

Kenelm Digby *Two treatises: in the one of which, the nature of bodies: in the other, the nature of mans soul, is looked into: in way of discovery of the immortality of reasonable souls*

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To my Sonne Kenelme Digby

Sonne,

The calamity of this time being such, as hath bereaft me of the ordinary meanes of expressing my affection to you; I have beene casting about, to find some other way of doing that in such sort, as you may receive most profit by it. Therein I soone pitched upon this consideration. That parents owe unto their children, not onely materiall subsistence for their bodie; but much more, spirituall contributions to their better part, their minde. I am much bound to God, that he hath endewed you with one very capable of the best instructions: and withall, I do therefore esteeme my self obliged, to do my utmost for moulding it to its most advantage. If my ayme therein do prove successefull, you will with more ease digest those inconveniences and distresses, which already you have begvn to be acqvainted with, and that threaten dayly worse unto you. For how can a man svffer his hart to be dejected att the privation of any temporall blessings, whiles he considereth the inanity of them; and that nothing is worthy his serious thought, but what may accompany him to his eternall habitation? What needeth he feare the desolations of warre, and the worst that they can do against him, who have his estate in their power, when he may be rich with a much nobler treasvre, that none but himself can robbe him of? Without dovbt, he that shall seriously reflect upon the excellency of his owne natvre, and upon the admirable perfect and happy state he shall most certainly arrive unto, if he but weane himself from those worldly impediments, that here clogge his souls flight; can not choose but looke with a disdainfull eye, upon the glittering tryfles, that weake spirits delight themselves withall. If he deeme it not requisite (as of old, the famous wise man did) to throw away those encvmbances, to the end he may the more freely attend unto divine contemplations (for worldly goods, duely used, may be very advantagious both to ones self, and to others) yet at the least, he

will not repine at fortvnes recalling of what she formerly had but lent him, and but permitted him the use of.

To the end then that you may be armed against the worst that may arrive unto you, in this unhappy state of affaires, in our distressed country; I send you those considerations of the natvre and Immortality of humane souls, which of late, have beene my chiefe entertainment. The progresse you have already made in the study of Philosophy, hath (I am persvaded) enabled you to benefitt your self, with what I have written upon this subiect: on the serious examining of which, if you will employ but halfe the time, that I have done in spinning out my thoughts, and weaving them into the piece you see, I dovb not but you will thereby receive so much contentement, as well as profit, that you will not repent you of your pains. Besides that, intellectvall entertainments are the pvrest, and the noblest, and the most proportionate to mans natvre, and prove the most delightfull to him, when they are duely relished. You will presently agree, that the matter handle, is the most important and the most weighty, within the whole extent of humane natvre, for a worthy and a gallant person to employ himself about. The advantage which man hath over vnreasonable creatvres, is, that what he doth, is by election; and he is himself master of all his actions; whereas they are impelled by outward causes, unto all they doe: it is properly sayd of them, that *agvntvr magis qvam agvnt*: He onely is free: and in all varieties of circvstances, hath the power to choose one, and to reiect an other. Now, to have this election wisely made, and becoming a man, requireth that it be steered by knowledge. To do any thing well, a man must first know throughly all that concerneth the action he is about; and chiefly the end of it. And certainly, of all his actions, the governement of himself, is the most important, and neereliest concerning him. The end of that governement, and of all a mans aymes, is by all men agreed to be beatitude: that is, his being completely well, and in a condition of enioying the most happinesse, that his natvre is capable of. For arrivall whereunto, it is impossible to pitch upon the direct and svre meanes, unlesse it be first determined, whether the beatitude we speake of, do belong to this life, or be not to be attained, till we come to the next: or rather, whether or no, there be an other life besides this, to be happy in. For if there remaineth an eternity unto us, after the short revolvion of time we so swiftly rvnne over here on earth; it is cleare, that all the happinesse which can be imagined in this fleeting state, is not valvable, in respect of the future; nor any thing we do here is considerable, otherwise then as it condvceth to the making our condition then, better or worse. Now the way to be svre of this, is eyther infallible authority, or evident science. They that rely on the first, depend of others: and they onely who know, are absolvtely complete of themselves; and have within themselves, the principles whereby to governe their actions, in what is of highest consequence to them. It is true, every body is not of a straine of witt and ivdgement, to be of this rank; and who are not, must be contented to beleeve others, and be satisfyed with what is tavght them. But he that will be of a superior orbe, must make this his study. This is the adeqvate entertainment of a worthy person.

To conceive how high and excellent, this science of governing a man in order to beatitude in the next world is, we may consider, how among all arts that concerne this life, the art of a statesman, unto whome belongeth to see a common wealthwell governed, is by much the noblest. All other arts, are but ministeriall to him. He maketh use of the soldier, of the lawyer, of the

orator, of the antiquary, of the physician, as best conduceth to the end he aimeth at, of making the commonwealth he governeth, happy and flourishing. All other meaner trades serve him in a yet lower degree. Yet after all, he must take his measures from the Metaphysician or Divine. For since the government of a society of men, aimeth at giving them the best being they are capable of; and since Mans well being here in this life, is but instrumentally good, as being the means for him to be well in the next life; It is evident, that the statesmans art, is but instrumentall to that, which sheweth, how every particular man must governe his life, to be partaker of a happy eternity. And consequently, if a statesman have not this science, he must be subject to a braver man then himself, whose province is to direct all his actions unto this end. We are told, how reverently great Cesar listened to the discourses of learned Achoreus, how observant Alexander was of his Master Aristotle, how secure Nero trode, while Seneca guided his steps, how humble Constantine was to saint Sylvesters precepts, how Charlemaine governed himself in his most important actions, by Alcuines advise: In a word, all the great men of antiquity, aswell among the Romanes, as among the Grecians, had their Philosophers, and Divines in their kind, belonging to them; from whome they might derive rules of living and doing as they ought upon all occasions, if themselves were not Masters in that superior and all directing science. He that seeth not by his owne light, must in this dangerous ocean steere by the lanterne which an other hangeth out to him. If the person he relyeth upon, eyther withholdeth the light from him, or sheweth him a false one, he is presently in the darke, and can not faile of loosing his way. How great an authority had the Avgers and priests among the rude Romanes, to forbid any publick act, or to breake any assembly upon pretence of Religious duties, when they liked not the businesse that was in agitation? The like may interested Divines among Christians do, if the ministers of state have not some insight into Divinity. He leadeth a vexatious life, that in his noblest actions is so gored with scruples, that he dareth not make a steppe, without the authority of an other to warrant him.

Yet I do not conclude, that he whome I designe by the character of a brave man, should be a professed or a complete Metaphysician or Divine, and consummate in every curious circumstance that belongeth to this science; it sufficeth him to know it in bvlke; and to have so much Divinity, as in common occvrrents, to be able to governe himself; and in speciall ones, to vnderstand what, and why his Divine perswadeth him to any thing; so that even then, though not without helpe, yet he governeth himself, and is not blindly governed by an other. He that aimeth at being a perfect horseman, is bound to know in generall (besides the art of riding) the nature and temper of horses; and to vnderstand the different qualities of bittes, saddles, and other vtensiles of a horseman; But the utmost exactnesse in these particulars, belongeth to farriers, saddlers, smithes, and other tradesmens of all which, the ivditious rider knoweth how to make due use, when he hath occasion, for his principall end; which is, orderly governing his horse. In like manner, he whom we designe by a complete brave man, must know solidely the maine end of what he is in the world for: and withall, must know how to serve himself when he pleaseth, and that it is needfull to him, of the Divines high contemplations, of the Metaphysicians subtle specvlations, of the naturall Philosophers minute observations, of the Mathematicians nice

demonstrations; and of whatsoever else of particvlar professions, may condvce to his end; though without making any of them his professed businesse.

To lay grovndes for such knowledge as this, is the scope of my ensving discourse. My first ayme, was to begett it in my self: to which end, the digesting my thoughts into order, and the setting them downe in writing, was necessary: for without such strict examination of them, as the penning them affordeth one meanes to make, they would hardly have avoyded being disioynted and roving ones. Now that I have done that, my next ayme is that you, unto whom I wish as much good as to my self, may reape as much benefit by the studying it, as I have done by the composing it. My end then being a private one (as looking no further then you my sonne, and my self) I have not endeavoured to expresse my conceptions eyther in the phrase, or in the language of the schooles. It will serve our turne, to comprehend the substance, without confining our selves to any scrvpvlous exactnesse, in what concerneth onely forme. And the same consideration hath made me passe slightly over many particvlar, in my first Treatise of the Natvre of Bodies; upon which learned and witty men might spinne out large volvmes. For in that part, I ayme no further, then to shew what may be effected by corporeall agents. There, possibility serveth my turne, as well as the determinate indivisible point of truth. I am obliged to that, onely in my maine great theme; which is the soul. In regard of which, the nvmerous crooked narrow cranies, and the restrayned flexvous rivolets of corporeall thinges, are all contemptible, further then the knowledge of them serveth to the knowledge of the soul. And a gallant man, whose thoughts flye att the highest game, requirerh no further insight into them, then to satisfy himself by what way they may be performed; and deemeth it farre too meane for him, to dwell upon the svbtilest of their mysteries for science sake.

Besides this liberty that the scope I ayme att alloweth me of passing very cvrsorily over svndry particvlar; I find now att my reading over all together, what I have written to deliver it to the Printer, that even in that which I ovght to have done to comply with my owne designe and expectation, I am fallen very short; so that if I had not vnwarily too farre engaged my self for the present pvblishing it, truly I should have kept it by me, till I had once again gone over it. I find the whole piece very confusedly done; the stile vneqvall and vnpolished; many particvlar (when they are not absolvte necessary to my maine drift) too slightly tovched, and farre from being driven home: and in a word, all of it seemeth to be rather but a loose modell and rovghecast of what I designe to do, then a complete worke throughly finished.

But since by my overforward promising of this piece to severall frindes, that have beene very earnest for it, I have now brovght my self to that passe, that it would ill become me to delay any longer the pvblishing of some thing upon this subiect; and that obligations of an other natvre permitt me not att the present to dwell any longer upon this (besides that, so laisy a braine as mine is, groweth soone weary when it hath so entangled a skeane as this is to vnwind) I now send it you as it is; but with a promise, that att my first leisvre, I will take a strict svrvey of it; and then in an other edition, will polish, correct and adde what shall appeare needfull to me. If any man shall take the booke out of your hand, invited by the title and subiect to looke into it; I pray you in my behalfe represent unto him, how distant my profession is, and how contrary my edvcation hath beene, from writing of bookes. In every art, the plainest that is, there is an apprenticeship

necessary, before it can be expected one should worke in it a fashionable piece. The first attemptes are always very imperfect ayminiges; and are scarce discernable what they are meaned for, unlesse the master guide his schollers hand. Much more will the same happen in so difficvlt and spiny an affaire, as the writing upon such a nice and copious subiect as this is, to one that is so wholly ignorant of the lawes of methode as I am.

This free and ingenvous acknowledgement on my side, will I hope prevayle with all ingenvous persons, who shall reade what I have written, to advertise me fairely (if they ivdge it worth their while) of what they dislike in it: to the end that in an other more accvrate edition, I may give them better satisfaction. For besides what faylinges may be in the matter, I can not dovbtt but that even in the expressions of it, there must often be great obscvrity and shortnesse; which I, who have my thoughts filled with the thinges themselves, am not aware of. So that, what per adventvre may seeme very full to me, because every imperfect tovch bringeth into my minde the entire notion and whole chaine of circvstances belonging to that thing I have so often beaten upon; may appeare very crvde and maymed to a stranger, that can not gvesse what I would be att, otherwise then as my direct wordes do leade him.

One thing more I shall wish you to desire of them who happily may peruse these two Treatises; aswell for their owne sakes, as for mine. And that is, that they will not passe their censvre upon any particvlar piece, or broken parcell of eyther of them, taken by it self. Let them draw the entire thridde through their fingers, and let them examine the consequentnesse of the whole body of the doctrine I deliver; and let them compare it by a like svrvey with what is ordinarily tavght in the schooles: and if they find in theirs, many brackes and short endes which can not be spvnne into an even piece, and in mine, a faire coherence throvghout; I shall promise my self a favourable doome from them, and that they will have an acquiescence in themselves to what I have here presented them with: whereas, if they but ravell it over loosely, and pitch upon disputing against particvlar conclusions, that att the first encovnter of them single, may seeme harsh unto them, (which is the ordinary course of flashy wits, who can not fadome the whole extent of a large discourse) it is impossible but that they should be very much vnsatisfyed of me; and goe away with a persvasion, that some such truthes as upon the whole matter are most evident (one stone in the arch supporting an other, and the whole) are meere chymeras and wilde paradoxes.

But (Sonne) it is time my booke should speake it self, rather then I speake any longer of it here. Reade it carefully over, and let me see by the effects of your governing your self, that you make such right use of it, as I may be comforted in having chosen you to beqveath it unto. God in heaven blesse you. Paris the last of Avgust 1644.

Your Loving Father KENELME DIGBY.

(...)

The Twelfth Chapter. Of the perseverance of a soul, in the state she findeth her self in, at her first separation from her body.

Thus we have brovght mans soul, out of the body she lived in here, and by which she conversed, and had commerce with the other partes of this world: and we have assigned her, her first array and stole, with which she may be seene in the next world: so that now there remaineth only for us to consider, what shall betide her afterwarde; and whether any change may happen to her, and be made in her, after the first instant of her being a pvre spiritt, separated from all consortshippe with materiall substances. To determine this point the more clearely, let us call to minde, an axiome that Aristotle giveth us in his logike; which teacheth us, That as it is true, if the effect be, there is a cause; so likewise it is most true, that if the cause be in act, or causing, the effect must also be. Which Axiome may be vnderstood two wayes: the one, that if the cause hath its effect, then the effect also is: and this is no great mystery; or for it, are any thanks due to the teacher; it being but a repetition, and saying over again of the same thing. The other way is, that if the cause be perfect in the natvre of being a cause, then the effect is: which is as much as to say, that if nothing be wanting to the cause, abstracting precisely from the effect; then neyther is the effect wanting. And this is the meaning of Aristotles Axiome: of the truth and evidence whereof in this sense, if any man should make the least dovt, it were easy to evince it: as thus; if nothing be wanting but the effect, and yet the effect doth not immediately follow, it must needs be, that it can not follow at all; for if it can, and doth not, then something more must be done to make it follow: which is against the supposition, that nothing was wanting but the effect; for that which is to be done, was wanting. To say, it will follow without any change, is senselesse: for if it follow without change, it followeth out of this, which is already putt: but if it do follow out of this which is precisely putt, then it followeth, against the supposition, which was, that it did not follow although this were putt.

This then being evident, let us apply it to our pvurpose; and let us putt three or more things, namely A. B. C. and D: whereof none can worke otherwise, then in an instant or indivisibly: and I say, that whatsoever these foure things are able to do, without respect to any other thing besides them, is completely done in the first instant of their being putt: and if they remayne for all eternity, without commvnication or respect to any other thing, there shall never be any innovation in any of them, or any further working among them: but they will always remayne immvtable, in the same state they were in, at the very first instant of their being putt: for whatsoever A can doe, in the first instant, is in that first instant actually done; because he worketh indivisibly: and what can be done precisely by A, and by his action ioyned to B; doth precisely follow out of A, and his action, and out of B, and his action, if B have any action independent of A: and because all these are in the same instant, whatsoever followeth precisely out of these, and out of any thing else that is in the same instant, and that worketh indivisibly as they do; is necessarily done in that very instant: but all the actions of C and D, and of whatsoever by reflection from them may be done by A and B, being all of them indivisible, and following precisely out of some of the forenamed actions; they do follow out of things being in this

instant: and because they are indivisible, they may be in this instant: and therefore, all is done in this instant. Now, supposing all to be done that can be done by them in this instant; and that nothing can follow from them, unlesse it follow precisely out of what is in this instant; and that it is all indivisible: it followeth clearly, that whatsoever (concerning them) is not in this instant, can never be.

These two conclusions being thus demonstrated; let us in the next place determine, how all actions of pvre spirits, which have no respect to bodies, must of necessity be indivisible; that is, must inclvde no continvate svccession: by which, I meane such a svccession, as may be devided into partes without end: for if we looke well into it, we shall find, that a continvate svccession can not be a thing, which hath in it self a being: and the reason is, because the essence of such a svccession, consisteth in having some of its partes already passed, and others of them yet to come: but on the other side, it is evident, that no such thing can be, whose essentiall ingredients are not it self: and therefore it followeth evidently, that such a thing as we call svccession, can have no being in it self: seeing that one essentiall part of it, never is with the other: therefore, such a svccession, must have its being in some permanent thing, which must be divisible; for that is essentially required in svccession: but permanent divisibility is that which we call biggenesse or qvantity; from which pvre spirits are free: and therefore, it is most evident, that all their actions in respect of themselves, are absolvtely indivisible.

Now, to make use of this doctrine to our intent: we say, that since our soul, when it is separated from our body, is a pvre spiritt or vnderstanding; and that all her actions are indivisible; and that all actions of other spirits upō her must likewise be such; and by cōsequence, that there can be no continvate svccession of action among them: we must of necessity conclvde, that according to the private natvre of the soul, and according to the common notion of spirituall thinges; there can be no change made in her, after the first instant of her parting from her body: but, what happinesse or misery betideth her in that instant, continveth with her for all eternity. Yet is it not my mind to say, that by the course of the vniversall resoltions, from which she is not wholly exempt, and from supernatvrall administration of corporeall thinges, there may not resvlt some change in her. But the consideration of that matter, I remitt to those treatises, unto which it belongeth; as not depending, nor ensving from the particvlar natvre of the soul: and therefore, not falling vnder our discussion in this place.

This same conclusion may be proved by an other argvment, besides this which we have now used: and it is this. Whatsoever worketh pvrely by vnderstanding and minde, can not be changed in its operations, unlesse its vnderstanding or minde be altered: but this can not happen, unlesse eyther it learne somewhat, it knew not before; or forgetting a foreknowne truth, it beginne afterwarde to thinke a falsity. This second part, is impossible, as we have already shewed, when we proved that falsehood covld have no admittance into a separated soul: and the former is as impossible; it being likewise proved, that at her first instant of her separation, she knoweth all thinges: wherefore, we may hence confidently conclvde, that no change of minde, (that is no change at all) can happen to an abstracted soul.

And thus, by discourse, we may arrive, to qvitt ourselves easily of that famous obiection, so much pestering Christian religion; how God, can in iustice impose eternall pains upon a soul,

for one sinne, acted in a short space of time. For we see, it followeth by the necessary course of natvre, that if a man dye in a disorderly affection to any thing, as to his chiefe good, he eternally remaineth by the necessity of his owne natvre, in the same affection: and there is no imparity, that to eternall sinne, there should be imposed eternall pvnishment.

(...)

The Conclusion

And now I hope, I may confidently say, I have beene as good as my word: and I dovb not, but my Reader will finde it so, if he spend but halfe as much time in perusing these two treatises, as the composing them hath cost me. They are too nice (and indeede, vnreasonable) who expect to attain without pains, unto that, which hath cost others years of toyle. Let them remember the wordes of holy Job, that wisdom is not fovnd in the land of those, that live at their ease. Let them cast their eyes on every side rovnd about them, and then tell me, if they meete with any employment, that may be compared to the attaining unto these, and such like principles; whereby a man is enabled to governe himself vnderstandingly and knowingly, towards the happinesse, both of the next life and of this; and to comprehend the wisemans theme; what is good for a man in the dayes of his vanity, whiles he playeth the stranger vnder the svnne. Let us feare Gods Ivdgements. Let us carefully pvrsv the hidden bovnities, he hath treasvred up for us. Let us thanke him for the knowledge he hath given us: and admire the excellency of Christian Religion; which so plainely teacheth us that, unto which it is so extreme hard to arrive by natvral meanes. Let us blesse him, that we are borne unto it. And let us sing to him; That it is he, who preacheth his doctrine to Iacob, and giveth his lawes to Israël. He hath not done the like to all nations; nor hath he manifested his secret truthes unto them.

But before I cutt of this thriddle, which hath cost me so much pains to spinne out to this Length; I must crave my Readers leave, to make some use of it, for my owne behoofe. Hitherto my discourse hath beene directed to him: now I shall entreate his patience, that I may reflect it in a word or two upon my self. And as I am svre I have profited my self not a litle, by talking all this while to him, that obliging me to polish my conceptions with more care, and to range them into better order, then whiles they were but rvde meditations with in my owne brest; so I hope, that a litle, conversation with my self upon this important subiect, (which is to be studied for use, and practise; not for specvlative science) may proove advantagious unto him; if his warmed thoughts have tvned his soul to such a key, as I am svre these considerations have wovnd up mine unto.

To thee then, my soul, I now address my speech. For since by long debate, and toylesome rowing against the impetvous tydes of ignorance, and false apprehentions, which overflow thy bankes, and hvrry thee headlong downe the streame, whilst thou art imprisoned in thy clayie mansion; wee have with much adoe arrived to ayme art some litle atome of thy vast greatnesse; and with the hard and tough blowes of strict and wary reasoning, we have strucken out some few sparkes of that glorious light, which invironeth and swelleth thee, or rather, which is thee: it is high time, I should retire my self out of the tvrbvlent and slippery field of eager strife and litigious disputation, to make my accovnts with thee; where no outward noise may distract us, nor

any way intermeddle betweene us, excepting only that eternall verity, which by thee shineth upon my faint and gloomy eyes; and in which I see, whatsoever doth or can content thee in me. I have discovered, that thou (my soul) wilt survive me: and so survive me, as thou wilt also survive the mortality, and changes which belong to me; and which are but accidentary to thee, meerey because thou art in me. Then shall the vicissitude of time, and the inequality of dispositions in thee, be turned into the constancy of immortality; and into the evennesse of one being, never to end, and never to receive a change, or succession to better or worse.

When my eye of contemplation, hath beene fixed upon this bright sunne, as long as it is able to endvre the radiant beames of it; whose redvndant light veyleth the looker on, with a darke mist: let me turne it for a litle space, upon the straight passage, and narrow gyllet, through which thou strivest (my soul) with faint and weary steppes, dvring thy hazardous voyage upon the earth, to make thy self a way: and let me examine, what comparison there is, betweene thy two conditions; the present one, wherein thou now findest thy self immersed in flesh and blood; and the future state that will betide thee, when thou shalt be melted out of this grosse oore, and refined from this meane alloy. Let my terme of life, be of a thousand long years; longer then ever happened to our aged forefathers, who stored the earth with their nvmerous progeny, by out living their skill to nvmer the diffused mvltitudes, that swarmed from their lioness: let me, dvring this long space, be sole Emperour and absolvt Lord, of all the hvge globe of land and water, encompassed with Adams offspring: let all my subjects lye prostrate at my feete, with obedience and awe, distilling their activest thoughts, in studying day and night to invent new pleavres and dilights for me: let natvre conspire with them, to give me a constant and vigorous health; a perpetvall spring of youth, that may to the full, relish whatsoever good all they can fancy: let gravest Prelates, and greatest Princes, serve instead of flatterers to highten my ioyes; and yet those ioyes, be rayed above their power of flattery: let the wisemen of this vast family (whose sentiments, are maximes and oracles, to governe the worldes beliefes and actions) esteeme, reverence, and adore me in the secretest, and the most recluse withdrawings of their hartes: let all the wealth, which to this very day, hath ever beene torne out of the bowels of the earth; and all the treasvres, which the sea hideth from the view of greedy men, swell rovd about me; whilst all the world besides, lyeth gaping to receive the crvmmes, that fall neglected by me, from my full loaden table: let my imagination be as vast, as the vnfathomed Vniverse; and let my felicity be as accomplished, as my imagination can reach unto; so that wallowing in pleavre, I bee not able to think how to increase it, or what to wish for more, then that which I possesse and enjoy.

Thus when my thoughts are at a stand, and can raise my present happinesse no higher; let me call to minde, how this long lease of pleasant dayes, will in time come to an end: this bottome of a thousand ioyfull years, will att length be vnwovnd, and nothing remaine of it: and then (my soul) thy infinitely longerlived Immortality will svceed; thy never ending date, will beginne a new accovnt, impossible to be svmmed up, and beyond all proportion infinitely exceeding the happinesse, we have rvdelly aymed to expresse: so that no comparison can be admitted betweene them. For, suppose first that such it were, as the least and shortest of those manifold joyes, which swell it to that height we have fancied, were eqvall to all the contentment thou shalt enjoy in a whole million of years; yet millions of years may be so often mvltiplied, as att length, the slender

and limited contentments supposed in them, may eqvalyse, and outgoe the whole heape of overflowing blisse, rayseed so high, in the large extent of these thousand happy years. Which when they are cast into a totall svmm; and that I compare it, with the vnmeasvrable eternity, which only measveth thee; then I see, that all this hvge prodvct of Algebraicall mvltiplication, appeareth as nothing, in respect of thy remaying, and never ending svrvivance; and is lesse, then the least point in regard of the immense Vniverse. But then, if it be true (as it is most true) that thy least sparke and moment of reall happinesse, in that blessed eternity thou hopest for, is infinitely greater, and nobler, then the whole masse of fancyed ioyes, of my thousand years life here on earth; how infinitely will the valew of thy dvracion, exceed all proportion, in regard of the felicity, I had imagined my self? And seing there is no proportion betweene them, let me sadly reflect upon my owne present condition: let me examine what it is, I so busily, and anxiously, employ my thoughts and pretious time upon: let me consider my owne courses, and whither they leade me: let me take a svrvay of the lives, and actions, of the greatest part of the world, which make so lovde a noise about my eares: and then may I iustly sigh out from the bottome of my angvished hart; to what pvrpose have I hitherto lived? To what pvrpose are all these millions of toilesome avntes, that live and labour about me? To what pvrpose were Cesars and Alexanders? To what pvrpose Aristotles and Archimedeses? How miserably foolish are those conquering tyrants, that divide the world with their lawlesse swords? What senseless idiots those acute Philosophers, who teare mens wittes in pieces, by their different wayes, and svbtile Logicke; striving to shew men beatitudes in this world, and seeking for that, which if they had fovnd, were but a nothing of a nothing in respect of true beatitude? He only is truly wise, who neglecting all that flesh and blodv desireth, endeavoreth to pvrchase att any rate this felicity, which thy svrvivance promiseth: the least degree of which, so farre svrmovnteth all the heapes, which the gyants of the earth are able to raise, by throwing hils upon hils, and striwing in vaine to scale and reach those eternities, which reside above the skies. Alas, how fondly doth mankinde svffer it self to be delvded? How true it is, that the only thing necessary, proveth the only thing that is neglected? Looke up my soul, and fixe thine eye upon that truth, which eternall light maketh so cleere unto thee, shining upon thy face with so great evidence, as defyeth the noonetyde svnne, in its greatest brightnesse. And this it is, that every action of thine, be it never so slight, is mainly mischievous; or be it never so bedeckt, with those specious considerations, which the wise men of the world ivdge important, is foolish, absvrd, and vnworthy of a man; and vnworthy of one that vnderstandeth, and acknowledgeth thy dignity; if in it there be any specke; or if through it, there appeare any sparke of those meane and flatte motives, which with a false byas, draw any way aside, from attaining that happinesse, we expect in thee. That happinesse, ovght to be the end, and marke we levell att: that, the rvle and model of all our actions: that, the measvre of every circvstance, of every atome, of whatsoever we bestow so pretious a thing upon, as the employment of thee is.

But we must not so slightly passe over the intensenesse and vehemence of that felicity, which thou (my soul) shalt enioy, when thou art severed from thy benvmming compartner. I see evidently, that thou dost not svrvive, a simple and dull essence; but art replenished with a vast and incomprehensible extent of riches and delight within thy self. I see that golden chayne, which

here by long discourses, filleth hve volvmes of bookes, and diveth into the hidden natvres of severall bodies; in thee resvmed into one circle or linke, which containeth in it self the large scope of whatsoever screwing discourse can reach unto. I see it comprehend, and master the whole world of bodies. I see every particvlar natvre, as it were embossed out to the life, in thy celestiaall garment. I see every solitary substance ranked in its dve place and order, not crushed or thronged by the mvlitude of its fellowes; but each of them in its full extent in the full propriety of every part and effect of it; and distingvished into more divisions, then ever natvre severed it into. In thee I see an infinite mvlitude enioy place enovgh. I see, that neither hight, nor profvndity, nor longitude, nor latitude, are able to exempt themselves from thy diffused powers: they faddome all; they comprehend all; they master all; they enriche thee with the stock of all; and thou thy self art all, and somewhat more then all; and yet, now but one of all. I see, that everyone of this all, in thee encreaseth the strength, by which thou knowest any other of the same all: and all, encreaseth the knowledge of all, by a mvltiplication beyond the skill of arithmetike; being (in its kind) absolvtely infinite; by having a natvre, that is incapable of being eyther infinite or finite. I see again, that those thinges which have not knowledge, are sitvated in the lowest, and meanest ranke of creatvres; and are in no wise comparable to those which know. I see, there is no pleasvre att all, no happinesse, no felicity, but by knowledge, and in knowledge. Experience teacheth me, how the pvrer, and nobler race of mankind, adoreth in their hartes, this idole of knowledge, and scorneth what ever else they seeme to court, and to be fond of. And I see, that this excesse of sea of knowledge which is in thee, groweth not by the svccession of one thought after an other; but is like a full swolne ocean, never ebbing on any coast, but eqvally pushing att all its boundes, and tvmbling out its flowing waves on every syde, and into every ereche; so that every where it maketh high tide. Or like a pvre synne, which from all partes of it, shooteth its radiant beames with a like extremity of violence. And I see likewise, that this admirable knowledge, is not begotten and conserved in thee, by the accidentary helpe of defective causes; but is rooted in thy self; is steeped in thy owne essence, like an unextinguishable sourse of a perpetvally streaming fire; or like the living head of an everrvnning spring; beholden to none, out of thy self, saving only to thy Almighty Creatour; and begging of none; but being in thy self all that of which thou shouldst begge.

This then (my soul) being thy lotte; and such a hieght of pleasvre being reserved for thee; and such an extremity of felicity, with in a short space attending thee; can any degenerate thought, ever gaine strength enovgh, to shake the evidence which these considerations implant and rivett in thee? Can any dull oblivion deface this so lively and so beavtifull image? Or can any length of time, draw in thy memory a veyle betweene it, and thy present attention? Can any perversity, so distort thy straight eyes, that thou shouldst not looke always fixed upon this marke; and levell thy ayme directly at this white? How is it possible, that thou canst brooke to live, and not expire presently, thereby to ingvlfe thy self, and be throughly imbibed with such an overflowing blisse? Why dost thou not breake the walles and chaynes of thy flesh and blovd, and leape into this glorious liberty? Here Stoickes, you are to use your swords. Upon these considerations, you may iustifie the leting out the blovd, which by your discourses, you seeme so prodigall of. To dye upon these termes, is not to part with that, which you fondly call a happy

life; feeding your selves, and flattering your hearers with empty words: but rather it is, to plvnge yourselves into a felicity, you were never able to imagine, or to frame in your misguided thoughts any scantling of.

But natvre pulleth me by the eare, and warneth me from being so wrongfull to her, as to conceive, that so wise a governess should to no advantage, condemne mankind to so long a bannishment, as the ordinary extent of his dull life, and wearisome pilgrimage here vnder the svnne reacheth unto. Can we imagine, she would allow him so much lazy time, to effect nothing in? Or can wee suspect, that she intended him no further advantage, then what an abortive child arriveth unto in his mothers wombe? For whatsoever the nettes and toyles of discourse can circle in; all that he, who but once knoweth that himself is, can attain unto as fully, as he that is enriched with the science of all things in the world. For, the connexion of things, is so linked together, that proceeding from any one, you reach the knowledge of many; and from many, you cannot faile of attaining unto all: so that a separated soul, which doth but know herself, can not choose but know her body too; and from her body, she cannot misse in proceeding from the causes of them both, as farre as immediate causes do proceede from others over them: and as litle can she be ignorant, of all the effects of those causes she reacheth unto. And thus, all that hvege masse of knowledge, and happinesse, which we have cōsidered in our last reflexion, amovnteth to no more, then the seeliest soul bvried in warme blood, can and will infallibly attain unto, when its time cometh. Wee may then assvre our selves, that iust natvre hath provided and designed a greater measvre of such felicity for longer livers: and so much greater, as may well be worth the pains and hazards, of so miserable and tedious a passage, as here (my soul) thou strugglest through. For certainly, if the dull percussion, which by natvres institvtion, hammereth out a spirituall soul from grosse flesh and blodv, can atcheive so wondrous an effect, by such blvnt instruments, as are used in the contriving of a man: how can it be imagined, but that fifty or a hvndred years beating upon farre more svbtile elements, refined in so long a time, as a child is becoming a man, and arriving to his perfect discourse, must necessarily forge out in such a soul, a strange and admirable excellency, above the vnlicked forme of an abortive embryon? Surely, those innvmerable strokes (every one of which maketh a strong impression in the soul, upon whom they beate) cannot choose but worke a mighty difference, in the subiect that receiveth them, changing it strangely from the condition it was in, before they begvne to new movld it. What if I should say, the oddes betweene two such souls, may peradventvre be not vnlike the difference, betweene the wittes and ivdgements of the svbtilest Philosopher that ever was, and of the dullest child or idiote living. But this comparison falleth too short by farre: even so much, that there is no resemblance or proportion betweene the thinges compared: for as the excesse of great nvmbres over one an other, drowneth the excesse of small ones, and maketh it not considerable, in respect of theirs, although they should be in the same proportion; so the advantages of a soul, forged to its highest perfection in a mans body, by its long abode there, and by its making right use of that pretious time allowed it; must needes, (in positive valeu, though not in geometricall proportion) infinitely exceed, when it shall be delivered out of prison, the advantages, which the newly hatched soul of an abortive infant shall acqvire, att the breaking of its chaines. In this case, I beleeve no man would be of Cesars mind; when he wished to be rather the first man in a

contemptible poore village, he passed through among the desert movntains, then the second man in Rome. Let us suppose, the wealth of the richest man in that barren habitation, to be one hvndred Crownes; and that the next to him in substance, had but halfe as much as he: in like manner, in that opvlent citty, the head of the world, where millions were as familiar as pence in other places, let the excesse of the richest mans wealth, be but (as in the former) dovable over his, that cometh next unto him; and there you shall find, that if the poorest of the two, be worth fifty millions, the other hath fifty millions more then he: whereas the formers petty treasvre, exceedeth his neighbours but by fifty crownes. What proportion is there, in the common estimation of affaires, betweene that triviall svmmē, and fifty millions? Much lesse is there, betweene the excellency of a separated soul, first perfected in its body, and an other that is sett loose into complete liberty, before its body arrived in a natvrall course, to be delivered into this world, and by its eyes to enjoy the light of it. The change of every soul att its separation from the body, to a degree of perfectiō, above what it enjoyed in the body, is in a manner infinite: and by a like infinite proportion, every degree of perfection it had in the body, is also then mvltiplied: what a vast prodvct then of infinity, must necessarily be raysed, by this mvltiplying instāt of the souls attaining liberty, in a well movlded soul; infinitely beyond that perfection, which the soul of an infant dying before it be borne, arriveth unto? And yet we have determined that to be a in manner infinite. Here our skill of Arithmetike and proportions fayleth us. Here wee find infinite excesse, over what we also know to be infinite. How this can be, the feeble eyes of our limited vnderstanding, are too dull to penetrate into: but that it is so, we are svre: the rigour of discourse, convinceth and necessarily concludeth it.

That assvreth us, that since every impression upon the soul, whiles it is in its body, maketh a change in it; were there no others made, but meerely the iterating of those actes, which brovght it from ignorance to knowledge; that soul, upon which a hvndred of those actes had wrovght, must have a hvndred degrees of advantage over an other, upon which only one had beaten; though by that one, it had acqvired perfect knowledge of that thing: and then in the separation, these hvndred degrees, being each of them infinitely mvltiplied, how infinitely must such a soul exceed in that particvlar, (though we know not how) the knowledge of the other soul; which though it be perfect in its kind, yet had but one act to forge it out? When wee arrive to vnderstand the difference of knowledge, betweene the superiour and inferiour rankes of intelligences; among whome, the lowest knoweth as much as the highest; and yet the knowledge of the highest, is infinitely more perfect and admirable, then the knowledge of his inferiours: then, and not before, we shall throughly comprehend this mystery. In the meane time, it is enovgh for us, that we are svre, that thus it faireth with souls: and that by how much the excellency and perfection of an all knowing and all comprehending soul, delivered out of the body of a wretched embryo, is above the vilenesse of that heavy lvmpe of flesh, it lately qvitted in his mothers wombe; even by so much, and according to the same proportion, must the excellency of a complete soul (completed in its body) be in a pitch above the adorable maiesty, wisdomē, and avgustnesse, of the greatest and most admired oracle in the world, living embodied in flesh and blovd.

Which as it is in a height, and eminency over such an excellent and admirable man, infinitely beyond the excesse of such a man, over that seely lump of flesh, which composeth the most contemptible idiote or embryon; so likewise, is the excesse of it, over the soul of an abortive embryon, (though by the separation, growne never so knowing, and never so perfect) infinitely greater, then the dignity and wisdom of such a man, is above the feeblenesse and misery of an new animated child. Therefore have patience my soul: repine not at thy longer stay here in this vale of misery, where thou art banished from those vnspeakable ioyes thou seest att hand before thee; from which nothing but the fraile walles of rotten flesh severeth thee. Thov shalt have an overflowing reward for thy endvring and patienting in this thy darkesome prison. Deprive not thy self through mischievous hast, of the great hopes and admirable felicity that attend thee, canst thou but with dve temper stay for it. Be content to let thy stocke lye out awhile at interest; thy profits will come in vast proportions; and every yeare, every day, every houre, will pay thee interest upon interest: and the longer it rvnneth on, the more it mvltiplyeth: and in the accovnt thou shalt find, if thou proceedest as thou shouldst, that one moment oftentimes bringeth in a greater increase unto thy stocke of treasvre, then the many years thou didst live and trade before: and the longer thou livest, the thicker will these moments arrive unto thee. In like manner as in Arithmetical nvmeration, every addition of the least figvre, mvltiplyeth the whole svmme it findeth. Here thou wilt prove how true that rich man sayed, who of his gaines pronovnced, that he had gotten litle with great labour, and great svmmes with litle: so if thou bestowest well thy time, thy latter svmmes will bring thee in hvge accovntes of gaine, upon small expence of pains or employments; whereas thy first beginnings are toylesome and full of pain, and bring in but slender profit.)

By this time, my soul, I am svre thou art satisfied, that the excesse of knowledge and of pleasvre, which in the next life thou shalt enjoy, is vastly beyond any thou art capable of here. But how may wee estimate the iust proportion they have to one on other? Or rather is not the pleasvre of a separated soul, so infinitely beyond all that can be relished by one embodied here in clay, that there is no proportion betweene them? At the least, though wee are not able to measvre the one, let us do our best to ayme and gvesse at the improportion betweene them; and reioyce when wee find that it is beyond our reach to conceive or imagine any thing, nigh the truth and the hvge excesse of thy good (my soul) over the most I am capable of in this world. It is agreed, that the vehemence and intensesse of thy pleasvre, is proportionable to the activity, power, and energy of the subiect, which is affected with such pleasvre; and to the gravitation, bent, and greatnesse, that such a subiect hath to the obiect that delighteth it. Now to rove at the force and activity, wherewith a separated soul weigheth and striveth to ioyne it self, to what its natvre carrieth it unto; let us beginne with considering the proportions of celerity and forciblenesse, wherewith heavy bodies move downwards. I see a povnd weight in one scale of the ballance, weigheth up the other empty one with great celerity. But if in to that you imagine a million of povndes to be put, you may well conceive, that this great excesse, would carry up the single povnd weight with so much violence and speede, as would hardly afford your eye liberty to observe the velocity of the motion. Let me mvltiply this million of povndes, by the whole globe of the earth; by the vast extent of the great orbe, made by the svnnes, or earthes motion about the

center of the world; by the incomprehensibility of that immense storehouse of matter and of bodies, which is designed in lvmpe by the name of the Vniverse; of which we know no more, but that it is beyond all hope of being knowne, dvring this mortall life. Thus when I have heaped together a bvlke of weight, eqvall to this vnwiely machine; let me mvltiply the strength of its velocity, and pressvre over the least atome imaginable in natvre, as farre beyond the limits of gravity, as the ingenious skill, wherewith Archimedes nvmbred the least graines of sand that would fill the world, can carry it: and when I have thus wearied my self, and exhausted the power of arithmetike, and of algebra, I find there is still a proportion betweene that atome and this vnvtterable weight: I see it is all qvantitative; it is all finite; and all this excesse vannisheth to nothing, and becommeth invisible (like twinkling starres, at the rising of the much brighter svnne) as soone as the lowest and the meanest substance shineth out of that orbe, where they reside that scorne divisibility, and are out of the reach of qvantity and matter. How vehement then must the activity and energy be, wherewith so pvssant a substance shooteth it self to its desired obiect? and when it enioyeth it, how violent must the extasy and transport be, wherewith it is delighted? How is it possible then for my narrow hart, to frame an apprehension of the infinite excesse of thy pleasvre (my soul) over all the pleasvre this limited world can afford, which is all measvred by such petty proportions? How should I stampe a figvre of thy immense greatnesse, into my materiall imagination? Here I loose my power of speaking, because I have too much to speake of: I must become silent and dvmbe, because all the words and langage I can use, expresse not the thousandeth, nor the millioneth part, of what I evidently see to be trev. All I can say is, that whatsoever I thinke or imagine, it is not that: and that it is not like any of those things; unto some of which unlesse it be like, it is impossible for me to make any proportion or similitude unto it. What then shall I do, but lay my self downe in mine owne shadow, and there reioyce that thou art a light so great, as I am not able to endvre the dazeling splendour of thy rayes: that thy pleasvre is so excessive, as no part of it can enter into my circvmscribed hart, without dilating it so wide, that it must breake in svnder: and that thy happinesse is so infinite, as the highest pitch I can hope for to glvtt my self withall, dvring this darke night of my tedious pilgrimage here on earth, is to see evidently, that it is impossible for me in this life, to frame any scantling of it; much lesse, to know how great it is. Shall I then once again presvme to breake out into impatience, at my delay of so great blisse, and crye out, that I am content with the meanest share of this exvberant felicity? I care not for the exaggerations which a longer life may heape up unto it. I am svre here is svfficient to swell my hart beyond it self, to satisfie my thirsty soul, to dissolve and melt all my power and to transforme me totally into a selfblessed creatvre. Away, away all tedious hopes, not only of this life, but even of all encrease in the next. I will leape bovdly into that fovntaine of blisse, and cast my self headlong into that sea of felicity; where I can neither apprehend shallow waters, nor feare I shall be so litle immersed and drowned, as to meete with any shelfe or dry grovnd, to moderate and stinte my happinesse. A self activity, and vnbounded extent, and essence free from time and place, assvre me svfficiently, that I neede desire no more. Which way soever I looke, I loose my sight, in seeing an infinity rovnd about me. Length without pointes: Breadth without Lines: Depth without any svrface. All content, all pleasvre, all restlesse rest, all an vnqvietnesse and transport of delight, all an extasy of frvition.

Happy forgetfulness, how deeply am I obliged to thee, for making room for this soul ravishing contemplation, by removing this while all other images of things farre from me? I would to God thou mightest endvre, while I endvre; that so I might be drowned in this present thought, and never wake again, but into the enjoying, and accomplishment of my present enflamed desires. But alas, that may not be. The eternal light whom my soul and I have chosen for Arbiter, to determine unto us what is most expedient for us, will not permit it. We must returne; and that into feares and miseries: For as a good life breedeth encrease of happinesse, so doth an evell one, heape up Iliades of woe. First (my soul) before I ventvre, we should be certaine, that thy parting from this life, waft thee over to assvred happinesse: For thou well knowest, that there are noxious actions, which deprave and infect the soul, while it is forging and moulding here it its body, and tempering for its future being: and if thou shouldst sally hence in such a perverse disposition, unhappinesse would betyde thee instead of thy presvmed blisse. I see some men so ravenous after those pleasvres, which cannot be enjoyed out of the body, that if those impotent desires accompany their souls into eternity, I can not dovb of their endvring an eternity of misery: I can not dovb of their being tormented with such a dire extremity, of vnsatisfyable desire and violent greife, as were able to teare all this world into pieces, were it converted into one hart; and to rive in svnder, any thing lesse then the necessity of contradiction. How high the blisse of a well governed soul is above all power of quantity, so extreme must the ravenous inclemency, and vulturelike cruelty, be of such an uncompassable desire gnawing eternally upon the soul; for the same reason holdeth in both: and which way soever the gravitation and desires of a separated soul do carry it, it is hvried on with a like impetvosity and vnlimited activity. Let me then cast an heedfull and wary eye, upon the actions of the generality of mankind, from whence I may gvesse at the weale or woe, of their future state: and if I find that the greatest nvmer weigheth downe in the scale of misery, have I not reason to feare least my lott should proove among theirs? For the greatest part sweepeth along with it every particvlar, that hath not some particvlar reason to exempt it from the generall law. Insteede then of a few that wisely settle their hartes on legitimate desires, what mvlitudes of wretched men do I see; some hvngry after flesh and blovd; others gaping after the empty wind of honour and vanity; others breathing nothing but ambitious thoughts; others grasping all, and groveling upon heapes of melted earth? So that they put me all in a horrour, and make me feare, least very few they be, that are exempted from the dreadfull fate of this incomprehensible misery, to which I see, and grieve to see, the whole face of mankind desperately turned. May it not then be my sad chance, to be one of their unhappy nvmer? Be content then, fond man, to live. Live yet, till thou hast first secvred the passage which thou art but once to ventvre on. Be svre before thou throwest thy self into it, to put thy soul into the scales: ballance all thy thoughts; examine all thy inclinations; put thy self to the reste, try what drosse, what pvre gold is in thy self: and what thou findest wanting, be svre to supply, before natvre calleth thee to thy dreadfull accovnt. It is soone done, if thou beest what thy natvre dictateth thee to be. Follow but evident reason and knowledge, and thy wantes are supplied, thy accovntes are made up.

The same evershining truth, which maketh thee see that two and two are foure, will shew thee without any contradiction, how all these base allvments are vaine and idle; and that there is

no comparison between the highest of them, and the meanest of what thou mayest hope for, hast thou but strength to settle thy hart by the steerage of this most evident science; in this very moment, thou mayest be sevre. But the hazard is great, in missing to examine thy self truly and throughly. And if thou miscarry there, thou art lost for ever. Apply therefore all thy care, all thy industry to that. Let that be thy continvall study, and thy perpetvall entertainment. Thinke nothing else worth the knowing, nothing else worth the doing, but screwing up thy soul unto this hight, but directing it by this levell, by this rvle. Then feare not, nor admit the least dovt of thy being happy, when thy time shall come; and that time shall have no more power over thee. In the meane season, spare no pains, forbear no diligence, employ all exactnesse, bvrne in svmmmer, freese in winter, watch by night, and labour by day, ioyned monthes to monthes, and entayle years upon years. Thinke nothing svfficient to prevent so maine a hazard; and deeme nothing long or tedious in this life, to pvrchace so happy an eternity. The first discoverers of the Indies, cast themselves among swarmes of maneaters; they fovght and strugled with vnknowne waves; so horrid ones, that oftentimes they perswaded themselves they climbed up movntaines of waters, and straight again were precipitated headlong downe betweene the cloven sea, upon the foaming sand, from whence they could not hope for a resource: hunger was their foode; snakes and serpents were their daynties; sword and fire were their dayly exercise: and all this, only to be masters of a litle gold, which after a short possession was to qvitt them for ever. Our searchers after the Northerne passage, have cut their way through movntaines of ice, more affrightfull and horrid, then the symplegades. They have imprisoned themselves in halfe yeare nights; they have chayned themselves in perpetvall stone cleaving coldes: some have beene fovnd closely embracing one an other, to conserve as long as they were able, a litle fewell in their freesing harts, at length petrified by the hardnesse of that vnmercifull winter: others have beene made the prey of vn humane men, more savage then the wildest beasts: others have beene never fovnd nor heard of, so that surely they have proved the foode of the vgly monsters of that vast ycy sea: and these have beene able and vnderstanding men. What motives, what hopes had these daring men? What gaines could they promise themselves, to covntervaile their desperate attempts? They ayimed not so much as at the pvrchase of any treasvre for themselves, but meerely to second the desires of those that sett them on worke; or to fill the mouthes of others, from whence some few crvmmes might fall to them. What is required at thy hands (my soul) like this? And yet the hazard thou art to avoyde, and the wealth thou art to attain unto, incomparably oversetteth all that they could hope for. Live then and be glad of long and nvmerous years; that like ripe frvite, thou mayest droppe secvrely into that passage, which duely entered into, shall deliver thee into an eternity of blisse, and of vnperishable happinesse.

And yet (my soul) be thou not too soare agast, with the apprehension of the dreadfull hazard thou art in. Let not a tormenting feare of the dangers that svrrovnd thee, make thy whole life here bitter and vncomfortable to thee. Let the serious and dve consideration of them, arme thee with cavtion and with wisdom, to prevent miscarriage by them. But to looke upon them with horreur and affrightednesse, would freese thy spirits, and benvmme thy actions, and peradventvre engylfe thee through pusillanimity in as great mischeifes, as thou seekest to avoyde. Tis true, the harme which would acrive from misgoverning thy passage out of this life, is

vnspeakable, is vnumaginable. But why shouldst thou take so deepe thought of the hazard thou rvnnest therein, as though the difficvlty of avoyding it were so extreme, as might amovnte to an impossibility. I allow, the thoughts that arme thee with wise cavtion to secvre thy self, cannot be too deepe nor too serious; but when thou hast providently stored thy self with such, call thy spirits manfully about thee: and to incourage thee to fight confidently, or rather to secvre thee of victory, so thou wilt not forsake thy self, turne thine eyes rovnd about thee, and consider how wise natvre, that hath prescribed an end and periode unto all her plantes, hath fvrnished them all with dve and orderly meanes to attain thereunto: and though particvlars sometimes miscarry in their iourney (since contingence is entayled to all created things) yet in the generality, and for the most part, they all arrive unto the scope she levelleth them at. Why then should we imagine, that so ivdicious and farre looking an architect, whom we see so accvrate in his meaner workes, should have framed this masterpiece of the world, to perish by the way, and never to attain unto that great end, for which he made it; even after he is prepared and armed with all advantageous circvmstances agreeable to his natvre. That artificer, we know, deserveth the style of seely, who frameth such tooles, as fayle in there performance, when they are applyed to the action for which they were intended. We see all sortes of trees for the most part beare their frvite in the dve season; which is the end they are designed unto, and the last and highest emolvment they are made to afford us. Few beasts we see there are, but contribute to our service what we looke for at their hands. The swine affordeth good flesh, the sheepe good wooll, the cow good milke, the sable warme and soft fvrre, the oxe bendeth his stvrdy necke to the yoke, the spiritfull horse dvtyfully beareth the soldier, and the sinewy mvle and stronger camel convey weighty marchandise. Why then shall even the better sort of mankind, the chiefe, the toppe, the head, of all the workes of natvre, be apprehended to miscarry from his end in so vast a proportion, as that it should be deemed in a manner impossible, even for those few (for so they are in respect of the other nvmerous mvlitude of the worser sort) to attain unto that felicity which is natvrall unto them.

Thou (my soul) art the forme, and that supreme part of me, which giveth being both to me and to my body: who then can dovbt, but that all the rest of me, is framed fitting and serviceable for thee? For what reason were there, that thou shouldst be implanted in a soyle, which can not beare thy frvite? The forme of a hogge, I see, is engrafted in a body fitt and appropriated for a swines operations: the forme of a horse, of a lyon, of a wolfe, all of them have their organes proportioned to the mastering piece within them, their soul. And is it credible, that only man, should have his inferiour partes raised so highly in rebellion against his soul, the greatest Mistresse (beyond proportion) among all formes, as that it shall be impossible for her to suppress their mvtnies, though she guide her self never so exactly by the prescripts of that rvle, which is borne with her? Can it be suspected, that his forme, which is infinitely movnted above the power of matter, should through the very necessity and principles of its owne natvre, be more lyable to contingency, then those that are englvfed and drowned in it; since we know, that contingency, defectibility, and change, are the lame children of grosse and misshapen matter? Alas it is too true, that natvre is in us vnhappily wrested from her originall and dve course. We find by sad experience, that although her depravation be not so totall, as to blind entirely the eye

of Reason she seeth by, yet it is so great, as to carry vehemently our affections quite crosse to what she proposeth us as best. Howsoever, let the incentives of flesh and blood be never so violent, to tumble humane nature downe the hill, yet if a contrary force, more efficacious then they with all their turbulent and misty steames, do impell it another way, it must needs obey that stronger power. Let us then examine whose motives, the souls, or the senses, in their own nature, worke most efficaciously in man. We are sure, that what pleasure he receiveth, he receiveth by means of his soul; even all corporeall pleasure: for, be the working object never so agreeable and pleasing unto him, he reapeth thence small delight, if in the meane time, his soules attention be carried another way from it. Certainly then, those things must affect the soul most powerfully, which are connaturall unto her, and which she seiseth upon and relisheth immediately; rather then those impure ones, which come sophisticated to her, through the muddy channels of the senses. And accordingly, all experience teacheth us, that her pleasures, when they are fully savored, are much stronger then the pleasures of our sense. Observe but the different comportments of an ambitious, and of a sensual man: and you will evidently perceive farre stronger motions, and more vehement straines in the former, who hath his desires bent to the satisfaction of his mind; then in the other, who aimeth but at the pleasures of his body. Let us looke upon the common face of mankind; and we shall see the most illustrious and noble part, taken with learning, with power, with honour; and the other part, which maketh sense their idole, moveth in a lower and baser orb under the others; and is in a servile degree to them.

Since then humane nature is of it self more enclined to the contentments of the active mind, then of the dull sense; who can doubt but that the way of those pure contentments, must be farre sweeter then the grosse and troubled streames of sensual pleasures: which if it be, certainly man in his own nature, is more apt to follow that: and when he chanceth to wander out of that smooth and easy roade, his steppes are painfull and wearisome ones: and if he do not presently perceive them such, it is, because it fareth with him, as with those that walke in their sleepe, and stray into rough and stony passages, or among thistles and bryars; whiles peradventure some illvding dreame bewitcheth their fancies, and perswadeth them they are in some pleasant garden; till waking (if at least they wake before they fall into a deadly precipice) they finde their feete all gored, and their bodies all scratched and torne. If any sensual man should doubt of this great truth, and find it hard to perswade himself, that intellectuall pleasures (which to his depraved taste, seeme cold and flatt ones) should be more active and intense, then those feculent ones, which so violently transport him; let him but exercise himself a while in those entertainments which delight the mind, taking leave, during that space, of those vnruly ones, which agitate the body; and continue doing thus, till by long practise, he hath made them easy and habituated himself unto them: and I will engage my word, that he will find this change so advantageous to him, even in contentment and delight, that he will not easily be brought backe to his former course of life. Experience sheweth us, that whatsoever is long customary to us, turneth into our nature; so much, that even diseases and poisons by divurte use, do mould and temper to themselves those bodies, which are habituated to them; in such sort, that those pestes of nature must be kept on foote, and fed upon for our subsistence. How much more then must the most connaturall exercise of mentall pleasure, turne so substantially into our being, that after

some good practice in it, we shall not be able, with out great struggling and reluctation, to live without it?

The violence of frivition in those fovle pvddles of flesh and blodv, presently glvtveth with satiety, and is attended with annoy and with dislike: and the often using and repeating it, weareth away that edge of pleasvre, which only maketh it sweete and valvable, even to them that sett their hartes upon it; and nothing heighteneth it, but an irritation by a convenient hvnger and abstinence. Contrarywise, in the soul, the greater and more violent the pleasvre is, the more intense and vehement the frivition is and the oftner it is repeated, so much the greater appetite and desire we have, to returne unto the same; and nothing provoketh us more, then the entire and absolvt frivition of it. If a svddaine change from one extreme of flesh and blodv, to the other opposite pole of spirituall delights and entertainements, seeme harsh to him, whose thoughts by long assvefaction, are glewed to corporeall obiects; let him beginne with gently brideling in his inferiour motions vnder a faire rvle of government: If he can not presently suppress and totally mortify their clamorous desires, let him att the least moderate and steere them according to the bent of reason. (If we will but follow this course which natvre teacheth us, to heighten even our sensvall delights and pleasvres, by reasonable moderation of them to their owne advantage; we shall find her so kind a mother to us, that of her self she will at length qvelle and disincomber us of all our enemies. If wee but temperately attend her worke, she will qvietly waft us over to our desired end, to our beloved happinesse. In a few years, by boyling away our unruly heate, she will abate, and in the end qvite weare away the sense of those transporting pleasvres, we used to take so much delight in the frivition of. With in a while, rhevmes will so clogge our tongve and palates, that we shall but flatly relish the most poignant meates. Our dulled eares will no longer devoure with delight, the ravishing sovnd of sweete harmonies. Our dimme eyes will carry to our heavy fansie but confused newes of any beavtifull and pleasing obiects. Our stopped nosethriles will afford no passage for spiritefull perfvmes, to warme and recreate our moyst and drowsie braine. In a word, natvre will ere long, warne us to take a long farewell of all those contentments and delights, which requyre a strong, vigorous, and athletike habite of body to enioy. She will shew us, by setting our graves before our eyes, how vaine this glittering fansie of honour is: how vnprofitable the staffe of power to vnderproppe our falling being: how more bvrthensome then helpfull are those massie heapes of gold and silver, which when we have, the greatest use we make of them, is but to looke upon them, and court them with our dazeled eyes; whiles they encompassse us with armies of traytours and of hvngry wolves, to teare them from us, and us in pieces for their sake. Thus will natvre of her self in a short time, dull those weapons that offend us, and destroy the enimies of those verities that shine upon us. Courage then, my Soule, and neyther feare to live, nor yet desire to dye. If thou continvest in thy body, it is easy for thee, and sweete and contentsome, to heape up treasvres for eternity. And if thou partest from it, thy hopes are great and faire, that the iourney thou art going, is to a world of vnknowne felicity. Take hart then, and march on with a sevre diligence, and expect the hand of bovnteous natvre, to dispose of thee, according as she hath wisely and benignely provided for thee. And feare not but that if thou hast kept a reasonable amity with her, she will passe thee to where thou shallest never more be in danger of iarring with her; nor of feeling within thy self the vnkind blowes of contrary

powers fighting in thee, whiles thou bleedest with the wovndes that each side giveth; nor of changing thy once gained happinesse into a contrary condition, according to the vicissitudes of all humane affaires. But shallest forever, be swelled to the utmost extent of thy infinite natvre, with this torrent, with this abisse of ioy, pleavre, and delight.

But here (my Soule) well mayest thou stand amazed att this great word, forever. What will this be, when fleeting time shall be converted into permanent eternity? Sharpen thy sight to looke into this vast profvndity. Suppose that halfe an houre, were resvmed into one instant or indivisible of time: what a strange kind of dvrance would that be? I see that halfe an houre, is divisible without end, into halfes, and halfes of halfes, and qvarters of qvarters; and after my riades of divisions, no parcell is so litle, but that it hath an infinite superproportion to an indivisible instant. What a prodigious thing then must it be, to have an instant equalise halfe an houre? Were it but some ordinary notion or qviddity, as of magnitude, of place, of activity, or the like, in which this excellency of an indivisibles equalising a large extent, were considered; my fantasy would offer to wrestle with it; and peradventvre, by strong abstraction, and by deepe retirement into the closet of ivdgement, I might hazard to frame some likenesse of it. But that wherein this mvltiplication is, is the noblest, the highest, and the roote of all other notions, it is being and existence it self. I my self, whiles I am, have my existence determined but to one poore instant of time; and beyond that, I am assvred of nothing. My slender thridde of being may breake a svnder, as neere to that instant, as I can suppose any thing to be neere unto it: and when I shall have supposed, Here it may breake, I still find that it may breake neerer and neerer; and that I can never arrive to settle the neerest point where it may snapp in two. But when time shall be no more; or att the least, shall in respect of me, be turned into Eternity; then this fraile Existence of mine, will be stretched, out beyond the extent of all conqvering time. What strange thing then, is this admirable mvltiplication of existence? or how may I be able to comprehend it? Existence is that which comprehendeth all things: and if God be not comprehended in it, thereby it is, that he is incomprehensible of us: and he is not comprehended in it, because himself is it. He is existence: and by being so, he eqvaleth, not comprehendeth it. From hence then I may gather the excellency and wast empire of existence, in its owne natvre: and so conclvde how admirable a change and betterment that must be, which encreaseth, and mvltiplyeth so infinitely the existence I now enioy: for be it never so specious; be it never so glorious; be it what it is, existence, the toppe, the flower, the perfection of all created thinges; still there is a flaw, there is a defect, a shortnesse, a limitation in it: for now, my soul, thou art but a part of me; and doest exist in such a manner by svccession, that the secvrity and possession of it, is of lesse then of any thing whatsoever in the world; for it is of nothing more, then of an indivisible; which being such, in truth is nothing. But when the walles shall be broken downe, that here confine thee to such a nothing of existence, (which yet is infinitely more noble, then all other degrees of notions) then thou shallest svmmе up time in formall being, and not be limited, as now thou art, to this so divided a svccession. Thov shallest be an houre without divisibility: and if an houre, a yeare: if so, an age: and if an age, then for ever, for al eternity.

But whither art thou flowne, my soul? to what a dazeling height art thou mounted? Thov art now soared to such a lessening pitch, as my faint eyes are no longer able to follow thy touring

flight: my head groweth giddy, with gazing up; whiles thou lookest downe, to see time runne an infinite distance beneath thee; wafting the existences of all corporeall thinges from nothing to nothing, in a perpetvall streame: and thou sevre, and out of the reach of its venomous and all destroying truth. Let me call to minde, all the violent pleasures of my heedy youth: let me summe up their extent according to those deceitfull measures I then rated happiness by: let me in my fancy chew over again the excessive good, I then fondly imagined in them: and to all this, let me adde as much more ioy and felicity, as in my weake thoughts, I am able to faddome or but ayme at: and then let me say (and with rigorous truth I shall say it) all this excesse of blisse, will be resumed, will be enjoyed to the full, in one indivisible moment: let me thinke with my self, if then, when pleasure was the Idole I sacrificed all my thoughts unto, I might in one quarter of an houre have enjoyed a pleasure, or at the least, have hoped for one, that should have equalised at once all those, that in my life I ever tasted: what would not I have beene content to give in purchase of that single quarter of an houre? And instead of this pleasant dreame, I now see that one reall moment, will truly and solidely give to thee and me, the quintessence, the elixir of content and happiness; not drawne out of such 40 years, as I have struggled through the world in various fortunes; but out of ages and ages of pleasure, greater farre then can be conceived by a hart of flesh; and multiplied beyond the arithmetike of intelligences. And this happy moment, shall not be of their soddaine fleeting and expiring nature, that are assigned to time; but shall endvre beyond the extent of that time, which surpasseth all multiplication. I see plainly that I must multiply eternity by eternity, to frame a scantling of that blisse, which a well passed life in this world, shall bring me to in the next. And yet it will be as farre short, and as much beneath the selfblessednesse of him that giveth one this, as nothing is short of all that is. For my blisse shall have a beginning; and though it never shall have end, yet that belongeth not to it for its owne sake, but proceedeth meerey from the bovnteous hand of the nothing annihilating self essence: from whom there is no more feare of the fayling of his liberall superefflvence of being upon me, then there is of his owne deficiency from being self being. But how can these thinges stand together? That indivisibly I shall possesse a tenvre beyond all possible time? and nevertheless possibly, notwithstanding my possession, I may be bereft of what I enjoy? who can reade this riddle? who can dive into this abisse? who can shoote light into this infinite pitte of darkenesse? It is the abundance and excesse of light that here striketh us blind. Who can strengthen our eyes to endvre eaglewise this glorious and resplendent sunne? Nothing surely in this world; unlesse it be silēce and solitude. To these therefore let us consecrate the reverend contemplation of this awefull mystery: which is but profaned, if it be exposed to vvlgar eyes; and to such nightowles and bates as we are, whiles the trobled fantasies of reeking sense and wordly occupations, do overcloud our mysty thoughts.

Now then if nature by short and thicke steppes att the beginning, and by larger paces in the progresse, hath delivered us over into a night of pure light, where we can see nothing, because every thing is too visible; so that we are faine to veyle our eyes, and are constraigned to retire ourselves to meditate and arme them, before we expose them to so strong and glorious beames: how should we dare to looke upon those admiable heights (infinitely surpassing all these) with which the overconvering grace hath crowned and swelled up the extent of nature? What sight is

sharpe enough to penetrate into the mysterious essence, sprovtng into different persons? Who can looke upon the self mvltiplied vnity, upon the incomprehensible circvmincession, upon those wondrous processions, and idiomes reserved for Angels eyes?

Of these, (my soul) whose shootings reach infinitely higher beyond all that we have said, then what we have sayd is beyond the dull and mvddy motions of this life; thou art not capable now of receiving any instructions: let first the mystagogicall illvminations of the great areopagite; and the ascetike discipline of the anachoreticall inhabitants of the wildernesse, purify thy eye, before thou attemptest to speake, or to ayme att the discovery of these abisming depths. By them thou must be first irrigated with the sweete shoures of morninges and eveninges, with the gentle deawes, and mannadropes, which fall abundantly from those bovnteous favours that reside in a higher sphere then natvre; and that poure out, vnknowne and vnconceivable blessinges upon prepared hartes: which frvtify into that true blisse, in comparison where of, all that we have hitherto declared is but shadow, vanity, and nothing.

FINIS.

Transcription made from unnumbered pages of the 'To my Sonne' and from pages 115-143 of the original (in Book Two).