *ibi*

Prov. xi, 2. *sapientia*. Therefore it is not such a groveling, frozen and stupid humility, as should quench the activity of our understanding, or make us neglect the

² ['Tollite jugum meum super vos, et discite a me: non mundum fabricare, non cuncta visibilia et invisibilia creare, non in ipso mundo miracula facere, et mortuos suscitare: sed 'quoniam mitis sum et humilis corde.' Magnus esse vis, a minimo incipe. Sermo 69, §2 (al. 10 de verbis Dom.) See too Serm. 142, §7.]

search of those secrets of God, which are accessible. For humility and studiousness (as it is opposed to curiosity, and transgresses not her bounds) are so near of kin, that they are both agreed to be limbs and members of one virtue,—Temperance. [Intro.]
Tho. Aquinas.³

These bounds Daniel exceeded not; and yet he was *vir desideriorum*, and in satisfaction of so high desires, to him alone were those visions discovered. And to such desires and endeavours the Apostle encourageth the Corinthians, *Æmulamini charismata meliora*; “Desire you better gifts, and I will yet shew you a better way.” Dan. x, 11.⁴
1 Co. xii,
31.

It is then humility to study God, and a strange miraculous one; for it is an ascending humility, which the Devil, which emulates even God's excellency in His goodness, and labours to be as ill as He is good, hath corrupted in us by a pride as much against reason; for he hath filled us with a descending

³ [Summa Theol. Secunda Secundæ quæstio 161 (art. iv, “Utrum Humilitas sit pars Modestix vel temperantix” Affirm.) et Quæst. 166 (art. ii, “Utrum studiositas,” (Affirm))]

⁴ [Vulgate, see too our margin “a man of desires.”]

[Intro.]

pride, to forsake GOD, for the study and love of things, worse than ourselves. This averts us from the contemplation of GOD and His Book. In whose inwards and *sanctum sanctorum*, what treasure of saving mysteries do His priests see, when we at the threshold see enough to instruct and secure us! for He hath said of His laws, *scribes ea in limine*; and both the people and Prince himself were to worship at the threshold.

Deut. vi, 9.
Ezek. xlvi,
2, 3.

Before we consider each stone of this threshold,—which are,

1, the *time*, “In the beginning;”

2, the *person*, “GOD;”

3, the *action*, “He created;” and,

4, the *work*, “Heaven and Earth;”

—we will speak of two or three other things, so many words:

[i] Of the whole Book;

[ii] Of the author of those first five books;

[iii] And of this first book.

For earthly princes look for so many pauses and reverences, in our accesses to their table, though they be not there.

ESSAY I.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Of the Bible.

GOD hath two Books of life; that
in the Revelation, and elsewhere, Apoc. iii,
which is an eternal Register of His 5.¹
elect; and this BIBLE. For of this it
is therefore said, “Search the Scrip- St. John v,
“tures, because in them ye hope to 39.
“have eternal life.” And more plainly
when, in the 24th of Ecclesiasticus,
Wisdom hath said in the first verse,
“Wisdom shall praise herself,” saying,
“HE created me from the beginning, Eccclus.
“and I shall never fail, . . . I give xxiv, 1.
“eternal things to all my children, —, 9.
“and in me is all grace of life and —, 18.
“truth, . . . They that eat me shall —, 21.
“have the more hunger, and they that
“drink me shall thirst the more. . . .
At last, in v. 23, “All these things are —, 23.

¹ [ch. xvii, 8. xx, 12, &c.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

“ the book of life, and the covenants
“ of the most high GOD, and the law of
“ Moses.” And as our orderly love
to the understanding this Book of life
testifies to us that our names are in
the other; so is there another book
subordinate to this, which is *Liber*
Creaturarum.

Is. xxix, 11.

Of the first book we may use the
words of Esay, “ It is a book that is
“ sealed up, and if it be delivered to
“ one (*Scienti literas*) that can read, he
“ shall say, I cannot, for it is sealed.”
So far removed from the search of
learning are those eternal decrees and
rolls of GOD, which are never certainly
and infallibly produced and exemplified
in foro exteriori, but only insinuated
and whispered to our hearts, *Ad infor-*
mandum conscientiam judicis, which is
the conscience itself.

—, 12.

Of the second Book, which is the
Bible, we may use the next verse :
“ The Book shall be given ” (as inter-
preters agree, *open*), “ *Nescienti lite-*
“ *ras*, to one which cannot read : ” and
he shall be bid read, and shall say,

“I cannot read.” By which we learn, Essays on Gen. i, 1. that as all mankind is naturally one flock feeding upon one common, and yet—for society and peace,—Propriety, Magistracy, and distinct Functions are reasonably induced; so, though all our souls have interest in this their common pasture, the Book of Life (for even the ignorant are bid to read); yet the Church hath wisely hedged us in so far, that all men may know, and cultivate, and manure their own part, and not adventure upon great reserved mysteries, nor trespass upon this Book, without inward humility, and outward interpretations. For it is not enough to have *objects*, and *eyes* to see, but you must have *light* too. The first book is then impossible; the second difficult; but of the third book, the book of Creatures, we will say the eighteenth verse, “The deaf shall hear the word of this book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity.” And so much is this book available to the other, that Sebund, when he had digested this book into a

Essays on written book, durst pronounce that it
 Gen. i, 1. was an art which teaches all things,
 Raymun- presupposes no other, is soon learned,
 dus de Sa- cannot be forgotten, requires no books,
 bunde in needs no witnesses, and in this is safer
 Prolo.² than the Bible itself, that it cannot
 Tit. 166.³ be falsified by heretics; and ventures
 further after to say, that because his
 book is made according to the order
 of creatures, which express fully the
 will of God, whosoever doth according
 to his book fulfils the will of God.

Howsoever, he may be too abundant
 in affirming that in *Libro Creaturarum*
 there is enough to teach us all par-
 ticularities of Christian religion (for

² [Ad *Theologiam naturalem de Homine et Creaturis* . . . Ista scientia nulla alia indiget scientia neque arte. Non enim præsupponit Grammaticam neque Logicam, neque aliquam de liberalibus scientiis sive artibus, nec Physicam neque Metaphysicam . . . Et ideo ista scientia communis est tam Laicis quam Clericis, et omni conditioni hominum, et potest haberi infra mercem, et sine labore, nec oportet aliquid inefectovari: nec habere librum in scriptis; nec potest tradi oblivioni, si semel habita fuerit . . . Et hæc scientia nihil allegat neque Sacram Scripturam, neque aliquos Doctores: immo ista confirmat Sacram Scripturam et per eam homo credit priviter S. S. ideo præcedit S. S. quoad nos.—Ed. Francof. 12^o 1635.]

³ [Sed quæ sit voluntas Dei, hoc manifestant nobis creaturæ et ordo creaturarum: quia quicquid significant nobis creaturæ et dicunt nobis, totum est secundum voluntatem Dei . . . Et qui facit ea quæ hic scripta sunt facit Dei Voluntatem.]

Trismegistus going far, extends not his proofs to particulars); yet St. *Paul* clears it thus far, that there is enough to make us inexcusable, if we search not further. And that further step is the knowledge of this Bible, which only, after Philosophy hath evicted and taught us an Unity in the Godhead, shows also a Trinity.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
De imma-
nifesto Deo
manifes-
tissimo.⁴
Rom. i, 20.
Greg.
Hom. [in
Evang. xi]

As then this life, compared to blessed eternity, is but a death, so the books of philosophers, which only instruct this life, have but such a proportion to this Book; which hath in it *Certainty* (for no man assigns to it other beginning than we do, though all allow not ours): *Dignity*, (for what author proceeds so *sine teste*?—and he that requires a witness believes not the thing, but the witness;) and a *Non notis* (for he

⁴ [There are few subjects in the history of literature more curious than the question concerning the authorship of those works which exist under the name of Hermes Trismegistus; they are quoted and constantly alluded to by the Fathers, by Lactantius, Cyril Alex., and even by Clemens Alex. Fabricius, of course, gives an elaborate, and Smith's Dictionary a concise and well arranged account of them. I extract from F. Patircius his *Nova de Universis Philosophia*, Venice 1593. The reference is to ol. 126.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

which requires reason believes himself, and his own approbation and allowance of the reason). And it hath *Sufficiency*, for it either rejecteth or judgeth all traditions. It exceeds all others in the *Object*, for it considers the *next life*; in the *Way*, for it is written by *revelation*; yea, the first piece of it which ever was written, which is the Decalogue, by God's own finger. And as Lyra notes, being perchance too allegorical and typic in this, it hath this common with all other books, that the *words* signify things; but hath this particular, that all the things signify other things.

Ex. xxxi.
18.

There are but two other books (within our knowledge) by which great nations or troops are governed in matter of religion, the *Alcoran* and *Talmud*, of which the first is esteemed only where ours is not read. And besides the common infirmity of all weak, and suspicious, and crazy⁵ religions, that it

⁵ [Compare Serm. on St. Jno. x, 10, § 2 “. . . there are not so many *crazy*, so many sickly men, men that so soon grow old in any profession as in ours.”]

affords salvation to all good men, in any religion, yea, to devils also (with our singular Origen), is so obnoxious⁷ and self-accusing, that, to confute it, all Christian Churches have ever thought it the readiest and presentest way to divulge it; and therefore Luther, after it had received *cribrationem*, a sifting by Cusanus,⁸ persuades an edition of the very text, because he thinks the *Roman* Church can no way be shaken more than thus to let the world see how sister-like those two Churches are. But that man of infinite undertaking, and industry, and zeal, and blessings from the Highest, had not seen the *Alcoran* when he wrote this, though he mentions it; nor Cusanus's book certainly, for else he could not have said

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
Epist. Pii
II, ad Mor-
bissau.⁶

Præfat. ad
Lector. ad
Lib. de
moribus
Turcarum.

⁶ ["Origenis præclari et excellentis ingenii viri, sicut multa extant præclarissima opera, ita et nonnulli errores perniciosissimi reperiuntur: inter quos unus ille est quia Dæmones per Dei misericordiam liberandos esse aliquando à poenis asseruit. Hunc secutus est Mahometes, qui salvandos per Alcoranum malos angelos affirmat," p. 84 of the third vol. of Tracts printed with the Koran in 1550, by Bibliander and Melancthon; the letter of Pius II begins at p. 60.]

⁷ ["Open to attack"—thus in the letters, p. 161, 4to, 1654, "and yet truly this man is extremely *obnoxious* in that kind."]

⁸ [The *Cribratio Alcorani* of Nicolas de Cusa is in the second vol. of Tracts mentioned above.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

that the Cardinal had only excerpted and exhibited to the world the infamous and ridiculous parts of it, and slipped the substantial; for he hath deduced an harmony and conformity of Christianity out of that book. Melancthon also counsels this edition, *Ut sciamus quale Poema sit.* And Bibliander observes, that it is not only too late to suppress it now, but that the Church never thought it fit to suppress it, because (saith he) there is nothing impious in it, but is formerly reprehensively registered in the Fathers.

Præmonit
ad Edit.
Alcoran.⁹
In Apol.
pro Edit.
Alcorani.¹⁰

As Cusanus hath done from the *Alcoran*, Galatinus hath from the *Talmud* deduced all Christianity, and more. For

Pet. Galatinus de
Arcanis
Cath. Veritatis.¹¹

⁹ [Vol. i of the work mentioned above. Melancthon in this preface says he has no doubt Daniel speaks of Mahomet under the name of the little horn.]

¹⁰ [Passim. The book has this title "Alcoranus Latine per Robertum Retenensem et Hermanum Dalmatam, cum præfatione Phil. Melancthonis, Apologia Theod. Bibliander et Confutationibus multorum authorum, Fol. S. L. 1550. It is in 3 tomes—Bibliander's Apology is in the first.]

¹¹ [Fran. fol. 1572. In lib. x, chaps. 2-7, he endeavours to prove that the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, and Eucharist, and the doctrine of Transubstantiation were predicted in the Talmud. Petrus Galatinus was born a Jew, and on his conversion to Christianity became a Franciscan monk. The above work was published at the suggestion of Leo X, and the Emperor Maximilian.]

he hath proved all *Roman* traditions from thence. We grudge them not those victories; but this flexibility and appliableness to a contrary religion, shews perfectly how leaden a rule those laws are. Without doubt their books would have been received with much more hunger than they are, if the Emperor Maximilian, by Reuchlin's counsel, had not allowed them free and open passage. If there were not some compassion belonged to them who are seduced by them, I should profess that I never read merrier books than those two. Ours therefore begun not only in the first stone but in the entire foundation, by God's own finger,¹²

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

It was intended to serve as a manual of controversy with the Jews and as a defence of Reuchlin. It is, however, one of the most audacious literary plagiarisms that ever appeared, being nothing more than a barefaced appropriation of a work of Porchetus Salvaticus, entitled "Victoria," that work again only professed to be a compilation from Raymund Martin's *Pugio Fidei*. Martin was a Spaniard who wrote in the latter part of the 13th, Salvaticus an Italian who flourished in the 14th century. All three works have been published. Martin's work by Carpzov with an *Introd.* at Leips. fol. 1687.]

¹² [Donne adopts here (and at p. 34) an assertion, of which he takes elsewhere more particular notice, maintained by Chemnitz in his *Examen Conc. Trid.* "nullum igitur dubium est ut

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Exod.
xxx, 18.

xxxii, 19.

xxxiv, 1.

Irenæus,
[Lib. iii, c.
xxi, § 2.]

Tertullian.
[De Cultu
Fœmin.

lib. i, c. 9.]
Clemens
Alex.

[Strom. lib.
i, c. xxi.]
Hieron.

[Adv. Hel-
vid. § 7.]
Eusebius,
&c.¹³

and pursued by HIS SPIRIT, is the only legible book of life, and is without doubt devolved from those to our times. For GOD, who first writ His law in the “tables of our hearts,” and when our corruption had defaced them, writ it again in “stone-tables;” and when Moses’s zealous anger had broken them, writ them again in “other tables,” leaves us not worse provided, whom He loves more, both because He ever in His providence foresaw the Jews’ defection, and because in a natural fatherly affection, He is delighted with His SON’S purchases. For that interruption which the course of this book is imagined by great authors to have had, by the perishing in the captivity, cannot possibly be allowed, if either GOD’S promise, or that history be considered; nor, if that were possible, is it the less the work of GOD, if Esdras refreshed and recompiled it by the

Deus Decalogum prius scripserit in tabulo quam Moses suos libros conscriberet, &c. &c. Exam. Canc. Trid. Franc. fol. 1596, p. 8.]

¹³ Feuarentius in his note on the above cited passage of Irenæus, says Magno consensu antiquissimi scriptores hanc sententiam suis calculis probant.]

same Spirit which was at first the author; nor is it the less ancient, no more than a man is the less old for having slept, than having walked out a day.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Our age therefore hath it, and our Church in our language; for since the Jesuit Sacroboscus, and more late interpreters of the Trent Council, have abandoned their old station, and defence of the letter of the Canon, pronouncing the Vulgate edition to be authentic (which they heretofore assumed for the controverted point), and now say that that Canon doth only prefer it before all Latin translations; and that not "absoluté" (so to avoid barbarisms), but *in ordine ad fidem et mores*; and have given us limits and rules of allowable infirmities in a translation, as corruptions not offensive to faith, observing the meaning, though not the words, if the Hebrew text may bear that reading, and more such; we might, if we had not better assurances, rely upon their words, that we have

Def. Conc.
Trid. c. 1.
[ad finem.]

Essays on the Scripture and nearer perfection
Gen. i, 1. than they.

[The Canon of Council of Trent to which allusion is made in the text is the last in the 4th Session . . . Statuit et declarat, ut hæc ipsa vetus, et vulgata editio, quæ largo tot sæculorum usu in ipsa Ecclesia probata est, in publicis lectionibus, disputationibus, prædicationibus et expositionibus pro authentica habeatur; et ut nemo illam rejicere quovis pretextu audeat, vel præsumat, etc.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[ESSAY II.]

Of Moses.

THE author of these first five books is Moses. In which number, composed of the first even and first odd, because Cabalistic learning seems to most *Occupatissima vanitas*, I will forbear the observations of Picus, in his 'Heptaplus,'¹ and in the 'Harmony' of Francis George, that transcending wit, whom therefore Pererius charges to have *audax nimis, et ad devia et abruta opinionum præceptis ingenium*, though they have many delicacies of honest

In Gen. i. i,
cap. viii.

¹ [Especially the very curious speculations about number in l. iii, c. i.]

and serviceable curiosity, and harmless recreation and entertainment. For as catechisers give us the milk of religion, and positive divines solid nutriment, so when our conscience is sick of scruples, or that the church is wounded by schisms, which make *solutionem continui* (as Chirurgians speak), though there be proper use of controverted Divinity for medicine, yet there be some cankers (as Judaism), which cannot be cured without the Cabal, which is (especially for those diseases), the Paraclesian physic of the understanding, and is not unworthily (if it be only applied where it is so medicinal) called *præambulum Evangelii*.

{ "They of the synagogue of Satan, which call themselves Jews, and are not, but do lie," as though they were still in the desert, and under the incommodities of a continual straying and ignorance of their way (and so they are, and worse; for then they only murmured against their guide, for not performing

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

["Solution of Continuity" is a term used by surgeons for every division of the parts made by wounds or any other cause."
Quincy's Phys. Dict. 8vo, 1719.]

Archangelus.²

² [Burgonovensis Apologia pro Doctrina Cabalæ Contra Pet. Garziam (8vo, Bazil, 1600), p. 67.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Drusius in
Not. ad
Nomen
Tetra.⁴

God's promises, now they have no promise), are not content with this "pillar of fire," this Moses, but have condensed³ to themselves a "pillar of cloud," Rabbi Moses (called the Egyptian, but a Spaniard), *a Mose ad Mosem non surrexit qualis Moses*, they say. This man quarelling with many imperfections, and some contradictions in our Moses' works, and yet concurring with the Jews in their opinion of his perfectness, if he were understood, accomplished and perfected their *legem oralem*, which they account to be delivered by God to our Moses, in His forty day's conversation with him, and after delivered to Esdras, and so descended to these ages. His lateness and singularity makes him not worth thus many words: we will therefore leave this Moses, and hasten to the

³ [So Milton P. L. ix, 636. Compact of unctuous vapour which the night *condenses*, &c. but see Pt. 2 Es. 8, a condensing and rarifying.]

⁴ [In the 8th vol. of the *Critici Sacri*, p. 2172, n. (e) "*Patria erat Cordubensis. Ægyptius autem dicitur quia in Ægypto habitavit De hoc dictitant, a Mose usque ad Mosem non fuit talis qualis Moses iste.*" This saying appears to be the original of the couplet quoted by Archdn. Hare, *Guesses at Truth*.—Sec. Series, 2d edition, p. 80.]

dispatch of the other. Who, because he was principal secretary to the Holy Ghost (I dispute not other dignities, but only priority of time,) is very credible, though he be his own historiographer.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Therefore, though his own books best show who and what he was, let us endeavour otherwise to bring those men to some reverence of his antiquity, who bring no taste to his philosophy, nor faith to his story. Pererius seems peremptory that no author is elder. I think it moved him, that Enoch's book, mentioned in the Epistle of Jude, is perished; so is the book of the battles of the Lord (for anything we know), and that is not spoken of till Num. xxi, 14, and then as of a future thing. He makes it reasonable evident, that Linus, Orpheus, and all Greek learning came after, and from him. But if we shall escape this, that Abraham's book, *De Formationi-*

Pererius in
Gen. [§ 5.]

Jude, 13,
14.⁵

[Pererius
u.s.]

⁵ [A book of Enoch containing the passage quoted by St. Jude was brought home by Bruce the traveller and afterwards translated from the Æthiopic by Archbishop Lawrence. The 3d edition was printed in 1838.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

bus, is yet alive, by suspecting and pronouncing it supposititious (yet Archangelus⁶ says he hath it, and hath commented it, and Francis George⁷ often vouches⁸ it),⁹ how shall we deliver ourselves from Zoroaster's Oracles? Whom Epiphanius¹⁰ places in Nembrot's [Nimrod's] time, and Eusebius¹¹ in Abraham's; since his language is Chaldaic, his works miraculously great (for his Oracles are twenty hundred thousand verses), and his phrase more express,

⁶ [Interpretationes in obscuriora Cabalistarum dogmata, etc. p. 732, vol. i, of *Ars Cabalistica*, per Joh. Pistorinus.]

⁷ [Problemata, to. i, sect. i, Prob. 3, and in the *Harm.*, cant. I, Tamo 7.]

⁸ [So Pt. 3, Es. 15, "The Apostles where they vouch the Old Testament."]

⁹ [For some account of this curious book, the reader may consult "La Kabbale ou La Philosophie Religieuse des Hebreux" par Ad. Franck, etc., Paris, 1843. Professor Franck thus sums up his remarks "1. L'ouvrage Hébreu intitulé le *Livre de la Création* [Sepher Jezireh] dont il existe aujourd'hui plusieurs éditions, est bien celui dont il est parlé sous le même titre et dans le Thalmud de Jérusalem et dans celui de Babylone. 2° Il n'a pu être écrit que dans le temps ou vivaient les premiers docteurs de la Mischna, c'est à dire pendant cette période qui embrasse le siècle qui précède et le demi siècle qui suit immédiatement la naissance du Christ." Ch. ii, p. 9, in Part ii, c. i, of Prof. Franck's work, there is a very full analysis of the book of Abraham.]

¹⁰ Adv. Hæres I, Præl. sect. vi, where see Petavius note.]

¹¹ In *Chronic. Regn. Assyr.*]

and clear, and liquid,¹² in the doctrine of the Trinity than Moses? For where says this, as the other, *toto mundo lucet Trias, cujus Monas est princeps?*¹³

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Heurnicus
de Philos.
Barba-
rica.¹³

From whence shall we say that Hermes Trismegistus sucked his not only Divinity but Christianity? in which no Evangelist, no Father, no Council is more literal and certain. Of the fall of Angels, renovation of the world by fire, eternity of punishments, his Asclepius is plain.¹⁴ Of regeneration who says more than *Nemo servari potest ante regenerationem, et regenerationis generator est Dei filius, homo unus?* Of imputed justice with what author would he change this sentence, *justificati sumus in justitia absentis?* Of our corrupt will and God's providence he says, *Anima nostra relicta à Deo, eligit corpoream naturam; at electio ejus est secundum providentiam Dei.*

De Rege-
neratione
et Silentii
professione
[coll. 15 b,
16 a.]

[u.s. fol.
16 b.]

De Fato
[fol. 38 b.]

¹² [So Milton's Sonnet to the Nightingale, l. 5. "Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day."]

¹³ [Chaldaicus. Zoroast. Oracula, c. i, p. 125.]

¹⁴ Hermes Trismeg. Asclep. fol. i b. col. 1; fol. 46, col. 2; fol. 5a, col. 1.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Minerva
Mundi
[fol. 34 a.]
[Ibid, fol.
29 a, et de
Regenera-
tione, &c.,
fol. 16 b.]

To say with Goropius,¹⁵ that there was no such man, because the public pillars and statues in which were engraved moral institutions, were called Hermæ, is improbable to one who hath read Patricius his answers to him.¹⁶ And if it be true, which Buntingus,¹⁷ in his Chronology, undisputably assumes, that he was the patriarch Joseph, as also that Goropius confounds Zoroaster and Japhet, then Moses was not the first author. But Hermes, his naming of Italy and the twelve constellations of the Zodiac, are arguments and impressions of a later time. To unentangle ourselves in this perplexity, is more labour than profit, or perchance possibility. Therefore, as in violent tempests, when a ship dares bear no main sail, and to lie still at hull,¹⁸ obeying the uncertain wind and tide, puts them much out of their way, and altogether

¹⁵ [J. Goropius Beckannus Hieroglyphyca, lib. i, p. 14.]

¹⁶ [In the work noticed in a former note, fol. 1-3.]

¹⁷ [Henrici Buntingi Chronologia Catholica in anno Mundi 2261, fol. 28 b, Magd. 1608.]

¹⁸ [So Milton, Par. Lost, xi, 840,—“He looked and saw the ark hull on the flood.”]

out of their account, it is best to put forth such a small rag of sail as may keep the bark upright, and make her continue near one place, though she proceed not; so in this question, where we cannot go forward to make Moses the first author, for many strong oppositions, and to lie hulling upon the face of the waters, and think nothing, is a stupid and lazy inconsideration, which (as Saint Austin says) is the worst of all affections, our best firmament and arrest will be that reverent, and pious, and reasonable credulity, that God was author of the first piece of these books, the Decalogue; and of such authors as God pre-ordained to survive all philosophers, and all tyrants, and all heretics, and be the canons of faith and manners to the world's end, Moses had the primacy. So that the divine and learned book of Job must be content to be disposed to a later rank (as indeed it hath somewhat a Greek taste), or to accept Moses for author. For to confess that it was found by Moses in

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Rom. i.¹⁹

¹⁹ [v. 20? August. Enarratio in Ps. lv, § 6.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Midian, were to derogate from the other prerogative generally afforded to him.

Hieron.
Ep. ad
Pauli-
num.²⁰


Here therefore I will temperately end this inquisition. Hierome tells me true, *Puerile est et circulatorum ludo simile docere quod ignores*. And besides, when I remember that it was GOD which hid Moses's body,²¹ and the Devil which laboured to reveal it, I use it thus, that there are some things which the Author of light hides from us, and the prince of darkness strives to show to us; but with no other light than his firebrands of contention and curiosity.

²⁰ [De Studio Scripturarum, Ep. 53 al. 103, § 7.]

²¹ [See Deut. xxxiv, 6, and the marginal reference to Jude 9.]

[ESSAY III.]

[OF THIS FIRST BOOK.]

*Of Genesis.**
Essays on
Gen. i, 1


PICUS, Earl of Mirandula (happier in no one thing in this life, than in the author¹ which writ it to us), being a man of an incontinent wit, and subject to the concupiscence of inaccessible knowledges and transcendencies, pursuing the rules of Cabal, out of the word Bresit, which is the title of this first book, by vexing and transposing and anagrammatizing the letters, hath expressed and wrung out this sum of Christian religion. “The Father, in

[בראשית]

In fine
Heptap.²

¹ [Sir Thomas More. It is to be found in his English works.]

² [Expos. primæ Dict. *i. e.* “In principio” . . . Videamus autem quid primo hæc Latine significant tum quæ per ea non ignaris philosophiæ de tota natura mysteria revelentur . . . Et totam si ordine consequenti oratione texamus, erit hujusmodi Pater in Filio et per Filium principium et finem, sive qui quietem creavit caput ignem et fundamentum magni hominis fœdere bono . . . nam si homo est parvus mundus utique mundus est magnus homo.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

“and through the Son, which is the
“beginning, end and rest, created in
“a perfect league, the head, fire and
“foundation (which he calls heaven,
“air and earth) of the great man,”
(which he calls the world). And he
hath not only delivered Moses from
any dissonance with other sound phi-
losophers, but hath observed all other
philosophy in Moses’ words; and more,
hath found all Moses’ learning in every
verse of Moses.

Gen. v, 1.

But since our merciful God hath
afforded us the whole and entire book,
why should we tear it into rags, or
rend the seamless garment?—since
the intention of God, through Moses,
in this, was that it might be to the
Jews a “Book of the generation of
“Adam;”—since, in it is purposely pro-
pounded, that all this universe, *Plants*,
the chiefest contemplation of natural
philosophy and physic (and no small
part of the wisdom of Solomon, “who
“spake of plants from cedar to hys-
“sop”); and *Beasts* (who have often

1 Kings,
iv, 33.

the honour to be our reproach, accited³ for examples of virtue and wisdom in the Scriptures, and some of them se-
 posed⁴ for the particular passive service of God in sacrifices (which He gave to no man but His Son, and withheld from Isaac); and *Man* (who, like his own eye, sees all but himself, in his opinion, but so dimly that there are marked an hundred differences in men's writings concerning an ant⁵); and *Spirits* (of whom we understand no more than a horse of us); and *the receptacles and theatres of all these*,—earth, sea, air, heaven, and all things—were once nothing: that man, choosing his own destruction, did what he could to annihilate himself again, and yet received a promise of a Redeemer; that God's mercy may not be distrusted, nor His justice tempted, since the

Essays on
 Gen. i, 1.

³ [So Shakspeare, Henry IV, pt. ii, act. v, s. iii,—

“Our coronation done we will accite,

As I before remembered all our state.”

but see Pt. 2, Es. 7, Ptolomæus accited from Jerusalem, &c.]

⁴ [See note at Pt. 1, Es. 7.]

⁵ [I have in vain endeavoured to obtain any explanation of this allusion, and should be thankful if any of my more learned readers would refer me to the passage which Donne had in mind.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

general deluge and Joseph's preservation are here related, filling a history of more than two thousand three hundred years, with such examples as might mollify the Jews in their wandering. I say, since this was directly and only purposed by Moses ;—to put him in a wine-press, and squeeze out philosophy and particular Christianity, is a degree of that injustice, which all laws forbid, to torture a man, *sine iudiciis aut sine probationibus*.

Of the time when Moses writ this book, there are two opinions, which have good guides and good followers. I, because to me it seems reasonable and clear that no divine work preceded the Decalogue, have therefore engaged myself to accompany Chemnitius,⁶ who is persuaded by Theodoret, Bede, and reason (because here is intimation of a Sabbath, and distinction of clean and unclean in beasts), that this book was written after the law ; and leave Pererius,⁷ whom Eusebius hath won to think

⁶ [See above, p. 19, n (12).]

⁷ [In Præf. ad Comm. in Gen. § 12.]

this book was written in Midian, induced only by Moses' forty years' leisure there; and a likelihood that this story might well conduce to his end of reclining⁸ the Jews from Egypt.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

And thus much necessarily, or conveniently, or pardonably, may have been said before my entrance, without disproportioning the whole work. For even in Solomon's magnificent temple, the porch to the temple had the proportion of twenty cubits to sixty. Our next step is upon the threshold itself, In the beginning, &c.

[ESSAY IV.]

PART I.

[OF THE TIME.]

“In the beginning.”

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

“**I**N the beginning whereof, O only
“Eternal God, of Whose being,
“beginning, or lasting, this beginning

⁸ [*i. e.* his end of urging the Jews to go *back* from Egypt to their forefather's home.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

“ is no period, nor measure ;¹ Which
 “ art no circle, for Thou hast no ends
 “ to close up ; Which art not within
 “ this all, for it cannot comprehend
 “ Thee ; nor without it, for Thou fillest
 “ it ; nor art it Thyself, for Thou madest
 “ it ; Which having decreed from all
 “ Eternity to do Thy great work of
 “ Mercy, our redemption ‘ in the ful-
 “ ness of time,’ didst now create *time*
 “ itself to conduce to it ; and madest
 “ Thy glory and Thy mercy equal thus,
 “ that though Thy glorious work of
 “ creation were first, Thy merciful work
 “ of redemption was greatest. Let me,
 “ in Thy beloved servant Augustine’s
 “ own words, when with an humble
 “ boldness he begged the understanding
 “ of this passage, say,²—‘ Moses writ
 “ this but is gone from me to Thee : if
 “ he were here, I would hold him and
 “ beseech him for Thy sake, to tell me
 “ what he meant. If he spake Hebrew,
 “ He would frustrate my hope ; but if

¹ [Compare the first four chapters of St. Augustine’s Confessions, of which all this is but an abbreviation.]

² [Conf. lib. xi, c. iii, § 5.]

“Latin, I should comprehend him. Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
 “But from whence should I know that
 “he said true?—Or when I knew it, came
 “that knowledge from him? No, for
 “within me, within me there is a truth,
 “not Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, nor
 “Barbarous; which without organs,
 “without noise of syllables, tells me
 “true, and would enable me to say con-
 “fidently to Moses, Thou sayest true!”
 Thus did he whom Thou hadst filled
 with faith, desire reason and under-
 standing; as men blest with great
 fortunes desire numbers of servants,
 and other complements of honour.
 But another instrument and engine of
 Thine, whom Thou hadst so enabled
 that nothing was too mineral nor
 centric for the search and reach of his
 wit, hath remembered⁴ me: “That it
 “is an article of our belief that the
 “world began.”—And therefore for this
 point, we are not under the insinu-
 ations and mollifyings of persuasion,

[Aquinas
Summa
pt. I,
Quæst.
xlvi, art.
ii.³]

³ [Utrum mundum incæpisse sit articulus fidei (Affirm.)]

⁴ [Donne uses this word perpetually in this sense: it is not quite obsolete among us though now confined I think to epistolary messages.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

and conveniency ; nor under the reach and violence of argument, or demonstration, or necessity ; but under the spiritual and peaceable tyranny, and easy yoke of sudden and present faith. Nor doth he say this, that we should discharge ourselves upon his word, and slumber in a lazy faith ; for no man was ever more endeavourous than he in such inquisitions ; nor he in any, more than in this point. But after he had given answers to all the arguments of reasonable and natural men, for a beginning of this world ; to advance faith duly above reason, he assigns this, with other mysteries, only to her comprehension. For reason is our sword, faith our target. With that we prevail against others, with this we defend ourselves : and old, well disciplined armies punished more severely the loss of this than that.⁵

This word “In the beginning” is the beginning of this book, which we

⁵ [See Plutarch, Apophth. Lacon. Demarati, ii, p. 220 A. For the punishment of a *ῥίψασιπς* at Athens, see Lysias Or. x, p. 117.]

find first placed of all the holy books ; Essays on Gen. i, 1.
 and also of the Gospel by St. John, St. John, i, 1.
 which we know to be last written of
 all.⁶ But that last beginning was the
 first ; for “ the Word was with God,”
 before God created heaven and earth.
 And Moses his “ In the beginning ”
 hath ever been used powerfully and
 prosperously against philosophers and
 heretics relapsed into an opinion of the
 world’s eternity.⁷ But St. John’s “ In
 “ the beginning,” hath ever had
 strength against the author of all error,
 the Devil himself, if we may believe
 the relations of exorcists, who in their
 dispossessings, mention strange obedi-
 ences of the Devil at the naked enun-
 ciation of that word.⁸

It is not then all one beginning ; for
 here God did, there He was. That
 confesses a limitation of time, this
 excludes it.

⁶ [Irenæus, l. iii, c. xi ; Euseb. H. E. l. v. c. 8 ; but especially Hieron. in Prolog. ad Ev. S. Matt.]

⁷ [See Pererius in Genesim, lib. i, § 25-35.]

⁸ [“ A ‘Gospel’ in Connaught phraseology means a piece of red cloth, on which is stitched the figure of a bleeding heart, inclosing a paper containing a few verses of the first chapter of St. John. This, after being blest by the priest, is worn round the neck as a kind of amulet.”—Church Miss. Intelligencer, Feb. 1853, p. 46, n.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Concilia
T. i, De
Conc. Nic.⁹

The great philosopher (whom I call so, rather for his conversion than his arguments), who was Arius his advocate at the first Nicene Council, assigned a beginning between these two beginnings; saying, that after John's eternal beginning, and before Moses's timely beginning, Christ had His beginning, being then created by God for an instrument in His general creation. But God forbid that anything should need to be said against this, now.

We therefore confessing two beginnings, say, that this first was *simul cum tempore*,¹⁰ and that it is truly said of it, *Erat quando non erat*,¹¹ and that it instantly vanished: and that the last beginning lasts yet, and ever shall: and that our merciful God, as He made no creature so frail and corrupti-

⁹ [I suppose he is alluding to Gelasius, Hist. Conc. Nic. lib. ii, c. xvii, apud Labbe vol. ii.]

¹⁰ [Of course Donne had in his mind the 12th book of Augustine's Confessions. In the 21st chapter the interpretation of the phrase "In the beginning," which makes it to mean, "in the beginning of time," is discussed.]

¹¹ [Aug. Conf. l. xi, c. 15. Præteritum vero jam non erat; unde nec longum esse poterat, quod omnino non erat, &c.]

ble as the first beginning, which, being
 “but the first point of time,” died as
 soon as it was made, flowing into the
 next point; so though He made no
 creature like the last beginning (for if
 it had been as it, eternal, it had been
 no creature); yet it pleased Him to
 come so near it, that our soul, though
 it began with that first beginning,
 shall continue and ever last with the
 last.¹²

Essays on
 Gen. i, 1.

We may not dissemble, nor dare
 reprove, nor would avoid another ordi-
 nary interpretation of this “beginning,”
 because it hath great and agreeing
 authority, and a consonance with our
 faith; which is, that by the beginning
 here, is meant the Son our Saviour;¹³
 for that is elsewhere said of Him “I
 “am first and last, which is, and was, Rev. i, 8.
 “and is to come.” And hereby they

¹² [The above paragraph is somewhat obscure; the meaning is: Gen. i, 1, refers to the beginning of Time; St. Jno. i, 1, to Eternity which has no beginning: the first moment of time died as soon as born; but no creature could be from eternity. The soul however is so like an eternal creature, that if it had been created when time began (Gen. i, 1) it would last for ever as He shall who is spoken of, St. Jno. i, 1.]

¹³ [Cf. Aug. Conf. xii, c. xx, and De Gen. ad Lit. i, § 6.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

would establish His co-eternity, and consubstantialness, because He can be no creature who is present at the first creation. But because although to us (whom the Spirit hath made faithfully credulous, and filled us with an assurance of this truth) every conducing and convenient application governs and commands our assent¹⁴ (because it doth but remember us, not teach us); [yet]¹⁵ to the Jews, who roundly deny this exposition, and to the Arians, who accept it (and yet call Christ a creature, as forecreated for an assistant in this second creation); these detortions have small force but (as sunbeams striking obliquely, or arrows diverted with a twig by the way), they lessen their strength, being turned upon another mark than they were destined to.

And therefore by the example of our late learned Reformers, I forbear this interpretation; the rather, because we are utterly disprovided of any history of the world's creation, except we

¹⁴ [Compare the grand passage in Aug. Conf. xii, c. 31.]

¹⁵ [I suggest this in the room of the "But" of the printed copy.]

defend and maintain this book of Essays on Gen. i, 1. Moses to be historical, and therefore literally to be interpreted. Which I urge not with that peremptoriness, as Bellarmine doth, who answers all the arguments of Moses's silence in many points maintained by that Church, with this only, *Est liber Historiarum non Dogmatum.* For then it were improperly argued by our Saviour, "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he writ of me." There is St. John. v, 46. then in Moses both history and precept, but evidently distinguishable without violence.

That then this beginning *was*, is matter of *faith*, and so infallible. *When* it was, is matter of *reason*, and therefore various and perplexed.

In the Epistle of Alexander the Great to his mother, remembered by Cyprian and Augustin, there is mention of 8000 years.¹⁶ The Chaldæans have delivered observations of 47,000

¹⁶ [Cyprian de Idol. Van. p. 9. Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. xii, c. x, § 2. But I have no doubt Donne was quoting from Pererius who gives the account of and authority for much that follows in this paragraph. Lib. i, sect. 30 and seq.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

years, and the Egyptians of 100,000. The Chinese vex us at this day, with irreconcilable accounts. And to be sure that none shall prevent¹⁷ them, some¹⁸ have called themselves “Aborigines.” The poor remedy of lunary¹⁹ and other planetary years, the silly and contemptible escape, that some authors speak of running years, some of years expired and perfected; or that the account of days and months are neglected, cannot ease us, nor afford us line enough to fathom this bottom.

Bib. Sanct.
l. 5.²⁰

The last refuge uses to be, that profane history cannot clear, but Scripture can. Which is the best, because it is half true; but that the latter part is true, or that GOD purposed to reveal it in His Book, it seems doubtful, because Sextus Senensis reckons almost thirty several supputations of the years be-

¹⁷ [In the sense of “precede.”]

¹⁸ [*e. g.* Herodot. i, c. 171.]

¹⁹ [Pererius u. s. § 32.]

²⁰ [Apud Perer. u. s. § 33 at Sextus Senensis l. 5, Bibliothecæ sanctæ prope triginta supputationes annorum ab ortu mundi ad Domini nostri adventum collegerit omnes inter se discrepantes, a bonis tamen auctoribus traditas, et vero si omnes voluisset persequi, ad quinquaginta recensere potuisset.]

tween the creation, and our blessed Saviour's birth, all of accepted authors, grounded upon the Scriptures, and Pererius confesses, he might have increased the number by twenty. And they who in a devout melancholy delight themselves with this meditation, that they can assign the beginning of all arts which we use for necessity or ornament, and conclude, that men which cannot live without such, were not long before such inventions, forget both that many nations want those commodities²¹ yet, and that there are as great things perished and forgotten, as are now remaining.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Truly, the creation and the last judgement, are the "diluculum" and "crepusculum," the morning and the evening twilights, of the long day of this world. Which times, though they be not utterly dark, yet they are but of uncertain, doubtful, and conjectural

²¹ [Often used by Donne in the sense of 'convenience.' So letters, p. 223, ed. 1651, "Sir, if I have no more the *commodity* of writing to you," &c. and again, p. 298, "Entreat my lord at his best commodity," &c.; indeed it is a very common word in the writings of this period.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[NB.—
Not ‘*di-
versely*,’
see Con-
fessions
of an In-
quiring
Spirit,
Letter III,
where
Coleridge
has a note
upon the
word.]

light. Yet not equally; for the break of the day, because it hath a succession of more and more light, is clearer than the shutting in, which is overtaken with more and more darkness; so is the birth of the world more discernible than the death, because upon this God hath cast more clouds; yet since the world in her first infancy did not speak to us at all (by any authors), and when she began to speak by Moses, she spake not plain, but diversly to divers understandings; we must return again to our stronghold, faith, and end with this, that this beginning was, and before it, nothing.²² It is elder than darkness, which is elder than light; and was before confusion, which is elder than order, by how much the universal Chaos preceded forms and distinctions.

A beginning so near eternity, that there was no “then,”²³ nor a minute of time between them. Of which eternity could never say, “to-morrow,” nor speak as of a future thing, because

²² [Compare August. Conf. xii, c. 29.]

²³ [Aug. Conf. xi, 13.]

this beginning was the first point of time, before which, whatsoever God did, He did it uncessantly and unintermittingly; which was but the generation of the Son, and procession of the Spirit, and enjoying one another; things which if ever they had ended, had begun; and those be terms incompatible with eternity.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

And therefore St. Augustine says religiously and exemplarily; ²⁴ “If one ask me what God did before this beginning I will not answer, as another did merrily, He made Hell for such busy inquirers; but I will sooner say, I know not, when I know not, than answer that, by which he shall be deluded which asked too high a mystery, and he be praised, which answered a lie.”

Conf. lib.
xi, c. 12.

²⁴ [So Serm. on Is. vii, 14, § 4—“The priest was an exemplar person.”]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[ESSAY V.]

PART II.

[OF THE PERSON] OF GOD.

NOW we have ended our consideration of this beginning, we will begin with that, which was before it, and was author of it, GOD Himself, and bend our thoughts first upon Himself, then upon His name, and then upon the particular name here used, Elohim.

Men which seek GOD by reason and natural strength (though we do not deny common notions and general impressions of a sovereign power) are like mariners which voyaged before the invention of the compass, which were but coasters,¹ and unwillingly left the sight of the land. Such are they which would arrive at GOD by this world, and contemplate Him only in His creatures, and seeming demonstration. — Certainly, every creature shows GOD, as a

¹ [Compare Pseudo Martyr, c. iv, § 25. Old monks were used heretofore to be but coasters about their own cloister; further than the contemplation of Heaven (which was their Bible) and of the stars (which were the devout interpreters thereof) guided them they did not easily venture. . . . But the Jesuits in this latter age have found out the use of the compass; which is the Pope's will, &c.]

glass, but glimmeringly and transitorily, by the frailty both of the receiver, and beholder : ourselves have His image, as medals, permanently and preciously delivered. But by these meditations, we get no further, than to know what He doth, not what He is.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

But as by the use of the compass, men safely dispatch Ulysses' dangerous ten years' travel in so many days, and have found out a new world richer than the old ; so doth faith, as soon as our hearts are touched with it, direct and inform [us] in that great search of the discovery of God's essence, and the new Jerusalem, which reason durst not attempt. And though the faithfullest heart is not ever directly, and constantly upon God, but that it sometimes descends also to reason ; yet it is not thereby so departed from Him, but that it still looks toward Him, though not fully to Him : as the compass is ever Northward, though it decline, and have often variations towards East and West.

[The original has 'it' which seems an error of the press.]

By this faith,—as by reason I know

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

that GOD is all that which all men can say of all good,—I believe He is somewhat which no man can say nor know. For, *si scirem quid Deus esset, Deus essem*. For all acquired knowledge is by degrees and successive; but GOD is impartible² and only faith which can receive it all at once, can comprehend Him.

Canst thou then, O my soul, when faith hath extended and enlarged thee, not as wind doth a bladder (which is the nature of human learning), but as GOD hath displayed the curtain of the firmament, and more spaciouly (for thou comprehendest that, and Him which comprehends it): Canst thou be satisfied with such a late knowledge of GOD as is gathered from effects, when even reason, which feeds upon the crumbs and fragments of appearances and verisimilitudes, requires causes? Canst thou rely and lean upon so infirm a knowledge, as is delivered by negations? And because a

² [Possibly this word may be used in allusion to the first article of the Church "Unus est vivus et verus Deus . . . impartibilis," &c. I have not noticed it elsewhere.]

devout speculative man hath said *Negationes de Deo sunt veræ, affirmationes autem sunt inconvenientes*, will it serve thy turn to hear that GOD is that which cannot be named, cannot be comprehended, or which is nothing else, when every negation implies some privation, which cannot be safely enough admitted in GOD; and is besides, so inconsiderable a kind of proof that in civil and judicial practice no man is bound by it, nor bound to prove it? Can it give thee any satisfaction to hear GOD called by concrete names, Good, Just, Wise; since these words can never be without confessing better, wiser, and more just? Or if He be called Best, &c., or in such phrase, the highest degree respects some lower, and mean one: and are those in GOD? Or is there any creature, any degree of that best, by which we should call GOD? Or art thou got any nearer, by hearing Him called abstractly, Goodness; since that, and such, are communicable,³ and daily applied to

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
Dionysius
Areop.
Cælest.
Hier. c. ii.

³ [See p. 58 (n. 5) and again p. 94, humbler and more communicable than the kings of Egypt, &c.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

princes? Art thou delighted with arguments arising from order and subordination of creatures, which must at last end in some one, which ends in none? or from the preservation of all this universe, when men which have not had faith, and have opposed reason to reason, have escaped from all these, without confessing such a God, as thou knowest; at least, without feeling thereby, what He is? Have they furthered, or eased thee any more, who not able to consider whole and infinite God, have made a particular God, not only of every power of God, but of every benefit? And so filled the world (which our God alone doth better) with so many, that Varro could account thirty thousand, and of them three hundred Jupiters. Out of this proceeded *Dea febris, and Dea fraus, and Tenebris, and Onions and Garlic*. For the Egyptians, most abundant in idolatry, were from thence said to have gods grow in their gardens.⁴ And Tertullian, noting that gods became

[See Tertul. Apol. c. 14, and August. Ep. xvii, § 2.]

⁴ [O sanctas gentes quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis Numina! Juv. Sat. xv, 10.]

men's creatures, said, *Homo incipit esse propitius Deo*, because gods were beholden to men for their being. And thus did a great Greek general, when he pressed the Islanders for money, tell them, that he presented two gods, *Vim et Suasionem*: and conformably to this they answered, that they opposed two gods, *Paupertatem et Impossibilitatem*.⁵ And this multiplicity of gods may teach thee, that the resultance of all these powers is one God, and that no place or action is hid from Him; but it teacheth not, who, nor what He is.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
Tertul.
Apol. c. v.

And too particular and restrained are all those descents of God in His word, when He speaks of a body, and of passions, like ours. And such also is their reverent silence, who have expressed God in Hieroglyphics, ever determining⁶ in some one power of God, without larger extent. And lastly,

⁵ [Themistocles and the Andrians. See Herodot. viii, 3, and Plutarch, Themist. 21.]

⁶ [*i. e.* "Stopping short." So Shakspeare Coriol. act. iii, s. iii, "Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?"

Must all determine here?"

But see next essay, p. 59, "they signified some determined and limited property."]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

can thy great capacity be fulfilled,⁷ with that knowledge, which the Roman Church affords of God, which, as though the state of a monarchy were too terrible, and refulgent for our sight, hath changed the kingdom of Heaven into an oligarchy : or at least, given God leisure, and deputed masters of His requests, and counsellors in His great Star Chamber ?

[Numbers,
xxxiii, 52.]

Thou shalt not then, O my faithful soul, despise any of these erroneous pictures, thou shalt not destroy, nor demolish their buildings ; but thou shalt not make them thy foundation. For thou believest more than they pretend to teach, and art assured of more than thou canst utter. For if thou couldst express all which thou seest of God, there would be something presently beyond that⁸, not that God grows, but faith doth. For, God Himself is so unutterable, that He hath a name which we cannot pronounce.⁹

⁷ [Compare the collect in the post-communion service, "may be fulfilled with Thy grace," &c.]

⁸ [Compare August. Serm. 53 . . . Finisti alicubi? Si finisti, Deus non est, &c.]

⁹ [Compare Sermon on Psalm vi, 1, part i, § Jehovah.]



ESSAY VI.

[OF THE NAME OF GOD.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
}

NAMES are either to avoid confusion, and distinguish particulars (and so every day begetting new inventions, and the names often overliving the things, curious entangled wits have vexed themselves to know whether in the world there were more things or names): but such a name, God, who is ONE, needs not. Or else names are to instruct us, and express natures and essences. This Adam was able to do. And an enormous pre-
tending wit of our nation and age undertook to frame such a language, herein exceeding Adam, that whereas he named everything by the most eminent and virtual property, our man gave names, by the first naked enunciation whereof, any understanding should comprehend the essence of the thing, better than by a definition.

[I have as yet been baffled in my attempts to discover who is meant. On the subject itself, see Bacon de Augment. Scient. l. vi, c. i.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Aquinas
Summa
Theol. pt
I, q. 13.
art. i.¹

And such a name, we, who know not GOD's essence, cannot give him. So that it is truly said, there is no name given by man to GOD, *Ejus essentiam adæquatè repræsentans*. And Hermes² says humbly and reverently, *Non spero*. I cannot hope that the Maker of all Majesty can be called by any one name, though compounded of many.

I have therefore sometimes suspected that there was some degree of pride, and overboldness in the first naming of GOD: the rather because I mark, that the first which ever pronounced the name GOD, was the Devil;³ and presently after the woman; who in the next chapter proceeded further, and first durst pronounce that sacred and mystic name of four letters. For when an angel did but ministerially represent GOD wrestling with Jacob, he reproves Jacob, for asking his name;

¹ [Deus . . . potest nominari a nobis ex creaturis; non tamen ita quod nomen significans ipsum exprimat divinam essentiam secundum quod est.]

² [Quod inmanifest. Deus manifest. est ad fin.]

³ [But there only the name Elohim.]

Cur quæris nomen meum? And so also to Manoah, "Why askest thou my name, *quod est mirabile?* And God to dignify that angel which He promises to lead His people, says, "Fear him, provoke him not &c. For "My name is in him;" but He tells them not what it is.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Judges,
xiii, 18.

Exod.
xxiii, 10.

But since necessity hath enforced, and God's will hath revealed, some names, (For in truth, we could not say this, "God cannot be named," except God could be named), to handle the mysteries of these names, is not for the straitness of these leaves, nor of my stock. But yet I will take from Picus those words which his extreme learning needed not, *Ex lege, spicula linquuntur pauperibus in messe*, the richest and learnedst must leave gleanings behind them.—Omitting therefore God's attributes, Eternity, Wisdom and such;

Proem. ad
Heptapl.⁴

⁴ [. . . An quum doctissimi interpretes . . . juxta legis edictum intactam partem aliquam reliquissent, nobis utpote infirmioribus demetendam. Unde mihi ego quoque vel pauculas spicas decerpere imponendam aris Ecclesiæ quasi primitias frugum, ne a privilegiis templi seu non verus Israëlita seu penitus asymbolus eliminaret. Præf. ad Laurent. Medicem.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

and His names communicable⁵ with princes and such; there are two names proper and expressing His essence: one imposed by us, GOD; the other taken by GOD.—(the name of four letters); for the name, I AM is derived from the same root.

The name imposed by us comes so near the other, that most nations express it in four letters;⁶ and the Turk almost as mystically, as the Hebrew, in Abgd, almost ineffably and hence perchance was derived the Pythagorean oath, by the number of four,⁷ and in this also, that though it be given from GOD's works, not from his essence, (for that is impossible to us) yet the root signifies all this, *Curare, Ardere and Considerare*; and is purposed and intended to signify as much the essence, as we can ex-

Aquinas,
Summa
Theol. i,
xiii, a. 8.]

⁵ [*i. e.*, common to God and princes. Compare Paradise Regained, book iii, l. 125,—

“ and impart
His good, communicable to every soul
Freely”]

⁶ [There is a curious list of names which various nations give to the Divine Being, in Beveridge, on the Art, art. i, n. 1.]

⁷ [See the passages from Plutarch and Lucian, given in Menagius's note to Diog. Laert. viii, 22.]

press ; and is never afforded absolutely to any but GOD himself. And therefore Aquinas, after he had preferred the name I AM above all, both because others were from forms, this from essence ; they signified some determined and limited property, this whole and entire GOD ; and this best expressed, that nothing was past, nor future to GOD ; he adds, yet the name GOD is more proper than this, and the name of four letters more than that.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Aquinas
U.S. Art.
xi, [ad fin.]

[ESSAY VII.]

[OF THE] TETRAGRAMMATON.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

OF which name one says,¹ that as there is a secret property by which we are changed into GOD, (referring, I think, to that “ We are made partakers of the godly nature”) so GOD hath a 2 Pet. i, 4.

¹ [Reuchlin de Verbo Mirifico, c. vi, lib. ii, p. 122. . . . At vero sicut ea proprietates, quâ transmutamur in Deum et naturam humanam excedimus, secreta nobis et occulta est, ita, jure optimo, Deus ei occulta et secreta quoque nomina dedit eisdemque pacta quædam indidit, quibus observatis mox ad eorum debitam prolationem pro voto nostro præsens ipse accedat.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[Reuchlin,
in the
above
quoted
work,
dwells on
all the
matters in
the text.]

certain name, to which He hath annexed certain conditions which being observed He hath bound Himself to be present.

This is the name, which the Jews stubbornly deny ever to have been attributed to the Messias in the Scriptures. This is the name, which they say none could utter, but the priests, and that the knowledge of it perished with the Temple. And this is the name by which they say our blessed Saviour did all His miracles having learned the true use of it, by a Schedule² which he found of Solomon's, and that any other, by that means might do them.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[ESSAY VIII.]

[OF THE NAME] JEHOVAH.

[See a
Letter to
Ussher on
thesubject.]

HOW this name should be sounded, is now upon the anvil, and every body is beating and hammering upon it.

² [So Love's Labour Lost, i, i,—

“..... those statutes
That are recorded in this *schedule* here.”]

That it is not JEHOVAH, this governs¹ me that the Septuagint never called it so; nor Christ; nor the Apostles, where they vouch the Old Testament; nor Origen, nor Hierome, curious in language. And though negatives have ever their infirmities, and must not be built on, this may, that our fathers heard not the first sound of this word JEHOVAH. For (for any thing appearing) Galatinus, in their age, was the first that offered it. For, that Hierome² should name it in the exposition of the eighth Psalm, it is peremptorily averred by Drusius, and admitted by our learnedst doctor,⁴ that in the old editions it was not JEHOVAH.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Works,
vol. xv,
323.]

[p. 26, n.
4.]

Drusius de
Nomine
Tetrag.³

But more than any other reason, this doth accomplish and perfect the opinion against that word, that whereas that language hath no natural vowels inserted, but points subjected, of the

¹ [So part iv, p. 83, "Basil governed by the words in Genesis."]

² [The Breviarium in Psalmos, which Donne quotes always as a genuine work, is not by St. Jerome; the passage alluded to in the text stands without any hint of its being an interpolation.]

³ [c. 21, p. 2162 of vol. viii of Critici Sacri.]

⁴ Rainolds de [Rom. Eccl.] Idol. lib. ii, [c. 3,] § 18. [His note on the subject is a long and elaborate one.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Genebrard
de Leg.
Orient.
sine punc-
tis.

value and sound of our vowels, added by the Masorites, the Hebrew critics, after Esdras; and therefore they observe a necessity of such a natural and infallible concurrence of consonants, that when such and such consonants meet, such and such vowels must be imagined, and sounded, by which they have an art of reading it without points: by those rules, those vowels cannot serve those consonants nor the name JEHOVAH be built of those four letters and vowels of Adonai.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[Horace
Ars Poet :
l. 170.]

[ESSAY IX.]

[OF THE NAME] ELOHIM.

OF the name used in this place, much needs not. But as old age is justly charged with this sickness, that though it abound, it ever covets, though it need less than youth did; so hath also this decrepit age of the world such a sickness; for though we

have now a clearer understanding of the Scriptures than former times, (for we inherit the talents and travails¹ of all expositors, and have overlived most of the prophecies), and though the gross thick clouds of Arianism be dispersed, and so we have few enemies; yet we affect, and strain at more arguments for the Trinity, than those times did, which needed them more.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Hereupon hath an opinion that by this name of God, Elohim, because it is plurally pronounced in this place and with a singular verb, the Trinity is insinuated, first of any begun by Peter Lombard, been since earnestly pursued by Lyra, Galatin, and very many. And because Calvin, in a brave religious scorn of this extortion and beggarly wresting of Scriptures, denies this place, with others usually offered for that point, to

Sent. i,
Dist. ii.²

¹ [In the sense of "labours."]

² [§ 6. Moyses dicit: "In principio creavit Deus cœlum et terram; per 'Deum' significans Patrem; per 'Principium,' Filium. Et pro eo quod apud nos Deus dicitur, Hebraica veritas habet Heloym, quod est pluralis hujus singularis quod est Hel. Quod ergo non est dictum Hel, quod est Deus, sed Heloym, . . . ad pluralitatem personarum refertur."]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Antipar.
fo. 9. [Not
there but
in the
Calvinus
Judaizan
c. i.]

concern it, and his defender Paræus³ denies any good author to approve it, Hunnius opposes Luther, and some after, but none before, to be of that opinion.

But, lest any should think this a prevarication in me, or a purpose to shew the nakedness of the fathers of our church, by opening their disagreeing, though in no fundamental thing, I will also remember, that great pillars of the Roman church differ with as much bitterness and less reason in this point. For when Cajetan had said true, that this place was not so interpretable, but yet upon false grounds (that the word Elohim had no singular, which is evidently false,⁴) Catharinus in his animadversions upon Cajetan, reprehends him

³ [Comment. in Gen. in loc. p. 21. Plures denique recentiorum interpretum voce plurali אלהים, mysterium Trinitatis Personarum in Deo et constructione cum verbo singulari mysterium Unitatis essentiæ a Mose insinuatam volunt; ut *Lutherus* et ante hos Burgensis, Galatinus, &c. quorum sententia ut pia sit, firma tamen satis non omnibus videtur, &c. D. David Paræus Op. Theol. Exeg. Francf., 3 vols. fol.]

⁴ [Castello in his *Lexicon Heptagl.* in the App. to Walton's *Polyglot*, refers for the singular form to Deut. xxxii, 17; Job iii, 4, 23; Dan. xi, 38. Donne, however, made the assertion in the text from his own observation.]

bitterly⁵ for his truth and spies not his error: and though Tostatus long before said the same, and Lombard were the first that writ the contrary, he denies any to have been of Cajetan's opinion.—

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

It satisfies me, for the phrase, that I am taught by collation of many places in the Scriptures, that it is a mere idiotism. And for the matter, [i.e. idiom. that our Saviour never applied this place to that purpose: and that I mark the first place which the fathers in the Nicene Council objected against Arius his philosopher, was *faciamus hominem*, and this never mentioned.⁶

Gen. i. 26.

Thus much of Him, Who hath said “I have been found by them which have not sought Me;” and therefore most assuredly in another place, “If thou seek Me, thou shalt find Me.”

Is. lxxv, 1.

[Prov. viii, 17.]

I have adventured in His name upon His name.

⁵ [Donne very frequently used this word in the sense of to rebuke; so Milton's translation of Ps. vi, 1, “Lord, in thine anger do not reprehend me.”]

⁶ [Gelasius, Hist. Conc. Nic. lib. ii, ch. xv, apud Labbe et Cossart, Paris, 1671.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Our next consideration must be His most glorious work which He hath yet done in any time,— the Creation.

[ESSAY X.]

PART III.

[OF THE ACTION.]

[Eccles.iii,
11.]

MUNDUM tradidit disputationi eorum, ut non inveniat homo opus quod operatus est Deus ab initio usque ad finem. So that GOD will be glorified both in our searching these mysteries, because it testifies our liveliness towards Him, and in our not finding them.

Lawyers, more than others have ever been tyrants over words and have made them accept other significations, than their nature inclined to.

Hereby have Casuists¹ drawn the word “anathema,” which is “consecrated” or “separated,” and separated

¹ [Compare Serm. on 1 Cor. xvi, 22, pt. iii.]

or seposed² for divine use, to signify necessarily "accursed," and cut off from the communion of the Church. Hereby Criminists have commanded "heresy," which is but "election," (and thereupon Paul gloried to be of the strictest heresy, a Pharisee; and the sceptics were despised, because they were of no heresy), to undertake a capital and infamous signification. Hereby also the Civilists have dignified the word "privilege," whose ancientest meaning was, "a law to the disadvantage of any private man" (and so Cicero speaks of one banished by privilege, and lays the names, cruel and capital upon privilege), and appointed it to express only the favours and graces of princes.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Acts xxvi,
5.³

Laert.⁴

Acacius de
Privilegiis⁵

² [A word which Donne used pretty frequently in the sense of "to set apart;" e, g., Letters, p. 228, "I had then seposed a few days, for my preparation to the Communion of our Blessed Saviour's body."]

³ [Κατὰ τὴν ἀκριβεστάτην αἴρεσιν κ.τ.λ.]

⁴ [Lib. ix, § 69; but the note of Menage is much more to the point than Diogenes Laertius' own words.]

⁵ [Jur. Civilis, l. i, c. i, § 2. Antiquissimum igitur omniumque prima . . . significatio esse videtur, qua privilegia appellantur leges nominatim in privatos seu singulos homines latae. Ita namque Cicero, in oratione pro domo sua . . . "nihil est crudelius, nihil perniciosius, nihil quod minus hæc civitas ferre possit," &c.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Schoolmen, which have invented new things, and found out, or added suburbs⁶ to hell, will not be exceeded in this boldness upon words. As, therefore in many other, so they have practised it in this word *creare*; which being but of an even nature with *facere*, or *producere*, they have laid a necessity upon it to signify a making of nothing; for so is creation defined. But in this

Scotus.⁷

place neither the Hebrew nor Greek

Pererius.⁸

word afford it, neither is it otherwise than indifferently used in the holy books. Sometimes of things of a pre-

Eccclus.
xvii, 1.

existent matter, "He created man of "earth;" and He "created" him a

[Gen. v, 2.]

helper out of himself. Sometimes of things but then revealed. "They are

Is. xlviii, 7.

"created now, and not of old." Sometimes of that, whereof God is neither Creator nor Maker, nor concurrent,⁹ as

⁶ [Compare *Ignatius his Conclave*, p. 110. "As for the suburbs of hell (I mean both limbo and purgatory,) I must confess," &c.]

⁷ [Johannes Duns, Comment. in Sent: Lib. ii. d. i, q. 5, ad init.]

⁸ [In Gen. i. i, § 35.]

⁹ [So Milton, P. L. x, 44,—

" no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall."]

of evil; *faciens pacem et creans malum*; and sometimes of that which was neither created nor made by God, nor any other, as darkness, which is but privation; *formans lucem et creans tenebras*.¹⁰

Essays on Gen. i, 1.

Is. xlv, 7.

Is. xlv, 7.

And the first that I can observe to have taken away the liberty of this word and made it to signify, of nothing, is our countryman Bede upon this place. For St. Augustine was as opposite and diametral¹² against it as it is against truth. For he says *facere est quod omnino non erat; creare verò est, ex eo quod jam erat educendo constituere*. Truly it is not the power and victory of reason that evicts¹³ the world to be made of nothing; for neither this word *creare* inforces it, nor is it expressly said so in any Scripture.

Aquinas, Summa Theol. pt. I, q. xlv, arts. 1, 3.¹¹

August. contra advers. leg. et prop. [lib. i, cap. xxiii. § 48 apud Aq. u.s.]¹²
2 Cor. xii, 11.

When Paul says himself to be “no-

¹⁰ [For those who know St. Augustine's Confessions, I need scarcely refer to the seventh book, when they observe Donne assuming “darkness” and “evil” to be nothing.]

¹¹ [. . . “dicit Glossa Ord. ex Beda in hunc locum, est aliquid ex nihilo facere.”]

¹² [Compare “Problem” xvii. “. . . were it never so opposite and diametrical.”]

¹³ [See the first passage quoted in note (1), p. 56.]

Essays on Gen. i, 1. “thing,” it is but a diminution and extenuation (not of himself, for he says there “I am not inferior to the very chief of the apostles),” but, of mankind. Where it is said to man, “Your making is of nothing,” it is but a respective,¹⁴ and comparative undervaluing; as in a lower descent than that before, “all nations before God are less than nothing.” As in another place by a like extreme extending it is said *Deus regnabit in æternum et ultra*. Only it is once said, *ex nihilo fecit omnia Deus*: but in a book of no strait obligation (if the matter needed authority) and it is also well translated by us, “of things which were not.” But therefore we may spare Divine authority and ease our faith too, because it is present to our reason. For, omitting the quarrelsome¹⁵ contending of Sextus Empiricus the Pyrrhonian,¹⁶

¹⁴ [So Two Gent. of Verona, act iv, sc. iv,—

“What should it be that he respects in her,

But I can make respective in myself;”

where see Knight’s foot-note.]

¹⁵ [*i. e.* “captious;” so Serm. on St. Jno. v, 28, 29. “. . . But they quarrel the circumstance,” (take exception at).]

¹⁶ [Sextus Empiricus, Pyrrhon. Hypot. iii, 14, § 112.]

(of the author of which sect Laertius¹⁷ says, that he handled philosophy bravely, having invented a way by which a man should determine nothing of everything), who with his ordinary weapon, a two-edged sword, thinks he cuts off all arguments against production of nothing, by this, *Non sit quod jam est, nec quod non est; nam non patitur mutationem, quod non est*; and omitting those idolaters of nature, the Epicureans, who pretending a mannerly lothness¹⁸ to trouble God, because *Nec bene pro-meritis capitur, nec tangitur ira*, indeed out of their pride are loth to be beholden to God, say, that we are sick of the fear of God, *Quo morbo mentem concussa? Timore Deorum*; and cannot therefore admit creation of nothing, because then *Nil semine egeret, but ferre omnes omnia possent, and subito exorirentur*,

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Lucretius
[lib. i, 62]

Horace
[lib. ii,
Sat. iii.
l. 295.]

Lucretius
[lib. i,
160-175.]

¹⁷ [Diog. Laert. ix, § 61: ὅθεν γενναιότατα φιλοσοφῆσαι, τὸ τῆς ἀκαταληψίας καὶ ἐποχῆς εἶδος εἰσαγαγών. Donne evidently quotes from a Latin translation.]

¹⁸ [Compare Letters, p. 173: "out of a voluptuous lothness to let that taste go," &c.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

incerto spatio, with such other do-
tages.

To make our approaches nearer, and batter²⁹ effectually, let him that will not confess this nothing, assign something of which the world was made. If it be of itself, it is GOD: and it is GOD, if it be of GOD; Who is also so simple, that it is impossible to imagine anything before Him, of which He should be compounded, or any workman to do it. For to say, as one doth, that the world might be eternal and yet not be GOD, because GOD's eternity is all at once, and the world's successive, will not reconcile it; for yet, some part of the world must be as old as GOD, and infinite things are equal, and equals to GOD are GOD.

The greatest dignity which we can give this world is, that the idea of it

¹⁹ [Taking a metaphor from the operations at a siege; so p. 102. "underminings and batteries of heretics."]

²⁰ [. . . Aliud est enim per interminabilem duci vitam, quod mundo Plato tribuit: aliud interminabilis vitæ totam pariter complexam esse præsentiam, quod divinæ mentis proprium esse manifestum est.]

Boethius
de Conso-
latione
Phil. lib. v,
prosa 6.²⁰

is eternal, and was ever in GOD: and that He knew this world, not only *scientiá intellectus*, by which He knows things which shall never be, and are in His purpose impossible, though yet possible and contingent to us; but after failing, become also to our knowledge impossible, (as it is yet possible you will read this book through now, but if you discontinue it, which is in your liberty, it is then impossible to your knowledge, and was ever so to GOD's;) ²¹ but also *scientiá visionis*, by which He knows only infallible things; and therefore these ideas and eternal impressions in GOD, may boldly be said to be GOD; for nothing understands GOD of itself, but GOD; and it is said *Intellectæ Jynges à patre intelligunt et ipsæ*: and with Zoroaster (if I misconceive not) "Jynx" is the same as "Idea" with Plato. The eternity of these ideas wrought so much and obtained so high an esti-

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Zoroaster
Oracula 4.
[apud F.
Patricium
"Jynges
Ideæ Prin-
cipia."]

²¹ [This paragraph is derived from Aquinas, whose determinations on these and kindred points are to be found in the Summa Theol. part i, q. xiv; see especially art. ix.]

Essays on Gen. i, 1. } mation with Scotus, that he thinks them the essence of this world, and the creation was but their existence;²² which reason and Scaliger reprehend roundly, when they do but ask him whether the creation were only of accidents.

[DeEmend
Temp. l. v,
DeConditu
Mundi.]

But because all which can be said hereof is cloudy, and therefore apt to be mis-imagined, and ill-interpreted, for, *obscurum loquitur quisque suo periculo*, I will turn to certain and evident things, and tell thee, O man, which art said to be the epilogue, and *compendium*²³ of all this world, and the “Hymen” and matrimonial knot of eternal and mortal things (whom one says

Picus.²⁴

²² [The readers of Plato's *Timæus* will understand the allusion of the text. The question of an eternal generation, discussed in that dialogue (p. 28), is handled laboriously and elaborately by Duns Scotus, in the passage Donne doubtless refers to (viz. in lib. ii, *Sent. Dist. i, quæst. iv.*): it is discussed under the question, “*Utrum possibile sit Deum producere aliquid aliud a se sive principio durationis.*” I should think it would repay any student of Plato; but to enter into such a transcendental subject here, or to attempt to give “a popular explanation” of it, would be simply ridiculous.]

²³ [By the way in which this word is printed in the original copy, I conclude that it was then looked upon as a Latin word not yet naturalized.]

²⁴ [*Mirandula, Heptaplus ad Lect.* He says the same again in the *Oratio de Dignitate Hominis*, p. 208.]

to be *all creatures*, because the Gospel, of which only man is capable, is sent to be “preached to all creatures;”) and wast made by GOD’s hands, not His commandment; and hast thy head erected to heaven, and all others to the centre, that yet only thy heart of all others points downward, and only trembles. And O ye chief of men, ye princes of the earth (for to you especially it is said *Terram dedit filiis hominum*; for the sons of GOD have the least portion thereof; and you are so princes of the earth, as the Devil is prince of the air, it is given to you to raise storms of war and persecution), know ye by how few descents ye are derived from Nothing? you are the children of the lust and excrements of your parents, they and theirs the children of Adam, the child of dirt, the child of nothing. Yea, our soul, which we magnify so much, and by which we consider this, is a verier upstart than our body, being but of the first head, and immediately made of Nothing: for how many souls hath this

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[Mar. xvi,
15.]
[Gen. ii, 7.]

[Psalm
cxv, 16.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

world, which were not Nothing a hundred years since? And of whole man compounded of body and soul, the best, and most spiritual parts (which are honour and pleasure) have such a neighbourhood and alliance with Nothing, that they lately were Nothing, and even now when they are, they are Nothing, or at least shall quickly be-

²⁵ [It will not be out of place here to quote a passage from Donne's own works on the subject alluded to, especially as the old controversy between the "Creationists" and "Traducianists" has been brought before our notice once more by Archdeacon Wilberforce (Incarnation, ch. iii, 1). Donne gives the following account of the question: ". . . whole Christian Churches arrest themselves upon propagation from parents; and other whole Christian Churches allow only infusion from God. In both which opinions there appear such infirmities as it is time to look for a better; for whosoever will adhere to the way of propagation, can never evict necessarily and certainly a natural immortality in the soul, if the soul result out of matter, nor shall he ever prove that all mankind hath any more than one soul. . . . And they which follow the opinion of infusion from God, and of a new creation (which is now the more common opinion), as they can very hardly defend the doctrine of original sin (the soul is forced to take this infection, and comes not into the body of her own disposition), so shall they never be able to prove that all those whom we see in the shape of men, have an immortal and reasonable soul, because our parents are as able as any other species is to give us a soul of growth and of sense, and to perform all vital and animal functions." This extract is from a letter, written on the 9th October [1607]; later however Donne expresses a more decided opinion on the matter: in the *Pseudo-Martyr* (c. vii, § 27, &c.) he says, "when at once you divorce that body which your parents prepared, from that soul which God infused and married to it," &c. He often recurs to the subject in the sermons.]

come Nothing, which, even at the last great fire, shall not befall the most wretched worm, nor most abject grain of dust, for that fire shall be a purifier, not consumer to Nothing.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

For to be Nothing, is so deep a curse, and high degree of punishment, that Hell and the prisoners there, not only have it not, but cannot wish so great a loss to themselves, nor such a frustrating of God's purposes.

Even in Hell, where if our mind could contract and gather together all the old persecutions of the first church, where men were tormented with exquisite deaths, and oftentimes more, by being denied that; and all the inhumanities of the Inquisition, where repentance increaseth the torture (for they die also,²⁶ and lose the comfort of perseverance); and all the miseries which the mistakings and furies and sloth of princes, and infinity and corrosiveness²⁷ of officers, the treachery of

²⁶ [I have not met with another instance of this word used, as here, in the sense of "all the same."]

²⁷ [The former of these words I can give no perfectly satisfac-

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

women, and bondage of reputation hath laid upon mankind, since it was, and distil the poison and strength of all these, and throw it upon one soul, it would not equal the torment of so much time as you sound one syllable. And for the lasting, if you take as many of Plato's²⁸ years, as a million of

tory explanation, the latter occurs elsewhere in Donne; I apprehend the meaning to be that the schemes of courtiers are infinitely various, and their plots troublesome to states. See Timon of Athens, act v, sc. i,—

“With a discovery of the *infinite* flatteries
That follow youth and opulency.”

Compare too Chapman's Iliad, book ii,—

“O ye Gods, how infinitely take
Ulysses' virtues in our good!”]

²⁸ [“Plato's year” is the “annus magnus” or cycle of the fixed stars which complete their revolution in 36,000 years according to the older, or 25,920 years according to the later astronomers. Plato supposed that at the end of this period the old world was destroyed and a new world began (Politicus 269 D. de Legibus iii, 676, &c. [surely *μυρία* is not used strictly as = 10,000 in these passages, as Zeller seems to think?] Timæus 23, Rep. viii, 546). “The hollowness” is the whole expanse or sphere of the fixed stars which was supposed not to be infinite, but to have a known measurement. The “first mover” is the “primum mobile” of the Ptolemaic system, the origin and source of all motion (see Penny Cyclopædia, art. Ptolemy, and compare Milton, Paradise Lost, iv, 481-483). “Clavius his number” refers to a digression which that mathematician makes in his work on the Sphere (ch. i ad fin, p. 217), where he, “at the request of friends,” revives an investigation which Archimedes had carried on before him, and shows how no finite quantity of objects can surpass our power of expressing them in numbers. As in fact Clavius's Essay

them hath minutes, and multiply them by Clavius his number, which expresses how many sands would fill the hollow-ness of the first mover, you were so far from proceeding towards the end, that you had not described one minute. In Hell, I say, to escape which, some have prayed to have "hills fall upon them," and many horrors shadowed in the Scriptures and Fathers, none is ever said to have wished himself Nothing.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Rev. vi, 16.

Indeed, as reposedly and at home within himself no man is an atheist, however he pretend it and serve the company with his braveries,²⁹ (as St. Augustine says of himself, that though he knew nothing was blameable but vice, yet he seemed vicious lest he

Confess. 1.
ii, c. iii.³⁰

is nothing more than a reproduction of the Arenarius of Archimedes, I can do no better than refer the reader to Professor Donkin's account of that tract, in his article on Archimedes, in Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biog.]

²⁹ [So Letters, p. 128: "The main bravery was the number of horses," &c. A better parallel is in Shakspeare; Hamlet, act v, sc. ii,— "But sure the bravery of his grief did put me Into a towering passion."]

³⁰ [§ 7. Quid dignum vituperatione nisi vitium? Ego ne vituperarer vitiosior fiebam, et ubi non suberat quo admisso æquarer perditis, fingebam me fecisse quod non feceram, ne viderer abjectior, quo eram innocentior, et ne vilior haberer quo eram castior.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

should be blameable, and feigned false vices when he had not true, lest he should be despised for his innocency;) so it is impossible that any man should wish himself Nothing; for we can desire nothing but that which seems satisfactory, and better to us at that time; and whatsoever is better is something. Doth, or can any man wish that, of which, if it were granted, he should, even by his wishing it, have no sense, nor benefit?

Piccolo-
min. Defin.
Creat. [De
Rerum
Def.
p. 134.]

To speak truth freely, there was no such Nothing as this before the beginning: for he that hath refined all the old definitions, hath put this ingredient *Creabile* (which cannot be absolutely nothing) into his definition of creation: and that Nothing which was, we cannot desire; for man's will is not larger than God's power: and since Nothing was not a pre-existent matter, nor mother of this all, but only a limitation when any thing began to be; how impossible it is to return to that first point of time,

since GOD (if it imply contradiction³¹) cannot reduce yesterday? of this we will say no more; for this Nothing being no creature; is more incomprehensible than all the rest: but we proceed to that which is all, "heaven and earth."³²

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[ESSAY XI.]

PART IV.

[THE WORK.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

ONE says in admiration of the spirit and sublimeness of Abbot Joachim his works, that he thinks he had read the Book of Life. Such an acquaintance as that should he need, who would

Picus Mi-
randula.¹

³¹ [The meaning is that though God be omnipotent, yet such things as imply contradictions are not possible (see St. Augustine, Contr. Faust. l. xxvi, c. 5), but it *may* be a question whether GOD cannot bring back ("reduce") yesterday.]

³² [The reader will be interested in comparing the above Essay with sections 34 to 37 of the Religio Medici of Sir Thos. Browne. The first edition of that work was published in 1642, long *before* these Essays appeared, and longer *after* they were written.]

¹ [I have been unable to find the passage, but the saying is not uncommon, in the Epistles of the enthusiastic Italian, as applied to several books which he speaks of reading.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[Harmonia
Mundi,
cant. i,
tom. vi,
c. iii.]

[Martial,
viii, 18,
10.]

worthily expound or comprehend these words "Heaven and Earth." And Francis George in his Harmony says, that after he had curiously observed, that the Ark of Noah and our body had the same proportion and correspondence in their parts, he was angry, when he found after, that St. Augustine had found out that before. So natural is the disease of *Meum* and *Tuum* to us, that even contemplative men, which have abandoned temporal propriety,² are delighted, and have their *complacentiam*, in having their spiritual meditations and inventions known to be theirs; for *qui velit ingenio cedere, rarus erit.*

But because to such as I, who are but interlopers, not staple merchants, nor of the company, nor within the commission of expositors of the Scriptures, if any license be granted by the Spirit to discover and possess any part herein, it is conditioned and qualified as the commissions of princes, that we attempt not any part actually possessed

² [*I. e.* 'all private property,' as a Minorite friar like Francis George would be obliged to do.]

before, nor disseise others ; therefore of these words, so abundantly handled, by so many, so learned, as no place hath been more traded to, I will expositively say nothing, but only a little refresh, what others have said of them, and then contemplate their immensity.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

All opinions about these words, whether of men too supple and slack, and so miscarried with the stream and tide of elder authority ; or too narrow and slavish, and so coasting ever within the view and protection of philosophy ; or too singular, and so disdaining all beaten paths, may fall within one of these expositions.³

[i] Either in these words Moses delivers roundly the entire creation of all, and after doth but dilate and declare the order ; which is usually assigned to Chrysostome and Basil governed by the

³ [The account that follows of the various expositions which the passage has received is taken from Pererius ; he however gives four interpretations : as the *second* an interpretation mentioned by Augustine (Conf. xii, c. vii), which is substantially the same as Donne's ; and as his *third* one mentioned by Augustine in the same place, which makes the heaven and the earth to mean generally the matter out of which all things were afterwards produced. Donne puts these two interpretations together.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

words in Gen. ii, 4, "In the day that the LORD GOD made the earth and the heavens;" and of these "He that liveth for ever made all things together;" and because the literal interpretation of successive days cannot subsist where there are some days mentioned before the creation of these planets which made days.

[ii] Or else (which Augustine authoriseth), the heaven signifies angels, and the earth *materiam primam*, out of which all things were produced; which Averroes hath called *Id ens quod mediat inter non esse penitus et esse actu*. And another hath afforded it a definition, which divines have denied to God: for he says *Est nullum prædicamentum, neque negatio*. And therefore that late Italian distiller and sublimer of old definitions hath riddled upon it, that it is first and last; immortal and perishable; formed and formless; one, four, and infinite; good, bad and neither; because it is susceptible of all forms, and changeable into all.

[iii] Or else Heaven must mean that

[Comment
in Met.
Arist.] lib.
i, 70.

Arist. 7,
Met. [ubi
supra.]

Piccolom.
de Defn.
Mat. Prim.
[u. s. p. iii.
and follow-
ing.]

Cœlum Empyræum (which some have thought to be increate and nothing but the refulgence of God) which is exempt from all alteration even of motion ; and the earth to design the first matter. And in this channel came the tide of almost all accepted expositors till later ages somewhat diverted it.⁴ For with, and since *Lyra*, (of whom his apologist Dornike says, *Delirat qui cum Lyra non sentit*) they agree much, that heaven and earth in this place, is the same which it is now ; and that the substantial forms were presently in it distinctly, but other accidental properties added successively. And therefore *Aquinas* having found danger in these words *Præcessit informitas materiæ ejus formationem*, expounds it, *ornatum not formam*.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

[In Re-
plicas ad
Pet. Burg.
pref. to the
Postils.]

Summæ
Theol. Pt.
i, [q. 66,]
art. i.

So that this heaven and earth, (being themselves and all between them,) is this world ; the common house and city of gods and men, in Cicero's words ; and the corporeal and visible image and

[i.e. in-
cluding.]

Cicero de
Nat. Deo-
rum [l. ii,
c. 6.]

⁴ [Pererius asserts that Eugubinus was the first who in modern times departed from this interpretation.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Gilbert de
Magnete,
lib. vi, c. 3.⁵

son of the invisible God, in the description of the Academics, which being but one (for *Universum est omnia versa in unum*) hath been the subject of God's labour and providence and delight, perchance almost six thousand years; whose uppermost first moving orb is too swift for our thoughts to overtake, if it dispatch in every hour three thousand times the compass of the earth, and this exceeds fifteen thousand miles: in whose firmament are scattered more eyes (for our use, not their own) than any ciphers can esteem or express, for, how weak a stomach to digest knowledge, or how strong and misgoverned faith against common sense hath he, that is content to rest in their number of 1022 stars?⁶ whose nearer regions are illustrated with the planets, which work so effectually upon man, that they have often stopped his further

⁵ [. . . Nonâ sphærâ omissâ, primi mobilis convexitas si juste ad reliquorum proportionem æstimetur, oportet primi mobilis convexum tantum spatii percurrere unâ horâ quantum continent circuli majores terrestres 3000, &c. p. 218.]

⁶ [Gilbert, u. s. 1022 is the number of the stars which are to be found in Ptolemy's catalogue.]

search, and been themselves by him deified; and whose navel this earth, which cannot stir, for every other place is upwards to it, and is under the water, yet not surrounded, and is man's prison and palace, yea man himself, (for *terra est quam calco et terra quam porto*, says Augustine): A world which when God had made, "He saw it was very good;" and when it became very bad, because *We* would not repent, *He* did: and more than once; for "He repented that He made it," and then that He "destroyed" it; becoming for our sakes, who were unnaturally constant (though in sinning) unnaturally changeable in affection: and when we dis-esteemed his benefits, and used not this world aright, but rather chose hell, He to dignify His own work, left heaven itself, to pass a life in this world: of the glory of which, and the inhabitants of it, we shall best end in the words of Sirach's son, "when we have spoken much, we cannot attain unto them: but the sum of all is that God is all."

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Aug. Conf.
[1. 12, c. ii.]

[Gen. i,
31.]

Gen. vi, 6.

Eccles.
xliii, 27.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
Ecclus.
xviii, 7.

But because, as the same man says, “when a man hath done his best he must begin again; and when he thinks to come to an end, he must go again to his labour;” let us further consider what love we may bear to the world: for to love it too much, is to love it too little; as over-praising is a kind of libelling. For a man may oppress a favourite or officer with so much commendation, as the prince neglected and diminished thereby may be jealous and ruin him.

Ambassadors in their first accesses to princes, use not to apply themselves, nor divert their eye upon any, until they have made their first dispatch, and find themselves next the prince; and after acknowledge and respect the beams of his majesty in the beauties and dignities of the rest. So should our soul do, between God and his creatures; for what is there in this world immediately and primarily worthy our love, which (by acceptation) is worthy the love of God? Earth and heaven are but the foot-stool of

God : but earth itself is but the foot-
 ball of wise men. How like a strumpet
 deals this world with the princes of it !
 Every one thinks he possesseth all,
 and his servants have more at her
 hand than he ; and theirs than they.
 They think they compass the earth,
 and a Job is not within their reach.

Essays on
 Gen. i, 1.

[Job i, 10
 and 12 ?]

A busy wit hath taken the pains to
 survey the possessions of some prin-
 ces : and he tells us that the Spanish
 king hath in Europe almost three hun-
 dred thousand miles, and in the New
 World seven millions, besides the
 borders of Africk, and all his islands :
 and we say the sun cannot hide him-
 self from his eye nor shine out of his
 dominions. Yet let him measure right,
 and the Turk exceeds him, and him
 the Persian ; the Tartar him, and him
 Prete-Jan.⁷

Malaguzzi
 [apud Fa-
 britio Ro-
 manci.]

Thes[oro]
 Pol[itico]
 Pt. ii, fol.
 62.]

⁷ [Of those singular attributes of supreme honour used in those countries that of Prester John applied to the Negush or great Emperor of the Æthiopians or Abyssins, hath the first place, both for the eminency of his name, and for that he is the chief Christian prince of them. He is usually called (besides his proper name) in Europe Presbyter Joannes, as if his name were the same in English as Priest John, and so owns the inscription of the letters sent to him from the ancient kings of Naples, as Scipione Mozella noteth. The

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
St. Luke
ii, 1.

“There came an edict from the Emperor” (saith the gospel) “that the whole world should be taxed:” And when the bishop of Rome is covetous of one treasure, and expensive of another, he gives and applies to some one the indulgences *Urbis et Orbis*. And alas, how many greater kingdoms are there in the world, which know not that there is such a bishop or emperor. Ambition rests not there; the Turk and less princes have styled themselves king of kings, and lord of lords, and chosen to God.⁸ Christian princes, in no impure times, have taken (nay given to themselves) *Numen nostrum*, and *divina oracula*, and *sacra scripta* to their laws.

Justiniani
Procem.⁹

Chassanæus
Bart.
Cat. Glo-
riæ Mundi
Pt. v, Cons.
24[art.59.]

Of them also some speak so tremblingly, that they say to dispute their actions is sacrilege. And their Baldus says of him, *Est omnia et super omnia*,

style, saith he, used, “Al Prete Juani d’India,” &c. &c. Selden, *Titles of Honour*, pt. i, ch. vi, sect. i. Compare Gibbon, D. and F. c. 47, n. 117.]

⁸ [See Selden’s *Titles of Honour*, pt. i, ch. iii, § ii.]

⁹ [I suppose he means to allude to the expression, *Victor et triumphator semper Augustus*. Acacius de *Privil. Juriscon.* l. i, c. iv. The whole chapter deals with the subject, especially §§ 3 and 4. Compare too Selden, ch. iv, sect. iii.]

et facit ut Deus, habet enim cæleste arbitrium. But more roundly the canonists of their bishop, *qui negat dominum Deum nostrum Papam, &c.*, which title the emperor Constantine also long before afforded him.¹⁰

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

Baldus de
Nova For-
ma fidelit.
c. 1.

But alas! what are these our fellow-ants, our fellow-dirt, our fellow-nothings, compared to that GOD, whom they make but their pattern? And how little have any of these, compared to the whole earth, whose hills, though they erect their heads beyond the country of meteors, and set their foot in one land, and cast their shadow into another, are but as warts upon our face, and her vaults, and caverns, the bed of the winds, and the secret streets and passages of all rivers, and hell itself, though they afford it three thousand great miles, are but as so many wrinkles, and pock-holes.

[Virg. Æn.
i, 53.]

Munster
[Cosmog.
Univers.]
lib. i, c. 16.

¹⁰ 3. [Decreti, Pars i.] Dist. xcvi [c. vii, tit.] "Satis." [Satis evidenter ostenditur a seculari potestate nec ligari prorsus nec solvi posse Pontificem quem constat a pio principe Constantino . . . Deum appellatum, &c. See Jewel's Apology, part v, ch. vi, div. 11, p. 842, ed. Parker Soc.] And Martial [of] Domitian, lib. viii, ii. [6. Terrarum domino, deoque rerum.]

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.

A prince is pilot of a great ship, a kingdom; we of a pinnace, a family, or a less skiff, ourselves; and howsoever we be tossed, we cannot perish; for our haven (if we will) is even in the midst of the sea; and where we die our home^{er} meets us. If he be a lion and live by prey, and waste among cedars and pines, and I a mole and scratch out my bed in the ground, happy in this that I cannot see him; if he be a butterfly the son of a silkworm, and I a scarab the seed of dirt; if he go to execution in a chariot, and I in a cart or by foot, where is the glorious advantage? if I can have (or if I can want) those things which the son of Sirach calls "principal," "water, fire, and iron, salt, and meal, wheat, and honey, milk, and the blood of grapes, oil, and clothing;" if I can *prandere olus*, and so need not kings, or can use kings, and so need not *prandere olus*; in one word, if I do not

Eccclus.
xxxix, 26.

Horace.¹¹

¹¹ [Ep. i, xvii, 14,—

"Si pranderet olus patienter, regibus uti
Nollet Aristippus."]

frui (which is, set my delight, and affection only due to God) but *uti* the creatures of this world, this world is mine and to me belong those words "subdue the earth, and rule over all creatures," and as God is proprietary, I am *usufructuarius* of this heaven and earth which God created in the beginning.

Essays on
Gen. i, 1.
Lombard
Sent. lib. i,
dist. i.¹²

Gen. i, 28.

And, here, because *nemo silens placuit multi brevitatem*, shall be the end.

Ausonius
[Epist.
xxv, 44.]

¹² [§ 2. Id ergo in rebus considerandum est . . . quod res aliæ sint quibus fruendum est, aliæ quibus utendum est . . . *Frui* autem est amore alicui rei inhærere propter seipsam. *Uti* vero, id quod in usum venerit referre ad obtinendum illud quo fruendum est, &c.]

[A PRAYER.]

A Prayer.

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**O** Eternal and Almighty Power, which being infinite hast enabled a limited creature, Faith, to comprehend Thee; and being even to angels but a passive mirror and looking-glass, art to us an active guest and domestic, (for Thou hast said, “ I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear Me, and open the door, I will come in unto him and sup with him, and he with Me,”) and so Thou dwellest in our hearts; and not there only, but even in our mouths; for though Thou beest greater, and more removed, yet [being] humbler and more communicable than the Kings of Egypt, or Roman Emperors (which disdained their particular distinguishing names, for Pharaoh and Cæsar, names of confusion); hast contracted Thine immensity, and shut Thyself within syllables, and accepted a Name from us; O keep

Rev. iii, 20.

and defend my tongue from misusing that Name in lightness, passion, or falsehood; and my heart, from mistaking Thy nature, by an inordinate preferring Thy justice before Thy mercy, or advancing this before that. And as, though Thyself hadst no beginning Thou gavest a beginning to all things in which Thou wouldst be served and glorified; so, though this soul of mine, by which I partake Thee, begin not now, yet let this minute, O GOD, this happy minute of Thy visitation, be the beginning of her conversion, and shaking away confusion, darkness, and barrenness, and let her now produce creatures, thoughts, words, and deeds agreeable to Thee. And let her not produce them, O GOD, out of any contemplation, or (I cannot say, idea, but) chimeras of my worthiness, either because I am a man and no worm, and within the pale of Thy church, and not in the wild forest, and enlightened with some glimmerings of natural knowledge; but merely out of Nothing: Nothing pre-existent in herself, but by power of

A Prayer.

## A Prayer.

Thy divine will and word. By which, as Thou didst so make heaven, as Thou didst not neglect earth, and madest them answerable and agreeable to one another, so let my soul's creatures have that temper and harmony, that they be not by a misdevout consideration of the next life, stupidly and treacherously negligent of the offices and duties which Thou enjoimest amongst us in this life; nor so anxious in these, that the other (which is our better business, though this also must be attended) be the less endeavoured. Thou hast, O God, denied even to angels the ability of arriving from one extreme to another, without passing the mean way between. Nor can we pass from the prison of our mother's womb, to Thy palace, but we must walk (in that pace whereto Thou hast enabled us) through the street of this life, and not sleep at the first corner, nor in the midst. Yet since my soul is sent immediately from Thee let me for her return, rely not principally, but wholly upon Thee and Thy Word:

and for this body, made of preordained matter and instruments let me so use the material means of her sustaining, that I neither neglect the seeking, nor grudge the missing of the conveniences of this life: and that for fame, which is a mean nature between them, I so esteem opinion that I despise not others thoughts of me, since most men are such as most men think they be; nor so reverence it, that I make it always the rule of my actions. And because in this world my body was first made, and then my soul, but in the next my soul shall be first and then my body, in my exterior and moral conversation let my first and presentest care be to give them satisfaction with whom I am mingled, because they may be scandalized, but Thou who seest hearts canst not: but for my faith let my first relation be to Thee, because of that Thou art justly jealous, which they cannot be. Grant these requests; O God, if I have asked fit things fitly, and as many more under the same limitations as are within that

A Prayer.

A Prayer.



prayer which (as Thy manna which was meat for all tastes, and served to the appetite of him which took it, and was that which every man would) includes all which all can ask, Our Father, which art, &c.

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## [ESSAYS ON]

EXODUS, i. 1.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

*Now these are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt.*

## ESSAY I.

[INTRODUCTORY.]

**I**N this book our entrance is a going out: for "Exodus" is "*Exitus.*" Of Exodus.

The meditation upon GOD's works is infinite; and whatsoever is so is circular, and returns into itself, and is everywhere beginning and ending, and yet nowhere either: which the Jews (the children of GOD by His first spouse the Law, as we are by Grace, His second) expressed in their round temples;<sup>1</sup> for GOD Himself is so much a circle, as being everywhere without any corner (that is never hid from our inquisition) yet He is nowhere any part of a straight

<sup>1</sup> [I am indebted to Mr. Gibbings, the learned author of *Roman Forgeries*, for a suggestion on this passage: he looks upon it as containing an allusion to Ex. xxv, 11, and xxx, 3, and compares with these passages Macc. iv, 57, in the Vulgate.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

line (that is, may not be directly and presently beheld and contemplated) but either we must seek His image in His works, or His will in His words ; which whether they be plain or dark, are ever true and guide us aright. For as well the pillar of cloud, as that of fire, did the office of directing.

Contro-  
versies.

Yea, oftentimes, where fewest expositors contribute their helps, the spirit of God alone enlightens us best ; for many lights cast many shadows, and since controverted divinity became an occupation, the distortions and violencing of scriptures, by Christians themselves, have wounded the scriptures more than the old philosophy or Turcism. So that that is applicable to us, which Seneca<sup>1</sup> says of Cæsar's murderers, *Plures amici quam inimici eum interfecerunt*. From which indulgence to our own affections, that should somewhat deter us, which Pliny<sup>2</sup> says of the same business, *Iisdem pugionibus quibus Cæsarem interfecerunt, sibi mortem*

<sup>1</sup> [Seneca. De Ira, iii, 30, § 3.]

<sup>2</sup> [Plinius (Minor) Paneg. 30, § 1.]



*consciverunt.* For we kill our own souls certainly when we seek passionately to draw truth into doubt and disputation. Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

I do not (I hope) in undertaking the meditation upon this verse, incur the fault of them,<sup>3</sup> who for ostentation and magnifying their wits, excerpt and tear shapeless and insignificant rags of a word or two from whole sentences, and make them obey their purpose in discoursing; the soldiers would not divide our Saviour's garments, though past His use and His propriety. Short  
texts.  
[St. Jno.  
xix, 23.]

No garment is so near God as His word: which is so much His, as it is He: His flesh, though dignified with unexpressible privileges, is not so near God, as His word: for that is *Spiritus oris*. And in the Incarnation, the act was only of one person, but the whole Trinity speaks in every word. [Ps. xxxiii,  
6, Vulg.  
xxxii, 6.]

They therefore which stub up these several roots, and mangle them into chips, in making the word of GOD not such (for the word of GOD is not the Literal  
Sense.

<sup>3</sup> [Compare Herbert's Country Parson, "The Parson Preaching."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

word of GOD in any other sense than literal and that also is not the literal, which the letter seems to present,<sup>4</sup> for so to divers understandings there might be divers literal senses; but it is called literal to distinguish it from the moral, allegorical, and the other senses, and is that which the Holy Ghost doth in that place principally intend:) they, I say, do what they can this way, to make GOD, whose word it is pretended to be, no GOD.

Supr. 86.

They which build, must take the solid stone, not the rubbish, of which, though there be none in the word of GOD, yet often unsincere translations, to justify our prejudices and foreconceived opinions, and the underminings and batteries of heretics, and the curious refinings of the allegorical fathers, which have made the Scriptures which are strong toils to catch and destroy the boar and bear which devast<sup>5</sup> our Lord's vineyard, fine cobwebs to catch flies; and of strong

<sup>4</sup> [Compare *Sermon*, on Rev. xx, 6, § 1.]

<sup>5</sup> See the instances for this word in Richardson's Dictionary.]

cables by which we might anchor in all storms of disputation and persecution, the threads of silkworms, curious vanities and excesses (for do not many among us study even the Scriptures only for ornament?) these I say may so bruise them, and raise so much dust, as may blind our eyes, and make us see nothing, by coveting too much.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

He which first invented the cutting of marble, had (says Pliny) *importunum ingenium*; <sup>6</sup> a wit that would take no answer nor denial. So have they which break these sentences *importuna ingenia*, unseasonable and murmuring spirits. When God out of his abundance affords them whole sentences, yea chapters, rather than not have enough to break to their auditory, they will attempt to feed miraculously great congregations with a loaf or two, and a few fishes; that is with two or three incoherent words of a sentence.

I remember I have read of a general, who having at last carried a town, yet

<sup>6</sup> [Plinius (Major) lib. xxxvi, c. vi, sect. 9, § 51.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

not merely by force, but upon this article, that in sign of subjection they should admit him to take away one row of stones round about their wall, chose to take the undermost row by which the whole wall ruined. So do they demolish GOD's fairest temple, His word, which pick out such stones, and deface the integrity of it, so much as neither that which they take, nor that which they leave, is the word of GOD.

In the temple was admitted no sound of hammer, nor in the building of this great patriarchal catholic church, of which every one of us is a little chapel, should the word be otherwise wrested or broken, but taken entirely as it is offered and presented.

But I do not at this time transgress this rule, both because I made not choice of this unperfect sentence, but prosecute my first purpose of taking the beginning of every book: and because this verse is not so unperfect, but that radically and virtually it comprehends all the book; which being a history of GOD's miraculous mercy to

Of this  
text.

His, is best intimated or epitomised in that first part which is insinuated in this verse, from how small a number He propagated so great a nation.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Upon this confidence and conscience of purposing good I proceed in these sermons; for they are such in the allowance of him whom they have styled *resolutissimum et Christianissimum doctorem*; for he says, *Scriptor manu prædicat*. And that to write

Unvocal  
preaching.

books, though one gain and profit temporally by it, yet if the final respect be the glory of God, is *latriæ veneratio*, and more honorable to the church, than the multiplication of vocal prayers, *Imo, quam insolens missarum inculcatio*. Did the author of that book, "the Preacher," make vocal sermons?

Gerson de  
laude  
Scripto-  
rum con-  
siderati, i.<sup>7</sup>

Though these lack thus much of sermons, that they have no auditory, yet as St. Bernard did almost glory,<sup>8</sup> that oaks and beeches were his masters, I

[Eccles. i,  
1, and xii,  
9.]

<sup>7</sup> [Scriptor idoneus et frequens librorum, doctrinæ salubris, . . prædicare dici potest.]

<sup>8</sup> [Experto crede; aliquid amplius invenies in silvis, quam in libris. Ligna et lapides docebunt te quod a magistris audire non possis. S. Bernard Epist. cvi, ad Mag. Henricum Murdach, § 2.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



shall be content that oaks and beeches be my scholars, and witnesses of my solitary meditations.

Division.

Therefore, after I shall have spoken a few words in general of this book, I will proceed to a nearer consideration of this verse :

First, as it begins to present a register of their names, whom God appointed to be the foundation of His many great works :

And then as it doth virtually comprehend those particular testimonies of God's love to His people.

- [i] In the first, we will look why God is willing, that those through whom God prepares his miracles should be named.
- [ii] Why they are in divers places diversly named.
- [iii] Why their number is expressed.
- [iv] And why that also diversely in divers places.
- [v] And lastly, whether there be no mystery in their number seventy.

In the second part, wherein out of Essays on Ex. i, 1. this verse radically will arise to our consideration all His favours to His chosen, expressed in this book, we shall have occasion to contemplate.

1, God's mercy, and that

[i] In bringing them into Egypt.

[ii] In propagating them there.

[iii] In delivering them from thence, and in nourishing them in the wilderness.

2. Secondly, His power expressed in His many miracles.

3. Thirdly, His justice in their pressures in Egypt and the wilderness.

4. Lastly, His judgments in affording them a law for their direction.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

## ESSAY II.

[OF THIS BOOK.]

*Exodus.*

Of Moses'  
five Books.

**W**HEN this book became a particular book, that is, when Moses his book was divided into five parts, I cannot trace; not only the first Christian councils which established or declared the canon of Scripture, and all the earliest expositors thereof, whether Christians or Jews, but the Septuagint, almost 300 years before Christ, acknowledge this partition.

Yet, that Moses left it a continued work, or at least not thus distributed, it seems evident, both because the Hebrew names of these books are not significant, but are only the first words of the book (as we use to cite the imperial and the canon laws). And because by Conradus Pellicanus I am taught that Moses, according to the fifty-two Hebdomades, distinguished

Comment  
in Penta-  
teuch [in  
loc.]



the Pentateuch into so many sections, of which this is the thirteenth. And Josias Simlerus notes, that the first letter here, which ordinarily hath no use, but grace, hath in this place the force of a conjunction. And so Lyra, and many others, acknowledge that this is but a continuing of the former history.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Comment  
in Exod. in  
loco.]

Besides the reasons which moved those times to make this a singular book, I may add this, that God, when He had in that part of Moses' book which we call Genesis, expressed fully, that by creating from nothing before nature was, He needed not her to begin His glorious work; so in this He declares especially, that He hath not so assumed nature into a colleagueship with Himself, that He cannot leave her out, or go beside her, and neglect her, or go directly against her when it pleases Him. And therefore this book is more than any other a register of His miracles.

Of which book this is notable, it consisting of the most particular cere-

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

monial parts, wherein the Jews yet persist, and we faithfully see already accomplished, and therefore likeliest to minister matter of quarrel and difference between us of all other books in the Bible, is best agreed upon; and fewer differences between ours and their copies than in any other book: so equally careful have all parties been to preserve the records of His miracles intemperate.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

### [ESSAY III.]

#### PART I.

[*Why GOD is willing, that those through whom GOD prepares His miracles should be named.*]

Names.

I COME now to the first part, in which the first consideration is why God should have them named?

Josephus  
Ant. l. ii.<sup>1</sup>

“These are the names, &c.” Josephus delivering the same history, says, that

<sup>1</sup> [C. 7, § 4: τὰ μὲν οὖν ὀνόματα δηλῶσαι τούτων οὐκ ἐδοκίμαζον, καὶ μάλιστα διὰ τὴν δυσκολίαν αὐτῶν. ἵνα μὲντοι παραστήσω τοῖς οὐχ ὑπολαμβάνουσιν ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς Μεσοποταμίας ἀλλ’ Αἰγυπτίους εἶναι, κ.τ.λ.]

he would not have ascribed the names, because they are of an hard and unpleasant sound, but that some had defamed the nation as Egyptians, and denied them to be Mesopotamians. It hath therefore one good use, to distinguish them from profane nations: but the chiefest is, that they are inserted into this book for an everlasting honour both to God and them.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Amongst men all depositories of our memories, all means which we have trusted with the preserving of our names, putrefy and perish. Of the infinite numbers of the medals of the Emperors, some one happy antiquary, with much pain, travail, cost, and most faith, believes he hath recovered some one rusty piece which deformity makes reverend to him, and yet is indeed the fresh work of an impostor.

The very places of the Obelisks and Pyramids are forgotten, and the purpose why they were erected. Books themselves are subject to the mercy of the magistrate: and as though the ignorant had not been enemy enough for them,

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Dio Cass.  
Hist. Rom.  
lib. lx, c.  
22.]

the learned unnaturally and treacherously contribute to their destruction, by rasure and misinterpretation. Caligula would abolish Homer, Virgil, and all the lawyers' works, and eternise himself and his time in medals: the Senate after his death, melted all them: of their brass his wife Messalina made the statue of her beloved player; and where is that? But names honoured with a place in this book cannot perish, because the book cannot.

Next to the glory of having his name<sup>2</sup> entered into the Book of Life, this is the second, to have been matriculated in this Register, for an example or instrument of good. Lazarus his name is enrolled, but the wicked rich man's omitted. How often in the Scriptures is the word *name*, for honour, fame, virtue? How often doth God accurse with abolishing the name? "Thou shalt destroy their name," Deut. vii, 24. And; "I will destroy their name *de sub cælo*,"

<sup>2</sup> [Compare with this paragraph the very striking sermon of Thomas Adams (of St. Gregory and St. Benet's, London) "The Gallant's burden."]

Deut. ix, 14. And, *Non seminabitur de nomine tuo*, Nah. i, 14. With which Essays on Ex. i, 1.  
 curse also the civil Ephesian law punished the burner of the temple, that none should name him. And in the [Val. Max. lib. viii, c. 14, (externa) § 5.]  
 same phrase doth God express His blessings to Abraham, Gen. xii, 2, and often elsewhere, "I will make thy name great." Which, without God, those vain attempters of the Tower of Babel endeavoured: for it is said, Gen. xi, 4, they did it "to get themselves a name."

Whether *nomen* be *novimen* or *notamen*,<sup>3</sup> it is still to make one known: and God, which cannot be known by His own name, may nearest by the names and prosperity of His. And therefore, for His ownsake, He is careful to have His servants named. "He St. Jno. x, 3.  
 calleth His own sheep by name;" And 3.  
*scribe nomen diei hujus*, says he to Ezek. xxiv, 3.  
 Ezekiel.

Of all nations the Jews have most Ethnic [i.e. Gentile] Names.  
 chastely preserved that ceremony of

<sup>3</sup> [The etymology and the remark was probably derived from Scaliger whom Voss quotes (Etym. Ling. Lat. s. v. "Nomen.")]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

abstaining from Ethnic names. At this time, when by their pressures they need most to descend to that common degree of flattery, to take the names of the Princes by whose leave they live, they do not degenerate into it, when almost all Christendom hath strayed into that scandalous fashion, of returning to heathen names as though they were ashamed of their examples. And almost in all their names the Jews have either testified some event past, or prophecied or prayed for some good to come.

Significant  
Names.

In no language are names so significant, so that if one consider diligently the senses of the names registered here he will not so soon say that the names are in the history as that the history is in the names. For Levi is "coupled to God,"<sup>4</sup> which notes God's calling, Simeon<sup>5</sup> "hearing" and "obedient," where their willingness is intimated. Juda<sup>6</sup> is

<sup>4</sup> [See Gen. xxix, 34, margin.]

<sup>5</sup> [Gen. xxix, 33, margin.]

<sup>6</sup> [Gen. xxix, 35, margin.]

“confessing” and “praising,” which results of the rest. Zebulon<sup>7</sup> is “a dwelling” because they are established in GOD: in Whom because they have both a civil policy and a military, Dan is a “judgment,” and Gad, a “garrison.”<sup>8</sup> In which that they may be exercised in continual occasions of meriting,<sup>9</sup> Naphthali is “a wrestling,” and to crown all, Asher is “complete blessedness.”

The other names have their peculiar force, which will not come into this room; but I entered the rather into this meditation and opinion, because I find the Scriptures often to allude to the name and sometimes express it, as 1 Sam. xxv, 25. “As his name is, so is he, Nabal a fool.” And in Exodus, xv, 23. “Therefore the name of the place was called bitter.”

And the Romans also had so much respect to the ominousness of good names, that when in musters every soldier was

Cicero de  
Divin. l. i.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [Gen. xxx, 20, margin.]

<sup>8</sup> [Gen. xxx, 6 & 11, margin.]

<sup>9</sup> [Gen. xxx, 8 & 13, margin.]

<sup>10</sup> [c. 45, Where see Davies' note.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

to be called by name, they were diligent to begin with one of a good and promising name, which Festus<sup>11</sup> reckons to be Valerius, Salvius, Statorius, and such. And I have read in some of the Criminalists that to have an ill name in this sense (not *malæ famæ*) was *Judicium ad torturam*.

Origen  
Hom. viii  
in Gen.<sup>12</sup>

Origen exaggerating pathetically the gradations of Abraham's sorrow at the immolation of his son, after he hath expostulated with God why he would remember him of the name son, and why of beloved son, rests most upon the last, that he would call him by his name Isaac, which signifies joy, in a commandment of so much bitterness.

It may be then some occasion of naming them in this place, that as these men were instruments of this work of God, so their names did sub-obscurly foreshadow it. For reason, the common soul to all laws, forbids that either great punishments should

<sup>11</sup> [Paulus Diaconus s.v. Lacus Lucrinus, apud Festum. Lindemann, Lips. 1832, vol. ii, p. 9.]

<sup>12</sup> [§ 2, in ed. Lommatzsch, vol. viii, p. 197.]



be inflicted otherwise than *nominatim*; Essays on Ex. i, 1.  
*Non nisi nominatim liberi exheredandi*:  
 or that great benefits should be in any  
 other sort conferred; for conformably Brissot-  
 nius.<sup>13</sup>  
 to this case, which now we consider, of  
 delivering persons from bondage, the  
 law is *Servis non nisi nominatim* Lex. Fur.<sup>14</sup>  
*libertas danda est.*

Of this honour to his servants, to be Changed  
 names.  
 remembered by name, God hath been  
 so diligent, that sometimes Himself hath  
 imposed the name before the birth, and  
 sometimes changed it to a higher sig-  
 nification, when He purposed to exalt  
 the person. It is noted that to Abram's Francis  
 George  
 Problema-  
 ta.<sup>15</sup>  
 name He added a letter, whose number  
 made the whole name equal to the  
 words, *creavit hominem*. So that the  
 multiplying of his seed was a work not  
 inferior to the creation. And from  
 Sarai's name He took a letter, which  
 expressed the number ten, and reposed  
 one which made but five; so that she

<sup>13</sup> [De Formulis et solemnibus Populi Rom. Verbis, lib. vii, c. 604.]

<sup>14</sup> [Julius Paulus Sent. iv, xiv, § 1, apud Corp. Jur. Ante-Just.]

<sup>15</sup> [Tom. i, de Hist. Sacram. Sect. iii, "de Patriarchis," Prob. 21.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

contributed that five which man wanted before, to show a mutual indigence and supplement.

St. Matt.  
xvi, 18.

How much schismatic disputation hath proceeded from the change of Simon's name into Peter! what a majestic change had James and John into

St. Mark  
iii, 17.

the Sons of thunder! yet God not only forebore ever such vast names, as Pharaoh gave Joseph, which is not only

Gen. xli,  
45.

“ expounder of secrets,”<sup>16</sup> but “ Saviour of the world,” which also the Roman emperors assumed in many coins, (*Æternitas Cæsaris*, and *Cæsar salus* and *Servator*, and *Restaurator orbis*<sup>17</sup>), but

Addition  
to Names.

(to my remembrance and observation) He never added other name as a *prænomen*, or *cognomen*, or such: to show, I think, that man brought not part of his dignity and God added; but that God when He will change a man,

He never added other name as a *prænomen*, or *cognomen*, or such: to show, I think, that man brought not part of his dignity and God added; but that God when He will change a man,

<sup>16</sup> [The first is the translation of our margin, the other of the Vulgate. Philo gives ‘a revealer’ as the explanation of Joseph’s name, so do the LXX, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Theodoret. All these, however, err by deriving the name from the Hebrew. St. Jerome (Quæst. in Gen.) with his usual sagacity, pointed out the folly of deriving a name given by an Egyptian from a Hebrew root and proposes the explanation which the Vulgate gives.]

<sup>17</sup> [See Selden’s *Titles of Honour*, u.s.]

begins, and works, and perfects all Himself.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

For though corrupt custom hath authorised it now, and *gaudent. prænomine molles auriculæ*, yet the Romans themselves, from whom we have this burden of many names, till they were mingled with the Sabines used but one name. And before that custom got to be noble, their slaves only when they were manumitted, were forced to accept three names.

[Hor. lib. ii, Sat. v, l. 32.]  
Robortellus de Nominibus.<sup>18</sup>

Politianus  
Miscell.  
c. 31.<sup>19</sup>

In this excess of names the Christians have exceeded their patterns: for to omit the vain and empty fulness in Paracelsus' name,<sup>20</sup> which of the ancients equals that grave wise author which writeshimself, *Pulmannus Anicius Manius Torquatus Severinus Boëthius?* But God hath barely and nakedly but

<sup>18</sup> [In Gruter's Thesaurus, vol. i, p. 1404.]

<sup>19</sup> [In Gruter's Thesaurus, vol. i.]

<sup>20</sup> [Compare Ignatius his Conclave, p. 123. "To whom Lucifer said: "And who are you?" He answered, "Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast of Hohenheim." At this Lucifer trembled, as if it were a new exorcism, and he thought it might well be the first verse of St. John, which is always employed in Exorcisms, and might now be taken out of the Welsh or Irish Bibles.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Gratiar.  
Actio,  
§ 32.]

permanently engraved these names, which shall never be subject to that obscurity which Ausonius imputes to one who was master to an Emperor and rewarded with a consulship but overswayed with his colleague, that men were fain to inquire *Quibus consulibus gesserit consulatum*. But wheresoever these names shall be mentioned, the miraculous history shall be called to memory, and wheresoever the history is remembered, their names shall be refreshed.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

## [ESSAY IV.]

### PART I.

#### *Diversity in Names.*

OUR next consideration is why they are diversly named and not always alike in Gen. xlvi, and here and in Deut. and the other places where they are spoken of. And this belongs not only to this case, but to many others in the Holy Bible, Joshua and

Jesus is all one. So is Coniah and Jechonias. And how multinominous is the father-in-law of Moses? And the name Nebrycadrozor is observed to be written seven several ways in the Prophets.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

To change the name, in the party himself is by many laws *dolus* and when a notary doth it, he is *falsarius*; faults penal and infamous. And therefore, laws have provided, that in instruments of contract, and in public registers, all the names, surnames, and additions shall be inserted: and they forbid abbreviations; and they appoint a more conspicuous and more permanent character to express them. So necessary is a certainty and constancy in the names.

[See Digest  
Lib. xlviii,  
tit. x, de  
lege Corne-  
lia de Fal-  
sis l. ix, §  
3 and l. xiii,  
pr. &c.]

Some late interpreters of the law teach that false Latin in grammar, in edicts or rescripts, from the imperial chamber or any other secular prince or court, doth not annihilate or vitiate the whole writing, because all they may be well enough presumed not to

Acacius de  
Privil.  
J. C.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Lib. i, c. ix, § 34.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

understand Latin ; but the bulls of the popes and decrees in the court of Rome are defeated and annulled by such a corruption, because their sufficiency in that point being presumed, it shall be justly thought surreptitious, whatever issues faulty and defective in that kind. So, though error and variety in names may be pardonable in profane histories, especially such as translate from authors of other language, yet the wisdom and constancy of that One Author of all these books, the Holy Ghost, is likely to defend and establish all His instruments chosen for building this frame of Scriptures, from any uncertain wavering and vacillation.

The Cabalists therefore, which are the anatomists of words, and have a theological alchymy to draw sovereign tinctures and spirits from plain and gross literal matter, observe in every variety some great mystic signification ; but so it is almost in every Hebrew name and word. Lyra (who is not

so refined, yet very Judaic<sup>2</sup> too) thinks<sup>3</sup> that as with the Latin, *Cholaus*, *Choletus*, *Cholinus*, and *Nicolaus* is one name, so it is in the variation of names in the Scriptures. But oftentimes, neither the sound, nor letter, nor signification, nor beginning, nor ending, nor root, nor branch have any affinity: as himself (though corruptly) says, that Esau, Seir, and Edom are one name.

It may be some laziness to answer everything thus, it is so because GOD would have it so, yet he which goes further, and asks, why GOD's will was so, enquires for something above GOD. For find me something that inclines GOD and I will worship that.

Since, therefore, this variety of names falls out in no place where the certainty of the person or history is thereby offuscate, I incline

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Qui rationem querit voluntatis Dei aliquid majus Deo querit  
Aug. De Gen. con. Man. lib. i, c. 2, § 4.]

[Obscured.]

<sup>2</sup> [Probably referring to the tradition, which Cave and others disbelieve, of his having been a converted Jew.]

<sup>3</sup> [On Gen. xxxvi, 1, apud de la Haye Bibl. Max.]

<sup>4</sup> [*i. e.* alter God's purpose—*bend down* God—So Milton Par. L. xi, 145,—

“But that from us aught should ascend to heav'n  
So prevalent as to concern the mind  
Of God high-bless'd, or to *incline His will*,  
Hard to believe may seem.”]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Difference  
in things  
not essen-  
tial.

to think, that another useful document arises from this admitting of variety; which seems to me to be this, that GOD in His eternal and ever present omniscience, foreseeing that His universal Christian Catholic Church,—imaged, and conceived and begotten by Him in His eternal decree, born and brought to light when He travailed and laboured in those bitter agonies and throes of His passion, nursed ever more delicately and preciously than any natural children (for they are fed with their mother's blood in their womb, but we with the blood of our most blessed Saviour all our lives,)—foreseeing I say, that this His dearly beloved spouse, and sister, and daughter the church, should in her latter age suffer many convulsions, distractions, rents, schisms, and wounds, by the severe and unrectified zeal of many, who should impose necessity upon indifferent things and oblige all the world to one precise form of exterior worship and ecclesiastic policy, averring that every degree



and minute, and scruple of all circumstances which may be admitted in either belief or practice, is certainly, constantly, expressly, and obligatorily exhibited in the Scriptures and that grace and salvation is in this unity, and nowhere else; His wisdom was mercifully pleased, that those particular churches (devout parts of the Universal,) which in our age (keeping still the foundation, and corner-stone Christ Jesus,) should piously abandon the spacious and specious super-edifications which the Church of Rome had built thereupon should from this variety of names in the Bible itself, be provided of an argument, *that an unity and consonance in things not essential is not so necessarily requisite as is imagined.*

Certainly when the Gentiles were assumed into the church, they entered into the same fundamental faith and religion with the Jews, as Musculus<sup>5</sup> truly notes, and this conjunction

<sup>5</sup> [In Ev. Joan. c. x, 16, obs. 3, certo cum Petrus circumcissioni et Paulus gentibus prædicarent impletur dictum hoc Christi, etc.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Jno. x, 16.

in the root and foundation fulfilled that which was said *Fiet unum ovile, et unus pastor*, one fold and one shepherd. For by that before, you may see that all Christ's sheep are not always in one fold, "other sheep have I also, which are not of this fold." So, all His sheep are of one fold, that is, under one shepherd, Christ. Yet not of one fold, that is not in one place, nor form. For that which was strayed and alone, was His sheep; much more any flock which hearken together to His voice, His word, and feed together upon His sacraments.

['Yet,' *i.e.*  
'even  
now.']

Therefore that church from which we are by God's mercy escaped, because upon the foundation which we yet embrace together,—Redemption in Christ,—they had built so many stories high, as the foundation was, though not destroyed, yet hid and obscured; and their additions were of so dangerous a construction, and appearance, and mis-appliableness,<sup>6</sup> that to tender consciences they seemed

<sup>6</sup> [So letters, p. 28, "In which I know I speak not dangerously nor misappliedly to you."]

idolatrous, and are certainly scandalous and very slippery and declinable<sup>7</sup> into idolatry, though that church be not in circumstantial and deduced points at unity with us, nor itself; (for with what tragic rage do the Sectaries of Thomas and Scotus prosecute their differences? and how impetuously doth Molinas and his disciples, at this day, impugn the common doctrine of grace and free will? And though these points be not immediately fundamental points of faith, yet radically they are, and as near the root as most of those things wherein we and they differ). Yet though we branch out East and West, that church concurs with us in the root, and sucks her vegetation from one and the same ground, Christ Jesus, who as it is in the Canticle Cant. i, 12. lies between the breasts of His Church, and gives suck on both sides.

And of that Church<sup>8</sup> which is de-

<sup>7</sup> [*i. e.* apt to turn downwards to idolatry, so Pt. 3, Essay 15, and “*declining* us towards the centre of horror and desperation.”]

<sup>8</sup> [This is a remarkable passage as showing how very distinctly marked a separation there was even at this period between the puritan body and the conforming clergy, for I understand the passage as referring to the English puritans, and not those at Geneva.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



Cant. viii,  
9.

parted from us disunited by an opinion of a necessity that all should be united in one form, and that theirs is it, since they keep their right foot fast upon the rock Christ, I dare not pronounce that she is not our sister, but rather, as in the same song of Solomon's, "We have a little sister and she hath no breasts; if she be a wall, we will build upon her a silver palace."

If, therefore, she be a wall, (that is because she is a wall, for so Lyra<sup>9</sup> expounds those words,) as, on her part, she shall be safer from ruin if she apply herself to receive a silver palace of order and that hierarchy which is most convenient and proportional to that ground and state wherein God hath planted her (and she may not transplant herself): so shall we best conserve the integrity of our own body of which she is a member, if we laboriously build upon her, and not tempestuously and ruinously demolish and annul her; but rather cherish and foment her

<sup>9</sup> [Lyra on Cant. viii, 9, apud de la Haye Bibl. Max.]

vital and wholesome parts, than either cut and suffer them to rot or moulder off.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



As natural, so politic bodies have *cutem et cuticulam*. The little thin skin which covers all our body may be broken without pain or danger, and may reunite itself, because it consists not of the chief and principient parts. But if in the skin itself there be any solution or division, which is seldom without drawing of blood, no art nor good disposition of nature can ever bring the parts together again, and restore the same substance, though it seem to the eye to have sodered itself. It will ever seem so much as a deforming scar, but is in truth a breach. Outward worship is this *cuticula*: and integrity of faith the skin itself. And if the first be touched with anything too corrosive, it will quickly pierce the other; and so schism (which is a departure from obedience) will quickly become heresy (which is a wilful deflection from the way of faith), which is not yet, so long as the main skin

[For the  
spelling  
see Isaiah  
xli, 7.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

is inviolate, for so long that church which despiseth another church, is itself no other church than that of which the Psalm speaks, *Ecclesia Malignantium*.<sup>10</sup>

Thus much was to my understanding naturally occasioned and presented by this variety of names in the Scriptures. For if Esau, Edom, and Seir were but one man, Jethro and Revel &c., but one man, which have no consonance<sup>11</sup> with one another, and might thereby discredit and enervate any history but this, which is the fountain of truth; so synagogue and church is the same thing, and of the church, Roman and Reformed, and all other distinctions of place, discipline, or person, but one church, journeying to one Hierusalem, and directed by one guide, Christ Jesus.<sup>12</sup> In which though this unity of things not fundamental be not absolutely necessary, yet it were

<sup>10</sup> [*i. e.* though “*Ecclesia Malignantium*,” for despising others and being schismatical, yet nothing more than that because not yet fallen into heresy.]

<sup>11</sup> [Consónance *i. e.* similarity in the sound.]

<sup>12</sup> [Compare the beautiful letter to “Sir H. R.” p. 26.]

so comely, and proportional with the foundation itself, if it were at unity in these things also, that though in my poor opinion, the form of GOD's worship established in the Church of England, be more convenient and advantageous than of any other kingdom, both to provoke and kindle devotion, and also to fix it that it stray not into infinite expansions and subdivisions (into the former of which churches utterly despoiled of ceremonies seem to me to have fallen; and the Roman Church, by presenting innumerable objects, into the latter), and though to all my thanksgivings to GOD, I ever humbly acknowledge, as one of His greatest mercies to me, that He gave me my pasture in this park, and my milk from the breast of this church, yet out of a fervent and, I hope, not inordinate affection, even to such an unity, I do zealously wish, that the whole Catholic Church were reduced to such unity and agreement in the form and profession established in any one of these churches (though ours

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

⎵

were principally to be wished), which have not by any additions destroyed the foundation and possibility of salvation in Christ Jesus; that then the church, discharged of disputations, and misapprehensions, and this defensive war, might contemplate Christ clearly and uniformly. For now He appears to her as in Cant. ii, 9: "He standeth behind a wall, looking forth of the window shewing himself through the grate." But then when all had one appetite, and one food, one nostril and one perfume, the church had obtained that which she then asked. "Arise O north, and come O south and blow on my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." For then, that "savour of life unto life" might allure and draw those to us, whom our dissensions, more than their own stubbornness withhold from us.

Cant. iv,  
16.

[2 Cor. ii,  
16.]



## [ESSAY V.]

## OF NUMBER.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.[*Why their number is expressed.*]

AS GOD registers the Names of His elect, and of His instruments, so doth He the Number, "He counteth the number of the stars, and calleth them by their names," says the Psalmist; which many expositors interpret of the elect. Of which St. John expresses a very great number, when he says, "I heard the number of them which were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand." But after in the ninth verse, "A multitude in white, before the Lamb, which none could number."

Psalm  
cxlvii, 4.

Rev. vii, 4.

In that place of Genesis, when Abram took three hundred and eighteen to rescue Lot (which number hath been not unusually observed to accord with the number of the fathers in the first Nicene council, where Christianity

Gen. xiv,  
14.

Essays on Ex. i, 1. }  
 Pererius,<sup>1</sup> }  
 [ἡριθμησε] } was rescued from Arius) the Septuagint  
 have *numeravit*, and St Ambrose says,  
 the Hebrew word signifies *elegit*:<sup>2</sup> as  
 though it were so connatural in God,  
 to number and to elect, that one word  
 might express both. And because  
 Christ knew how rigorous an account  
 God took of those whom He had made  
 governors of His, in His prayer, that  
 they might be after preserved, He says,  
 “I have kept them, and none of them  
 are lost, except, &c. How often doth  
 God iterate this way also of expressing  
 His love to Abraham, that He will mul-  
 tiply his posterity! “If a man can  
 number the dust of the earth, then  
 shall thy seed be numbered.” And  
 lest He should have seemed to have  
 performed that promise when He had  
 only multiplied their number, and yet

St. John  
 xvii, 12.

Gen. xiii,  
 16.

<sup>1</sup> [In Gen. sub loco, § 37, Numerum hunc trecentorum decem et octo *Rupertus* ait esse mysticum et sacrum: “Hic numerus” inquit “totus sacer est: quo et sancta Nicæna Synodus non humana industria, non compositione aliqua, sed divina agente providentia gavisa est: in qua vastator Christianitatis, Arius, a trecentis octo decem Episcopis superatus et condemnatus est, etc. etc.]

<sup>2</sup> [St. Ambrose does not meddle with the Hebrew, but simply says . . . . Quid est “numeravit?” Hoc est elegit, etc. and then passes on to enlarge upon the interpretation. De Abrah. i, c. 3, § 15.]

left them to be trod under foot by the Egyptians, because that comparison of dust might import and insinuate so much, He chooses after <sup>4</sup> another of infinite number and dignity together; “tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; so shall thy seed be.”

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Gen. xv, 5.

David, to let them see what a blessing their increase in number was, bids them remember what they were, *Cum essent numero brevi*. And Jeremy, as though they did not else concur with God in His purpose to restore them to greatness, when they were in Babylon, says to them, *Nolite esse pauci numero*. Upon this love of God to see His people prosper, says Rabbi Solomon, *Ut homo habens peculium*, or as a man which hath a stock of cattle which he loves, reckons them every day; so doth God His people. Hence is it, that so many times God commands His people to be numbered. Insomuch that that which we call the fourth book of Moses,

Ps. cv, 12.

Jer. xxix,  
6.

<sup>4</sup> [So a little further on, p. 137, “which he after threatens again,” &c.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

in which St. Jerome saith<sup>5</sup> are contained *totius arithmeticae Mysteria*, hath the denomination from numbering. In the first entrance whereof, GOD commands His to be numbered and to be numbered by name: and the number in that place, when the old and young and women are added to it, one very curious, following those rules by which the Hebrews have learned the number of the angels in Heaven, hath found to accord precisely with that number of angels intimated in Dan. vii.

Francis  
George  
Probl.<sup>6</sup>

[Dan. vii,  
7.]

This order of being first named and then numbered, or first numbered and then named, Antichrist perverts by anticipation, and doing both at once; for his name is a number. The Devil, who counterfeits GOD, put a desire into David to number his people; who was then only in his right arithmetic when he prayed to "find the number of his days." But when "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to

Rev. xiii,  
18.

Ps. xxxix,  
5.

1 Chron.  
xxi, 1.

<sup>5</sup> [Ep. 53 de Studio Scripturarum, § 8, ". . . Numeri vero nonne totius arithmeticae mysteria continet?"]

<sup>6</sup> [Tom. i, de Hist. Sacram. Sect. vi, de Progressu et Pereg. Israel in deserto, p. 48, Probl. 376.]

number his people," he entered a work of such glory and ostentation, that Joab was nine months and twenty days in doing that service. But God would number also: and because David would not attend His leisure, He changed His fashion, and brought upon them that number, which He after threatens again in Isaiah, *Numerabo vos in gladio.*

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

2 Sam.  
xxiv, 8.

Isaiah, lxx,  
11.

For the number registered in this history, as God had well provided for their honour, by entering their names in this everlasting record: so, I think, He provided for His own honour, of which He is ever jealous, in expressing the number, that all posterity might be awakened to a reverent acknowledgement of His greatness and goodness, by seeing from what a small number, in how short a time, how numerous a people, through how great pressures and straits, were by Him propagated and established. For since He is content to receive His honour from us, (for although all cause of honour be eternally inherent in Himself,

Of this  
Number.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[God made  
all things  
for himself

. . . . for  
honour  
being an  
external  
adjunct,  
and in the  
honourer  
rather  
than in  
the person  
honoured,  
it was  
necessary  
to make a  
creature  
from  
whom he  
might  
receive  
this hom-  
age, &c.,  
Religio  
Medici  
§ xxxv.  
Compare  
too  
August. de  
Civ. Dei.  
lib. xii,  
c. xv, § i.]

yet that act proceeds from us; and of that honour, which is *in honorante*, He could have none, till He had made creatures to exhibit it), His great work of creation (which admits no arrest for reason, nor gradations for our discourse, but must be at once swallowed and devoured by faith, without mastication or digestion), is not so apt to work upon us, for the provoking of our acts of honour, as those other miracles are which are somewhat more submitted to reason and exercise, and entertain our disputation and spiritual curiosity by the way, and yet at last go as far beyond reason as the other; as all miracles do equally. Of that kind this is, because a mighty people is miraculously made, not of nothing (upon which consideration can take no hold), but of a disproportional and incompetent littleness. And in these, where the smallness of the root or seed is a degree of the miracle, the Spirit of God uses to be precise in recording it. And therefore, in the greatest of that kind, which is the

fulfilling and replenishing the world, after that great exinanition<sup>37</sup> by the general deluge, though Moses say twice or thrice, that Noah and his sons and his and their wives went into the ark, and came out; yet, because the miracle of propagating consists in the number, Almighty God is pleased, by His ordinary way of expounding His word (which is, to explicate and assure one place by another) to teach us, that this number was but eight; for St. Peter says, "In the ark but few, that is, but eight were saved."

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

1 Pet. iii,

20.

In like manner, I mean with like preciseness, after the miracle in Matt. xiv, was precisely recorded, how many loaves, how many fishes, how many eaters, how many baskets of fragments: in the next chapter, another miracle of the same kind being to be registered, though it be less than the other, (for there is more meat, fewer eaters and fewer fragments) yet God seems careful in the particular numbers.

vss. 17, 20,

21.

ch. xv, 34,

37, 38.

<sup>7</sup> ["Bringing to nothing." very frequently used by Donne; thus Serm. on St. Mt. vi, 21, § 4, "this is such a nullification of the heart, such an annihilation—such an exinanition thereof, as reflects upon God."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

This therefore I take to be some reason of inserting this number; which being somewhat discordantly and differently set down, as the collation<sup>s</sup> of places manifests, and the Spirit of God doing nothing falsely, inordinately, negligently, dangerously or perplexedly to an humble and diligent understanding, we will in the next section consider the variety in this number.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[ESSAY VI.]

VARIETY IN THE NUMBER.

[*Why the number is diversly expressed in divers places.*]

**N**UMBERING is so proper and peculiar to man, who only can number, that some philosophical inquisitors have argued doubtfully, whether if men were

<sup>s</sup> [It is a pity that this word is not in more general use as applied to setting passages side by side; the modern "comparison" is much less correct. Donne frequently uses it *e. g.* Serm. on Col. i, 19, 20, § i, "First then we consider the *collation* and reference of the text, &c.]



not, there were any number. And error in numbering is *de substantialibus*, Essays on Ex. i, 1: as lawyers say, and sometimes annuls, ever vitiates any instrument, so much as it may not be corrected. Nothing therefore seems so much to endanger the Scriptures, and to submit and render them obnoxious to censure and calumny, as the appearance of error in chronology, or other limbs and members of arithmetic; for, since error is an approbation of false for true, or uncertain for certain, the author hath erred (and then the author is not God), if any number be falsely delivered; and we err if we arrest ourselves as upon certain truth (as we do upon all the Scriptures) when there is sufficient suspicion of error, (abstracting<sup>2</sup> the reverence of the author), and a certain confession and undeniable-ness of uncertainty.

Augustine  
in En-  
chirid.<sup>1</sup>

And as a man delated juridically, or

<sup>1</sup> [c. xvii, § 5 . . . pro vero quippe approbat falsum, quod est erroris proprium.]

<sup>2</sup> [The meaning is that where there is any very great "reverence for the author, there will *not* be sufficient suspicion," but caving out of account that reverence, &c.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[See Black-  
stone's  
Commens-  
taries by  
Stewart,  
vol. iv, p.  
457.]

by fame, or by private information of any crime, must, when canonical purgation is required at his hands, not only swear his own innocency himself, but produce others of his neighbourhood and friendship, to swear that they think he swears true; and if they concurred not with him, this would have the nature of a half-proof, and justify a further proceeding to his condemnation: so when any profane history rises up against any place of Scripture, accusing it to human reason and understanding (for though in our supreme court in such cases, for the last appeal be faith, yet reason is her delegate), it is not enough that one place justify itself to say true, but all other places produced as handling the same matter must be of the same opinion, and of one harmony.

I have therefore wondered that Althemerus, pretending to reconcile all apparent discordances in the Scriptures<sup>3</sup> hath utterly pretermitted all

<sup>3</sup> [The work referred to is "Conciliationes Locorum Scripturæ qui specie tenus inter se pugnare videntur. Centuriæ duæ. 8vo, Norimb. 1561, Andrea Althemero authore."]

variety in numbering, of examples whereof the comparing of the historical books would have afforded him great plenty and worthy of his travail.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

The general reasons why God admits some such diversities in His book, prevail also for this place which is now under our consideration ; which are,—

First, To make men sharp and industrious in the inquisition of truth, He withdraws it from present apprehension and obviousness. For naturally great wits affect the reading of obscure books, wrestle and sweat in the explication of prophecies, dig and hresh out the words of unlegible hands, resuscitate and bring to life again the mangled and lame fragmentary images and characters in marbles and medals, because they have a joy and complacency in the victory and achievement thereof.

Another reason is, that as His elect children are submitted by Him to the malice and calumny of the reprobate,

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

and are not only ragefully tempestured with storms of persecution, but contemptuously and scornfully (which is oftentimes the greater affliction) insimulated<sup>4</sup> of folly and silliness, are in His knowledge, and often so declared in this world to abound in the treasure of riches and wisdom: so He is pleased that His word should endure and undergo the opinion of contradiction<sup>5</sup> or other infirmities in the eyes of pride (the author of heresy and schism), that after all such dissections and cribractions<sup>6</sup> and examinings of heretical adventures upon it, it might return from the furnace more refined, and gain lustre and clearness by this vexation.

But the most important and useful reason is, that we might ever have occasion to accustom ourselves to that best way of expounding Scrip-

<sup>4</sup> [*i. e.* accused (*insimulare*) so in Serm. on Job. xvi, 17-19, § 18. “. . . many and heinous sins, such as they insimulated Job of.”]

<sup>5</sup> [*i. e.* be thought to contradict itself.]

<sup>6</sup> [See above, p. 17, “after it had received *Cribrationem* a sifting.”]

tures by comparing one place with another. Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

All the doubts about this place determine in two.

First, why the number is in so many places said to be seventy, as Genesis xlvi, 27, and in this place of Exodus, and in Deuteronomy x, 22; and yet Genesis xlvi, 26, the number is said to be but sixty-six. And in all the process of time from Moses to Stephen's martyrdom, recorded Acts vii, there could be no other doubt but this one, to them which understood Hebrew and were not misgoverned<sup>7</sup> by the translation of the Septuagint.

And this first doubt is no sooner offered than answered; for in the forty-sixth of Genesis the 26 verse speaks of sixty-six, and considers not Joseph and his two sons, which were already in Egypt, which the twenty-seventh verse doth, and adding Jacob himself, perfects the number seventy of which it speaks. So that here is no dissonance in the number, but only the

<sup>7</sup> [Compare p. 83, "and Basil governed by the words," &c.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Spirit of GOD hath used His liberty in the phrase, reckoning some born in Egypt among the souls which came into Egypt.

The other doubt which hath more travailed<sup>8</sup> the expositors, is why Stephen, referring to Moses, should say they were seventy-five. The occasion of this mistaking (for so I think it was) was given by false copies of the Septuagint's translation, then in most use. For the Hebrew text was long before so far out of ordinary use, that we see our Saviour Himself in His allegations, follows the Septuagint. And in my mind, so much reverence is due to that translation, that it were hard to think, that they at first added five to Moses' number. For, that which is said for that opinion (though by St Hierome)<sup>9</sup> which is, that they comprehend some nephews of Joseph, hath no warrant; and all the rest of the brethren were

<sup>8</sup> [Compare Letters, p. 183, "So, sir, the reading of the letter was a kind of travail to me;" the transition from labour to *trouble* is obvious.]

<sup>9</sup> [Liber de Hebr. Quæst. in Gen. in loco.]

likely to have nephews at that time also.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

And against this opinion it prevails much with me that by St Hierome's testimony, that translation in his time in the other place, Deuteronomy x, 22, had but seventy conform<sup>10</sup> to Moses; and any reason which might have induced them to add five to Genesis, had been as strong for Deuteronomy. Junius, scarce exceeded by any in learning sharpness and faith, thinks that Stephen neither applied his speech to that account of those that were issued from Jacob's loins, which were indeed but sixty-six, nor to the addition of the three in Egypt, which with Jacob himself, accomplished the number of seventy; but that, insisting precisely upon Moses' syllables, he related so many as were expressed by name by Moses in that chapter, to have been of Jacob's family, which were Jacob's four wives, and the two sons of Judah which

Lib. i, Par.  
92.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> [*i. e.* "Conformably." He uses the word elsewhere.]

<sup>11</sup> ['Sacrorum Parallelorum Libri tres,' is the book referred to; it is in the 2d vol. of his Opera Theol.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

v. 12.

made up seventy-five. But with that modesty wherein he asks leave to depart from the fathers, I must depart from him: for Joseph could not cause these two sons of Judah to be brought into Egypt (as appears in the text he did, for all the number there intended), since they were dead in Canaan before, as is evident Genesis xlvi.

Others therefore have thought, that St. Luke reported not the words out of Stephen's mouth, but by view of Moses his text, and that but in the translation, because being but a proselyte, he had no perfection, nor was accustomed to the Hebrew; and others, that indulgently he descended to that text which was most familiar, and so most credible to them. For though this be either an apparent error in the Septuagint at first (which is hard to allow, if we believe half of that which uses to be said<sup>12</sup> in proof that the Holy Ghost assisted them), or a corruption insinuated after (as

<sup>12</sup> [Alluding to the legend of the manner in which the translation was made.]



it is easy, when numbers are expressed by numerant letters).<sup>13</sup> Yet that translation, so corrupted, had so much weight, that all then followed it; and it maintained that authority so long that even in Lyra's time the Latin obeyed it. For<sup>14</sup> he reads in this place of Exodus seventy-five, though he there confess the Hebrew hath but seventy. This in my understanding may safelier be admitted, than to decline so far as Master Calvin doth, who thinks it possible that St. Luke reposed the true number seventy, but some other exscriber,<sup>15</sup> ignorant of Hebrew, and obedient to the Septuagint, reformed it deformly,<sup>16</sup> since his writing; for this seems to me to open dangerously a way to the infringing or infirming<sup>17</sup> many places of scripture.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Calvin  
[Com. on  
Acts, viii,  
8.]

<sup>13</sup> [*i. e.* Letters expressing numbers, *e. g.* M=1000; C=100, &c.]

<sup>14</sup> [Lyra on Exod. i, 5, apud De la Haye.]

<sup>15</sup> [So letters, p. 308, "I have now put into my Lord of Bath and Wells' hands the Sermon faithfully *exscribed.*"]

<sup>16</sup> [So Milton, P. L. xi, 494,—

"Sight so deform, what heart of rock could long  
Dry-eyed behold?"]

<sup>17</sup> [Compare Part 3, Essay 15. . . "though endued with excellent abilities of . . . *infirming* others' allegations."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



The number being then certainly seventy, since by the hardness and insolence of the phrase there seems some violence and force to raise the number to seventy-five (for it may seem hard that Joseph, which sent for these seventy, should be called one of the seventy which came; and that his two sons already in Egypt should be two of them which came into Egypt; and that Jacob should be one of these seventy which issued out of Jacob's loins); in a few words we will consider whether any mystery reside in that chosen number; the rather because very many remarkable things and passages in history seem to me to have been limited in that number, which therefore seems more periodic than any other.

## [ESSAY VII.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[*Whether there be no mystery in their number, Seventy.*]

**B**UT because any over-curious and mysterious consideration of this number seventy, (though it be composed of the two greatest numbers; for ten cannot be exceeded,<sup>1</sup> but that to express any further number you must take a part of it again: and seven<sup>2</sup> is ever used to express infinite), be too Cabalistic and Pythagoric for a vulgar Christian (which I offer not for a phrase of diminution or distrust, that such are unprovided of sufficient defences for themselves, or are ignorant of anything required in such as they, for salvation, but that there

<sup>1</sup> [The unlearned reader must be apprised that it only *happens* that we turn upon the ten; for many reasons it would be much more convenient to count by twelves, and so thirteen, fourteen (three-ten, four-ten) would be one-twelve, two-twelve, &c.]

<sup>2</sup> [For these mysterious speculations on numbers, especially the number seven, consult Philo Judæus, de Mundi Opif. chs. xxx-xlii.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

is needed also a meta-theology, and super-divinity, above that which serves our particular consciences, in them who must fight against philosophers and Jews), because I am one, and in a low degree, of the first and vulgar rank, and write but to my equals, I will forbear it, as misinterpretable; since to some palates it may taste of ostentation, but to some, of distraction from better contemplations, and of superstition to others; yet we may as well with reverence to the things, as respect to the number, rest a little upon those works of God, or His servants, which this number at least reduces<sup>3</sup> to our memory.

Seventy  
Patriarchs.

First therefore, those fathers of the world to whom God affords a room by name in the tenth of Genesis, from whom are derived all nations, all extinguished and forgotten, all now eminent and in actions, and all yet undiscovered and unbeing;<sup>4</sup> they to whose

<sup>3</sup> [*i. e.* brings back, so p. 81, "since God . . . cannot reduce yesterday."]

<sup>4</sup> [Similarly Milton, *Par. Lost*, x, 988,—

"The race . . . to being yet unbegot."]

sons He hath given the earth, utterly wasted before, and hath reserved rooms in heaven, from whence their betters are dejected, are reckoned there to be seventy.

*Essays on Ex. i, 1.*

After, when the children of Israel's murmuring kindled Moses' zeal to expostulate with GOD thus, "Have I conceived all this people, or have I begotten them, that I should bear this? I am not able to bear all this alone; therefore if Thou deal thus with me, if I have found favour in Thy sight, I pray Thee kill me, that I behold not my misery." When by this importunity Moses had extorted from GOD another form of policy, the number amongst which GOD would divide Moses's labour and Moses's spirit was seventy.

*Seventy Elders.*

*[Numb. xi, 12-15.]*

*v. 16.*

The barbarous cruelty of Adonibezek, confessed by himself, was then accomplished and ripe for GOD's vengeance, when he had executed it upon seventy kings.

*Seventy Kings slain.*

*[Judges, i, 7.]*

Moses, though his words "Man's days shall be an hundred and twenty years," are by many, and may well

*Seventy years our life.*

*Gen. vi, 3.*

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

be expounded to be the ordinary term of man's life after the flood (though ordinarily they are said to design the years from that speech to the flood),<sup>5</sup> and though at that time when he writ the eighty-ninth psalm<sup>6</sup> (for he writ the Pentateuch first, and that, after his going out of Egypt) he was more than eighty years old, yet in that psalm he pitches the limits of man's life seventy years.

In Seventy  
David  
died.

Though David were not author of that psalm, he was an example of it; for, though in a kingdom which had but newly taken that form, and was now translated to David's family, and vexed with the discontentments of Saul's friends and his own son's ambitions, a longer life and longer reign might seem to many to have been requisite, yet he ended his years in seventy. "David was thirty when he began to reign, and he reigned forty."

2 Sam. v,  
4.

<sup>5</sup> [Pererius adduces in favour of the former interpretation passages from Philo, Lactantius, Josephus, and others; in favour of the latter he quotes Jerome, Chrys. and Augustine.]

<sup>6</sup> [Eighty-ninth in the Vulgate, 90th in our arrangement.]

After he had seen the anger of GOD punishing his confidence in the number of his men, by diminishing them, limit and determine itself in seventy thousand.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Seventy  
thousand  
of the  
plague.

2 Sam.  
xxiv, 15.

Seventy  
years in  
Babylon.

And in that great captivity of Babylon, in which (as many think) the word of GOD Himself, the text of scriptures perished,<sup>7</sup> that great and pregnant mother and daughter of mysteries, (for how many prophecies were fulfilled and accomplished in that, and how many conceived but then, which are not yet brought to light) the chosen people of GOD, were trodden down seventy years. To which foreign sojourning, for many concurrences and main circumstances, many have assimilated and compared the Roman church's straying into France and being impounded in Avignon seventy years; and so long also lasted the inundation of the Goths in Italy.

Seventy in  
Avignon.

Seventy  
the Goths  
in Italy.

In that dejection and bondage in Babylon, GOD afforded to Daniel that vision and voice, than which nothing is

Seventy  
Hebdo-  
mads.

<sup>7</sup> [See page 20.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1. } more mysterious, nothing more impor-  
tant for our assurance, nothing more  
advantageable against the Jews, which  
Dan. ix,  
24. is the seventy Hebdomades.

Seventy  
Disciples. Then those disciples, suppliers and  
fellow-workers with the Apostles, equal  
to them in very many things (and  
men dispute whether not in all), whom  
our most blessed Saviour instituted,  
St. Luke,  
x, 1. were also of this number, seventy.

Septuagint. And so having refreshed to your  
memory, upon this occasion of the  
number seventy, these stories out  
of the Bible, we will end with this  
observation, that when GOD moved  
Ptolomæus to a desire of having the  
Bible translated, he accited<sup>8</sup> from Jeru-  
salem seventy-two for that glorious and  
mystic work; and these, though they  
were seventy-two, either for affection to  
conform themselves to a number so  
notorious, or for some true mystery in  
it, or for what else, GOD knows, have  
ever retained the name of Septuagint.

And so, having delivered what by  
GOD'S grace I received of this book in

<sup>8</sup> [Compare p. 33, "beasts accited for examples."]



general, and of the reason of registering the names, and why there is therein some variety; why also they are summed and numbered up; and why variously; and lastly noted those special places which the number seventy presented; I will now pass to that which I destined for a second part, because it is radically and contractedly in that first verse, but diffused and expansively through the whole book: the Mercy, Power, Justice and Judgment of God: of which, if nothing can be said new, nothing can be said too often.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[ESSAY VIII.]

PART II.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[*Of God's Mercy in general.*]

**T**HOUGH God be absolutely simple, yet since for our sakes in His scriptures He often submits Himself to comparisons and similitudes, we may

Composi-  
tion in  
God's  
actions.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Thomas  
Aquinas,  
Pars i, qu.  
21, a. 4.

offencelessly<sup>1</sup> (since there is nothing but Himself so large as the world) thus compare Him to the world:—That His eternal prescience is the celestial world, which admits no alteration, no generation of new purposes, nor corruption of old; *and* those four, Mercy, Power, Justice and Judgment are the elementary world, of which all below is composed; *and* the elemented world are His particular extrinsic actions, in which though they be so complexioned that they are all mingled equally, yet in every one of them every one of these four concur. For in every work of God there is Mercy and Justice, so as they pre-suppose one another.

And as in His created elements, so in these there is a condensing<sup>2</sup> and a rarifying, by which they become and grow into one another. For often that action which was principally intended for a work of justice against one malefactor, extends itself to an universal mercy by the example. And the chil-

<sup>1</sup> [So Othello, act ii, scene 3, "his offenceless dog."]

<sup>2</sup> [See p. 24, n. 3.]

dren of GOD know how to resolve and make liquid all His actions. They can spy out and extract balms and oils from His vinegar; and supple and cure with His corrosives. Be He what He will, they will make Him merciful, if mercy be then wholesomest for them. For so that brave Maccabee interpreted GOD's daily afflicting them. "The Lord doth not long wait for us, as for other nations, whom He punisheth when they come to the fulness of their sins, but He never withdraweth His mercy from us." And in like manner out of His mercies they can distil justice, when presumption upon mercy needs such a corrective, for so says St. Ambrose,<sup>3</sup> Cain, *indignus judicatus est, qui puniretur in peccato*; because he was not so much spared as reserved to a greater condemnation. And upon like reason, the imperial laws forbid a servant in an inn to be accused of incontinency, because (in those times) custom

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

2 Mac. vii,  
14-16.

De Pœnit.  
dist. i, [c.  
xlvi, tit.]  
'Serpens.'

<sup>3</sup> [In libro] de Paradiso [apud Corp. Jur. Can. Decret. Pars ii, Causa xxxiii.]

Essays on Ex. i, 1. had made them all such, and therefore unworthy of the law's cognisance.

Of Mercy. Yet of all these four elements, Mercy is the uppermost and most embracing.

Ps. cxlv, 9. *Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus.* And *quanta magnitudo*, as great as His greatness (which is infinite) is His mercy, and as great as His power, which is omnipotent, for it is therefore said, *misereris omnium, quia omnia potes.* Before there was any subject of His mercy, He was merciful; for creation itself is one of the greatest of His mercies. And it is *misericordiá Domini, quia non sumus consumpti*; so that our preservation is also from mercy. "And therefore will the Lord wait that he may have mercy upon you;" and *miserans miserabitur*, in the next verse.

Wisdom, xi, 23.

Lam. iii, 22.

Is. xxx, 18.

God is the Lord of Hosts and this world a warfare. And as the imperial armies had three *Signa Militaria* to be given them, so hath God's mercy afforded us. They had *Signa Vocalia*, the express word of the commander, which office the word of God

Vegetius  
 [de Re Militari] lib.  
 iii, c. 5.

doth to us; and *Semivocalia*, which were the sound of trumpets and other instruments, and such to us are traditions and sermons, partaking of God and man, and they had *Signa Muta*, which were the colours and ensigns, and such to us are the creatures and works of GOD. His mercy is infinite in extent, for it is in all places, yea, where there is no place; and it is infinite in duration, for *as* it never begun, (for the ideating<sup>4</sup> of this world which was from everlasting, was a work of mercy) *and as* the interruptions which by acts of justice it seems to suffer here discontinue it not (for though GOD say, "For a moment in mine anger I hid My face from thee;" yet He adds there: "yet with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee;") *so also* is it reasonable to think that it shall never have end. And because in heaven there can be no distinct and particular act of mercy from GOD, because there can be no de-

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Is. liv, 8.

<sup>4</sup> [So Pseudo Martyr, c. i, § 6 ". . . that form of a State which Plato ideated."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Ps. lxxvii,  
10.

August.  
apud Pe-  
trum Lom-  
bardum  
Sent. lib.  
iv, q. 46,  
[Sect. i.  
The whole  
of the next  
paragraph  
is sug-  
gested by  
sect. ii of  
the same  
quæstio.]

Psalm cxi,  
[v. 1, in the  
vulgate.]

merit in us, nor possibility of it, after judgment; therefore, and from the Psalm, *non continebit in ira sua misericordias suas*, some (but too licentiously) have concluded a determination and ending of the pains of the damned; and others learned and pious, and accused by nobody for this opinion, evict from thence certain *intervalla* and relaxations in the torments of hell after the general judgment; as all confess a diminishing of the pains there, and that the punishment is *citra condignum* by the benefit of the passion of our blessed Saviour.

That which is mercy in God, in us is compassion. And in us, it hath two steps. To rest upon the first, which is but a sadness and sorrow for another's misery, is but a dull lazy and barren compassion. Therefore it is elegantly expressed in the Psalm, *Jucundus homo, qui miseretur et comodat*; for that is the second and highest step in compassion, alacrity and cheerfulness to help.

And as God, delighting most in mercy, hath proposed to Himself most ways for the exercise thereof, so hath He provided man of most occasions of that virtue. Every man contributes to it by being agent, or patient.<sup>5</sup> Certainly we were all miserable if none were; for we wanted the exercise of the profitablest virtue. For though a judge may be just, though none transgress; and we might be merciful, though none wanted, by keeping ever a disposition to be such if need were; yet what can we hope would serve to awake us then, which snore now under the cries of the wretched, the testimony of our own consciences, the liberal promises of reward from God, and His loud threatenings of such omissions?

Amongst the rules of state, it is taught and practised for one, that they which advance and do good, must do it immediately from themselves, that all the obligation may be towards them. But when they will destroy or do hurt, they must do it instrumentally

<sup>5</sup> [Confined in its use now to the medical profession.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[*Ἀνθρω-  
πος ἀνθρώ-  
που δαιμό-  
νιον.* Ze-  
nob. Adag.  
Cent. i, 91,  
in Leutsch.  
Parœmiog.  
vol. i, p. 29,  
and vol. ii,  
p. 8.]  
Valerius  
Maximus  
viii, c. 9.  
[Ext. 3.]

by others, to remove and alienate the envy. Accordingly when princes communicate to any *jura regalia*, by that they are authorised, to apprehend, accuse, pursue, condemn, execute, and despoil, but not to pardon. God doth otherwise; for, for our first sin; Himself hath inflicted death and labour upon us. And as it were to take from us all occasion of evil, He doth all the evil of which His nature is capable, which is but *malum pænæ*. But of the treasures of His mercy He hath made us the stewards by dispensing to one another. For first, He hath redeemed man by man; and then He hath made *hominem homini deum*. And proportional to this treasure, He hath made our necessities and miseries infinite, so much, that an Egyptian king forbade Hegesias, the philosopher, to speak publicly of human misery, lest every one should kill himself.

All consists of givers and receivers: and to contract it closer every man is both those; and therefore made so because one provokes the other, for



*homo indigens, misericors est.* And it is therefore that Aquinas says, that old men, and wise men, are aptest to this virtue, because they best foresee a possibility of needing others' compassion. And if thou hadst nothing to give, or knewest no want in any other, thou hast work enough within doors, *miserere animæ tuæ.* But towards ourselves, or persons almost ourselves, there is not properly mercy, but grief; therefore we must go to seek guests. And to such a cheerful giver, God gives Himself; *et quid non possidet, qui ipsum possidet possidentem?* says a contemplative wise man. And for such a giver to work upon, God makes others needy; *fecit miseros, ut agnosceret misericordes,* says the same man, in the same book.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Prov. xix,  
22, Vulg.]

Summa  
Theol.  
Sec. Sec.  
q. xxx, a.  
ii.

Eccelus.  
xxx, 23.

Aquinas  
u.s.

Paulinus  
Hom. in  
Gazophyl.  
[Epis. 34.]

In the first constitution of the Roman Empire, by the general corruption of all men, which is to give more to them which abound, they easily foresaw that men would soon decline and stray into a chargeable and sumptuous worship of their gods. And

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

therefore they resisted it with this law, *deos frugi colunto*. This moderated their sacrifices, but yet withheld them not from the superfluous adorning the temples and images of their gods. But in our reformed Christian religion, which is the thriftiest and cheapest that ever was instituted (for our sacrifices grow within us, and are our own creatures, prayer and praise; and since our Blessed Saviour hath given Himself for us, we are now as men which had paid a great fine, and were bound to no other rent, than acknowledgements and services), now that we have removed the expensive dignifying of images, and relics, what other exercise is there left for our charity, than those nearer images both of God and ourselves, the poor? "Be merciful then, as your Father in heaven is merciful." And how is he? *Homines et jumenta salvabis, Deus*; and by *jumenta* are understood men not yet reduced to the knowledge of God.

Give then thy counsel to the ignorant, thy prayers to the negligent,

St. Luke,  
vi, 36.  
Ps. xxxv  
[vulg.  
xxxvi,  
Ang. vers.  
v, 6.]

but most thy strength to the oppressed and dejected in heart, for surely "oppression maketh a wise man mad." How impetuously will it then work upon a weaker! Let no greatness retard thee from giving, as though thou wert above want. Alas! our greatness is hydroptic not solid; we are not firm, but puffed and swollen; we are the lighter and the less for such greatness. Alcibiades bragged how he could walk in his own ground; all this was his, and no man a foot within him; and Socrates gave him a little map of the world, and bid him shew him his territory there; and there an ant would have overstrid it. Let no smallness retard thee; if thou beest not a cedar to help towards a palace, if thou beest not amber, bezoar, nor liquid gold, to restore princes; yet thou art a shrub to shelter a lamb or to feed a bird; or thou art a plantain to ease a child's smart, or a grass to cure a sick dog.

Love an asker better than a giver: which was good Agapetus' counsel to

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.  
Eccles. vii,  
7.

Ælian  
[Var.  
Hist.] l. iii,  
c. 28.

[In the infancy of medicine remedies were supposed to be powerful in proportion to their value. Compare Donne's Devotions, title of pt. xi.]  
[Aph. viii.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

['Ciminile'  
is a term  
applied to  
a basin for  
alms. Du  
Cange.]  
Seneca [De  
Beneficiis,  
ii, 7, § 1.]

[Def. p.  
567, D.  
'Ελευθε-  
ριότης ἕξις  
πρὸς τὸ  
χρηματί-  
ζεσθαι ὡς  
δεῖ.]

Justinian: Yea, rather prevent the asking; and do not so much join and concur with misery, as to suffer it to grow to that strength, that it shall make thy brother ask, and put him to the danger of a denial.

Avoid in giving, that which the canonists express by *cyminibilis*, which is a trifling giver. And give not (as Seneca calls them) *panes lapidosos*; which are benefits hardly drawn, which have only the shape not the nourishment of benefits: but give as thou wouldst receive, for thou givest not, but restorest, yea thou performest another duty too, thou lendest. Thou dost not waste, but lay up; and thou gainest in losing. For to this giving most properly squares Plato's definition of liberality, that it is, *studium lucrandi ut decet*.

I need not much fear that any man is too much inflamed to a wasteful charity by this; yet it is an affection capable of sin. And therefore, as waggoners in steep descents tie the team behind, not to draw it up, but

to stop sudden precipitations downward, so only to prevent such slippery downfalls, I say that as the Holy Ghost forbids, "Be not just over-much," so one may be charitable over-much. His aptness to give may occasion another's sloth, and he may breed the worms which shall eat him and produce the lean kine which shall devour the fat. And so, as Paulinus says, *in charitatem de charitate peccat*. And in another place *multa charitas pene delirium et pietas stultum fecit*. For GOD would not, saith St. Ambrose, that we should pour out, but distribute our wealth. So that for precise moderation herein precept will not serve, but that prayer of that most devout Abbot Anthony (of whom St. Augustine says, that without knowledge of letters, he rehearsed and expounded all the Scriptures) *Deus det nobis gratiam discretionis*. For the same B. Dorotheus which says wisely, "God requires not that you should fly but that you should not fall," says also devoutly, that

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Ecc. vii,  
18.

Ad Severum. [Ep.  
ii, p. 23.]  
De Monachatu. [?]

[Ambrose,  
de Off. Lib.  
i, c. 30.]

"Dominus  
non vult  
effundi  
opes sed  
dispen-  
sari.]

De doctrina  
Christ.  
[Prologus  
§ 4.]

[Sermo]  
xiv [de  
Ædificio,  
p. 207.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.  
Sermo i.  
[p. 14.]

they “which do what they are commanded of Christ, pay their tribute justly, but they which perform His counsels bring Him presents.” But in this we may insist no longer: we shall best know what we should do, by considering what God hath done, and how He expressed His mercies towards His Israelites.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

## [ESSAY IX.]

### PART II.

[*His mercy in bringing them to Egypt.*]

**H**E brought them “into the land of Egypt.” For though in the Scriptures, when God would excite His children, He uses to remember them that He is that “God which brought them out of the land of Egypt;” yet that He brought them into that land, was more simply, absolutely, and entirely a work of Mercy. For in the other He exercised His Justice upon Pharaoh; and His Power in miracles.

And miracles must not be drawn into consequence; no man may argue to himself, "God hath miraculously preserved me, therefore He will do so still,"

Miracles are to our apprehension incoherent and independent things with the rest of nature; they seem none of the links of that great chain of providence and connexion of causes. Therefore he which hears them, believes them but so far as he believes the reporter; and he which sees them, suspects his sense in the apprehending, and his judgment in the inquisition and pursuit of the causes; or goes more roundly to work, and imputes it all to the devil. But this work of bringing them into Egypt, was only a work of a familiar and fatherly Providence, and though it were greater than the other (for in coming from Egypt they were but redeemed from serving, here from perishing) yet there is nothing in the history, which a mere natural man would grudge to believe.

From what kind of destruction did Famine.  
He then deliver them? From famine;

*Essays on*  
*Ex. i, 1.*

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

one of those three afflictions, which GOD in a diligent and exquisite revenge presented to David's choice, and one of those two, in comparison whereof David chose a pestilence of uncertain lasting and intenseness. An affliction so great, as GOD chooses that comparison to express His greatest affliction of all, which is a famine of His word.

Amos viii,  
11.

[Donne's  
authority  
was prob-  
ably Arn.  
Clapma-  
rius de  
Jure Domi-  
nationis,  
Lib. iv,  
c. xvi.]

An affliction which defeats all magistracy; for in it one may lawfully steal: all propriety; for in it all things return to their primitive community: all natural affection; for in it fathers may sell their children, by human laws; and divine books have examples where they have eaten them. An affliction which Caligula, to exceed his predecessors and his own examples, studied out,

[2 Kings  
vi, 28.]

Suetonius  
Calig. c. 26.

when to imitate the greatest power of all, *præclusis horreis, indixit populo famem.* An affliction with which

[See under  
the words  
'Mute'  
and 'Peine  
Forte et  
Dure,' in  
Jacob's  
Law Dict.]

our law revenges herself when a delinquent which had offended her before, doth after in contempt of her stand mute at the bar. It is a rack, without either engine or executioner; a devour-



ing poison; and yet by subtraction; Essays on Ex. i, 1.  
and a way to make a man kill himself by doing nothing.

Such are all extreme famines and such was this; for it was no particular curse upon one country, "for famine was in all the land," says the text, and all countries came into Egypt to buy corn. It was no natural disease or infirmity in the earth or air: but as the Psalmist expresses it, "God had called a famine upon the land, and utterly brake the staff of bread." Egypt herself, which uses to brag *Nihil se imbribus cæloque debere*, and whose inundations are fertilities, felt the barrenness, though by Joseph's providence it felt not the penury. Gen. xli, 54, 57. Ps. cv, 16. Pliny Pan. [in Traj. 30, § 51.]

In this affliction, in this distress, the sons of Jacob must go into a strange land, where they had no friend whom they knew, but (to speak humanly) an enemy whom they knew not: and yet God, as though their malice against their brother Joseph, and as though this curse upon the whole land had been ordained by Him for their advan-

Essays on Ex. i, 1.   
 Gen. xlv, 8.   
 Ps. cv, 17.   
 tage (for so it may seem by those words of Joseph, "you sent me not hither but GOD," and in this Psalm, "GOD sent a man before them") appears to Jacob, persuades the journey, assures him his safe going, great propagation, and safe return.

## [ESSAY X.]

## PART II.

[*His Mercy in Propagating them in Egypt.*]

Propag-  
 ation of  
 GOD.

**P**ROPROPAGATION is the truest im-  
 age and nearest representation of  
 eternity. For eternity itself, that is  
 the Deity itself, seems to have been  
 ever delighted with it, for the pro-  
 ducing of the three Persons in the  
 Trinity, which is a continuing and un-  
 determinable work, is a propagation  
 of the Deity.

Of Sin.

And next to this contemplation that  
 GOD, Which is full, and perfect, and  
 all, should admit a propagation, it

may deserve a second place to consider, that that which is merely and utterly Nothing, which is Sin, (for it is but privation) hath had the greatest propagation that can be.

*Essays on*  
Ex. i, 1.

[See p.  
114,n.(1).]

And between these two extreme miracles, a propagation in that which is already All, and a propagation in that which is always Nothing, we may wonder at a propagation in that which is but one-half; which is those religious orders, and devout professions which multiply without mothers, of which not to speak of late times, when that profession was become a disease and contagion, and so no wonder though they infected, and possessed, and devoured whole territories: but in their primitive institution and practice, how infinite was the propagation! We cannot discredit those stories (for being disinterested in our late-sprung controversies they could not speak prejudicially) which reckon five thousand in some one monastery; and five hundred monasteries under one abbot. These who had no wives had infinite

*Of Religious*  
Orders.

*Azorius*  
[*Inst. Moral.*] lib.  
xii, [c. 28.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Azorius  
u. s.]

Lib. v, c.  
17. [Sect.  
15, § 73.]

spiritual children; and having nothing in the world had a great part of it. Within one mile of Alexandria there were five hundred monasteries *pene contigua*. So that, it is truly said of them, they had *Oppida extra mundum*. And when the only tribe of the Benedictines was in full height, it had not many less than forty thousand monasteries. And not only the Christian Church, the easiness of whose yoke might invite them to these counsels, but the Jews under an insupportable law, would ever supererogate in this kind: of whose one sect the Esseni Pliny says, *per multa seculorum millia, gens æterna, in qua nemo nascitur*: and he gives no other mother to such an increase than this, *tam fœcunda illis aliorum vitæ pœnitentia*.

Of these men if they will accept the name<sup>1</sup> (except such of them as being all born to sail in the same ship as we, and

<sup>1</sup> [Compare Gibbon D. and F. c. 37, n. 69 " . . . and glorious was the *man* (I abuse that name) who contrived any cell or seat of a peculiar construction which might expose him," &c. &c. The parallel is the more striking because Gibbon is writing on this very subject of the quasi-sanctity of monks.]

to suffer with us have so sublimed<sup>2</sup> their wits with a contempt of ours, that they steal from us in a calenture; or so stupefied themselves that they forsake their partnership in our labours and dangers, in a lazy scurvy), I dare not conceive any hard opinion: for though we be all God's tenants in this world and freeholders for life, and are so bound, amongst other duties, to keep the world in reparation and leave it as well as we found it (for, *ut gignamus geniti*), yet since we have here two employments, one to conserve this world, another to increase God's kingdom, none is to be accused, that every one doth not all, so all do all.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

For as, though every particular man by his diet and temperance should preserve his own body, and so observe it by his own experience of it, that he might ordinarily be his own physician; yet it is fit that some sepose all their time for that study, and be able to instruct and reform others: So, though

<sup>2</sup> [So Milton, Par. Lost, v, 483, " . . . . . by gradual scale sublimed."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

every one should watch his own steps and serve GOD in his vocation, yet there should be some whose vocation it should be to serve GOD ;—as all should do it, so some should do nothing else.

But because our *esse* must be considered before our *bene esse*, and to our *esse* properly conduce all things which belong to our preservation here (for the first words that ever GOD

Gen. i, 28. said to man, were, “Bring forth and multiply and fill the earth,” which was propagation ; and then presently; “subdue it and rule,” which is dominion,

Gen. ix, 3. and then “everything which hath life shall be to you for meat ;” which is not only sustenance, but lawful abundance and delicacy), therefore to advance propagation, laws have been diligent and curious. Some have forbidden a man to divide himself to divers women, because, though GOD in His secret ends have sometimes permitted it to the patriarchs, and though (being able to make contraries serve to one end) He threatens in another place<sup>3</sup> that “ten women

<sup>3</sup> [Not ten but seven, Is. iv, 1. I suppose the mistake arose from mixing up Is. iv, 1, and Zech. viii, 23.]

shall follow one man ;” yet ordinarily this liberality of a man’s self, frustrates propagation, and is in itself a confession that he seeks not children. And therefore that panegyric justly extols that Emperor, who married young, *Novum jam tum miraculum, juvenis uxorius*. And some laws in the Greek states enforced men to marry :<sup>4</sup> and the Roman law pretended to have the same ends, but with more sweetness, by giving privileges to the married: but ever increasing them with their number of children, of which to have had none, threw a man back again into penalty ; for of the estate of such a tenth part was confiscate ;<sup>5</sup> for to have children is so much of the essence of the lawfulness of the act, that St. Augustine says *Si prolem ex conditione vitant, non est matrimonium* ; for that is a condi-

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Maximiano  
et Con-  
stant. [c.  
iv.]

De bono  
Conjugali.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [Sparta especially, see the art. Marriage (Greek) in Smith’s Dict. of Antiq.]

<sup>5</sup> [See the account of Augustus’ laws on this subject in Mr. Merivale’s sketch of the Augustan Age c. iii, § ii, published by the Soc. for Diff. of Useful Knowledge.]

<sup>6</sup> [The words are certainly not in that treatise; there are expressions almost as strong, but not identical with that in the text.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



tion destroying the nature of matrimony; of which, and of the fruits thereof, how indulgent the Romans were, this one law declares, that to minors they allowed so many more years than they had, as they had children.

Of this  
Propaga-  
tion.

Of this propagation, which is our present contemplation, many think devoutly, that the smallness of the first number, and the shortness of the time, are the remarkable and essential parts. To advance their devotion, I will remember them, that the number of four hundred and thirty years divers times spoken of, is from Abraham's coming to Canaan; for the time of this propagation in Egypt was but two hundred and fifteen years,<sup>7</sup> and the number of men which is six hundred thousand and is only of fighting men, which cannot well be thought a fifth part of all the

Exod. xii,  
41.

<sup>7</sup> [Donne here takes for granted that which from St. Jerome's days (Comment in Ep. ad Galat. c. iii) has always been matter of dispute and controversy. Pererius enters into it in his usual thorough manner, and the reader may find it worth his while to refer to him (Can. in Exod. c. xii, disp. xix) where the interpretation adopted by Donne, Gal. iii, vs. 17, is referred to.]



souls. The whole number Josephus,<sup>8</sup> proportioning ten to a paschal lamb, as the Rabbins do, brings to be three millions seven hundred thousand, yet to me these seem no great parts of God's exceeding mercy in this history; for from so many in such a space, God, without miracle, by affording twins and preserving alive, might ordinarily have derived more men than ever were at once upon the whole earth.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

But whether His decree have appointed a certain number which mankind shall not exceed (as it seems to be a reasonable conjecture of the whole, because in the most famous parts it is found to have held: Rome, and Venice, and like States never exceeding that number to which they have very soon arrived): or that the whole earth is able to nourish no more,—without doubt it is evident, that the world had very long since as many souls as ever it had, or may be presumed to have ever hereafter. And it is a very probable conjecture, that the reason why, since

<sup>8</sup> [Apud Pererium, u. s.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

wolves produce oftener and more than sheep, and more sheep are killed than wolves, yet more sheep remain, is because they are cherished by all industry. For only there men increase where there is means for their sustentation.

That therefore which GOD did mercifully in this, was that He propagated them to such numbers under such oppressions and destructions: for the  
Exod. i, 14. Egyptians cruelly caused them to serve, and made them weary of their lives by sore labour, with all manner of bondage; yea, their devotion was scorn-  
Exod. v, 8. fully misinterpreted. "Because you are idle you say, let us go offer to our Lord." And yet the more they vexed  
Ps. cv, 24. them the more they grew: and "He made them stronger than their oppressors:" and this though that desperate law of destroying all their male children had been executed among them.

## [ESSAY XI.]

## PART II.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.*His Mercy in bringing them from  
Egypt.*

NOW follows His bringing them from Egypt: and though that were properly a work of justice, because it was the performance of GOD's promise, yet that promise was rooted in mercy: and though He brought them out *in manu forti*, as it is very often repeated, and by effect of miracles, and so shewed His power (for it is written, "He saved them for His name's sake, Ps. cvi, 8. that He might make His power to be known." And in another place, "I will get me honour upon Pharaoh and upon all his host.") Yet respecting the time when He did it (to which His promise had not limited Him) and for whom He did it, we can contemplate nothing but mercy. For in the same place it is said "Our fathers under- Ps. cvi, 7.

Exod. xiv,  
4 [Com-  
pare p. 70,  
n. 14.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

stood not Thy wonders in Egypt, neither remembered the multitude of Thy mercies :” so that, diversly beheld, the same act might seem all Power and all Mercy.

And at this time we consider, not that those plagues afflicted Egypt, but that the land of Goshen felt none ; and we hear not now the cries and lamentations for the death of the first-born, but we remember that “not a dog opened his mouth against the children of Israel.” He delivered them then from such an oppressor, as would neither let them go, nor live there—from one who increased their labours, and diminished their numbers ; from one who would neither allow them to be naturals, nor aliens. So ambiguous and perplexed and wayward is human policy, when she exceeds her limits and her subject. But God, though His mercy be abundantly enough for all the world (for since He sweat and bled physic enough for all, it were more easy for Him to apply it to all, if that conduced to His ends), yet, because

Exod. xi, 7.

His children were ever froward and grudged any part to others in this their delivery, pours out all His sea of mercy upon them, and withdraws all from the Egyptians. Therefore He is said to have "hardened Pharaoh's heart."

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Which because it is so often repeated (at least nine times) was done certainly all those ways by which GOD can be said to harden us. Either *ad captum* [i] *humanum*, when GOD descends to our phrase of speech and serves our way of apprehending. Or *permissively*, [ii] when GOD, as it were, looks another way, and agrees with that counsel of the physician, "it is a discreet man's part to let him alone which cannot be cured;" or *subtractively*, when He withdraws that spiritual food which because it is ordained for children, must not be cast to dogs. Or *occasionally*, [iv] when He presents grace, proportioned to a good end in its own nature and quality, which yet He knows the taker will corrupt and envenom (for so, a magistrate may occasion evil, though neither he may

Induration.

Corn. Cel-  
sus, lib. v,  
[c. xxvi, §  
7.]

Essays on Ex. i, 1. }  
 [v] nor GOD can cause any): Or else *ordinately* and instrumentally, when GOD, by this evil, works a greater good; which yet was not evil where it first grew, in the paradise of GOD's purpose and decree (for so no simple<sup>1</sup> is evil), but becomes such, when it comes to our handling, and mingling, and applying, yea that very act, which GOD punished in Pharaoh, which was the oppression, proceeded from GOD, for the  
 Ps. cv, 25. Psalmist says, "He hardened their hearts to hate His people, and to deal craftily with His servants," that so by this violence, and this deceit, they might have a double title to possess themselves of the Egyptians' treasure. And accordingly for all their pressures He brought them away sound; and rich for all their deceit: "He brought them forth with silver and gold, and  
 Ps. cv, 37. there was none feeble in their tribes."  
 —, v.38. Yea, it is added, "Egypt was glad at their departing;" which GOD intimated  
 Exod. xi, 1. when He said, "When he letteth

<sup>1</sup> [In the sense of an "herb," keeping up the metaphor of the "paradise."]

you go, he shall at once chase you hence.”

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Only to paraphrase the history of this delivery, without amplifying, were furniture and food enough for a meditation of the best perseverance and appetite and digestion: yea, the least word in the history would serve a long rumination. If this be in the bark, what is in the tree? If in the superficial grass, the letter, what treasure is there in the hearty and inward mine, the mystic and retired sense? Dig a little deeper, O my poor lazy soul, and thou shalt see that thou and all mankind are delivered from an Egypt, and more miraculously than these. For Almightyness is so natural to God, that nothing done by His power, is very properly miracles, which is above nature<sup>2</sup>. But God delivered us, by that which is most contrary to Him; by being impotent; by being sin; by being dead. That great Pharaoh, whose Egypt all the world is by

[Compare p. 37, “... nothing was too *mineral* nor centric for the search and reach of his wit.”]

<sup>2</sup> [*i. e.* may properly be called Miracles, for a miracle is something which is contrary to the usual course of nature.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Acacius de  
Privilegiis  
[Jur. Civ.  
lib. i, c. i,  
§ 14.]

usurpation (for Pharaoh is but *exemptus* and *privilegiatus*; and that name, [I hope not the nature] is strayed into our word Baro) whom God hath made Prince of the air, and Prince of darkness (that is, of all light and airy illusions, and of all sad and earnest wickedness, of vanity and of sin) had made us fetch our own straw (that is, painfully seek out light and blazing vanities) and then burn his brick (which is the clay of our own bodies) with concupiscences and ambitions, to build up with ourselves his kingdom: he made us travail more for hell, than would have purchased heaven: he enfeebled us from begetting or conceiving male children, which are our good thoughts, and those few which we had he strangled in the birth. And then camest Thou, O Christ—Thine own Moses—and deliveredst us; not by doing, but suffering; not by killing, but dying! Go one step lower, that is higher and nearer to God, O my soul, in this meditation, and thou shalt see that even in this moment, when He



affords thee these thoughts, He delivers thee from an Egypt of dullness and stupidity. As often as He moves thee to pray to be delivered from the Egypt of sin, He delivers thee. And as often as thou promisest Him not to return thither He delivers thee. Thou hast delivered me, O God, from the Egypt of confidence and presumption, by interrupting my fortunes, and intercepting my hopes ; and from the Egypt of despair, by contemplation of Thine abundant treasures, and my portion therein ; from the Egypt of lust, by confining my affections ; and from the monstrous and unnatural Egypt of painful and wearisome idleness, by the necessities of domestic and familiar cares and duties. Yet as an eagle, though she enjoy her wing and beak, is wholly prisoner if she be held by but one talon ; so are we, though we could be delivered of all habit of sin, in bondage still, if vanity hold us but by a silken thread. But O God, as mine inward corruptions have made me mine own Pharaoh, and mine own Egypt ;

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

so Thou, by the inhabitation of Thy Spirit, and application of Thy merit, hast made me mine own Christ; and, contenting Thyself with being my medicine, allowest me to be my physician.

Lastly, descend O my soul, to the very centre, which is the very pole (for in infinite things incapable of distinction of parts, highest and lowest are all one) and consider to what a land of promise and heavenly Jerusalem God will at last bring thee from the Egypt of this world, and the most Egyptiacal part, this flesh. God is so abundantly true, that He ever performs His words more than once, and therefore as He hath fulfilled that promise, "out of Egypt have I called My son;" so will He also perform it in every one of His elect; and as when Herod died, His angel appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream, to call him thence; so when our persecutor, our flesh, shall die, and the slumber of death shall overtake us in our Egypt, His angels sent

St. Matt.  
ii, 15.

from heaven, or His angels newly created in us (which are good desires of that dissolution), or His ministerial angels in His militant church, shall call and invite us from this Egypt to that Canaan. Between which (as the Israelites did) we must pass a desert; a disunion and divorce of our body and soul, and a solitude of the grave. In which the faithful and discreet prayers of them which stay behind may much advantage and benefit us and themselves, if thereby God may be moved to hasten that judgment which shall set open heaven's greater gates, at which our bodies may enter, and to consummate and accomplish our salvation.<sup>3</sup>

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

<sup>3</sup> [Possibly he had in his mind the prayer in the burial service " . . . beseeching thee . . . shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and hasten thy kingdom," &c. For a condemnation of prayers for the dead, see Serm. on St. Matt. xxviii, 6, § 14.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



## [ESSAY XII.]

## PART II.

*His Mercy in their Preservation.*

THE next place is, to consider His Mercy in their preservation in the desert. For GOD hath made nothing which needs Him not, or which would not instantly return again to nothing without His special conservation. Angels and our souls are not delivered from this dependency upon Him. As therefore conservation is as great a work of power as creation; so the particular ways of GOD's preserving those special people in the wilderness, are as great works of mercy as the delivery from Egypt.

And though this book of Exodus embrace not all those, yet here are some instance of every kind: as well of preservation from extrinsic violences of war, as intrinsic of famine: and mixed, of infirmities and diseases.

And because God's purpose had destined them to an offensive war at last, let us mark by what degrees He instructed and nursed them to it. They had been ever frozen in slavery, without use of arms, or taste of honour or glory or victory, and because they were therefore likely to forsake themselves, and dishonour Him, God (saith the history) "carried them not by the way of the Philistines' country, though that were nearer, lest they should repent when they see war, and turn again into Egypt." But presently after, when He had contracted Himself to them and affirmed and affianced His presence by the sacrament of the Pillar, He was then content they should see an army pursuing them: which was not so much terrible to them as they were enemies, as that they were their masters, for then they exclaimed to Moses, "Hast thou brought us to die in the wilderness because there were no graves in Egypt? Did not we say, let us be in rest that we may serve the Egyptians?"

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Exod. xiii,  
17.

Exod. xiv,  
11.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



Exod. xvii,  
9.

Exod. xvii,  
14.

So soon did a dejection make them call their former bondage, rest; and sink down to meet and invite death, when the LORD of life upheld them, And at this time GOD used not their swords at all, yet gave them a full victory. But when this had warmed them, as soon as the Amalekites made towards them, they feared not, murmured not, retired not, nay, they expected not; "but," saith Moses to Joshua, "choose us men, and go fight with Amalek." Which victory, lest they should attribute to themselves, and so grow too forward in exposing themselves and tempting God: the lifting up or falling down of Moses's hands in prayer, that day swayed and governed the battle, which therefore GOD was especially careful that the soldier should know: for so He commanded Moses, "write that for a remembrance in the book, and rehearse it to Joshua."

To their other wars this book extends not: but is full of examples of His other mercies towards them

though they murmured, yea, by the words, it may well seem they were done because they murmured: “In the morning ye shall see the glory of God (says Moses to them) for He hath heard your grudging against Him.” And again. “At evening shall the LORD give you flesh, for the LORD hath heard your murmuring.” They murmured for water, saying “what shall we drink?” and then God presented water; but lest they should attribute all that to the nature of the place, those waters were too bitter to be drunk.—Then God would sweeten them: yet not by miracle, but to incline them to a reverence of Moses, He informed him what would do it naturally; as it appears in another place, where the art of physic is extolled: “was not the water made sweet with wood, that men might know the virtue thereof?” and yet the next time that they murmured for water, He gave it them miraculously from the rock; to shew, that though Moses was enabled to all na-

*Essays on*  
Ex. i, 1.

Exod. xvi,

7.

v. 8.

Exod. xv,

24.

*Ecclus.*

xxxviii, 5.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Ex. xvi, 3.

Francis  
George  
Problem.<sup>1</sup>  
Exod. xv,  
16.

[N.B. not  
"manna."

See Sta-  
pel'n's

"Diss. de-  
voc. *Man*,"  
in the Thes.

Theol-  
Phil.]

[Francis  
George  
u.s.] Probl.  
351.

Wis. xvi, 20

tural works, yet He withdrew not His miraculous presence from them. And then when they murmured desperately for meat, "Oh that we had died in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, &c," the LORD, as though nothing in use or in nature had been precious enough for them, rained down such fowls as no naturalist since can tell what they were: and such a grain, as though it abide the interpretation of *panis fortium*, and *panis angelorum*, yet, saith a curious observer of those subtilties, the name signifies *Quid est hoc?* which is easily gathered from the very text, "When they saw it they said one to another, it is *Man*; for they wist not what it was." In which the same problemist observes this wonder, that every man took a like proportion, and all were alike satisfied, though all could not be of a like appetite and digestion. And a greater wonder and by a better author is observed in it, that "it was

<sup>1</sup> [In S. S. and Phil. Tom. i, sect. vi, de progressu et peregrin. Israelis in deserto. Probl. 348.]



food for all tastes, and served to the appetite of him which took it, and was that which every man would." Essays on Ex. i, 1.

Yet this heavenly food they injured with a weariness of it : and worse, with their comparisons : for they cried, " we remember the flesh we ate in Egypt for nought, the cucumbers, pepons,<sup>2</sup> leeks, onions and garlick." As though [that] had been less worth, or they had paid more for it. Numb. xi, 5. ['they' old copy.]

If then they could chide Him into mercy, and make Him merciful not only to their sin, but for their sin, where or when may we doubt of His mercy? Of which we will here end the consideration, not without an humble acknowledgement, that it is not His least mercy that we have been thus long possessed with the meditation thereof; for thus long we have been in the harbour, but we launch into a main and unknown sea when we come to consider His Power.

[<sup>2</sup> "Pepons." So in Wickliffe's earlier version, from which it probably got into the Bible of 1578. It is found in no other earlier or later that I have examined.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[ESSAY XIII.]

PART III.

[*Of God's Power expressed in His many miracles.*]

OF all the ways in which GOD hath expressed himself towards us, we have made no word which doth less signify what we mean, than Power; for Power which is but an ability to do, ever relates to some future thing; and GOD is ever a present, simple, and pure act.

But we think we have done much, and gone far, when we have made up the word "Omnipotence," which is both ways improper; for it is much too short, because "Omnipotence" supposes and confesses a matter and subject to work upon; and yet GOD was the same when there was nothing; And then it over-reaches and goes downwards beyond GOD: for GOD hath not, or is not such an omni-

tence as can do all things ; for though squeamish and tenderer men think it more mannerly to say, "This thing cannot be done ;" than "God cannot do this thing ;" yet it is all one ; and if that be an omnipotence, which is limited with the nature of the worker or with the congruity of the subject, other things may inroach upon the word "omnipotent;" that is they can do all things which are not against their natures or the nature of the matter upon which they work. Beza therefore might well enough say, that God could not make a body without place : and Prateolus<sup>1</sup> might truly enough infer upon that, that the "Bezanites" (as he calls them) deny omnipotence in God, for both are true.

And therefore I doubt not, but it hath some mystery, that the word "Omnipotence" is not found in all the Bible ; nor "Omnipotent" in the New Testament. And where it is in the Old, it would rather be interpreted

<sup>1</sup> [Elenchus Hæreticorum Omnium, etc. per Gabr. Prateolum Macrossium] Verbo Bezanitæ [p. 93.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, l.

*All-sufficient* than *Almighty*; between which there is much difference. God is so *All-sufficient*, that He is sufficient for all and sufficient to all, He is enough, and we are in Him able enough to take and apply; we fetch part of our wealth, which is our faith, expressly from His treasury, and for our good works, we bring the metal to His mint (or that mint comes to us) and there the character<sup>2</sup> of baptism, and the impression of His grace, makes them current and somewhat worth, even towards Him.

God is *all-efficient*: that is hath created the beginning, ordained the way, foreseen the end of every thing: and nothing else is any kind of cause thereof. Yet, since this word "efficient," is now grown to signify infallibility in God, it reaches not home to that which we mean of God; since man is efficient cause of his own destruction.

God is also *all-conficient*: that is

[See 'Problems and Paradoxes' Paradox V, That all things kill themselves.]

<sup>2</sup> [In the sense of "mark" or "impression," so ". . . Reason's mintage character'd in the face." Comus 530.]

concurr with the nature of every thing; for indeed the nature of every thing is that which He works in it. And as He redeemed not man as He was GOD (though the mercy and purpose and acceptation were only of GOD), but as GOD and man; so in our repentances and reconciliations, though the first grace proceed only from GOD, yet we concur so, as there is an union of two hypostases, *grace* and *nature*. Which (as the incarnation of Our Blessed Saviour Himself was) is conceived in us of the Holy Ghost, without Father; but fed and produced by us; that is, by our will first enabled and illumined. For neither GOD nor man determine man's will (for that must either imply a necessitating thereof from GOD, or else Pelagianism); but they condetermine it. And thus GOD is truly *all-conficient*, that is, concurrent in all; and yet we may not dare to say that He hath any part in sin.

So GOD is also *all-perficent*: that is, all and all parts of every work are His entirely: and lest any might seem

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.  
[See infra,  
p. 204.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

⎵

to escape Him and be attributed to nature or to art, all things were in Him at once, before He made nature, or she art. All things which we do to-day were done by us in Him before we were made. And now (when they are produced in time, as they were foreseen in eternity) His exciting grace provokes every particular good work, and His assisting grace perfects it. And yet we may not say, but that God begins many things which we frustrate, and calls when we come not.

[Compare  
p. 73.]

So that, as yet our understanding hath found no word which is well proportioned to that which we mean by "Power of God;" much less of that refined and subtile part thereof, which we chiefly consider in this place, which is the absolute and transcendent *power of miracles*, with which this history abounds. For whatsoever God did for His Israelites, beside miracles, was but an extension of His mercy, and belongs to that paragraph which we have ended before.

Nature is the common law by which

God governs us, and Miracle is His prerogative. For miracles are but so many *non-obstantes*<sup>3</sup> upon nature. And miracle is not like prerogative in any thing more than in this, that nobody can tell what it is. For,

First, Creation and such as that, are not miracles, because they are not (to speak in that language) *nata fieri per alium modum*. And so, only that is miracle which might be done naturally, and is not so done.

And then, lest we allow the devil a power to do miracles, we must say, that miracle is *contra totam naturam*, against the whole order and disposition of nature. For as in cities, a father governs his family by a certain order, which yet the magistrate of the city may change for the city's good, and a higher officer may change for the city's<sup>4</sup> order; but none, all, except the King: so, I can change some natural

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[The whole  
of the mat-  
ter of this  
page is to  
be found at  
large in  
Aquinas,  
Summa  
Theol. pars  
i, q. cv, arts.  
5 to 8 inc.]

<sup>3</sup> ["Non obstante, a licence from the Crown to do that which could not be lawfully done without it."—Wharton's Law Dict.]

<sup>4</sup> [Query—whether this be not a misprint in the old copy for "kingdom?" Then the sense of the passage will be that each member of the commonwealth may direct those below him by a natural sequence from man up to God.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[Compare  
Hooker,  
Eecl. Pol.  
B. I, c. iii,  
§ 5.]

[Div. Inst.  
lib. iv] de  
Vera Sapi-  
entia, c. xv.

Contra  
Faust. l.  
xxvi, c. iii.

things (as I can make a stone fly upward) a physician more, and the devil more than he ; but only God can change all.

And after that is out of necessity established, that miracle is against the whole order of nature, I see not how there is left in God a power of miracles. For the miracles which are produced to-day were determined and inserted into the body of the whole history of nature (though they seem to us but interlineary and marginal) at the beginning, and are as infallible and certain as the most ordinary and customary things. Which is evicted and approved by that which Lactantius says and particularly proves, that all Christ's miracles were long before prophesied, so that truly nothing can be done against the order of nature. For St. Augustine says truly, that is natural to each thing which God doth, from whom proceeds all fashion number and order of nature ; for that God, Whose decree is the nature of everything, should do against His own decree if He should do against nature.

As therefore, if we understood all



created nature, nothing would be *mirum* to us ; so, if we knew God's purpose, nothing would be *miraculum*. For certainly; those miracles which Moses did, after God had once revealed to Moses that he would do them, were not miracles to him, no more than the works of the conjurers, which *ex ratione rei* were as true as his. But the expressing of his power at this time was, that in the sight of such understanders and workmasters as the Magi were, he would do more without any instrument conducing to those ends, than they could do by their best instrument, the devil, and so draw from them that confession *Digitus DEI hic est* ; for else who could have distinguished between his and their works, or denied the name of miracle to theirs? For they (not to depart at this time from vulgar philosophy, not that I bind your faith to it, but that, if we abandon this, it is not easy and ready to constitute<sup>5</sup> another so defensible) by

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Ex. viii, 19.

<sup>5</sup> [Donne more than once uses this word in the sense of "to raise up." Compare letters, p. 298 ". . . there is a fair field of exercising his favour towards me and of *constituting a fortune* to me, &c.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

their power of local motion, and application of active and passive things, could oppose matter to heat, and so produce frogs truly; yea, when such things are brought together by such a workman, he can by them produce greater effects than nature could. As, an axe and timber being in the hand of a statuary, he can make an image, which they two, or a less skilful agent could not do.

But God wrought not so: but, as [Adv. Nat. l. i, c. 43.] Arnobius says, He did them, *Sine vi carminum, sine herbarum aut graminum succis, sine ulla observatione sollicita, but verbo, et jussione*, as Lactantius [Div. Inst. l. iv, c. 15.] notes. By which Arnobius pronounces none of the philosophers could cure an [Adv. Nat. l. ii, c. ii.] itch, *Nemo philosophorum potuit unquam scabiem uná interdictione sanare.*

Another expression of His power, was in this, that when He would, He intercepted their power, which was, when they attempted to make "cyniphs."<sup>6</sup> For that is a kind of treason, and clipping God's coin, to say, that

<sup>6</sup> [So Jewel Controv. with Harding. Answer to Preface, "The ciniphs were but small, yet are they reckoned among the great plagues of God."]

they were hindered by natural causes ; for, if those “cyniphs” were lice (as many translations call them) and if sweat be the matter of them, and the devil could not ordinarily provide store of that, yet I say, their credit stood not upon the story but the fact ; and then the devil knew natural means to warm and distil multitudes of men into sweats ; and last, if they were such vermin, yet they are agreed to be of that kind which infest dogs ; and they never sweat. And if by “cyniph” be expressed some fly, not made till then, and then of putrefaction (for it were too much to allow creatures of a new species) certainly, the devil can produce all such. Either then the creature being merely new, the devil understood not of what it was composed : or God changed the form of dust into another form, which the devil could never do : or else God manacled his hand in the easiest thing, to confound him the more ; for after this, it appears not that the Magi attempted to do any more miracles.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[The extraordinary questions alluded to in the text form the subjects of much discussion among the early Romish commentators on Exodus. Pererius is very elaborate and diffuse in his commentary whence the history of these controversies may be gathered.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.



St. Mark,  
vi, 5.

Apud Em.  
Sâ [Scholia  
in Quatuor  
Evang. in  
S. Marc. c.  
vi, § 14.  
Sens. Lit.  
(Lugd. 4to,  
1602).]

To discountenance then their deceits, and withal to afflict the land of Egypt, was the principal purpose of God in these miracles; not to declare Himself or beget faith: for He doth not always bind miracles to faith, nor faith to miracles. He will sometimes be believed without them: and sometimes spend them upon unbelievers: lest men should think their faith gave strength to His power. For though it be said, "Christ could do no great works in His own country, for their unbelief:" yet He did some there: which St. Hierome says was done, lest they should be excusable, having seen no miracle: and He did not many, lest, as Theophylact says, He should, after many miracles, resisted have been forced in justice to a severer punishment of them.

But because the danger of believing false miracles is extremely great, and the essential differences of false and true very few, and very obscure (for what human understanding can discern, whether they be wrought imme-

diately or by second causes: and then for the end to which they are addressed, what sect of Christians, or what sect departed from all Christians will refuse to stand to that law,—“If there arise a prophet, and he give a wonder, and the wonder come to pass, saying, let us go after other gods, that prophet shall be slain),” I incline to think that God for the most part works His miracles rather to show His power than mercy, and to terrify enemies rather than comfort His children. For miracles lessen the merit of faith.<sup>7</sup> And our Blessed Saviour said to the Pharisees, “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign.” And John Baptist, in whom there seems to have been most use of miracles, did none.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

St. Matt.  
xii, 39.

St. Jno. x,  
41.

And though in this delivery from Egypt, for Pharaoh's hardness God abounded in miracles, yet in their delivery from Babylon (of which in respect of this, the prophet says, “The day shall come, saith the LORD, that it

Jer. xvi,  
14, 15.

<sup>7</sup> [Compare the very beautiful passage in the Religio Medici, Pt. i, sect. ix and sect. xxvii.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Jo. Acosta  
de Procu-  
randa In-  
dorum Sa-  
lute, lib. ii,  
c. 9 [p.  
223.]

shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought His sons out of the land of Egypt; but the LORD liveth, that brought His sons out of the land of the north”), God proceeded without miracles.—And though in propagation of Christian religion in the new discoveries, the Jesuits have recorded infinite miracles, yet the best among them ingenuously deny it: and one gives this for a reason, why miracles are not afforded by God now, as well as in the primitive Church, since the occasion seems to be the same, that then, ignorant men were sent to preach Christianity amongst men armed and instructed against it with all kinds of learnings and philosophies; but now, learned men are sent to the ignorant, and are superior to them in reason and in civility and in authority: and besides, present them a religion less incredible than their own.

I speak not thus, to cherish their opinion, who think God doth no miracle now: that were to shorten His power, or to understand His counsels:

but to resist theirs, who make miracles ordinary. For, besides that it contradicts and destroys the nature of miracles to be frequent, God at first possest His Church *Fortiter*, by conquest of miracles; but He governs it now *Suaviter*, like an indulgent King, by a law which He hath let us know. God forbid I should discredit or diminish the great works that He hath done at the tombs of His martyrs. or at the pious and devout commemoration of the sanctity and compassion of His most blessed mother; but to set her up a bank almost in every good town, and make her keep a shop of miracles greater than her Son's (for is it not so, to raise a child, which was born dead, and had been buried seventeen days, to so small end for it died again as soon as it was carried from her sight) is fearful and dangerous to admit.

God forbid, I should deny or obscure the power and practice of Our Blessed Saviour, and His Apostles, in casting out devils in the primitive

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Miracula  
[quæ ad  
Invoc.] B.  
Virg.  
Mariæ  
[apud  
Tungros,  
&c. efful-  
sere] ab  
anno 1081  
ad annum  
usque 1605  
[(Duaci  
24mo,  
1606.) l.iii,  
c. 34, p.  
218.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Church : but that the Roman Church should make an occupation of it, and bind apprentices to it (for such are those little boys whom they make Exorcists<sup>s</sup> and then make them free when they receive greater orders, and yet forbid them to set up, or utter their ware but where they appoint, is scarce agreeable to the first examples, I dare not say institution; for I see not that this order had any.

Why we do not so, the reason is, because *non fuit sic ab initio*: and no hardness of heart is enough to justify a toleration of these “devout deceits” and “holy lies,” as they are often called amongst themselves.

[In Comm.  
on Exod.  
ch. viii.]

The power of God, which we can not name, needs not our help. And this very history (in expounding of which Pererius inculcates so often, *non multiplicanda miracula*) which seems the principalest record of God’s miracles, though literally it seem to be directed to His enemies, by often ex-

<sup>s</sup> [See Jeremy Taylor’s Diss. from Popery, Part i, c. ii, sect. x, and Bingham’s Antiq. b. iii, ch. iv, sects. 4 and 5.]



pressing His power: yet to His children it insinuates an admonition to beware of miracles, since it tells them how great things the devil did, and that his giving over in no great thing, but the least of all, shows, that that was not a cancelling of his patent, which he had in his creation, but only a supersedeas not to execute it at that time. For (excepting the staying of the sun, and carrying it back—if it be clear that the body of the sun was carried back, and not the shadow only—and a very few more) it appears enough, that the devil hath done oftener greater miracles, than the children of God. For God delights not so much in the exercise of His Power, as of His Mercy and Justice, which partakes of both the other: for Mercy is His paradise and garden, in which He descends to walk and converse with man: Power His army and arsenal, by which He protects and overthrows: Justice His exchequer, where He preserves His own dignity, and exacts our forfeitures.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Joshua, x,  
12.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[ESSAY XIV.]

PART III.

[Of God's Justice in the pressures of Israel in Egypt and the wilderness.]

[Compare  
Hooker  
Eecl. Pol.  
b. i, c. viii.]

Gen. ii, 16,  
17.

**E**VEN at first God intimated how unwillingly He is drawn to execute justice upon transgressors; for He first exercised all the rest, Mercy in purposing our creation, Power in doing it, and Judgment in giving us a law, of which the written part was in a volume and character so familiar and inward to us (for it was written in our hearts, and by nature) as needed no expositor: and that part which was vocal and delivered by edict and proclamation, was so short, so perspicuous, and so easy (for it was but prohibitory, and exacted nothing from man) as it is one of the greatest strangenesses in the story, that they could so soon forget the text thereof, and not espy the serpent's additions and falsifications.

And then at last GOD interposed His justice; yet not so much for justice' sake as to get opportunity of *new mercy*, in promising a Redeemer; of *new power* in raising again bodies made mortal by that sin, and of *new judgments*, in delivering upon more communications, a more particular law, apparelled with ceremonies the cement and mortar of all exterior, and often the inflamer of interior religion.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

So that almost all GOD's justice is but mercy, as all our mercy is but justice; for we are all mutual debtors to one another, but He to none. Yea, both His nature and His will are so conditioned as He cannot do justice so much as man can. For, for His will, though He neither will nor can do any thing against justice, He doth many things besides it, nothing unjustly, but many things not justly: for He rewards beyond our merits, and our sins are beyond His punishments. And then, we have exercise as well of commutative justice as distributive, GOD only of the latter, since He can receive

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

nothing from us. And indeed distributive justice in GOD, is nothing but mercy. So that there is but one limb of justice left to GOD, which is punishment: and of that, all the degrees on this side final condemnation are acts of mercy. So that the vulture, by which some of the ancients figured justice, was a just symbol of this justice; for as that bird preys only upon carcasses, and upon nothing which lives, so this justice apprehends none but such as are dead and putrified in sin and impenitence.

To proceed then: all ordinary significations of justice will conveniently be reduced to these two, innocence, which in the Scriptures is everywhere called righteousness; or else satisfaction for transgressions, which, though Christ have paid aforehand for us all, and so we are rather pardoned than put to satisfaction, yet we are bound at GOD's tribunal to plead our pardon and to pay the fees of contrition and penance. For, since our justification now consists not in a pacification of GOD (for then

nothing but that which is infinite could have any proportion) but in the application of the merits of Christ to us, our contrition (which is a compassion<sup>1</sup> with Christ; and so an incorporating of ourselves into His merit) hath *aliqualem proportionem* to God's justice and the passion of Christ had not *aequalem*, but that God's acceptance (which also dignifies our contrition, though not to that height) advanced it to that worthiness.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

To enquire further the way and manner by which God makes a few do acceptable works; or how out of a corrupt lump He selects and purifies a few, is but a stumbling block and a temptation. Who asks a charitable man that gave him an alms where he got it or why he gave it? will any favorite, whom his prince only for his appliableness to him, or some half virtue, or his own glory, burdens with honors and fortunes every day, and destines to future offices and

<sup>1</sup> [*i. e.* A suffering with Him, taking part with Him in His passion.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[i.e. "or how he will appease his nobility's murmurings, for making new men equals with them."]

[i.e. our mutual duties are those which we must discharge in society.]

dignities, dispute or expostulate with his prince, why he rather chose not another; how he will restore his coffers; how he will quench his people's murmuring, by whom this liberality is fed; or his nobility, with whom he equals new men; and will not rather repose himself gratefully in the wisdom, greatness and bounty of his master? Will a languishing desperate patient that hath scarce time enough to swallow the potion, examine the physician how he procured those ingredients, how that soil nourished them, which humour they affect in the body, whether they work by excess of quality, or specifically; whether he have prepared them by correcting, or else by withdrawing their malignity, and for such unnecessary scruples neglect his health? Alas! our time is little enough for prayer, and praise, and society, which is for our mutual duties.

Moral divinity becomes us all, but natural divinity and metaphysic divinity, almost all may spare. Almost

all the ruptures in the Christian church have been occasioned by such bold disputations *de modo*.<sup>2</sup>

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

One example is too much ; that Our Blessed Saviour's body is in the Sacrament, all say : the Roman church appoints it to be there by *transubstantiation*. The needless multiplying of miracles for that opinion hath moved the French and Helvetic reformed churches to find the word, *sacramentally*, which because it puts the body there, and yet no nearer than heaven to earth, seems a riddle to the Saxon and such churches : whose modesty (though not clearness) seems greatest in this point : since believing the real being of it there, they abstain generally (though some bold adventurers amongst them also do exorbitate) from pronouncing *de modo*.

The like tempests hath the inquisition *de modo*, raised in the article of descent into hell, even in our

<sup>2</sup> [Compare Sermon on St. Jno. xiv, 20, § 18, and with that again the striking parallel passage in Bp. Andrewes, Responsio ad Bellarm. Apol. p. 13, Oxf. 1851.]

Essays on Church,<sup>3</sup> and of the conveyance of God's  
 Ex. i, 1. grace (which was the occasion of this  
 digression) in the Roman at this day.

But to decline this sad contemplation, and to further ourselves in the meditation of God's justice declared in this history, let me observe to you, that God in His scriptures hath registered especially three symbols or sacraments<sup>4</sup> of use in this matter. One in Genesis of pure and mere Justice, vindicative and permanent; which is the cherubim and fiery sword placed in Paradise, to keep out, not only Adam, but his posterity.

Gen. iii,  
22, 24.

Ex. xxv,  
17.

The second in Exodus, of pure and only Mercy, which is the model and fabric of the mercy seat, under the shadow of two cherubim's wings.

Gen. ix, 14.

The third, partaking of both Mercy and Justice, and a memorial and seal of both, is the rainbow after the deluge.

The first of these, which is of mere Justice, is so figurative and so mystic

<sup>3</sup> [The most eminent of the belligerents were Hugh Broughton on the one side and Bp. Andrewes on the other.]

<sup>4</sup> [In the old sense of a "sacred sign."]



and so unfit for example or consequence, and so disputable whether it lasted long, or ever were literally, that it seems God had no purpose to deliver any evident testimony of so severe and mere Justice. But that of mere Mercy, He made so familiar, that only devising the form Himself, He committed the making of it to man: and so affiancing and binding His mercy to man's work, did, as it were, put His mercy into our hands.

Essays  
Ex. i, 1.

Yet that also is long since translated<sup>5</sup> from us; and there remains only the middle one, more convenient and proportional and useful. For, as it betokens His justice in the precedent deluge or His mercy in assuring us from any future; so is it made of natural and well known causes (and thereby familiar to us) and yet become a sacrament by God's special institution then. And though it should be true which Chrysostom says, that it was a new miracle then, and never appeared before; yea, though that could be true

Hom. 28  
in Gen.  
[apud Pe-  
rer. in  
loco.]

<sup>5</sup> [So Heb. xi, 5, "By faith Enoch was *translated*, &c."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

De Noe  
et Arca,  
c. 27 [apud  
Perer. u. s.]

which Ambrose, somewhat against the text and directly against the other expositors, says, that the bow mentioned there was not a rainbow; but that a bow in the clouds signifies only the power of God in persecution, and thereupon he observes that God says *a bow*, but says not *arrows*, to inflict terror not wounds; every way, I say, it doth the office of remembering God's justice and mercy together. And accordingly in this large and particular history of God's justice and persecution, both towards His children, and His enemies, if we consider their laborious waste and maceratings of their bodies by hot and intemperate labour; all their contempts, and scorns, and aviling,<sup>6</sup> and annihilating in the eye of the Egyptians; all their orbity<sup>7</sup> and enfeebling their race by the edict of destroying their male children; all their deviations and straying forty years, in a passage of a few days; and

<sup>6</sup> [He uses this word instead of the more modern equivalent "reviling." So Pseudo Martyr, c. iii, § 92 ". . . this point of aviling princes."]

<sup>7</sup> ["Barrenness," occurs frequently.]

all their penuries and battles in that journey ; and then for the Egyptians, if we look upon all their afflictions, first of plagues hateful to their senses, then noisome to their fruits, then to their cattle, then to their bodies, then to their posterity, then to their lives ; excepting only the drowning of the Egyptians in the sea, and the killing of the Israelites by their own hands in their guiltiness of idolatry with the calf, it will scarce be found that any of the afflictions proceeded from mere justice, but were rather as physic, and had only a medicinal bitterness in them.

It remains, for determination of this meditation, that we speak a little of God's judgments.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

[ESSAY XV.]

PART III.

[*Of GOD's Judgments in affording Israel a Law for their direction.*]

AND at this time (as by infinite places in the scriptures we are directed) we call GOD's judgments, *all those laws and directions by which He hath informed the judgments of His children, and by which He governs His judgments with or against them.*

For otherwise this word judgment hath also three profane and three divine acceptations.

Of the first sort, the first serves contemplations only, and so judgment is the last act of our understanding, and a conclusive resolution; which both in private studies and at counsel tables many want, though endued with excellent abilities of objecting, disputing, infirming,<sup>1</sup> yea, destroying

<sup>1</sup> [See p. 149, n. (17)]

others' allegations; yet are not able to establish or propose any other from themselves. These men, whether you consult them in religion, or state, or law, only when they are joined with others have good use, because they bring doubts into disceptation; else, they are at least unprofitable; and are but as simplicists which know the venom and peccant quality of every herb, but cannot fit them to medicine, or such a lapidary which can soon spy the flaw, but not mend it with setting.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Judgment in the second acceptation serves for practice, and is almost synonymous with discretion; when we consider not so much the thing which we then do, as the whole frame and machine of the business, as it is complexioned<sup>2</sup> and circumstanced with time and place and beholders: and so make a thing which was at most but indifferent, good.

The third way, judgment serves not only present practice but enlightens,

<sup>2</sup> [So Sir Thos. Brown Rel. Med. Part ii, sect. iv, "Such as are *complexioned* for humility."]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

and almost governs posterity ; and these are decrees and sentences, and judgments in courts.

1 Pet. iv,  
17.

The phrase of divinity also accepts judgment three ways ; for sometimes it is severe and mere justice as “ judgment must begin at the house of God.” And many such. And judgment in this sense, is deep and un-

Ecl. vii,  
15.

searchable. For though Solomon pronounce, “ there is a just man that perisheth in his justice, and there is a wicked man that continueth long in his malice ;” yet he enquires for no reason of it : for “ God’s righteousness

Ps. xxxvi,  
6.

is like the mountains” eminent and inviting our contemplation towards heaven ; but “ His judgments are like a great deep ” terrible and bottomless,

[see p. 127,  
n. 7.]

and declining us towards the centre of horror and desperation. These judgments we cannot measure nor fathom, yet, for all that, we must more than believe them to be just ; for the Apostle says “ we know the judgment of God is according to truth.”

Rom. ii, 2.

But yet oftentimes judgment signifies

not mere justice, but as it is attempered and sweetened with mercy. For by the phrase of the Psalmist, *Judicabit populum in justitiâ at pauperes in judicio* and many such, the Cabalists (as one which understood them well observes) have concluded, that the word judgment applied to God, hath every where a mixed and participant nature, and intimates both Justice and Mercy.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Ps. lxxii, 2.

Reuchlin  
de Arte Cabalística,  
lib. i.<sup>3</sup>

And thirdly, the Talmudists have straitened the word and restrained judgment to signify only the judicial part of the law, and say the Holy Ghost so directed them in Deuteronomy. "These are the commandments, and the ceremonies, and the judgments, which the LORD commanded." And they proceed further, for, because God's covenant and His ten commandments are said simply to be given them, and without any limitation of time or place, they confess, they are bound to them ever, and everywhere:

Deut. iv,  
13.

<sup>3</sup> [Fol. xix, D. "Judicabit populum tuum," inquit, "in justitiâ et pauperes tuos in judicio"—tum quum judicium משפט secundum omnes Cabalistas cum justitiâ etiam admittit clementia, etc.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Deut. iv.  
5.

Pet. Gala-  
tinus, [De  
Arcanis  
Cathol.  
Verit.] lib.  
xi, c. 3.

Ps. cxlvii,  
19.

Deut.  
xxxii, 4.

but because His ordinances and His law (which in the original is *ceremonies* and *judgments*) are thus delivered, "You shall keep them in the land which you go to possess" they therefore now cut off ceremonies and judgments from the body of the law, and in their dispersion, bind not themselves to them, but where they may with convenience enough.

But here we take the word judgment entirely, to signify all the law: for so the Psalmist speaks. "He shews His word unto Jacob, His statutes and judgments unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with every nation nor have they known His judgments." For here judgments are as much as all the rest.

And GOD Himself in that last piece of His, which He commanded Moses to record, that heavenly song which only Himself composed, (for though every other poetic part of scripture, be also GOD'S word, and so made by Him, yet all the rest were ministerially and instrumentally delivered by the



prophets, only inflamed by Him ; but this, which Himself calls a song, was made immediately by Himself, and Moses was commanded to deliver it to the children ; God choosing this way and conveyance of a song, as fittest to justify His future severities against His children, because He knew that they would ever be repeating this song—as the delicacy, and elegancy thereof, both for divinity and poetry, would invite any to that—and so He should draw from their own mouths a confession of His benefits and of their ingratitude) ; in this song, I say, Himself best expresses the value of this word thus, “ All My ways are judgment.”

The greatness of this benefit or blessing of giving them a law, was not that salvation was due to the fulfilling of it ; nor were they bound to a perfect fulfilling of it upon damnation : for salvation was ever from a faith in the promise of the Messiah ; and accordingly the apostle reasons strongly, “ the promise of Christ to Abraham was four hundred and thirty years

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Gal. iii, 17.

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Jer. xxxi,  
33.

Thos. [Aq.  
Summa  
Theol. Sec.  
Sec. q. 60,  
art. 5.]

before the law, and therefore this cannot disannul that," and yet this to Abraham was but an iteration of the promise formerly given, and iterated often. But one benefit of the law was, that it did in some measure restore them towards the first light of nature: for if man had kept that he had needed no outward law, for then he was to himself a law having all law in his heart; as God promiseth for one of the greatest blessings under the gospel, when the law of nature is more clearly restored "I will make a new covenant, and put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;" so that we are brought nearer home, and set in a fairer way than the Jews, though their and our law differ not as diverse in species; but as a perfect and grown thing from an imperfect and growing: for to the first law all laws aspire. As we may observe in the Jews, who after the law of nature was clouded and darkened in man by sin, framed to themselves many directive laws, before the promulgation of this law in the desert. -

For we may easily trace out besides Essays on Ex. i, 1. circumcision (which was commanded), sabbaths, sacrifices of divers sorts, expiatory and eucharistical, vows, ex- Bertram de Politia Judaica, c. 2.<sup>4</sup> communication, burial and marriage, before the written law. But these had but half the nature of law; they did direct, but not correct; they did but counsel, not command: and they were not particular enough to do that office fully, for they shewed not all. Therefore St. Paul says of Moses' law, and the sufficiency of it, "By the law Rom. iii, 20. comes the knowledge of sin," and in another place, "where no law is, Rom. iv, 15. there is no transgression!" and again, "when the commandment came, sin Rom. vii, 9. revived;" that is, it revived to his understanding and conscience: for, that sin was before any written commandment, himself clears it; "Unto Rom. v, 13. the time of the law was sin in the world; but sin is not imputed when

<sup>4</sup> [For the Sabbath he adduces Ex. xvi, 5, 26, 27. Expiatory Sacrifices, Gen. viii, 20; Gen. xxii, 2, 3, 7 & 13; Ex. x, 25, &c. Eucharistic Sacrifices, Gen. iv, 4. Vows, Gen. xxviii, 20, and xxxi, 13. Excommunication, Gen. xvii, 14 & iv, 14, 16. Burial, Gen. iii, 19.]

Essays on  
 Ex. i, 1.

there is no law." Not that God imputes it not (for there is always enough within us for Him to try us by, and His written laws are but declaratory of the former): but we impute it not to ourselves by confession and repentance. This therefore is the benefit of the law, that (as Calvin upon this place says) *Arguit, objurgat, et vellicando nos expergefacit.* We read in Leviticus that a blasphemer was stoned, and after his execution a law was made against blasphemers: if it had been made before, perchance he had not perished. Oftentimes laws, though they be ambiguous yea impossible, avert men from doing many things, which may, in their fear, be drawn within the compass of that law. Not to go far for examples; without doubt, our law which makes multiplication felony,<sup>5</sup> keeps many from doing

[Calvin on  
 Rom. v,  
 13.]  
 Lev. xxiv,  
 10.  
 — v. 16.

<sup>5</sup> ["By a statute made 5 H. IV, c. 4, it is ordained and established, that none from henceforth shall use to multiply gold or silver, nor use the craft of multiplication, and if any the same do, he shall incur the pain of felony; and it was made upon a presumption that some persons skilful in chemistry could multiply or augment those metals." Cowel's Law Dict.—Jacob (Law Dict.)

things which may be so called, for any thing they know, though perchance nobody know what multiplication is. Essays on Ex. i, 1.  
 And our law, which makes it felony to feed a spirit,<sup>6</sup> holds many from that melancholic and mischievous belief of making such an express covenant with the Devil, though everybody knows it is impossible to feed a spirit.

Another benefit of the law (taking the law at large for all the scriptures as the Apostle doth, "Tell me, you that are under the law, have you not read in the law &c," and then cites a place out of Genesis before the law was given: And as St. John says, "It is written in the law," and then cites the thirty fifth Psalm) is, that it hath prepared us to Christ by manifold and Gal. iv, 21. St. Jno. xv, 25. Ps. xxxv, 19.

adds that the statute 5 H. IV, c. 4, was repealed by 1 W. and My. c. 30. The repeal "*it is said was obtained by the learned and celebrated Robert Boyle.*"

<sup>6</sup> [Statute i, Jac. i, c. 12, is an act against conjuration, witchcraft, and dealing with evil and wicked spirits. "Offenders are divided into two degrees, and those in the *first degree* and their accessories before [the fact] shall suffer as felons, without benefit of clergy; and of these there are the four following species . . . secondly [those] that *consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, or reward any evil spirit to any intents,*" &c. &c. Cunningham, Law Dict. art. Conjuration.]

Essays on Ex. i, 1. evident prophecies. Which use the Apostle makes of it thus, "Before faith came" (that is to say, the fulfilling of faith, for faith was ever) "we were kept under the law and shut up unto the faith which should after be revealed; wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."

Gal. iii, 23, 24.

Lastly, the law benefits us thus, that it wrestles with that other law which St Paul found himself not only subject to, but slave to, "I am captive to the law of sin," and "I serve in my flesh the law of sin."

Rom. vii, 23, 25.

These then were the advantages of the law; and had it any disadvantage? It is true, the laws were many; for as the frame of our body hath two hundred and forty eight bones, so the body of the law had so many affirmative precepts; and of the same number consisted Abraham's name, to whose seed the Messias, to whose knowledge all the law conduced, was promised. It hath also three hundred and sixty

Francis George.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [Problemata, tom. ii, de Lege, sect. i, de quibusdam præcedentibus legem] Probl. 8 [p. 65.]

five negative precepts;<sup>8</sup> and so many sinews and ligatures hath our body, and so many days the year.

But, not to pursue these curiosities, besides that multiplicity of laws (because thereby little is left to the discretion of the judge) is not so burdensome as it is thought except it be in a captious and entangling and needy state; or under a Prince too indulgent to his own prerogative: all this great number of laws are observed by one who (Capnio says) was breathed upon by the Holy Ghost, to have been reduced by David to eleven, by Esay to six, by Micheas to three, and by Habaccuc to one. The Lawgiver himself reduced them in the decalogue to ten and therefore the cabalists mark mysteriously, that in the decalogue there are just so many letters, as there are precepts in the whole law. Yet certainly the number and intricacy and perplexity of the laws (for their later rabbins, which make the oral law their rule, insist upon many both con-

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

Pet. Galat-  
inus, [de  
Arcanis  
Cath. Ve-  
rit.] l. xi,  
c. 4.

[Francis  
George  
u.s.]

Buxtorf  
[u.s. p.  
49.]

<sup>8</sup> [Buxtorf Synag. Jud. c. iii, p. 39.]

Essays on  
Ex. i, 1.

traditions and imperfections in the letter of this law), was extremely burdensome to the punctual observers thereof.

[Quoted  
by] Marlo-  
ratus [on  
Acts, xv,  
10.]

Yet, to say peremptorily that it could not be observed, seems to me hasty.<sup>9</sup> Though Calvin, citing St. Hierome, *si quis dixerit, impossibile esse servare legem, anathema sit*, say wisely and truly, that Hierome must not prevail so much as he which says “why tempt you God, to lay a yoke upon the disciples’ necks, which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear?”

Acts, xv,  
10.

Yet that place in Deuteronomy xxx, 8, hath as much authority as this, “Do all the Commandments which I command thee this day;” therefore they might be done. And in another verse it is said of all the commandments laws and ordinances together, “This commandment is not hid from thee, nor far off; It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, who shall go up and bring it down, nor beyond sea that thou shouldest say, who shall go beyond sea and fetch it: but it is near

Rom. x, 6,  
8.

<sup>9</sup> [Compare Jer. Taylor, *Unum Necessarium*, c. i, sect. ii, pt. i.]



thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart." Essays on Ex. i, 1.  
 For though the Prophet in God's person say *Dedi eis præcepta non bona* : Ezek. xx, 25.  
 it was but in comparison of the laws of the Gospel : as our Saviour calls, St. Matt. vii, 11.  
 His Apostles evil comparatively, "ye which are evil can give good things."  
 For simply, the law was good : and, Hom. xiii, ad Rom. in ver. 25, cap. vii, [§ 4.]  
 as Chrysostom says, so easy that they were easier things which were commanded by the written law than by the law of nature ; as, to my understanding, in the point of concupiscence it is evident ; which in the first law of nature, and now in the Gospel, is prohibited but was not so in the letter of the written law.

So much therefore as was required of them (for so Calvin<sup>10</sup> says), that is to make the law a bridle and a direction to them, was possible to them : and he concludes this point, and I with him, that even the regenerate do but half that themselves, the grace of God perfecting the rest.

<sup>10</sup> [Not in Calvin, but in Chrysostom, u. s.]

## PRAYERS.

O Eternal God, as Thou didst admit Thy faithful servant Abraham, to make the granting of one petition an encouragement and rise to another, and gavest him leave to gather upon thee from fifty to ten; so I beseech Thee, that since by Thy grace, I have thus long meditated upon Thee and spoken of Thee, I may now speak to Thee. As Thou hast enlightened and enlarged me to contemplate Thy greatness, so, O God, descend Thou and stoop down to see my infirmities and the Egypt in which I live; and (if Thy good pleasure be such) hasten mine Exodus and deliverance, for I desire to be dissolved, and be with Thee. O Lord, I most humbly acknowledge and confess Thine infinite mercy, that when Thou hadst almost broke the staff of bread, and called a famine of Thy word almost upon all the world, then Thou broughtest me into this Egypt, where Thou hadst appointed Thy stewards to husband Thy blessings, and to feed Thy flock. Here also, O God, Thou hast multiplied Thy children in me, by begetting and cherishing in me reverent devotions and pious affections towards thee, but that mine own

corruption, mine own Pharaoh hath ever smothered and strangled them. And Thou hast put me in my way towards Thy land of promise, Thy heavenly Canaan, by removing me from the Egypt of frequented and populous, glorious places, to a more solitary and desert retiredness where I may more safely feed upon both Thy Mannas, Thyself in Thy Sacrament, and that other, which is true angel's food, contemplation of Thee. O Lord, I most humbly acknowledge and confess that I feel in me so many strong effects of Thy power, as only for the ordinariness and frequency thereof, they are not miracles. For hourly Thou rectifiest my lameness, hourly Thou restorest my sight, and hourly not only deliverest me from the Egypt, but raisest me from the death of sin. My sin, O God, hath not only caused Thy descent hither, and passion here; but by it I am become that hell into which Thou descendest after Thy passion, yea, after Thy glorification: for hourly Thou in Thy Spirit descendest into my heart, to overthrow there legions of spirits of disobedience and incredulity and murmuring. ] O Lord, I most humbly acknowledge and confess that by Thy mercy I have a sense of Thy justice; for not only those afflictions with which it pleaseth Thee to exercise me, awaken me to consider how terrible Thy severe justice is; but even the rest and security which Thou affordest me, puts me often into fear, that Thou reservest and sparest

me for a greater measure of punishment. [ O Lord, I most humbly acknowledge and confess that I have understood sin, by understanding Thy laws and judgments ; but have done against Thy known and revealed will. Thou hast set up many candlesticks, and kindled many lamps in me ; but I have either blown them out, or carried them to guide me in bye and forbidden ways. Thou hast given me a desire of knowledge, and some means to it, and some possession of it, and I have armed myself with Thy weapons against Thee : yet, O God, have mercy upon me, for Thine own sake have mercy upon me. Let not sin and me be able to exceed Thee, nor to defraud Thee, nor to frustrate Thy purposes : but let me, in despite of me, be of so much use to Thy glory, that by Thy mercy to my sin, other sinners may see how much sin Thou canst pardon. Thus show mercy to many in one : and show Thy power and all-mightiness upon Thyself, by casting manacles upon Thine own hands, and calling back those thunder-bolts which Thou hadst thrown against me. Show Thy justice upon the common seducer and devourer of us all : and show to us so much of Thy judgments, as may instruct, not condemn us. Hear us, O God, hear us, for this contrition which Thou hast put into us, who come to Thee with that watch-word, by which Thy Son hath assured us of access, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

**O** Eternal God, who art not only first and last, but in whom, first and last is all one; who art not only all mercy, and all justice, but in whom mercy and justice is all one; who in the height of Thy justice, wouldst not spare Thine own and only most innocent Son; and yet in the depth of Thy mercy, wouldst not have the wretchedest liver come to destruction; Behold us O God, here gathered together in Thy fear, according to Thine ordinance, and in confidence of Thy promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou wilt be in the midst of them and grant them their petitions. We confess O God that we are not worthy so much as to confess, less to be heard, least of all to be pardoned our manifold sins and transgressions against Thee. We have betrayed Thy temples to profaneness, our bodies to sensuality, Thy fortresses to Thine enemy, our souls to Satan. We have armed him with Thy munition to fight against Thee, by surrendering our eyes and ears all our senses all our faculties to be exercised and wrought upon and tyrannised by him. Vanities and disguises have covered us, and thereby we are naked; licentiousness hath inflamed us, and thereby we are frozen; voluptuousness hath fed us, and thereby we are starved; the fancies and traditions of men have taught and instructed us, and thereby we are

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ignorant. These distempers, Thou only O God, who art true and perfect harmony, canst tune and rectify, and set in order again. Do so then, O most merciful Father, for Thy most innocent Son's sake; and since He hath spread His arms upon the cross to receive the whole world, O Lord shut out none of us who are now fallen before the throne of Thy Majesty and Thy mercy from the benefit of His merits; but with as many of us as begin their conversion and newness of life this minute, this minute O God begin Thou Thy account with them, and put all that is past out of Thy remembrance. Accept our humble thanks for all Thy mercies; and continue and enlarge them upon the whole Church, &c.

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**O** Most glorious and most gracious God, into whose presence our own consciences make us afraid to come, and from whose presence we cannot hide ourselves, hide us in the wounds of Thy Son, our Saviour Christ Jesus; and though our sins be as red as scarlet, give them there another redness, which may be acceptable in Thy sight. We renounce O Lord all our confidence in this world; for this world passeth away, and the lusts thereof. We renounce all our confidence in our own merits, for we have done nothing in respect of that which we might have done neither could we ever have done any such thing

but that still we must have remained unprofitable servants to Thee. We renounce all confidence, even in our own confessions and accusations of ourselves: for our sins are above number, if we would reckon them; above weight and measure, if we would weigh and measure them; and past finding out, if we would seek them in those dark corners in which we have multiplied them against thee. Yea, we renounce all confidence even in our repentances; for we have found by many lamentable experiences that we never perform our promises to Thee, never perfect our purposes in ourselves, but relapse again and again into those sins which again and again we have repented. We have no confidence in this world, but in Him who hath taken possession of the next world for us, by sitting down at Thy right hand. We have no confidence in our merits; but in Him, whose merits Thou hast been pleased to accept for us, and to apply to us, we have: no confidence in our own confessions and repentances, but in that blessed Spirit, who is the author of them, and loves to perfect His own works and build upon His own foundations, we have. Accept them therefore O Lord, for Their sakes whose they are; our poor endeavours, for Thy glorious Son's sake, who gives them their root, and so they are His; our poor beginnings of sanctification, for Thy blessed Spirit's sake, who gives them their growth, and so they are His: and for Thy Son's sake, in whom only our

prayers are acceptable to Thee, and for Thy Spirit's sake which is now in us, and must be so whensoever we do pray acceptably to Thee; accept our humble prayers for &c.

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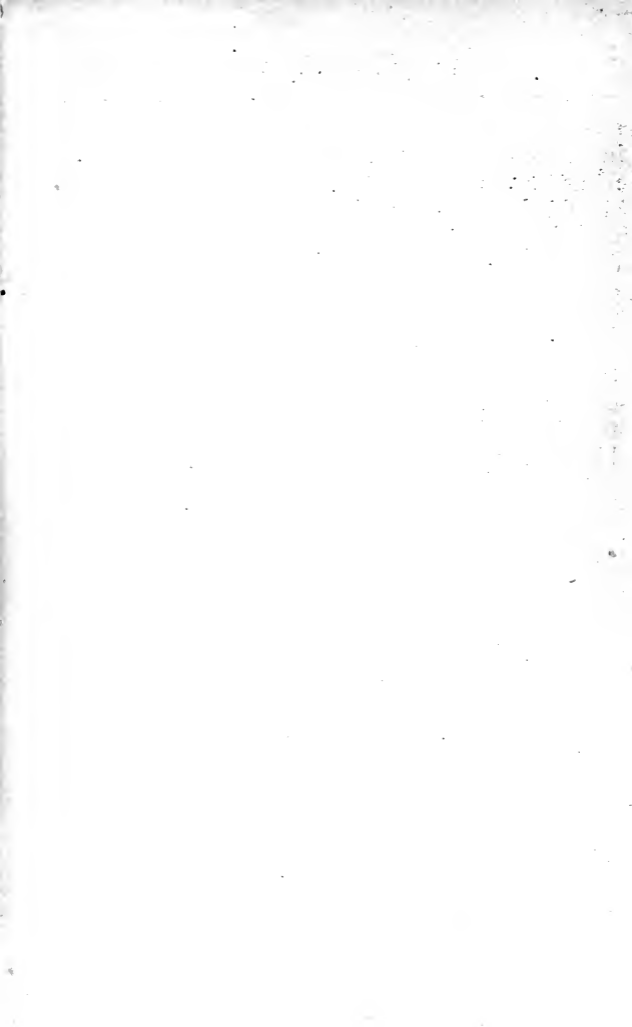
**O** Eternal and most merciful God, against whom, as we know and acknowledge that we have multiplied contemptuous and rebellious sins, so we know and acknowledge too, that it were a more sinful contempt and rebellion, than in all those, to doubt of Thy mercy for them, have mercy upon us: In the merits and mediation of Thy Son, our Saviour Christ Jesus, be merciful unto us. // Suffer not O Lord, so great a waste as the effusion of His blood, without any return to Thee; suffer not the expense of so rich a treasure, as the spending of His life, without any purchase to Thee; but as Thou didst empty and evacuate His glory here upon earth, glorify us with that glory which His humiliation purchased for us in the kingdom of heaven. And as Thou didst empty that kingdom of Thine, in a great part, by the banishment of those angels whose pride threw them into everlasting ruin, be pleased to repair that kingdom, which their fall did so far depopulate, by assuming us into their places, and making us rich with their confiscations. And to that purpose, O Lord, make us capable of that succession to Thine angels there; begin in us here in this life an



angelical purity, an angelical chastity, an angelical integrity to Thy service, an angelical acknowledgement that we always stand in Thy presence, and should direct all our actions to Thy glory. Rebuke us not O Lord in Thine anger that we have not done so till now ; but enable us now to begin that great work ; and imprint in us an assurance that Thou receivest us now graciously, as reconciled, though enemies ; and fatherly, as children, though prodigals ; and powerfully, as the God of our salvation, though our own consciences testify against us. Continue and enlarge Thy blessings upon the whole Church, &c. ✓



*FINIS.*



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## A LIST OF WORDS

OCCURRING IN THE FOREGOING ESSAYS REMARKABLE  
IN THEIR FORM OR USAGE.

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[T.—Todd's Edition of Johnson's Dictionary;  
R.—Richardson's Dictionary].

### A.

- ABSTRACT, *v. a.*—leave out of account, 141.  
ADVANTAGEABLE, 156.  
ACCITE, 33, 156.  
AFTER, *adv.* (as in Heb. iii, 5), used very frequently, *e.g.* 88,  
133, 148, &c.  
AGREEING, *adj.*, 41, *see* Udal as quoted in R.—“the agreeing  
and friendly fellowship of the church.”  
ALSO—“all the same,” 77.  
ANCIENTEST—most ancient, 67.  
APPLIABLENESS, 19, 217.  
ARREST—“arrest ourselves,” 141.  
AVILE, 222.

### B.

- BATTER, 72, 102.  
BEND—“bend our thoughts,” 48.  
BRAVERY, p. 79.

### C.

- CAPITAL—“heinous,” 67.  
CENTRIC, 37, [so in the poem called ‘Love's Alchemy,’—  
“Some that have deeper digg'd Love's mine than I  
Say, where this *centric* happiness doth lie.”  
CHARACTER—“impression,” 200.  
CIRCUMSTANCE, *v.*, 225.  
COLLATION, 65, 140.  
COLLEAGUESHIP, 109.

## List of Words, &c.

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IMPARTIBLE, 50.

IN—at, 154.

INCLINE, 123.

INDUCE, 13.

INFINITY, 77.

INFIRM, *v.*, 149, 224.

INFRINGE, 149.

INQUISITOR, 140.

INSIMULATE, 144, 213.

INSINUATE, 148.

INSOLENCE—rarity, 150.

INTEMERATE, 110.

INTENSENESS, 172.

INWARDS, *subst.*, 10.

INSTRUCT, p. 15. [Used in the same way by B. Jonson in the *Silent Woman*, quoted by R.]

ITERATE, 134, 330.

### J.

JURIDICALLY, 151.

### L.

LEARNEDST—most learned, 57, 61.

LIBERTY, 73.

LIQUID, 27.

LOTHENESS, 70.

### M.

MARK, 57.

MINERAL, 37.

MISAPPLIABLENESS, 126.

MISCONCEIVE, 73.

MISIMAGINED, 74.

MISTAKING, 77, 146.

### O.

OBLIGATORILY, 125.

OBNOXIOUS, 17.

OFFENCELESSLY, 158.

OFFUSCATE, 123.

## *List of Words, &c.*

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OPPOSE, 63.  
OPPOSITE, 69.  
OVERBOLDNESS, 57.  
OVER-REACH, 198.

### P.

PATIENT, 163.  
PERIODIC, 158.  
PREJUDICALLY, 175.  
PRESENTLY, 85.  
PRESENTEST, 97.  
PREVENT, 44.  
PRINCIPIANT, 129.  
PROPER, "Names proper"—proper names, 58.  
PROPRIETY, 19. So Daniel quoted in R., and many instances in T.

### Q.

QUARREL, 70.

### R.

RAGEFULLY, 144.  
RECLINE, *v. a.*, 35.  
REDUCE, 81, 132.  
REMEMBER, *v. a.*—"mention," 43. The passage from Ayliffe in T. seems doubtful.  
REPOSE, 117.  
REPOSEDLY, 79.  
REPREHEND, 64.  
RESPECT, 183.  
RESPECTIVE, 69.  
RESULTANCE, 53.  
REVERENCES, 10.  
ROUNDLY, 42, 117.  
RUIN, *v. n.*, 104.

### S.

SACRAMENT, 193, 220.  
SAFELIER, 149.  
SCHEDULE, 60.

## List of Words, &c.

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SEPOSE, 67, 177.

SIMPLICIST—a gatherer of herbs, 225.

SLIP, *v. a.*, 18, as in the expression “slip the occasion.”

STUB UP, 101.

SUBLIME, *v. a.*, 177.

SUBLIMER, 84.

SUBLIMENESS, 81.

SUB-OBSCURELY, 116.

SUPPLE, *v. a.*, 159.

SUPPLIER, 156.

### T.

TEMPEST, *v. a.*, 144.

TIMELY, 40—“having to do with time.” [Compare Spenser  
in T.—

“And many bards that to the trembling chord,  
Can tune their *timely* voices cunningly.”]

TRANSLATE, 221.

TRAVAIL, *v. a.*, 146. See too 63.

### U.

UNBEING, 152.

UNLEGIBLE, 143.

UNSINCERE, 102.

### V.

VIOLENCE, *v. a.*, 100.

VIRTUAL, 55.

VOUCH—quote, 26, 61.

### Y.

YET—even now, 126.

Cusanus 17

Pico . 22, 31, 57, 74 51

Predomani 84

Georgius 82

Chemistry of Earth of Anat. of the World. 91.





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