

THE
VANITY
OF THE
VVORLD.

BY
EZEKIEL HOPKINS.

Wm. of London
Wm. of London
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TO THE
Right Worshipful,
SIR
ROBERT VYNER
Knight and Baronet,

Sir,

VV Ere You
one of that
sort of men, who value
themselves by the Bag,
or the Acre ; it might
possibly be thought ra-
ther an Affront, than a
A 3 Dedi-

THE EPISTLE

*Dedication, to prefix
your Name to this Trea-
tise. For since it is
purposely intended to
beat down the price of
the World, and to ex-
pose its admired Vani-
ties to publick contempt,
those sordid Spirits, who
have no other worth to
commend them, but
what is summd up in
their yearly Revenues,
would interpret such an
Address, not so much
a*

DEDICATORY.

a tender of respect and service, as a design to undo and begger them.

But Sir to you, whom God hath doubly blest with a large Estate, and a larger heart, I doubt not but this Piece will be very acceptable; if upon no other accompt, yet at least as the perusal of it may be helpful to you to strip off, and as it were to sequester all your worldly

A 4 ad.

THE EPISTLE

advantages, that you may the better take an Estimate of your self according to your Native and Genuine worth, both as a man, and as a Christian.

*I am not so much a Cynick, as to plead for affected Poverty, and a disdainful rejecting the gifts of Divine Providence. Such a morose and sower pride I judg worthy to be
cka-*

DEDICATORY.

*chastis'd not onely with
the censure of Vanity,
but Impiety. We need
not shelter our selves
under any Monastick
vow; nor flie to De-
serts, and Solitudes to
bide us from the Al-
lurements of the World;
This is to run away
from that Enemy,
whom we ought to con-
quer. Certainly Re-
ligion allows us the pos-
session of earthly Com-
forts;*

THE EPISTLE

forts; onely it regulates the Use, and forbids the inordinate Love of them. We may prize them as Comforts, but not as Treasures: And while we imploy a due part of our abundance, in the works of a generous Charity, and true Piety, we may well look upon what is left, as a Salary that God gives us for being faithful Stewards of the
the

DEDICATORY.

*the rest. Thus to use
the World for the Inte-
rests of Heaven, to
make its enjoyments
tributary to Gods Glo-
ry, it is to convert and
proselite it; and turn
that into an Offring,
which others make an
Idol. By this we give
Earth a Translation;
and in a nobler sense
than the new Systeme of
Astronomy teacheth,
advance it to be a Star,
and*

THE EPISTLE

and a Celestial body.
And by this Method,
we change those helps
that Vice had to make
it self prodigious and
infamous, into the most
serviceable Instru-
ments that Vertue can
have to make it self con-
spicuous and exempla-
ry. For Wealth and
Honour in a vertuous
person, are like the
well setting of a Jew,
which, though it makes
it

DEDICATORY.

it not more pretious,
makes it more sparkling.

But Sir, I forget
my self, and instead of
writing a Letter, am
writing a Tract. I
shall make no other A-
pology for it, but that
the Book being de-
signed against Vanity,
I would not have the
Dedication of it guilty
of that common and no-
torious one, to be fill'd
onely with Comple-
ments.

THE EPISTLE, &c.

ments. And I hope you will not think it any thing of that strain, when I shall assure you that my prayers to God for you are, that you may still enjoy all advantages of doing good here on Earth, and hereafter receive the reward of it in Heaven.

Exon. Feb. 11.
1. 1668.

Your most Hum-
bled and most
obliged Servant,

Ezek. Hopkins.

*The Reader is desired to pardon faults of less moment
and to correct these which follow.*

PAge 6. line 18. for *senec* read *senec*. p. 22. margin, for *curat*
is r. *curat*. p. 24. for *ridiculous* r. *ridiculously*. p. 25. marg.
for *ἐκ πικρίας* r. *ἐκ ποικίλων*. p. 27. marg. for *μαλας* r.
αἰσχυρ. p. 28. for *sester* r. *sestert.* p. 31. l. 8. for *imagined* r.
imagine. p. 41. marg. for *πυρίπυρ* r. *πυρίπυρ* *ibid.* for *ἐμπόδιον*
τῶν r. *ἐμπόδιον τῶν*. p. 46. marg for *lunaria* r. *lunaria*. p. 47.
marg. for *ἱεῖς* r. *ἱεῖς*.



THE
VANITY.
OF THE
VVORLD.

Ecclesiastes I. 2.

*Vanity of Vanities, saith the
Preacher, Vanity of Vanities,
all is Vanity.*

THe Preacher here men-
tioned, is no lesse a
Person than *Solomon* :
and this whole Book is no o-
ther than his recantation Ser-
mon.

mon. The Text he preacht on is the same that I have chosen : and it contains the true and severe judgement he past upon all things under the Sun. Certainly, he who had *Riches as plentiful as the (a) Stones of the Street*, and *Wisedom as large as the sand of the (b) Sea*, could want no advantages either to try experiments, or draw conclusions from them. And yet, when he had (c) employed both, in the critical search of true happiness, and contentment, and had dissected and ransacked the whole world to find it, He returns disappointed of his hopes, and tired with his pursuit, and begins the sad Narrative of his long wandrings and errors, with *Vanity of Vanities all is Vanity.* The

a 1 Kings 8.
27.

b 1 Kings 4.
29.

c Eccles. 1.
16, 17.

1. The whole Verse is loaden with Emphases : and it is first observable, That he doth not glide into it, by any smooth connexion of sence, or sentences ; but on a sudden breaks upon us, with a surprising abruptnesse, *Vanity of Vanities*. Which shews a mind so full of matter, that it could not attend the circumstance of a Prologue to usher it in.

2. Again, it is all exprest in the Abstract. It sufficed not to censure all things to be vain, but they are *Vanity* it self.

3. And this Abstract hath another heapt upon it, *Vanity of Vanities*. Now this reflexion of the same word upon it self, is alway used to signifie the height and greatnesse of the

the thing exprest, as *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords* denotes the highest King, and the most absolute Lord. So here *Vanity of Vanities* intimates to us the most exceeding superlative Vanity imaginable.

4.

*Gen. 41. 32.

Again, this is not only once pronounced but doubled and repeated : partly the more to confirme this truth to our belief; and thus *Pharaohs* dream was * doubled : and partly the more to imprint it upon our consideration. *Vanity of Vanities, Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.*

But though this be exprest in most general and comprehensive termes, yet it must not be taken in the utmost latitude, as if there were nothing
at

at all of solid, and real good extant. It is enough if we understand the words in a sence restrained to the subject matter whereof he here treats. For the Wiseman himself *ex-
**Ecl. 12. 13*
 empts the *Fear* and *service of God*, from that *Vanity* under which he had concluded all other things. God and Religion have in them a solid and substantial good ; the one, as our utmost end and happiness, the other as the best proportioned means to attain it.

When therefore he pronounceth all to be Vanity, it must be meant of all worldly and earthly things : for he speaks onely of these. And if we enquire what these wordly things are, that have this censure of Vanity so vehemently

past upon them, Saint John hath drawn up a full and true Inventory of all the goods that are to be found in this great House of the Universe, 1 John 2. 16. *All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of Life. The Lusts of the flesh are the pleasures of the world; which are all of them suited to gratifie the sensual and fleshly part of man. The Lusts of the eye, are riches; so called, because their greatest serviceableness is onely to make a glittering, and dazling shew. Which since Solomon approves, Eccles. 5. 11. What good is there to the owners thereof, save the beholding them with their eyes. The Pride of Life is honour and dignity; that fla-*

flatulent, and airy notion, that puffs up mens pride and vain-glory, and makes them look upon their inferiours, as though they were not their fellow Creatures. This is all that the world can shew *Pleasures, Riches, Honors*, and this is that *All* concerning which the Wiseman pronounceth that it is *Vanity*.

For these things, though they make a fair and gaudy shew, yet it is all but shew and appearance. As bubbles blown into the air, will represent great variety of Orient and glittering colours, not (as some suppose) that there are any such really there, but onely they appear so to us, thorough a false reflexion of light cast upon them: so truly this world,

B 4

this

this earth on which we live, is nothing else but a great bubble blown up by the breath of God in the midst of the air, where it now hangs. It sparkles with ten thousand glories; not that they are so in themselves, but onely they seem so to us thorough the false light, by which we look upon them. If we come to grasp it, like a thin filme it breaks, and leaves nothing but wind and disappointment in our hands: as histories report of the fruits that grow near the dead sea, where once *Sodome* and *Gomorah* stood, they appear very fair and beautifull to the eye, but if they be crusht, *in cinerem evanescent*, turn straight to smoak and ashes.

The Subject, which I have propounded to discourse of, is this
Vanity

Tacit. hist.
lib. 5.

*Fumum
exhilarant &
faiscunt in
vagum pul-
verem* So-
lin.

Joseph. An-
tiquit. l. 5.
c. 5.

Vanity of the world, and of all things here below ; that being hereof convinced, we may desist our vain pursuit of vain objects, and may set our affections on those things which are above, which are the alone valuable, because the only permanent and stable good. Whence is it that we are become so degenerate, that we, who have immortal and heaven-born Souls, should stake them down to these perishing injoyments ? Whence is it, that we, who should soar aloft unto God, and were to that end fitted with the fleet wings of Meditation and affections, to cut through the Heavens in an instant, and to appear there before the Throne of the great God, that we should lye here groveling in the

Gen. 3. 14.

the thick clay and muck of this world, as if the Serpents curse were become ours, *to creep up on our bellies, and to lick up the dust of the earth?* Do we not shamefully degrade our selves, when we stoop to admire, what is so vastly below us, and barter away our pretious Souls, Souls more worth than ten thousand worlds, onely to gain some small part of one? Certainly the God of this world hath blinded mens eyes, and cast a strange mist before them, that they cannot discern, what is most evident and obvious, even the instability and vanity, of all subllunary enjoyments. That I may therefore contribute somewhat to scatter this mist, I shall endeavour to represent to you the native and ge-

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deceit
Devil
and so
that g
charm
pove

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proce
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Firj
the wo
natural
God h
good.
pronon
took a
of his
saw n
made
good.

genuine Vanity that is in all earthly things, free from that deceitful varnish, which the Devil usually puts upon them; and so to deform, and wound that great Sorcerer, that his charms may have no more power to prevail over you.

Now, that we may rightly proceed in this, I shall premise these two or three things.

I. *First*, There is nothing in the world vain in respect of its natural being. Whatsoever God hath made is, in its kind good. And so the great Creator pronounced of them, when he took a survey of all the works of his hands. Gen. 1. 31. *God saw every thing, that he had made, and behold it was very good.* There is a most harmonious

nious order, and beauty in all the Creation, and every part of it. And therefore *Solomon* must not be here so interpreted, as if he disparaged the works of God in pronouncing them all *Vanity*. Certainly he doth not libell his Creator, nor upraid him as though he had filled the world onely with vain toyes and trifles. If we regard the wonderful artifice and wisdom, that shines forth in the frame of nature, we cannot have so unworthy a thought either of the world it self, or of God, who made it.

* *Jam. I 17.* View the Sun (next unto * God) the great *Father of lights*. View the numerous assembly of the Starres : observe their Influences, their Courses, and Measures. Is it
a

a vain or impertinent thing, to spread forth the Heavens, and to beat out a Path for every one of these to walk in ! The Air, that thin and subtil Vail that God hath spread over the face of Nature ; the Earth that God hath pois'd in the midst of the Air, and the whole Universe in the midst of a vast and boundless Nothing : The great Sea, whose proud waves God binds in with a girdle of sand ; and checks its rage by a body almost as unsetled and roling as it self : The various kinds of Creatures that God governs by a wonderful *Economy* ; the great family of brute Beasts, which God brings up and educates without disorder ; but especially Man, the Lord and Chief of the World, that knot that

that God hath tyed between Heaven and Earth, that sacred band of Time with Eternity: If we consider the frame and compofure of all these things in themselves, or their usefulness and subserviency unto us, we shall be so far from branding them with Vanity, that unless our contemplations lead us from natural things to the great God who formed them, we might rather fear lest their beauty and excellency should inviegle us, as it did the Heathen, to look no farther for a Deity, but worship them as Gods.

II.

Secondly, There is nothing vain in respect of God the Creator. He makes his ends out of all: for they all glorifie him according to their several ranks

ranks and orders; and to rational and considerate men, are most evident Demonstrations, of his infinite Being, Wisdom, and Power. In which sense the Apostle tells us, *Rom. i. 20.* *the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead.* God hath composed two Books; by the diligent study of which we may attain to the knowledg of Himself; the Book of the Creatures, and the Book of the Scriptures. The Book of the Creatures is written in those great letters of Heaven and Earth, the Air and Sea, and by these we may spell out somewhat of God. He made them for our instruction, as well as for our service; the least

α' Ἐχομὲν
δὲ ἐν τοῖς
ἀνθρώποις
τοῦ μὲν α'-
πὸ τῆς καλ-
λῆς τῆς
ἐμφαντο-
μίας
προσλαμ-
βάνοντες.
Οὐδὲν γὰρ
τῶν καλῶν
ἀκὴν, καὶ,
ὡς ἔτυχε
γίνεται.
*Plut. de pla-
citis philos.
c. 6.*

a Rom. I.
20, 21.

least and vilest of them read us lectures of his glorious Attributes; nor is it any absurdity, to say, that as they are all the Works of his Mouth, so they are all the Words of his Hand. Indeed this knowledge that the creatures give us of the Creator, cannot suffice to make us happy, though it may be sufficient to make us ^ainexcusable. We could never have collected from them those mysterious discoveries of God, which the Scriptures exhibit, and which are so necessary to our eternal bliss. For what signature is there stamp't upon any of the Creatures of a Trinity in Unity; of the eternal Generation, or temporal Incarnation of the Son of God? What Creature could have informed

formed us of our first fall, and guilt contracted by it? Or where can we find the Copy of the Covenant of Works, or of Grace printed upon any of the Creatures? All the great sages of the world, though they were Natures Secretaries, and ransackt its abstrusest secrets, yet all their learning and knowledg could never discover that sacred mystery of a crucified Saviour. These are truths which Nature and Reason are so far from finding out that they can scarce receive them when discovered. And therefore God hath manifested them to us by the Light and Revelation of the Holy Scriptures. But yet so much of God as belongs to those two great Titles of Creator and Governor of the World, our

C

reason

b 1 Cor.
2. 14.

III.

reason may collect from created and visible things, running up their consequences, till they are all resolved into the first cause, and Origine of all.

Thirdly, Therefore, All the Vanity that is in worldly things is onely in respect of the sin and folly of man. For those things are said to be Vain, which neither do, nor can, perform what we expect from them. Our great expectation is Happiness, and our great folly is that we think to obtain it by the enjoyments of this world. This makes men pursue pleasures, hoard up riches, court honours and preferments, because they look with an overweening conceit on these things, as such as can make them truly happy. Whereas to seek for happiness among

among these worldly things, is but to seek the living among the dead; yea, it is but to search for happiness among those things which are the very root and occasion of all our misery. (6) They are all of them leaky and broken Cisterns and cannot hold this living water. This is it which makes them charged with Vanity, because in our perverted phancy, we look upon them as stable, permanent, and satisfactory, fix them as our journeys end, which ought onely to be used by us in our passage, and expect much more from them than they can yield: And so indeed the Vanity is not so much theirs as ours.

There are some things (as^d
S. *Austin* and the^e *Schools* from
C₂ him

Ἡ Τάραχος
 ὁ κυριώτατος
 τὸς τῆς
 ἀνθρωπί-
 ναις ψυ-
 χᾶς γίνε-
 ται ἐκ τῶν
 ταῦτα μα-
 κροτέρως
 δοξάζειν
 κ' ἀφαιρεταί
 Epic. apud
 Laert. in vi-
 tā Epicuri.
 & Aug. doct.
 Ch. ist. l. 1.
 c. 3
 e Lomb. l. 1.
 d. 1 Aquin.
 I 12, q 11.
 16 Durand.
 l. 1 d 1 q 4
 arim. d. 1. 4
 3. ut 2.
 Altiſs. l 3
 tract. 10

*f Frui est a-
more alicui
rei inherere
propter scip-
sam. Aug.
doct. Christ.
l. 1. c. 4.
gustari autem,
quod in u-
sum venit
ad id quod
in eis, obli-
nendum re-
ferre. Idem
ibid.
h utendum
est hoc mun-
do, non fru-
endum, ut
invisibilia
Dei per ea
quæ facta
sunt, intelli-
gatur, hoc
est ut de tem-
poralibus et
terrenis capi-
antur, Aug
ibid.*

him do well distinguish) which
 must be onely *enjoyed*, other
 things what must be onely *used*.
 To *enjoy*, is to cleave to an
 object by love for its own sake:
 And this belongs onely to
 God. What we *use*, we re-
 fer to the obtaining of what
 we desire to enjoy: And this
 belongs to the Creatures. So
 that we ought to *use* the crea-
 tures, that we may arrive at the
 Creator: We may serve our
 selves of them, but we must
 alone enjoy him.

Now that which makes the
 whole world become Vanity,
 is when we break this order of
 use and fruition; when we set
 up any particular created good
 as our end and happiness, which
 ought onely to be used as a
 means to attain it. All things

In

in the world are in themselves good, but when we propound them as the greatest and highest good that we expect satisfaction from, this turns them all into Vanity, and so every thing besides God, becomes nothing.

And thus we have a brief account whence proceeds this Vanity of the World, not from the nature of things, but from those vain hopes and expectations we build upon them for that happiness which they cannot afford.

It remains therefore to display before you this Vanity of the World, in some more remarkable particulars : Whereof I have collected these following.

C 3

First,

First, The Vanity of the World appears in this, that all its glory and splendor depends merely upon opinion and phancy. It is not so much what things are, as what we account them, that makes them good or evil: And what can be vainer than that which borrows its worth from so vain and fickle a thing as our estimation? And therefore we find the things of the world rated diversly, according to the esteem that men have of them. What were Gold and Silver, had not mens phancy stamp't upon them an excellency far beyond their natural usefulness? This great Idol of the world, was of no value among those barbarous Nations; where abundance made it vile. They preferred

Glas

Quantum apud nos indiciis margaritis pretium est, tantum apud Indos in curalia. Namque ista persuasione gentium constant. Plin. lib. 32. de Gem. Ben. 201 d. l. mondo nuovo, lib. 1.

Glass and Beads before it, and made that their treasure, which we make our scorn. They despise our riches, and we theirs; and true reason will tell us that both the one and the other are in themselves alike despicable, and it is onely phancy that puts such an immodest and extravagant price upon them, far above their natural worth. Should the whole world conspire together to depose Gold and Silver from that sovereignty they have usurped over us, they might for ever lie hid in the bowels of the Earth, ere their true usefulness would entice any to the pains and hazard of digging them out into the light. Indeed the whole use of what we so much dote upon is meerly phan-

^a *Ælian.*

l. 2. c. 14.

phantastical, and to make our selves needy, we have invented an artificial kind of riches, which are no more necessary to the service of sober Nature, than Jewels and Bracelets were to that Plane-tree, which ^a *Xerxes* so ridiculous adorned. And although we eagerly pursue these things, and count our selves poor and indigent without them; yet possibly right reason will dictate, that they are no more needful to us, than to brut or senseless Creatures; and that it would be altogether as ridiculous for a man to be deckt with them, as for a Beast or Plant, were it but as uncommon. These pretious trifles when they are hung about us, make no more either to the warmth or defence of the
Body

Body, than if they were hung upon a tree they could make its leaves more verdant, or its shade more refreshing. ^b Doth any man lie the softer, because his bed posts are gilt? Doth his Meat and Drink relish the better, because serv'd up in Gold? Is his House more convenient, because better carv'd or painted? Or are his Cloaths more fit, because more fashionable than anothers? And if they are not necessary to these natural uses, all that is left them is but phancy and opinion. Indeed mankind cozen themselves by compact, and by setting a value upon things that are rare, have made

δ ταῦτα
πάντα
γίγνεται,
τῶν μὲν
ποικίλων
ἱματίων
ἕδην, τι-
μᾶλλον
θελπεῖν
διωαυρῶ-
σιν, τῶν δὲ
χρυσόφο-
ρον οἰκίων
οὐδέεν τι
μᾶλλον
σκεπε-
σῶν τῶν δὲ
ἐν ποικί-
λων τῶν
ἀργυρῶν

ἐκ ὀφελάντων τὸν πότον. ἕδὲ τῶν χρυσῶν, ἕδὲ
πὺνέλεφαντίνων κλινῶν τὸν ὕπνον ἡδῶ παρὰ χρυσοῦ
Lucian. Cynicus.

many

many think themselves poor, whereas God and Nature made all equally wealthy, had they not artificially impoverish themselves. It is nothing but conceit that makes the difference between the richest and the meanest, if both enjoy necessities. For what are all their superfluous riches, but a load that mens covetousness lays upon them? They are but like ^c Roman slaves that were wont to carry heavy burdens of bread upon their backs, whereof others eat as large a share as they. Whatsoever is more than barely to satisfy the cravings of Nature, is of no other use but onely to ^d look upon. Thy Lands, thy Houses, and fair Estate are but Pictures of things. The poorest that

*c—ut si
Reticul in
pani, q. an-
les inter, a-
nula Forre
ueh is hura-
ro, nih lo
plus accipias
quam. Q. i
nil potari.
Hor: sat. 1.
d Ecclesi.
5. 11.*

sees th
them as
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reason
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theirs a
And
these a
naked
them
mean
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or Nat
them, a
those sh
and St
Earth,
the say
Bney
Amo. de
exas
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sdfu
qua n r

sees them enjoys as much of them as thy self: Yea, and if men could be contented with reason, all that they behold with their eyes, is as much theirs as it is the owners.

And indeed if we strip all these admired nothings to their naked principles, we shall find them as base and sordid as the meanest of those things which we spurn and despise; onely Art or Nature put new shapes upon them, and phancy a price upon those shapes. * What are Gold and Silver, but divercyfied Earth, hard and shining Clay?

Ἄφραλέρ-
νος χυλά-
ριον ἐστὶ
σαφυλίη καὶ
ἡ περιπόρ-
φος τρι-
χία προ-
βατίη αι-
μάτιον
μασχίης
δεδυμμένα.
Οὕτως δ' αὖ
παρ' ὅλον
τὸν βίον
ποιεῖν, καὶ
ὅπερ λίαν
ἀξιοπιστό-
τατα
πραγμάτα
φαντάζε-

ται ἀπογυμνῆν αὐτά, καὶ τὴν εὐτελείαν αὐτῶν κα-
θεῶν καὶ τὴν ἰσορίαν ὑφ' ἧς σεμνύνεται περιαιρεῖν *M.*
Anto. de f. i. p. 1. 6. S. 10. Edit. Cas. Τὸ σαπροντῆς
ἐκάστω ὑποκεκμηχῆς ὕλης. ὕδωρ, κόνις, ὀσάρεα,
γράφος ἢ πέλιν, πᾶροι γῆς, τὰ μέγιστα, καὶ ἀπο-
σαθῆναι ὁ χρυσοῦς, ὁ ἀργυρος, καὶ τριχία, ἡ ἰαθῆς καὶ
ἄμμα ἢ πορφύρα. *Id. 1. 9. S. 30. 6.* The

The very place where they are bred, the entrails of the Earth, upbraids us for accounting them pretious. The best and richest perfumes, what are they but the clammy sweat of Trees, or the mucous froth of Beasts? The softer Silks are but the Excrement of a vile Worm. The most racy and generous Wines, are nothing else but puddle water strain'd through a Vine. Our choicest delicates are but dirt, cookt and serv'd up to us in various forms. The very same things which we condemn under one shape, we admire in another; and with this, Phancy and Custom have conspired together to cheat us.

Think, O worldling! when thou castest thy greedy eyes upon

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'Tis

upon thy riches, think, here are bags that onely phancy hath fil'd with treasure, which else were fil'd with dirt. Here are trifles, that onely phancy hath called Jewels, which else were no better than common pebbles. And shall I lay the foundation of my content and happiness upon a phancy, a thing more light and wavering than the very Air?

Nay, consider, That a distemper'd phancy can easily alter a mans condition, and put what shape it pleaseth upon it. If a black and sullen Melancholy ceiseth the spirits, it will make him complain of poverty in the midst of his abundance of pain and sickness, in the midst of his health & strength. 'Tis true, these are but the effects

effects of a distorted phancy ; but though his sickness and poverty be not real , yet the torment of them is . It is all one, as to our disquiet whether we be indeed unhappy, or only ^b imagine our selves so.

Again , If the phancy be more merrily perverted , streight they are nothing less than Kings, or Emperors, in their own conceit. A straw is as majestick as a Scepter, they will speak of their Rags as magnificently, as-if they were Robes : And look upon all that come near them as their subjects or servants. They make every stone a Jew, every cottage a Pallace ; all they see is their own, and all their own is most excellent. Now what think you, are these things
vain,

^b Ταράσσει
τὸς ἀν-
θρώπους ἢ
τὰ πράγ-
ματα ἀλ-
λὰ τὰ πε-
ρὶ τῶν
πραγμα-
τῶν δόγ-
ματα.

Εἰς Τελ. Γη-
ch: γ. c. 10.
ἢ dissert.

l. 3. c. 19

vain, or no? I doubt not but you will conclude them most extremely vain; and yet they serve their turns as well, and bring them in as much solace and contentment, as if they were really what they imagined them. Thus ^a *Thrasyllus* noted down all the Ships that arrived at the Port of *Athens*, thinking them and their Merchandize to be all his own. And when cured of that pleasant madness, ^b confess, that he never in his whole life enjoyed so much content, as in that conceited wealth those Ships brought him. And indeed for my part, I know not whether these things are more vain in the phancy, or in the reality. Such is the exceeding Vanity of all things in the World,

^a *Alian.*
l. 4. c. 25

^b ΕΛΕΥΣΕΝ
ΜΗΔΕΠΟΤΕ
ΉΔΗΝΑΙ
ΤΟΣΟΥΤΟΝ,
ὅσον τότε
ἤδετο ἐπὶ
ταῖς μὲν
αὐτῷ προ-
σηλύσαις
ναύσιν
ἀποσωζο-
μένας.
Id. iud.

World, that were it not for the Eternal concernments of the Soul, which cannot be so well regarded under a suspension or distraction of Reason, I should make no difficulty to account and prove them the happiest men on Earth.

If then there be so great a power in phancy, how vain must all those things be which you pursue with eagerness and impatience, since a vain phancy without them, can give you as much satisfaction, as if you enjoyed them all: And a vain phancy can, on the other hand, in the greatest abundance of them, make your lives as wearisome and vexarious, as if you enjoyed nothing. That is the first Demonstration.

Secondly, The Vanity of the

the World appears in its deceitfulness and treachery. It is not onely Vanity, but a lying Vanity, and betrays both our hopes, and our souls.

It betrays our hopes, and leaves us nothing but disappointment, when it promiseth satisfaction and happiness. What strange confidences do we build upon the false flatteries of the world? In our prosperity we sing a *Requiem* to our selves; and are ready to say, *Our Mountain is so strong, that it shall never be moved*: But within a while God hath shaken it like that of *Sinai*, and wrapt it about with clouds and thick darkness.

It betrays the soul to guilt and eternal condemnation. For usually the world intangles it

1.

Psal. 30.
6, 7.

2.

D

in

in strong, though secret and insensible snares, and insinuates into the heart that love of it self, which is inconsistent with the love of God. The world is the Devils factor, and drives on the designs of Hell. The Apostle hath told us, *1 Tim. 6. 9.* *They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.* And because of the subserviency of worldly enjoyments to mens lusts, it is almost as impossible a thing to moderate our affections towards them, or to bound our appetites and desires, as it is to assuage the thirst of a Dropsie by drinking, or to keep that fire from encreasing into which we are still casting new fewel.

And

And therefore our Saviour hath pronounced it as ^a Hard for a rich man to enter into Heaven, as for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle.

^a Luke 18. 25.

As Judas gave a sign to the Officers that came with him to apprehend Jesus, ^b Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he, hold him fast: The same sign doth the World give the Devil. Whomsoever I shall caress and favour, whomsoever I shall heap honour and riches on, whomsoever I shall embrace and kiss, the same is he, hold him fast. Such a darling of the World, is usually fast bound in the silken bands of Voluptuousness, and consigned over to be fast bound in chains of massy darkness.

^b Mat. 26. 48.

3. As all things in the world are lying Vanities, so are they all vexatious. They are infamous to a Proverb, *Uncertain comforts, but most certain crosses.* And therefore the wise man concludes them all to be not only *Vanity, but Vexation of spirit.*

There is a fourfold Vexatiousness in all worldly things.

1. There is a great deal of turmoil and trouble in getting them; nothing can be acquired without it. The sweat of *Adams* brows hath stream'd down along upon ours, and the curse together with it, & that in sorrow we should eat of that which Toil and Labour hath provided for us. Men rise early, and go to bed late, and eat the Bread of carefulness, and such is either their curse,

or

e Gen. 3.
19.

or their folly, that they make their lives uncomfortable, onely to get the comforts of life.

Whether they get them, or no, yet still they are disappointed in their hopes. ^d If they cannot compass their designs, then they are tormented, because they fall short of what they laboured for; if they do compass them, yet still they are tormented, because what they laboured for, falls short of what they expected from it. The truth is, the World is much better in shew than substance: And those very things we admire before we enjoy them, yet afterward, we find much less in them than we expected. As he that sees a falling Star shoot through the
D ? Air,

2.

d Ex his tristitia sequitur, si aut non successit, aut successus pudet Senec. de tranquil. c. 11.

Air, and draw after it a long train of light, runs to the place, and thinking to get some bright and glittering thing, catches up nothing but a filthy jelly; such is the disappointment we find in our pursuit after the enjoyments of this world: They make a glorious shew at a distance, but when we come near them, we find our hopes deluded, and nothing upon the place but a vile slime.

3.

Thirdly, They are all vexation while we enjoy them. Be it what it will that we possess of the world, it is but by fits at most, that we take any great pleasure in it: And then, what between cares and designs to secure the continuance of it, and fears of losing it, the comfort

fort of enjoying it is wholly swallowed up. * For strong affections begetting strong fears, do always lessen the delight of present enjoyments. This is the unhappiness of all things in the world, that if we set any price and value upon them, we lose much of the sweetness of them, by fearing to lose them.

Fourthly, They are all vexatious, as in their enjoyment, so especially in their loss. Whatever we set our hearts upon, we may assure our selves, and experience will teach it us, that the pleasure of possessing it, will not near countervail the bitterness of losing it, And as if God had on purpose so ordained it, to take off our hearts from the world, the

D 4

better

α ἡ γὰρ
σφοδρὰ
περὶ ἑκα-
τον ἐπι-
θυμία σφο-
δρότατον
φόβον ἐκ-
ποιᾷσα τῷ
μὴ παρα-
μένειν,
ἀδεν ἢ
τὴν χάριν
ποιεῖ καὶ
ἀβέβαιον.
ὡς περὶ φλό-
γα, κα-
ταπνεο-
μήσω.
Plut. de
Tranquil.

better we esteem any thing, the more Vanity and Vexation shall we find in it ; for the more will our care and perplexity in keeping it, and the more our grief and torment in losing it be encreased. That's a third Demonstration.

IV.

Fourthly, The Vanity of the world appears in this, that a little cross will embitter great comforts. One *dead Flie* is enough to corrupt a whole *Box* of the worlds most fragrant *Oyntment*. How much will onely the aking of a tooth, a fit of the Stone or Gout deaden and dishearten us, to all the joys and pleasures of Life ? Certainly, the world must needs be vain, that cannot bear out the brunt of a little pain or sickness. The least cross acci-
dent

dent is enough to discompose all our delights. And indeed there are so many ingredients required to make up worldly Felicity, * Riches, Health, Friends, Honor, good Name, and the like, that if any of these be wanting, the whole composition is spoiled; and we shall take advantage against our selves to conclude we are miserable. For such is the peevishness of our nature, that if we have not all we would, we take no content in any thing we have. And besides, we are apt ^b to slide off from the

^a φαίνεται
καὶ τῶν
ἐκ τὸ σα-
γαθῶν
προσδε-
ομένη (εὐ-
δαιμονία)
ἐνίων
τητώμενοι
εὐπαίνε-
σι τὸ μα-
κάριον,
οἷον εὐγεν-
είας, εὐ-
τεχνίας,
καλλείας.
Οὐ πάν-
τες εὐδαι-
μονικὸς ὁ
τιμὴν ἰδέαν

πανάρχης ἢ δυσγενής, ἢ μονώτης καὶ ἄτεκνος. Ari.
E. l. i. c. 8. & l. i. o. c. 8. ^b Τὸ τοῦ ἐπιθυμίας ἐπιτα-
ράσσει. ὅταν ὥσπερ αἱ μυῖαι τῶν λέγων τοπῶν ἐν τοῖς
κατόπροις ἀπολιθαίνουσι, ταῖς δὲ τραχύτησι προ-
σέχονται καὶ ταῖς ἀμυχαῖς ὥτως ἄνθρωποι τῶν ἰλα-
ρῶν καὶ προσιωτῶν ἀπορρέοντες, ἐμπλέκονται τῶν
ἀνδρῶν ἀναμνήσεσι Pimarch. de tr. inq. smoothe

smoother part of our lives, as Flies from glass, and to stick onely on the rougher passages : For neither is Sense capable to be so much or so long affected with the impressions of pleasure, as of pain (since never could there yet be any delights invented as piercing, as there are many torments) nor yet is our busie remembrance so officious in calling back the pleasant passages of our days to our review, as those that have been more gloomy and dolorous. And though it be our sin to look more upon the Crosses we find, than the Comforts we enjoy, yet here we may likewise see how vain a thing it is for us to expect happiness and contentment from the world, whose Crosses as they are more,

more, so are they more considerable than its Comforts.

Fifthly, consider, The longer we enjoy any worldly thing, the more flat and insipid doth it grow : We are soon at the bottom, and find nothing but dregs there. In all the pleasures of life either our Spirits sink and fall under the continuance of them, as not able to bear a constant tension and emotion ; or the delight consists merely in the novelty and variety of the objects, which when we are made more familiar with are but dull, because ordinary : And so they either tire our appetites, or deceive our hopes. And therefore the most artificial Voluptuaries have always allowed themselves an intermission in their plea-

5.

e Certos ha-
 b bat dies ip-
 se magister
 voluptatis
 Epicurus,
 quibus ma-
 lignè semem
 extinguere.
 Sen. Ep. 18
 Ep. ad Me-
 nœceum apud
 Diog. Licet
 in viâ epic.
 τὸ συνεθί-
 ζεν ἐν ἀ-
 πλαΐς καὶ
 πολυτε-
 λέσι διαί-
 ταις ταῖς
 πολυτελέ-
 σιν ἐν δια-
 λεμμάτω
 προσερχο-
 μέναις,
 κρείττον ἢ
 μᾶς δια-
 τίθουσι.

pleasures, to recruit nature,
 and sharpen their sensual de-
 fires, without which they
 would but cloy and surfeit, and
 instead of pleasures, prove
 onely a wast and oppression to
 the spirits. e *Epicurus* himself,
 the great Master and Servant
 of pleasure, who made it the
 highest good and chiefest hap-
 piness of man, set himself certain
 dayes of abstinence in course,
 wherein he would but niggardly
 satisfie his stomach; well know-
 ing that the pleasure of gluttony,
 could never be so much enanc'd
 as by an intervall of hunger.

For what is a furnish'd Table
 to him whose constant meals
 overtake one another, but one-
 ly the heaping of food upon
 crudities and indigestion?
 What are titles of Honour to

a per-

a person born noble? They signifie no more to him, than it doth to another man, when he hears himself called by his ordinary name. What is respect and honour to a man long accustomed to it? It brings him no great content when he hath it, but torments him when he fails of it. Give these things to those that are unacquainted with them, if you would have them valued. Bring a poor man to a table of Delicates; invest an ignoble person with Honours and Dignities; give respect to a despised person, and for the present you bless them. But time and custom will wear off this content: And the ^b tediousness even of such a life as this will make them willing at least for their divertisement and recreation,

b — Sunc
taliquoq;
talia vita
Magna. Vo-
luptates com-
mendat ravi-
or usus. Fur.
Sa. II.

to

*c Non existi-
mes me duce-
re te ad mo-
dicas cenas
& pauperum
cellis, &
quicquid ali-
ud est per
quod luxu-
ria, divitiarum
tadio
ludit. Sen:
Ep. 13.*

to retire to their homely Cells and Station. For as it is with those that are accustomed to strong perfumes, they themselves cannot scent those odours, which to others that use them not, are most sweet and fragrant: So it fares with us in the long continuance of worldly enjoyments; our senses are so stufft and even suffocated with them, that we cannot perceive them; and unless we purchase pleasures by alternate sorrow, they are but lost upon us. Now how vain must the world needs be, whose comforts are not valuable while we have them, but while we have them not? And how vain are those joys, for which we must pay down as much grief, as the joys themselves are

are worth ? So that upon balancing the accompt there remains nothing to us : And it had been altogether as good to have enjoyed nothing.

Again, Consider, all the pleasure of the world, is nothing else but a tedious repetition of the same things. Our life consists in a round of Actions, and what can be duller than still to be doing the same things over and over again ? Ask the most frolick Gallant, whose onely study it is how he may pass his time merrily, and live happily : What account can he give of his pleasures, but that from his Bed, he riseth to his Table, from his Table to his Sports, from them he tumbles into his Bed again ? This is the most
gentile

6.

Ἐ πάντα
ἐξ αἰδίου
ἡμῶν καὶ
ἀνακυκλώ-
μενα καὶ
ἐν δὲ δια-
φέρει πό-
τερον, ἐν
ἑκατον ἐ-
τεσιν, ἢ ἐν
διακοσί-
οις ἢ ἐν τῷ
ἀπείρῳ
χρόνῳ τὰ
αὐτὰ τίς
ᾔσεται.
Λιονία.
1 2. S. 12.

gentile and fashionable life. And are these the great joyes that a world so prized and so admired can afford? One half of his pleasant life he spends in sleep, a dull state, which we may rather reckon to death, than life. The other half he spends in clogging his appetite, and tiring his body, and then to sleep again. What generous and noble designs are these! Fit for high spirits and high births, while the contemptible Peasants are left to do the drudgery of the world, and to be the onely serviceable men in it. Nay rather what a pittiful Circle is this, still to be doing the same things, and things which we have before searcht and often found all that is in them. So that even a
Hea-

Heathen could say, that not onely a valiant, or a miserable man might desire to die, but a nice and delicate man, as disdain-
ing the irksome repetition of the same things.

Seventhly; The Vanity of the World appears in this, that it can stand us in no stead, then when we have the greatest need of support and comfort. There be two seasons especially, in which the soul wants relief and comfort, and they are in trouble of Conscience, and at the hour of death. Now in each of these the world shews it self to be exceeding vain and useless.

First, The World appears to be vain, when we are under trouble of Conscience. What choice comforts the soul then
E stands

*a Cogita
quamdiu
eadem faci-
as. Cibus,
somens, li-
bidoz Mori
velle, non
tantum pru-
dens & sor-
tis aut mi-
ser, sed eti-
am fastidio-
sus potest.
Sen. Ep:77.*

I.

stands in need of, those who have felt the sting and terrors of it, can best tell. The torments they then feel, next to those of the damned, are the most intollerable, and the most unutterable. God sets them up as his mark, and shoots his Arrows dip't in flaming poyson into the very midst of their souls. He kindles a secret fire in them, that consumes their bones, dries up their marrow, and scorches their entrals, and such is the spreading rage of it, that oftentimes it smokes out at their mouths in despairing outcrys.

The spirit of a man, (saith Solomon, Prov. 18. 14.) will bear his infirmity; i. e. The natural chearfulness and vivacity of a mans spirit, will in-
abl

able him to bear up under bodily pains; *but a wounded spirit who can bear?* When our Propit self is broken we must needs sink, & fall under the most gloomy apprehensions that Guilt and Hell can create in a soul already sing'd with those Eternal flames into which with unspeakable horror it dayly expects to be plunged. Oh! think what exact torture thou must needs endure, when God shall make deep wounds in thy spirit, and let fall great drops of his burning wrath, on that part of thy soul that is infinitely more tender and sensible than the apple of thine eye. Imagine what sharp and intolerable pains those *Martyrs* sustained, who (as the *Apostle* tells us *Heb. 11. 37.* were

E 2 *sawn*

sawn asunder. Or suppose that thou thy self wert now under the ragged teeth of a Saw, drawn to and fro upon the tendrest parts of thy body, tearing thy flesh, thy nerves, and sinews; grating and jarring upon thy very bones: Yet all the extremity of this, is nothing to what torments the Conscience feels, when God causeth his Sword to enter into it, to rive it up; when he makes deep and bloody wounds in it, and instead of pouring in healing balm, with an heavy hand chafes them with fire and brimstone.

Now in such a time of anguish and distress as this, what is there that can relieve the afflicted soul? The worldling that heaps up his ill-gotten trea-

treasures, and wallows in thick clay, when God comes to ransack his conscience, and to set before him the guilt of his sins, will then know with terrour and amazement, that there is a Justice which Gold and Silver cannot bribe. The voluptuous person will no longer relish any savouriness in his carnal delights, when once *God^a writes bitter things against him.* What is mirth and musick to him that can now hear nothing but the screeches of his own conscience? What is a full cup to him, that can now taste nothing but the cup of fury and trembling? Little content will the Noble take in his honourable Titles, if all this while his Conscience call him Reprobate. A Title of

a Job. 13.
26.

Honour will no more abate the torments of Conscience, than it doth mitigate *Belzebubs* torments to be stiled Prince of the Devils. All the worlds hony, will not serve to allay the invenomed stingings of Conscience. That's a fiery Serpent, a deaf Adder, that will not be charm'd by all the alluring pleasures of the world. These are vain and impertinent to one whose thoughts are wholly possess'd with the fear of Wrath and Hell, from which these cannot deliver him. When God makes a wound in the spirit, the whole world cannot make a Plaister broad enough to cover it.

2. Secondly, The world is a vain and useless thing at the hour of death. Possibly, many

ny

ny of us may never conflict with the terrors of Conscience, nor have that conviction of the worlds Vanity: But yet we must all conflict with death, that *King of terrors*. Suppose therefore (what must certainly once be) that we were now gasping our last, our tongues faltering, our eyestrings breaking, our limbs quivering, a dead cold and stiffness invading us; were our souls tost to and fro upon our expiring breath, and like wrecks at Sea, sometimes cast up, and by and by sucked back again, what could stand us in stead, and make our passage happy at such a time as this? Now the soul requires the strongest, the richest Cordials. Prepare it one mingled of the best Ingredients the

E 4 whole

whole world can afford. Cast into the Cup Riches, Honour, Pleasure, the Quintessence of all that is here desirable, yet alas ! What is all this world to a dying man who is just leaving it ?

Thy wicked companions, with whom thou hast laught and sin'd away thy freshest years, will in this thy last extremity forsake thee ; or if they do attend so sad a spectacle, alas, What miserable comforters will they be ? They will then prove another bad conscience to thee, and bring to thy remembrance with horror the sins which thou hast committed, by their enticement, or they by thine. Thy mirth and jollity, will then be turned into groans and howlings :

lings; All things will stare ruthfully upon thee, and when thou callest upon them for help, confess their impotency to rescue thee from the gripe of death, and from the doom of Justice.

Sickness is usually a busie time with conscience, and when it is packing up for a remove into the other world, it will be sure to gather together all the sins of a mans life, and bind them as an heavy and insupportable burden upon his soul. Can thy sensual pleasures divert thee now? As they have served thee to pass away the tediousness of time, can they serve to pass away the infinite tediousness of Eternity? Nay, how can it otherwise be, but that a mind long soak't and softned

*Non domus
& fundus,
non æris a-
ceruus &
auri, Egro-
to domini
deduxit cor-
pore febris.
Non animo
curas, Ho-
rat. Ep. 2.*

softned by these, should be made the more capable of receiving deep impressions of grief, anguish, and despair?

Indeed, while we eagerly pursue any of these worldly enjoyments, we are but running after a shadow: And as shadows vanish, and are swallowed up in the greater shade of night, so when the night of Death shall cast its thick shade about us, and wrap us up in deep and substantial darkness, all these vain shadows will then disappear, and vanish quite out of sight.

Now could we have the same opinion of the world in the time of our health and prosperity, as we shall certainly have when we lie languishing and drawing on to Eternity, we should

should be able then with a generous scorn to live above it, and despise it. Shall we prize those comforts, which will be none to us, when we have the greatest need of comfort? Shall we glue our affections to that which either is so faithless that it will not, or so weak that it cannot help us? So vain a thing is it, that it cannot resist the disgrace that sleep, or onely winking doth it. Shut but your eyes, and what becomes of all the pomp and lustre, the beauty and splendour that we so much admire in the world? It all vanisheth into darkness and nothing. Sleep snatcheth us from it; and for the time, we have no more enjoyment of it, than if we were dead. Every night
we

we die in our beds, and yet every day are so immerst in the pleasures, and businesses of the world, as if we were never to die indeed. Since therefore we have higher and nobler objects to fix our affections on, let us not lavish them out upon these worldly Vanities, which can at no time prove real comforts unto us, and then least of all, when we have most need of comfort. That's a seventh Demonstration.

VIII.

Again, All things in the World are yain, because they are unsuitable. True indeed, they are suited to the necessities of the Body, and serve to feed and cloath that; but He is a Beast or worse, that reckons himself provided for, when onely his bodily wants are

are supplied. Have we not all of us precious and immortal souls, capable and desirous of happiness? Do not these crave to be satisfied? Do they not deserve to be heard? Shall our vile bodies which are but dust and worms-meat, engross all our care how to please and pamper them, and shall the necessities of our never dying souls be neglected? What have you laid up in store for these? Alas! That which most men busie themselves about, is to heap up temporal riches, *To joyn house to house, and land to land, that they might dwell alone upon the Earth.* But know, thou dost but give thy soul husks and swines-meat, when thou settest the whole world before it.

And

Isa. 5. 8.

* Luke 12.
19.

And therefore *our Saviour* justly brands the *rich man* in the Gospel for a *fool*, that when he had stufte up his barns with Corn, said to his soul, * *Soul thou hast much Goods laid up for many years.* A fool indeed to measure the souls goods by the Barn, or by the Bushel. The very same is the folly of most men, who think they are in all respects well provided for, if they can but scrape together a great estate, whereas the soul can no more live upon these things, than the body can upon a thought or notion.

There is a threefold unsuitableness, between worldly things and the soul.

1. First, The soul is spiritual, these are drossie and material

Of

Of all things belonging to a man his breath is the most subtle, invisible, and spiritual. But now the soul is called the * *Breath of God*, and therefore must needs be spiritual in a high degree. And what then hath a spiritual soul to do with clods of Earth, or acres of Land, with Barns full of Corn, or Bags full of Gold? These are too thick and gross to correspond with its refined nature. But rather, bring spiritual things to Spiritual. God who is the * *Father of Spirits*, his love and favour, an interest in him, and communion with him, the consolations of the Holy Ghost, the actings of Grace, and the hopes of Glory; these spiritual and clarified Essences, which a carnal eye cannot see, nor

* Gen. 2.7.

* Heb. 12.
9.

nor a carnal judgment value, these are most suitable to the soul; that is a Spirit, and ought not to be unequally yoked to the dregs and dross of earthly enjoyments.

2.

Secondly, The soul is immortal, but all worldly things are perishing, and wear out in the using. And therefore it was but small comfort, when the rich man sung his *Requiem*, to say, *Soul, take thy ease, thou hast Goods laid up for many years.* Thou fool! What is an estate for many years, to a soul whose duration is not measured by years; but by Eternity? What when those years of plenty are expired? How destitute will thy soul be when it shall have out-lived all its good things? It may out-live them, even in this

this world. God may nip and blast all that thou fettest thy heart on, and make all thy comforts fall off from thee, like so many withered leaves. However, if thou hast no other than what this miserable world can afford, thou shalt certainly out-live them in the world to come: And what wilt thou do, not in those years, but in that Eternity of Famine?

As it is with those that are invited to feast in some noble Family, the Furniture is rich, the Entertainment splendid and magnificent; but when they depart, they cannot of all that pomp and bravery carry any thing away with them: So is it here; the world is Gods great House, richly furnished,
F and

and we well entertain'd in it ; we have all things liberally afforded us for our use ; but nothing of all is ours. And therefore God hath set that grim Porter, Death, at his Gate to see that as we brought nothing into it, so we carry nothing out of it. What a sad parting hour will it be to the soul, when it must go into another world, and leave all that it admired, and loved, behind in this ? How will it protract, and linger ? How loath will it be to enter upon so great a journey, and carry nothing to defray the charges of it ? Certainly, dying must needs be a terrible thing to those who have gotten nothing but what they can no longer keep, when their souls must be set on shore
in

in a vast and black Eternity all naked and destitute, having nothing to relieve or support them.

Thirdly, The necessities of the soul, are altogether of another kind, than those which worldly things are able to supply; and therefore they are wholly unsuitable. Natural things may well serve for natural wants. Food will satisfy hunger; and Rayment fence off the injuries of the weather, and Riches will procure both. But the souls necessities are spiritual, and these no Natural thing can reach. It wants a price to redeem it, nothing can do this but the precious Blood of Christ. It wants pardon and forgiveness, nothing can grant it, but the free and abund-

dant mercy of God. It wants Sanctification and Holiness, Comfort, and Assurance, nothing can effect these but the Holy Ghost. Here all worldly things fall short. The Exigencies of the outward man they may supply; but the greatest abundance of them can never quiet a troubled Conscience, nor appease an angry God, nor remove the condemning guilt of the least sin :
 No, *The redemption of the soul is pretious* (more pretious than to be purchased by these poor things) *and it ceaseth for ever.*

Pfal. 49. 8.

Possibly now in the time of your peace and prosperity. you regard not these spiritual wants ; but when the dayes of sorrow and darkness shall come
 upon

upon you, when God shall drop into your Consciences a little of his wrath and displeasure, you may as well seek to cure a wound in your body by applying a plaister to your garment, as seek to ease a wounded Spirit by all the Treasures, Pleasures, and Enjoyments of this world. *Riches (saith the wise man) profit not in the day of wrath:* For indeed they cannot reach the soul to bring any true solace to it.

Prov. II. 4.

Thus you see how unsuitable the World is to the Soul. Unsuitable to the Nature of it, for the Soul is spiritual, but all earthly enjoyments, are drossie and material; the soul is immortal, but these are all perishing; Unsuitable also to the necessities of the soul, which

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they

they can never reach nor supply.

IX.

Again, The Vanity of the World appears in its Inconstancy and Fickleness. Gods Providence administers all things here below in perpetual vicissitudes. His Hand turns them about like so many *wheels* (to which they are compared *Ezek. 1.*) the same part is now uppermost, and anon lowermost; now lifted up in the Air, and by and by grated through the mire. This is the mutable condition of the world. And therefore we find it compared to the *Moon*, *Rev. 12. 1.* where the Church is described to be *Clothed with the Sun*, and to have the *Moon*, that is, the World, under her feet. And well may it bear the re-

resemblance, for it is still waxing and waning, sometimes full of brightness, at other times scarce a small streak of light to be discerned. There are none of us but have had experience in some kind or other, of the inconstancy of these sublunary enjoyments. When the Sun shines bright and warm, all the flowers of the Field open and display their leaves, to receive him into their bosomes; but when night comes, they fold together, and shut up all their glories: And though they were like so many little Suns shining here below, able, one would think, to force a day for themselves, yet when the Sun withdraws his Beams, they droop, and hang the head, and stand neglected,

dull and obscure things. So
nath it fared with us : While
God hath shone upon us with
warm and cherishing influen-
ces , we opened and spread,
and flourisht into a great pomp
and glory : But he onely hides
his Face, draws in his Beams,
and all our beautiful leaves
shut up, or fall to the ground,
and leave us a bare stalk, poor
and contemptible.

Or if there have been no
such considerable mutations in
what concerns us, yet the re-
volutions that God hath of late
years brought upon others, so
beyond expectation or example,
may well instruct us in the Va-
nity of the World, and make
us no less condemn it, than ad-
mire that infinite wisdom that
governs it.

It

It is said of the *Wheels*, Ezek. 1. 17. *That they went upon their four sides.* For one Wheel intersecting and crossing another, the whole must needs consist of four sides or Semi-circles; And moving upon these four sides, it must of necessity move very ruggedly, by jolts and jerks. So truly the Providences of God do sometimes move unevenly, as cross wheels would do moving upon their sides. Great and suddain changes are often brought to pass without being ripened by sensible degrees; but happen by the surprisal of some unexpected Providence, and as it were, by the suddain jerk of the wheel, shaking off those who sate on the top, and crushing them in its passage over.

'Tis

'Tis true these mutations which to us seem so confused and tumultuary, are all orderly and harmonious in the Divine Council & foreknowledg. There is not a Providence that breaks its rank, not a wheel that moves out of its tract, and there is a destined end for them all, the glory of the Almighty Creator; to which, while every Creature pursues its own inclinations, he sweetly, and yet efficaciously sways them. They are all like Arrows shot at a mark by an unerring hand: Some are shot point-blank, and some by compass, but none so carelessly as to miss it. Though changes may surprise us, yet they do not surprise God: But as it is a great pleasure to us, to see our designs and forecasts

ac.

accomplished; so infinite Wisdom delights it self to look on, and see how all things start up into their place and order, as soon as called forth by his efficacious decree and foreknowledge. Among all the weighty and arduous cares of governing the world, it is (if I may so express it) the recreation of Providence, to amuse mankind, with some wonderful events; that when we cannot find out the connexion and dependance of second causes, we may humbly acquiesce in adoring the absolute Sovereignty of the First: And by observing the mutations of Affairs here below, may be taught to repose our selves in him who onely is immutable. Thus God administers the various occurrences

rences of the world according to the counsel of his own will; and makes the inconstancy of it, serve both for his delight and our admonition.

It is in vain therefore to expect happiness from what is so uncertain. All the comforts of it are but like fading flowers, that while we are looking on them, and smelling to them, die, and wither in our hands. Is it pleasures we seek? These must vary: For where there is not an intermission, it is not pleasure, but a glut and surfeit. And hence it is that they who are used to hardships, taste more sweetness in some ordinary pleasures, than those who are accustomed to a voluptuous life, do in all their exqui-

exquisite and invented delights. Do you pursue Honour and Applause in the world? This hangs upon the wavering tongues of the Multitude: To follow this is but to pursue a puff of wind, and of all winds in nature the most fickle and changeable. The Peoples *Hosanna*, and Crucifie are oft pronounced in the same breath. And besides that it is^a no great matter that those should think or speak well of thee, who have but too much reason to think ill of themselves; besides this, consider how soon publick Fame grows out of breath. Possibly an Age or two may talk of thee, but this bruit is but like successive *Echo's*, that render the voice still weaker and

• Πανέ-
δαι θέλει
ὑπὸ ἀν-
θρώπων τρεῖς
τῆς ὥρας
αὐτῆ κα-
ταρμύν.
Ant. 1. S.
Sect. 44.

β' Ως αἰθί-
 ρες ἄλλαι
 ἐπ' ἄλλαις
 ἐπιφορέ-
 μαί
 πρύπτεσι
 τὰ πρότε-
 ρα· οὕτως
 ἐν τῷ βίῳ
 τὰ πρό-
 τερα ὑπὸ
 τῶν ἐπε-
 νεχθέντων
 τάχιστα
 ἐκαλύφ-
 θη *Eccl.* 7.
S. 23.

Prov.
 23.5.

and weaker, till at length it
 vanisheth into silence. Yea,
 couldst thou fill whole Chro-
 nicles with thy story, yet time
 or moths will eat thee out :
 And the ^b fresher remembrance
 of other mens actions will bu-
 rry thine in Oblivion. Is it
 riches you desire ? These too
 are uncertain, *1 Tim.* 6. 17.
Charge them that they trust not
in uncertain riches. Uncertain
 they are in getting, and uncer-
 tain in keeping when got. All
 our treasures are like quick-
 silver, which strangely slips
 between our fingers when we
 think we hold it fastest. *Riches,*
 (^csaith the Wise man) *make*
themselves Wings, and flie a-
way as an Eagle towards Hea-
ven ; and it were a most strange
folly

folly ^d to fall passionately in love with a Bird upon his wing, who is free and unconfined as the Air in which he flies, and will not stoop to thy call or lure. Believe it Miser, all thy angels are winged, and if thou dost not, yet some or other of thy heirs will set them flying. How much better were it, since they will fly, for thy self to direct their flight towards Heaven, by relieving the necessitous servants and members of Jesus Christ. Then will their flight be happy and glorious, when they carry on their wings the prayers and blessings of the poor whose bowels thou hast refreshed. This is to lay up Treasure in Heaven, to remit thy Monys to the other World, where they

^d Ὁπὲρ εἰ
τίς τι τῶν
παρὰ πτε-
ρομένων
σευθίων φι-
λεῖν ἀρχοί-
το, τὸ δ'
ἤδη ἐξ ὀφ-
θαλμῶν ἀ-
πελήλυθιν.
Id. lib. 6.
S: c. 11.
The same
with
that of So-
lomon, will
thou set
thine eyes
upon that
which is not,
&c.

they shall be truly paid thee, with abundant Interest. This is to lay up a stock for hereafter, that thou maist have whereon to live splendidly and gloriously to all Eternity. And thus to lay out, is to lay up, to lay up uncertain riches in a safe repository: Gods promises shall be thy security, and every Star in Heaven, a Seal set up on the Treasury door which none can break or violate.

Thus you see how mutable and inconstant all worldly things are. So that we may truly apply that which the Psalmist speaks of the Earth in another sense, That * God hath founded it upon the Sea; and established it upon the Flouds. Such is the waving, and fluctuation of all things here below, that they are

* Psa. 24.
2.

are no more constant, than if they were merely built upon the ebbing and flowing of the Tide.

Lastly, The Vanity of the World appears in this that it is altogether unsatisfactory. That must needs be vain, which when we enjoy it in its greatest abundance, can give us no real nor solid content. Such an empty thing is the whole World. You may as soon grasp a bundle of dreams, or take up an arm full of your own shadow, as fill the vast and boundless desires of your souls with these earthly enjoyments. And therefore the Psalmist speaking of prosperous sinners, sets forth their state by the most thin and empty things imaginable, *Psal.* 73. 30. *As a dream when one*

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awakes

awakes, so O Lord, thou shalt despise their image. The Images and Representations that a dream makes, seem very brisk and lively; but when we reflect upon them with our waking thoughts, we find them confused and impertinent. Such is all the prosperity of this world, it is but as the image and fiction of a dream.

Isa. 29. 8.

* As an hungry man that dreams, he is at a furnish'd Table, and fills himself with all varieties of Delicates, how joyful, and how pleas'd is he, how fully satisfied, if he were not to wake again! But some one jogs or calls him; he wakes, and finds himself hunger-starv'd, nothing fed but his phancy. So is it with us in this world. While the Soul
lies

lies under the coverlet of this body, it sleeps: And one thinks himself rich; another, great and noble; a third learned and wise: But alas! All this is onely a dream: When either Afflictions, or Death, make a noise, and call upon him, the sleepy soul awakes, and finds it self empty and hunger-starv'd, after all the imaginary store it enjoyed.

Now, the Unsatisfactoriness of the World, may be clearly evinced by these two things.

First, In that the highest condition we can attain unto, cannot free us from cares and crosses. Yea indeed it is so far from freeing us, that it rather encreaseth them. It doth but make us spread the wider, and

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stand the fairer mark for trouble. And yet we are like Children, that think the Skie lies on yonder Hill; thither they run, hoping to touch it there: When they come, they find it dislodg'd to another Hill; after it they run, and pursue it from hill to hill, and after all their pains and sweat, find themselves as far below it as at first: So it fares with us. We think happiness, and true content lies in some condition above us. Thither we hasten, hoping we shall reach it there. When we arrive thither, we find, the happiness we sought for is dislodg'd, and seems to us to rest in a condition above that: But when we attain this too, still we are as far below happiness and satisfaction, as we

we were in our lowest estate.

When we change our outward condition, be it to never so great advantage, we do not lose, but onely change our cares. If we are freed from the cares and crosses of a poor and private life; we fall into those of a pompous and envied greatness, which are both more numerous, and more oppressive. • The man that lies most compacted, and in least compass in the world, is like to scape best: Whereas the great ones, that take up much room, do onely shew in how many places, and concernments, they are lyable to be wounded. It is not therefore any thing in this world that can give you satisfaction. All the enjoyments of it are to the soul, as wind

a Angustan-
da sunt pa-
trimonia, ut
minus ad in-
jurias fortu-
ne sumus ex-
positi. Habi-
lora sunt
corpora in
bello, que
in arma sua
contrahi pos-
sunt, quam
que supe-
funduntur,
& undique
magnitudo
sua vulneri-
bus obicit.
Sen. de
trinq. c. 8.
Cogenda in
arctum res
sunt, ut re-
lum in va-
num cadant.
Id. c. 9.

G 2

to

ἂν ὡς οἱ
 δειλοὶ καὶ
 ναυσίῳ λες
 ἐν πῶ
 πλεῖν, ἔτα
 ῥχον οἰο-
 μῶσι δι-
 ἄξιν ἑαῖν
 εἰς γαυλὸν
 ἐξ ἀκάρου,
 καὶ πάλιν
 ἑαῖν ἐκ
 τεύχε
 μεταβῶσιν,
 ἔδ' ἐν πε-
 ραίνουσι,
 τὴν χολικὴν
 καὶ τὴν δει-
 λίαν συμ-
 μελαφροῦν

τες ἐαυτοῖς. οὐτως αἱ τῶν θῶν ἀνιμολαλῆδες ἐκ
 εξαίρουσι τῆς ψυχῆς τὰ λυπῶδη καὶ ταραχῶδη
 ταῦτα ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀπείρα ἰσὶ περιστάσεων, ἀλογισία, τὸ
 μὲν δυνάμει, μὴ δ' ὁπίσθας χρεῖας τοῖς παρῶσι ὁρθῶς
 ἔχει. de tranquill. Animi.

to the stomach, they may gripe
 it; but they can never satisfy it.
 Indeed so vain are they, that
 they scarce have any other
 proof of their reality, but the
 pain and torment they bring
 with them.

Secondly, The world appears
 to be unsatisfactory, in that be
 our condition what it will, yet
 still we desire change. We can
 no more rest in an high estate,
 than in a low; but still we de-
 sire something further, and
 something better. As sick
 men toss to and fro, from side
 to side, thinking to find ease, by

change-

changing their posture ; where-
as it is not their outward po-
sture, but their inward distem-
per, that is the cause of their
restlessness : So do we endea-
vour to change and shift condi-
tions in the world, and ly some-
times in one posture, and some-
times in another, but yet are
restless in all ; for where-
soere we tumble, we carry
our disease with us, false
opinions and foolish hopes, and
impotent desires, and fond de-
signes, which make us complain
of our present state, and wish
the amendment of that, when
nothing wants cure but our
selves.

‘ The Servant thinks he shall

θεὸς· μονονυχὶ βροτῶν καὶ ἀσεργίην ἐθέλοντες· εἴτα
ἕτως αἰεὶ τῶν ἐπὶ ἐαυτοὺς ὄνδεις ὄντες, ἐδέποτε
τοῖς καθ' ἑαυτὸς χάριν ἔχουσιν. &c. Plut. Ib.

οὐδὲ δα-
μῶνι ἐν-
δαμονίξεν-
σοι γὰρ λε-
λυμμένος
ἐκέννοι ὃ
τὰς ἐλευ-
θέρους· οἱ δὲ
ἐλεύθεροι,
τὰς πολί-
τας, δούλοι ὃ
πάντα αὐ-
τοὺς πλε-
σίς· οἱ δὲ
πλείστοι,
τὰς Σαρδέ-
πας· οἱ δὲ
σατράπαι
τὰς βασι-
λεῖς· οἱ ὃ
βασι-
λεῖς τὰς

be a happy man when he is made free. Is the freeman happy? No, but he shall be, when he hath gotten such an estate. Is the rich man happy? No; but he shall be when he is invested with such an honour and dignity. Well, Is the honourable man happy? No; unless he be supream. And those who are supreme, cannot think themselves compleatly happy, unless they be Universal Monarchs. And those who were so, we find they could not rest there, but would needs be adored for Gods. Oh whither do the boundless desires of men hurry them! Nothing in this world can put a stop to them.

*Plat. in vi.
à Pyrrhi.*

It was a pertinent discourse of *Cineas*, diswading *Pyrrhus* from

from undertaking a war against the *Romans* : Sir, (saith he) when you have conquer'd them what will you do next ? Then *Sicily* is near at hand, and easie to master. And what when you have subdued *Sicily* ? Then we'll pass over to *Africk*, and take *Carthage*, which cannot long withstand us. When these are conquer'd, what will be your next attempt ? Then (saith *Pyrrhus*) we'll fall in upon *Greece*, and *Macedon*, and recover what we have lost there. Well, when all are subdued, what fruit do you expect from all your Victories ? Then (saith he) we'll sit down and enjoy our selves. Sir (replies *Cineas*) May we not do it now ? Have you not already a Kingdom of your own?

And

And he that cannot enjoy himself with a Kingdom, cannot with the whole World. Such are the designs of men, and so we may answer them. Most are projecting how they may get such an estate; then how they may raise themselves to honour, and think that their advancement in both, will bring them satisfaction. Alas ! This will not do. Their desires will still run before them : And they may as well sit down content where they are, as where they hope to be.

And the reason of this unsatisfactoriness in worldly things, is because none of them are so good as the soul is. The Soul, next to Angels, is the very top and cream of the whole Creation, other things are but Dregs and

and Lees compared to it. Now that which is our happiness must be better than our selves; for it must perfect us. But these things being far worse, and inferiour, the soul in cleaving to them, is secretly conscious that it abaseth, and disparageth it self; and therefore cannot find true satisfaction. Nothing can fill the soul, but that which eminently contains in it all good. But now, as light is onely divided, and parcel'd out among the Stars, but is all united in the Sun: So goodness is onely parcel'd out among the Creatures; this Creature hath one share, and that, another; nor any of them contains the whole sum of goodness. This is proper to God onely, who is the Author, and original of them

them all, in whom all excellencies and perfections are concentrated. And therefore in him alone can be found that rest and satisfaction which the soul in vain seeks for, in any thing besides himself.

These are the Demonstrations of the Worlds Vanity; which, though they be many, and various, yet I doubt not but every mans particular experience, may furnish him with divers others. But whatever our Observations are, the Uses we may make of them are these.

1. *First*, It should teach us to admire and adore the good Providence of God to his Children, in so ordering it that the World should be thus vain,

vain, and deal so ill with those who serve it. For if it were not so infamous and deceitful as it is, if it did not frustrate and disappoint our hopes, and pay us with Vexation, when it promiseth Fruition, and Content : What think'st thou O Christian, would be the end of this ? Would any one think of God or remember Heaven, and the life to come ? *St. Augustine* somewhere, speaks excellently, *Turbat me Mundus, & Ego eum diligo, quid si non turbaret ?* The World troubles and molests me, and yet I love it ; What if it did not trouble me ? Certainly, we should fall into an utter forgetfulness of God, if we could find any true satisfaction here. We should never think of returning to the Fountain of living

living Waters, if we could find enough in Cisterns to quench the thirst of our souls. And therefore God deals with us, as some great person would do with a disobedient son, that forsakes his House, and riots among his Tenants: His Father gives order they should treat him ill, affront, and chase him from them, and all that he might reduce him. The same doth God. Man is his wild and debauched son. He flies from the commands of his Father, and cannot endure to live under his strict and severe Government. Whither goes he? But to the pleasures of the World, and revels, and riots among the Creatures. But God resolves to recover him, and therefore commands every Crea-

Creature to handle him roughly. Burn him Fire, tofs him Tempests, and Shipwrack his Estate; forsake him Friends, designs fail him; Children be rebellious to him, as he is to me; let his supports and dependances sink under him, his riches melt away, leave him poor, and dispis'd, and destitute. These are all Gods servants, and must obey his will. And to what end is all this, but that seeing himself forsaken of all, he may at length like the beggar'd Prodigal return again to his Father.

Secondly, If the Vanity of the world be such, and so great, if it be onely an empty bubble, a swelling nothing, less solid than the dream of a shadow; if it be thus unsuitable, uncertain,

2.

tain, and unsatisfactory, as I have demonstrated to you, what grosse folly then are most men guilty of in setting so high a price upon that which is of no worth nor substance ? Though formerly we have been so much deceived as to take the worlds paint and varnish for true beauty, and its glittering for substantial treasure, yet now since the cheat is discovered, since you have seen this false pack opened, and nothing but counterfeit wares obtruded upon you, your folly will be inexcusable if after experiments & admonitions, you should contribute any longer to your own cheat, & set a price upon things which you know to be vile and worthless. The wise man (as you have heard) sums up their whole value.

value, onely in a great Cypher, and a great blot, *Vanity*, and *Vexation*. At what price would you rate *Vanity*, which is nothing ? Or *Vexation* which is worse than nothing ?

And therefore our Saviour, *Mark 4.9.* compares the things of this world to *Thorns* ; *Some fell among thorns* : which thorns he interprets to be the *Cares of this world*, and the *deceitfulness of riches*, *vers. 19.* Now, he were a mad man that to assuage his hunger, would attempt to swallow a bush of *Thorns*. No less is the madness, and extream folly of most men, who to satisfy the eager appetite of an hungry and indigent soul, gape after the *Thorns* of this world, and chew *Thistles* ; which instead of yielding them either

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Grapes

Grapes or Figs, will onely serve to pierce them through with innumerable sorrows.

A mans wisdom or folly is commonly judged by the bargains he makes. If he lay out that which is very pretious, to purchase what is of no worth, this we justly account a foolish bargain. If on the other hand, he purchaseth that which is of great price, with something little worth, we account it a wise and thriving bargain. Now here we may see the gross folly of most men. Though they are wise enough in bartering one part of the world for another; yet they shew themselves very fools in purchasing any part of the world, with that which is no part of it. The Scripture hath told us, That all that is
in

in the world is honour, pleasure or profit. While we onely traffick with these for one another; we do not amiss. The world is a proper price for it self. And doubtless we may lawfully part with some worldly advantages to procure others. But then there are other things which do not belong to the world under this acception. Our Affections, our Consciences, our pretious and immortal Souls. And these God hath given us to trade with for Heaven, and eternal glory. Now herein lyes the folly of most men, that they purchase the vile things of this World, with such an inestimable price, and extravagantly outbid themselves to procure trifles with that which might

procure them eternal happiness.
More particularly,

1.

First, Is it not extream folly to lavish our pretious affections, upon vile and vain objects. Affections are the wings of the the soul, without which, the soul it self, were but a dull and unactive carkasse. These God hath given it, that it might be able to take its flight to heaven, and lodge it self in his bosome. Now, how unworthy a thing is it onely to flutter to and fro upon the surface of the earth, to clog and clatter these wings with mire and dirt, which were at first made to take so high, and so noble a flight.

a Colof. 3.

2.

The *Apostle* hath commanded us to set our affections on things above, and not on things

on.

on the earth. And indeed there is great reason for it. For the two choice affections of the soul are *Love*, and *Joy*. Now that is most worthy our *Love*, that can return a *Joy* most worthy of us. But the *Joy* that the world gives, is usually tumultuous, alway checkt with some secret annoy, and it ends with a dulness and damp upon the spirits. It is but like the empty ^b crackling of thornes under a pot, that for the present may make a great noise and blaze, but suddenly vanisheth all away into smoke. Whereas an heavenly Christian feels sometimes a ponderous and weighty *Joy*, a *Joy* springing up in his soul, almost intollerable, and altogether unutter-

b Eccles. 7

6

Flamma stipulâ exorta, claro crepitu, largo fulgore, cito incenso; sed enim materiâ livi, caduco incendio, nullis reliquis. Apul. Apol.

11 2

able

able, a Joy that melts him into extatic and rapture. How infinitely doth he then disdain that any Soul should be so wretchedly sottish, as to prefer the the world before, or equallize it with God. He thinks the happiness he then enjoys so great, that although he believes it is, yet he cannot conceive how it should be more, or greater in Heaven it self. Then the soul claps its wings ; it would fain take its flight, and be gone : it breaths, it pants, it reaches after God, and falls into an agony of Joy and desire inconceivably mixt together. Can the world give us any such over powering Joy as this ? It may afford us Corn, and wine, the weak recruits of a frail life : but when it hath emptied all its
store

store and abundance into our bosomes, it is not worthy to be mentioned with the love, and favour of God, which is *a better than life it self*. And therefore the *Psalmist* makes it his prayer, *Psal. 4. 6. Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us : Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn or wine increased.*

a *Psal. 63.*
3

The Joy of the world resembles a torrent : As upon a glut of Rain, you shall have a torrent come rolling along with noise and violence, overflowing its banks, and bearing all before it ; yet it is but muddy and impure water, and 'tis soon gone and dried up. Such is all the Joy this world can give; it makes a great noise, 'tis

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com-

commonly immoderate, and swells beyond its due bounds, yet 'tis but a muddy and impure Joy, it soon rolls away, and leaves nothing behind but a drowth in the soul. Now since the Worlds Joy is but such a poor empty thing as this, it is most gross folly for us to lay out our best love upon that which cannot repay us with the best Joy.

2. *Secondly*, If the World be thus vain, what folly is it to lay out our most serious cares, and contrivances upon it ! The cares of worldly men are most absurd and irrational. Ask them why they care, they will tell you it is that they may live without care : and yet the more they get, the more do their
their

their cares swarm and encrease about them. To what purpose do they thus disquiet themselves? They were as good make Nets to catch the Wind, as lay plots either to obtain, or secure a World, which is so slippery, and so full of disappointments, that neither they who have it, are sure of keeping it; nor they who have it not, of getting it. We may observe a kind of coyness in the World: those who court it most, and pursue it closest, o'times miss of their designs, because they overact them. And it is commonly seen, that those (who as we use to say) have many Irons in the Fire, get nothing thereby, but onely the burning of their own fingers.

'Tis

2 I Tim. 5.
8.

'Tis true, there is a prudential and providential care, that is so far from being chargeable with folly, that it is necessary, and a great part of our duty, not onely as we are men, but as we are Christians. And this prudential care is, when we do, what lawfully we may to procure the comforts of life; and then with all quietness and indifferency, submit the success to God. This is a care of Diligence. But that which is justly branded with folly is a care of Diffidence, which is alway accompanied with torment, fears, and distractions about the success and issue, and most unreasonably vexeth us, for what is not in our power to determine. Such a care as this usurps upon God. And certainly

tainly it is no less a fault to invade Gods part, than to neglect our own; and a like folly. The right temper a Christian should observe in procuring any worldly comfort, is to interest his judgement in the choice of means, but to keep his affections disinterested and unconcern'd in the event. But when we are anxious, how our designs will succeed, we make it a torment to us in getting, before we can make it a comfort to us in enjoying.

To what purpose then dost thou, O worldling, rack thy brains with contrivances, how to fill thy baggs with treasure, how to empty them out with advantage? When thou hast added heap to heap; of all thy store thou enjoyest

enjoyest no more, than what thou eatest, or drinkest, or wearest : and of this too thou enjoyest no more, than will just suffice to satisfie thy hunger, to quench thy thirst, and to fence off the injuries of the weather : all the rest turns either to diseases, or burdens. True reason will teach us to chuse our Estates, as we would do our ^b Garments, not those which are largest, but those which are fittest for us. Vast and overflowing Estates are but like huge enormous Rudders, that rather serve to sink the Ship, than steer it : their abundance is useless and their excess dan-

^b *Fortuna,*
velut tuni-
ca, magis
concinna
quàm longa
probanda,
quippe etiam
ea si non
gestetur, &
trahitur,
nihilominus
quàm laci-
nia præpen-
dens impedit
& præcipi-
at. Etenim
in omnibus ad vite munia utendis, q'icquid aptam mo-
derationem supergreditur oneri potius, quam usui exuberat.
Apul. Apol.

gerous.

gerous. To what end therefore is all our care and carking, all our perplexing and solicitous thoughts, those parching and consuming distractions, which can hasten on nothing but our own natural decayes; to what end are they, unless it be to contradict our Saviour, and shew that we have a power to make *our black hairs white*? When we lay subtil and intricate designs to obtain the things of this World, we are but like Spiders, that with a great deal of art and labour, weave a curious Cobweb, onely to catch Flies; and possibly spend more of their bowels in framing it than the prey they catch can again repair. Yea, and it may be too, before the prey

c. Mat. v.
36

prey be caught, both they and their Web are swept down together, and trod in the dust. So when we frame designs, to get any worldly advantage, it is but taking a great deal of pains to catch a Flie. And possibly before it be caught, the rude hand of death wraps us about in our Cobweb, and sweeps us down into the Grave, ^d and in that very moment, we, and all our well laid projects perish together.

d Plak. 146.

4.

3.

Thirdly, If the World be thus vain, what extreame and prodigious folly is it, to take as much pains to secure the poor and perishing concerns of it, as would suffice to secure Heaven and eternall glory, were they laid out that way !

way ! We labour for the Bread that peristeth, and we perish with it in our very mouths. About this are our hearts, our hands, our strength, our time employed : whereas the great things of Eternity, are so utterly neglected by us, as if they were none of our concerns to look after. Were we but as laborious in our Christian calling, as we commonly are in our Worldly callings, salvation would not lie upon our hands unwrought, God and Christ, and all Heaven were ours. Who would doubt, when they see men so busie about impertinencies, and the trivial affairs of this World, but that they were much more anxious about their souls ?

souls? Who would not conclude, that certainly their great work is already done, that shall see them so earnest and solicitous about petty matters? But alas! It may astonish Men and Angels, that rational Creatures, who have immortal souls, Souls whose endless duration, must abide either in inconceivable misery or bliss, should trifle away that time and strength, which might secure their everlasting happiness, about those vain nothings, that have neither happiness in them, nor continuance. Certainly, the service of God is not more painful, than the drudgery of the World: and sure I am, it is far more cleanly. Thou shalt not in his service set thine

thine hand to any foul Office :
 whereas the world employes
 thee basely to rake together
 thick clay, and load thy
 self with it; and the Devil
 yet worse, to rake in the mire
 and filth of all manner of de-
 filements; which now pollute
 the soul, and will hereafter
 damn it. Both these are most
 grievous task-masters. Some
draw iniquity with cords of va-
nity, and sin, as it were with
a cart-rope. Isa. 5. 18. They
 are so enslaved to the work
 of the Devil, that he puts
 them into his Team, makes
 them draw and strain for
 their iniquities, and doth them
 a courtesie when their sins
 come easily. He makes them
 toil and sweat in carrying
 Fagots to their own Fire,

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and

and blowing up those flames, which must for ever burn them. Others (as the Prophet expresseth it *Hab. 2. 13.*) labour in the fire and weary themselves for *rusty Vanity*. They take great pains in the World, and meet with great disappointments; for both are signified by *labouring in the fire*, where what they produce, cannot be enjoyed, but is consumed between their hands.

Since then you must take so much pains, either for sin, or Vanity, why will you not be perswaded rather to lay it out upon that, which is substantially good and eternally so? God requires not more, but onely other work from you: and the many things that

that *Martha* was careful about, Religion and Holiness reduceth to the *One thing necessary*; which though it contains many particular duties under it, yet by reason of its uniformity and subserviency to it self, is less distracting and cumbersome. The Wheels of a Watch move and click as fast, when it goes false, as when it goes true; and if it be but set right at first, the same activity of the Spring will so continue it, which before made its motion irregular. So is it here: The same activity and industry which you irregularly use in pursuit of the World, would procure Heaven and Glory for you, were it that way directed. Your cares, your contri-

I 2 vances,

vances, your endeavours, need be no more than now, they are; onely what before you laid out upon the World, reserve now for Heaven. And how infinitely reasonable is this! Certainly they are most stupidly foolish, that will take up Vanity at as dear a rate as Happiness, and give as much for vexation, as for endless Joy.

4.

Fourthly, If the things of this World be so vain, what inexcusable folly is it to part with the peace, or the purity of our Consciences for them! And yet what more common? If men can get any thing of the World at the price of a sin, they think, they have made a gainful bargain. And therefore the Devil hath recourse to this,

this, as his most prevailing temptation. When he set on our Saviour in the Wilderness, the last assault was, ^a *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*; and when this battery could not make a breach, he raiseth his siege, as despairing of success. And this is the usual temptation by which he assaults others. Judas comes with his ^b *Quid dabitis, what will you give me*; and sets Christ, and his own Conscience to sale, for the inconsiderable sum of *thirty pieces*. He demands no more than the common market price of a slave. (not amounting to above ^d eight and thirty shillings) for the Lord of Life and Glory: And thinks his I 2 bargain

Mat. 4 9.

b Mat. 26.
15.

c Exod. 21.
32.
Accounting the value of the common shekel to be 15 pence of our money.

bargain so good, that he gives
 himself to the Devil for van-
 tage. This is the very root
 of all that injustice, and rapine,
 and oppression, and violence
 that is to be found among
 men. They all strive and
 tug, who shall get most of
 this earth from one another;
 and lose Heaven, and their
 own Consciences in the
 scuffle. This is it that makes
 men so oft shift their Sails,
 that they may run before every
 wind that blows. If times
 grow rough and tempestuous,
 and they must throw over-
 board either their gain, or
 their godliness, this persuades
 them to make shipwreck of
 Faith and a good Conscience,
 onely that they may bear up
 in this World, though they
 sink

sink hereafter. Now, what deplorable folly is this! When thy conscience is disquieted with the tormenting review of past crimes; what will all thy ill-gotten wealth avail thee? Thou wilt then with extream horror cast thy eyes upon all thy treasures of wickedness; when conscience shall tell thee, thou hast not only treasur'd up them, but watch too against the day of wrath.

Fifthly, What desperate folly is it to purchase a vain World, with the loss of our precious Souls! So our Saviour *Matth. 16. 26.* What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul? O think what great losers they
 I 4 must

50

must needs be, who lose their
 Souls, to gain the World;
 and must at last lose the
 World too, together with
 their Souls: This is the on-
 ly thing that damns men,
 that they prefer the Pleasures,
 Honours, Profits, and pitiful
 nothings of this World, be-
 fore their precious and immor-
 tal Souls, which are more
 worth than ten thousand
 Worlds. What is this but a
 stupidity as grosse, as that of
 the old Heathens, to make a
 vile Worm our God, and sa-
 crifice an Ox to it; or a Mon-
 ster our God, and sacrifice a
 Man to it? Think how dread-
 ful and grating will be the re-
 flexions of worldlings in hell,
 to consider that there they
 must lye and burn to eterni-
 ty.

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for

for their inordinate love to that World, of which they have nothing left them, besides the bitter remembrance. What will it then avail them that they have lived here in ease and delights, when all their mirth shall be turned into groans and howling? What will all their treasures and riches avail them, when these shall be melted down about them, to encrease their torment? Believe it, 'tis sad to be left to the conviction of that day, when the Vanity of Earth, shall appear in the torments of Hell. Be perswaded therefore, as you have renounced it in all its pomps and and vanities, when you gave up your Names to Christianity, so to renounce it likewise in your lives; habitually, at all times.

times, by setting loose from it, and living above it; and actually, whensoever God calls for any of your temporal enjoyments, that is, when you cannot keep them without wounding your consciences, and hazarding your souls.

3. *Thirdly*, Another Life may be this, If the World be thus vain and empty, why then should we pride ourselves in, or prize ourselves by any poor enjoyments of it? How foolish is it to account thy self a better man than another, onely because thy dunghill is a little bigger than his! These things are not at all to be reckoned into the value and worth of a man: they are all without thee, and concern thee no more than fine cloaths do the health

health or strength of the body. 'Tis wealth indeed that makes all the noise and bustle in the World, and challengeth all the respect and honour to it self, and the ignorant Vulgar, whose eyes are dazzled with pomp and bravery, pay it with a stupid and astonisht reverence. Yet know, that it is but thy Silks and Velvet, thy Lands, or thy Retinue and Servants, they venerate not thee: and if thou think'st otherwise, thou art as justly ridiculous, as that Ass in the Apologue, that grew very gravely proud, and took state when the people fell prostrate before him, adoring not him but the Idol he carried.

Those things which belong to the perfection of a man,
are

are all within him ; Knowledge, and Wisdom, and Temperance, a serene Mind, and calm Affections, an inflexible Vertue, and a Soul constant and true to it self in all Occurrences. Give me such an one that can stand firm and unshaken upon his own basis , when the whole World totters ; that knows what is just and honest, and dares do it; that is master of his own passions, and scorns to be a slave to anothers ; such an one in his Rags and Poverty, is a far better man than those gay things, who owe all their parts, and wisdom, and vertue to their Rentals, and whose Tenants and Stewards bring them in the yearly Revenue of their Reputation. But then suppose this excellent person indowed with
Divine

Divine Grace, and the true fear and love of God, and this will exalt him above the highest and greatest of other men, as far as they themselves are above the vilest of Beasts. Solomon tells us, *Prov. 10. 20. That the heart of the wicked is little worth; it is of no price nor value; And shall his estate be, when his heart is not? Indeed nothing makes us rich as men, but Wisdom and vertue, nor as Christians, but Piety and Holiness.* And in these which are the onely true and substantial riches, the poorest Christian may vie stakes with all the world. Drop millions of Gold, boundles Revenues, ample Territories, Crowns and Scepters, and a poor contemptible Christian lays his one God

God against all these, and be-
gats them.

If the World and all the en-
joyments of it be thus vain,
this should fortifie us against
the fear of Death, which can
deprive us of nothing but what
is both vain and vexatious.

Life is nothing else but an
huddle of business; a great
swarm of employments; that
have more stings in them, than
Hony. If we be great, we are
but the larger Hives for cares.
If honourable, we are but rai-
sed above others to be the more
weather-beaten. An high de-
grees in this World; doth but
incher other mens cares under
our wings; and adopt other

α' Μόλιτα
σε εύκολον
προς τὸν
θάνατον
ποιήσει ἢ
ἐπιστᾶσις ἢ
ἐπὶ τὰ
ὑποκαίματα
ὧν μέλλεις
ἀρῆσθαι.

Anton. l. 9.
S 3. A malis
mors abdu-
cit, non à bo-
nis, verum
si querimus.
Hoc quidum
à Cyrenaico
Hegesia sic
copiose d's-
putatur, ut

is a rege Ptolameo prohibitus esse dicatur illa in scholis di-
cere, quod multi his auditis, mortem sibi ipsi consciscerent.
Cic. Tus. quest. 1. 1.

mens

mens troubles, as a wretched
 supplement to our own. If
 our estate be mean and low;
 as it exposeth us to contempt
 and injuries, so it engageth us
 to rescue our selves from the
 pressures of Poverty by our
 own sweat and industry. Those
 few things that are necessary
 to a comfortable subsistence in
 the world, will yet cost us care
 and labour, an aking heart, and
 a weary hand, and this turnes
 our Bread into Stones, and
 our Fish into Scorpions. If
 we have too much business in
 the world, our callings become
 a burden or temptation to us:
 And if we have none, we be-
 come a burden to our selves
 and to others. God hath writ-
 ten Vanity and Vexation upon
 every condition, and if his
 Pro-

Providence create not troubles for us, yet our own folly will. Thus hath man made himself a slave and drudge to the world, over which God had made him Lord.

Why then should Death be so terrible, which comes onely to ease us of our burden, to stroak the sweat from our brows, and to give us a profound rest from all our labours in the bed of the Grave? There (as Job saith) the weary be at rest, and all cares and troubles vanish, as soon as our heads touch that Pillow. There is no work nor device in the grave, whither we are going; but a deep repose, a secure retirement where none of the vexations of this life shall ever find us.

Job. 3. 17.

And

And as it frees us from all the cares, so from all the sorrows of this world. What is our life but a bubble? Our sighs are the Air, and our tears the water that make it. The first possession that we take of this world, is by crying: And there is nothing in it that we hold by a surer tenure than our griefs. Tears are the inheritance of our eyes, either our sins, calls for them or our sufferings, and nothing can drie them up but the dust of the Grave. Sometimes we lose a Friend, or near Relation; the Tribute we owe their memory must be paid down in tears. Sometimes their ungodly practices torment us, when by their lewdness and debaucheries they are lost both to their

K

own

own interests, and our hopes. Sometimes compassion of other mens sufferings, affects us with a tender sorrow; and as if we had not grief enough springing up out of our own bowels, we call in forraign succours to augment the score. And many times tedious and lingering sicknesses waste us, grinding pains rack and torture us; which were far the more intollerable, but that they hasten on that Death, that puts an end and period to all a Christians miseries. We are not concerned in the Grave, at the loss of some Friends, nor the evil courses of others: What calamities befall the World, or those whom we loved dearest in it. There it troubles us not, though preferment go by the merits

merit of flattery and baseness, while the generous and gallant soul, starves through the mere rigor of his Vertue. It concerns us nothing, what stinking breath blasts our good Name; or what unworthy foot treads upon our Grave. Here a little pain molests us; but their whole limbs rot, and fall off, and crumble into dust, without at all disturbing that quiet rest, that buries all the cares and sorrows of this life in silence and oblivion. Where then is the dreadfulnes of death, which onely frees us from the troubles and crosses of a wretched life? It is unreasonable to complain of that change, which delivers us from a world of which we are still complaining: And it is childish to

quarrel at that hand which undresses us, and strips off our uneasie garments, onely to lay us to sleep.

5.

Lastly, If the world be so vain and empty, we may learn to be well contented with our present state and condition, whatsoever it be. It hath been fully demonstrated, that there can be no compleat satisfaction in any estate: And why then should we desire change? The great ground of discontent, is not our wants, but our desires. There is scarce any condition in the world so low, but may satisfie our wants: And there is no condition so high, as can satisfie our desires. If we live according to the law of Nature and Reason, we shall never be poor; but if we live

αὐτοῖς
δὲ ὅτι πῆ-
ναι εἰς τὴν
ἀναγνώσκειν.
Clem. Alex
Ped. l. 2.

c. 1.
Quod sati-
are potest
diversa natura
ministrat
Quod docet
infantis
gloria sine
cunct. Petr.
h. Charron
de la sagesse
lc 1.3 c 25.

live according to fond opinion and phancy, we shall never be rich. That which we have, be it never so little, is full as satisfactory, as that which we hope for, be it never so great. For Vanity and Vexation of spirit is past upon all that is in the world, whether it be more or less.

And therefore, O Christian, thou mayst well bear a narrow stint in the things of this world. If God reduce thee to a morsel of bread, and a cup of water, it is enough: This will suffice to bear thy charges to Heaven; or if this too should fail, thy journey will onely be the shorter. Possibly God keeps thee short in Vanities, that he might bestow upon thee that which is solid and substantial.

Ps. 55. 22.

Ὁλον
κενὸν τι
ὄντι
περὶ ὃ δὲ
σπεύων
εἰσφέρει-
ται ; Ἐν
τοῦτο, διὰ
νοῖα δι-
καια, καὶ
πράξεις
κοινωνι-
καί, καὶ λό-
γος οἷος
μήποτε-
διαψέυ-
σασθαι, καὶ
διάθεσις
ἀσπαζο-
μένη πᾶν
το
συμβαί-

νον ὡς ἀναγκαῖον, ὡς χρώριμον, ὡς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς
τοιαύτης καὶ πηγῆς ῥεόν. ἔκων σεαυτὸν τῇ κλωθοῖ
συνεπιδίδου, παρέχων συνῆδαι οἷς τισὶ ποτε
πράγμασι βέλεται. Antonin. l. 4. S. 22.

stantial good. The Psalmist tells us, Psal. 68. 19. that God daily loads us with his benefits. Though some may have more than others, yet every one hath his load, as much as he can carry. Every Vessel cannot bear up with a like Sail, and therefore God to keep us from oversetting, puts on so much as will safely bring us to Heaven, our desired Port.

Let us therefore Cast these cares and burdens upon him who hath^a promised to sustain us; and turn the stream of our desires Heavenward, where alone we can find permanent and satisfactory good. ^b Walk hum-

bly

bly with God, keep your selves
always in an awful fear of his
dread Majesty, be constant in
the exercise of Grace, and
the performance of Duty :
These are the onely things ex-
empted from Vanity and
Vexation; in these alone can
the Soul find true rest and
contentment. And therefore
Solomon, after he had pierc'd
and searcht through all the
World; and pronounced
Riches, Strength, Beauty,
Wisdom, Learning, and all
to be Vanity and Vexation
of Spirit; he rests himself
in the Close, and tells us,
Chapter 12. 13. Let us hear
the Conclusion of the whole mat-
ter: Fear God, and keep his
Commandments, for this is
the

the whole of man: It is his whole duty, and his onely happiness in this life.

FINIS.
