

A
RESOLUTION
TO
The Countrey-man.

PROVING IT VITTERLY
VNLAWFVLL TO BVY OR VSE
our yearly PROGNOSTICATIONS.

Written long since by W. P.

ESAY 47. vers. 12, 13, 14.

Stand now among thine Inchanters, and in the multitude of Sooth-sayers, (with whom thou hast wearied thy selfe from thy youth) if so be thou maist have profit, or if so be thou maist have strength. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels: let now the Astrologers, the Star-gazers, and Prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble: the fire shall burne them, they shall not deliver their owne lives from the power of the flame: there shall be no coales to warme at, nor light to sit by.



LONDON,
Printed by IOHN HAVILAND, for IAMES BOLER.
1 6 3 1.

Not convenient to have Prognostications.

- Reasons: <
- 1 Concerning the buyer.
 - 1 Immoderate care joyned with distrust in God.
 - 2 Contempt of the providence of God, in not reverently regarding it.
 - 2 Concerning the maker.
 - 1 His inability in prognosticating, proved
 - 1 By the true end of the Heavens.
 - 2 By want of good experience.
 - 3 By ignorance of particular causes.
 - 2 His manifold untruths.
 - 3 His impieties, and prophane speeches, and actions, not seeming a Christian.
 - 4 His tricks of deceit.

A

RESOLVTION

TO THE COVNTREY-MAN,

proving it unlawfull for him to buy or use
our yearly PROGNOSTICATIONS.



Good Reader, I have thought it convenient (for some speciall causes) in this short Treatise, to discloſe a part of my minde unto thee, concerning the making of *Prognostications*, and if it might bee, to perswade thee, not to spend thy money in buying any of them. I have long studied this Art, and was never quiet untill I had ſene all the ſecrets of the ſame: but at the length, it pleaſed God to lay before mee the prophaneſſe of it, nay, I dare boldly ſay, Idolatrie, although it bee covered with faire and golden ſhewes. Wherefore, that which I will ſpeake with griefe, the ſame I would deſire thee to marke with ſome attention. My reaſon ſhall partly concerne thee, partly the *Prognosticator* himſelfe. Firſt on thy behalfe, I reaſon thus:

The firſt reaſon, immoderate care.

AS a man doth ſee the bleſſings of God upon him, ſo he muſt alſo labour with a carefull diligence to maintaine the ſtate of this life. But becauſe the affection of man is carried head-long unto a greedy covetouſneſſe: this deſire of over-much carping and caring, muſt bee bridled with two ſtrong bits: Firſt, all our care muſt extend it ſelfe no further than the preſent day: Secondly, in caring we muſt not truſt unto our ſelves, but fix all our confidence in the mercy and providence of God who bleſſeth all, and without whoſe goodneſſe nothing can come to paſſe, doe what we will. As touching the firſt, we have the direction of our Saviour Chriſt: who teacheth us to pray on this wiſe; *Give us this day our daily bread*; whereby we are given to underſtand, that we are onely to ſeek for the preſent time, reſting with this perſwaſion, that hee which hath bleſſed us this day will alſo to morrow, and the next day

ſhew his like goodneſſe unto us. Againe, in the ſame place, our Saviour Chriſt ſpeaketh on this wiſe, *Care not then for the morrow; for the morrow ſhall care for it ſelfe: the day hath enough with his owne griefe*. By this we learne, that God will provide for every day all things neceſſary, though we doe not increaſe the preſent griefe, with caring and caſting in our heads how we ſhall live in the time to come. Now tell me what is the cauſe that thou yearly doſt buy a *Prognostication*, and one of thoſe which tell the ſtrangeſt things? Is it becauſe thou haſt a delight to reade the ſtile of *Prognostications*? Or becauſe thou wouldeſt learne to *Prognosticate*? Or becauſe the pictures and Characters which they make delight thy minde? it were folly to bee perſwaded of this, ſeeing the very cauſe it ſelfe is manifeſt. Thy whole deſire is to fill thy coſſers, and to heape up wealth, thou art afraid leſt thou ſhould become poore, therefore thou greedily buyeſt the *Prognostications*, and continually ſearcheſt all the corners of them, to ſee the ſtate of the yeare to come, even thus in minde reaſoning with thy ſelfe: I can never bee quiet, nor take my ſleepe, untill ſuch time as I have knowne the ſtate of the yeare inſuing, that I may frame my buſineſſe accordingly: This next yeare there will be much raine, it will rot Corne upon the ground, it will be ſpoiled, I will keepe my Corne untill the next yeare following. I find that Corne will be deere about halfe a yeare hence, I will not ſell my Corne now, but keepe it, that I may have plenty of money for it, and ſufficient beſide to maintaine my houſe: the ſea and land is calme and quiet this yeare, the next yeare many ſhipwracks and troubles in many countries will fall, now I will fraught my ſhips that then I may be quiet. Theſe imaginations are lively arguments of thy diffidence and deſpaire in the goodneſſe and loving kindeſſe of God. If thou feare God, love God, put thy whole truſt in God, thou art content to reſerre thy whole preſervation unto the hands of God: now theſe

Math. 6. 34

Math. 6. 11.

proling and raigning conceits of the time to come, argue that either thou never thinkest on God, or at the least perswadeſt thy ſelfe, that either he will not, or cannot helpe thee. And if thou in thy covetous minde pray unto God, thou canſt not pray according to the institution of Chriſt, without hypocriſie, *Give us our daily bread this day.* Wherefore ſeeing the having of *Prognostications* commeth of ſo wicked cauſes, as is the greedy deſire of proſperity and wealth, and argueth ſome kinde of diffidence in God : when thou readeſt theſe my words, examine thine owne heart, if thou finde my ſayings true (as certainly thou ſhalt) never hereafter deſire to know the ſtate of the year before hand, except it bee for the ſeaſons of the year, which I am perſwaded thou maielt know in ſome part, without any ſkill, even by thine owne experience.

The ſecond reaſon, neglect of Gods providence.

2 Concerning the contempt of Gods providence, thus much I ſay : The *Prognosticator*, if he be asked whether he confeſſe the providence of God, he will with all his heart confeſſe it : but by his deeds hee doth deny it, for all the things whatſoever, which can happen in a whole year, hee attributeth them to the Starres, and ſo he publiſheth his Prediſtions, alwaies mentioning Starres, never, or very ſlen-derly, making any ſignification of the power, and juſtice, mercy, and everlaſting wiſdome of God. And ſurely, even for the very pating of thy nailes, for the cutting of thy haire, for the putting on of thy ſhoes, for taking a journey two or three miles from thine houſe, for obtaining at Gods hands thy requeſt, for making thy bargain with thy neighbour, for all thine actions be they never ſo ſmall, theſe wiſe men (if thou wilt aſke their advice) will give thee counſell from the ſtarres. Now when theſe their irreligious prediſtions ſhall be had in thy boſome, and read of thee daily, thou being a man unlearned and worldly given, never hearing any mention of the ſpeciall providence, and hand of God in every thing, but long diſcourſes of the virtues of Planets and Signes, doeſt never thinke upon the wonderfull and moſt infinite power of God, working after a ſpeciall manner in every matter, but art drawne ſtraight waies into an admiration of the *Aſtrologer*, and a great feare of the conſtellations of Heaven. An experience of this I found in thee about two yeares agoe. A learned man (yet in this caſe far deceived) wrote an *Aſtrophological diſcourſe of the conjunction betwene Iupiter and Saturne*, wherein he ſhewed of great alteration in every thing to fall. At this thou waſt ſore agaiſt, thy minde was incumbered with ſetting thy goods to ſet them in order againſt that day : thy ſong for halfe a yeare was nothing elſe, but the con-

A junction; the day being come, what ſtaring was there and gazing into Heaven, to ſee the meeting of thoſe two Planets. Now all this while where was Gods providence, where was that truſt and rejoycing in him : where was that praizing of his name for all things whatſoever ſhould come to paſſe; where was that meditation of his infinite, and unſearchable wiſdome : theſe things were never thought nor heard of, yea, by reaſon of thine earthly affections, they tooke no place in thine heart. This thy dealing is like unto the folly of that man, who having a coſtly clocke in his boſome, never extollet or thinketh on the wit and invention of the clock-maker, but is continually in admiration of the ſpring or watch of the clocke, by whoſe B meanes all the wheelles have their ſwifter or ſlower, their backward or forward motions, & by which the whole clocke keepeth his courſe. Wherefore mee thinketh that in a Chriſtian common-wealth, thoſe only books ſhould bee publiſhed for thine uſe, which might beat into thine head, and make thee every houre and moment to thinke on the providence of God : which being once ſettled in thy minde, the conſideration of the meanes which God uſeth will follow of it ſelfe. Contrariwiſe, to tell thee the meanes which God doth uſe, to thunder out the aſpects and conſtellations of Starres, and ſeldome to mention his providence, maketh thee to feare, and admire, and love the meanes, quite forgetting the worke of God in the C meanes. This fault was very riſe amongſt the Iſraelites, who came yearly unto Aſtrologers and wiſe men : Wherefore that which is ſpoken by *Ieremy* unto them, is alſo ſpoken unto thee : *Hear ye the word of the Lord, that he ſpeaketh unto you, O houſe of Iſrael. Thou ſaiſt the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and bee not afraid for the ſignes of Heavens, though the heathen bee afraid of ſuch.* In like ſort, God forbiddeth his people of England to give credit, or feare the conſtellations and conjunctions of Starres and Planets, which have no power of themſelves, but are governed by him, and their ſecret motions and influences are not knowne to man, and therefore there can bee no certaine judgement thereof. If thou wilt not heare and follow this which I ſay, ſee what will enſue. D Thou ſeeſt that the greateſt matters, which theſe *Diviners* and *Prognosticators* foretell, fall out ſtat otherwiſe than they ſay, to their perpetuall ſhame. Truly I am perſwaded, that it is the judgement of God upon them (although they cannot ſee it) who maketh them, when they thinke they are moſt wiſe, to bee moſt fooles. For ſo the Lord uſed the wiſe men and *Aſtrologers of Chaldees*, as he ſpeaketh by his Prophet *Eſay* : *I am the Lord that made all things, that ſpred out the heavens alone, and ſtreich out the earth by my ſelfe; I deſtroy the tokens of ſooth-ſayers, and make them that conſeſture fooles, and turne their wiſe men backward, and make their knowledge fooliſhneſſe.* Doeſt thou then,

Ier. 10. 1, 2.

Eſay 44. 24.

then, O careless and miserable man, thinke to escape the same, or greater punishment being a cause of this fault! for if none desired to know what is to come, none would busie themselves in that vanity. Wherefore reade the Word of God in the 18. of Deut. When thou shalt come (saith the Spirit of God, into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learne to doe after the abominations of those Nations. In the words following *Moses* numb'reth nine abominations:

- 1 To make his childre goe thro' the fire.
- 2 To use Witchcraft.
- 3 To regard times, this is the fault.
- 4 To make the flying of Fowles.
- As 5 To be a Sorcerer.
- 6 To be a Charmer.
- 7 To consule with spirits.
- 8 To be a Sooth-sayer.
- 9 To aske counsell at the dead.

All these horrible abominations being rehearsed, marke what followeth, *For all that doe such things are an abomination unto the Lord*, and because of their abominations, the Lord thy God doth cast them out before thee: now seeing most of these abominations, and especially the third, is used of us, why should we not feare the like judgements upon us, unlesse we will repent, and that with speed?

1 The reasons which concerne the *Prognosticator*, and may avails to the perswading of thee not to buy any more of their unprofitable bookes, are these which follow: first, their inability in *Prognosticating*: secondly, their manifest untruths: thirdly, their impieties: fourthly, their tricks of deceit. What: can they not foretell that which is to come? can they not make conjectures of that which is like to ensue? No surely. And I will use arguments to confirme it unto thee.

The first reason, of the use and end of the Heavens.

THe true use of the Heavens consisteth in many points: First, to declare the glory of God. *The Heavens* (saith David) *declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth the working of his hands.* It is an Alphabet written in great letters, in which is described the majesty of God, and that by these foure speciall points: First, he majestic of the worke it selfe: secondly, the infinite multitude of Stars: thirdly, by the wonderfull variety of Stars: fourthly by the greatness of the Stars.

Secondly, it maketh sinners and wicked men inexcusable before the judgement seat of God. For the invisible things of him (saith Paul) that is, his eternal power and God-head, are seene by the creation of the world, being considered in his workes, to the intent that they should be without excuse.

Thirdly, they serve to the appointing of times, as day, night, month, yeare, which are

A both measured and described by the course of the Sunne, and Moone, and other Starres. And so the feast of the Israelites, and the computation of the yeare in our Church dependeth thereupon, and without them there would be great confusion both in the common-wealth and Church.

Fourthly, they serve to be signes, that is, to foretell things to come. And they are either of extraordinary things, or things which be ordinary. When they are signes of extraordinary things, then there is, and appeareth in them some extraordinary worke of God: as appeareth in these examples which follow. As the suffering of Christ, not onely the *crucifixion of the Temple rent*, and the *dead rose forth of their graves*, but also the Sunne was wholly eclipsed, the Moone being in the full. At which sight, *Dionysius Areopagita*, a good *Astronomer* spake these words: Either the frame of the world is destroyed, or the God of nature suffereth. The Prophet *Ezekiel* being commanded of God to prophesie the destruction of *Egypt*, he first putteth down extraordinary signes: *And when I will put thee out, I will cover the Heavens, and make the Stars thereof darke: I will cover the Sun with a cloud, and the Moone shall not give her light. All the lights of Heaven will I make darke for thee, and bring darkness upon the land* (saith the Lord.) Before the second coming of our Saviour Christ, there shall be signes in the Sunne and Moone, and in the Stars. Lastly, the extraordinary going backe of the Sunne signified the lengthning of the life of King *Hezekias*.

B Secondly, the Starres are signes of generall things which happen ordinarily every yeare in nature among us.

- 1 The Spring.
- 2 Approching and declining of } 3 Summer.
- 4 Winter.

2 Ordinary weather in these quarters.

C As of 3 Ebbing and flowing of the sea.

- 4 Seasons of } 5 Plowing.
- 6 Sowing.
- 7 Setting.
- 8 Planting.
- 9 Cutting.
- 10 Felling.
- 11 Reaping.

D I say generall, because the particular estate and affaires of men, can in no wise be fore-signified by the Stars. I say ordinary, because the things which fall out seldome, and are besides the common course of nature, as plenty of all things, famine, plague, warre, evasions of Kingdomes, &c. doe not depend upon the Stars. For the confirming of this, I have three reasons: First, in the first of Genesis, God saith, *That he made the lights to be signes*, and yet the

Deut. 18. 9.

Deut. 18. 9.

Mark. 17.

Ezek. 32. 7.

I Phil. 19. 2.

Rom. 1. 20.

Gen. 1. 14.

Gen. 1. 14.

Esay 47. 13, 14.

James God in the 47. of *Esay* saith, *He will destroy* A
the signes of them which drinne: flatly forbid-
 ding us to use Starres, as meanes to judge of
 any thing to come, saving only of thoe of
 which they are expressly made signes of God in
 the creation: all which are put downe before.
 Secondly, this is manifest by the order of the
 creation: *the third day God created upon the*
earth herbs and trees, and the earth brought
forth fruits and was fertile: *the fourth day God*
commanded lights to be made in the firmament
of Heaven, to separate the day and the night, and
to be for signes and for seasons, and daies, and
moneths, and then it was so, and then God saw
it was good. Out of which I gather, that it can-
 not bee a signe causing famine, or plenty and
 fertilenesse, because fertilitie went before the
 creation of the host of Heaven. Also of wars
 and plagues, and the particular plagues of men,
 they can bee no signes, because man was not yet
 created, and yet even then they were signes. Some
 will say, they were no signes of those matters in
 the creation, but now they may bee, and are:
 No, for the workes which God created he now
 preserveth, neither increasing nor diminishing
 any thing in them. *Philo Iudaei* in his booke
De opificio mundi, saith, *Hee was persuaded*
that God foreseeing the minds of men, given to
search strange matters: o come, did in this order
create the heavens, to confute and disprove their
imaginations. Thirdly, the Heavens and Starres
 were made for the use of man, and man is their
 end, so that it is absurd to imagine they have
 any force in the affaires of man. Now then,
Prognosticators if they will foreflew of strange
 things to come, they must undoe the worke of
 their Creator, and give unto it new uses, other-
 wise they shall not bee able to *prognosticate* as
 they yearly doe.

*The second reason, the pro-
 vidence of God.*

THe providence of God, is his decree by
 which hee appointeth how every thing
 shall come to passe. The continuall execution
 of this decree, is ordinarily by meanes, but of-
 ten without meanes. The meanes which God
 useth are either generall or speciall. Generall
 are those by which he governeth all the whole
 world, and every particular thing which con-
 concerneth this life: unto this kinde are referred
 spirituall creatures, called Angels, by whom
 the Philosophers say the Heavens are governed,
 and we see that whole Kingdoms, Provinces, &
 Cities have bene kept and defended by them,
 as also consumed and destroyed. Againe, the
 Starres and heavenly bodies are used of God to
 governe and order things here below, as it is
 in the 19. Psalm, *Nothing is hid from the heat*
of the Sonne. And by the Prophet *Hosea*, the
 Lord speaketh thus, *I will heare the heavens, the*
heavens shall heare the earth, the earth shall
heare the corne, the corne shall heare Israel. But

this instrument is onely a general instrument
 and hath his worke in ordinary matters of na-
 ture. Besides these meanes, there bee many
 other by which God ruleth the world. In the
 beginning hee set man over the whole world, that
 he might have rule over Fishes, Fowles, Beasts,
 and all things else. He appointed husbands to
 governe their wives, he set the first-borne before
 their brethren, as *Cain* before *Abel*: Princes
 and Tyrants over Cities, Kingdomes, Common-
 wealths, and therefore by reason of their dig-
 nities calleth them gods. There be also govern-
 ours of families over their families, fathers
 over their children, masters over their ser-
 vants. Yet God hath a more neere care in
 preserving and governing his chosin, as ap-
 peareth in the 43. chap. of *Esay*, *Thus saith*
the Lord God that created thee, O Iacob: and
he that formed thee, O Israel: Feare not, for
I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy
name, thou art mine: when thou passest thorow
the waters, I will be with thee, and thorow the
floods, that they doe not overflow thee. When
thou walkest thorow the very fire, thou shalt not
be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee.
for I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel,
thy Saviour. This is also manifest by that Sym-
 pathy which is in the Lord, when his children
 are afflicted, as appeareth by the 11. of *Zacha-*
ry: *He which toucheth you, toucheth the apple*
of mine eye. And in the 9. of the Acts, *Saul, Saul,*
why persecurst thou mee? that is, my Elect.
 Wherefore there be also speciall means by which
 he more carefully governeth the Elect: As bee
 Angels, whom *Paul* to the Hebrewes calleth
minist'ring spirits: it is certaine they defend eve-
 ry one of the Elect particularly. Hitherto may
 be referred the preaching of the Word of God,
 the minist'ring of the Sacraments. Besides this,
 God useth the devils, and wicked men and Ty-
 rants to exercise the faith of his Elect, and to
 confirme them in patience: whereby they are
 called the servants of the Lord, axes, hammers,
 sawes, and swords in the land of God: as *Pha-*
raoh, and *Nabuchadnezzar*, and *Senacherib*.
 Moreover, the meanes by which hee worketh
 upon the wicked are also many:

- 1 Angels good and evil. Exod. 14.
- 2 Friends and familiars. Jerem. 13. 14.
- 3 Aimos 7. 1.
- 4 Wild beasts. Jerem. 8. 17.
- 5 Heaven above. Deut. 11. 17.
- 6 Diseases, plague. Exod. 15. 16.
- 7 Famine. Hcf. 9. 3.
- 8 Fire. Hof. 8. 14.
- 9 Fury. Hof. 7. 9.
- 10 Hardnesse of heart. Rom. 1. 28.
- 11 Caprivitie. Jerem. 15. 2.

All these meanes Gods providence useth;
 first, that he might shew his goodnesse towards
 us: secondly, that he might be knowne to bee
 the Lord over all: thirdly, that wee might bee
 thankfull, because he not onely himselfe gover-
 neth us, but also maketh his creatures to serve
 our

our turnes. Marry this must be noted (as I said before) that in all these secondary causes, beside their naturall worke, which God hath given them, there is also the speciall worke of God his speciall hand shewed. God worketh not by second causes, as Magistrates governe their common wealths by their inferior officers. For they so governe by them, that they do nothing or very little themselves, and peradventure never know what is done. God governeth not the world so, but in every particular worke, he hath his particular stroke. That the thunder burneth, moveth, hurteth; it is the generall providence of God: but that it burneth, or hurteth this or that man, on this or that part, in this or that manner, it is the speciall providence of the same God. The Lord hath shewed his speciall providence in one excellent example. *If the hatcher (saith God) fall forth of the hand of him which loppe the tree, and kill a man in the way, I the Lord have killed him.* God also governeth the world immediatly, and his providence worketh without means, and many things he bringeth to passe against all meanes, which is manifest by that of *Matthew: Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* For example, without meanes. The Spirit of God did move upon the waters, and cover them in the creation immediatly. The first garment which was made, was of leather, and God alone without meanes made it. *Noah* in the Arke was preserved by God alone a whole yeare, against the force of the waters. Without meanes did hee keepe the shooes and garments of the *Israelites* whole forty yeares. He alone justifieth, sanctifieth, and converteth a sinner. Against the course of nature he made the sea to divide it selfe, the sunne to goe backward, the fire not to burne the three children, the Lyons not to devour *Daniel*. The causes of this, are these: 1. That we may know when God works by causes, he doth it by no necessity, but freely. 2. That we might know when God useth means, that then he is not idle, but worketh all in all. 3. That if meanes want, nay, if meanes be against us, yet we should not despair of Gods providence. Now to come to our *Prognosticators*, and *Moone-prophets*, how shall they be able to know what will come to passe hereafter? for first, the heavens being only one particular instrument of Gods providence, among many, they cannot certainly and truly say, this thing or that thing proceedeth from the heavens: Secondly, they cannot determine whether God in extraordinary matters, as Plague, Famine, Barrenesse, Distempered weather, Earthquakes, Warres, &c. doth worke immediatly, or with meanes: If with meanes, they cannot determine, whether the Heavens, or Angels, or men, or any other things be the meanes of his providence. Thirdly, if they were able to know what the Heaven worketh naturally, yet they were never the better: for God beside the power of the heavens, hath in all

things his particular working providence, altering, and flaming, and bending as wax his instruments to his good will. Truly by this consideration, a Christian man will be brought to leave off to seeke what event the workes of God shall have before they come to passe. If a man shall come into a Joynters shop, can hee by knowing the use of all his tooles, tell what things he hath made in his shop? No. What is the cause of that? Hee useth not only his tooles in his worke, but thereunto adjoyneth his owne hand, by which he handleth and turneth the tooles to his owne pleasure, and so maketh divers kinde of workes with the same instruments. The same may be said of our *Prognosticators*, which I would to God they would somewhat consider.

*The third Reason, the want
of experience.*

IF our *Prognosticators* have any meanes to foretell things to come, they have those meanes either without experience, or with experience: If they have them without experience, then must thou account all which they doe to be foolish dreames and deceit; for all kinde of humane learning which is profitable, and hath use in the life of man, is taken from often observations, and experience. If it be said that they have their directions in *Prognosticating* from experience, and that of all times, I will convince them thus. True experience of the causes of things, is an often observing of the effects of the same causes, with this ground that they can proceed from no other thing. The Physician saith *Rhenbarb* doth purge choler. Well: how knoweth he this? he hath often tried this, and that in old men, young men, children: and hath found, that in the bodies of all men, the cause of purging this humor, could be ascribed to nothing else. Wherefore he may peremptorily conclude, *Rhenbarb* purgeth choler. Our *Prognosticators*, in the heavens, can have no such experience. For they cannot observe often the same position of starres in the heaven. The order and cause of the fixed starres and Planets, which we finde in the heavens this day, the next day will be changed, and never the like againe. They will say indeed although the same position of the whole heaven never happen, yet the same conjunctions of notable starres, the same risings, and settings, and the same constellations of the chiefe starres are marked often. I say againe, that when these Eclipses and great conjunctions happen, the rest of the starres being otherwise affected than they were before, and having new positions, may either increase and diminish their effects, or else hinder them, and quite take them away. As we see when the Sun casting his beames into a chamber, the light of candles, and torches, and fires doe make it shine dimme, yet these being absent, it will shine bright. Again, they are not able to say that

conjunctions, which they have marked, are causes of those effects which follow, as warres, discases, distempered weather, earthquakes, famine, &c. For in those things which happen together, the one is not the cause of the other. When *Nero* played upon his harpe, *Rome* was on fire: yet *Neroes* playing on the harpe was no cause of the burning of *Rome*. Altho these effects may have other causes in the heaven, than those which they make, and they may come immediately from God, they may come enely from the will of man. Wherefore seeing that they cannot assure themselves that those eclipses and conjunctions are the works of such effects upon earth, and they cannot have often observations of the course of heaven, their rules of Predictions are feigned and supposed, and not built upon true experience. Let a man which knoweth not one herb, take all kinds of herbs, and put them into a great vessell, yet so, that there be more of some herbs, and lesse of other some; let him beat them all together, and make a compound vertue of all their vertues: Can hee now tell the nature and operation of every particular herb? Can he divide and sever by any helpe the vertue of one herb from another? No indeed. The same thing may be said of the starres of heaven: all their lights, and all their influences (as they terme it,) are in the lower bodies: more plainly, every earthly body hath in it all the secret powers, and working of every particular starre: so that they make (as it were) a compound operation rising of all, or of the most of their vertues joyned together: for the *Astrologers* hold, that although the light may be hindered by the thicknesse of the body, yet the heavenly influence pierceth thorow all. Therefore they are not able to sever, and learne the nature of these starres, except they can stop the influence of what stars they list, and bring them into what compass they will. Yet thus much I will grant them, that they may have a little knowledge of the vertue of the *Sunne* and *Moon*, and some other starres: as we see those herbs in the former composition, whose vertues be the chiefest, though not fully, yet somewhat doe represent their nature, and shew themselves above the rest. But what is this to the purpose? If I consider the operations of the *Sun* and *Moon*: If I shall grant that *Saturne* is in nature cold and dry, *Jupiter* warme and moist, *Mars* hot and dry, *Venus* cold and moist, *Mercurie* in nature mixt, the notable fixed starres in the *Zodiacke* to be of the nature of Planets, and to have manifest operations, as the rising of the dogge, to make heat and tempestuous seas, the rising of *Arcturus*, to make raine and showers, *Pleades* to be of the nature of *Mars* and the *Moon*, &c. what will all this suffice to make a *Prognostication*? for seeing all starres have their owne powers, and peradventure also the least starres which wee make no account of, have great effects amongst us (as one graine of muske in the Apothecaries shop maketh a

A greater line than all other powers do they never so many) nothing will the knowledge of the operation of some starres prevaile, the will being not knowne and never regarded. They will say they have some experience, but yet not perfect; I have shewed how they have no true experience at all and their imperfect experience maketh them perfect liers.

The fourth Reason, the ignorance of causes.

A Man which wil judge rightly of any matter by the causes, must not onely consider the common causes, but he must also with them confesse the particular causes of all things which happen amongst us, so he shall judge aright. In heaven the starres be common causes of all things amongst us, because they shew their vertue on every matter, one way or other. The same things have their peculiar efficientes, and matters, and formes, by which, and not by the heavens, they are made that, whatsoever they are. These proper causes because their natures be unknowne unto us, I cannot see how the *Prognosticator* is able to foretell anything to come, in good and convenient manner, laying aside all deceiving and forging of untutis. To make this more plaine, I will use this similitude. Suppose an hen to sit upon many egges, some of her owne, some of divers other fowles: she imparteth her heat equally unto them: at the length she hatcheth, and some of her chickens are cockes, some hennes, some crows, some partridges, some doves, some blacke, some white; some like and live, some die, some are killed of the kite, some are tossed. No man, I thinke, will profess so much skill, as to say that hee by the considering of the henne and her heat, which is a common cause of the chickens, and all that befall them, is able to tell, why of this egge came a partridge, of that a crow, why this egge had no chicken, why that had a dead chicken, &c. except hee doe therewithall adjoyneth the consideration of the particular effects. The heaven is as it were an hen sitting under her wings all earthly things, imparting his vertue and heat unto all. Can our *Prognosticator* by the erecting of figures, by considering the disposition of every Planet in their houses, and the significations of every thing, judge, why this man is wealthy, that man a begger: why this noble man dieth this year, none the next year: why it is naught to travell this way, good to travell that way: why these discases abound, and not others: why come shall be deare this quarter, not the next: why this weeke is faire and temperate, that weeke, that month unseasonable and tempestuous. Truly it is a thing flat impossible. They must hereunto adjoyneth the particular nature of the countrey, the particular causes both in mens mindes and bodies, as, education, place, honestie, birth, blood, sicknesse, health, strength, weaknesse,

meat, drinke, liberty of minde, learning, &c. and all other speciall circumstances: which they never doc as we may see in their *Prognostications*: and if they would doe it, yet they could not. Wherefore I must needs say this, that their folly is great in publishing their *Prognostications*: and thou also greatly to bee blamed which by thy greedy desire givest them great occasion to be to unprofitably occupied.

To shew more briefly and plainly of their inability in *Prognosticating*, although I grant the starres have great force, yet I say they cannot judge of things to come. And there bee six impediments:

The first impediment is imbecillity of wit: for as mans eye from the earth beholding the heavens and the starres, perceiveth them not in their just quantity, but as very small lights: for indeed the *Sunne* is an hundred and threecore and six times bigger than the earth, *Saturne* 90. times, *Jupiter* 95. *Mars* one and an halfe, the *Moon* is the 39. part of the earth: the biggest fixed starres containe the earth 107. times, the starres of the second magnitude 90. the third 70. times, the fourth magnitude 54. times; the fifth magnitude 35. times; the sixth magnitude 18. times; So the weaknesse of mans understanding is not able to conceive and learn the things which the heavens doe bring to passe on earth.

The second impediment, the infinite number of starres, which no doubt all have great power, although wee doe not finde it. For the *Prognosticator* only marketh 1028. starres, and of these he taketh onely heed unto a very few. Which is as though a man should judge the power of an army by the power of one or two souldiers and Captaines, not by the power of the whole company.

The third impediment, is the infinite varieties of the vertues of starres, and the parts of heaven, which *Astrologers* grant to be: yet they do not know them. As touching the nature of the fixed starres, they know nothing but by the colour, which is red, leady, white, pale, &c. resembling some planet. And because they know not the vertue of all starres and every part of heaven, they are not able to judge any thing but to their owne shame, no more than the Physician is able to know the nature of a compound medicine without the knowing of every simple.

The fourth impediment, the manifold and daily change of the motions, positions, and configurations of the starres: for if a man could tell both the number and nature of starres, yet the variety of positions breedeth trouble and hindereth right judgement: because by this means the powers of starres are increased, diminished, and changed. And these rules which served for ancient times to foretell things, will not serve us, because all the fixed starres have changed their places, and the rest are daily changed.

The fifth impediment, the infinite variety of

inferiour things, which doe hinder, pervert, change, receive, or not receive the vertue and predictions of starres, as the nature of the soile; the disposition naturall of ayre, orders, and constitutions of the common-wealth, occasions; education, institution, kindes of meat and drinke, &c.

The sixth impediment, the will of man, which freely in common matters chuseth this and refuseth that. There are many things which are caused without any worke of starres, onely by the will of man, and study, as we may see in *Socrates*, *Demosthenes*, and other, &c.

Thus much shall suffice to shew that they cannot *Prognosticate* of things ensuing: now follow their manifold untruths, and most false rules. In disclosing them I will keepe the same order they use in their *Almanacks*.

In the first or second leafe of their bookes thou shalt finde a picture of mans bodie with the 12. signes round about it, they call it the *Anatomic* of mans bodie, shewing how the 12. signes have government of the time: for the *Moone* or any other significator of any thing being in the signe, they say, that it is dangerous to box, to keare that part, or to let blood in it, which is subject to the dominion of that signe. All these are nothing but vaine Fables, as I will manifestly prove.

1. Whereas they call it an *Anatomic*, me thinketh, it is a butcherly *Anatomic*: nay, that of the butchers is farre better, for they joyne head and appurtenance together: these men being sparing, give *Aries* the head, *Leo* and *Cancer* the heart and lungs. As for the liver, I know not which signe hath it, peradventure in old time men had no livers. At the *Anatomic* of a carrion, crows be friendly, for every one hath some what: but in the division of mans bodie, signes play fustie play, for *Capricorne* hath got nothing but a paire of knees. It is like that the signes scrambling for their portions *Capricorne* being slow got nothing; hereupon compassion being had, there was a gathering made, & *Sagittarius* gave the lower part of the thigh, *Aquarius* the higher part of the leg, which both together make the knee. But to deliver thee out of all doubt, mark these reasons which follow: 1. The signes cannot have any such dominion over mans body: I make it manifest thus.

There is no corporall heaven indeed above the firmament, yet because the firmament or eighth Sphere hath many motions, to give reasons of those motions, the *Astronomers* have feigned two heavens above the firmament, the *Christalline* heaven, and the first moveable or 10. Sphere, which they divide into 12. parts, which parts they call signes. Now I pray you tel me, is it possible to conceive that an imagined part of any imagined heaven void of all starres, shall either have in it selfe, or give unto other Starres power to governe the parts of mans body? More reasonable was that man, who being asked what was the cause of the sands in *Sandwich* haven,

he

The evill signes
feigned.

he answered the building up of *Tentation* Steele. Secondly, the government of the signes in the body is not taken from experience in nature, but feigned long agoe by some drowſie pate, and now because it hath a cloke of antiquity, it is allowed. More naturall was this kinde of way, that hot signes should governe hot parts, cold signes cold parts, earthly signes earthly parts. So *Avies* should governe the heart and the vitall blood, not the head, and the rest of the signes those parts which are of their nature and disposition. Thirdly, great experience of many men daily confute this rule. For many learned Physicians, and expert Chirurgeons have by infinite examples found, that if a man be let blood in the signe, or lanced, or boxed, or seared, no harme ensueth, nay, they have given testimony that the patients have found even then great comfort. Wherefore let not these things trouble thy mind any more, but let them be numbred even amongst vaine and unprofitable fables.

2 Next after followeth Elections of daies and houres necessary for all matters, as followeth:

Speciall daies to	Prepare humors.	{	Vomit.
	Let blood.		Electuaries.
	Purge with		Potions.
	Cut haire.	{	Pills.
	Comfort the verue.	{	Attractive.
			Digestive.
			Retentive.
		{	Expulsive.
	Bathe.		
	Put children to schoole.		
Travell.			
Marry.			
Hunt, Hawke, Fish.			
Plant.			
Gold Castell.			
Lay Foundations.			

Here, I pray thee, marke their naughty dealings, how they abuse thy ignorance, to make themselves skilfull, and to doe more than they can doe. For if the judgements of the best *Astrologers* may be taken, certainly most of these Elections cannot be prescribed to thee, unless they know before-hand the figure of thy Nativitie. For all election, which concerneth thy person, must be moderated (to speake as plainly as their roies will suffer mee) by the direction of the root of thy Nativitie, and by the monethly and diurnall Progressions of thy present Revolution. If any of these pretend some evill, the particular Election may be a meane to increase and to bring into paffe. For example, suppose, thou being a man toward marriage, in the *Almanacke* thou findest a good day noted by the *Prognosticator* to marry in: thou takest thy opportunity: after a while thou art weary of thy life: the first day of thy marriage was the last day of thy joy. What is the cause of this? All the Planets which were signifiers of thy marri-

age in thy nativity, were then evilly affected, and peradventure also, when thou wast first borne, they received some disgrace. So then thou mayest lay all blame, partly upon thy selfe for beleeveng, and partly upon the *Prognosticator*, who deceived thee. But to come unto particulars, the elections of dayes to purge the body with any kinde of purgation, and to comfort the same, are most ridiculous. Why doe they not also prescribe houres of eating meat? Why doe they not appoint the kindes of meats and drinks, which we must eat and use daily? If thou see that God doth daily blesse the enterprises of those Physicians, which never regard those elections in ministering to their patients: never esteeme of them, let them goe as lies to the Devill from whence they came. Concerning the elections of dayes to sowe, to set, to plant, to lop, they are also foolish: the generall observation of the season of the yeare, in which these things are to bee done is sufficient. And *S. Augustine* in his book *de civitate Dei*, laugheth at the folly of them, which chuse particular dayes to doether husbandrie, as though some certaine positions of starres had some speciall influence to the things which are sowne then. His reason is, because many grains of corne being cast into the ground together, and ripening all at one time: yet some of them are blasted, some are eaten of birds, some are trodden downe under foot, some stand and are never touched. The rest of the elections, and especially that of laying foundations is most absurd. They say that if an house, a city, a towne have his foundation when the starres bee well affected, the inhabitants shall have prosperous and quiet living: if when the starres bee evill disposed, then trouble and disquietness. They have no experience of this but that onely which is most false, for they know not the foundations of cities and towns, neither the positions of the starres, when they were built. Let *Rome* and *Venice* be examples, because these are most alleaged of *Astrologers*, the time in which they were built is uncertaine, and the Planets are falsely set in the figure of the foundation of *Rome*, because *Mercurie* is contrary to the sunne, a thing far impossible. Again, the folly of this is thus manifest, that an house, or city, or common-wealth may remaine, the people being gone, as it is in the time of plague, and banishment and conquests of princes: And the inhabitants also may bee safe and remaine, the building quite ransumed and beaten downe, as wee may see in *Carthage*, the people and common-wealth remained, the City quite defaced. That all elections are unlawful, *S. Austin* writing unto *Januarium*, proveth it forth of the 4. to the *Galatians* by these words: *Te observe moneths and times and yeares. Therefore* (saith he) *let us not observe dayes, and yeares, and moneths, and times, lest we beate this of the Apostle: I am afraid lest I have taken labour in vaine with you: for he rebuketh them which say, I will not*

goc, because the Moone is thus or thus moved, or I will take my journey that I may have good successe, because there is such a position of Stars: I will not do my businesse this moneth, because such a starre governeth this moneth: or I will do my businesse this moneth because such a starre ruleth. How then shall a man doe, not to breake the word of God? Art thou a man that desirest to lead a Christian life? Then take the example of *Paul*, as a pattern to governe all the actions of thy life: Without ceasing (saith he) *I make mention of you in my prayers: beseeching that by some means, one time or other I might have prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.* So thou if thou hast any businesse in hand, any journey to take, any thing to buy or sell, or any other matter: never regard the constellations of Heaven, commit thy selfe to the onely providence of God, in whom thou hast thy life, and motion, and being, who directeth all thy steps: pray unto him privately with thy selfe to blesse thee and all thy actions, that they may tend to his glory, thy welfare: thou shalt find that all thy enterprises will have better successe, than if the whole hoast of heaven, and all the *Prognosticators* of England, had promised never to much prosperity. Now let us shew their absurd folly in *prognosticating* of the state of the yeare: of which their *predictions* are either generall for the whole yeare, or speciall for every day. In their generall *predictions* are considered either the grounds of them, or the matters which they foretel. Their grounds are especially two: 1. The figure of the revolution of the yeare, erected when the sunne cutteth into the first minute of *Aries*. 2. The figure celestially for the time of the eclipse of the sunne and moone: for upon these twaine, say they, dependeth the whole state of the yeare. In their celestially figures they consider the erecting of them, and the finding of the Lord of the figure. The erecting of the figure, containeth very many absurdities.

1. They follow that way, which *Regiomontanus* did invent, never as yet proved by any experience, and flatly differing from those waies which of ancient *Astrologers* were used; and were invented by *Gazzalus* and *Campanus*. Nay, oftentimes it maketh the *Planet* or fixed starre to signifie a flat contrary thing to that which these two other doe.

2. The casting of the heavens into twelve distinct kind of matters is ridiculous, because it being imagined, and void of starres, can have no force. Yet (some will say) other starres being in these places may have and signifie such, or such effects. I answer, that if starres of divers natures comming to such an house alwayes signifying some one kinde of thing, then the house must of necessity give some force unto the *Planet*: and so it shall have not only an augmenting, but also an effectually working power, which *Astrologers* deny, and no reason can prove.

A 3. They make the twelfth and eleventh houses being higher above the horizon than the first, to be of lesse force than it: and the fourth house to be of greater power than any above the Horizon not Cardinall: and the end of the ninth, to be more in power than the beginning of the eleventh house: all which are against reason, because a Planet the more perpendicular his beames are, the more is his force. They answer, although the force of the light be greater, yet the secret influence is lesse, and the first house hath more forcible influence than the twelfth or eleventh. If the influence be secret, how can they know it? againe, they can by no good experience shew that those houses have more influence than the rest; this influence maketh against them. I say they cannot *prognosticate*, because they know not one starres vertue. For whereas they say, that the sunne, and moone and planets have most force; I answer, that it is by reason of their light, not their influence, which is small; and there is farre greater in the smallest fixed starres. So that the fixed starres although they have no light, or very small light perceived, yet they have most influence. And so these men must needs dreame because they judge by wrong causes. Well, their figure being framed and distinguished with faire characters, then goe they on to finde the Lord of the figure, that is, that *Planet* which hath most dignities in the figure.

C
 1 Houses of Planets.
 2 Exaltation.
 3 Triplicity.
 4 Termes.
 5 Starres.
 6 Houses.
 7 Freedom from Combustion.
 8 Directions.
 9 Velocity of course.
 10 Seasons.
 11 Some aspects of other Planets.

The dignities of the Planets are found out by these means especially:

D These toyes be so foolish, that a reasonable man would not vouchsafe to refuse them: yet a word or twaine. If the houses of the *Planets* shall be battered and puld downe, all the rest of their worship and dignity will lie in the dust. *Aries* and *Scorpio* are appointed the houses of *Mars*; *Taurus* and *Libra*, the houses of *Venus*; *Geminus* and *Virgo*, the houses of *Mercury*; *Cancer* the house of the *Moone*; *Leo* the house of the *Sunne*; *Sagittarius* and *Pisces*, the houses of *Jupiter*; *Aquarius*, and *Capricornus*, the houses of *Saturne*. What reason doe they give of this? *Leo* and *Cancer*, say they, are the houses of the *Sunne* and *Moone*, because they resemble the nature of these *Planets*, and because they come most neere our heads: such reason they give of the rest. What feeble grounds are these? As in the North part of the world *Cancer* and *Leo* resemble the nature of the *Sunne*: so in the South part, in the contrarie climates, *Capricornus*, and *Aquarius* doe resemble their natures.

Also in every country some divers signes be either vertically, or else come neere the top of the country, and so all signes shall be the houses of the *Sunne* and *Moonne*. Now then, the *sunne* being displaced, I cannot finde how the rest of the *Planets* can keep their hold. To goe further, the exaltations of *Planets* in like manner are very dreames. They suppose *Exaltations* bee those degrees in which the *Planets* were in the beginning of the world. But why should those places give more force than any other? And if they could give more force, yet they have falsly assigned them. For the *Sunne* was not in *Aries*, when it was created of God, but was placed in *Libra*, which I prove by this reason. God created man and beast in perfect age, giving unto them all kinds of fruits being then ripe, so that in the beginning was the time of the yeare, which we call harvest. Now because God never afterward changed the seasons, and wee finde that in the time of ripeness the *Sunne* is alwaies in *Libra*, we must needs also say that his place in the creation was in *Libra*. In the 23. of *Exodus*, God commanded that the feast of tabernacles should bee celebrated in the end of the yeare, when the Israelites had gathered their fruits out of the fields. Wherefore it must needs be that harvest was in the beginning of the yeare (the beginning and ending being both together) and so by counting backwards wee shall finde that the *Sunne* was in *Libra* in the beginning of the world. To this agreeth *Iosiphus de antiquis. Lib. 1. cap. 2. Rabbi Eleazar* upon *Genes.* and *Rabbi Abraham, Ase Ezra* upon the 7. of *Daniel*.

The rest of the dignities of the *planets* consist of Principles more weak than water. First, what is more unreasonable to a reasonable man than this, that swift motion should give unto a *planet* two dignities, and slow motion two debilities: it seemeth to be plaine contrary. For a swift course hindereth the force of the *Planets*, a slow course helpeth the same: and the stations of any *Planet* make an effectually and sensible operation. A scale of fire in a mans hand if it be shaken about very much, it heateth very little, if it be shaken more slowly, it heateth more: but if it lie still, it burneth violently. Beside this, also experience confirmeth my assertion. In the yeare of our Lord 1513. the *Sunne* entering into *Pisces* was almost in time aspect with *Saturne* stationarie, a little while after, there was a great frost and snow continuing many dayes: and when *Saturne* began againe to be direct, the weather was indifferent warme. In the yeare 1518. in Aprill *Jupiter* almost in *secunda statione*, beholding *Saturne* in *statione prima*, caused a great heat, considering the time of the yeare. In the yeare 1520. *Saturne* (as I said before) being stationarie made such a cold, that spoiled the Grapes and made Wine deare. Upon these examples and many other I may conclude, that the worke and influence of *Planets*, is most felt when they are sta-

tionary: because their vertue is fixed (as it were) in one place by reason of the slow motion.

Combustion is in like sort a feined thing: What reason can *Astrologers* give, why it should give unto a *starre* five debilities? They talk how that experience teacheth them, that *Planets* being under the beames of the *Sunne*, doe lose a great, nay (some say) all their force. It is a manifest untruth. For, *Mercurius* being of the nature of that *Planet* with which hee is conjoined, if he goe from conjunction with *Saturne* unto the *Sunne*, he getteth no debilities thereby, but rather losing the feeble and unfortunate Nature of *Saturne*, receiveth a more strong and fortunate nature of the *Sunne*. If any man say aginst mee that *Mercurius* combusteth with no force, he deceiveth himselfe. For if hee be not hindered, he naturally will cause winds, being combust, he not onely ingendereth winds, but causeth tempestuous winds and foule weather. In *Aries*, *Taurus*, *Cancer*, he maketh tempests, in *Virgo* and *Scorpius*, raging Seas, in *Sagittarius*, *Capricornus*, *Aquarius*, and *Pisces*, raine and snow. Again, when many dayes together there hath bene faire weather, the *Sunne* if it come to be in conjunction or any other aspect with *Saturne*, maketh very foule weather, and therefore the aspects of the *Sunne* and *Jupiter* are called *apertiones portarum pro pluvia*. This could not come to passe if *Saturne* had his force diminished by the beames of the *Sunne*. A *planet* also being in *Saturne*, that is, being within 16. minutes of the *Suns* middle, hath thereby 5. dignities, which cannot well be, if that combustion give 5. debilities. For the *Planet* is in the middle of his combustion, and the *Sunne* casteth his beames and force very vehemently upon it. These things shew how absurd a dream combustion is: yet if it were a good and sound principle of *Astrologie*, and gave unto every planet five debilities, yet it could not be proved, that liberty from combustion should give five dignities, being only a mere absence and privation of the other. *Magnes* at the presence of the *Adamant*, is hindered from drawing Iron: yet if the *Adamant* be away, the attractive vertue of the *magnes* is not increased. Here I might with ease confute the triplicities of *Planets*, directions, aspects, applications, preventions, relictions, with many such like, but my intent at this time is onely to shew thee some untruths of our *Prognosticators*.

Thus much of the grounds of their predictions, now follow the matters, of which they *Prognosticate*, and they are very many: nay, there is no matter almost, of which they will not give their verdict: but how they doe this I will briefly make it manifest unto thee, that their lies and their unchristian dealing may bee more loathed of thee.

1. They foretell of Comets, Earthquakes, Famines, and plagues, &c. but they doe it as the blind man which casteth his staffe hee knoweth not where. No man as yet ever knew the true cause

causes of these. As for Comets and blazing starres, they doe not rise of the influence of any starres, neither are they any earthly things, but are in heaven, most commonly farre above the Moone, as by Geometrical and Astronomical demonstrations may be proved: How this cometh to passe the Lord only knoweth. And surely they doe thee great injury, that when as no doubt, God doth lighten them, and send the rest extraordinarily, as threatening tokens of his sore displeasure, yet they will rocke thee asleepe in the cradle of security, by telling that such tokens came from the ordinary course of the heavens.

2. They foretell all things which happen in civill affaires amongst men, as are these which follow:

(Love and hatred of kinsfolke.

Marriages.

Increase of farmes and livings.

Injuries and quarrels.

Raising of rents.

Excelling of subsidies by officers.

False rumors.

Imprisonments.

As *Hard intreating of Ecclesiasticall persons.*

Buying, selling, undermining.

The studying of sciences.

Friends fall out for trifles.

Solemne progresses.

Favours of noble men.

Men shall fall, body, and goods, into the Princes hands.

Merchandise unprofitable, &c.

These and such like proceed onely from the will of man: the constellations of starres are neither signes nor causes of them. Some will say, *Non imponere necessitates, sed inclinare Stellarum*, that is, That starres doe not constrain, but onely incline the mindes of men: a most wicked saying, although most commonly spoken of and defended. For the inclining of the will of man is onely the worke of God, as the holy Scriptures doe teach us. *The heart of man* (saith Salomon) *purposeth his wayes, but the Lord directeth his steps.* O Lord (saith Ieremy the Prophet) *that the way of man is not in himselfe, neither is it in man to walke and direct his steps.* He speaketh this because that *Nebuchadnezzar* purposed to have made warre against the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, but hearing of *Zedekias* rebellion, he returned his power to goe against *Ierusalem*, therefore the Prophet saith, that whereas he had otherwise purposed, yet this was the Lords inclination and direction. Again, in the Proverbs we read this: *That the heart of the King is in the hands of the Lord, as the river of water, hee directeth it whither hee will.* It will be said, that although God properly and immediately inclineth the will of man; yet also some small inclination must be given unto the Starres, and that immediately. For

(Constellations worke upon the Elements by the foure first qualities.

Elements worke upon, and alter the compound bodies and humors.

Say some, *Compound bodies by their qualities change the senses.*

The senses being altered, the understanding is altered.

The understanding lastly altereth and inclineth the will of man.

Therefore Constellations incline the will.

This reason is not much unlike that which the drunken man maketh, serving as well for the defence of his vice, as the former for approving of truth in divination.

He which drinketh well, sleepeth well:

He which sleepeth well, thinketh no harme:

He which thinketh no harme, is a good man:

Therefore hee which drinketh well, is a good man.

The deceits and untruths which bee in their reasons, are very many:

1. The starres worke upon mens bodies, yet so that the nature of the Countrey and soyle, the meats and drinckes have most commonly greater force. Why are the bodies of Gentlemen of England and poore labouring men of divers dispositions? are they not both in one country? doe not the starres shew their force in them alike? yes truly, but the kind of life and diet prevaileth. In the same region, why are they, which dwell upon hills, of other temperatures than they which dwell upon plaine and champaign ground? why doe not the same influences of Starres make them of like natures? is it not because the nature of the soyle prevaileth? So then, when as there be many causes effectually, and differing in altering mens bodies, to build an argument upon one cause is most unreasonable.

2. The starres worke upon the Elements, earth, water, ayre, by making heat, cold, moisture, drinesse. The Elements, how worke they on mens bodies? They will also say by making heat, cold, moisture, drinesse: which is most untrue: for the hotter, and drier the elements be, the colder and moyster by nature are mens bodies. According to that saying of *Empedocles*, Nature placed a hot body in a cold countrey, and a cold body in a hot countrey.

3. The *Philosophers* say that all causes are either *per se* or *per accidens*. Now the heavens being causes of the alteration of the senses *per accidens*, they must not be causes of the inclination of the will, either *per se* or *per accidens*, but *per accidentis accidens*, which is most ridiculous.

4. This long chaine by which they linke the will of man to the starres, if it shall be applied unto particulars, it must needs breake: for the actions of the will is buying, selling, travelling, lying, heaping up wealth, murdering, spreading of false rumors, offering of discourtesies, hating of kinsfolkes, and such like,

which our heaven-gazers foretell, have no coherence with the first qualities, heat, cold, moisture, driness: neither can they any way proceed from them, and therefore the starres cannot be causes of them, for they worke onely by these qualities.

5. This reason is nothing to their purpose: for because they grant that a man may freely resist the inclination of the starres, and he may hinder that, unto which the starres bend his will, how dare they presume to say this or that will come to passe? The heathen men gave up themselves to their owne lusts and vanities, and followed every little and vaine inclination: and of them, in this order, did ancient *Astrologers* among them divine that this or that time, such actions, such vices, such enterprises, such affaires should be among them. In like manner our English wisemen, speake of us as though wee were beasts, not reasonable men, as though we never had heard the blessed Gospell of God, never tasted of the grace of God, never learned what is good and what is bad, never laboured to subdue our lusts and affections, alwayes turned to and fro with the blast of any influence, working very slenderly in us.

Thus much of Civill affaires. They make mention also yearly of the diseases which shall reigne: but the way which they follow, is taken forth of the barren and uncertaine rules of the old *Astrologers*, who doe so ascribe unto every Planet certaine diseases, that if need shall require, they may referre the same diseases unto many signifiers, as in the plague, the putrification of humors is attributed unto *Jupiter*, the sharpe fever unto *Mars*, the madnesse which followeth unto *Mercurie*, the whole plague unto *Mars*. In the pluresie the inflammation of the blood betwene the skinne called *Pluritis*, and the ribbes, is attributed unto *Jupiter*, the suppuration of the blood unto *Saturne*, and the whole pluresie unto *Jupiter*: In the Jaundes the inflammation and corruption of humors, unto *Jupiter*; the yellow humor in the galle, unto *Mars*, the obstruction of the parts unto *Saturne*, the whole Jaundes being white, unto *Mars*; black, unto *Saturne*. And so in every disease, they use this inconstancie and ambiguity in *Prognosticating*. It is a rule among the *Astrologers*, that if the Planets signifiers of diseases be well affected, then there shall be no diseases but health; if they be evilly affected, then diseases follow. Our *Prognosticators* never marke this rule, but howsoever the Planets be affected, they straitwaies pronounce that such diseases shall reigne. For example; The last winter quarter it was said by one of them, that the diseases which should afflict mens bodies, were rheumes, coughs, cold laskes, swelling of the face and throte, falling of the Colmell, sore eyes, deafenesse, the stone, gowt, dropsie, green-sicknesse, madnesse, quartane fevers, &c. And all the Planets signifiers of diseases in that quarter were indifferent well affected: wherefore thou

hast not one cause to feare their threatnings, but rather to be sorry for their continuall deceits, wishing them minds that they may one day see their owne folly.

Concerning the time when the constellations take their effects, our *Prognosticators* say that some take their effects the same year, some not the same year, but long after, as great conjunctions and eclipses. For they say if the *Moone* be eclipsed one houre, she worketh her effect a moneth after; if two houres, two moneths after; and the *Sunne* for every houre it is eclipsed, taketh his effect an whole year after. Truly this rule which they follow, must needs be against all reason. For why should not all conjunctions and oppositions of the *Sunne* and *Moone* deferre their effects, as well as those conjunctions and oppositions in which the *Sunne* and *Moone* is eclipsed? if they shew forth their power immediately after, why should not these also doe the same? Moreover Epignosticall *Astrologers* who have conferred the course of the heavens with histories, shew very manifestly, that eclipses doe not deferre the time of working their spite upon the earth.

In the year of our Lord 1419, the *Sunne* was eclipsed in *Aries*, & presently after shewed all his force. There was a great sedition in *Prag* that year; In *Paris* an uprore betwene them of the City and the University, and two thousand Schollers were slain. Then also *Wenceslaus* king of *Bohemia*, being in a great palse, died. In the year 1524, there was a conjunction of *Saturne* and *Jupiter* in *Scorpio*, and also a great eclipse of the *Sunne* in June, which tooke their effects the same year: *Charles*, king of *France*, driven forth of his country: warre betwene the *Danes* and the men of *Sleswicke*. There was a great plague in *Germany*, Civill dissention amongst the Princes of the Empire and them which tooke the part of *John Huss*. 1452. an eclipse of the *Sunne* in *Sagittarius*, his effects began presently, and lasted a great while: Even then *Constantinople* was taken by the *Turke*. The *Hungarians* and *Bohemians* besieged *Fredricke* the Emperour. 1472. the 27. of Aprill, the *Sunne* was eclipsed in *Taurus*, *Mars* being in *Aries*, and *Jupiter* in *Sagittarius*. The same year in summer was such heat and driness of weather, that woods even withered, and one might wade over deepe rivers. In the years of our Lord 1476. 1460. 1469. 1486. 1502. 1518. and many years after, there were both great conjunctions and strange eclipses, which tooke their effects presently, not one, or two, or three years after (as our heaven-gazers beare thee in hand.) All these examples which I bring against them, I have not fained, but taken forth of those bookes which they have in greatest estimation, and could, if need should serve, bring an hundred more, all to shew their lies, when as they commonly say thus, There shall be an eclipse this year, marry I will not here determine his effects, but reserve them to be declared

clared in my *Prognostication* one yeare or two yeares hence, when it will take place.

To know where the effects of the starres shall take place, they have appointed unto every signe certaine countries, as over *Europe* they have set the fiery *Triplixity*, over the Orientall and North parts of *Asia*, the ayrie *Triplixity*, the watery *Triplixity* over *Africa*, over the South parts of *Asia* the earthy *Triplixity*: and so every peculiar signe hath his dominion over some parts of those. Now therefore when a conjunction or eclipse is in any of these signes, the Cities and countries subject unto them, feeble the force of that constellation: especially. This is a most manifest untruth, and may be confuted by many reasons: 1. The nature of the signes is not the same now as it was in times past, and by the confession of the best learned have other effects now, than they had in the dayes of king *Ptolome*: yet we see the nature of countries and people to remaine the same still, as may bee scene by reading *Tacitus*, *Pliny*, *Cassius*, *Strabo*. 2. *America* which is halfe the world, hath no signes appointed over it: why? it was found out of late: True it is, but this is an argument that the Rules of *Astrologie* are absurd, and were the bare inventions and imaginations of idle braines. For, there is no doubt, but that *America* his parts and Ilands, as *Brasilea*, *Parr*, *Terra Florida*, *Iava Major*, *Iava Minor*, *Puloana*, *Pavilonia*, *Subath*, *Madagascara*, *Mattan*, *Iruana*, *Ceylon*, *Java*, *Java*, &c. have felt the force of those Constellations, which they attribute to some parts of the old world: Because these Countries be about the middle Zone, and have both Planets and signes full over them, and therefore if the starres threaten any strange thing to come, they must especially feele it. 3. Experience the cause of all acts, is against them, as is manifest in these examples: 47. yeares before the Nativity of our Saviour Christ, there was a conjunction of the higher Planets in *Scorpius*; and then was civill warre betweene *Cesar* and *Pompey*: And the change of the Empire was in *Europe*. But according unto the institution of *Astrologers*, all these troubles should have beene in *Africa*, because *Scorpius* hath his dominion there. In the yeare of our Lord 34. there was a great conjunction of planets in *Leo*, and then (saith one very prophanely) was the Gospell preached through the world. But if he make this conjunction to be a signe of the preaching of the Gospell, then it should more have bin preached in the parts of *Europe* than *Asia*, which is not true. In the yeares of our Lord 331. and 1127. there were great conjunctions in *Virgo*, and yet the Countries subject to this signe felt no harme, but *Italy* was troubled with the *Popes* superstitions, and *Arius* his heresie was broched. There was a meeting of Planets in *Sagittarius* 73. yeares after Christ, when as *Otho*, *Galba*, *Vitellius*, and *Vespasian* troubled the *Roman* Empire, yet there was no where more grievous warres than in *Palestine*, and no

greater slaughter than of the *Jewes*, who are subject unto *Scorpius* and not unto *Sagittarius*. In the yeare 1464. a conjunction of higher Planets was in *Pisces*, under whose dominion, although *Europe* be not placed, yet it most felt the smart by troubles and civil warres. So 1576. and 1577. two eclipses of the Sunne, the one in *Leo*, the other in *Capricorne* tooke their effects in *Germany*: when as *Leo* and *Capricorne* doe not rule that Country. It is vaine to shew the absurdity of this rule by more examples, these shall be sufficient.

This shall suffice to have spoken of their generall Predictions, now follow their special determinations of the state and temperature of the weather, wherein I will set forth first of all a most manifest and absurd contradiction, which most of them make, and that is this: They use (as I have said) to set downe their judgements of the whole quarter, that it should be either moist, hot, cold, or dry: afterward judging particularly they disprove by particular dayes that which they laid before. In the yeare of our Lord 1581. one said that in the Autumne quarter should be a great drought, yet I perusing his particular judgement upon the dayes of the quarter, finde it should have plenty of raine. In the yeare last past, another said, the summer should be so hot and drie, that even wells and rivers should be dried up, and fishes be scarce, and cattell die for want of water: yet the same party in his particular judgement of the weather, maketh so. dayes of the same quarter, at the least raine and misting, and so. other either temperate or very cold.

In one word, the judgements which are set downe of the weather, they are more tolerable than the rest: yet as long as the world endureth, no man shall be able to prognosticate truly what weather shall be in every day of the yeare. The causes of this I have set downe before, and need not now to repeat. Wherefore they might leave off any longer to busie themselves in this kinde. And it shall be sufficient for the leading of a Christian life, to know the generall and ordinary estate of the parts and seasons of the yeare.

The third reason, impieties.

Besides all this, the impious speeches and Ungodly practices, which these men use, might move a Christian man to loath their predictions. First, yearely some of them doe foretell whether men shall study and embrace, or forget and neglect true Religion. What a filthy and devillish thing is this, not to bee suffered in a Common-wealth where the Gospell of Christ is preached. Every man naturally is the child of wrath, the unprofitable servant, dead in all kind of sinne, his understanding it is enmity against God, his affections are rebellious against his will, none doth good, no not one: not one hath any faculty to receive or keepe true religion: we are as sawes in the hands of God, as the Prophet

Ioh. 6. 44

Esay speaketh: how then become we religious? by the onely worke of God. *Noman can come to me* (saith Christ) *except the father draw him.* And as God draweth us first unto true religion, so hee also maketh us continue in the professing of the same, as *S. Paul* saith, *hee which hath begun a good worke in you, will finish the same, &c.* By what meanes doth God doe this? by the outward preaching of the Law and the Gospell, and by the inward working of his holy Spirit: other meanes the Scripture never mentioneth. On the contrary part, many man refuse the grace of God, and will not embrace the true Religion, it proceedeth from the hardness of his owne heart, and wilfull rebellion: Seeing therefore the rebellion of man cometh from his owne will, and the embracing of true godlinesse from God alone: why dare they presume, without great impiety, to adjoyne the constellations as adjuvants either unto man or God in this divine worke. Again, these predictions are very perilous, for if a man be wickedly given, they hinder him from the acknowledging of his sinne, because they make him lay part of his faults upon the starres, when as all indeed come from his owne soule. And if a man be a penitent sinner, and feele the grace of God; yet being weake in faith and conscience, they make him not to put his whole trust in God, and to love him with all his soule, with all his strength; but allure him in some part to attribute that unto the starres, which is the onely worke of God, and not of any creature.

2. They use to foretell what vices shall reigne, as in these examples:

There shall be much unlawfull and secret whoredome.

Great robbing by high-wayes shalbe.

As Wanton and young men shall sit in their Ladies laps, by reason of their GODESSES well placing.

Many shall use deceit and counterfeiting.

By these and such like, lewd and dissolute people take occasions and are stirred up to live prophane, and to follow those vices, unto which the lusts of their nature carry them.

The fourth reason, tricks of deceit.

A Jugler which taketh upon him to doe strange things must use many sleights, lest if the stander by shall see his tricks of ligierdemaine hee be despised, and all his former cunning turne to his shame. Our *Prognosticators* understanding this, have thought it convenient to use in their kinde some tricks of deceiving Juglers, I can call them by no better name, for so they are indeed. First, publishing their predictions in thy behalfe, they use such absurd, unknowne, and insolent words, as (I thinke) never the like were read or heard amongst us in England. As are these which follow:

1. *A Prognostication Astrologically calcula-*

red for the pole Arctick for such a city whose longitude and latitude is thus.

2. *Quartill revolution.*

3. *Rectified for the motions and effects of the meridian and elevation.*

4. *Capricorne in quality cold and drie; melancholicke, in taste bitter, nocturnall feminine, meridionall, of the earthly trigon.*

5. *Mercurialists, Iovialists, Martialists, Hecmatolistic, Eschival, Vernal, Autumnal.*

6. *Parastorene coupled with the Dragons taile.*

7. *Taurus a signe of the earthly trigonisme naturally, cold in the signe horoscop; and Virgo of the same shape the signe of the preservation preceding.*

8. *A signe of the same trikingularity, Impier Lord of this revolution resident with Venus in dominion in the signum ab angulo cadente.*

9. *Planets retrograde.*

10. *Cardinaler a succedent position.*

11. *Lunary defect.*

In his doctores immortal.

12. *Names of strange authors, Proclum, Alchindus, Messahala, Zael, Allobazzen, Halby, Albmace, Albmace, Gypsy, Bonetru, Hippaleus, Firmin, Abraham, Avenezra, Trifon gists, with many other unknowne.*

13. *Dollars, having a great deal of small learning, and being far borne, as in Caldea, Persia, Arabia, Iurie.*

1. Thou wilt say, what meanes all this? here is great learning no doubt it passeth my capacity: who would not have an *Almanacke*, if it were for nothing but for this, to see and heare how profound our *Prognosticators* are? Thou shalt be deceived thy selfe: for they perceiving well, that their deccits and lyes may be soone espied, have invented strange termes to colour them, and to cast a mist before thine eyes, that thou mayst not see their naughty dealing. For any man the more true and honest hee thinketh his matter, the more desirous is heeto speake plainly to the understanding of all.

2. It was a point of the knaverie of the Devil, otherwise called *Apollis*, as the Heathen men asked his counsell, to answer doubtfully, because when as he was ignorant of the event, yet would not, but seeme to know, as in this answer,

I tell thee Pyrrhus the Romans may conquer.

It is understood two wayes; either that *Antiochides* might vanquish the Romans, or the Romans *Antiochides*. Our *Prognosticators* have chosen a very good patterne to follow, their dealing with thee is the like: when they doubt and cannot tell what to *Prognosticate*, then they use two wayes of foretelling, either to speake that which is true every way, or that which is true every year. For the first, amongst many examples, I will put one or two that thou mayst see their dealing in true, not forged examples.

1. The conjunction of *Mars* and *Saturne* threaten warres, but *Impier* will misguide the

the same: as a man should say, the *Pragmatica* for telleth true, except he tell a lye.

2 1585. We shall have a very dry winter, if peradventure any foulds and store of raine doe fall, they shall proceed of former causes.

3 This summer quarter is like to be for the greatest part drie and whole, yet it is like neither to bee too hot, or too cold, but indifferent.

4 Neither faire, nor foule, both together.

5 Faire and calme, but a little miling.

6 Clouds portending raine and snow.

Examples of those *preditions*, which may agree to every yeare, are common with them, as these;

1 This yeare Artificers must take heed of too much straining their backs.

2 Take heed of venturing in slippery places boldly in building.

3 Old men shall die.

4 Death of Sheepe and other cattell this yeare shall be.

5 Sundry diseases are like to reigue amongst many which will sweepe away many.

6 False rumors, imprisonments, tortures.

7 Brethren and sisters shall not love one another.

8 Sundry men and women shall be troubled with paines in their eyes.

9 Much strife amongst men and women.

10 Small love amongst kinsfolkes.

11 Much unlawfull lust, this yeare, and secret fornication.

12 Some Ecclesiasticall person shall bee in trouble, and some noble man shall die, this is ever at one place or other.

13 Many shipwracks, and other sturres on the seas.

14 Many shall addict themselves to the study of *Negromancie*.

Again, beside these wayes there is also a third, and that is this: They fearing lest their *Pragmatications* should not bee regarded because of their lies, and that they might winne men unto the using of them, have adjoynded *Astronomiell* matters of the rising and setting of starres, of the aspects and motions of planets, which are no profit to thee. Here also they have annexed tables of all the faires in the land, and of the chiefe high wayes, which being of some price with thee, make that which is naught of it selfe, to be of some account.

A Conclusion.

Thus much (good Reader) I hope shall be sufficient to perswade thee of the vanity of *Pragmatications*: if not, I beseech thee accept of my simple endeavour, serving in some part unto thy profit. For if thou bee a Christian man, thou oughtest only to be contented with knowing the times and ordinary seasons of the yeare: not regarding nor searching any secret and speciall Predictions, for which the Lord never gave any man warrant, but in plaine words hath forbidden them. Nay, they which be ingrafted into Jesus Christ indeed, are so farre from searching what shall bee hereafter, that they lead a life which is a continuall meditation of present death. The which the Lord for Jesus sake, grant unto us, that we may in some measure behold our owne vanities.

Trinmi Deo fit omnia bonos, omnia gloria.