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233 ERASMUS (DESIDERIUS). MOR
or, a Panegyrick upon Folly. Done in
curious cuts design'd and drawn by Han-
trait. 8vo, paneled calf, gilt.
Best edition. Rare.

DEPARTMENT OF
THE HISTORY OF ART
OXFORD

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DEPT. HISTORY
OF OXFORD ART



DESIDERIUS
ERASMUS
ROTTERODAMUS.

Hans Holbenius pinxit.

J. Sturt sculp.

Morie Encomium:
OR, A
PANEGYRICK
UPON
FOLLY.

Written in *Latin* by
DESIDERIUS ERASMUS.

Done into *English*, and Illustrat-
ed with above Fifty Curious
Cuts, Design'd and Drawn
by *Hans Holbeine.*

To which is prefix'd,
Erasmus's Epistle to Sir Thomas More,
and an Account of *Hans Holbeine's*
Pictures, &c. and where to be
seen.

LONDON:
Printed, and Sold by *J. Woodward*, in *Threadneedle-*
Street. 1709.



T O T H E

R E A D E R.

THAT there cannot be Two more Fortunate Properties, than *to have a little of the Fool, and not too much of the Knave,* was an Observation of him who (if the *Servant's* Extortion reflect not on the *Master's* Integrity or Judgment) was neither of both, the Learned Lord *Bacon*. What that Collecting Politician did coily Remark is here in a greater Advance more positively made good, namely, That not only *Fortune*, but what is more comprehensive, *Happiness* in all respects, does devoutly attend such as whom either Nature or Distemper hath first Moulded, or afterward Corrupted, into *Fools* and *Madmen*. And

To the Reader.

certainly if the Absence of Grief, the Reprieve from Care, the Unrelenting at Disappointments, and such like well-esteem'd Accidents, do any Way pertain to (as perhaps in the Philosophy of bare Nature they wholly make up) the *Notion of Happiness*, the easie Result of each Man's Experience, as well as the Induction of the following Particulars, will abundantly convince, that always Anxiety and Forecast, and not seldom Discontent and Regret, being Handmaids to the *Wise*, while an immoveable Complacency is a constant Guest to the *Fool*, this *last* is as much more happy, as he is less harrass'd, less perplex'd, less solicitous than the *other*. Beside, if (what was formerly probable, and is of late ingeniously attempted to be improved to an higher Degree of Credibility,) a *Reality of Happiness* during the Conceit equally results from an *Imaginary*, as a *Real*, Object, and what's Aiery
and

To the Reader.

and Phantastick in the *Apprehension*, may be Firm and Solid in the *Fruition*; I see no great Reason why a Fool's Bliss should not, without a Figure, be a *Paradise* in the Propriety of the Word, since it is a State wherein neither Desire outstrips Enjoyment, nor Fear of Deprivation damps the Comfort of a present Possession.

But after all, there is a wide Difference betwixt what is strictly *True*, and what's finely *Plausible*; and therefore how smoothly soever it may sound, that the being possess'd of all we do but suppose *Good*, is the commencing all we can imagine *Happy*, (which by the by were it unconditionately granted would infer, that the degenerating into *Brutes* was an Approach to the becoming *Gods*,) yet it is undeniably experienced that this Happiness of *Fools* will never be made so much the *Opinion* of others, as it is the *Faith* of themselves.

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selves. This Paradox therefore we may well presume was not the sole Aim of the Author, who from Principles of Self-Interest was obliged not to be in Earnest when he declaims against his own Accomplishments of Wit, Learning, and Wisdom, and at the same time attributes the most attainable Perfection to what he himself was at the greatest Distance from Dotage and Folly. He might perhaps, like the *copious Orator*, give the World an hint, that if at any time he appear'd Patron on the juster Side of any Controversie, Men of Morals and Conscience were beholden to him for his Choice of Argument, since he could Polish the roughest *Paradox* with as much Ease and Success as he could *illustrate* the most received *Truth*; and with the subtilizing *Crysippus*, should sooner want *Opinions* to set Abroach, than upon the taking up any *Opinion* want Arguments to defend it. But otherwise

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ther wise it is apparent, that (like Persons of Squinting Opticks, who roul their Eyes one Way, and yet direct their Looks another,) our Author, Archer-like, shoots just contrary from where he pretends to aim, and makes a compleat Satyr against Fools of what he Entitles a *Panegyrick upon Folly*. Under this Covert he levels more securely, wounds more inoffensively, and leaves room for a safer Retreat, than if he had fell too bluntly on, and made an open *Assault* instead of an ambuscading *Surprize*. And indeed the Palate of each Man's *Judgment* being the same with that of his *Taste*, is clogg'd and nauseated with what's *sweet* and *luscious*, and repaired only by the whetting Particles of sharp and corroding, yet again a too biting Reproof, without some Intermixture of *Wheedle*, seldom making Converts of those it is applied to: Subjects of this Na-

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ture are certainly then best handled, when the Persons to be reflected on are in the same Periods laugh'd out of their Mistakes, and yet flattered into Amendment. By this Artifice, in the following Tract, all the Scandals, Corruptions, grosser Absurdities, or more trivial Failures of a crazy World, are expos'd with as equal a Dose of Insinuation and Sarcasm, as either the *Oylinefs* of a *Sycophant* could on the one Hand suggest, or the *Gall* of a *Poet* on the other express. As he spared no one Degree of Age, Sex or Professions, out of Cowardice or Partiality; so, to be most *Corrosive*, where the Sore was most *Cankerous*, he is less niggardly of his Taunts and Strictures, upon the Botches and Excrescencies of the *Roman Church*, whose Marts of Indulgence, Trinkets of Superstition, Blindness of the Laity, Impostures of the Priest, and most other Appendages of Cheat and Delu-

A

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Delusion, are so boldly ript up, and smartly animadverted on, as no Confidence could have *outraved*, nor any the highest Reach of Wit can ever go *beyond*. Upon which Account Part of the Subject being so fashionably grateful, I presume the whole *Translation* may be the more Welcome; especially since several Dialogues of the same Author have been acceptably *done into English*, to represent the *LEVITIE*S crept into the Church of Rome, by a Person that, maugre the Reproach of Malice, is no doubt as sincere a Professor of *Protestant Religion*, as he is a zealous Patriot of *Christian Loyalty*; and (if Circumstances rendred it more necessary) could as freely expose the *Impostures of Popery*, as he does daily in unanswerable Papers discover the *Impudence and Hypocrisie of a Phanatick Faction*: A Faction that has been the *Scandal of Christianity*, and the meer *Burlesk of Protestantism*; that has forfeited
an

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an *Indulgence*, out-dared an *Oblivion*, and so long bid Defiance to Mercy, as well as Justice, till the Capital *Punishments* of *Treason* must discharge the lesser *Penalties* of *Schism*.

But this is certain, the Papal *Policy*, which demands so straight-lac'd a Submission from all her Members, would never have suffered *Erasmus* to have took so unbridled a Range in the Reproof and Censures of her Extravagancies, if he had not nick'd the Opportunity of doing it at such a Time, and under such Circumstances, as when the more profess'd Attack of *Luther*, and his Adherents in *Germany*, impos'd on her a Prudential Necessity of not disobliging her *Friends*, that she might have an undisturbed Leisure, and more united Strength, to oppose the common Enemy ; so that under that Juncture she was forc'd patiently to put up, what at any other Season she would have heinously resentted : As Princes engaged

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gaged in a hazardous War are oblig'd to connive at some little *Encroachments* from their Subjects, or *Provocations* from their Allies, which in a more settled Posture they would scorn to bear, or comply with: Thus (as the *Reasons* of each are *parallel*, though the *Cases* be as widely *different*, as the Confidence of speaking *Truth*, and the Impudence of a *Lie*,) our Government can now find Courage enough to Sentence and Suppress such Treasonable and Seditious *Libels*, which not so long since perk'd up with undaunted Foreheads, and stared even Majesty itself out of Countenance.

Yet however our Author was not questioned by Publick Authority, we are sure that he hereby gall'd and chafed several, not only of his Profession in general, but of his more intimate Friends and Acquaintance: Among which his *Beloved Dorpius* (with whom he
had

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had Contracted as near a Familiarity, as Personal Conference, and frequent Correspondence, could either occasion or improve,) was so nettled at the first Appearance of this Tract, that he sends him a rattling *Reproof*; to which, though *Erasmus* subjoined a very reconciling *Reply*, yet we have good Grounds to presume that they were never afterwards cordially *Friends*. And *Lifter*, who in *Erasmus* his Lifetime republished this Treatise with his own *Notes*, or *Commentaries*, undertook this Task, not so much out of *Respect* to his Friend the Author, or *Care* for the Promotion of Learning, as he did to *Salve* and *Palliate* the several Reflections upon the then Fashionable Religion, as will appear to any indifferent Observer, who cannot but see that the Obscurities and Difficulties of the *Text* (which perhaps are too few and mean to need any Explanation) are but slightly touch'd at, while great Pains and Caution

is

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is employed in either *perverting*, or at least *mollifying*, those Passages, which lay too heavy a Hand upon any of their hallowed Corruptions. Nay, the whole Catholick Party were so incensed at his Liberty of Reflecting, that though for the forehinted Inducements they did not by any Formal *Interdict* send him in Person to the *Devil* while *Alive*, yet since his *Death* they have dispatch'd him half Way to *Hell* in *Effigie*, and few of their late Historians do anywhere occasionally mention him without some little *Wiping Character*, as it were easie to find Materials for Instances in several Particulars. Yet (what was sure to be the Consequence, and indeed was but Just,) he impaired his Esteem with the *Romanists* at no faster a Rate than he advanced his Reputation with the *Reformed*, especially here in *England*, where a *Translation* of his *Paraphrase on the New Testament* was in the First of
Edward

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Edward the Sixth ordered to be placed in all Parish Churches, and in some of them to this Day remains: The Method whereof is very Profitable, and the Stile both Easie and Eloquent; yet on some Texts there is imposed but an harsh Interpretation, as I am in one Particular more especially engaged to take notice, because the same Sense is given of the same Passage toward the latter end of this following Piece, where Animadverting upon the Disingenuity of Commentators, he singles out *Franciscus de Lira*, who treating on that Text of *St. Luke, C. 22. V. 36.* [*He that hath no Sword, let him Sell his Garment, and Buy one,*] had without much Impropriety taken the whole *Literally*, tho' indeed with a very extravagant Inference for the Legitimacy of *Private Defence* in case of *Persecution*. Our Author might reasonably Arraign this Deduction of a dangerous Influence; but not content with
this,

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this, he proceeds, and as well here, as in his Paraphrase, maintains, that the Sentence is such a Sort of Metaphor, as by the *Sword* must be understood that only of the *Spirit*. It is true, a great many Commentators interpret the Sense Figuratively, yet so as the Word *Sword* shall be taken for neither *Material* nor *Spiritual*, but only denote the foretelling of Persecution, and caution the providing for Tribulation and Martyrdom. Yet some other *Expositors* do with more of *Naturalness*, and perhaps not less of *Truth*, apprehend the Words *Literally*, and conclude, that our Saviour hereby authorized his Disciples to be furnished with Weapons for Security against the Assaults of *private Robbers*, who at that time *Josephus* observes were very numerous: These same Arms, which might be employed for the preventing *private Pillage*, or *Assassination*, were to be laid down on all other the most
urging

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urging Provocations at the Feet of Publick Authority; of which, when there appear'd but a bare Face, our Lord commands *Peter* to sheath his Sword, and threatens, that whoever upon any such Occasion did hereafter *take it*, should *perish by it*. This may perhaps be thought too *serious*, and (as so) *impertinent* for the introducing so Light and Comical an Argument: But it ought to be supposed proper enough, since it has an immediate Relation to a Passage in the following Discourse, wherein, with Submission, I presume the Author was a little too Bold in his Comment, and in some Measure incurs the same Guilt himself which he so smartly upbraided in others. His Misunderstanding of which may however be the more meriting an Excuse, because it may well be supposed to have been occasioned by an Honest Design of promoting Unity, Peace, and Charity,
in

To the Reader.

in the obviating that Pretence, which was by some drawn from this very Text of propagating Christianity by all the most enforcing Methods of Torture, War and Slaughter; as if the *teaching of Nations* were to be accompanied with the *Baptizing* them in Blood, and Converts must have their own *Wounds to bleed*, before they could become sensible of the Benefits of a *wounded and bleeding Saviour*.

There needs no Excuse for any other Failure through the following Discourse; so that to remove the *Guard* to that Place, which the *Enemy* may find easiest to *attack*, I must divert the Apology for the *Author*, to one more requisite for the *Translator*. Against whom (beside all other Piques and Exceptions) there will no question be pointed this thrusting Objection, namely, That this same Piece of Wits Pageantry has been Twice already cloath'd in our Mother

[b] Tongue,

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Tongue, so that the *Republishing* at least of one of these Translations might have superceeded the Trouble of a new one. It may, I hope, be no Scandal to confess, that till after my first Onset I had neither by Sight nor Report gathered any Intimation of the Forefallment herein; of which I were yet the less inquisitive, because the Person who imposed on me the Undertaking, took the Negative for granted, though he stood in better Circumstances of being informed, and was more concerned in the Consequence. But allowing the worst, *Retranslations* of late have been so successively performed, so much to the *Service* of the *present* Times, and *Justice* to the first Authors, that Attempts of like Nature can be no longer invidious, if they are grounded on the same Inducements, and do answer the same End and Design. How far I can Square my Apology by this
Rule

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Rule will in part appear by this following Observation: *Originals* of one Language are differently to be rendred into another, according to their respective Matter and Subject; in an Argument of *History*, but more especially of *Physicks*, and *Mathematicks*, so much depends on the Critical Genuine Sense of the Author, that there can be no Latitude or Deviation allowed, but a *harsh Cadence* is far more preferrable, than a *bold, though tunable, Variation*: Whereas on the contrary, in *Poesie*, *Oratory*, *Panegyrick*, *Satyr*, or such like looser Subjects, the Excellency resulting rather from the Stile and Fancy in general, than from the strictness of particular Periods, there may, nay, there must, be some such Judgment or Discretion Tolerated, as shall within due Bounds new Marshal the Words, and in some Measure Plaister over the Abruptness and Incoherence of Sense. Accordingly the Design of

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Translations seems then best answered, when the respective Renderers square their Attempts by the foregoing Rule; the same Liberty being an unpardonable *Extravagance* in the one, which is no worse than a becoming *Freedom* in the other: As the Painter, who is employed to draw a Face to the Life, must confine his Pencil to an exact Transcript of the Natural Strokes, without any room to Fancy or Flattery, Limning even *Venus* herself with a *Blemishing Mole*; whereas in the Copying after a *Landskip*, or other flourishing Draught, both Colours and other Features for the Lustre of Prospect may be so far altered, as the Judgment of the Artist shall with Liberty recommend. The Result of this it is my Interest to have thus understood. Our Language hath been so much Polish'd and Refin'd since the first Appearance of this Declaration in *English*, * that had it fallen

* Done by
Sir Thomas Chaloner, and
Printed at
London,
1549, in
4to.

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fallen into my Hands e'er I entred on this Work, the Perusal of it would have scarcely discourag'd me from pursuing the Undertaking: For to have adventured abroad a Second Edition of this antiquated Version, would doubtless have been Interpreted as a Design rather of Exercising the Reader in the unpleasent Task of laboriously picking out the Meaning of obsolete Words and Expressions, than of fairly leading him into the True and Genuine Sense of the Original; although what is here asserted might be easily made out beyond all Possibility of Exception; yet the Learned Author acquitted himself so very well herein, that he comes fully up, even to the most commendable Way of Writing, which obtain'd in his Time. The Modern Translator (to whom I intended the Rule, but now laid down, to be chiefly applied) tied himself so strictly to a Literal Ob-

[b 3] servance

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fervance of the *Latin*, that to a bare *English* Reader, unacquainted with Allusions to the Eloquence of the *Latin* Tongue, his Version is sometimes puzzling and obscure, at least never so smooth and voluble, as the Gaiety of the Argument would better have dispens'd with; whereas in this *Rehearsal* of mine, I have (more I confess to my own Ease, and more gratefully, I question not, to the Palate of others) allowed my self such Elbow-room of Expression, as the Humourfomeness of the Subject, and the Idiom of each Language, did *invite*, if not *command*. Yet I would not have it hereby suspected that I have taken a straying Frisk or Jaunt, beyond the Limits of a just *Decorum*; no, I have been so *free*, I hope, as not to be *licencious*, so *bold*, as not to be *immodest*: I considered, that Rambling Variations, as well as *Verbatim* Constructions, are both the Scandalous Tasks of *School-Boys*; there-

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therefore I so far consulted the avoiding each Extreme, that I have *this Disjunctive Plea* to gag the Men of *Teeth* with, where-ever the *Latin* appears to have been seemingly injured, and receded from, there I doubted a too close Adherence would have been rough and jarring: Again, where the *English* wants any thing of Cadence or Coherence, there I check'd my Range, and was afraid of treading too wide from the Footsteps of the Original. For that the same Harangue, compleatly Eloquent in one Tongue, would be less winning and perswasive when close Interpreted in another, is as obvious, as that *Travellers*, if they adapt not their Garb to the Mode of the Country they reside in, are rather an Object to *Stare* and *Gaze* at, than to *Bow* to, *Reverence*, or be any Way *Respected*. The Reason on which this is grounded being a *Propriety* in each Language to peculiar Tropes, Figures, Phrases,

To the Reader.

Gr. is so known a Topick, that to them who understand the Original *Latin* it is wholly *superfluous*, and to those that do not it is altogether as *needless*.

T O

T O T H E

Author upon this Translation.

I've thought, *Sir*, hitherto without Success,
 On the Expedients for Happiness:
 This to desire by Nature we're inclin'd,
 Which we in our Researches seldom find.
 It doth, like Beauty, in the Fancy lye,
 As 'tis agreeable to the Lover's Eye,
 Camelion-like, from all Things takes a Dye. }
 One thinks it doth consist in sanguine Mirth,
 When the Debauch to Wit must give a Birth:
 Another's happy if *Corinna's* Kind;
 The Wise Man calls it Indolence of Mind:
 The Miser to them all prefers his Wealth;
 The jolly Liver says 'tis florid Health:
 But these mistaken Wretches go astray,
 Thy Author only hath found out the Way.
 Like to phantastick Chymists they presume,
 Till all their Projects break away in Fume:
 To search the Secret out they vainly try,
 For after all it doth in Folly lye.
 This, 'cause 'tis innocent, is the best Estate,
 Which with Resistance blunts the Edge of Fate;
 Him with a Genius Nature doth inspire,
 Which others by Philosophy acquire:

All Things content a Fool, and nothing cloy,
 Which they define the height of Humane Joys:
 He drivelling on the Shore secure can be,
 And view unmov'd the Tempests of the Sea.
 No Formidable News doth him alarm ;
 He is in Peace, tho' all the World doth arm ;
 'Gainst all Misfortunes hath a sure Defence ;
 His Skull's impregnable with want of Sense ;
 His Passion's quiet, and his Mind sedate ;
 Nothing provokes his Envy or his Hate:
 He unconcern'd can stand with Laughing Eyes,
 And see unworthy Men to Honour rise.
 Fortune a fordid Piece of Earth refines,
 And from a Dunghil drawn the Meteor shines.
 Then none the Upstart Insolence can endure,
 Whose Soul is narrow, and his Birth obscure :
 Under the Mask a Fury's Face doth show,
 Tho' for the Consulate he bowed low :
 His Will without his Reason doth command ;
 Thunder's too weighty for a Vulgar Hand.
 Then he is freed from Book's laborious Toil ;
 He doth not spend his Time, nor waste his Oil,
 Impair his Colour, and consume his Strength,
 Then grow too subtle for himself at length ;
 Before h' hath travell'd half the Way he's dead,
 The very Fineness of it breaks the Thread.
 The *Turks* allow an Idiot a Shrine ;
 They think in Folly something is Divine :
 His Actions still an equal Tenour keep,
 No frightful Images afflict his Sleep.

His Guardian-Angel then the Care doth take,
His Innocence preserves him when awake.
This great Advantage he is happy in,
He wants a brisk Capacity to sin.
Sometimes a Vice he blunders on by Chance,
But all his Faults are those of Ignorance.
Besides, a Changeling is no Hypocrite,
For what he is he shews you at first Sight ;
Whilst others do their Native selves disguise
With nauseous Pretence of being VVise :
Of Criticks they assume the furlly State,
And censure those they cannot imitate.
Like Bladders only they of VVind are full,
And hide with Gravity their being dull.
Tho' they with Scorn the VVorld do ridicule,
Yet the Affected VVife one is the Fool.

But my Digression returns to you,
To give that Character which is your due ;
And it impartially I can bestow,
The Author by his VVork I only know.
So that if what I find I must commend,
'Tis done without being bias'd as his Friend.
'Tis not your * Pride, your Folly, or your Fate,
That makes you chuse *Erasmus* to Translate.
If with such Versions you the VVorld delight,
You can oblige it equally, and write.
And here you have as much of Judgment shown,
As if it had entirely been your own.
This way of VVriting once was thought a Vice,
But now the Touches of it are so Nice,

* *Denham.*

That

That who this Elegant Province would adorn,
 Not Made, but he on purpose must be Born.
 Some spoil all Subjects that they write upon,
 As Ladies dawb a good Complexion :
 So Highway Beggars others Children hire,
 With ruddy Looks, and all their Limbs entire ;
 But they industriously are Cripples made,
 For to promote the canting Gypsies Trade.
 Things that are delicate foul Hands will stain,
 But from your's always they do Lustre gain.
 The *French* have luckily on this Subject fell,
 (The only Thing they ever yet did well.)
 Ingenuous *d'Ablancourt* shall lead the Van,
 With his smart Dialogues of *Lucian* ;
 Him copied by a skilful Hand we see
 An Ancient Droll in Modern Raillery.
 A double Honour to *Boyleau* is due,
 Who is a Writer and Translator too :
 He chose the Noblest Author of his Time,
 Like his *Longinus* *ὁ ἄριστος* is sublime.
 Then *Vaugelas* did mighty Pains bestow
 On *Curtius*, but he always was too slow ;
 His Hero in less Time had *Asia* got ;
 He conquer'd faster than this *Frenchman* wrote.
 But still their natural Vanity is such,
 In this, and all Things else, they do too much.
 They with superfluous Branches kill the Root,
 And make their Muse a Suburb Prostitute ;
 For what at first was cautiously enclos'd,
 Like to the common Way is now expos'd.
 Every Coquet can now her Author quote,
 And, like her Paraquetto, talk by Rote.

Their

Their Wit is, like their Conversation, slight;
 The *English* with a Manly Vigour write.
 If they at any time with Labour strain,
 The Greatness of the Birth doth cause the Pain :
 With Joints robustly knit the Infant grows,
 And so makes Compensation for the Throws.
 By reading your Translation we can tell
 How much in their own Way we them excel.
 Our Learned *Athens* lately hath brought forth
 Men hardly to be equall'd for their Worth.
Lucretius first in *English* did appear,
 (But you, *Sir*, worship Muses less severe.)
 That Work is now unto Perfection brought,
 Which all Men dreaded in the very Thought ;
 Our fruitful Mother hath herself outdone
 In Teeming with so Excellent a Son :
 Of ours the Admiration doth engage,
 And the Applauses of the future Age :
 You with the Softness of your Art beguile,
 And teach the rigid *Stoick* how to smile :
 You hit the Humour of the Book so true,
 That Comical *Erasmus* breathes in you.
 We see the Spirit of the Author shine
 In every Page, in every pleasant Line,
 The Stile's so clear, so admirably fine. }
 What Fruits will not your Age maturely bring,
 So fertile, if so early is your Spring ?
 The Rising Sun sets forth a previous Ray,
 Engaging to shine brightly all the Day.
 Your Talents, *Sir*, do make you justly fit }
 For to Translate this Noble Piece of Wit,
 Who have your self so great a Share of it.
M. MORGAN.

To his Ingenious Friend, on his
Excellent Translation of *Moriae*
Encomium.

THere's ne'er a Blade of Honour in the Town,
But if you chance to term him Fool or Clown,
Straight Satisfaction cries, and then with speed
The Time, the Place, and Rapier's length's decreed.
Prodigious Fops, I'll swear, which can't agree
To be call'd what's their Happiness to be:

Blest Ideots!

That in an humble Sphere securely move,
And there the Sweets of a safe Dulness prove,
Nor envy the proud Heights of those who range above.
Folly, sure Friend of a misguided Will,
Affords a kind Excuse for doing Ill;
And to the peaceful Breast wherein she lives,
A free and a true Gust of Pleasure gives:
Whilst Wisdom's Patron with discreet Alloy,
Palls his Delights, and deadens all his Joy:
Than this nought more does evidence the Love,
Or more ensures the Care of Powers above.
Heaven still bestows on those it does despise
The creditable Plague of being VVise.
And Socrates, that Prudent, Thinking Tool,
Had the Gods lik'd him would have prov'd a Fool.
My thinks our Author, when without a Flaw,
The Graces of his Mistress he does draw,
Wishes (if Metempsychosis be true,
And Souls do change their Case, and all anew,)

*In his next Life he only might aspire
To the few Brains of some soft Country Squire,
Whose Head with such like Rudiments is fraught,
As in his Youth his careful Grannum taught.*

*And now (dear Friend) how shall we to thy Brows
Pay all those Laurels which we justly owe?
For thou fresh Honours to the Work dost bring,
And to the Theme: Nor seems that pleasing Thing,
Which he so well in Latin has express'd,
Less Comical in English Garments dress'd;
Thy Sentences are all so clearly wrought,
And so exactly plac'd is every Thought,
That, which is more oblig'd, we scarce can see
The Subject by thine Author, or himself by thee.*

In the Person of FOLLY.

Distance: Away, you fullen, sheepish Souls,
Whose broody Thoughts fit always hatching
(Rules !
Your Tub-Philosophers, whose croaking Brains
Make Earth as Hellish as the Stygian Plains ;
Your uncouth, low'ring Grimaces become
Your moody Musings on your selves at Home.
But no Infernal Visage must be seen,
Where all are to be jolly by design.
Vail then, or vanish, die, or disappear,
And leave us Fools to our Careless here.

My

My thund'ring Mandates having purg'd the Air,
 The Gods consenting, and the Passage clear,
 I thus attempt my Grandeur to extol,
 Acting my own Encomiaſt in a Droll :
 I'll make descriptive Gloſſes on a Straw,
 And cant the VWorld to a *Tarantula*.

Thus, long-bleſs'd Herd, have I with Patience ſeen
Minerva's Scepter taking Place of mine:
 That curs'd *Virago*, whoſe officious Spies
 Have watch'd you out of all your Libraries :
 Her School-Devotees, a baſe, degenerate Brood,
 Like waſpiſh Inſects ſwarm, and buzz abroad.
 Theſe with unruly Inſolence have made
 Injurious Inroads on thoſe Rights I had ;
 They fetter Souls with magiſterial Rage,
 And lecture Freemen into Vaſſalage ;
 Nay, by the Circumventions of Diſpute,
 They'll prove my Chaſtity a Proſtitute.
 Thus overgrown in Sophiſtry and Pride,
 They're Kings themſelves, but make all Slaves beſide :
 And ſhall theſe Rebels thus uſurp it on ?
 No, their Dogmatick Tyranny ſhall down.
 Inſtead of Problems, Schemes, Compendiums, Rules,
 Thoſe Execution-Engines of the Schools,
 I, with my Pictures, Puppets, Dwarfs and Apes,
 Masks, Mermaids, Interludes, and Antick Shapes,
 Will mount the Stage, ridiculoſly Fine,
 In all the Colours of an *Indian* Queen,
 VVhich Magazine of Rarities preſents,
 A Gallimaufry of Divertiſements ;

For

For beautified by Art, or Nature's Dress,
 They all enamour by their Prettiness,
 While the admiring Crowd, with Captive Eyes,
 Do Profelyte themselves to Votaries.

In early Days, when Men, unus'd to Rules,
 Commenc'd by natural Instalment Fools,
 When Sacred Ignorance its Umbrage spread,
 And all fate cool and quiet in the Shade,
 So long the Province of my Reign did know
 No other Bounds than Earth and Heaven do.
 But when the World grew light, and hot as Noon,
 And Dog-star Wit made all a Torrid Zone,
 Then Questionists arose, Men who would know
 Why Things were thus and thus, and why not so ;
 These pert and restless, started Scruples still,
 Painful to state, but worse to reconcile,
 Yet well resolv'd by one disdainful Smile ;
 Which hot-brain'd Tribe, uneasy and morose,
 Made all the World an Inquisition-house.

But now my Crown shall be restor'd anew,
 And False Pretenders shall confess the True ;
 Their long usurp'd Dominion shall decline,
 And die into the Establishment of mine.
 Now let the World keep Halcion, and carefs
 In endless Circles of unstinted Bliss ;
 Let uniyersal Ravishments encrease
 Your Joys beyond Description or Degrees :
 Don't baulk your Humours, lest for want of Vent
 Your Spirits stagnate into Sediment,

But frolick on without consulting Fate,
 Till your loose shattering Souls evaporate.
 Each individual Votary shall share
 Repeated Pledges of my constant Care :
 A balmy Mist of *Lethe*-Dews shall fall
 In cool refreshing Opiates on all :
 As Lands of Spices in a fragrant Air,
 Disperse and scatter their Perfumes afar,
 VVith equal Frankness, and with greater Loye,
 VVill I show'r down my Blessings from Above.
 That peaceful Days may still my Reign await,
 I'll give the God of VVar an Opiate.
 Your Starch'd Punctilio Bravoes can't conclude
 A private Quarrel but with Loss of Blood :
 But my kind Fools are naturally strange
 To all the Means and Mischief of Revenge.
 And thus I'll lay all Discords that arise
 From being really or reputed VVife.
 Let not the Jolly Heir, who revels on,
 Unravelling all his Father's Thrift had spun,
 Turn Saint, for fear of some restrictive Ties,
 Or that penurious Project, Legacies :
 I'll keep the Sire so doating, he shall ne'er
 Impoverish this, or chuse another Heir.
 Thus with a Princely Care will I contrive
 To guard your Rights, and my Prerogative.
 The peevish Cynick, in a whining Strain,
 VVill strive to Preach Tub-learning up again,
 And prove that none but Anchorites are Men.

But

But now you'll scorn their Philosophick Rants,
And laugh their Reasonings out of Countenance:
You'll see the Fruit and Influence of Books,
And ne'er desire to b' aggrandiz'd to Stocks.
Admonish'd thus, and repossess'd anew
Of Freedom, Peace, and my Protection too,
Career it on with an advancing haste,
Let one Day's Joy exceed all Ages past:
With Frolicks drein your Souls of all their Earth,
Ne'er think, but laugh, and breathe no Air but Mirth:
And now Farewel, I must with speed away,
The Bucksome Gods keep Jubilee to Day,
And all their Jollity will soon conclude,
If I don't come and act an Interlude:
They vote me still the Prolocutor's Chair,
Besides, I am to make th' *Encœnia* there.

*Occasioned by the Translation of Erasmus
his Moriaë Encomium.*

Since awkward *Folly* is so neatly drawn,
 And all its Charms in *Nakedness* are shown,
 Since barren *Wisdom* unattended fits,
 And no Respect, and few *Encomiums*, meets, }
 Too poor to keep an Equipage of *VVits*,
 Blest is the senseless Man, the thickest Skull,
 The grinning, hardened and undaunted, Fool.
 Blest are the *Dutch*, who this their Idol prize,
 And wisely fall its humble *Votaries*.
 Their *VVorths* the *Press* doth often speak with Pain,
 The *Press*, to all a Pimp, and Bawd for Gain.
 To th' World each strives to shew his Learned Soul,
 And in great Letters writes himself an *O VV L*.
 But tho' when living they *Abuses* meet,
 By being dead they *Fame* and *Credit* get :
 In *Epitaph* some Hundred Pounds are spent,
 And every Fool hath then a *Monument*.
Leyden in *Physick* *Traacts* would often please
 Our *only* *Sickness*, and the *worst* *Disease*;
 Hither their vast dull *Commentaries* sail,
 And shew that *Gospellers* sometimes may fail.
 In *Waters* bred they *Inundations* drew,
 And load all *Nations* with a *Deluge* too.
 Happy, then happy, must our *Island* be,
VVith *Parsons* stock'd, and *Dutch* *Divinity* :
 Yet these our wise, mistaken, *Croud* desire,
 And all that from *Beyond-Sea* come admire.

To our Fine Ladies *Paris* thus unloads
 Its Ribbons, Lackies, and its Chamber-maids.
 The *French* indeed have often broke the Peace,
 But Fashions and Romance do plague us less.
 For no Man now securely lives at Home,
 The *Turks* and *Dutch* invade our Christendom.
 In'ts Native Soil their Dulness safe may rest,
 But why should they their Neighbours thus infest ?
 To *Holland Grotius* by *Mistake* was sent,
 Sure that Man Nature for our *England* meant.
 Their Worlds in all Things still must us obey,
 As Lords and Sovereigns by Land and Sea.
De Wit, *Trump*, *Ruyter*, easily were beat,
 Their Ships from ours do naturally retreat,
Erasmus only does remain *unconquer'd* yet.
 That Name alone (worthy the Noblest Muse)
 Does from Disgrace and utmost Scorn excuse.
 His Youthful, Neatest, Stile atones for all
 Their Clumfiness, a Sin that's National.
 In Comick Dress he gravely preaches Sense,
 Directs, and jeers, and chides his Audience.
 O'er Thoughts profound Mirth dances all the Way,
 Like the Sun-beams that on deep Waters play.
 Henceforth I'll all laborious Trifles flight,
 Thy Works can teach to talk, and how to write.
 Cease then, ye Sots, that us in spight of Fate
 By damn'd Buffoonery would imitate.
 You that by Tavern-Jests a Fame would get,
 And feed upon the *Excrements* of Wit ;
 To raise up Mirth who basely rob the Croud,
 Sing nobly out of Tune, and laugh aloud.

This

This from *Erasmus* Ghost much Pity drew;
 He comes our Island to inform anew.
 Methinks his Ship upon the *Thames* appears,
 Proud of the Weight and Learning that it bears.
 The Multitude on th' Banks do shout their Joys
 To greet his Friend, and Reverend *More* does rise.
 The Standard is set up, the Cannons roar,
 And all *Erasmus* Welcome to our *English* Shore.

On the Argument and Design of
 the following Oration.

WHate'er the Modern Satyrs o'th' Stage,
 To jirk the Failures of a sliding Age,
 Have lavishly expos'd to Publick View,
 For a Discharge to all from Envy due,
 Here in as lively Colours Naked lye,
 With equal Wit, and more of Modesty,
 Those Poets, with their free disclosing Arts,
 Strip Vice so near to its Uncomely Parts,
 Their Libels prove but Lessons, and they teach
 Those very Crimes which they intend t' impeach:
 While here so wholesome all, tho' sharp t' th' Taste,
 So briskly free, yet so resolv'dly Chaste;
 The Virgin Naked as her God of Bows,
 May read or hear when Blood at highest flows;

Not

*Nor more Expence of Blushes thence arise,
 Than while the leſſring Matron does advise
 To guard her Virtue, and her Honour prize.*

*Satyr and Panegyrick, diſtant be,
 Yet jointly here they both in one agree.
 The Whole's a Sacrifice of Salt and Fire;
 So does the Humour of the Age require,
 To chaſe the Touch, and ſo foment Deſire.
 As Doctrine-dandling Preachers lull aſleep
 Their unattentive pent-up Fold of Sheep;
 The Opiated Milk glews up the Brain,
 And th' Babes of Grace are in their Cradles lain;
 While mounted Andrews, bawdy, bold and loud,
 Like Cocks, alarm all the drowſie Crowd,
 Whoſe glittering Ears are prick'd as bolt-upright,
 As ſailing Hairs are hoisted in a Fright.
 So does it fare with croaking Spawns o'th' Preſs,
 The Mould o'th' Subject alters the Succeſs;
 What's ſerious, like Sleep, grants Writs of Eaſe,
 Satyr and Ridicule can only pleaſe;
 As if no other Animals could gape,
 But the biting Badger, or the ſnick'ring Ape.*

*Folly by Irony's commended here,
 Sooth'd, that her Weakneſs may the more appear.
 Thus Fools, who trick'd, in Red and Yellow ſhine,
 Are made believe that they are wondrous fine,
 When all's a Plot t' expoſe them by deſign.
 The Largesses of Folly here are ſtrown,
 Like Pebbles, not to pick, but trample on.*

Thus

*Thus Spartans laid their soaking Slaves before
The Boys, to juggle, kick, and tumble o'er :
Not that the dry-lipp'd Youngsters might combine
To taste and know the Mystery of Wine,
But wonder thus at Men transform'd to Swine ;
And th' Power of such Enchantments to escape,
Timely renounce the Devil of the Grape.*

*So here,
Though Folly Speaker be, and Argument,
Wit guides the Tongue, Wisdom's the Lecture meant.*

A

Prefatory Epistle

F R O M

E R A S M U S

T O

Sir T H O. M O O R.

IN my late Travels from Italy into England, that I might not trifle away my Time in the Rehearsal of Old Wives Fables, I thought it more pertinent to imploy my Thoughts in reflecting upon some past Studies, or calling to remembrance several of those highly Learned, as well as smartly Ingenious, Friends I had here left behind, among whom you (Dear SIR) were represented as the Chief; you, whose Memory, while ab-

[d] sent

sent at this Distance, I respect with no less a Complacency than I was wont while present to enjoy your more intimate Conversation, which last afforded me the greatest Satisfaction I could possibly hope for. Having therefore resolved to be a doing, and deeming that Time improper for any Serious Concerns, I thought good to divert my self with drawing up a Panegyrick upon Folly. How! What Maggot (say you) put this in your Head? Why, the First hint (Sir) was your own Sirname of Moor, which comes as near the Literal Sound of the * Word, as you your self are distant from the Signification of it, and that in all Mens Judgments is vastly wide. In the next Place I supposed that this kind of Sporting Wit would be by you more especially accepted of, by you (Sir) that are wont with this Sort of Jocosse Raillery (such as, if I mistake not, is neither dull nor impertinent,) to be mightily pleased, and in your ordinary Converse to approve your self a Democritus Junior: For truly, as you do from a singular Vein of Wit ve-

ry

* *Mœia.*

ry much dissent from the Common Herd of Mankind; so by an Incredible Affability and Pliableness of Temper you have the Art of Suiting your Humour with all Sorts of Companies. I hope therefore you will not only readily accept of this Rude Essay as a Token from your Friend, but take it under your more Immediate Protection, as being Dedicated to you, and by that Title adopted for yours, rather than to be Fathered as my own. And it is a Chance if there be wanting some Quarrelsome Persons that will shew their Teeth, and pretend these Fooleries are either too Buffoon-like for a Grave Divine, or too Satyrical for a Meek Christian, and so will exclaim against me as if I were ramping up some Old Farce, or acted anew the Lucian again with a Peevish Snarling at all Things. But those who are offended at the Lightness and Pedantry of this Subject, I would have them consider that I do not set my self for the First Example of this Kind, but that the same has been oft done by many Considerable

ble Authors. For thus several Ages since Homer wrote of no more weighty a Subject than of a War between the Frogs and Mice, Virgil of a Gnat and a Pudding-Cake, and Ovid of a Nut. Polycrates commended the Cruelty of Busiris, and Isocrates, that corrects him for this, did as much for the Injustice of Glaucus. Favorinus extoll'd Therites, and wrote in Praise of a Quartane Ague. Synecius pleaded in behalf of Baldness: And Lucian defended a Sipping-Fly. Seneca drollingly related the Deifying of Claudius; Plutarch the Dialogue betwixt Gryllus and Ulysses; Lucian and Apuleius the Story of an Ass; and Somebody else Records the last Will of a Hog, of which St. Hierom makes Mention. So that if they please, let themselves think the Worst of me, and fancy to themselves that I were all this while a Playing at Push-pin, or riding Astride on a Hobby-Horse. For how unjust is it, if when we allow different Recreations to each Particular Course of Life, we afford no
 Diversion

Diversion to Studies? Especially when Trifles may be a Whet to more Serious Thoughts, and Comical Matters may be so treated of, as that a Reader of Ordinary Sense may possibly thence reap more Advantage than from some more Big and Stately Argument: As while One in a Long-winded Oration descants in Commendation of Rhetorick or Philosophy, Another in a Fulsome Harangue sets forth the Praise of his Nation, a Third makes a Zealous Invitation to a Holy War with the Turks, Another confidently sets up for a Fortune-teller, and a Fifth states Questions upon meer Impertinencies. But as nothing is more Childish than to handle a Serious Subject in a Loose, Wanton Stile, so is there nothing more Pleasant than so to treat of Trifles, as to make them seem nothing less than what their Name imports. As to what relates to my self, I must be forc'd to submit to the Judgment of others; yet except I am too partial to be Judge in my own Case, I am apt to believe I have praised Folly in

[d 3] such

such a Manner as not to have deserved the Name of a Fool for my Pains. To reply now to the Objection of Satyricalness Wits have been always allowed this Priviledge, that they might be Smart upon any Transactions of Life, if so be their Liberty did not extend to Railing; which makes me wonder at the Tender-ear'd Humour of this Age, which will admit of no Address without the Prefatory Repetition of all Formal Titles; nay, you may find some so preposterously devout, that they will sooner wink at the Greatest Affronts against our Saviour, than be content that a Prince, or a Pope, should be nettled with the least Joque or Gird; especially in what relates to their Ordinary Customs. But he who so blames Mens Irregularities, as to lash at no one particular Person by Name, does he (I say) seem to carp so properly as to teach and instruct? And if so, how am I concerned to make any farther Excuse? Beside, he who in his Strictures points in-
differently

differently) at all, he seems not angry at one Man, but at all Vices.

Therefore if any singly Complain they are particularly reflected upon, they do but betray they own Guilt, at least their Cowardice. St. Hierom dealt in the same Argument at a much Freer and Sharper Rate; nay, and he did not sometime refrain from naming the Persons: Whereas I have not only stifled the Mentioning any one Person, but have so tempered my Stile, as the Ingenious Reader will easily perceivè I aimed at Diversion rather than Satyr. Neither did I so far imitate Juvenal, as to rake into the Sink of Vices to procure a Laughter, rather than create a Hearty Abhorrence. If there be any one that after all remains yet unsatisfied, let him at least consider that there may be Good Use made of being reprehended by Folly, which since we have feigned as speaking, we must keep up that Character which is suitable to the Person introduced.

(viii)

But why do I trouble you (Sir) with this Needless Apology, you that are so peculiar a Patron, as though the Cause itself be none of the best, you can at the least give it the best Protection. Farewel.

A

A
CATALOGUE
OF THE
PAINTINGS
OF
Hans Holbein.

I. **T**HE History of our Saviour's Passion for Mankind and Crucifixion by the Jews; in Eight Pieces join'd together. An Incomparable Work. 'Tis to be seen at *Basil*, in a Withdrawing Room of the Town-House, *vulg. Ratib-House*. 'Tis reported that some Thousands of Rix-Dollars were offer'd for this by *Maximilian Duke of Bavaria*.

In the Upper Part of this same Town-House, Three of the Walls are adorn'd with divers Histories, all by the same Hand.

II. The Dead Body of our Saviour lying along; done on a Board Four Times as broad as long. MDXXI, denote the Year, *H. H.* the Painter's Name, *Hans Holbein*. *JESUS NAZARENUS REX JUD.* is writ in Letters of Gold. In the Library of the University.

III. The

of Hans Holbein.

III. The Supper of our Lord with his Apostles. Religious Worship has been given to this Piece, or rather Fragment of One; the most Part being lost, and what remains disfigured with Cracks: Yet nothing has been omitted that is in the Power of Art to restore and amend it. In the Library of the University.

IV. Another Supper of our Lord done on Cloth glewed on a Board: A valuable Piece, though drawn by *Holbein* being yet very Young. In the Library of the University.

V. Christ Ty'd to a Pillar, Mock'd and Scourg'd by his Executioners. This being not so exquisitely done, seems to be a Work of his Younger Years. In the Library of the University.

VI. A Board painted on both Sides: On one Side a School-Master teaches Two Boys, the One to Read, the Other to write: On the Reverse the same School-Master teaches Two Boys the Alphabet, with a Rod in his Hand; Two more sitting on a Bench. Over-against him is a Woman teaching a Girl. This Board seems to have been hung over a Door to invite the Youth to learn Fair Writing, and to shew the School: As appears by the adjoin'd Inscription in *High Dutch*;

*Wer jemand hie der gern wolt lernen Dutsch
schriben, &c. i. e. If any has a Mind to learn
to Write and Read Dutch, &c. 1516. And
on the other Part An. M. CCCCC XVI. In
the Library of the University.*

VII. A

A Catalogue of the Paintings

VII. A Side Draught of *Desiderius Erasmus* writing a Paraphrase on the Gospel of *St. Mark*, with several Rings on his Hand. In the Library of the University of *Basil*.

VIII. An Oval Picture of the same of a smaller Size. In the Library of the University of *Basil*.

IX. The Picture of the Renown'd *Civilian Bonifacius Amerbachius*, Professor of the Law. On the Branch of a Tree hangs a Board with this Inscription;

PICTA licet facies, vivæ non cedo; sed instar
Sum Domini, justis nobile Lineolis.

Ὅμοιοις δὲ μὲν περαγίτ τερετήν, sic graviter in me

Id quod naturæ est exprimit Artis Opus.

Bonif. Amerbachium Joh. Holbein depingebat.

A. M. DXIX. eid. Octobr. In the Library of the University of *Basil*.

X. The Picture of a Woman sitting with a Girl in her Arm, and stroaking a Boy with her Hand. She is said to be the Wife of *Holbein*, and these his Children. In the Library of the University at *Basil*. Engrav'd by *Jo. Wirtz*.

XI. The Picture of an *Alsatian* Lady playing with a Boy. In the Library of the University at *Basil*.

XII. The Picture of a Beautiful Woman with this Inscription, *Lais Corinthiaca*, 1526. In the Library of the University of *Basil*.

XIII. *Adam* and *Eve* from the Waste upwards. The Last holds an Apple in her Hand. The Drawer and Date are declar'd by this Inscription, 1517. H. H. In the Library of the University of *Basil*.

XIV. Two

A Catalogue of the Paintings

XIV. Two Pieces join'd, done in Black and White; one of them representing, in a Stately Porch, Christ sitting Naked, Crown'd with Thorns, and Lamenting: The other the Blessed Virgin *Mary* praying in the Temple. In the Library of the University at *Basil*.

XV. Two Death's Heads near a Grate. In the Library of the University at *Basil*.

XVI. The Picture of *John Holbein*, wearing a Red Hat or Cap, and a White Garment trimm'd with Black. In the Library of the University of *Basil*.

XVII. Choice Sketches upon Paper, or the First Draughts of Pictures, by the Ancients call'd *Σκιαγραφαί*. These were by the Famous *Amerbachius* carefully Collected, and Mark'd with this Title, *HANS HOLBEIN GENUINA*, 103 *Stuck*: For in so many Leaves are they contain'd. The Principal of them are those which represent the History of our Saviour's Passion, together with those of *Sir Thomas Moor's* Family. A great Part of 'em seem to have been design'd by *Holbein* as Patterns for Painting on Glafs. In the Library at *Basil*.

XVIII. The Picture of *James Mejer*, Consul, vulg. *Burgher-master* of *Basil*, and *Anna Scheckenburlin*, his Wife, together with the First Draught, or *Σκιαγραφία*, which *Limners* call *Exquisse*, or Dead Life; marked thus, *H. H. 1516*. In the *Museum* of *Feschius*.

XIX. A Picture of *Desiderius Erasmus*, Rot. In the same Place.

XX. There

of Hans Holbein.

XX. There is a whole House Painted Without-side by *Holbein*, in the *Iron-street*, called *Eissengassen*, not far from the Bridge of the *Rhine*: Amongst many Pillars and Buildings, in one Place, is to be seen *Marcus Curtius* throwing himself headlong into the Chasm in the *Forum* at *Rome* for the Safety of the Commonwealth; in another, a Ring of Country-men and Women Dancing. 'Tis undoubtedly a Noble Performance, worthy of a more Magnificent Building, and more Ample Prospect. For doing this *Holbein* had a Reward of Sixty Florins, as *Zwingerus* remarks in *Meth. Apodemica*, f. 119.

XXI. The Picture of *Charles V. Emperor*, which a Painter of *Amsterdam*, *Le Blond* by Name, sent by the Earl of *Buckingham* in search of Paintings over all the World, especially *Holbein's* most Famous Pieces, purchased at *Lyons* in *France* for an Hundred Crowns. *An.* 1633.

XXII. The Picture of *DES. ERASMUS, ROT.* Bought at *Basil* by the same *Le Blond* for an Hundred Ducats of Gold; which being afterwards brought into *Holland*, he caus'd to be exactly cut in Copper, full Length, by *Wischer* the Engraver.

XXIII. To this Board, on the Right Hand, is another fastned with Iron, on which is the Picture of *John Frobenius*, the Famous Printer. These Two Pieces have no doubt been done at the Direction and Charges of *Erasmus*, for the Love and Honour he bore to *Frobenius*, whom he much esteem'd, placing him therefore

A Catalogue of the Paintings

fore on the Right Hand; to whom also he presented them. I believe these Two Pictures of *Erasmus* and *Frobenius* are the same I saw in the Royal Repository at *London* in 1672.

XXIV. It appears from the Epistles of *Erasmus*, that his Picture has been often drawn by *Holbein*, and carried into *France, England,* and other Places.

XXV. A Piece of about Three *Basil* Ells Square, containing the Pictures of *James Mejer*, Consul of *Basil*, on the Right Side, with his Sons; on the other the Consul's Wife and Daughters: All of them done to the Life, kneeling before the Altar. This was first sold at *Basil* for an Hundred Pieces of Gold; for which *Le Blond*, the Painter of *Amsterdam*, paid a Thousand Rix Dollars in 1633 at *Basil*, and sold it again for Three Times as much to *Mary of Medici*, Grandmother to *Lewis XIV.* then living in *Holland*.

XXVI. The Pictures of *Henry VIII.* King of *England*, the Queen his Consort, his Son, Prince *Edward*, Queen *Mary*, call'd afterwards the *Catholick*, and *Elizabeth*. Upon the Wall of the King's Bed-chamber in *Whitehall, London*.

XXVII. The Picture of *Thomas Howard*, Earl of *Norfolk*, &c. Lord High Admiral, &c. Engrav'd by *L. Vorsterman*. In *Arundel-House, London*.

XXVIII. The Picture of a Maid of *Basil* array'd in Wedding-Cloaths of Purple Silk, adorn'd with Chains, Bracelets, and Gold Rings. In *Arundel-House, London*.

XXIX. The

of **Hans Holbein.**

XXIX. The Picture of *Anne of Cleve*, Wife to *Henry VIII.* King of *England*: Engraved by *Wenceslaus Hollarus* in 1648. In *Arundel-House*, *London*.

XXX. The Picture of *Sir Thomas Moor*, Chancellor of *England*. Engraved by *L. Vorsterman*. In the *Museum* of *Jo. Waverus*, at *Antwerp*.

XXXI. A Piece representing *Sir Thomas Moor* with all his Family; of which *Erasmus* makes mention, *Epistle 21. Book 26.* to *Sir Thomas Moor*, and to his Daughter *Margaret Ruper*, *Epist. 50. Book 26.* The First Draught of this is to be seen amongst the Drawings of the University of *Basil*; which has moreover the following Names inscrib'd in the Pictures:

John Moor, the Father, in his 76th Year.

Anne Grisacre, *John Moor's* Spouse, in her 15th Year.

Sir Thomas Moor, in his 50th Year.

Alice, *Sir Thomas Moor's* Wife, in her 57th Year.

John Moor, Son of *Sir Thomas Moor*, in his 19th Year.

Margaret Ruper, Daughter of *Sir Thomas Moor*, in her 22d Year.

Elizabeth Dame, Daughter of *Sir Thomas Moor*, in her 21st Year.

Cecilia Heroin, Daughter of *Sir Thomas*, in her 20th Year.

Margaret Gigo, Wife of *Clement*, an Acquaintance and Relation of *Sir Thomas* and his Daughters, in her 22d Year.

Henry Paterson, *Sir Thomas Moor's* Jester, in his 40th Year.

XXXII.

A Catalogue of the Paintings

XXXII. A Picture of *Des. Erasmus*, Rot. In the Imperial Treasury at *Vienna*.

XXXIII. The Picture of some *English* Person of Quality, perhaps that of *John Moor*, the Chancellor's Father, being one of *Holbein's* most Valuable Pieces. In the Imperial Treasury at *Vienna*.

XXXIV. Two Pieces about Five Foot high, on which are represented Monks digging up the Bones of some Saint out of the Grave, and carrying them into a Church in Solemn Procession. In the Imperial Treasury at *Vienna*.

XXXV. The Picture of an Archbishop of *Canterbury*, with the Ensigns of his Dignity, viz. The Double Cross and Mitre; an half Length as big as the Life: On a Green Veil, which serves for a Ground, is read this Inscription, *Anno Domini MDXXVII. Ætatis sue LXX*. In the *French King's* Cabinet.

XXXVI. The Picture of a certain Mathematician, with the several Instruments of his Art, a half Length also as big as the Life. In the *French King's* Closet. 'Tis undoubtedly *Nicholaus*, the Astronomer of *Henry VIII.* King of *England*.

XXXVII. The Picture of *Anne of Cleve*, King *Henry VIII's* Wife. In the *French King's* Closet.

XXXVIII. The Picture of *Holbein*, done by himself. In the *French King's* Cabinet.

XXXIX. A Picture of *Erasmus* writing; of a smaller Size. In the aforesaid Closet.

XL. The

of Hans Holbein.

XL. The Picture of an Old Man, with a Gold Chain about his Neck, and a Cross fastned to it, which he holds in one Hand, and a Scroll in the other: Of a smaller Size. In the *French King's Closet*.

XLI. A Picture of Sir *Thomas Moor*, less than the Life; on the Ground of which is this Inscription, *Ex Julii, Anno H. VIII. XXXVIII. Ætatis sue An. XXXIII.* In the *French King's Closet*.

XLII. The Picture of a Man holding Prayer-Beads, near a Death's Head. In the *French King's Closet*.

XLIII. A Piece of about Four Foot square, wherein are Dancings, Fishings, Huntings, Tiltings, and many other Sports. In the Publick Library at *Zurich*.

XLIV. An Arched Room resembling a Church; in which *St. John* holds a Wax-Taper before the Virgin Mother of God sitting, the rest of the Apostles standing round, and the Angels Singing on high. In the Picture-Room of Mr. *Werdmyller*, at *Zurich*.

XLV. The Picture of an *English Earl*. In the same Picture-Room.

XLVI. The Picture of *Conrad Pellican*, Professor of Theology and Hebrew in the School of *Zurich*: To which is added the Four following *Latin Verses*;

Bis septem lustris vixi, & quinq; insuper annos:

Fatidico quare cum Simeone precor,

Nunc in pace tuum Deus O dimitte Ministrum,

Detur & in Christi regna redire tui.

A Catalogue of the Paintings

In the House of Mr. *Martin Werdmyller*, a Senator of the Republick of *Basil*.

XLVII. Christ in his Cradle, and the Blessed Virgin before him on her Knees, *Joseph* standing by; at a distance appear an Ox and an Ass, and the Shepherds warn'd by the Angels afar. At *Lucern*, in the Church of the *Augustin-Friars*.

XLVIII. Christ in his Mother's Lap, ador'd by the Wisemen. *Ibid.*

XLIX. Christ taken down from the Cross; the Blessed Virgin, the Apostle *John*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Nicodemus*, and others, standing round: The Thieves on each Side hanging yet on the Cross. *Ibid.*

L. The Face of Christ represented on a Napkin held up by little Boys. *Ibid.*

LI. Christ from the Chair teaching the *Jews*. *Ibid.*

LII. CHRIST, O. S. fastned with Four Nails to the Cross, betwixt the Blessed Virgin and St. *John* Sorrowing; the Inscription being in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*.

LIII. A Piece in which the Chief Chirurgion receives the Privilege offer'd from King *Henry*, representing all the Persons to the Life.

LIV. The Triumph of *Plutus*, or Riches: *Plutus* sitting in a most Magnificent Chariot, followed by *Cræsus*, *Midas*, and others. In *England*.

LV. The

of Hans Holbein.

LV. The Triumph of Poverty: A Woman almost Dead with Hunger, sitting in a Chariot drawn by Four starv'd Horses, followed by a vast Number of Poor. In *England*.

LVI. All the Prophets, greater and smaller, in Nine Pieces; each, of a Yard in Measure, representing Two of 'em, drawn in Distemper. These Pieces were carried to *Holland* by *Bartholomew Sarbruck*, an Exquisite Painter, where he left Copies of 'em Drawn with his own Hand, which are kept in the *Feschian Museum*.

LVII. The Picture of *Mary*, Queen of *England*. At the House of *Dr. Patinus*.

LVIII. The Picture of an Old Man, with a Red Forked Beard. From his Golden Cross, fasten'd by Four others to a Black Cord, 'tis Conjectur'd that he was General of the Order of *St. John* at *Jerusalem*, call'd afterwards of *Rhodes*, and last of all of *Maltha*. In the aforesaid House.

LIX. Moreover, our *Holbein* Drew the Pictures of many Persons of Quality, of both Sexes, which are everywhere kept with great Care, especially in *England*, where he spent the most Part of his Life.

LX. He also Cut many Things in Wood, amongst which were the Cutts of the Bible, and the Dance of Death, *Vulg. Todtentanz*. To this that is not unlike which, Drawn to the Life, as some say, by the Hand of *Holbein* himself, is with great Pleasure seen by Strangers,

A Catalogue of the Paintings
gers, within a Wooden Grate at *Basil*, in the
Church-Yard of the *Predicants* of the Suburbs
of *St. John*.

The End of Hans Holbein's Works.

A
PANEGYRICK
UPON
FOLLY,
Declamation-wife.

FOLLY Speaks.

HOW slightly soever I am esteemed *The Laugh-
ter of Fools.*
in the Common Vogue of the World,
(for I well know how disingeniously
Folly is decried even by those who
are themselves the greatest Fools,) yet it is from
my Influence alone that the whole Universe re-
ceives her Ferment of Mirth and Jollity: Of
which this may be urged as a Convincing Ar-
gument, in that as soon as I appeared to speak
before this Numerous Assembly, all their Coun-
tenances were gilded o'er with a lively spark-
ling

B

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

ling Pleasantness: [Fig. I.] You soon welcomed me with so encouraging a Look, you spurr'd



me on with so cheerful a Hum, that truly in all Appearance you seem now flush'd with a good Dose of Reviving Nectar, when as just before you fate Drowsie and Melancholly, as if you were lately come out of some Hermit's Cell. But as it is usual, that as soon as the Sun peeps from her Eastern Bed, and draws back the Curtains of the darksome Night; or as when after a Hard Winter the Restorative Spring breathes a more enlivening Air, Nature forthwith changes her Apparel, and all things seem to renew their Age; so at the first Sight of
me

on the Praise of Folly.

3

me you all Unmask, and appear in more lively Colours. That therefore which expert Orators can scarce effect by all their little Artifice of Eloquence, to wit, a raising the Attentions of their Auditors to a Composedness of Thought, this a bare Look from me has commanded. The Reason why I appear in this odd kind of Garb you shall soon be informed of, if for so short a while you will but have the Patience to lend me an Ear; yet not such an one as you are wont to hearken with to your Reverend Preachers, but as you listen withal to Mountebanks, Buffoons, and *Merry-Andrews*; in short, such as formerly were fastned to *Midas*, as a Punishment for his Affront to the God *Pan*. For I am now in a Humour to act awhile the *Sophist*, yet not of that Sort who undertake the Drudgery of tyrannizing over School-boys, and teach a more than Womanish Knack of Brawling; but in Imitation of those Ancient Ones, who to avoid the Scandalous Epithet of *Wise*, preferr'd this Title of *Sophists*; the Task of these was to Celebrate the Worth of Gods and Heroes. Prepare therefore to be entertained with a *Panegyrick*, yet not upon *Hercules*, *Solon*, or any other Grandee, but on my self, that is, upon *Folly*.

The Subject of this Discourse.

And here I value not their Censure that pretend it is foppish and affected for any Person to praise himself: Yet let it be as silly as they please, if they will but allow it needful: And indeed what is more befitting than that *Folly* should be the Trumpet of her own Praise, and Dance after her own Pipe?

B 2

For

Erasmus's Panegyrick

For who can set me forth better than my self ?
Or who can pretend to be so well acquainted
with my Condition ?

*Mercenary
Flatterers.*

And yet farther I may safely urge, that all this is no more than the same with what is done by several seemingly Great and Wise Men, who with a new-fashion'd Modesty employ some paltry Orator or scribbling Poet, whom they Bribe to flatter them with some Highflown Character, that shall consist of meer Lies and Shams: And yet the Persons thus extoll'd shall bristle up, and Peacock-like bespread their Plumes, while the impudent Parasite magnifies the poor Wretch to the Skies, and proposes him as a compleat Pattern of all Virtues, from each of which he is yet as far distant as Heaven itself from Hell: What's all this in the mean while, but the tricking up a *Daw* in stoln Feathers, a labouring to change the *Blackamoor's* Hue, and the drawing on a *Pigmy's* Frock over the Shoulders of a *Giant*.

Lastly, I verifie the old Observation, that allows him a Right of praising himself who has no body else to do it for him: For really I cannot but admire at that Ingratitude, shall I term it, or Blockishness of Mankind, who when they all willingly pay to me their utmost Devoir, and freely acknowledge their respective Obligations ; that notwithstanding this, there should have been none so grateful or complaisant as to have bestowed on me a Comendatory Oration, especially when there have not been wanting such as at a great Expence
of

on the Praise of Folly.

5

of Sweat, and loss of Sleep, have in Elaborate Speeches given high Encomiums to Tyrants, Agues, Flies, Baldness, and such like Trumperies.

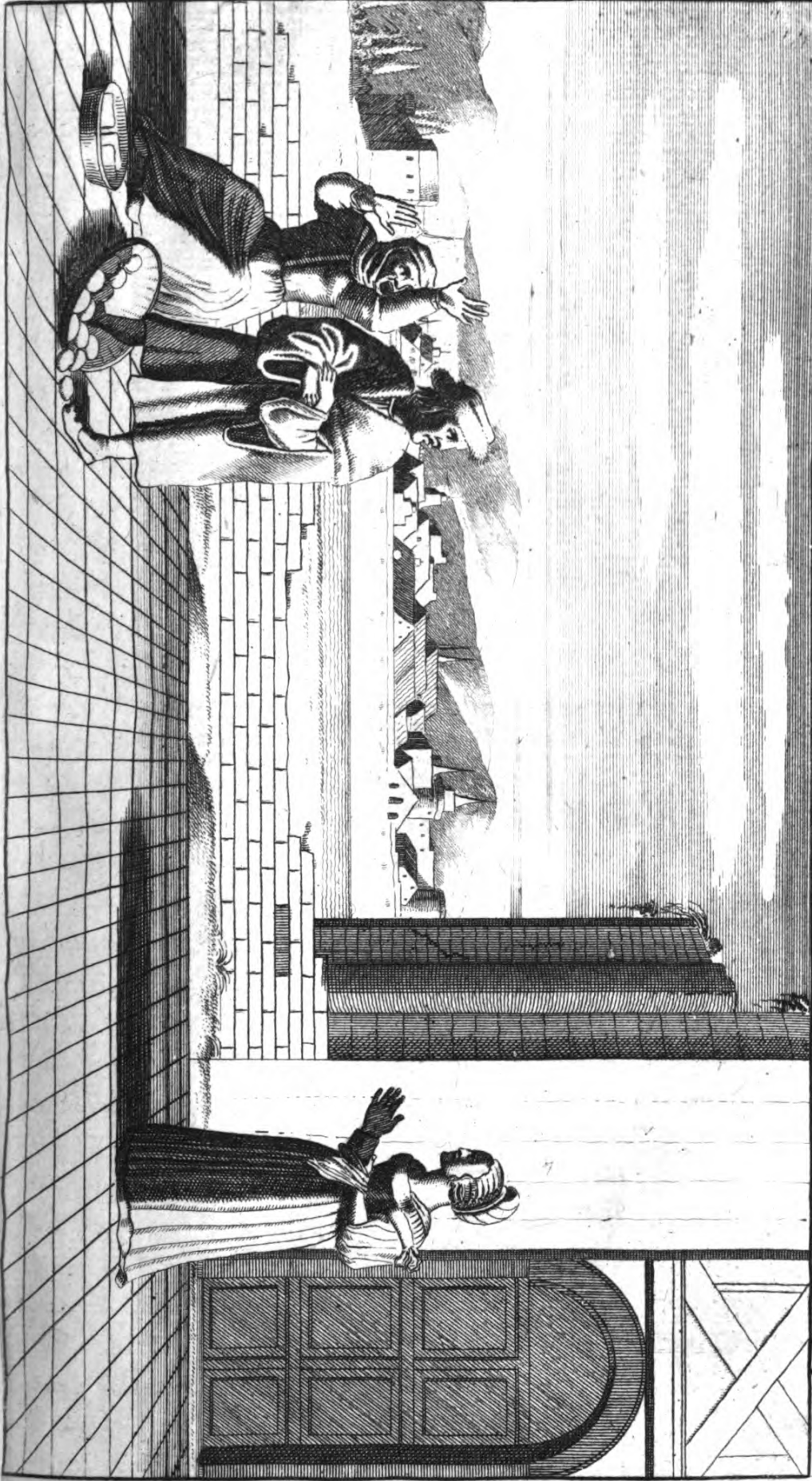
I shall entertain you with a hasty and unpremeditated, but so much the more natural Discourse. My venting it *ex tempore* I would not have you think proceeds from any Principles of Vainglory, by which ordinary Orators square their Attempts, who (as it is easie to observe) when they are delivered of a Speech that has been Thirty Years a conceiving, nay, perhaps at last none of their own, yet they'll swear they wrote it in a great Hurry, and upon very short Warning: Whereas the Reason of my not being provided beforehand is only because it was alway my Humour constantly to *speak* that which lies *Uppermost*. Next, let no one be so fond as to imagine that I should so far stint my Invention to the Method of other Pleaders, as first to *define*, and then *divide*, my Subject, *i. e.* myself. For it is equally hazardous to attempt the crowding her within the narrow Limits of a Definition, whose Nature is of so diffusive an Extent, or to mangle and disjoin that, to the Adoration whereof all Nations unitedly concur. Beside, to what Purpose is it to lay down a Definition for a faint Resemblance, and meer Shadow of me, while appearing here Personally you may view me at a more certain Light? And if your Eyesight fail not, you may at first Blush discern me to be her whom the Greeks term *Μωρία*, the Latins *Stultitia*.

Orators derided.

Folly well
known by
all.

But why need I have been so Impertinent as to have told you this, as if my very Looks did not sufficiently betray what I am; or supposing any be so credulous as to take me for some Sage Matron or Goddess of Wisdom, [Fig. II.] as if a single glance from me would not immediately correct their Mistake, while my Visage, the exact reflex of my Soul, would supply and supersede the Trouble of any other Confessions: For I appear alway in my Natural Colours, and an Unartificial Dress, and never let my Face pretend one thing, and my Heart conceal another: Nay, and in all Things I am so true to my Principles, that I cannot be so much as counterfeited, even by those who challenge the Name of *Wits*, yet indeed are no better than Jackanapes's, trick'd up in gawdy Cloaths, and *Asses* strutting in *Lions Skins*; and how cunningly soe'er they carry it, their long *Ears* [Fig. III.] appear, and betray what they are. These in troth are very Rude and Disingenuous, for while they apparently belong to my Party, yet among the Vulgar they are so ashamed of my Relation, as to cast it in others Dish for a Shame and Reproach: Wherefore since they are so eager to be accounted *Wise*, when in truth they are extreamly *Silly*, what, if to give them their due, I dub them with the Title of *wise Fools*: And herein they Copy after the Example of some Modern Orators, who swell to that Proportion of Conceitedness, as to vaunt themselves for so many Giants of Eloquence, if with a Double-tongu'd Fluency they can Plead indifferently for either Side, and deem it

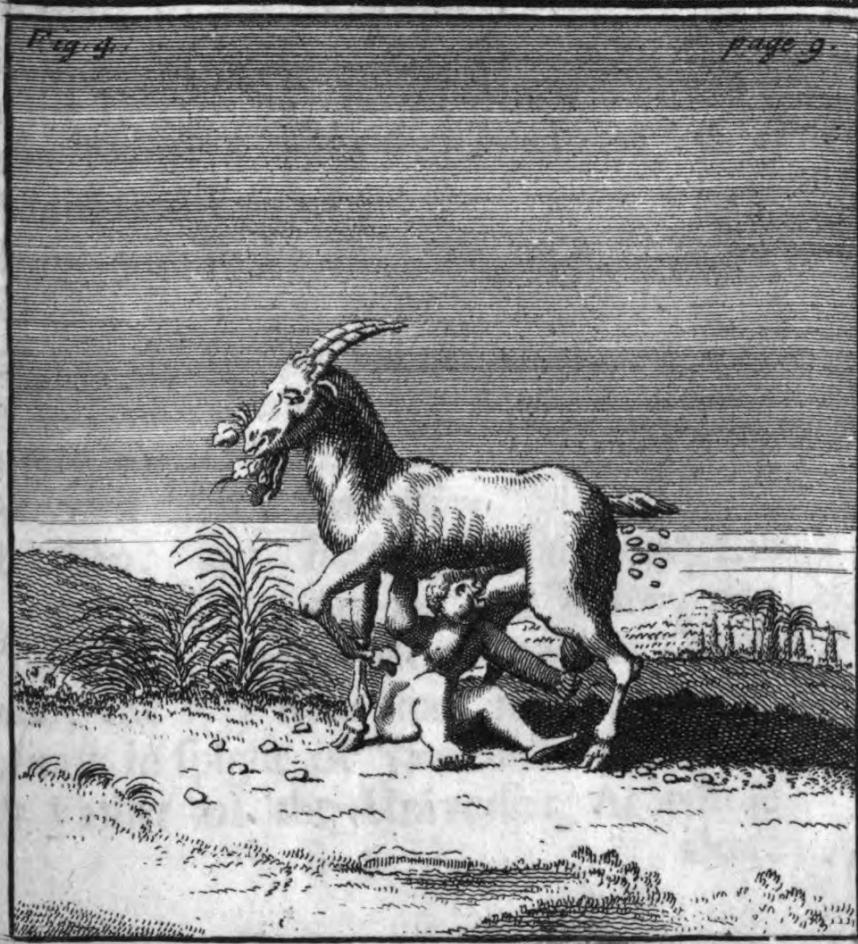
Affected
Vanity of
Orators.





Page 5

page 6



THE HISTORY
OF ART
OXFORD

on the Praise of Folly.

a very doughty Exploit if they can but Enter-
lard a *Latin* Sentence with some *Greek* Word,
which for seeming Garnish they crowd in at a
Venture; and rather than be at a Stand for
some cramp Words, they'll furbish up a long
Scroll of old absolete Terms out of some mu-
sty Author, and foist them in, to amuse the
Reader with, that those who understand them
may be tickled with the Happiness of being
acquainted with them, and those who under-
stand them not, the less they know the more
they may admire: Whereas it has been always
a Custom to those of our Side to contemn and
undervalue whatever is strange and unusual,
while those that are better Conceited of them-
selves will nod and smile, and prick up their
Ears, that they may be thought easily to ap-
prehend that, of which perhaps they do not
understand one Word. And so much for this;
pardon the Digression, now I return.

Of my Name I have informed you, *Sirs*, The Name
and Descent
of Folly. what Additional Epithet to give you I know
not, except you'll be content with that of
Most Foolish; for under what more proper Ap-
pellation can the Goddess *Folly* greet her *De-
votes*? But since there are few acquainted with
my Family and Original, I'll now give you
some Account of my *Extraction*.

First then, my *Father* was neither the
Chaos, nor Hell, nor *Saturn*, nor *Jupiter*, nor
any of those old, worn out, Grandfire Gods, Praise of
Riches. but *Plutus*, the very same that, *Maugre Homer*,
Hesiod, nay, in spight of *Jove* himself, was the
primary Father of the Universe: At whose

Eraſmus's Panegyrick

alone Beck, for all Ages, Religion and Civil Policy, have been ſucceſſively Undermined and Re-eſtabliſhed; by whoſe powerful Influence War, Peace, Empire, Debates, Juſtice, Magiſtracy, Marriage, Leagues, Compacts, Laws, Arts, (I've almoſt run my ſelf out of Breath, but) in a Word, all Affairs of Church and State, and Buſineſs of Private Concern, are ſeverally Ordered and Adminiſtered; without whoſe Aſſiſtance all the Poets Gang of Deities, nay, I may be ſo bold as to ſay the very *Major-domo's* of Heaven, would either dwindle into nothing, or at leaſt be confined to their reſpective Homes, without any Ceremonies of Devotional Addreſs: Whomever he combats with as an Enemy, nothing can be Armour-proof againſt his Assaults; and whoſoever he ſides with as a Friend, may grapple at even Hand with *Jove*, and all his Bolts. Of ſuch a Father I may well brag; and he begot me, not of his Brain, as *Jupiter* did the Hag *Pallas*, but of a pretty young Nymph, fam'd for Wit no leſs than Beauty: And this Feat was not done amidſt the Embraces of dull nauſeous Wedlock, but what gave a greater Guſt to the Pleaſure, it was done at a *ſtol'n Bant*, as we may modeſtly phraſe it. But to prevent your miſtaking me, I would have you underſtand that my Father was not that *Plutus* in *Ariſtophanes*, Old, Dry, Withered, Sapleſs and Blind; but the ſame in his Younger and Brisker Days, and when his Veins were more impregnated, and the Heat of his Youth ſomewhat higher inflamed by a chirping Cup

on the Praise of Folly.

9

Cup of Nectar, which for a whet to his Lust he had just before drank very freely of at a Merry-meeting of the Gods. And now presuming you may be inquisitive after my *Birth-place*, (the Quality of the Place we are Born in, being now look'd upon as a main Ingredient of Gentility,) I were Born neither in the floating *Delos*, nor on the frothy Sea, nor in any of these Privacies, where too forward Mothers are wont to retire for an undiscovered Delivery; but in the Fortune Islands, where all Things grow without the Toil of Husbandry, wherein there is no Drudgery, no Distempers, no Old Age, where in the Fields grow no Daffadillies, Mallows, Onions, Pease, Beans, or such kind of Trash, but there give equal Divertisement to our Sight and Smelling, Rue, All-heal, Bugloss, Marjoram, Herb of Life, Roses, Violets, Hyacinth, and such like Fragrances as perfume the Gardens of *Adonis*. And being Born amongst these Delights, I did not, like other Infants, come crying into the World, but perk'd up, and laugh'd immediately in my Mother's Face. And there is no Reason I should Envy *Jove* for having a [*Fig. IV.*] She-Goat to his Nurse, since I were more creditably suckled by Two jolly Nymphs; the Name of the first *Drunkennes*, one of *Bacchus*'s Off-spring, the other *Ignorance*, the Daughter of *Pan*; both which you may here behold among several others of my Train and Attendants, whose particular Names, if you would fain know, I'll give you in short. This, who goes with a mincing Gate, and holds up her

The Country of Folly.

Her Attendants.

Head

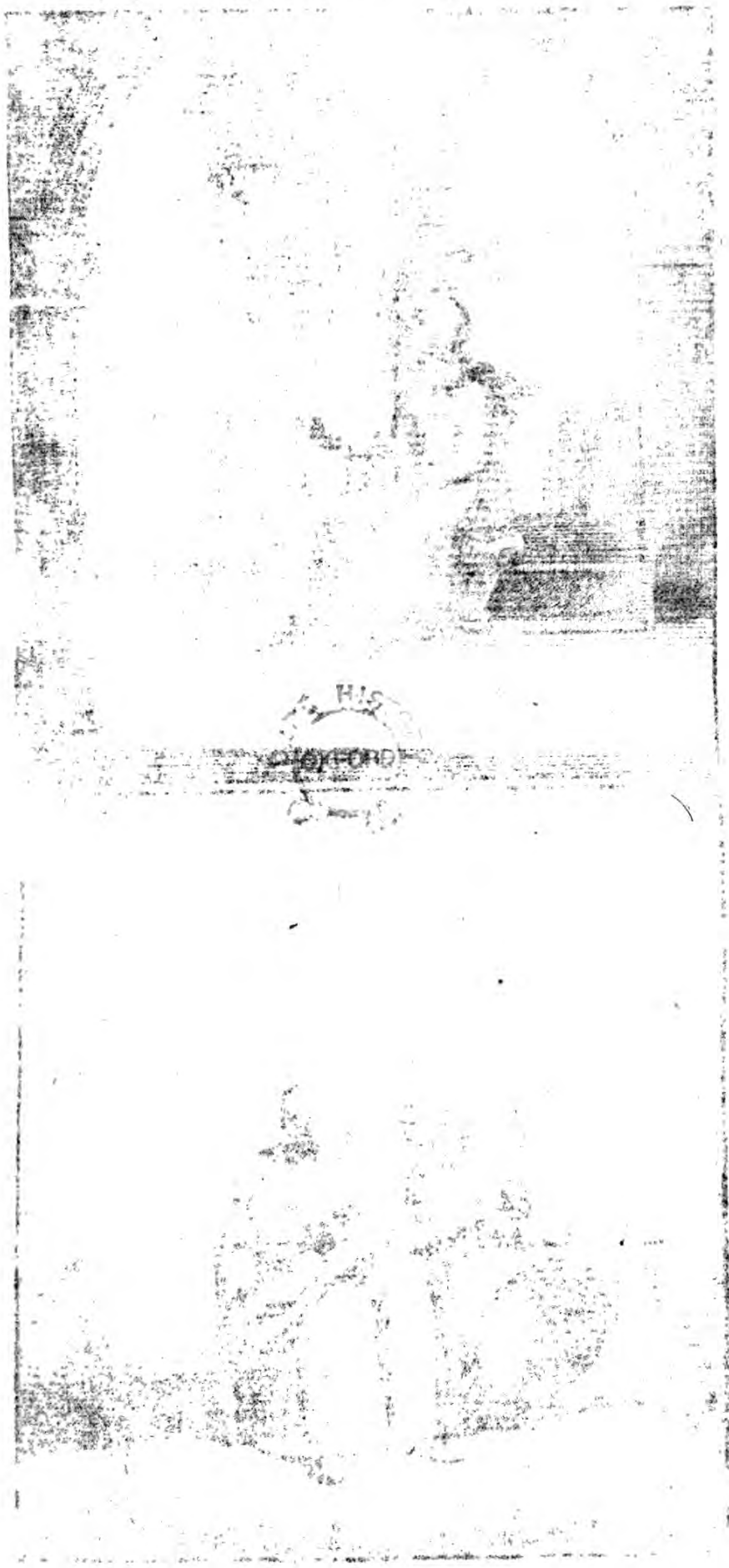
Erasmus's Panegyrick

Head so high, is *Self-Love*. She that looks so Spruce, and makes such a Noise and Bustle, is *Flattery*. That other, which sits hum-drum, as if she were half asleep, is call'd *Forgetfulness*. She that leans on her Elbow, and sometime yawningly stretches out her Arms, is *Lazinefs*. This that wears a plighted Garland of Flowers, and smells so Perfumed, is *Pleasure*. The other, which appears in so smooth a Skin, and pampered-up Flesh, is *Sensuality*. She that stares so wildly, and rouls about her Eyes, is *Madness*. As to those Two Gods whom you see playing among the Lasses, the Name of the one is *Intemperance*, the other *Sound Sleep*. By the Help and Service of this Retinue I bring all Things under the Verge of my Power, lording it over the greatest Kings and Potentates.

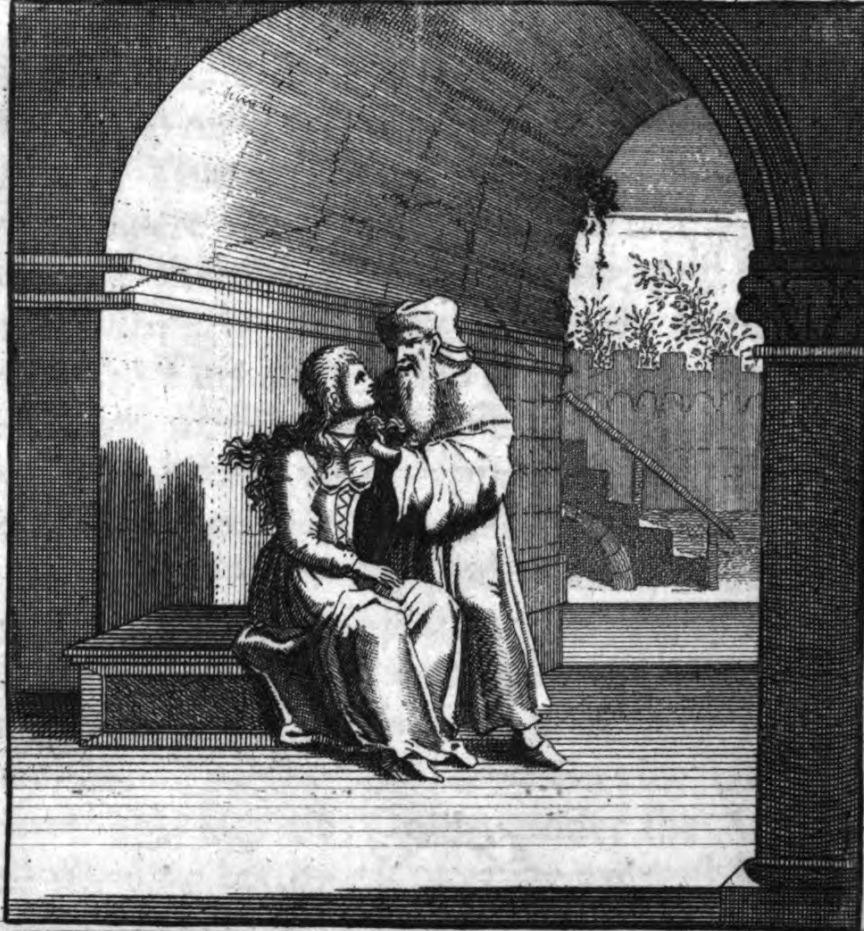
Her Divi-
nity.

You have now heard of my Descent, my Education, and my Attendance; that I may not be taxed as presumptuous in borrowing the Title of a *Goddefs*, I come now in the next Place to acquaint you what obliging Favours I everywhere bestow, and how largely my Jurisdiction extends: For if, as one has ingeniously noted, to be a *God* is no other than to be a *Benefactor* to Mankind; and if they have been thought deservedly Deified who have Invented the Use of Wine, Corn, or any other Convenience for the Well-being of Mortals, why may not I justly bear the Van among the whole Troop of Gods, who in all, and toward all, exert an unparallell'd Bounty and Beneficence?

For



5



on the Praise of Folly.

II

For Instance, in the first Place, what can be more Dear and Precious than Life itself? And yet for this are none beholden, save to me alone. For it is neither the Spear of throughly-begotten *Pallas*, nor the Buckler of Cloud-gathering *Jove*, that multiplies and propagates Mankind: But that Prime Father of the Universe, who at a displeasing Nod makes Heaven itself to tremble, he (I say) must lay aside his frightful Ensigns of Majesty, and put away that grim Aspect wherewith he makes the other Gods to quake, and, Stage-player-like, must alter his usual Character, if he would do that, the doing whereof he cannot refrain from, *i. e.* Getting of Children. The next Place to the Gods is challenged by the *Stoicks*; but give me one as Stoical as Ill-nature can make him, and if I do not prevail on him to part with his Beard, that Bush of Wisdom, (though no other Ornament than what Nature in more ample manner has given to Goats,) yet at least he shall lay by his Gravity, smooth up his Brow, relinquish his rigid Tenets, [*Fig. V.*] and in Despite of Prejudice become sensible of some Passion in wanton Sport and Dallying. In a Word, this Dictator of Wisdom shall be glad to take Folly for his Diversion, if ever he would arrive to the Honour of a Father. And why should I not tell my Story out? To proceed then: Is it the Head, the Face, the Breasts, the Hands, the Ears, or other more comely Parts, that serve for Instruments of Generation? I trow not, but it is that Member of our Body which is so odd and uncouth

She is the Cause of the Propagation of Humane Kind.

Erasmus's Panegyrick

couth as can scarce be mentioned without a Smile. This Part, I say, is that Fountain of Life, from which originally spring all Things in a truer Sense than from the Elemental Seminary. Add to this, what Man would be so silly as to run his Head into the Collar of a *Matrimonial Noose*, if (as wise Men are wont to do) he had beforehand duly consider'd the Inconveniences of a Wedded Life? Or indeed what Woman would open her Arms to receive the Embraces of a *Husband*, if she did but forecast the Pangs of Child-birth, and the Plague of being a Nurse? Since then you owe your Birth to the Bride-bed, and (what was Preparatory to that) the Solemnizing of Marriage to my Waiting-woman *Madness*, you cannot but acknowledge how much you are indebted to me. Beside, those who had once dearly bought the Experience of their Folly, would never re-engage themselves in the same Intanglement by a *Second Match*, if it were not occasion'd by the Forgetfulness of past Dangers. And *Venus* herself (whatever *Lucretius* pretends to the contrary) cannot deny, but that, without my Assistance, her Procreative Power would prove weak and ineffectual. It was from my sportive and tickling Recreation that proceeded the Old Crabbed Philosophers, and those who now supply their Stead, the mortified Monks and Friars; as also Kings, Priests and Popes, nay, the whole Tribe of Poetick Gods, who are at last grown so numerous, as in the Camp of Heaven (though ne'er so spacious) to *jostle* for
Elbow-

Elbow-room. But it is not sufficient to have made it appear that I am the Source and Original of all Life, except I likewise shew that all the Benefits of Life are equally at my Disposal. And what are such? Why, can any one be said properly to live to whom Pleasure is denied? You'll give me your Assent; for there is none I know among you so wise shall I say, or so silly, as to be of a contrary Opinion. The Stoicks indeed contemn, and pretend to banish Pleasure; but this is only a dissembling Trick, and a putting the Vulgar out of Conceit with it, that they may more quietly engross it to themselves: But I dare them now to confess what one Stage of Life is not melancholly, dull, tiresome, tedious and uneasy, unless we spice it with Pleasure, that Hautgoust of Folly. Of the Truth whereof the never enough to be commended *Sophocles* is sufficient Authority, who gives me the highest Character in that Sentence of his,

From Folly proceed the Conveniences of Life.

To know nothing is the sweetest Life.

Yet abating from this, let us examine the Case more narrowly. Who knows not that the first Scene of *Infancy* is far the most pleasant and delightful? What then is it in Children that makes us so kiss, hug and play with them, and that the Bloodiest Enemy can scarce have the Heart to hurt them, but their Ingredients of Innocence and Folly, of which Nature out of Providence did purposely compound and blend their tender Infancy,

Childhood foolish.

[Fig.

[Fig. VI.] that by a frank Return of Pleasure they might make some Sort of Amends for their Parents Trouble, and give in Caution as it were for the Discharge of a future Education?

Youth.

The next Advance from Childhood is *Youth*, and how favourably is this dealt with? How kind, courteous and respectful are all to it? And how ready to become serviceable upon all Occasions? And whence reaps it this Happiness? Whence indeed but from me only, by whose Procurement it is furnish'd with little of Wisdom, and so with the less of Disquiet?

Manhood.

And when once Lads begin to grow up, and attempt to write *Man*, their Prettiness does then soon decay, their Briskness flags, their Humours stagnate, their Jollity ceases, and their Blood grows cold; and the farther they proceed in Years, the more they go backward in the Enjoyment of themselves, till waspish Old Age comes on, a Burthen to itself as well as others, and that so heavy and oppressiv^e, as none would bear the Weight of, unless out of Pity to their Sufferings. I again intervene, and lend a Helping-hand, assisting them at a dead Lift, in the same Method the Poets feign their Gods to succour dying Men, by transforming them into New Creatures, which I do by bringing them back, after they have one Foot in the Grave, to their Infancy again; so as there is a great deal of Truth couch'd in that Old Proverb, *Once an Old Man, and twice a Child*. Now if any one be curious to understand what Course I take to effect this Alteration, my Method is this: I bring them to

Old Age.

my

my Well of *Forgetfulness*, (the Fountain whereof is in the *Fortunate Islands*, and the River *Lethe* in Hell but a small Stream of it,) and when they have there fill'd their Bellies full, and wash'd down Care, by the Virtue and Operation whereof they become Young again. (Ay, but (say you) they meerly *dote*, and play the *Fool* : Why yes, this is what I mean by growing Young again : For what else is it to be a Child than to be a Fool and an Idiot ? It is the being such that makes that Age so acceptable : For who does not esteem it somewhat Ominous to see a Boy endow'd with the Discretion of a Man, and therefore for the Curbing of too forward Parts we have a disparaging Proverb, *Soon ripe, soon rotten* ? And farther, who would keep Company, or have any thing to do with such an Old Blade, as, after the Wear and Harrowing of so many Years, should yet continue of as clear a Head and sound a Judgment as he had at any time been in his Middle-Age ; and therefore it is a great Kindness of me that Old Men grow *Fools*, since it is hereby only that they are freed from such Vexations as would torment them if they were more *wise* : They can drink briskly, bear up stoutly, and lightly pass over such Infirmities, as a far stronger Constitution could scarce master. Sometime, with the Old Fellow in *Plautus*, they are brought back to their *Horn-book* again, to learn to spell their Fortune in Love. Most wretched would they needs be if they had but Wit enough to be sensible of their hard Condition ; but, by
my

Erasmus's Panegyrick

my Assistance, they carry off all well, and to their respective Friends approve themselves good, sociable, jolly Companions. Thus *Homer* makes Aged *Nestor* fam'd for a smooth oily-tongu'd Orator, while the Delivery of *Achilles* was but rough, harsh and hesitant; and the same *Poet* elsewhere tells us of Old Men that sat on the Walls, and spake with a great deal of Flourish and Elegance. And in this Point indeed they surpass and outgo Children, who are pretty forward in a softly, innocent *Prattle*, but otherwise are too much Tongue-ty'd, and want the other's most acceptable Embellishment of a perpetual *Talkativeness*. Add to this, that Old Men love to be playing with Children, and Children delight as much in them, to verifie the Proverb, that *Birds of a Feather flock together*. And indeed what difference can be discern'd between 'em, but that the one is more furrow'd with Wrinkles, and has seen a little more of the World than the other? For otherwise their Whitish Hair, their Want of Teeth, their Smalness of Stature, their Milk Diet, their Bald Crowns, their Pratling, their Playing, their short Memory, their Heedlesness, and all their other Endowments, exactly agree; and the more they advance in Years, the nearer they come back to their Cradle, till, like Children indeed, at last they depart the World, without any Remorse at the Loss of Life, or Sense of the Pangs of Death.

And

on the Praise of Folly.

17

And now let any one compare the Excellency of my Metamorphosing Power to that which *Ovid* attributes to the Gods; their strange Feats in some drunken Passions we will omit for their Credit sake, and instance only in such Persons as they pretended great Kindnesses for: These they transform'd into Trees, Birds, Insects, and sometimes Serpents; but alas, their very Change into somewhat else argues the Destruction of what they were before; whereas I can restore the same numerical Man to his pristine State of Youth, Health and Strength: Yea, what is more, if Men would but so far consult their own Interest, as to discard all Thoughts of Wisdom, and entirely resign themselves to my Guidance and Conduct, Old Age should be a Paradox, and each Man's Years a perpetual Spring. For look how your hard-plodding *Students*, by a close sedentary Confinement to their Books, grow mopish, pale and meagre, as if, by a continual Wrack of Brains, and Torture of Invention, their Veins were pump'd dry, and their whole Body squeez'd sapless; whereas my Followers are smooth, plump and bucksome, and altogether as lusty as so many Bacon-Hogs, or Sucking Calves; never in their Career of Pleasure to be arrested with Old Age, if they could but keep themselves untainted from the Contagiousness of Wisdom, with the Leprosie whereof if at any time they are infected it is only for Prevention, lest they should otherwise have been too happy.

Folly, the most powerful of the Goddesses, causes perpetual Youth.

C

For

Erasmus's Panegyrick

For a more ample Confirmation of the Truth of what foregoes, it is on all Sides confess'd, that Folly is the best Preservative of Youth, and the most effectual Antidote against Age. And it is a Never-failing Observation made of the People of *Brabant*, that, contrary to the Proverb of *Older and Wiser*, the more Ancient they grow, the more Fools they are; and there is not any one Country whose Inhabitants enjoy themselves Better, and rub through the World with more Ease and Quiet. To these are nearly related, as well by Affinity of Customs, as of Neighbourhood, my Friends the *Hollanders*: Mine I may well call them, for they stick so close and lovingly to me, that they are stiled *Fools* to a Proverb, and yet scorn to be ashamed of their Name. Well, let fond Mortals go now in a needless Quest of some *Medea*, *Circe*, *Venus*, or some enchanted Fountain, for a Restorative of Age, whereas the Accurate Performance of this Feat lyes only within the Ability of my Art and Skill.

It is I only who have the Receipt of making that Liquor wherewith *Memnon's* Daughter lengthen'd out her Grandfather's declining Days: It is I that am that *Venus*, who so far restor'd the languishing *Phaon*, as to make *Sapho* fall deeply in Love with his Beauty. Mine are those Herbs, mine those Charms, that not only lure back swift Time, when past and gone, but (what is more to be admired) clip its Wings, and prevent all farther Flight. So then, if you will all agree to my Verdict, that

on the Praise of Folly!

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that nothing is more desirable than the being Young, nor any thing more loathed than contemptible Old Age, you must needs acknowledge it as an unrequitable Obligation from me, for fencing off the One, and perpetuating the Other.

But why should I confine my Discourse to the narrow Subject of Mankind only? View the whole Heaven itself, and there tell me what one of that Divine Tribe would not be mean and despicable if my Name did not lend him some Respect and Authority. Why is *Bacchus* always painted as a Young Man, [Fig. VII.] but only because he is Frea-

*Folly the
Excellency
of the Gods*



C 2

kish,

Erasmus's Panegyrick

kish, Drunk and Mad, and spending his Time in Topping, Dancing, Masking and Revelling, seems to have nothing in the least to do with Wisdom? Nay, so far is he from the Affectation of being accounted Wise, that he is content all the Rites of Devotion which are paid unto him should consist of Apishness and Drollery. Farther, what Scoffs and Jeers did not the Old Comedians throw upon him? O *swinish Paunch-gut God*, (say they,) that smells rank of the *Sty* he was sow'd up in, and so on. But prethee who in his Case, alway Merry, Youthful, soak'd in Wine, and drown'd in Pleasures, who (I say) in such a Case would change Conditions either with the lofty menace-looking *Jove*, the grave, yet timorous *Pan*, the stately *Pallas*, or indeed any one other of Heaven's Landlords? Why is *Cupid* feign'd as a Boy, but only because he is an Under-witted Whipster, that neither acts nor thinks any thing with Discretion? Why is *Venus* ador'd for the Mirrour of Beauty, but only because she and I claim Kindred, she being of the same Complexion with my Father *Plutus*, and therefore call'd by *Homer* the *Golden Goddess*? Beside, she imitates me in being alway a laughing, if either we believe the *Poets*, or their near Kinsmen the *Painters*, the first *Mentioning*, the other *Drawing* her constantly in that Posture. Add farther, to what Deity did the *Romans* pay a more Ceremonial Respect than to *Flora*, that Bawd of Obscenity? And if any one search the *Poets* for an

Histo.

Historical Account of the Gods, he shall find them all Famous for Lewd Pranks and Debaucheries. It is needless to insist upon the Miscarriages of others, when the lecherous Intregues of *Jove* himself are so notorious, and when the pretendedly chaste *Diana* so oft uncloak'd her Modesty to run a Hunting after her Beloved *Endimion*. But I'll say no more, for I had rather they should be told of their Faults by *Momus*, who was wont formerly to sting them with some close Reflections, till nettled by his Abusive Raillery, they kick'd him out of Heaven for his Sawciness of daring to reprove such as were beyond Correction: And now in his Banishment from Heaven he finds but cold Entertainment here on Earth, nay, is denied all Admittance into the Court of Princes, where notwithstanding my Handmaid *Flattery* finds a most encouraging Welcome: But this petulant Monitor being thrust out of Doors, the Gods can now more freely Rant and Revel, and take their whole Swinge of Pleasure. Now the beastly *Priapus* may recreate himself without Contradiction in Lust and Filthiness; now the sly *Mercury* may, without Discovery, go on in his Thieveries, and nimble-finger'd Juggles; the sooty *Vulcan* may now renew his wonted Custom of making the other Gods laugh by his Hopping so limpingly, and coming off with so many dry Jokes, and biting Repartees. *Silenus*, the Old doting Lover, to shew his Activity, may now Dance a Frisking Jig, and the Nymphs be at

Erasmus's Panegyrick

Folly natu-
ral to Man-
kind.

the same Sport *Naked*. The Goatish *Satyrs* [Fig. VIII.] may make up a merry Ball, and *Pan*, the Blind Harper, may put up his Bagpipes, and sing Bawdy Catches, to which the Gods, especially when they are almost Drunk, shall give a most profound Attention. But why should I any farther rip open and expose the Weakness of the Gods? A Weakness so Childish and Absurd, that no Man can at the same time keep his Countenance, and make a Relation of it. Now therefore, like *Homer's* wandring *Muse*, I'll take my Leave of Heaven, and come down again here Below, where we shall find nothing happy, nay, nothing tolerable, without my Presence and Assistance. And in the first place consider how providently Nature has took Care that in all her Works there should be some piquant Smack and Relish of *Folly*: For since the *Stoicks* define Wisdom to be conducted by *Reason*, and *Folly* nothing else but the being hurried by *Passion*, lest our Life should otherwise have been too dull and unactive, that Creator, who out of Clay first tempered and made us up, put into the Composition of our Humanity more than a Pound of Passions to an Ounce of Reason; and Reason he confined within the narrow Cells of the *Brain*, whereas he left Passions the *whole Body* to range in. Farther, he set up Two sturdy Champions to stand perpetually on the Guard, that Reason might make no Assault, Surprize, nor Inroad: *Anger,*



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on the Praise of Folly.

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ger, which keeps its Station in the Fortrefs of the *Heart*; and *Lust*, which, like the Signs *Virgo* and *Scorpio*, rules the *Belly* and *Secret Members*: Against the Forces of these Two Warriors how unable is Reason to bear up and withstand every Day's Experience does abundantly witness; while, let Reason be never so importunate in urging and reinforcing her Admonitions to Virtue, yet the Passions bear all before them, and by the least Offer of Curb or Restraint grow but more imperious, till Reason itself, for Quietness sake, is forced to desist from all farther Remonstrance. But because it seem'd expedient that Man, who was Born for the Transaction of Business, should have so much Wisdom as shou'd fit and capacitate him for the Discharge of his Duty herein, and yet lest such a Measure as is requisite for this Purpose might prove too dangerous and fatal, I were advis'd with for an Antidote, who prescrib'd this Infallible Receipt of *taking a Wife*, a Creature so harmless and silly, and yet so useful and convenient, as might mollifie and make pliable the Stiffness and morose Humour of Man. Now that which made *Plato* doubt under what *Genus* to rank *Woman*, whether among Brutes or Rational Creatures, was only meant to denote the extream Stupidness and Folly of that Sex; a Sex so unalterably Simple, that for any of them to thrust forward, and reach at the Name of *Wife*, is but to make themselves the more remarkable *Fools*, such an Endeavour, being

Erasmus's Panegyrick

being but a swimming against the Stream, nay, a turning the Course of Nature, the bare Attempting whereof is as extravagant as the effecting of it is impossible: For as it is a trite Proverb, *That an Ape will be an Ape, tho' clad in Purple*; so a Woman will be a Woman *i. e.* a Fool, whatever Disguise she takes up. And yet there is no Reason Women should take it amiss to be thus charged; for if they do but rightly consider they'll find that it is to Folly they are beholden for those Endowments wherein they so far surpass and excel Man, as first, for their unparallel'd Beauty, by the Charm whereof they tyrannize over the greatest Tyrants: For what is it but too great a Smatch of Wisdom that makes Men so tawny and thick-skinn'd, so rough and prickly-bearded, like an Emblem of Winter, or Old Age, while Women have such dainty smooth Cheeks, such a low gentle Voice, and so pure a Complexion, as if Nature had drawn them for a standing Pattern of all Symetry and Comeliness? Beside, what greater or juster Aim and Ambition have they than to please their Husbands? In order whereunto they garnish themselves with Paint, Washes, Curls, Perfumes, and all other Mysteries of Ornament; yet after all they become acceptable to them only for their Folly. Wives are always allow'd their Humour, yet it is only in Exchange for Titillation and Pleasure, which indeed are but other Names for Folly; as none can deny, who considers how a Man must





on the Praise of Folly.

must hug, and dandle, and kittle, and play a Hundred little Tricks with his Bedfellow, (*Fig. IX.*) when he is disposed to make that Use of her that Nature design'd her for. Well then, you see whence that *greatest Pleasure* (to which Modesty scarce allows a Name) springs and proceeds.

But now some blood-chill'd Old Men, that are more for *Wine* than *Wenching*, will pretend that in their Opinion the greatest Happiness consists in Feasting and Drinking. Grant it be so; yet certainly in the most luxurious Entertainments it is Folly must give the Sauce and Relish to the daintiest Cates and Delicacies; so that if there be no one of the Guests naturally Fool enough to be play'd upon by the rest, they must procure some comical Buffoon, that by his Jokes, and Flouts, and Blunders, shall make the whole Company split themselves with Laughing: For to what Purpose were it to be stuff'd and cramm'd with so many dainty Bits, savoury Dishes, and toothsome Rarities, if after all this Epicurism of the Belly, the Eyes, the Ears, and the whole Mind of Man, were not as well foistred and relieved with Laughing, Jestings, and such like Divertisements, which like Second Courses serve for the promoting of Digestion? And as to all those Shooing-horns of Drunkenness, the keeping every one his Man, the throwing Hey-jinks, the filling of Bumpers, the drinking Two in a Hand, the beginning of Mistresses Healths; and then the roaring out

*Pleasure of
Entertain-
ments from
Folly.*

of

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

of drunken Catches, the calling in a Fidler, the leading out every one his Lady to Dance, and such like Riotous Pastimes, these were not Taught or Dictated by any of the Wise Men of Greece, but of Gotham rather, being *my* Invention, and by *me* prescribed as the best Preservative of Health: Each of which, the more Ridiculous it is, the more Welcome it finds. And indeed to jog sleepingly through the World in a dumpish Melancholly Posture cannot properly be said to *Live*, but to be wound up as it were in a *Winding-Sheet* before we are Dead, and so to be shuffled Quick into a Grave, and Buried *Alive*.

No Friend-
ship with-
out Folly.

But there are yet others perhaps that have no Gust in this Sort of Pleasure, but place their greatest Content in the Enjoyment of *Friends*, telling us that true *Friendship* is to be preferr'd before all other Acquirements; that it is a Thing so *useful* and necessary as the very Elements could not long subsist without a natural Combination; so *pleasant*, that it affords as warm an Influence as the Sun itself; so *honest*, (if Honesty in this Case deserve any Consideration,) that the very Philosophers have not stuck to place this as one among the rest of their different Sentiments of the chiefest Good. But what if I make it appear that I also am the main Spring and Original of this Endearment? Yes, I can easily demonstrate it, and that not by crabbed Syllogisms, or a crooked and unintelligible Way of Arguing, but can make it (as the Proverb goes) *as plain*

as the Nose on your Face. Well then, to scratch and curry one another, to wink at a Friend's Faults; nay, to cry up some Failings for virtuous and commendable, is not this the next Door to the being a Fool? When One looking stedfastly in his Mistress's Face admires a Mole as much as a Beauty-Spot; when another swears his Lady's Stinking Breath is a most redolent Perfume; and at another time the fond Parent hugs the Squint-eyed Child, and pretends it is rather a Becoming Glance and Winning Aspect than any Blemish of the Eye-Sight, what is all this but the very Height of Folly? Folly (I say) that both makes Friends, and keeps them so. I speak of Mortal Men only, among whom there are none but have some small Faults; he is most happy that has fewest. If we pass to the *Gods*, we shall find that they have so much of Wisdom, as they have very little of Friendship; nay, nothing of that which is true and hearty. The Reason why *Men* make a greater Improvement in this Vertue, is only because they are more Credulous and Easie-natur'd; for Friends must be of the same Humour and Inclinations too, or else the League of Amity, though made with never so many Protestations, will be soon broke. Thus grave and morose Men seldom prove fast Friends; they are too captious and censorious, and will not bear with one another's Infirmities; they are as Eagle-sighted as may be in the Espial of others Faults, while they wink upon themselves, and never mind
the

Erasmus's Panegyrick

the Beam in their own Eyes. In short, Man being by Nature so prone to Frailties, so Humourfome and Cross-grain'd, and so guilty of so many Slips and Miscarriages, there could be no firm Friendship contracted, except there be such an Allowance made for each other's Defaults, which the *Greeks* term *Ευηθεια*, and we may construe Good Nature, which is but another Word for Folly. And what? Is not *Cupid*, that first Father of all Relation, is not he stark Blind, that as he cannot himself distinguish of Colours, so he would make us as Mope-eyed in judging falsly of all Love-Concerns, and wheedle us into a Thinking that we are alway in the Right? Thus every Jack sticks to his own Jill, every Tinker esteems his own Trull, and the Hob-nailed Suitor prefers *Joan* the Milk-maid before any of my Lady's Daughters. These Things are true, and are ordinarily laugh'd at, and yet however ridiculous they seem, it is hence only that all Societies receive their Cement and Consolidation.

The same which has been said of Friendship is much more applicable to a *State of Marriage*, which is but the highest Advance and Improvement of Friendship in the closest Bond of Union. Good God! What frequent Divorces, or worse Mischief, would oft sadly happen, except Man and Wife were so Discreet as to pass over light Occasions of Quarrel with Laughing, Jestings, Dissembling, and such like Playing the Fool? Nay, how few Matches would go forward, if the hasty Lover did but

Wedlock unhappy without Folly.

Prothia

but first know how many little Tricks of Lust and Wantonness (and perhaps more gross Failings) his Coy and seemingly Bashful Mistress had oft before been guilty of? And how fewer Marriages, when consummated, would continue happy, if the Husband were not either sottishly insensible of, or did not purposely wink at and pass over the Lightness and Forwardness of his Good-natur'd Wife? This Peace and Quietness is owing to my Management, for there would otherwise be continual Jarrs, and Broils, and Mad Doings, if want of Wit only did not at the same time make a contented Cuckold and a still House; if the *Cuckow* Sing at the Back-door, the unthinking Cornute takes no notice of the unlucky *Omen of others Eggs being laid in his own Nest*, but laughs it over, [Fig. X.] kisses his Dear Spouse, and all is well. And indeed it is much better patiently to be such a hen-peck'd Frigot, than alway to be wrack'd and tortur'd with the grating Surmises of Suspicion and Jealousie. In fine, there is no one Society, no one Relation Men stand in, would be comfortable, or indeed tolerable, without my Assistance; there could be no right Understanding betwixt Prince and People, Lord and Servant, Tutor and Pupil, Friend and Friend, Man and Wife, Buyer and Seller, or any Persons however otherwise related, if they did not cowardly put up small Abuses, sneakingly Gringe and Submit, or after all fawningly Scratch and Flatter each other. This you'll say is much, but

Folly necessary to Society.

Without
Folly no
Love of
our selves
or others.

but you shall yet hear what is more; tell me then, can any one love another that first hates himself? Is it likely any one should agree with a Friend that is first fallen out with his own Judgment? Or is it probable he should be any Way pleasing to another, who is a perpetual Plague and Trouble to himself? This is such a Paradox that none can be so mad as to maintain. Well, but if I am excluded and barr'd out, every Man would be so far from being able to bear with others, that he would be Burdensome to himself, and consequently incapable of any Ease or Satisfaction. Nature, that toward some of her Products plays the Stepmother rather than the indulgent Parent, has endowed some Men with that unhappy Pœvishness of Disposition, as to nauseate and dislike whatever is their own, and much admire what belongs to other Persons, so as they cannot in any wise enjoy what their Birth or Fortunes has bestowed upon them: For what Grace is there in the greatest Beauty, if it be alway clouded with Frowns and Sulliness? Or what Vigour in Youth, if it be harrassed with a pettish, dogged, waspish, ill Humour? None sure. Nor indeed can there be any credible Acquitment of our selves in any one Station of Life, but we should sink without Rescue into Misery and Despair, if we were not buoyed up and supported by *Self-love*, which is but the Eldest Sister (as it were) of Folly, and her own constant Friend and Assistant. For what is or
can



can be more Silly than to be Lovers and Admirers of our selves? And yet if we were not so there will be no relish to any of our Words or Actions. Take away this one Property of a Fool, and the Orator shall become as Dumb and Silent as the Pulpit he stands in; the Musician shall hang up his untoucht Instruments on the Wall; the compleatest Actors shall be his'd off the Stage; the Poet shall be burlesk'd upon with his own doggrel Rhimes; the Painter shall himself vanish into an imaginary Landskip; and the Physician shall want Food more than his Patients do Physick. In short, without Self-love, instead of Beautiful, you shall think your self an Old Bedlam of Four score; instead of Youthful, you shall seem just dropping into the Grave; instead of Eloquent, a meer Stammerer; and in lieu of Gentile and Complaisant, you shall appear like a downright Country Clown; it being so necessary that every one should think well of himself before he can expect the Good Opinion of others. Finally, when it is the main and essential Part of Happiness to desire to be no other than what we already are; this Expedient is again wholly owing to Self-love, which so flushes Men with a good Conceit of their own, that no one repents of his Shape, of his Wit, of his Education, or of his Country; so as the dirty half-drown'd *Hollander* would not remove into the Pleasant Plains of *Italy*, the rude *Thracian* would not change his Boggy Soil for the best Seat in *Athens*, nor the brutish *Scythian* quit his Thorny

Folly brings
Contentment.

Erasmus's Panegyrick

Whatever
is great or
useful pre-
ceeds from
Folly.

War the
Offspring of
Folly.

Thorny Desarts to become an Inhabitant of the *Fortunate Island*. And Oh the incomparable Contrivance of Nature, who has ordered all Things in so even a Method, that wherever she has been less Bountiful in her Gifts, there she makes it up with a larger Dose of Self-love, which supplies the former Defects, and makes all even. To enlarge farther, I may well presume to averr, that there are no considerable Exploits performed, no useful Arts invented, but what I am the respective Author and Manager of: As first, what is more Lofty and Heroical than *War*? And yet, what is more Foolish than for some petty, trivial Affront to take such a Revenge as both Sides shall be sure to be Loofers, and where the Quarrel must be decided at the Price of so many Limbs and Lives? And when they come to an Engagement, what Service can be done by such Pale-fac'd Students, as by Drudging at the Oarsof Wisdom, have spent all their Strength and Activity? No, the only Use is of blunt sturdy Fellows that have little of Wit, and so the more of Resolution; except you would make a Soldier of such another *Demosthenes* as threw down his Arms as soon as he came within Sight of the Enemy, and lost that Credit in the *Camp* which he gained in the *Pulpit*. But Counsel, Deliberation and Advice, (say you,) are very necessary for the Management of War: Very true, but not such Counsel as shall be prescribed by the strict Rules of Wisdom and Justice; for a Battel shall be more successively fought
by

on the Praise of Folly.

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by Serving-men, Porters, Bailiffs, Padders, Rogues, Goal-birds, and such like Tag-rags of Mankind, than by the most Accomplished Philosophers; which last, how unhappy they are in the Management of such Concerns, *Socrates* (by the Oracle adjudg'd to be the Wisest of Mortals) is a notable Example; who when he appeared in the Attempt of some publick Performance before the People, he faultred in the first Onset, and could never recover himself, but was houted and hissed Home again: Yet this Philosopher was the less a Fool for refusing the Appellation of Wise, and not accepting the Oracle's Compliment; as also for advising that no Philosophers should have any Hand in the Government of the Commonwealth; he should have likewise at the same time added that they should be banished all Human Society. And what made this Great Man poison himself to prevent the Malice of his Accusers? What made him the Instrument of his own Death, but only his Excessiveness of Wisdom? Whereby, while he was searching into the Nature of Clouds, while he was plodding and contemplating upon Ideas, while he was exercising his Geometry upon the Measure of a Flea, and diving into the Recesses of Nature for an Account how little Insects, when they were so small, could make so great a Buz and Hum; while he was intent upon these Fooleries he minded nothing of the World, or its ordinary Concerns.

Philosophers useless and pernicious to a State.

D

Next

Next to *Socrates* comes his Scholar *Plato*, a Famous Orator indeed, that could be so dash'd out of Countenance by an Illiterate Rabble, as to Demur, and Hawk, and Hesitate, before he could get to the end of one short Sentence. *Theophrastus* was such another Coward, who beginning to make an Oration was presently struck down with Fear, as if he had been some Ghost, or Hobgoblin. *Isocrates* was so Bashful and Timorous, that though he taught Rhetorick, yet he could never have the Confidence to speak in Publick. *Cicero*, that Master of *Roman* Eloquence, was wont to begin his Speeches with a low quivering Voice, just like a *School-Boy*, afraid of not saying his Lesson perfect enough to escape Whipping: And yet *Fabius* commends this Property of *Tully* as an Argument of a considerate Orator, sensible of the Difficulty of acquitting himself with Credit: But what hereby does he do more than plainly confess that Wisdom is but a Rub and Impediment to the well Management of any Affair? How would these *Heroes* crouch, and shrink into nothing, at the Sight of *drawn Swords*, that are thus quash'd and stunn'd at the Delivery of *bare Words*?

Now then let *Plato's* fine Sentence be cried up, that *Happy are those Commonwealths where either Philosophers are elected Kings, or Kings turn Philosophers.* Alas, this is so far from being

being true, that if we consult all Historians for an Account of past Ages, we shall find no Princes more Weak, nor any People more Slavish and Wretched, than where the Administration of Affairs fell on the Shoulders of some Learned Bookish Governour. Of the Truth whereof the Two *Cato's* are Exemplary Instances: The First of which Embroiled the City, and tired out the Senate by his tedious Harangues of defending himself, and accusing others; the younger was an unhappy Occasion of the Loss of the Peoples Liberty, while by improper Methods he pretended to maintain it. To these may be added *Brutus, Cassius*, the Two *Gracchi*, and *Cicero* himself, who was no less Fatal to *Rome*, than his Parallel *Demosthenes* was to *Athens*: As likewise *Marcus Antoninus*, whom we may allow to have been a Good *Emperor*, yet the less such for his being a *Philosopher*; and certainly he did not do half that Kindness to his Empire by his own prudent Management of Affairs, as he did Mischief by leaving such a Degenerate Successor as his Son *Commodus* proved to be. But it is a common Observation, that *A Wise Father has many times a Foolish Son*, Nature so contriving it, lest the Taint of Wisdom, like Hereditary Distempers, should otherwise descend by Propagation. Thus *Tully's* Son *Marcus*, though Bred at *Athens*, proved but a dull, insipid Soul; and *Socrates* his Children had (as one ingeniously expresses it) more

Erasmus's Panegyrick

of the Mother than the Father, [Fig. XI.] a Phrase for their being Fools. However, it



A Wise
Man fit for
nothing.

were the more excuseable, tho' Wise Men are so Awkward and Unhandy in the ordering of Publick Affairs, if they were not as bad or worse in the Management of their Ordinary and Domestick Concerns; but alas, here they are much to seek: For place a formal Wise Man at a Feast, and he shall, either by his morose Silence put the whole Table out of Humour, or by his frivolous Questions disoblige and tire out all that sit near him. Call him out to Dance, and he shall move no more nimbly than a Camel: Invite him to any Pub-

Publick Performance, and by his very Looks he shall damp the Mirth of all the Spectators, and at last be forced, like *Cato*, to leave the *Theatre*, because he cannot unstarch his Gravity, nor put on a more pleasant Countenance. If he be engaged in any Discourse, he either breaks off abruptly, or tires out the Patience of the whole Company if he goes on: If he have any Contract, Sale, or Purchase to make, or any other Worldly Business to transact, he behaves himself more like a Senseless Stock than a Rational Man; so as he can be of no Use nor Advantage to himself, to his Friends, or to his Country, because he knows nothing how the World goes, and is wholly unacquainted with the Humour of the Vulgar, who cannot but hate a Person so disagreeing in Temper from themselves.

And indeed the whole Proceedings of the World are nothing but one continued *Scene of Folly*, all the *Actors* being equally Fools and Mad-men; and therefore if any be so Pragmatically Wise as to be Singular, he must e'en turn a Second *Timon*, or Manhater, and by retiring into some unfrequented Desert, become a *Recluse* from all Mankind.

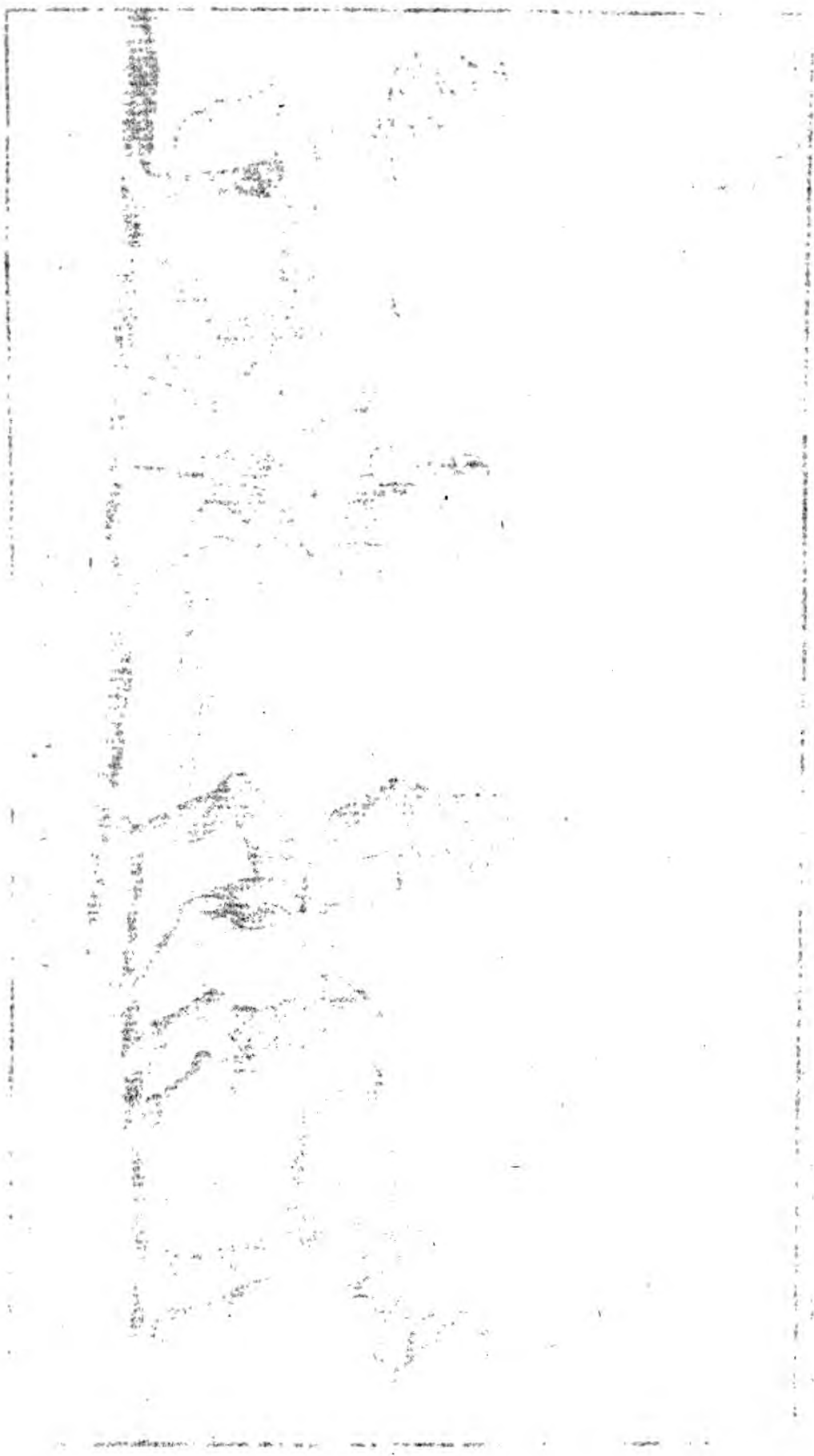
But to return to what I first proposed, what was it in the Infancy of the World that made Men naturally Savage, Unite into Civil Societies, but only *Flattery*, one of my chiefest Virtues? For there is nothing else meant by the Fables of *Amphion* and *Orpheus* with their Harps; the first making the Stones

*Folly the
Original
Cause of
Societies.*

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

jump into a well-built Wall, the other inducing the *Trees* to pull their Legs out of the Ground, and Dance the *Morrice* after him. What was it that quieted and appeased the *Roman* People, when they brake out into a Riot for the Redress of Grievances? Was it any finewy, starch'd Oration? No, alas, it was only a silly, ridiculous Story, told by *Menenius Agrippa*, how the other Members of the Body quarrell'd with the Belly, resolving no longer to continue her drudging Caterers, till by the Penance they thought thus in Revenge to impose they soon found their own Strength so far diminished, that paying the Cost of experiencing a Mistake, they willingly returned to their respective Duties. Thus when the Rabble of *Athens* murmured at the Exaction of the Magistrates, *Themistocles* satisfied them with such another Tale of the *Fox*, and the *Hedgehog*; the first whereof being stuck fast in a *Miry Bog*, the *Flies* came swarming about him, and almost suck'd out all his Blood, the latter officiously offers his Service to drive them away; no, says the *Fox*, if these which are almost glutted be frighted off, there will come a new hungry Set that will be Ten times more Greedy and Devouring: The Moral of this he meant applicable to the People, who if they had such Magistrates removed as they complained of for Extortion, yet their Successors would certainly be worse.

With
D 3





Sertorius Experiment

With what highest Advances of Policy could *Sertorius* have kept the *Barbarians* so well in Awe, as by a White *Hart*, which he pretended was presented to him by *Diana*, and brought him Intelligence of all his Enemies Designs? What was *Lycurgus* his Grand Argument for demonstrating the Force of Education, but only the bringing out Two Whelps of the same Bitch, differently brought up, and placing before them a Dish, and a live Hare; the *one*, that had been bred to Hunting, ran after the *Game*; while the *other*, whose Kennel had been a Kitchen, presently fell a licking the *Platter*. Thus the before-mentioned *Sertorius* made his Soldiers sensible that Wit and Contrivance would do more than bare Strength, by setting a couple of Men to the plucking of Two Horses Tails; the first pulling at all in one Handful, tugged in vain, while the other, though much the weaker, snatching off one by one, soon performed his appointed Task. [Fig. XII.]

Instances of like Nature are *Minos* and King *Numa*, both which fooled the People into Obedience by a meer Cheat and Juggle; the first by pretending he was advised by *Jupiter*, the latter by making the Vulgar believe he had the *Goddeſs Ægeria* assistant to him in all Debates and Transactions. And indeed it is by such Wheedles that the Common People are best gull'd and imposed upon.

For farther, what City would ever submit to the rigorous Laws of *Plato*, to the severe Injunctions

*Folly the
Preserver
of States.*

Erasmus's Panegyrick

Injunctions of *Aristotle*? Or the more unpracticable Tenets of *Socrates*? No, these would have been too streight and gauling, there not being Allowance enough made for the Infirmities of the People.

To pass to another Head, what was it made the *Decii* so forward to offer themselves up as a Sacrifice for an Atonement to the Angry Gods, to rescue and stipulate for their indebted Country?

What made *Curtius*, on a like Occasion, so desperately to throw away his Life, but only *Vain-glory*, that is condemn'd, and unanimously voted for a main Branch of Folly by all Wise Men? What is more unreasonable and foppish, (say they) than for any Man, out of Ambition to some Office, to bow, and scrape, and cringe to the gaping Rabble, to purchase their Favour by Bribes and Donatives, to have their Names cry'd up in the Streets, to be carry'd about as it were for a fine Sight upon the Shoulders of the Crowd, to have their *Effigies* carved in Brass, and put up in the Market-place for a Monument of their Popularity? Add to this the Affectation of new Titles and Distinctive Badges of Honour; nay, the very Deifying of such as were the most Bloody Tyrants. These are so extreemly ridiculous, that there is need of more than one *Democritus* to laugh at 'em. And yet hence only have been occasion'd those Memorable Atchievements of Heroes, that have so much employ'd the Pens of many Laborious Writers.

It

It is *Folly* that, in a several Dress, governs Cities, appoints Magistrates, and supports Judicatures; and, in short, makes the whole Course of Man's Life a meer Childrens Play, and a worse than Push-pin Diversion. The Invention of all *Arts* and *Sciences* are likewise owing to the same Cause: For what sedentary, thoughtful Men would have beat their Brains in the Search of new and unheard-of Mysteries, if not egg'd on by the bubbling Hopes of Credit and Reputation? They think a little glittering Flash of Vain-glory is a sufficient Reward for all their Sweat, and Toil, and tedious Drudgery, while they that are supposedly more foolish reap Advantage of the others Labours.

*Folly the
Inventer of
Arts and
Sciences.*

And now since I have made good my Title to *Valour* and *Industry*, what if I challenge an equal Share of *Wisdom*? How! This (you'll say) is absurd and contradictory; the East and West may as soon shake Hands as *Folly* and *Wisdom* be reconciled. Well, but have a little Patience and I'll warrant you I'll make out my Claim. First then, if *Wisdom* (as must be confess'd) is no more than a Readiness of doing Good, and an expedite Method of becoming serviceable to the World, to whom does this Vertue more properly belong? To the Wise Man, who partly out of Modesty, partly out of Cowardice, can proceed resolutely in no Attempt; or to the Fool, that goes Hand over Head, Leaps before he Looks; and so ventures thro' the most hazardous Undertaking without any Sense or Prospect

*Fools of all
Men the
Wisest.*

Prospect of Danger. In the Undertaking any Enterprize the Wise Man shall run to consult with his Books, and doze himself with poring upon musty Authors, while the dispatchful Fool shall rush bluntly on, and have done the Business, while the other is thinking of it. For the Two greatest Lets and Impediments to the Issue of any Performance are *Modesty*, which casts a Mist before Mens Eyes, and *Fear*, which makes them shrink back, and recede from any Proposal: Both these are Bannish'd and Cashier'd by *Folly*, and in their stead such a Habit of *Fool-hardiness* introduc'd, as mightily contributes to the Success of all Enterprizes.

Farther, if you will have Wisdom taken in the other Sense, of being *A right Judgment of Things*, you shall see how short Wise Men fall of it in this Acceptation.

First then, it is certain that all Things, like so many *Janus's*, carry a double Face, or rather bear a false Aspect, most Things being *really* in themselves far different from what they are in Appearance to others: So as that which at first Blush proves Alive, is in truth Dead; and that again which appears as Dead, at a nearer Review seems to be Alive: Beautiful seems Ugly, Wealthy Poor, Scandalous is thought Creditable, Prosperous passes for Unlucky, Friendly for what is most Opposite, and Innocent for what is Hurtful and Pernicious. In short, if we change the Tables, all Things are found placed in a quite different

different Posture from what just before they appear'd to stand in.

If this seem too darkly and unintelligibly express'd, I'll explain it by the familiar Instance of some Great King or Prince, whom every one shall suppose to swim in the Luxury of Wealth, and to be a Powerful Lord and Master, when, alas, on the one Hand he has Poverty of Spirit enough to make him a meer Beggar, and on the other Side he is worse than a Galley-slave to his own Lusts and Passions.

If I had a mind farther to expatiate I could enlarge upon several Instances of like Nature; but this one may at present suffice.

Well, but what's the Meaning (will some say) of all this? Why, observe the Application. If any one in a Play-house be so impertinent and rude as to rifle the Actors of their borrow'd Cloaths, make them lay down the Character assum'd, and force them to return to their Naked Selves, would not such a one wholly discompose and spoil the Entertainment? And wou'd he not deserve to be hiss'd and thrown Stones at till the Pragmatical Fool could learn better Manners? For by such a Disturbance the whole Scene will be alter'd: Such as acted the *Men* will perhaps appear to be *Women*: He that was dress'd up for a *Young Brisk Lover*, will be found a rough *Old Fellow*; and he that represented a *King*, will remain but a mean ordinary *Serving-Man*. The laying Things thus open is a Marring

Eraſmus's Panegyrick

Marring all the Sport, which conſiſts only in Counterfeit and Diſguiſe. Now the World is nothing elſe but ſuch another *Comedy*, where every one in the Tiring-room is firſt Habited ſuitably to the Part he is to act; and as it is ſucceſſively their Turn, out they come on the Stage, where he that now Perſonates a *Prince*, (*Fig. XIII.*) ſhall in another Part of the ſame Play alter his Dress, and become a *Beggar*, all Things being in a Mask and particular Diſguiſe, or otherwiſe the *Play* could never be preſented. Now if there ſhould ariſe any Starch'd Formal *Don*, that would point at the ſeveral Actors, and tell how this, that ſeems a Petty God, is in truth worſe than a Brute, being made Captive to the Tyranny of Paſſion; that the Other, who bears the Character of a King, is indeed the moſt ſlaviſh of Serving-men, in being ſubject to the Maſterſhip of Luſt and Senſuality; that a Third, who vaunts ſo much of his Pedigree, is no better than a Baſtard for degenerating from Virtue, which ought to be of greateſt Conſideration in Heraldry, and ſo ſhall go on in Expoſing all the reſt; would not any one think ſuch a Perſon quite Frantick, and ripe for Bedlam? For as nothing is more ſilly than Prepoſterous Wiſdom, ſo is there nothing more indiſcreeet than an Unſeaſonable Reproof. And therefore he is to be houted out of all Society that will not be pliable, conformable, and willing to ſuit his Humour with other Mens, remembering the Law of Clubs and Meetings, That he who will not do

Fig. 13.

p. 44.



Fig. 14.

p. 49.





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do as the rest must get him out of the Company. And it is certainly one great Degree of Wisdom for every one to consider that he is but a *Man*, and therefore he shou'd not pitch his soaring Thoughts beyond the Level of *Mortality*, but imp the Wings of his tow'ring Ambition, and obligingly submit and condescend to the Weakness of others, it being many times a Piece of Complaisance to go out of the Road for Company's Sake. No, (say you) this a grand Piece of *Folly*: True, but yet all our Living is no more than such kind of Fooling: Which though it may seem harsh to assert, yet it is not so strange as true.

For the better making it out it might perhaps be requisite to Invoke the Aid of the *Muses*, to whom the Poets devoutly apply themselves upon far more slender Occasions. Come then and assist, ye *Heliconian* Lasses, while I attempt to prove that there is no Method for an Arrival to Wisdom, and consequently no Tract to the Goal of Happiness, without the Instructions and Directions of *Folly*.

Folly the only Way to the highest Wisdom.

And here, in the first place, it has been already acknowledged, that all the Passions are Listed under my Regiment, since This is resolved to be the only Distinction betwixt a Wise Man and a Fool, that this latter is govern'd by Passion, the other guided by Reason: And therefore the Stoicks look upon Passions no other than as the Infection and Malady of the Soul, that disorders the Constitution

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

stitution of the whole Man, and by putting the Spirits into a Feavourish Ferment, many times occasion some Mortal Distemper. And yet these, however decried, are not only our Tutors to instruct us toward the Attainment of Wisdom, but e'en bolden us likewise, and spur us on to a quicker Dispatch of all our Undertakings. This, I suppose, will be stomach'd by the Stoical *Seneca*, who pretends, that the only Emblem of Wisdom is *the Man without Passion*; whereas the supposing any Person to be so, is perfectly to Unman him, or else Transforming him into some fabulous Deity that never was, nor ever will be; nay, to speak more plain, it is but the making him a meer *Statue*, immoveable, senseless, and altogether unactive. And if this be their Wise Man, let them take him to themselves, and remove him into *Plato's Commonwealth*, the new *Atlantis*, or some other-like Fairy-land. For who would not hate and avoid such a Person as should be deaf to all the Dictates of common Sense? That should have no more of Love or Pity than a Block or Stone, that remains heedless of all Dangers? That thinks he can never Mistake, but can foresee all Contingencies at the greatest Distance, and make Provision for the worst Presages? that feeds upon himself, and his own Thoughts? That Monopolizes Health, Wealth, Power, Dignity, and all to himself? That loves no Man, nor is beloved of any? That has the Impudence to tax even Divine Providence of ill Contrivance, and proudly grudges, nay, tram-

tramples under Foot all other Mens Reputation? And this is he that is the Stoick's compleat Wise Man. But prithee what City would chuse such a Magistrate? What Army would be willing to serve under such a Commander? Or what Woman would be Content with such a Do-little Husband? Who would invite such a Guest? Or what Servant would be retained by such a Master? The most illiterate Mechanick would in all Respects be a more acceptable Man, who would be frolicksome with his Wife, free with his Friends, jovial at a Feast, pliable in Converse, and obliging to all Company. But I am tired out with this Part of my Subject, and so must pass to some *other Topicks*.

And now were any one plac'd on that Tower, from whence *Jove* is fancied by the Poets to Survey the World, he would all around discern how many Grievances and Calamities our whole Life is on every Side encompassed with: How Unclean our Birth, how Troublesome our Tendance in the Cradle, how liable our Childhood is to a Thousand Misfortunes, how Toilsome and full of Drudgery our Riper Years, how Heavy and Uncomfortable our Old Age, and lastly, how Unwelcome the Unavoidableness of Death. Farther, in every Course of Life how many Wracks there may be of torturing Diseases, how many unhappy Accidents may casually occur, how many unexpected Disasters may arise, and what strange Alterations may one Moment pro-

*Folly the
only Conso-
lation a-
midst the
Miseries of
Life.*

produce? Not to mention such Miseries as Men are mutually the Cause of, as Poverty, Imprisonment, Slander, Reproach, Revenge, Treachery, Malice, Couzenage, Deceit, and so many more, as to reckon them all would be as puzz'ling Arithmetick as the numbring of the Sands.

How Mankind became environed with such hard Circumstances, or what Deity imposed these Plagues, as a Penance on rebellious Mortals, I am not now at Leisure to enquire: But whoever seriously takes them into Consideration, he must needs commend the Valour of the *Milesian Virgins*, who voluntarily kill'd themselves to get rid of a troublesome World: And how many Wise Men have took the same Course of becoming their own Executioners; among whom, not to mention *Diogenes*, *Xenocrates*, *Cato*, *Cassius*, *Brutus*, and other Heroes, the Self-denying *Chiron* is never enough to be commended; who, when he was offered by *Apollo* the Priviledge of being exempted from Death, and living on to the Worlds End, he refused the Enticing Proposal, as deservedly, thinking it a Punishment rather than Reward.

*She pre-
serves Hu-
man Race
from fail-
ing.*

But if all were thus Wise you see how soon the World would be Unpeopled, and what need there would be of a Second *Prometheus*, to Plaister up the Decayed Image of Mankind. I therefore come and stand in this Gap of Danger, and prevent farther Mischief; partly by Ignorance, partly by Inadvertence; by the Oblivion of whatever would be gra-
ting

ting to remember, and the Hopes of whatever may be grateful to expect, together palliating all Grievs with an Intermixture of Pleasure; whereby I make Men so far from being weary of their Lives, that when their Thread is spun to its full length, they are yet unwilling to die, and mighty hardly brought to take their last Farewel of their Friends. Thus some Decrepit Old Fellows, that look as hollow as the *Grave* into which they are falling, that rattle in the Throat at every Word they speak, that can eat no Meat but what is tender enough to *suck*, that have more Hair on their *Beard* than they have on their *Head*, [*Fig. XIV.*] and go stooping toward the *Dust* they must shortly return to, whose Skin seems already drest into *Parchment*, and their Bones ready dried to a *Skeleton*; these Shadows of Men shall be wonderful Ambitious of living longer, and therefore fence off the Attacks of Death with all imaginable Sights and Impostures: One shall *new Dye* his Grey Hairs, for fear their Colour should betray his Age; another shall spruce himself up in a light *Periwig*; a Third shall repair the Loss of his Teeth with an *Ivory Set*; and a Fourth perhaps shall fall deeply in *Love* with a Young Girl, and accordingly Court her with as much of Gaiety and Briskness as the liveliest Spark in the whole Town: And we can't but know, that for an Old Man to Marry a Young Wife without a Portion, to be a *Cooler* to other Mens Lust, is grown so common, that it is become the *Alamode* of the Times. And what's yet

Erasmus's Panegyrick

more Comical, you shall have some wrinkled Old Women, [*Fig. XV.*] whose very Looks are a sufficient Antidote to Leachery, that shall be canting out, *Ah, Life is a sweet Thing,* and so run a Catterwawling, and hire some strong back'd Stallions to recover their almost lost Sense of Feeling; and to set themselves off the better, they shall paint and dawb their Faces, alway stand a tricking up themselves at their Looking-glass, go naked-neck'd, bare-breasted, be tickled at a smutty Jest, dance among the Young Girls, write Love-Letters, and do all the other little Knacks of decoying Hot-blooded Suitors; and in the mean while, however they are laught at, they enjoy themselves to the full, live up to their Hearts Desire, and want for nothing that may compleat their Happiness. As for those that think them herein so ridiculous, I would have them give an Ingenuous Answer to this One Query, whether if Folly or Hanging were left to their Choice, they had not much rather live like *Fools*, than die like *Dogs*? But what Matter is it if these Things are resented by the Vulgar? Their ill Word is no Injury to Fools, who are either altogether insensible of any Affront, or at least lay it not much to Heart. If they were knock'd on the Head, or had their Brains dash'd out, they would have some Cause to complain; but alas, Slander, Calumny and Disgrace, are no other Way Injurious than as they are Interpreted; nor otherwise Evil, than as they are thought to be so: What Harm is it then if all Persons deride and scoff you, if you bear

Fig 15

P. 50.



Fig 16

P. 53





bear but up in your own Thoughts, and be your self thoroughly conceited of your Deserts? And prithee, why should it be thought any Scandal to be a Fool, since the being so is one Part of our Nature and Essence; and as so, our not being Wise can no more reasonably be imputed as a Fault, than it would be proper to laugh at a Man because he cannot fly in the Air like Birds and Fowls; because he goes not on all Four as Beasts of the Field; because he does not wear a Pair of visible Horns as a Crest on his Forehead, like Bulls or Stags: By the same Figure we may call a Horse unhappy, because he was never taught his Grammar; and an Oxe miserable, for that he never learnt to Fence: But sure as a Horse, for not knowing a Letter is never the less valuable, so a Man, for being a Fool, is never the more unfortunate, it being by Nature and Providence so ordained for each.

Ay, but (say our Patrons of Wisdom) the Knowledge of Arts and Sciences is purposely attainable by Men, that the Defect of *Natural* Parts may be supplied by the help of *Acquired*: As if it were probable that Nature, which had been so exact and curious in the Mechanism of Flowers, Herbs, and Flies, should have bungled most in her Master-piece, and made Man as it were by Halves, to be afterward Polished and Refined by his own Industry, in the Attainment of such Sciences as the *Aegyptians* feigned were invented by their God *Theuth*, as a Plague sure, and Punishment to Mankind, being so far from augment-

*Arts and
Sciences use-
less and
noxious.*

Erasmus's Panegyrick

ing their Happiness, that they do not answer that End they were first designed for, which was the *Improvement of Memory*, as *Plato* in his *Phædrus* does wittily observe.

In the first Golden Age of the World there was no need of these Perplexities; there was then no other Sort of Learning but what was naturally Collected from every Man's common *Sense*, improved by an easie *Experience*. What Use could there have been of *Grammar*, when all Men spoke the same Mother-Tongue, and aimed at no higher Pitch of Oratory, than barely to be understood by each other? What need of *Logick*, when they were too Wise to enter into any Dispute? Or what occasion for *Rhetorick*, where no Difference arose to require any laborious Decision? And as little Reason had they to be tied up by any Laws, since the Dictates of Nature and common Morality were restraint, and Obligation sufficient: And as to all the Mysteries of Providence, they made them rather the Object of their Wonder, than of their Curiosity; and therefore were not so presumptuous as to dive into the Depths of Nature, to labour for the solving all *Phænomena's* in Astronomy, or to wrack their Brain in the splitting of Entities, and unfolding the nicest Speculations, judging it a Crime for any Man to aim at what is put beyond the reach of his shallow Apprehension.

Thus was *Ignorance*, in the Infancy of the World, as much the Parent of *Happiness* as it
has

has been since of *Devotion*: But as soon as the Golden Age began by degrees to degenerate into more drossy Metals, then were *Arts* likewise invented; yet at first but few in Number, and those rarely understood, till in farther Process of Time the Superstition of the *Chaldeans*, and the Curiosity of the *Grecians*, spawn'd so many Subtilties, that now it is scarce the Work of an *Age* to be thoroughly acquainted with all the Criticisms in *Grammar* only. And among all the several Arts, those are proportionably most esteemed of that come nearest to Weakness and Folly. For thus Divines may bite their Nails, and Naturalists may blow their Fingers, Astrologers may know their own Fortune is to be Poor, and the Logician may shut his Fist, and grasp the Wind.

Arts the nearer to Folly the more valued.

Solus iatros aīē πολλῶν ἀντάξι' ἄλλω,

*While all these hard-naw'd Fellows cannot make
So great a Figure as a single Quack. [Fig. XVI.]*

And in this Profession, those that have most Confidence, though least Skill, shall be sure of the greatest Custom; and indeed this whole Art, as it is now practis'd, is but one Incorporated Compound of Craft and Imposture.

Next to the *Physician* comes (he, who perhaps will Commence a Suit with me for not being placed before him, I mean) the *Lawyer*, who is so silly as to be *Ignoramus* to a Proverb,

verb, and yet by such are all Difficulties resolved, all Controversies determined, and all Affairs managed so much to their own Advantage, that they get those Estates to themselves which they are employed to recover for their Clients: While the Poor Divine in the mean time shall have the Lice crawl upon his thread-bare Gown, before, by all his Sweat and Drudgery, he can get Money enough to purchase a new one. As those Arts therefore are most advantageous to their respective Professors which are farthest distant from Wisdom, so are those Persons incomparably most happy that have least to do with any at all, but jog on in the common Road of Nature, which will never mislead us, except we voluntarily leap over those Boundaries which she has cautiously set to our finite Beings. Nature glitters most in her own plain, homely Garb, and then gives the greatest Lustre when she is unsullied from all Artificial Garnish.

*Creatures
least capa-
ble of In-
struction
the most
Happy.*

Thus if we inquire into the State of all Dumb Creatures, we shall find those fare best that are left to Nature's Conduct: As to instance in *Bees*, what is more to be admired than the Industry and Contrivance of these little Animals? What Architect could ever form so curious a Structure as they give a Model of in their unimitable Combs? What Kingdom can be Governed with better Discipline than they exactly observe in their respective Hives? While the *Horse*, by turning a Rebel to Nature, and becoming a Slave to
Man,

Man, undergoes the worst of Tyranny : He is sometimes spurr'd on to Battle so long till he draw his Guts after him for Trapping, and at last falls down, and bites the Ground instead of Grass; not to mention the Penalty of his Jaws being curbed, his Tail dock'd, his Back wrung, his Sides spur-gall'd, his close Imprisonment in a Stable, his Rapshin and Fetters when he runs a Grass, and a great many other Plagues, which he might have avoided if he had kept to that first Station of Freedom which Nature plac'd him in. How much more desirable is the unconfined Range of *Flies* and *Birds*, who living by Instinct, would want nothing to compleat their Happiness, if some well-employed *Domitian* would not persecute the former, nor the sly Fowler lay Snares and Gins for the intrapping of the other? And if young Birds, before their unfledg'd Wings can carry them from their Nests, are caught, and pent up in a Cage, for the being taught to Sing, or Whistle, all their new *Tunes* make not half so sweet Musick as their wild *Notes*, and natural *Melody* : So much does that which is but rough-drawn by Nature surpass and excel all the additional Paint and Varnish of Art. And we cannot sure but commend and admire that *Pythagorean* Cock, which (as *Lucian* relates) had been successively a Man, a Woman, a Prince, a Subject, a Fish, a Horse, and a Frog; after all his Experience he summ'd up his Judgment in this Censure, that Man was the most wretch-

Fools the
happiest of
Men.

ed and deplorable of all Creatures, all other patiently grazing within the Enclosures of Nature, while Man only broke out, and strayed beyond those safer Limits, which he was justly confined to. And *Gryllus* is to be adjudged wiser than the much-counselling *Ulysses*, in as much as when by the Inchantment of *Circe* he had been turned into a *Hog*, he would not lay down his Swinishness, nor forsake his beloved *Stie*, to run the Peril of a Hazardous Voyage. For a farther Confirmation whereof I have the Authority of *Homer*, that Captain of all Poetry, who, as he gives to Mankind in general the Epithet of *Wretched* and *Unhappy*, so he bestows in particular upon *Ulysses* the Title of *Miserable*, which he never attributes to *Paris*, *Ajax*, *Achilles*, or any other of the Commanders; and that for this Reason, because *Ulysses* was more Crafty, Cautions, and Wise, than any of the rest.

As those therefore fall shortest of Happiness that reach highest at Wisdom, meeting with the greater Repulse for soaring beyond the Boundaries of their Nature, and without remembering themselves to be but Men, like the fallen Angels, daring them to vye with Omnipotence, and Giant-like Scale Heaven with the Engines of their own Brain; so are those most exalted in the Road of Bliss that degenerate nearest into *Brutes*, and quietly divest themselves of all Use and Exercise of Reason.

And

on the Praise of Folly.

57

And this we can prove by a familiar Instance. As namely, can there be any one Sort of Men that enjoy themselves better than those which we call Idiots, Changelings, Fools and Naturals? It may perhaps sound harsh, but upon due Consideration it will be found abundantly true, that these Persons in all Circumstances fare best, and live most comfortably: As first, they are void of all Fear, which is a very great Priviledge to be exempted from; they are troubled with no Remorse, nor Pricks of Conscience; they are not frighted with any Bugbear Stories of another World; they startle not at the fancied Appearance of Ghosts, or Apparitions; they are not wrack'd with the Dread of impending Mischiefs, nor bandied with the Hopes of any expected Enjoyments: In short, they are unassaulted by all those Legions of Cares that War against the Quiet of Rational Souls; they are ashamed of nothing, fear no Man, banish the Uneasiness of Ambition, Envy, and Love; and to add the Reversion of a future Happiness to the Enjoyment of a present one, they have no Sin neither to answer for; *Divines* unanimously maintaining, that a gross and unavoidable *Ignorance* does not only extenuate and abate from the Aggravation, but wholly expiate the Guilt of any *Immorality*.

Come now then as many of you as challenge the Respect of being accounted *Wise*, ingenuously confess how many Insurrections of rebellious Thoughts, and Pangs of a labouring Mind, ye are perpetually thrown and tortur'd

tur'd with ; reckon up all those Inconveniences that you are unavoidably subject to, and then tell me whether *Fools*, by being exempted from all these Embroilments, are not infinitely more free and happy than your selves ? Add to this, that Fools do not barely Laugh, and Sing, and Play the Goodfellow, alone to themselves ; but as it is the Nature of *Good* to be *communicative*, so they impart their Mirth to others, by making Sport for the whole Company they are at any time engaged in, as if Providence purposely design'd them for an Antidote to Melancholly : Whereby they make all Persons so fond of their Society, that they are welcomed to all Places, hugg'd, caress'd, and defended, a Liberty given them of saying or doing any thing ; so well Beloved, that none dares to offer them the least Injury ; nay, the most ravenous Beasts of Prey will pass them by untouch'd, as if by Instinct they were warned that such Innocence ought to receive no hurt. [Fig. XVII.] Farther, their Converse is so acceptable in the Court of Princes, that few Kings will Banquet, Walk, or take any other Diversion, without their Attendance ; nay, and had much rather have their Company, than that of their gravest Counsellors, whom they maintain more for Fashion-sake than Good-will ; nor is it so strange that these Fools should be preferr'd before graver Politicians, since these last, by their harsh, sowre Advice, and ill-timing the Truth, are fit only to put a Prince out of the Humour, while the other Laugh, and
Talk,

*Fools more
acceptable
to Princes
than Wise
Men.*

Fig. 17.

p. 58.



Fig. 18.

p. 60.



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Talk, and Joke, without any Danger of dis-oblising.

It is one farther very commendable Property of Fools that they always speak the *Truth*, than which there is nothing more Noble and Heroical. For so, tho' *Plato* relate it as a Sentence of *Alcibiades*, That *in the Sea of Drunkenness Truth swims uppermost*, and so Wine is the only Teller of Truth, yet this Character may more justly be assumed by me, as I can make good from the Authority of *Euripides*, who lays down this as an Axiom, *μωρὰ μωρὸς λέγει*, *Children and Fools always speak the Truth*. Whatever the Fool has in his Heart, he betrays it in his Face; or what is more notifying, discovers it by his Words: While the Wise Man, as *Euripides* observes, carries a Double Tongue; the one to speak what *may* be said, the other what ought to be; the one what *Truth*, the other what the *Time* requires: Whereby he can in a trice so alter his Judgment, as to prove that to be now White, which he had just before swore to be Black; like the Satyr at his Porrage, blowing hot and cold at the same Breath; in his *Lips* professing one Thing, when in his *Heart* he means another.

Farthermore, Princes in their greatest Splendor seem upon this Account unhappy, in that they miss the Advantage of being told the Truth, and are sham'd off by a parcel of insinuating Courtiers, that acquit themselves as Flatterers more than as Friends. But some will Perchance object, that Princes do not love

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love to hear the Truth, and therefore Wise Men must be very cautious how they behave themselves before them, lest they should take too great a Liberty in speaking what is *true*, rather than what is *acceptable*. This must be confess'd, Truth indeed is seldom palatable to the Ears of Kings, yet Fools have so great a Privilege as to have free leave, not only to speak *bare* Truths, but the most *bitter* ones too: So as the same Reproof, which had it come from the Mouth of a Wise Man would have cost him his Head, being blurted out by a Fool, is not only pardon'd, but well taken, and rewarded. For Truth has naturally a Mixture of Pleasure, if it carry with it nothing of Offence to the Person whom it is applied to; and the happy Knack of ordering it so is bestowed only on Fools. 'Tis for the same Reason that this Sort of Men are more fondly beloved by Women, [*Fig. XVIII.*] who like their tumbling them about, and playing with them, though never so boisterously, pretending to take that only in Jest, which they would have to be meant in Earnest, as that Sex is very Ingenious in palliating, and dissembling the Bent of their wanton Inclinations.

*Whilst Fools
are Happy,
the Wise are
most Miserable.*

But to return. An Additional Happiness of these Fools appears farther in this, that when they have run merrily on to their last Stage of Life, they neither find any Fear, nor feel any Pain to *die*, but march contentedly to the other World, where their Company sure must be as acceptable as it was here upon Earth.

Let

Let us draw now a Comparison between the Condition of a *Fool* and that of a *Wise Man*, and see how infinitely the one outweighs the other.

Give me any Instance then of a Man as Wise as you can fancy him possible to be, that has spent all his Younger Years in poring upon Books, and trudging after Learning, in the Pursuit whereof he squanders away the pleasantest Time of his Life in Watching, Sweat and Fasting, and in his latter Days he never tastes one Mouthful of Delight, but is always stingy, poor, dejected, melancholly, burthensome to himself, and unwelcome to others, pale, lean, thin-jaw'd, sickly, contracting by his Sedentariness such hurtful Distempers as bring him to an untimely Death, like *Roses* pluck'd before they shatter. Thus have you the Draught of a Wise Man's Happiness, more the Object of a Commiserating Pity, than of an Ambitioning Envy.

But now again come the croaking Stoicks, and tell me in Mood and Figure, That nothing is more miserable than the being Mad: But the being a Fool is the being Mad, therefore there is nothing more miserable than the being a Fool. Alas, this is but a Falacy, the Discovery whereof solves the Force of the whole Syllogism. Well then, they argue subtilly, 'tis true, but a *Socrates* in *Plato* makes Two *Venus's* and Two *Cupids*, and shews how their Actions and Properties ought not to be confounded; so these Disputants, if they had not been *Mad* themselves, should have distinguish'd between

The Stoicks refuted.

Madness twofold.

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between a double *Madness* in others : And there is certainly a great Difference in the Nature as well as in the Degrees of them, and they are not both equally Scandalous : For *Horace* seems to take Delight in one Sort when he says,

—————*An me ludit amabilis*
Insania ? —————

Does welcome Frenzy make me thus mistake ?

And *Plato* in his *Phædron* ranks the Madness of Poets, of Prophets, and of Lovers, among those Properties which conduce to a Happy Life. And *Virgil*, in his Sixth *Ænead*, gives this Epithet to his industrious *Æneas*,

Quod si —————
—————*Infano juvat indulgere labori :*

If you'll proceed to these your Mad Attempts.

And indeed there is a Twofold Sort of Madness ; the one that which the Furies bring from Hell ; those that are herewith possess'd are hurried on to Wars and Contentions, by an inexhaustible Thirst of Power and Riches, inflamed to some infamous and unlawful Lust, enraged to act the Parricide, seduced to become guilty of Incest, Sacrilege, or some other of those Crimson-dy'd Crimes ; or, finally, to be so prick'd in Conscience as to be lash'd and stung with the Whips and Snakes of Grief and Remorse. But there is another Sort of Madness that proceeds from Folly, so far from being any way injurious or distasteful, that
it

it is throughly good and desirable : And this happens when by a harmless Mistake in the Judgment of Things the Mind is freed from those Cares which would otherwise gratingly afflict it, and smooth'd over with a Content and Satisfaction it could not under other Circumstances so happily enjoy. And this is that comfortable Apathy or Insensibleness which *Cicero*, in an Epistle to his Friend *Atticus*, wishes himself Master of, that he might the less take to Heart those insufferable Outrages committed by the Tyrannizing Triumvirate, *Lepidus*, *Antonius*, and *Augustus*. That *Grecian* likewise had a happy Time of it, who was so frantick as to sit a whole Day in the empty Theatre laughing, shouting, and clapping his Hands, as if he had really seen some Pathetick Tragedy acted to the Life, when indeed all was no more than the Strength of Imagination, and the Efforts of Delusion, while in all other Respects the same Person behaved himself very discreetly, was,

— *Jucundus amicis,*

*Comis in uxorem, possitque ignoscere servis,
Et signo lese non insanire lagenæ.*

Sweet to his Friends, to's Wife obliging, kind,
And so averse from a revengeful Mind,
That had his Servants unseal'd his Bottled
(Wine,
He wou'd not fret, nor doggedly repine.

And when by a Course of Phyfick he was recover'd from this Phrensie, he look'd upon his
his

Erasmus's Panegyrick

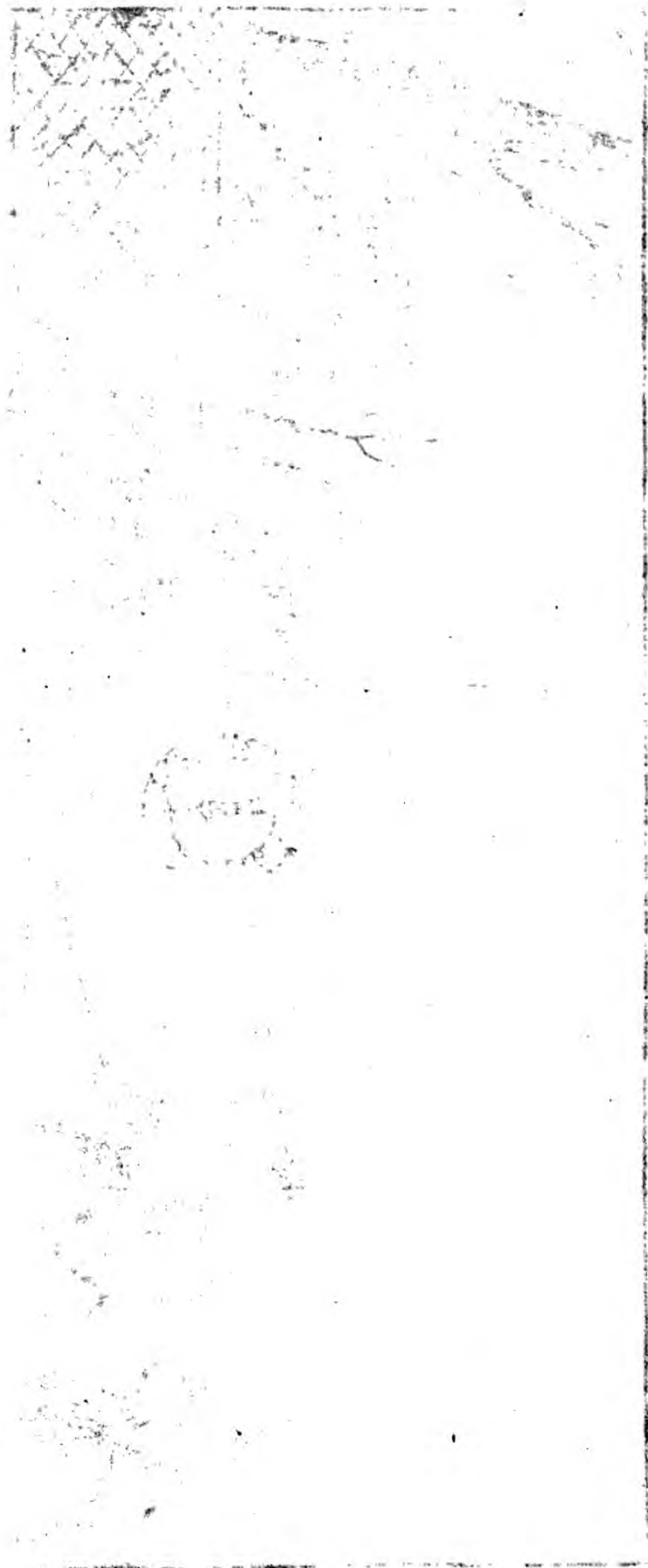
his Cure so far from a *Kindness*, that he thus reasons the Case with his Friends ;

— *Pol me occidistis amici,
Non servastis, — cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.*

This Remedy, my Friends, is worse i'th' main }
Than the Disease, the Cure augments the }
My only Hopes is a Relapse again. (Pain ; }

And certainly they were the more Mad of the Two who endeavour'd to bereave him of so pleasing a *Delirium*, and recal all the Aches of his Head by dispelling the Mists of his Brain.

I have not yet determin'd whether it be proper to include all the Defects of Sense and Understanding under the common *Genus* of Madness. For if any one be so short-sighted as to take a Mule for an Ass, or so shallow-pated as to admire a paltry Ballad for an elegant Poem, he is not thereupon immediately censured as Mad: But if any one let not only his Senses but his Judgment be imposed upon in the most ordinary common Concerns, he shall come under the Scandal of being thought next Door to a Madman. As suppose any one should hear an Ass bray, and should take it for ravishing Musick ; or if any one, Born a Beggar, should fancy himself as Great as a Prince, or the like. But this sort of Madness, if (as is most usual) it be accompanied with Pleasure, brings a great Satisfaction both to those who are possess'd with it themselves, and those who deride it in others,



P. 65.

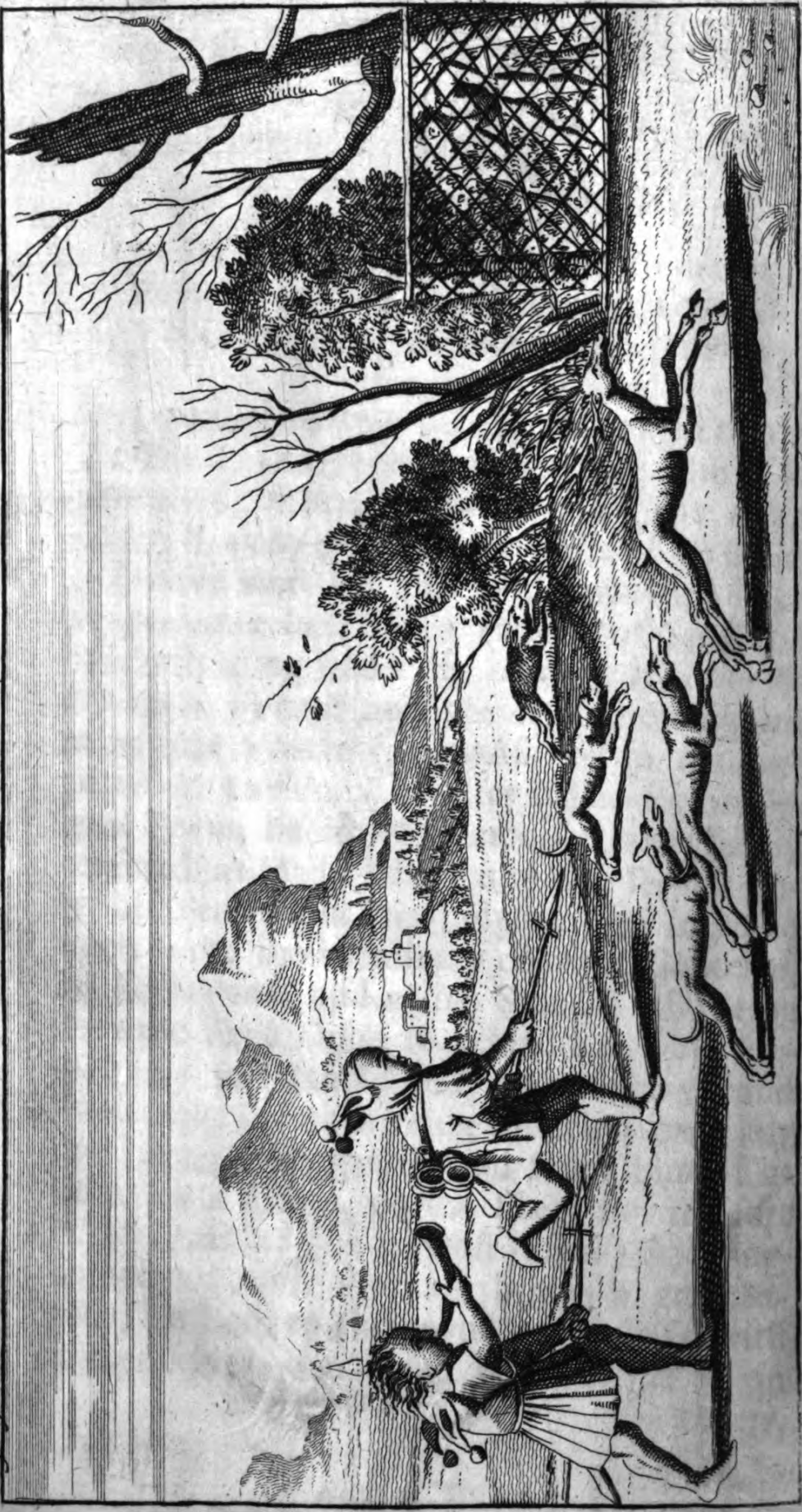


Fig. 19

Fig.

others, tho' they are not both equally Frantick. And this *Species* of Madness is of larger Extent than the World commonly imagines. Thus the whole Tribe of Madmen make Sport among themselves, while one laughs at another; he that is more Mad many times jeering him that is less so. But indeed the greater each Man's Madness is, the greater is his Happiness, if it be but such a Sort as proceeds from an Excess of Folly, which is so Epidemical a Distemper that it is hard to find any one Man so uninfected as not to have sometimes a Fit or two of some Sort of Frensie. There is only this Difference between the several Patients, he that shall take a Broom-stick for a Strait-bodied Woman, is without more ado sentenced for a Mad-man, because this is so strange a Blunder as very seldom happens; whereas he whose Wife is a common Jilt, that keeps a Warehouse free for all Customers, and yet swears she is as chaste as an untouch'd Virgin, and hugs himself in his contented Mistake, is scarce taken notice of, because he fares no worse than a great many more of his good-natur'd Neighbours. Among these are to be rank'd such as take an immoderate Delight in *Hunting*, (*Fig. XIX.*) and think no Musick comparable to the Sounding of Horns and the Yelping of Beagles; and were they to take Physick, would no question think the most Sovereign Virtues to be in the *Album Græcum* of a Dog's Turd. When they have run down their Game, what strange Pleasure they take in cutting of it up! Cows
F and

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and Sheep may be slaughter'd by common *Butchers*, but what is kill'd in Hunting must be broke up by none under a *Gentleman*, who shall throw down his Hat, fall devoutly on his Knees, and drawing out a flashing Hanger, (for a common Knife is not good enough,) after several Ceremonies shall dissect all the Parts as artificially as the best-skill'd Anatomist, while all that stand round shall look very intently, and seem to be mightily surpriz'd with the Novelty, tho' they have seen the same an Hundred times before; and he that can but dip his Finger, and taste of the Blood, shall think his own better'd by it: And tho' the constant Feeding on such Diet does but assimilate them to the Nature of those Beasts they eat of, yet they'll swear that Venison is Meat for Princes, and that their living upon it makes them as Great as Emperors.

Delight in Building.

Near akin to these are such as take a great Fancy for *Building*: They raise up, pull down, begin anew, alter the Model, and never rest till they run themselves out of their whole Estate, taking up such a Compass for Buildings, till they leave themselves not one Foot of Land to live upon, nor one poor Cottage to shelter themselves from Cold and Hunger: And yet all the while are mighty proud of their Contrivances, and sing a sweet *Requiem* to their own Happiness.

The Virtuoso.

To these are to be added those plodding *Vertuoso's*, that plunder the most inward Recesses of Nature for the Pillage of a New Invention, and rake over Sea and Land for the





on the Praise of Folly.

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the Turning up some hitherto latent Mystery ; and are so continually tickled with the Hopes of Success, that they spare for no Cost nor Pains, but trudge on ; and upon a Defeat in one Attempt, courageously tack about to another, and fall upon new Experiments, never giving over till they have *calcined* their whole Estate to *Ashes*, and have not Money enough left unmelted to purchase one Crucible or Limbeck : And yet after all, they are not so much discouraged, but that they dream Fine Things still, and animate others what they can to the like Undertakings ; nay, when their Hopes come to the last Gasp, after all their Disappointments, they have yet one *Salvo* for their Credit, that

In Magnis voluisse sat est.

In Great Exploits our bare Attempts suffice.

And so inveigh against the Shortness of their Life, which allows them not Time enough to bring their Designs to a Maturity and Perfection.

Whether *Dice-Players* (*Fig. XX.*) may be The Gamester. so favourably dealt with as to be admitted among the rest is scarce yet resolved upon : But sure it is hugely vain and ridiculous, when we see some Persons so devoutly addicted to this Diversion, that at the first Rattle of the Box their Heart shakes within them, and keeps Consort with the Motion of the Dice : They are egg'd on so long with the Hopes of always

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Winning, till at last, in a Literal Sense, they have *thrown away* their whole Estate, and made Shipwreck of all they have, scarce escaping to Shore with their own Cloaths to their Backs ; thinking it in the mean while a great Piece of Religion to be just in the Payment of their Stakes, and will cheat any Creditor sooner than him who trusts them in Play : And that poring Old Men, that cannot tell their Cast without the Help of Spectacles, should be sweating at the same Sport ; nay, that such decrepit Blades, as by the Gout have lost the Use of their Fingers, shou'd look over, and hire others to throw for them. This indeed is prodigiously extravagant ; but the Consequence of it ends so oft in downright Madness, that it seems rather to belong to the Furies than to Folly.

*Superstition
foolish.*

The next to be placed among the Regiment of Fools are such as make a Trade of telling or inquiring after incredible Stories of *Miracles* and *Prodigies* : Never doubting that a Lie will choak them, they'll muster up a Thousand several strange Relations of Spirits, Ghosts, Apparitions, Raising of the Devil, and such like Bugbears of Superstition, which the farther they are from being probably true, the more greedily they are swallow'd, and the more devoutly believ'd. And these Absurdities do not only bring an empty Pleasure, and cheap Divertisement, but they are a good Trade, and procure a comfortable Income to such Priests and Friars as by this Craft get their Gain. To these again are
nearly

nearly related such others as attribute strange Virtues to the *Shrines* and *Images* of Saints and Martyrs, and so would make their credulous Profelytes believe, that if they pay their Devotion to *St. Christopher* in the Morning, they shall be guarded and secured the Day following from all Dangers and Misfortunes: If Soldiers, (*Fig. XXI.*) when they first take Arms, shall come and mumble over such a Set Prayer before the Picture of *St. Barbara*, they shall return safe from all Engagements; or if any pray to *Erasmus* on such particular Holidays, with the Ceremony of Wax-Candles, and other Fopperies, he shall in a short time be rewarded with a plentiful Increase of Wealth and Riches. The Christians have now their Gigantick *St. George*, as well as the Pagans had their *Hercules*; they paint the Saint on Horseback, and drawing the Horse in splendid Trappings, very gloriously accoutred, they scarce refrain in a Literal Sense from Worshipping the *very Beast*.

What shall I say of such as cry up and maintain the Cheat of *Pardons* and *Indulgences*? That by these compute the Time of each Soul's Residence in Purgatory, and assign them a longer or shorter Continuance, according as they purchase more or fewer of these paltry *Pardons*, and saleable Exemptions? Or what can be said bad enough of such others, as pretend that by the Force of such Magical Charms, or by the Fumbling over their *Beads* in the Rehearsal of such and such Petitions, (which some Religious Impostors in-

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vented, either for Diversion, or, what is more likely, for Advantage,) they shall procure Riches, Honour, Pleasure, Health, Long Life, a lusty Old Age, nay, after Death a Sitting at the Right Hand of our Saviour in his Kingdom; tho' as to this last Part of their Happiness they care not how long it be deferr'd, having scarce any Appetite toward a Tasting the Joys of *Heaven*, till they are surfeited, glutted with, and can no longer relsh the ir *Enjoyments* on *Earth*. By this easie Way of purchasing Pardons, any Notorious Highwayman, any Plundering Soldier, or any Bribe-taking Judge, shall disburse some part of their unjust Gains, and so think all their grossest Impieties sufficiently atoned for; so many Perjuries, Lusts, Drunkenness, Quarrels, Bloodsheds, Cheats, Treacheries, and all Sorts of Debaucheries, shall all be, as it were, struck a Bargain for, and such a Contract made, as if they had paid off all *Arrears*, and might now begin upon a *New Score*.

And what can be more ridiculous, than for some others to be confident of going to Heaven by repeating daily those Seven Verses out of the *Psalms*, which the *Devil* taught *St. Bernard*, (*Fig. XXII.*) thinking thereby to have put a Trick upon him, but that he was overreach'd in his Cunning?

Several of these Fooleries, which are so gross and absurd, as I my self am even asham'd to own, are practised and admired, not only by the Vulgar, but by such Proficients in Religion

Fig. 22

P. 20



Fig. 23

P. 24





ligion as one might well expect should have more Wit.

From the same Principles of Folly proceeds the Custom of each Country's Challenging their particular *Guardian-Saint*; nay, each Saint has his *distinct Office* allotted to him, and is accordingly address'd to upon the respective Occasions: As one for the Tooth-ach, a fifth to grant an easie Delivery in Child-birth, a third to help Persons to lost Goods, another to protect Seamen in a long Voyage, another to guard the Farmers Cows and Sheep, and so on; for to rehearse all Instances would be extremely tedious.

There are some more *Catholick Saints* petition'd to upon all Occasions, as more-especially the *Virgin Mary*, whose blind Devotees think it Manners now to place the Mother before the Son.

And of all the Prayers and Intercessions that are made to these respective Saints, the Substance of them is no more than downright Folly. Among all the Trophies that for Tokens of Gratitude are hung upon the Walls and Ceilings of Churches, you shall find no Relicks presented as a *Memorandum* of any that were ever cured of Folly, or had been made one Dram the Wiser. One perhaps after a Shipwrack got safe to Shore; another recover'd when he had been run thro' by an Enemy; one, when all his Fellow-Soldiers were kill'd upon the Spot, as Cunningly perhaps as Cowardly, made his Escape from the Field; another, while he was a Hanging, the

Guardian-Saints.

Offerings in Churches Trophies of Folly.

Erasmus's Panegyrick

Rope broke, and so he saved his Neck, and renewed his Licence for practising his Old Trade of Thieving ; another broke Goal, and got loose ; a Patient, against his Physician's Will, recover'd of a dangerous Feaver ; another drank Poison, which putting him into a violent Looseness, did his Body more Good than Hurt, to the great Grief of his Wife, who hoped upon this Occasion to have become a joyful Widow ; another had his Waggon overturn'd, and yet none of his Horses lamed ; another had caught a grievous Fall, and yet recover'd from the Bruise ; another had been tampering with his Neighbour's Wife, and escaped very narrowly from being catch'd by the enraged Cuckold in the very Act. After all these Acknowledgments of Escapes from such singular Dangers, there is none (as I have before intimated) that returns Thanks for being freed from Folly ; Folly being so sweet and luscious, that it is rather sued for as a Happiness, than deprecated as a Punishment. But why should I launch out into so wide a Sea of Superstitions ?

*Non mihi si linguæ centum sint, oraque centum,
Ferreæ vox, omnes fatuorum evolvere formas,
Omnia stultitiæ percurrere nomina possim.*

Had I as many Tongues as *Argus* Eyes,
Briareus Hands, they all wou'd not suffice }
Folly in all her Shapes t'epitomize.

Almost all Christians being wretchedly enslaved to Blindness and Ignorance, which the *Priests* are so far from preventing or removing, that they blacken the Darkness, and promote the Delusion ; wisely foreseeing that the People (like Cows, which never give down their Milk so well as when they are gently stroaked,) would part with less if they knew more, their *Bounty* proceeding only from a Mistake of *Charity*. Now if any Grave Wise Man should stand up, and unseasonably speak the Truth, telling every one that a Pious Life is the only Way of securing a Happy Death ; that the best Title to a *Pardon* of our Sins is purchased by a hearty *Abhorrence* of our Guilt, and sincere Resolutions of *Amendment* ; that the best *Devotion* which can be paid to any *Saints* is to *imitate* them in their exemplary Life : If he should proceed thus to inform them of their several Mistakes, there would be quite another Estimate put upon Tears, Watchings, Masses, Fastings, and other Severities, which before were so much prized, as Persons will now be vexed to lose that Satisfaction they formerly found in them.

In the same Predicament of Fools are to be ranked such, as while they are yet Living, and in good Health, take so great Care how they shall be *Buried* when they die, that they solemnly appoint how many Torches, how many Scutcheons, how many Gloves to be given, and how many Mourners they will have at their Funeral ; as if they thought they themselves

selves in their Coffins could be sensible of what Respect was paid to their Corps ; or as if they doubted they should rest a whit the less quiet in the Grave if they were with less State and Pomp interr'd.

Folly of another Kind, that of Nobles, Doctors, &c.

Now though I am in so great haste, as I would not willingly be stop't or detained, yet I cannot pass by without bestowing some Remarks upon another Sort of Fools ; who, tho' their first Descent was perhaps no better than from a Tapster or Tinker, yet highly value themselves upon their *Birth* and *Parentage*. One fetches his Pedigree from *Æneas*, another from *Brute*, a third from King *Arthur* : They hang up their Ancestors Worm-eaten Pictures as Records of Antiquity, and keep a long List of their Predecessors, with an Account of all their Offices and Titles, while they themselves are but Transcripts of their Forefather's dumb Statues, and degenerate even into those very *Beasts* which they carry in their Coat of Arms as *Ensigns* of their Nobility : And yet by a strong Presumption of their Birth and Quality, they Live not only the most pleasant and unconcerned themselves, but there are not wanting others too who cry up these Brutes almost equal to the Gods. But why should I dwell upon One or Two Instances of Folly when there are so many of like Nature ? *Conceit* and *Self-love* making many by Strength of Fancy believe themselves happy, when otherwise they are really Wretched and Despicable. Thus the most Apesac'd, [*Fig. XXIII.*] Ugliest Fellow in the whole Town, shall think him-

himself a Mirrour of Beauty: Another shall be so proud of his Parts, that if he can but mark out a Triangle with a Pair of Compasses he thinks he has mastered all the Difficulties of *Geometry*, and could outdo *Euclid* himself. A third shall admire himself for a ravishing Musician, though he have no more Skill in the handling of any Instrument than a *Pig* playing on the *Organs*: And another that rattles in the Throat as hoarse as a Cock crows, shall be proud of his Voice, and think he sings like any *Nightingale*.

There is another very pleasant Sort of Madness, whereby Persons assume to *themselves* whatever of Accomplishment they discern in *others*. Thus the Happy *Rich Churl* in *Seneca*, who had so short a Memory, as he could not tell the least Story without a Servant's standing by to prompt him, and was at the same so weak as he could scarce go upright, yet he thought he might adventure to accept a Challenge to a Duel, because he kept at home some lusty, sturdy Fellows, whose Strength he relied upon instead of his own.

It is almost needless to insist upon the several *Professors* of Arts and Sciences, who are all so egregiously conceited, that they would sooner give up their Title to an Estate in Lands, than part with the Reversion of their Wits: Among these, more especially Stage-Players, Musicians, Orators and Poets, each of which, the more of Duncery they have, the more of Pride, and the less their Deserts be, the greater is their Ambition: And how notoriously

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toriously soever dull they be, they meet with their Admirers; nay, the more silly they are, the higher they are extoll'd: Folly (as we have before intimated) never failing of Respect and Esteem. If therefore every one, the more ignorant he is, the greater Satisfaction he is to himself, and the more commended by others, to what Purpose is it to Sweat and Toil in the Pursuit of true Learning, which shall cost so many Gripes and Pangs of the Brain to acquire, and when obtained, shall only make the laborious Student more uneasie to himself, and less acceptable to others?

Every Nation has its peculiar Self-love, and Folly.

As Nature in her Dispensations of Conceitedness has dealt with *Private Persons*, so has she given a particular Smatch of Self-love to each *Country and Nation*. Upon this Account it is that the *English* challenge the Prerogative of having the most handsome Women, of the being most accomplished in the Skill of Musick, and of keeping the best Tables: The *Scotch* brag of their Gentility, and pretend the Genius of their Native Soil inclines them to be good Disputants: The *French* think themselves remarkable for Complaisance and Good Breeding: The *Sorbonists* of *Paris* pretend before any others to have made the greatest Proficiency in Polemick Divinity: The *Italians* value themselves for Learning and Eloquence; and, like the *Grecians* of Old, account all the World *Barbarians* in respect of themselves; to which piece of Vanity the Inhabitants of *Rome* are more especially addicted, pretending themselves to be Owners of all those Heroick
Virtues

Virtues which their City so many Ages since was deservedly Famous for. The *Venetians* stand upon their Birth and Pedigree. The *Grecians* Pride themselves in having been the first Inventers of most Arts, and in their Country being famed for the Product of so many Eminent Philosophers. The *Turks*, and all the other Refuse of *Mahometism*, pretend they profess the only true Religion, and laugh at all Christians for Superstitious, Narrow-soul'd Fools. The *Jews* to this Day expect their *Messias* as devoutly as they believe in their first Prophet *Moses*. The *Spaniards* challenge the Repute of being accounted good Soldiers. And the *Germans* are noted for their Tall, Proper Stature, and for their Skill in Magick. But not to mention any more, I suppose you are already convinced how great an Improvement and Addition to the Happiness of Humane Life is occasioned by Self-love: Next Step to which is *Flattery*; for as Self-love is nothing but the coaking up of *our selves*, so the same currying and humouring of *others* is termed Flattery.

Flattery, it is true, is now looked upon as a Scandalous Name, but it is by such only as mind *Words* more than *Things*. They are prejudiced against it upon this Account, because they suppose it justles out all Truth and Sincerity: Whereas indeed its Property is quite contrary, as appears from the Examples of several Brute Creatures: What is more fawning than a *Spaniel*? And yet what is more faithful

Flattery
both safe
and expedient.

to his Master? What is more fond and loving than a tame *Squirrel*? And yet what is more sporting and inoffensive? This little frisking Creature is kept up in a Cage to play withal, while Lions, Tigers, Leopards, and such other Savage Emblems of Rapine and Cruelty are shewn only for State and Rarity, and otherwise yield no Pleasure to their respective Keepers.

There is indeed a pernicious destructive Sort of *Flattery*, wherewith Rookers and Sharks work their several Ends upon such as they can make a Prey of, by decoying them into Traps and Snares beyond Recovery: But that which is the Effect of Folly is of a much different Nature; it proceeds from a softness of Spirit, and a flexibleness of Good Humour, and comes far nearer to Virtue than that other Extream of Friendship, namely, a stiff, sower, dogged Moroseness: It refreshes our Minds when tired, enlivens them when melancholly, reinforces them when languishing, invigorates them when heavy, recovers them when sick, and pacifies them when rebellious: It puts us in a Method how to procure Friends, and how to keep them; it entices Children to swallow the bitter Rudiments of Learning; it gives a new ferment to the almost stagnated Souls of Old Men; it both reproveth and instructs Princes without Offence under the Mask of Commendation: In short, it makes every Man fond and indulgent of himself, which is indeed no small Part of each Man's Happiness, and at the same time renders him obliging and com-

complaisant in all Company, where it is pleasant to see how the Asses rub and scratch one another. This again is a great Accomplishment to an Orator, a greater to a Physician, and the only one to a Poet: In fine, it is the best Sweetner to all Afflictions, and gives a true Relish to the otherwise insipid Enjoyments of our whole Life. Ay, but (say you) to *Flatter* is to *Deceive*; and to *Deceive* is very harsh and hurtful: No, rather just contrary; nothing is more welcome and bewitching than the *being deceived*. They are much to be blamed for an undistinguishing Head, that make a Judgment of Things according to what they are in *themselves*, when their whole Nature consists barely in the *Opinions* that are had of them. For all sublunary Matters are enveloped in such a Cloud of Obscurity, that the Short-sightedness of Humane Understanding cannot pry through and arrive to any comprehensive Knowledge of them: Hence the Sect of *Academick* Philosophers have modestly resolved, that all things being no more than *Probable*, nothing can be known as *Certain*; or if there could, yet would it but interrupt and abate from the Pleasure of a more happy *Ignorance*. Finally, our Souls are so Fashioned and Moulded, that they are sooner Captivated by *Appearances*, than by *Real Truths*; of which, if any one would demand an Example, he may find a very familiar one in *Churches*, where, if what is delivered from the Pulpit be a grave, solid, rational Discourse, all the Congregation grow weary, and fall asleep, till their Patience

Men are
sway'd by
Fancy, especially in Religion.

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

tience be released; whereas if the *Preacher* (pardon the Impropriety of the Word, the *Prater* I would have said,) be *Zealous* in his Thumps of the Cushion, and Antick Gestures, and spend his Glas in the telling of pleasant Stories, his *Beloved* shall then stand up, tuck their Hair behind their Ears, and be very devoutly attentive. So among the *Saints*, those are most resorted to who are most *Romantick* and *Fabulous*: As for Instance, a *Poetick* *St. George*, a *St. Christopher*, or a *St. Barbara*, shall be oftner pray'd to than *St. Peter*, *St. Paul*, nay, perhaps than *Christ* himself: But this, it is possible, may more properly be re-ferr'd to another Place.

In the mean while observe what a *cheap* Purchase of *Happiness* is made by the Strength of *Fancy*. For whereas many Things, even of inconsiderable Value, would cost a great deal of Pains, and perhaps Pelf, to procure; *Opinion* spares Charges, and yet gives us them in as ample a Manner by *Conceit*, as if we possess'd them in *Reality*. Thus he who feeds on such a *stinking* Dish of Fish, as another must hold his Nose at a Yard's distance from; yet if he feed heartily, and relish them palatably, they are to him as good as if they were *fresh* caught: Whereas on the other Hand, if any one be invited to never so dainty a Jowl of *Sturgeon*, if it go against his Stomach to eat any, he may sit a Hungry, and bite his Nails with greater Appetite than his *Victuals*. If a Woman be never so ugly and nauseous, yet if her Husband

band can but *think* her handsome, it is all one to him as if she really *were* so: If any Man have never so ordinary and smutty a *Draught*, yet if he admires the Excellency of it, and can suppose it to have been drawn by some Old *Apelles*, or Modern *Vandike*, he is as proud of it as if it had really been done by one of their Hands. I knew a Friend of mine that presented his Bride with several False and Counterfeit *Stones*, making her believe that they were right *Jewels*, and cost him so many Hundred Thousand Crowns; under this Mistake the poor Woman was as choice of *Pebbles*, and *Painted Glass*, as if they had been so many Natural *Rubies* and *Diamonds*, while the subtle Husband sav'd a great deal in his Pocket, and yet made his Wife as well pleased as if he had been at Ten Hundred times the Cost. What Difference is there between them that in the darkest Dungeon can with a *Platonick* Brain Survey the whole World in Idea, and him that stands in the open Air, and takes a less deluding Prospect of the Universe? If the *Beggar* in *Lucian*, that *dreamt* he was a Prince, had never *wak'd*, his *imaginary* Kingdom had been as great as a *real* one. Between him therefore that *truly* is happy, and him that *thinks* himself so, there is no perceivable Distinction; or if any, the Fool has the better of it: First, Because his Happiness costs him less, standing him only in the Price of a *single Thought*; and then, Secondly, Because he has more Fellow-companions and Partakers of his

G

Folly frees
Mankind
from Cares,
and makes
happy.

his good Fortune: For no Enjoyment is comfortable where the Benefit is not imparted to others; nor is any one Station of Life desirable where we can have no Converse with Persons of the same Condition with our selves: And yet this is the hard Fate of Wise Men, who are grown so scarce, that, like *Phenixes*, they appear but *One* in an Age. The *Grecians*, it is true, reckoned up *Seven* within the narrow Precincts of their own Country; yet I believe, were they to cast up their Accounts anew, they would not find a half, nay, not not a third Part, of *One* in far larger Extent.

Farther, when among the several Good Properties of *Bacchus* this is look'd upon as the chief, namely, that he drowns the Cares and Anxieties of the Mind, though it be indeed but for a short while; for after a small *Knap*, when our Brains are a little settled, they all return to their former Corrodings: How much greater is the more durable Advantage which I bring? While by one uninterrupted Fit of being *Drunk in Conceit*, I perpetually cajole the Mind with Riots, Revels, and all the Excess and Energy of Joy.

Add to this, that I am so *Communicative* and Bountiful, as to let no one particular Person pass without some Token of my Favour; whereas other Deities bestow their Gifts sparingly to their *Elect* only. *Bacchus* has not thought fit that every Soil should bear the same Juice-yielding Grape: *Venus* has not given to all alike Portion of Beauty: *Mercury*
endows

endows but few with the Knack of an Accomplished Eloquence: *Hercules* gives not to all the same Measure of Wealth and Riches: *Jupiter* has ordained but a few to be Born to a Kingdom: *Mars* in Battle gives the compleat Victory but to one Party; nay, he often makes them both Losers: *Apollo* does not answer the Expectation of all that consult his Oracles: *Jove* oft thunders: *Phæbus* sometimes shoots the Plague, or some other Infection, at the point of his Darts: And *Neptune* swallows down more than he bears up: Not to mention their *Ve-Jupiters*, their *Pluto's*, their *Ate Goddesses of Loss*, their *Evil Genius's*, and such other Monsters of Divinity, as had more of the Hangman than the God in them, and were Worshipped only to deprecate that Hurt which used to be inflicted by them: I say, not to mention these, I am that high and mighty Goddess, whose *Liberality* is of as large an Extent as her *Omnipotence*: I give to all that ask; I never appear Sullen, nor out of Humour, nor ever demand any Atonement or Satisfaction for the Omission of any Ceremonious Punctilio in my Worship: I do not Storm or Rage, if Mortals, in their Addresses to the other Gods pass me by Unregarded, without the Acknowledgment of any Respect or Application: Whereas all the other Gods are so scrupulous and exact, that it often proves less dangerous manfully to despise them, than sneakingly to attempt the Difficulty of pleasing them. Thus some Men are of that captious, froward Humour,

Folly a most propitious Divinity, and ador'd by all.

mour, that a Man had better be wholly *Strangers* to them, than never so intimate *Friends*.

Well, but there are none (say you) Build any *Altars*, or Dedicate any *Temple* to Folly. I admire (as I have before intimated) that the World should be so wretchedly ungrateful. But I am so Good-natur'd as to pass by and Pardon this seeming Affront, though indeed the Charge thereof, as unnecessary, may well be saved; for to what Purpose should I demand the *Sacrifice* of Frankincense, Cakes, Goats, and Swine, since all Persons everywhere pay me that more acceptable *Service*, which all Divines agree to be more effectual and meritorious, namely, an *Imitation* of my communicable Attributes? I do not therefore any Way envy *Diana* for having her Altars bedewed with Human Blood: I think my self then most Religiously adored, when my respective *Devotees* (as is their usual Custom) conform themselves to my Practice, transcribe my Pattern, and so live the *Copy* of me their *Original*. And truly this Pious Devotion is not so much in Use among Christians as is much to be wished it were: For how many Zealous *Votaries* are there that pay so profound a Respect to the *Virgin Mary*, as to place *lighted* [Fig. XXIV.] Tapers even at *Noon-day* upon her Altars? And yet how few of them Copy after her untouch'd Chastity, her Modesty, and her other commendable Virtues, in the Imitation whereof consists the truest

Fig. 24.

p. 84.

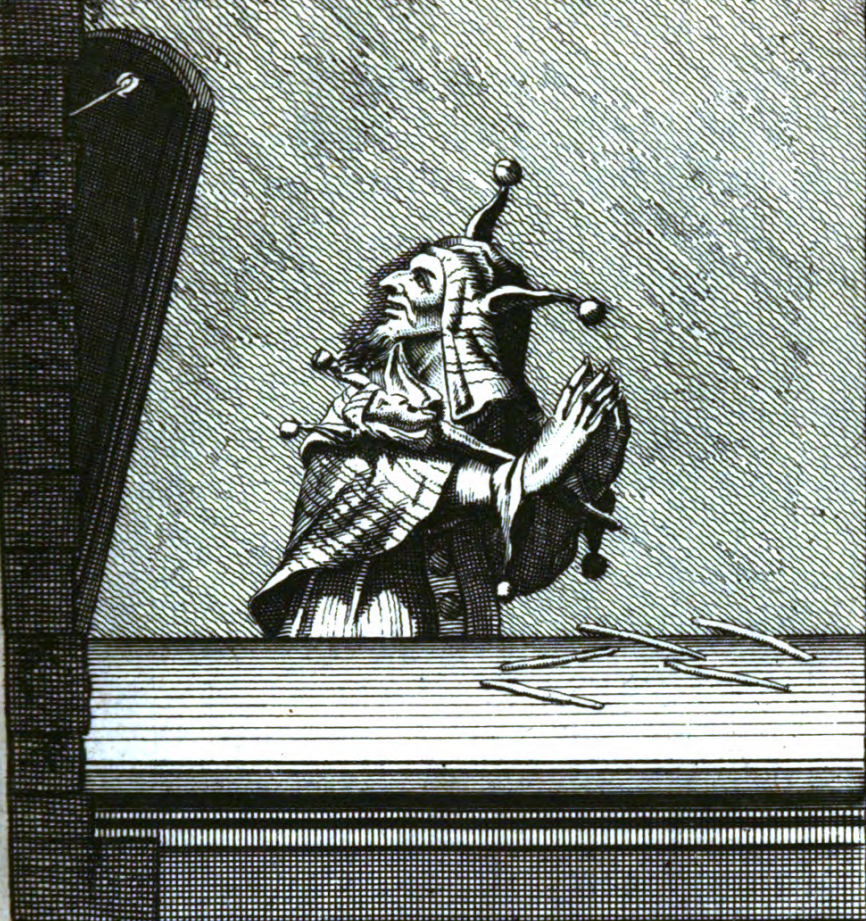


Fig. 25.

p. 89.



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truest Esteem of *Divine Worship*? Farther, why should I desire a *Temple*, since the whole World is but one ample continued Choir, entirely Dedicated to my Use and Service? Nor do I want *Worshippers* at any Place where the Earth wants not *Inhabitants*. And as to the manner of my Worship, I am not yet so irrecoverably foolish, as to be prayed to by *Proxy*, and to have my Honour intermediately bestowed upon Senseless *Images* and *Pictures*, which quite subvert the true End of Religion; while the unwary Supplicants seldom distinguish betwixt the *things themselves*, and the *Objects* they represent. The same Respect in the mean while is paid to me in a more Legitimate Manner; for to me there are as many Statues erected as there are moving Fabricks of Morality; every Person, even against his own Will, carrying the Image of me, *i. e.* the Signal of Folly instamped on his Countenance. I have not therefore the least tempting Inducement to envy the more seeming State and Splendor of the other Gods, who are Worshipped at Set *Times* and *Places*; as *Phœbus* at *Rhodes*, *Venus* in her *Cyprian Isle*, *Juno* in the City *Argos*, *Minerva* at *Athens*, *Jupiter* on the Hill *Olympus*, *Neptune* at *Tarentum*, and *Priapus* in the Town of *Lampsacum*; while my *Worship* extending as far as my *Influence*, the Whole World is my *One Altar*, whereon the most valuable *Incense* and *Sacrifice* is perpetually offered up.

*Human Life
fraught with
Folly.*

But lest I should seem to speak this with more of Confidence than Truth, let us take a nearer View of the Mode of Mens Lives, whereby it will be rendred more apparently evident what Largeesses I everywhere bestow, and how much I am respected and esteem'd of Persons, from the highest to the basest Quality. For the proof whereof, it being too tedious to insist upon each Particular, I shall only mention such in general as are most worthy the Remark, from which by Analogy we may easily judge of the Remainder. And indeed to what Purpose would it be singly to recount the Commonalty and Rabble of Mankind, who beyond all Question are entirely on my Side? And for a Token of their Vassalage do wear my Livery in so many older Shapes, and more newly invented Modes of Folly, that the Lungs of a Thousand *Democritus's* would never hold out to such a Laughter as this Subject would excite; and to these Thousand must be superadded One more, to laugh at them as much as they do at the other.

It is indeed almost incredible to relate what Mirth, what Sport, what Diversion, the groveling Inhabitants here on Earth give to the above-seated Gods in Heaven: For these Exalted Deities spend their fasting sober Hours in listning to those Petitions that are offered up, and in succouring such as they are appealed to for Redress; but when they are a little entred at a Glass of Nectar, they then throw off all serious Concerns, and go and place themselves

on

on the Ascent of some Promontory in Heaven, and from thence Survey the little Mole-hill of Earth. And trust me, there cannot be a more delightful Prospect, than to view such a Theatre so stuff'd and cramm'd with Swarms of Fools. One falls desperately in *Love*, and the more he is slighted, the more does his Spaniel-like Passion increase: Another is wedded to *Wealth* rather than to a *Wife*: A Third *Pimps* for his own Spouse, and is content to be a Cuckold so he may wear his Horns Guilt: A Fourth is haunted with a *Jealousie* of his visiting Neighbours: Another sobs, and roars, and plays the Child, for the *Death* of a Friend or Relation; and lest his own Tears should not rise high enough to express the Torrent of his Grief, he hires other Mourners to accompany the Corps to the Grave, and sing its *Requiem* in Sighs and Lamentations: Another hypocritically weeps at the *Funeral* of one whose Death at Heart he rejoices for: Here a *gluttonous* Cormorant, whatever he can scrape up, thrusts all into his Guts to pacifie the cryings of a hungry Stomach: There a *laxy* Wretch sits yawning and stretching, and thinks nothing so desirable as Sleep and Idleness: Some are extremely industrious in *other Mens* Business, and sottishly neglectful of their *own*: Some think themselves Rich because their *Credit* is great, though they can never Pay till they Break, and Compound for their Debts: One is so covetous that he *lives Poor* to *die Rich*: One for a little uncertain Gain will venture cross the roughest Seas, and expose his *Life* for the

Purchase of a *Livelihood* : Another will depend on the Plunders of *War*, rather than on the **Honest Gains of *Peace*** : Some will close with, and humour such warm Old Blades as have a good Estate, and no Children of their own to bestow it upon : Others practice the same Art of *Wheedling* upon good Old Women, that have hoarded and coffer'd up more Bags than they know how to dispose of ; both of these sly Flatteries make fine Sport for the Gods, when they are beat at their own Weapons, and (as oft happens) are gull'd by those very Persons they intended to make a Prey of : There is another Sort of Base Scoundrels in Gentility, such scraping Merchants, who although for the better vent of their Commodities they Lie, Swear, Cheat, and Practice all the Intrigues of Dishonesty, yet think themselves no Way Inferior to Persons of the highest Quality, only because they have raked together a plentiful Estate ; and there are not want such insinuating *Hangers on*, as shall Carefs and Compliment them with the greatest Respect, in hopes to go *Snacks* in some of their dishonest Gains : There are others so infected with the Philosophical Paradox of banishing *Propriety*, and having all Things in *Common*, that they make no Conscience of fastning on, and purloining whatever they can get, and converting it to their own Use and Possession : There are some who are Rich only in *Wishes* ; and yet while they barely dream of vast Mountains of Wealth, they are as happy as if their imaginary *Fancies* commenc'd real *Truths*.

Truths: Some put on the *best Side* outermost, and starve themselves at *Home* to appear gay and splendid a *Abroad*: One with an open-handed Freedom spends all he lays his Fingers on; another with a *Logick-fisted* Gripingness catches at and grasps all he can come within the Reach of: One apes it about in the Streets to court Popularity; another consults his Ease, and sticks to the *Confinement* of a Chimney-corner: Many others are tugging hard at *Law* for a Trifle, and drive on an endless Suit, only to enrich a Deferring Judge, or a Knavish Advocate: One is for *New-modelling* a Settled Government; another is for some Notable Heroical Attempt; and a Third by all Means must Travel a *Pilgrim* (*Fig. XXV.*) to *Rome*, *Jerusalem*, or some Shrine of a Saint elsewhere, though he have no other Business than the Paying of a formal impertinent Visit, leaving his Wife and Children to fast, while he himself forsooth is gone to pray. In short, if (as *Lucian* fancies *Menippus* to have done heretofore) any Man could now again look down from the Orb of the Moon, he would see thick Swarms, as it were, of Flies and Gnats, that were quarrelling with each other, jostling, fighting, fluttering, skipping, playing, just new produced, soon after decaying, and then immediately vanishing: And it can scarce be thought how many Tumults and Tragedies so inconsiderate a Creature as *Man* does give Occasion to, and that in so short a Space as the small Span of Life; subject to so many Casualties, that the Sword, Pestilence,

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

lence, and other Epidemick Accidents, shall many times sweep away whole Thousands at a Brush.

*Men of Learning most foolish, and especially Gram-
marians.*

But hold; I should but expose my self too far, and incur the Guilt of being roundly laugh'd at, if I proceed to enumerate the several Kinds of the Folly of the Vulgar. I shall confine therefore my following Discourse only to such as challenge the *Repute* of Wisdom, and seemingly pass for Men of the soundest Intellectuals. Among whom the *Grammarians* present themselves in the Front, a Sort of Men who would be the most miserable, the most slavish, and the most hateful of all Persons, if I did not some way alleviate the Pressures and Miseries of their Profession, by blessing them with a bewitching Sort of Madness: For they are not only liable to those *Five Curses*, which they so oft recite from the first Five Verses of *Homer*, but to Five Hundred more of a worse Nature; as always damn'd to Thirst and Hunger, to be choak'd with Dust in their unswept Schools, (*Schools* shall I term them, or rather *Elaboratories*, nay, *Bridewels*, and Houses of Correction?) to wear out themselves in Fret and Drudgery; to be deafen'd with the Noise of gaping Boys; and in short, to be stifled with Heat and Stench; and yet they cheerfully dispence with all these Inconveniences, and, by the Help of a fond Conceit, think themselves as happy as any then living; taking a great Pride and Delight in frowning and looking big upon the trembling Urchins, in boxing, flashing, striking with the *Ferula*,
and

DEPT. HISTOR
OXFORD
OF ART

Fig 26.

p. 91.



Fig 27.

p. 93.



and in the Exercise of all their other Methods of Tyranny; while thus lording it over a Parcel of young, weak Chits, (*Fig. XXVI.*) they imitate the *Cuman* As's, and think themselves as stately as a Lion, that domineers over all the inferiour Herd. Elivated with this Conceit, they can hold Filth and Nastiness to be an Ornament, can reconcile their Nose to the most intolerable Smells; and finally, think their wretched Slavery the most Arbitrary Kingdom, which they would not exchange for the Jurisdiction of the most Sovereign Potentate: And they are yet more happy by a strong Perswasion of their own Parts and Abilities; for thus when their Employment is only to rehearse Silly Stories, and Poetical Fictions, they'll yet think themselves wiser than the best experienced Philosopher; nay, they have an Art of making ordinary People, such as their School-boys fond Parents, to think them as considerable as their own Pride has made them. Add hereunto this other Sort of ravishing Pleasure: When any of them has found out who was the Mother of *Anchises*, or has lighted upon some old unusual Word, such as *Bubsequa*, *Bovinator*, *Manticulator*, or other like obsolete *cramp Terms*; or can, after a great deal of poring, spell out the Inscription of some batter'd Monument, Lord! what Joy, what Triumph, what Congratulating their Success, as if they had conquer'd *Africa*, or taken *Babylon* the Great! When they recite some of their frothy, bombast Verses, if any hap-
pen

pen to admire them, they are presently flush'd with the least Hint of Commendation, and devoutly thank *Pythagoras* for his grateful *Hypothesis*, whereby they are now become actuated with a Descent of *Virgil's* Poetick Soul. Nor is any Divertisement more pleasant, than when they meet to flatter and curry one another; yet they are so critical, that if any one hap to be guilty of the least Slip, or seeming Blunder, another shall presently correct him for it, and then to it they go in a Tongue-combat, with all the Fervour, Spleen and Eagerness imaginable. May *Priscian* himself be my Enemy if what I am now going to say be not exactly true. I knew an Old Sophister, that was a *Grecian*, a *Latinist*, a *Mathematician*, a *Philosopher*, a *Musician*, and all to the utmost Perfection, who after Threescore Years Experience in the World, had spent the last Twenty of them only in drudging to conquer the Criticisms of Grammar, and made it the chief Part of his Prayers, that his Life might be so long spared till he had learn'd how rightly to distinguish betwixt the Eight Parts of Speech, which no Grammarian, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, had yet accurately done. If any chance to have placed that as a *Conjunction* which ought to have been used as an *Adverb*, it is a sufficient Alarm to raise a War for the doing Justice to the injur'd Word. And since there have been as many several Grammars, as particular Grammarians, (nay, more, for *Aldus* alone wrot Five distinct Grammars for his own Share.)

Share,) the School-master must be obliged to consult them all, sparing for no Time nor Trouble, tho' never so great, lest he should be otherwise pos'd in any unobserv'd Criticism, and so by an irreparable Disgrace lose the Reward of all his Toil. It is indifferent to me whether you call this Folly or Madness, since you must needs confess that it is by my Influence these School-tyrants, though in never so despicable a Condition, are so happy in their own Thoughts, that they would not change Fortunes with the most Illustrious Sophy of *Persia*.

The *Poets*, however somewhat less beholden to me, own a profess'd Dependance on me, being a Sort of Lawless Blades, that by Prescription claim a Licence to a Proverb, while the whole Intent of their Profession is only to smooth up and tickle the Ears of Fools, and that by meer Toys and fabulous Shams, with which (however ridiculous) they are so bolstred up in an airy Imagination, as to promise themselves an Everlasting Name, and promise, by their Balderdash, at the same time to celebrate the Never-dying Memory of others. To these rapturous Wits Self-love and Flattery are never-failing Attendants; nor do any prove more zealous or constant Devotees to Folly.

The *Rhetoricians* likewise, though they are ambitious of being rank'd among the Philosophers, yet are apparently of my Faction, as appears among other Arguments, by this more especially; in that among their several
Topicks,

*Poets, O-
rators, Au-
thors all
Fools, and
therefore
happy.*

Erasmus's Panegyrick

Topicks of compleating the Art of Oratory, they all particularly insist upon the Knack of Jestings, which is one Species of Folly; as is evident from the Books of Oratory wrot to *Herennius*, put among *Cicero's* Works, but done by some other unknown Author; and in *Quintilian*, that Great Master of Eloquence, there is one large Chapter spent in prescribing the Methods of raising *Laughter*: In short, they may well attribute a great Efficacy to Folly, since on any Argument they can many times by a Slight *laugh over* what they could never seriously *confute*.

Of the same Gang are those Scribbling Fops, who think to Eternize their Memory by setting up for *Authors*: Among which, though they are all some way indebted to me, yet are those more especially so, who spoil Paper in blotting it with meer Trifles and Impertinences. For as to those Graver Drudgers to the *Press*, that write Learnedly, beyond the Reach of an ordinary Reader, who durst submit their Labours to the Review of the most severe Critick, these are not so liable to be envied for their Honour, as to be pitied for their Sweat and Slavery. They make Additions, Alterations, blot out, write anew, amend, interline, turn it upside down, and yet can never please their fickle Judgment, but that they shall dislike the next Hour what they penn'd the former; and all this to purchase the airy Commendations of a few understanding Readers, which at most is but a poor Reward for all their Fastings, Watchings, Confinements,

ments, and Brain-breaking Tortures of Invention. Add to this the impairing of their Health, the weakening of their Constitution, their contracting sore Eyes, or perhaps turning stark Blind; their Poverty, their Envy, their Debarment from all Pleasures, their hastening on Old Age, their untimely Death, and what other Inconveniences of a like or worse Nature can be thought upon: And yet the Recompence for all this severe Penance is at best no more than a Mouthful or two of frothy Praise. These, as they are more laborious, so are they less happy than those other *Hackney-scriblers* which I first mention'd, who never stand much to consider, but write what comes next at a Venture, knowing that the more silly their Compositions are, the more they will be bought up by the greater Number of Readers, who are Fools and Blockheads: And if they hap to be condemn'd by some few Judicious Persons, it is an easie Matter by Clamour to drown their Censure, and to silence them by urging the more numerous Commendations of others. They are yet the Wisest who transcribe whole Discourses from others, and then reprint them as their own. By doing so they make a cheap and easie Seizure to themselves of that Reputation which cost the first Author so much Time and Trouble to procure. If they are at any time prick'd a little in Conscience for fear of Discovery, they feed themselves however with this Hope, that if they be at last found *Plagiaries*, yet
at

Eraſmus's Panegyrick

at leaſt for ſome time they ſhall have the Credit of paſſing for the genuine Authors. It is pleaſant to ſee how all theſe ſeveral Writers are puff'd up with the leaſt Blaſt of Applauſe, eſpecially if they come to the Honour of being pointed at as they walk along the Streets, when their ſeveral *Pieces* are laid open upon every Bookseller's Stall, when their *Names* are embos'd in a different Character upon the Title Page, ſometime only with the Two firſt Letters, and ſometime with fictitious cramp Terms, which few ſhall underſtand the Meaning of; and of thoſe that do, all ſhall not agree in their Verdict of the Performance; ſome cenſuring, others approving it, Mens Judgments being as different as their Palates; that being toothſome to one which is unſavoury and nauſeous to another: Tho' it is a Sneaking Piece of Cowardice for Authors to put *feigned Names* to their Works, as if, like *Baſtards* of their Brain, they were afraid to own them. Thus one ſtiles himſelf *Telemachus*, another *Stelenus*, a Third *Polycrates*, another *Thraſymachus*, and ſo on. By the ſame Liberty we may ranſack the whole Alphabet, and jumble together any Letters that come next to hand. It is farther very pleaſant when theſe Coxcombs employ their Pens in writing Congratulatory Epiſtles, Poems and Panegyricks, upon each other, wherein one ſhall be complemented with the Title of *Alcæus*, another ſhall be character'd for the incomparable *Callimachus*; this ſhall be com-
mended

ended for a compleater Orator than *Tully* himself; a Fourth shall be told by his Fellow-fool that the Divine *Plato* comes short of him for a Philosophick Soul. Sometime again they take up the Cudgels, and challenge out an *Antagonist*, and so get a Name by a Combat and Dispute and Controversie, while the unvary Readers draw Sides according to their different Judgments: The longer the Quarrel holds, the more irreconcilable it grows; and when both Parties are weary, they *each* pretend themselves the *Conquerors*, and both lay Claim to the Credit of coming off with Victory. These Fooleries make Sport for Wise Men, as being highly absurd, ridiculous and extravagant. True, but yet these Paper-Combatants, by my Assistance, are so flush'd with a Conceit of their own Greatneis, that they prefer the Solving of a *Syllogism* before the Sacking of *Carthage*; and upon the Defeat of a poor Objection carry themselves more *triumphant* than the most Victorious *Scipio*.

Nay, even the *Learned* and more *Judicious*, that have Wit enough to laugh at the other's Folly, are very much beholden to my Goodness; which (except Ingratitude have drowned their Ingenuity) they must be ready upon all Occasions to confess. Among these I suppose the *Lawyers* (*Fig. XXVII.*) will shuffle in for Precedence, and they of all Men have the greatest Conceit of their own Abilities. They'll argue as confidently as if they spoke *Gospel* instead of *Law*; they'll cite you Six Hundred several *Presidents*, though not One of

*Lawyers
and Logicians
are Fools.*

them come near to the Case in hand ; they'll muster up the Authority of *Judgments, Deeds, Glosses* and *Reports*, and tumble over so many musty *Records*, that they make their Employ, tho' in itself Easie, the greatest Slavery imaginable ; always accounting that the *best Plea* which they have took most *Pains* for.

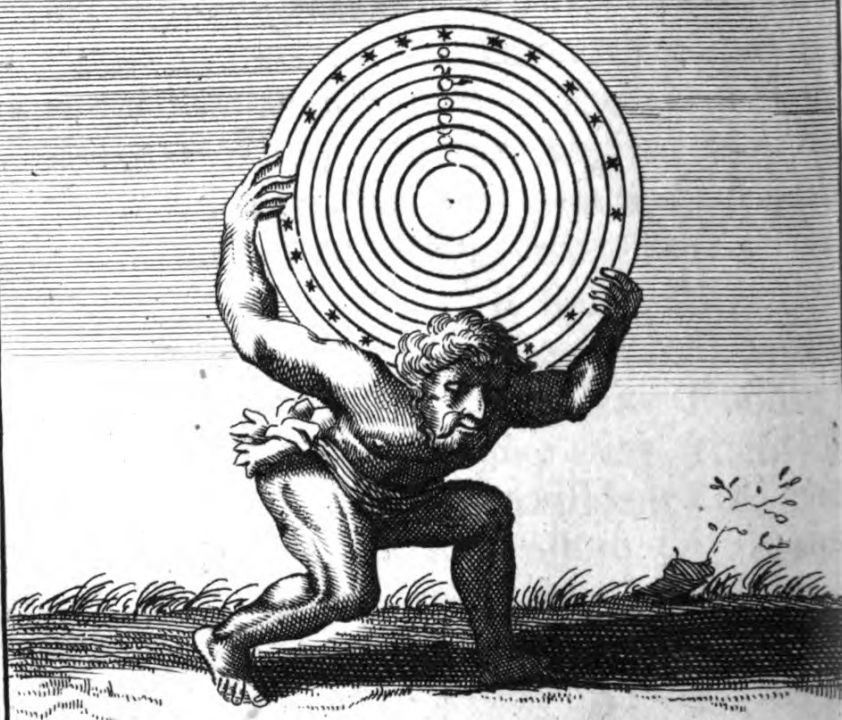
To these, as bearing great Resemblance to them, may be added *Logicians* and *Sophisters*, Fellows that talk as much by Rote as a Parrot ; who shall run down a whole Gossiping of Old Women, nay, silence the very Noise of a *Belfry*, with louder Clappers than those of the *Steeple* : And if their unappeasable Clamourousness were their only Fault it would admit of some Excuse ; but they are at the same time so fierce and quarrelsome, that they'll wrangle bloodily for the least Trifle, and be so over-intent and eager, that they many times lose their Game in the Chace, and fright away that Truth they are hunting for. Yet Self-conceit makes these nimble Disputants such *doughty* Champions, that arm'd with Three or Four close-link'd Syllogisms, they shall enter the *Lists* with the greatest Masters of Reason, and not question the Foiling of them in an irresistible *Baffle* : Nay, their Obstinacy makes them so confident of their being in the Right, that all the Arguments in the World shall never convince them to the contrary.



Fig. 28.



Fig. 29.



Next to these come the *Philosophers* in their long Beards and short Cloaks, who esteem themselves the only Favourites of Wisdom, and look upon the rest of Mankind as the *Dirt* and *Rubbish* of the Creation: Yet these Mens Happiness is only a frantick Crasiness of Brain; they build Castles in the Air, and infinite Worlds in a *Vacuum*. They'll give you to a Hair's Breadth the Dimensions of the Sun, Moon and Stars, (*Fig. XXVIII.*) as easily as they would do that of a Flaggon or Pipkin: They'll give a punctual Account of the Rise of Thunder, of the Origin of Winds, of the Nature of Eclipses, and of all the other abstrusest Difficulties in Physicks, without the least Demur or Hesitation, as if they had been admitted into the Cabinet-Council of Nature, or had been Eye-witnesses to all the accurate Methods of Creation: Though alas Nature does but laugh at all their puny Conjectures; for they never yet made one considerable Discovery, as appears in that they are unanimously agreed in no one Point of the smallest Moment; nothing so plain or evident but what by some or other is opposed and contradicted. But though they are ignorant of the Artificial Contexture of the least Insect, they vaunt however and brag that they know all things, when indeed they are unable to construe the Mechanism of their own Body: Nay, when they are so Purblind as not to be able to see a Stone's cast before them, yet they shall be as sharp-sighted as possible in spying out Idea's, Uni-

Philosophers,
Mathematicians,
Fools.

versals, separate Forms, first Matters, *Quiddities*, Formalities, and a Hundred such like *Niceties*, so diminutively *small*, that were not their Eyes extreamly magnifying all the Art of *Opticks* could never make them *discernible*. But they then most despise the low groveling Vulgar when they bring out their *Parallels*, *Triangles*, *Circles*, and other Mathematical Figures, drawn up in Battalia like so many *Spells* and *Charms* of *Conjuration* in *Musters*, with *Letters* to refer to the *Explication* of the several Problems; hereby raising *Devils* as it were, only to have the *Credit* of laying them, and amusing the ordinary *Spectators* into *Wonder*, because they have not *Wit* enough to understand the *Juggle*. Of these some undertake to profess themselves *Judicial Astrologers*, pretending to keep *Correspondence* with the *Stars*, and so from their *Information* can resolve any *Query*; and tho' it is all but a *Presumptuous Imposture*, yet some to be sure will be so great *Fools* as to believe them.

Divines
Fools.

The *Divines* present themselves next; but it may perhaps be most safe to pass them by, and not at all to touch upon so harsh a *String* as this *Subject* would afford. Beside, the *Undertaking* may be very hazardous; for they are a *Sort* of *Men* generally very hot and passionate; and should I provoke them, I doubt would set upon me with a full *Cry*, and force me with *Shame* to *recant*: Which if I stubbornly refuse to do, they'll presently brand me for an *Heretick*, and thunder out an
Excom-

time, our Saviour was conceived in the **Vir-**
gin's Womb, and demonstrate in the **Con-**
secrated Wafer how *Accidents* may subsist
without a *Subject*. Nay, these are accounted
trivial, easie Questions; they have yet far
greater Difficulties behind, which notwith-
standing they solve with as much Expedition
as the former: As namely, whether **Superna-**
tural Generation requires any Instant of **Time**
for its *Acting*? Whether Christ, as a Son, bears
a double specifically distinct Relation to God
the Father, and his Virgin Mother? Whether
this Proposition is possible to be true, *The First*
Person of the Trinity hated the Second? Whe-
ther God, who took our Nature upon
him in the Form of a Man, could as well
have become a Woman, a Devil, a Beast,
an Herb, or a Stone? And were it so pos-
sible that the Godhead had appear'd in
the Shape of an Inanimate Substance, how
he should then have preach'd his Gospel?
Or how have been nail'd to the Cross? Whe-
ther if St. *Peter* had celebrated the Eucha-
rist at the same time our Saviour was hang-
ing on the Cross, the Consecrated Bread would
have been *Transubstantiated* into the same
Body that remain'd on the Tree? Whether
in Christ's Corporal Presence in the Sacramen-
tal Wafer his *Humanity* be not abstracted
from his *Godhead*? Whether after the Re-
surrection we shall carnally eat and drink as
we do in this Life? There are a Thousand
other more sublimated and refined Niceties
of *Notions, Relations, Quantities, Formalities,*
Quid-

Quiddities, Haecceities, and such like Abstru-
sities, as one would think no one could pry
 into, except he had not only such Cats-eyes
 as to see best in the *Dark*, but even such a
 piercing Faculty as to see thro' an Inch-board,
 and spy out what really never had any Being.
 Add to these some of their Tenets and Opi-
 nions, which are so absurd and extravagant,
 that the wildest Fancies of the Stoicks, which
 they so much disdain and decry as Paradoxes,
 seem in Comparison just and rational; as
 their maintaining, That it is a less aggrava-
 ting Fault to kill a Hundred Men, than for a
 poor Cobler to set a Stitch on the Sabbath-
 day; or, That it is more justifiable to do the
 greatest Injury imaginable to others, than to
 tell the least Lie our selves. And these Subtilties
 are Alchymiz'd to a more refined Sublimate
 by the abstracting Brains of their several School-
 men; the *Realists*, the *Nominalists*, the *Tho-*
*mist*s, the *Albertists*, the *Occamists*, the *Scotists*;
 these are not all, but the Rehearsal of a few
 only, as a *Specimen* of their divided Sects:
 In each of which there is so much of deep
 Learning, so much of unfathomable Difficul-
 ty, that I believe the Apostles themselves
 would stand in need of a new Illuminating
Spirit if they were to engage in any Con-
 troversie with these new Divines. *St. Paul*
 no question had a full Measure of Faith, yet
 when he lays down Faith to be the *Substance*
of Things not seen, these Men carp at it for
 an imperfect Definition, and would undertake
 to teach the Apostles better Logick. Thus

the same holy Author wanted for nothing of the Grace of *Charity*, yet (say they) he describes and defines it but very unaccurately, when he treats of it in the Thirteenth Chapter of his First Epistle to the *Corinthians*. The Primitive Disciples were very frequent in administering the *Holy Sacrament*, *breaking Bread from House to House*; yet should they be asked of the *Terminus a quo*, and the *Terminus ad quem*, the Nature of *Transubstantiation*? The Manner how *One Body* can be in *several Places* at the same Time? The Difference betwixt the several Attributes of Christ in Heaven, on the Cross, and in the Consecrated Bread? What Time is required for the *Transubstantiating* the Bread into *Flesh*? How it can be done by a short *Sentence* pronounc'd by the Priest, which Sentence is a Species of *discreet Quantity*, that has no permanent *Punctum*? Were they ask'd (I say) these, and several other confused Queries, I don't believe they could answer so readily as our mincing Schoolmen now-a-days take a Pride to do. They were well acquainted with the *Virgin Mary*, yet none of them undertook to prove that she was preserv'd *Immaculate* from Original Sin, as some of our Divines very hotly contend for. *St. Peter* had the *Keys* given to him, and that by our Saviour himself, who had never entrusted him, except he had known him capable of their Manage and Custody; and yet it is much to be question'd whether *Peter* was sensible of that *Subtilty* broach'd by *Scotus*, that he may have
the

the Key of Knowledge *effectually* for others, who has no Knowledge *actually* in himself. Again, *They Baptized all Nations*, and yet never taught what was the *Formal, Material, Efficient, and Final Cause* of *Baptism*, and certainly never dreamt of distinguishing between a *Delible* and an *Indelible* Character in this Sacrament. They *Worshipped* in the *Spirit*, following their Master's Injunction, *God is a Spirit, and they which Worship him, must Worship him in Spirit, and in Truth*; yet it don't appear that it was ever reveal'd to them how *Divine Adoration* should be paid at the same time to our *Blessed Saviour* in Heaven, and to his *Picture* here below on a Wall, drawn with *Two Fingers* held out, a *Bald Crown*, and a *Circle* round his Head. To reconcile these *Intricacies* to an *Appearance of Reason* requires *Threescore Years Experience* in *Metaphysics*.

Farther, the *Apostles* often mention *Grace*, yet never distinguish between *gratia, gratis data*, and *gratia gratificans*. They earnestly exhort us likewise to *Good Works*, yet never explain the *Difference* between *Opus operans*, and *Opus operatum*. They very frequently press and invite us to seek after *Charity*, without dividing it into *Infused* and *Acquired*, or determining whether it be a *Substance* or an *Accident*, a *Created* or an *Uncreated Being*. They detested *Sin* themselves, and warned others from the *Commission* of it; and yet I am sure they could never have defined so *dogmatically*, as the *Scotists* have since done.

St.

St. Paul, who in others Judgment is no less the Chief of the *Apostles*, than he was in his own the *Chief of Sinners*, who being bred at the Feet of Gamaliel, was certainly more Eminently a Scholar than any of the rest, yet he often exclaims against *vain Philosophy*, warns us from *doting about Questions and Strifes of Words*, and charges us to *avoid profane and vain Babblings, and Oppositions of Science falsely so called*; which he would not have done if he had thought it worth his while to have become acquainted with them, which he might soon have been, the Disputes of that Age being but small, and more intelligible Sophisms, in reference to the vastly greater Intricacies they are now improved to. But yet however our Scholastic Divines are so modest, that if they meet with any Passage in St. Paul, or any other Penman of Holy Writ, which is not so well modell'd, or critically disposed of, as they could wish, they will not roughly condemn it, but bend it rather to a favourable Interpretation, out of Reverence to Antiquity, and Respect to the Holy Scriptures; tho' indeed it were unreasonable to expect any thing of this Nature from the Apostles, whose Lord and Master had given unto them to know the *Mysteries of God*, but not those of Philosophy. If the same Divines meet with any thing of like Nature unpalatable in St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Hierom, or others of the Fathers, they will not stick to appeal from their Authority, and very fair-

ly

ly resolve that they lay under a Mistake: Yet these Ancient Fathers were they who confuted both the *Jews* and *Heathens*, though they both obstinately adher'd to their respective Prejudices; they confuted them, (I say,) yet by their Lives and Miracles, rather than by Words and Syllogisms; and the Persons they thus proselyted were downright honest, well-meaning People, such as understood plain Sense better than any Artificial Pomp of Reasoning: Whereas if our *Divines* should now set about the Gaining *Converts* from Paganism by their Metaphysical Subtilties, they would find that most of the Persons they applied themselves to were either so ignorant as not at all to apprehend them, or so impudent as to scoff and deride them; or finally, so well skill'd at the same Weapons, that they would be able to keep their Pass, and fence off all Assaults of Conviction: And this last Way the Victory would be altogether as hopeless, as if Two Persons were engaged of so equal Strength, that it were impossible any one should overpower the other.

If my Judgment might be taken, I would advise *Christians*, in their next Expedition to a *Holy War*, instead of those many unsuccessful Legions, which they have hitherto sent to encounter the *Turks* and *Saracens*, that they would furnish out their clamorous *Scotists*, their obstinate *Occamists*, their invincible *Albertists*, and all their Forces of tough, crabbed and profound *Disputants*: The Engage-
ment,

ment, I fancy, would be mighty pleasant, and the Victory we may imagine on our Side not to be question'd. For which of the Enemies would not vail their *Turbants* at so Solemn an Appearance? Which of the fiercest *Janizaries* would not throw away his *Scimiter*, and all the *Half-moons* be eclipsed by the Interposition of so Glorious an Army?

I suppose you mistrust I speak all this by way of Jeer and Irony; and well I may, since among Divines themselves there are some so Ingenious as to despise these captious and frivolous Impertinences: They look upon it as a kind of Profane Sacrilege, and a little less than Blasphemous Impiety, to determine of such Niceties in Religion, as ought rather to be the Subject of an humble and uncontradicting *Faith*, than of a scrupulous and inquisitive *Reason*: They abhor a Defiling the Mysteries of Christianity with an Intermixture of Heathenish Philosophy, and judge it very improper to reduce Divinity to an obscure *speculative Science*, whose End is such a Happiness as can be gain'd only by the Means of *Practice*. But alas, those *Notional Divines*, however condemn'd by the soberer Judgment of others, are yet mightily pleas'd with themselves, and are so laboriously intent upon prosecuting their crabbed Studies, that they cannot afford so much Time as to read a single Chapter in any one Book of the whole Bible. And while they thus trifle away their mis-spent Hours in Trash and Babble, they

they think that they *support* the *Catholick Church* with the Props and Pillars of Propositions and Syllogisms, no less effectually than *Atlas* [Fig. XXIX.] is feigned by the Poets to sustain on his Shoulders the *Burden* of a tottering World. Their Priviledges too and Authority are very considerable: They can deal with any Text of Scripture as with a *Nose of Wax*, knead it into what Shape best suits their Interest; and whatever Conclusions they have dogmatically resolved upon, they would have them as irrepealably ratified as *Solon's* Laws, and in as great Force as the very Decrees of the *Papal Chair*. If any be so bold as to remonstrate to their Decisions, they'll bring him on his Knees to a Recantation of his Impudence. They shall pronounce as irrevocably as an Oracle, this Proposition is Scandalous, that Irreverent; this has a smack of Heresie, and that is Bald and Improper: So that it is not the being *Baptized* into the Church, the Believing of the *Scriptures*, the giving Credit to *St. Peter*, *St. Paul*, *St. Hierom*, *St. Augustin*, nay, or *St. Thomas Aquinas* himself, that shall make a Man a *Christian*, except he have the joint Suffrage of these Novices in Learning, who have blessed the World no doubt with a great many Discoveries which had never come to light, if they had not struck the Fire of Subtilty out of the Flint of Obscurity. These Fooleries sure must be a happy Employ.

Farther, they make as many Partitions and Divisions in *Hell* and *Purgatory*, and describe

Eraſmus's Panegyrick

as many different Sorts and Degrees of Punishment, as if they were very well acquainted with the Soil and Situation of thoſe Infernal Regions. And to prepare a Seat for the Bleſſed above, they invent new Orbs, and a ſtately *Empyrean* Heaven, ſo wide and ſpacious as if they had purpoſely contriv'd it, that the Glorified Saints might have room enough to Walk, to Feaſt, or to take any Recreation.

With theſe, and a Thouſand more ſuch like Toys, their Heads are more ſtuff'd and ſwell'd than *Jove*, [*Fig. XXX.*] when he went big of *Pallas* in his Brain, and was forced to uſe the Midwivery of *Vulcan's* Axe to eaſe him of his Teeming Burden. Do not wonder therefore that at Publick Diſputations they bind their Heads with ſo many *Caps* one over another, for this is to prevent the loſs of their Brains, which would otherwiſe break out from their uneaſie Confinement. It affords likewiſe a pleaſant Scene of Laughter, to liſten to theſe Divines in their hotly managed Diſputations; to ſee how proud they are of talking ſuch hard Gibberish, and ſtammering out ſuch blundering Diſtinctions, as the Auditors perhaps may ſometimes gape at, but ſeldom apprehend: And they take ſuch a Liberty in their ſpeaking of *Latin*, that they ſcorn to ſtick at the exactneſs of *Syntax* or *Concord*; pretending it is below the Majeſty of a *Divine* to talk like a *Pædagog*, and be tied to the ſlavish Obſervance of the Rules of *Grammar*. Finally, they take a vaſt Pride, among other

Fig. 30.



Fig. 31.





other Citations; to alledge the Authority of their respective *Master*, which Word they bear as profound a Respect to as the *Jews* did to their effable *Tetragrammaton*, and therefore they'll be sure never to write it any otherwise than in great Letters, **MAGISTER NOSTER**; and if any happen to invert the Order of the Words, and say, *Noster Magister*, instead of *Magister Noster*, they'll presently exclaim against him as a Pestilent Heretick, and Underminer of the Catholick Faith.

The next to these are another Sort of Brain-sick Fools, who stile themselves *Monks*, and of *Religious Orders*, though they assume both Titles very unjustly: For as to the *last*, they have very little of *Religion* in them; and as to the *former*, the Etimology of the Word *Monk* implies a Solitariness, or being alone; whereas they are so thick abroad that we cannot pass any Street or Alley without meeting them. Now I cannot imagine what one Degree of Men would be more hopelessly wretched, if I did not stand their Friend, and Buoy them up in that Lake of Misery, which by the Engagements of a Holy Vow they have voluntarily immerg'd themselves in. But when these Sort of Men are so unwelcome to others, as that the very Sight of them is thought Ominous, I yet make them highly in Love with themselves, and fond Admirers of their own Happiness. The first Step whereunto they esteem a profound Ignorance, thinking *Carnal Knowledge* a great Enemy to their *Spiritual Welfare*, and seem confident of becoming greater

*The Folly
and Happi-
ness of Mo-
nasticks.*

greater Proficients in *Divine* Mysteries the less they are poisoned with any *Humane* Learning. They Imagine, that they bear a sweet *Consort* with the Heavenly Choire, when they *tone out* their daily Talley of *Psalms*, which they rehearse only by Rote, without permitting their Understanding or Affections to go along with their Voice. Among these some make a good profitable Trade of *Beggary*, [Fig. XXXI.] going about from House to House, not like the Apostles, to *Break*, but to *Beg*, their Bread; nay, thrust into all Publick Houses, come Aboard the Passage-boats, get into the Travelling Waggon, and omit no Opportunity of Time or Place for the craving Peoples Charity; doing a great deal of Injury to common Highway Beggars, by Interloping in their Traffick of Alms. And when they are thus voluntarily poor, destitute, not provided with Two Coats, nor with any Money in their Purse, they have the Impudence to pretend that they imitate the first Disciples, whom their Master expressly sent out in such an Equipage. It is pretty to observe how they regulate all their Actions as it were by Weight and Measure, to so exact a Proportion, as if the whole Loss of their Religion depended upon the Omission of the least Punctilio. Thus they must be very Critical in the precise Number of *Knots*, to the tying on of their *Sandals*; what distinct *Colours* their respective Habits, and what *Stuff* made of; how broad and long their *Girdles*; how big, and in what Fashion, their *Hoods*; whether their bald

on the Praise of Folly.

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bald Crowns be to a *Hair's-breadth* of the Right Cut; how many Hours they must Sleep, at what Minute rise to Prayers, &c. And these several Customs are altered according to the Humours of different Persons and Places. While they are sworn to the Superstitious Observance of these Trifles, they do not only despise all others, but are very inclinable to fall out among themselves; for though they make Profession of an Apostolick Charity, yet they'll pick a Quarrel, and be implacably Passionate for such poor Provocations, as the girting on a Coat the wrong Way, for the wearing of Cloaths a little too darkish Coloured, or any such Nicety, not worth the speaking of. Some are so obstinately Superstitious, that they'll wear their upper Garment of some coarse Dog's-hair Stuff, and that next their Skin as soft as Silk: But others on the contrary will have Linen Frocks outermost, and their Shirts of Wooll, or Hair. Some again will not touch a Piece of Money, though they make no Scruple of the Sin of Drunkenness, and the Lust of the Flesh. All their several Orders are mindful of nothing more than of their being *distinguish'd* each from other by their different Customs and Habits. They seem indeed not so careful of becoming *like Christ*, and of being known to be his Disciples, as the being *unlike* to one another, and distinguishable for Followers of their several *Founders*. A great Part of their Religion consists in their *Title*: Some will be call'd *Corde-liers*, and these subdivided into *Capuchines*,
I *Minors*,

Minors, Mimms, and Mendicants: Some again are stiled *Benedictines*, others of the Order of *St. Bernard*, others of that of *St. Bridget*; some are *Augustin Monks*, some *Willielmites*, and other *Jacobists*, as if the common Name of *Christian* were too mean and vulgar. Most of them place their greatest Strels for Salvation on a strict Conformity to their Foppish Ceremonies, and a Belief of their Legendary Traditions; wherein they fancy to have acquitted themselves with so much of Super-errogation, that *One Heaven* can never be a *Condign* Reward for their meritorious Life; little thinking that the Judge of all the Earth at the last Day shall put them off with a *who hath required these Things at your Hands?* And call them to an Account only for the Stewardship of his *Legacy*, which was the Precept of *Love and Charity*. It will be pretty to hear their several Pleas before the great Tribunal: One will brag how he *mortified* his Carnal Appetite by feeding only upon *Fish*: Another will urge that he spent most of his Time on Earth in the Divine Exercise of *Singing Psalms*: A Third will tell how many Days he *fasted*, and what severe *Penance* he imposed on himself for the bringing his Body into Subjection: Another shall produce in his own Behalf as many *Ceremonies* as would load a Fleet of Merchant-men: A Fifth shall plead, that in Threescore Years he never so much as touch'd a Piece of *Money*, except he finger'd it through a thick Pair of *Gloves*:

Gloves: A Sixth, to testify his former *Humility*, shall bring along with him his *Sacred Hood*, so old and nasty, that any Seaman had rather stand Bare-headed on the Deck, than put it on to defend his Ears from the sharpest Storms: The next that comes to answer for himself shall plead, that for Fifty Years together he had lived like a Sponge upon the *same Place*, and was content never to change his homely Habitation: Another shall whisper softly, and tell the Judge he has lost his Voice by a continual Singing of Holy *Hymns* and *Anthems*: The next shall confess how he fell into a *Lethargy* by a strict, reserved, and sedentary Life: And the last shall imitate that he has forgot to speak, by having always kept *Silence*, in Obedience to the Injunction of *taking heed lest he should have offended with his Tongue*. But amidst all their Fine Excuses our Saviour shall interrupt them with this Answer, *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, verily I know you not; I left you but one Precept, of loving one another, which I do not hear any one plead he has faithfully discharged: I told you plainly in my Gospel, without any Parable, that my Father's Kingdom was prepared, not for such as should lay claim to it by Austerities, Prayers, or Fastings, but for those who should render themselves worthy of it by the Exercise of Faith, and the Offices of Charity: I cannot own such as depend on their own Merits without a Reliance on my Mercy:*

As many of you therefore as trust to the broken Reeds of your own Deserts, may e'en go search out a new Heaven, for you shall never enter into *that*, which from the Foundations of the World was prepared only for such as are *true of Heart*. When these Monks and Friars shall meet with such a shameful Repulse, and see that Ploughmen and Mechanics are *admitted* into that Kingdom, from which they themselves are *shut out*, how sneakingly will they look? And how pitifully sink away? Yet till this last Trial they had more Comfort of a Future Happiness, because more Hopes of it than any other Men. And these Persons are not only great in their own Eyes, but highly esteem'd and respected by others, especially those of the *Order of Mendicants*, whom none dare to offer any Affront to, because as *Confessors* they are intrusted with all the Secrets of particular Intrigues, which they are bound by Oath not to discover; yet many times, when they are almost Drunk, they cannot keep their Tongue so far within their Head, as not to be babbling out some Hints, and shewing themselves so full, that they are in pain to be delivered. If any Person give them the least Provocation they'll be sure to be reveng'd of him, and in their next Publick Harangue give him such shrew'd Wipes and Reflections, that the whole Congregation must needs take notice at whom they are levell'd; nor will they ever desist from this Way of declaiming, till their Mouth
be

be stopp'd with a [Fig. XXXII.] Bribe to hold their Tongue. All their Preaching is



meer Stage-playing, and their Delivery the very Transports of *Ridicule* and *Drollery*. Good Lord! How Mimical are their Gestures? What Heights and Falls in their Voice? What Toning, what Bawling, what Singing, what Squeaking, what Grimaces, making of Mouths, Apes Faces, and distorting of their Countenance? And this Art of Oratory as a Choice Mystery they convey down by Tradition to one another.

ther. The Manner of it I may adventure thus farther to enlarge upon. First, in a kind of Mockery they implore the Divine Assistance, which they borrowed from the Solemn Custom of the Poets: Then if their Text suppose be of *Charity*, they shall take their *Exordium* as far off as from a Description of the River *Nile* in *Ægypt*; or if they are to Discourse of the Mystery of the *Cross*, they shall begin with a Story of *Bel and the Dragon*; or perchance if their Subject be of *Fasting*, for an Entrance to their Sermon they shall pass through the Twelve Signs of the *Zodiack*; or lastly, if they are to Preach of *Faith*, they shall address themselves in a long Mathematical Account of the *Quadrature of the Circle*. I my self once heard a great Fool (a great Scholar I would have said) undertaking in a laborious Discourse to explain the Mystery of the *Holy Trinity*; in the unfolding whereof, that he might shew his Wit and Reading, and together satisfy *itching Ears*, he proceeded in a new Method, as by insisting on the Letters, Syllables, and Proposition, on the Concord of Noun and Verb, and that of Noun Substantive, and Noun Adjective; the Auditors all wondred, and some mumbled to themselves that Hemistich of *Horace*,

— *Quorsum hæc tam putrida tendunt?*

Why all this needless Trash?

But

But at last he brought it thus far, that he could demonstrate the whole *Trinity* to be represented by these first Rudiments of *Grammar*, as clearly and plainly as it was possible for a Mathematician to draw a *Triangle* in the Sand: And for the making of this Grand Discovery, this Subtle Divine had plodded so hard for Eight Months together, that he studied himself as Blind as a Beetle, the Intensness of the Eye of his *Understanding* over-shadowing and extinguishing that of his *Body*; and yet he did not at all repent him of his Blindness, but thinks the Loss of his Sight an easie Purchase for the Gain of Glory and Credit.

I heard at another time a Grave Divine, of Fourscore Years of Age at least, so soure and hard-favoured, that one would be apt to mistrust that it was *Scotus Redivivus*; he taking upon him to treat of the mysterious Name, *Jesus*, did very subtilly pretend that in the very *Letters* was contained whatever could be said of it: For first, its being Declined only with *Three Cases*, did expressly point out the *Trinity* of Persons, then that the *Nominative Case* ended in *S*, the *Accusative* in *M*, and the *Ablative* in *U*, did imply some unspeakable Mystery, namely, that in Words of those *Initial Letters* Christ was the *Summus* or *Beginning*, the *Medius* or *Middle*, and the *Ultimus* or *End* of all Things. There was yet a more abstruse Riddle to be explained, which was by dividing the Word *JESUS* into Two Parts, and separating the *S* in the Mid-

dle from the Two extreme Syllables, making it a kind of *Pentametre*, the Word consisting of Five Letters: And this intermedial S being in the *Hebrew* Alphabet call'd *Sin*, which in the *English* Language signifies what the Latines term *Peccatum*, was urged to imply, that the Holy *Jesus* should purifie us from all *Sin* and *Wickedness*. Thus did the Pulpiteer Cant, while all the Congregation, especially the Brotherhood of Divines, were so surprized at this odd Way of Preaching, that Wonder served them, as Grief did *Niobe*, [Fig. XXXIII.] almost turned them into Stones; I among the rest (as *Horace* describes *Priapus* viewing the Enchantments of the Two Sorceresses, *Canidia* and *Sagane*,) could no longer contain, but let fly a cracking Report of the Operation it had upon me. These impertinent Introductions are not without Reason condemn'd; for of old, whenever *Demosthenes* among the *Greeks*, or *Tully* among the *Latines*, began their Orations with so great a Digression from the Matter in Hand, it was alway look'd upon as *improper* and *unelegant*: And indeed, were such a long-fetch'd *Exordium* any Token of a good Invention, Shepherds and Ploughmen might lay Claim to the Title of Men of greatest Parts, since upon any Argument it is easiest for them to talk what is least to the Purpose. These Preachers think their *Preamble* (as we may well term it,) to be the most fashionable, when it is farthest from the Subject they propose to treat of, while each Au-

ditor





ditor sits and wonders what they drive at, and many times mutter out the Complaint of *Virgil*,

— *Quo nunc se proripit ille?*

Whither does all this Jargon tend?

In the Third Place, when they come to the *Division* of their Text, they shall give only a very short touch at the Interpretation of the Words, when the fuller Explication of their Sense ought to have been their only Province. Fourthly, after they are a little entered, they shall start some Theological Queries, far enough off from the Matter in Hand, and bandy it about *Pro* and *Con* till they lose it in the heat of Scuffle. And here they shall cite their Doctors *Invincible*, *Subtle*, *Seraphick*, *Chembick*, *Holy*, *Irrefragable*, and such like great Names, to confirm their several Assertions. Then out they bring their Syllogisms, their Majors, their Minors, Conclusions, Corollaries, Suppositions and Distinctions, that will sooner terrifie the Congregation into an Amazement, than perswade them into a Conviction Now comes the *Fifth Act*, in which they must exert their utmost Skill to come off with Applause. Here therefore they fall a telling some sad lamentable Story out of their Legend, or some other fabulous History, and this they descant upon *Allegorically*, *Tropologically*, and *Analogically*: And so they draw to a *Conclusion* of their Discourse, which

Erasmus's *Panegyrick*

is a more Brain-sick Chimæra than ever *Horace* could describe in his *De Arte Poetica*, when he began,

Humano Capiti, &c.

Their *Praying* is altogether as ridiculous as their *Preaching*; for imagining that in their *Addresses* to Heaven they should set out in a low and tremulous Voice, as a Token of Dread and Reverence, they begin therefore with such a soft *Whispering*, as if they were afraid any one should over-hear what they said; but when they are gone a little Way, they clear up their Pipes by degrees, and at last *bawl* out so loud, as if with *Baal's Priests* they were resolved to awake a *sleeping God*. And then again, being told by Rhetoricians that Heights and Falls, and a different Cadency in Pronunciation, is a great Advantage to the setting off any thing that is spoke, they'll sometimes as it were mutter their Words inwardly, and then of a sudden hollow them out, and be sure at last in such a flat faltering Tone, as if their Spirits were spent, and they had run themselves out of Breath. Lastly, they have read that most Systems of Rhetorick treat of the Art of exciting Laughter, therefore for the effecting of this they'll sprinkle some Jests and Puns that must pass for Ingenuity, though they are only the Froth of Folly and Affectèdness. Sometime they'll nibble at the Wit of being Satyrical, though their utmost Spleen is so Toothless, that they
suck

Suck rather than bite, tickle rather than scratch or wound: Nor do they ever flatter more than at such times as they pretend to speak with greatest freedom.

Finally, all their Actions are so Buffoonish and Mimical, that any would judge they had learned all their Tricks of Mountebanks and Stage-players, who in *Action* it is true may perhaps outdo them, but in *Oratory* there is so little odds between both, that it is hard to determine which seems of longest Standing in the Schools of Eloquence. Yet these Preachers, however ridiculous, meet with such Hearers, who admire them as much as the People of *Athens* did *Demosthenes*, or the Citizens of *Rome* could do *Cicero*: Among which *Admirers* are chiefly *Shopkeepers*, and *Women*, whose Approbation and good Opinion they only court; because the *first*, if they are humoured, give them some Snacks out of unjust Gain; and the *last* come and ease their Grief to them upon all pinching Occasions, especially when their Husbands are any ways cross or unkind.

Thus much I suppose may suffice to make you sensible how much these Cell-Hermits and Recluses are indebted to my Bounty; who when they Tyrannize over the Consciences of the deluded Laity with Fopperies, Juggles, and Impostures, yet think themselves as eminently Pious as *St. Paul*, *St. Anthony*, or any other of the Saints: But these Stage-Divines, not less ungrateful Disowners of their Obligations to Folly, than they are impudent Pre-

tenders

The Folly of
Princes.

tenders to the Profession of Piety, I willingly take my leave of, and pass now to *Kings, Princes, and Courtiers*, who paying me a devout Acknowledgment, may justly challenge back the Respect of being mentioned and taken notice of by me. And first, had they Wisdom enough to make a true Judgment of Things, they would find their own Condition to be more despicable and slavish than that of the most menial *Subjects*. For certainly none can Esteem Perjury or Parricide a cheap Purchase for a *Crown*, if he does but seriously reflect on that Weight of Cares a Princely Diadem is loaded with. He that sits at the Helm of Government, acts in a publick Capacity, and so must sacrifice all *private* Interest to the Attainment of the *common* Good; he must *himself* be conformable to those Laws his Prerogative exacts, or else he can expect no Obedience paid them from *others*; he must have a strict Eye over all his Inferior Magistrates and Officers, or otherwise it is to be doubted they will but carelessly discharge their respective Duties. Every *King*, within his own Territories, is placed for a shining Example, as it were in the *Firmament* of his wide-spread Dominions, to prove either a glorious *Star* of benign Influence, if his Behaviour be remarkably Just and Innocent, or else to impend as a threatening *Comet*, if his blazing Power be pestilent and hurtful. *Subjects* move in a darker *Sphere*, and so their *Wandrings* and *Failings* are less discernable; whereas *Princes*, being fix'd in a more exalted *Orb*, and encompassed with a brighter

brighter dazzling Lustre, their *Spots* are more apparently visible, and their *Eclipses*, or other Defects, influential on all that is inferior to them. Kings are baited with so many Temptations and Opportunities to Vice and Immorality, such as are high Feeding, Liberty, Flattery, Luxury, and the like, that they must stand perpetually on their Guard, to fence off those Assaults that are always ready to be made upon them. In fine, abating from Treachery, Hatred, Dangers, Fear, and a Thousand other Mischiefs impending on Crown'd Heads, however uncontrollable they are this side Heaven, yet after their Reign here they must appear before a *Supreamer Judge*, and there be call'd to an exact Account for the Discharge of that great *Stewardship* which was committed to their *Trust*. If Princes did but seriously consider, (and *consider* they would if they were but *wise*,) these many Hardships of a Royal Life, they would be so perplex'd in the Result of their Thoughts hereupon, as scarce to eat or sleep in quiet. But now by my Assistance they leave all these Cares to the Gods, and mind only their own Ease and Pleasure, and therefore will admit none to their Attendance but who will divert them with Sport and Mirth, lest they should otherwise be seiz'd and damp'd with the Surprizal of sober Thoughts. They think they have sufficiently acquitted themselves in the Duty of Governing if they do but ride constantly a Hunting, breed up good Race-horses, sell Places and Offices to those of the Courtiers that will give most for them, and find out

New

New Ways for Invading of their Peoples Property, and hooking in a larger Revenue to their own Exchequer; for the Procurement whereof they'll always have some pretended Claim and Title; that though it be manifest Extortion, yet it may bear the Shew of Law and Justice: And then they dawb over their Oppression with a submissive, flattering Carriage, that they may so far insinuate into the Affections of the Vulgar, as they may not tumult nor rebel, but patiently crouch to Burdens and Exactions. Let us feign now a Person ignorant of the Laws and Constitutions of that Realm he lives in, an Enemy to the Publick Good, studious only of his own private Interest, addicted wholly to Pleasures and Delights, a Hater of Learning, a profess'd Enemy to Liberty and Truth, careless and unmindful of the common Concerns, taking all the Measures of Justice and Honesty from the false Beam of Self-interest and Advantage, after this hang about his Neck a *Gold Chain*, for an Intimation that he ought to have all Virtues link'd together; then set a *Crown* of Gold and Jewels on his Head, for a Token that he ought to overtop and *outshine* others in all commendable Qualifications; next, put into his Hand a *Royal Scepter* for a Symbol of Justice and Integrity; lastly, cloath him with *Purple*, for an Hieroglyphick of a *tender Love* and Affection to the Commonwealth. If a Prince should look upon this Pourtraiture, and draw a Comparison between that and himself, certainly he would be asham'd of his

his Ensigns of Majesty, and be afraid of being laugh'd out of them.

Next to *Kings* themselves may come their *Courtiers*, (Fig. XXXIV.) who, tho' they are for the most part a base, servile, cringing, low-spirited Sort of Flatterers, yet they look big, swell great, and have high Thoughts of their Honour and Grandeur. Their Confidence appears upon all Occasions; yet in this one Thing they are very modest, in that they are content to adorn their *Bodies* with Gold, Jewels, Purple, and other Glorious Ensigns of Virtue and Wisdom, but leave their *Minds* empty and unfrught; and taking the *Resemblance* of Goodness to themselves, turn over the *Truth* and Reality of it to others. They think themselves mighty happy in that they can call the King *Master*, and be allow'd the Familiarity of talking with him; that they can volubly rehearse his several Titles of *August Highness*, *Super eminent Excellence*, and *Most Serene Majesty*, that they can boldly usher in any Discourse, and that they have the compleat Knack of Insinuation and Flattery; for these are the Arts that make them truly Gentle and Noble. If you make a stricter Enquiry after their other Endowments, you shall find them meer Sots and Dolts. They'll sleep generally till Noon, and then their mercenary Chaplains shall come to their Bed-side, and entertain them perhaps with a short *Morning-Prayer*. As soon as they are *dress'd* they must go to *Break-fast*, and when that is done, immediately to *Dinner*. When the Cloth is taken
away

away then to *Cards, Dice, Tables*, or some such like Diversion. After this they must have One or Two Afternoon *Banquets*, and so in the Evening to *Supper*. When they have sup'd then begins the Game of *Drinking*; the Bottles are marshall'd, the Glasses rank'd, and round go the *Healths* and *Bumpers* till they are carried up to Bed. And this is the constant Method of passing away their Hours, Days, Months, Years and Ages. I have many times took great Satisfaction by standing in the Court, and seeing how the tawdry Butterflies vie upon one another: The Ladies shall measure the *Height* of their *Honours* by the Length of their *Trails*, which must be bore up by a *Page* behind. The Nobles jostle one another to get nearest to the King's Elbow, and wear *Gold-Chains* of that Weight and Bigness, as require no less Strength to *carry*, than they do *Wealth* to *purchase*.

*Bishops
Fools.*

And now for some Reflexions upon *Popes, Cardinals* and *Bishops*, who in Pomp and Splendor have almost equall'd, if not out-gone *Secular Princes*. Now if any one consider, that their upper *Crochet* of White Linen is to signifie their *unspotted Purity* and *Innocence*; that their fork'd *Mitres*, with both Divisions tied together by the same Knot, are to denote the *joint Knowledge* of the *Old* and *New Testament*; that their always wearing *Gloves* represents their keeping their *Hands* clean and undefiled from *Lucre* and *Covetousness*; that the *Pastoral Staff* implies the *Care* of a *Flock* committed to their *Charge*; that the *Cross* carried

Fig 34.

p. 128.



Fig 35.

p. 129.





ed before them expresses their *Victory* over all carnal Affections : He (I say) that considers his, and much more of like Nature, must needs conclude they are entrusted with a very weighty and difficult Office. But alas, they think it sufficient if they can but *feed themselves* ; and as to their *Flock*, either commend them to the Care of *Christ* himself, or commit them to the Guidance of some inferiour *Vicars* and *Curates* ; not so much as remembering what their Name of *Bishop* imports, to wit, *Labour, Pains* and *Diligence*, but by base Simoniacal Contracts they are in a Profane Sense *Episcopi*, . e. *Overseers* of their own Gain and Income.

So *Cardinals* in like manner, if they did but consider that the Church supposes them to succeed in the Room of the *Apostles* ; that therefore they must behave themselves as their *Predecessors*, and so not be *Lords*, but *Dispensers*, of Spiritual Gifts, of the Disposal whereof they must one Day render a strict Account : Or if they would but reflect a little on their Habit, and thus reason with themselves, What means this *White* Upper Garment, but only an unspotted *Innocence* ? What signifies my Inner *Purple*, but only an ardent Love and *Zeal* to God ? What imports my outermost *Pall*, so wide and long that it covers the whole Mule when I ride, nay, would be big enough to cover a Camel, but only a *Diffusive* Charity, that should spread itself for a Succour and Protection to all, by Teaching, Exhorting, Comforting, Reproving, Admonishing, Composing of Differences, courageously withstand-

Erasmus's Panegyrick

ing wicked Princes, and sacrificing for the Safety of our Flock our Life and Blood, as well as our Wealth and Riches; though indeed *Riches* ought not to be at all possess'd by such as boast themselves Successors to the Apostles, who were poor, needy and destitute: I say, if they did but lay these Considerations to Heart they would never be so ambitious of being *created* to this Honour; they would willingly *resign* it when conferr'd upon them, or at least would be as industrious, watchful and laborious, as the Primitive Apostles were.

Now as to the *Popes* of *Rome*, who pretend themselves *Christ's Vicars*, if they would but imitate his Exemplary Life, in the being employed in an unintermitted Course of *Preaching*; in the being attending with Poverty, Nakedness, Hunger, and a Contempt of this World; if they did but consider the Import of the Word *Pope*, which signifies a *Father*; or if they did but practise their Sirname of *Most Holy*, what Order or Degrees of Men would be in a worse Condition? There would be then no such vigorous making of Parties, and buying of Votes, in the *Conclave* upon a Vacancy of that *See*: And those who by Bribery, or other indirect Courses, should get themselves Elected, would never secure their sitting firm in the Chair by Pistol, Poison, Force and Violence. How much of their Pleasure would be abated if they were but endow'd with one Dram of Wisdom? *Wisdom* did I say? Nay, with one Grain of that

Salt which our Saviour bid them not lose the Savour of. All their Riches, all their Honour, their Jurisdctions, their *Peter's* Patrimony, their Offices, their Dispensations, their Licences, their Indulgences, their long Train and Attendants, (see in how short a Compass I have abbreviated all their Marketing of Religion;) in a Word, all their Perquisites will be forfeited and lost; and in their room would succeed Watchings, Fastings, Tears, Prayers, Sermons, hard Studies, repenting Sighs, and a Thousand such like severe Penalties: Nay, what's yet more deplorable, it would then follow, that all their Clerks, Amanuenses, Notaries, Advocates, Proctors, Secretaries, the Offices of Grooms, Ostlers, Serving-men, Pimps, (and somewhat else, which for Modesty's sake I shall not mention;) in short, all these Troops of Attendants, which depend on his Holiness, would all lose their several Employments. This indeed would be hard, but what yet remains would be more dreadful: The very Head of the Church, the Spiritual Prince, would then be brought from all his *Splendour* to the poor Equipage of a *Scrip* and *Staff*. But all this is upon the Supposition only that they understood what Circumstances they are placed in; whereas now, by a wholesome *Neglect* of *Thinking*, they live as well as Heart can wish: Whatever of *Toil* and *Drudgery* belongs to their Office that they assign over to *St. Peter*, or *St. Paul*, who have Time enough to mind it; but if there be any thing of *Pleasure* and *Grandeur*,

Erasmus's Panegyrick

that they assume to themselves, as being hereunto called: So that by my Influence no Sort of People live more to their own Ease and Content. They think to satisfy that Master they pretend to serve, our Lord and Saviour, with the great State and Magnificence, with the Ceremonies of Instalments, with the Titles of Reverence and Holiness, and with exercising their Episcopal Function only in *Blessing* and *Cursing*. The Working of *Miracles* is old and out-dated, to *teach* the People is too laborious, to *interpret Scripture* is to evade the Prerogative of the *Schoolmen*, to *pray* is too idle, to shed *Tears* is cowardish and unmanly, to *fast* is too mean and sordid, to be easie and *familiar* is beneath the Grandeur of him, who, without being sued to and intreated, will scarce give Princes the Honour of *kissing his Toe*: Finally, to *die* for Religion is too Self-denying, and to be *crucified* as their *Lord of Life* is base and ignominious. Their only *Weapons* ought to be those of the Spirit; and of these indeed they are mighty liberal, as of their *Interdicts*, their *Suspensions*, their *Denunciations*, their *Aggravations*, their greater and lesser *Excommunications*, and their roaring *Bulls*, that fright whomever they are thundred against; and these most Holy Fathers never issue them out more frequently than against those, who, at the *Instigation of the Devil*, (*Fig. XXXVI.*) and not *having the Fear of God before their Eyes*, do *Feloniously* and *Maliciously* attempt to lessen and impair St. Peter's
Patri-

Fig. 36.

P. 132



Fig. 37.

P. 134





Patrimony: And though that Apostle tells our Saviour in the Gospel, in the Name of all the other Disciples, *We have left all, and followed you,* yet they challenge as *his* Inheritance, Fields, Towns, Treasures, and large Dominions; for the Defending whereof, inflamed with a Holy Zeal, they fight with Fire and Sword, to the great Loss and Effusion of Christian Blood; thinking they are Apostolical *Maintainers* of Christ's Spouse, the Church, when they have murder'd all such as they call her Enemies; though indeed the Church has no Enemies more Bloody and Tyrannical than such impious Popes, who give Dispensations for the *not Preaching* of Christ; evacuate the main Design and Effect of our *Redemption* by their Pecuniary Bribes and Sales; adulterate the Gospel by their forced Interpretations, and undermining *Traditions*; and lastly, by their Lusts and Wickedness *grieve the Holy Spirit*, and make their Saviour's Wounds to *bleed anew*. Farther, when the Christian Church has been all along first Planted, then Confirm'd, and since Establish'd by the *Blood of her Martyrs*, as if Christ her Head would be wanting in the same Methods still of protecting her, they invert the Order, and propagate their Religion now by *Arms and Violence*, which was wont formerly to be done only with *Patience and Sufferings*. And though *War* be so brutish, as that it becomes Beasts rather than Men; so extravagant, that the Poets feign'd it an Effect of the Furies; so licentious, that it stops the Course of all Justice

and Honesty, so desperate, that it is best waged by Ruffins and *Banditti*, and so unchristian, that it is contrary to the express Commands of the Gospel; yet maugre all this, *Peace* is too quiet, too unactive, and they must be engaged in the boisterousness of War. Among which undertaking Popes, you shall have some so *Old* that they can scarce creep, and yet they'll put on a *Young, Brisk Resolution*, will resolve to stick at no Pains, to spare no Cost, nor to wave any Inconvenience, so they may involve Laws, Religion, Peace, and all other Concerns, whether Sacred or Civil, in unappeasable Tumults and Distractions. And yet some of their learned fawning Courtiers will interpret this notorious Madness for Zeal, and Piety, and Fortitude, having found out the Way how a Man may draw his Sword, and sheath it in his Brother's Bowels, and yet not offend against the Duty of the *Second Table*, whereby we are obliged to *love our Neighbour as our selves*. It is yet uncertain whether these *Romish Fathers* have taken Example from, or given President to, such other *German Bishops*, who omitting their Ecclesiastical Habit, and other Ceremonies, appear openly armed Cap-a-pe, like so many Champions and Warriours, thinking no doubt that they come short of the Duty of their Function if they die in any other Place than the open Field, fighting the *Battles of the Lord*. The inferiour Clergy (*Fig. XXXVII.*) deeming it unmannerly not to conform to their Patrons and Diocesans, devoutly tugg and fight

The Bishops
of Germa-
ny most
foolish, as
also their
Inferiour
Clergy.

fight for their Tythes with Syllogisms and Arguments, as fiercely as with Swords, Sticks, Stones, or any thing that came next to Hand. When they read the Rabbies, Fathers, or other Ancient Writings, how quick-sighted are they in spying out any Sentences, that they may fright the People with, and make them believe that *more* than the *Tenth* is due, passing by whatever they meet with in the same Authors that minds them of the Duty and Difficulty of their own Office. They never consider that their *shaven Crown* is a Token that they should *pare off* and *cut away* all the superfluous Lusts of this World, and give themselves wholly to Divine Meditation; but instead of this, our bald-pated Priests think they have done enough if they do but mumble over such a Fardle of Prayers; which it is a Wonder if God should hear or understand, when they whisper them so softly, and in so unknown a Language, which they can scarce hear or understand themselves. This they have in common with other Mechanicks, that they are most subtle in the Craft of getting Money, and wonderfully skill'd in their respective Dues of Tythes, Offerings, Perquisites, &c. Thus they are all content to reap the *Profit*, but as to the *Burden*, that they toss as a Ball from one Hand to another, and assign it over to any they can get or hire: For as Secular Princes have their Judges and subordinate Ministers to act in their Name, and supply their Stead; so Ecclesiastical Governours have their Deputies,

ties, Vicars and Curates, nay, many times turn over the whole Care of Religion to the Laity. The Laity, supposing they have nothing to do with the Church, (as if their Baptismal Vow did not initiate them Members of it,) make it over to the Priests; of the Priests again, those that are *Secular*, thinking their Title implies them to be a little too profane, assign this Task over to the *Regulars*, the *Regulars* to the *Monks*, the *Monks* bandy it from one Order to another, till it light upon the *Mendicants*; they lay it upon the *Carthusians*, which Order alone keeps Honesty and Piety among them, but really keep them so *close* that no Body ever yet could see them. Thus the *Pope* thrusting only their Sickle into the *Harvest* of Profit, leave all the other Toil of *Spiritual Husbandry* to the *Bishops*, the *Bishops* bestow it upon the *Pastors*, the *Pastors* on their *Curates*, and the *Curates* commit it to the *Mendicants*, who return it again to such as well know how to make good Advantage of the *Flock* by the Benefit of their *Fleece*.

But I would not be thought purposely to expose the Weaknesses of Popes and Priests, lest I should seem to recede from my Title, and make a *Satyr* instead of a *Panegyrick*: Nor let any one imagine that I reflect on good Princes by commending of bad ones: I did this only in brief, to shew that there is no one particular Person can lead a comfortable Life except he be entred of my Society,
and



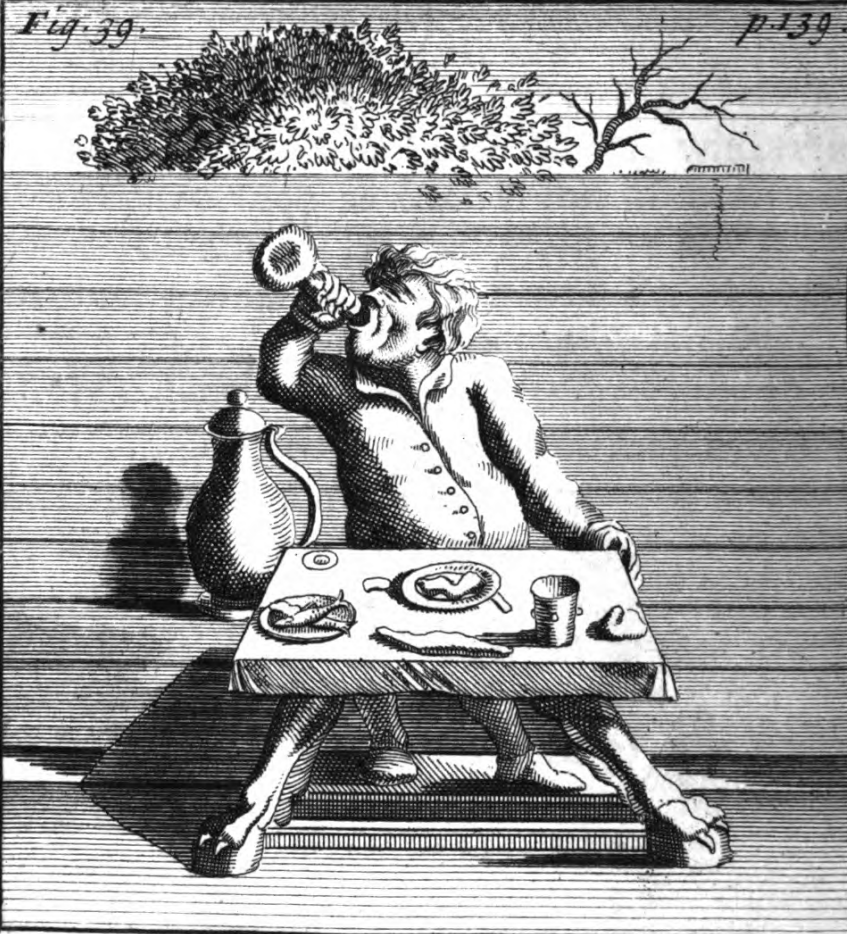
Fig. 38.

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Fig. 39.

p. 139.



and retain me for his Friend. Nor indeed can it be otherwise, since Fortune, [*Fig. XXXVIII.*] Fortune favours Fools. that Empress of the World, is so much in League and Amity with me, that to *Wise Men* she is always Stingy, and Sparing of her Gifts, but is profusely Liberal and Lavish to *Fools*. Thus *Timotheus*, the *Athenian* Commander, in all his Expeditions was a Mirrour of good Luck, because he was a little *Underwitted*; from him was occasioned the *Grecian* Proverb, *ἡ εἶδος ἔκρυψε τὸ αἶμα*, *the Net fills though the Fisherman sleeps*: There is also another favourable Proverb, *Γλαυξ ἰπίζεται*, *the Owl flies*, an Omen of Success. But against *Wise Men* are pointed these Ill-aboding Proverbs, [*Ἐπιτετραδίς Ἰουνοδέντης*,] *Born under a bad Planet*; *Equum habet Sejanum*, *He cannot ride the Forehorse*; *Aurum Tholosanum*, *Ill-gotten Goods will never Prosper*; and more to the same Purpose. But I forbear from any farther *Proverbializing*, lest I should be thought to have rifled my *Erasmus's Adagies*. To return therefore, Fortune we find still favouring the Blunt, and flushing the Forward; strokes and smooths up *Fools*, Crowning all their Undertakings with Success: But *Wisdom* makes her Followers *Bashful*, *Sneaking*, and *Timorous*, and therefore you commonly see that they are reduc'd to hard Shifts, must grapple with *Poverty*, *Cold* and *Hunger*, must lye *Recluse*, *Despised* and *Unregarded*, while *Fools* roul in *Money*, are advanc'd to *Dignities* and *Offices*, and in a Word, have the whole World at *Command*. If any one think it happy to
be

be a Favourite at *Court*, and to manage the Disposal of Places and Preferments, alas, this Happiness is so far from being attainable by Wisdom, that the very Suspicion of it would put a stop to all Advancement. Has any Man a mind to raise himself a *good Estate*? Alas, what Dealer in the World would ever get a Farthing if he be so wise as to scruple at Perjury, blush at a Lie, or stick at any Fraud and Over-reaching.

Farther, does any one appear a Candidate for any *Ecclesiastical Dignity*? Why, an Ass, or a Plough-Jobber, shall sooner gain it than a Wise Man. Again, are you in *Love* with any Handsome Lady? Alas, Womenkind are so addicted to Folly, that they will not at all listen to the Courtship of a Wise Suitor. Finally, where-ever there is any Preparation made for Mirth and Jollity all Wise Men are sure to be excluded the Company, lest they should stint the Joy, and damp the Frolick. In a Word, to what Side soever we turn ourselves, to Popes, Princes, Judges, Magistrates, Friends, Enemies, Rich or Poor, all their Concerns are managed by *Money*, which because it is undervalued by Wise Men, therefore, in Revenge to be sure, it never comes at them.

*The Praise
of Folly out
of Profaned
Authors.*

But now, though my Praise and Commendation might well be endless, yet it is requisite I should put some Period to my Speech. I'll therefore draw toward an End, when I have first confirm'd what I have said by the *Authority* of several *Authors*. Which Way of farther

ther Proof I shall insist upon, partly, that I may not be thought to have said more in my own Behalf than what will be justified by others; and partly, that the Lawyers may not check me for citing no Presidents nor Allegations. To imitate them therefore I will produce some Reports and Authorities, though perhaps like theirs too, they are nothing to the Purpose.

First then, it is confest almost to a Proverb, that the Art of *Dissembling* is a very necessary Accomplishment; and therefore it is a common Verse among School-boys,

Stultitiam simulare loco sapientia summa est.

To feign the Fool when fit Occasions rise,
Argues the being more compleatly Wise:

It is easie therefore to collect how great a Value ought to be put upon *Real Folly*, when the very *Shadow*, and bare Imitation of it, is so much esteem'd. *Horace*, who in his Epistles thus stiles himself,

Me pinguem & nitidum—

—Epicuri de grege Porcum,

My Sleek-skin'd Corps as smooth as if I lye
Mong th' fatted Swine of *Epicurus* Sty :

[*Fig. XXXIX.*]

This

Erasmus's Panegyrick

This Poet (I say) gives this Advice in one of his Odes,

Misce Stultitiam consiliis brevem :

Short Folly with your Counsels mix.

The Epithet of *short*, it is true, is a little improper. The same Poet again has this Passage elsewhere,

Dulce est despere in loco,

Well-timed Folly has a sweet Relish.

And in another Place,

— *Malle delirus inersque videri,
Quam sapere & ringi.*—

I'd rather much be censur'd for a Fool,
Than feel the Lash and Smart of Wisdom's
(School.

Homer praises *Telemachus* as much as any one of his *Heroes*, and yet he gives him the Epithet of *Νήπιος*, *Silly*: And the *Grecians* generally use the same Word to express *Children*, as a Token of their Innocence. And what is the Argument of all *Homer's Iliads*, but only, as *Horace* observes,

Stultorum Regum, & Populorum continet estus,

They



... ..

Fig. 40.

p. 141.



Fig. 41.

p. 142.



They Kings and Subjects Dotages contain?

How positive also is *Tully's* Commendation, that *all Places are fill'd with Fools*? Now every *Excellence* being to be Measured by its *Extent*, the Goodness of Folly must be of as large Compass as those Universal Places she reaches to. But perhaps Christians may slight the Authority of a Heathen, I could therefore, if I pleased, back and confirm the Truth hereof by the Citations of several Texts of *Scripture*; though herein it were perhaps my Duty to beg Leave of the Divines that I might so far Intrench upon their Prerogative. Supposing a Grant, the Task seems so difficult as to require the Invocation of some Aid and Assistance: Yet because it is unreasonable to put the Muses to the Trouble and Expence of so tedious a Journey, especially since the Business is out of their Sphere, I shall chuse rather (while I am acting the Divine, and venturing in their Polemick Difficulties,) to wish my self for such time animated with *Scotus*, his bristling and prickly Soul, [*Fig. XL.*] which I would not care how afterwards it returned to his Body, though for Refinement it were stopped at a Purgatory by the Way. I cannot but wish that I might wholly change my Character, or at least that some Grave Divine in my stead might rehearse this Part of the Subject for me: For truly I suspect that Somebody will accuse me for Plundering the Closets of those Reverend Men, while I pretend to

Out of the
Scriptures.

to so much of Divinity as must appear in my following Discourse. Yet however, it may not seem strange, that after so long and frequent a Converse, I have gleaned some Scraps from the Divines; since *Horace's Wooden God*, by hearing his Master read *Homer*, learned some Words of Greek; and *Lucian's Cock*, by long Attention, could readily understand what any Man spoke. But now to the Purpose, wishing my self Success.

Ecclesiastes doth somewhere confess that there are an *infinite Number of Fools*; now when he speaks of an *infinite Number*, what does he else but imply, that herein is included the *whole Race of Mankind*, except some very few, which I know not whether ever any one had yet the Happiness to see?

The Prophet *Jeremy* speaks yet more plainly in his *Tenth Chapter*, where he saith, That *every Man is Brutish in his Knowledge*. He just before attributes Wisdom to God alone, saying, That *the Wise Men of the Nations are altogether Brutish and Foolish*. And in the preceding Chapter he gives this Seasonable Caution, *Let not the Wise Man glory in his Wisdom*: The Reason is obvious, because no Man hath truly any whereof to glory. But to return to *Ecclesiastes*, when he saith, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity*, what else can we imagine his Meaning to be, than that our whole Life is nothing but one continued Interlude of Folly? This confirms that Assertion of *Tully*, which is delivered in that noted Passage we but just now mentioned, namely,

ly, That *all Places swarm with Fools*. Farther, what does the Son of *Sirach* mean when he saith in *Ecclesiasticus*, That the *Fool is changed as the Moon*, while the *Wise Man is fix'd as the Sun* than only to hint out the Folly of Mankind; and that the Name of Wise is due to no other but the All-wise God? For all Interpreters by *Moon* understand *Mankind*, and by *Sun* that Fountain of all Light, the *Almighty*. The same Sense is implied in that Saying of our Saviour in the Gospel, *There is none Good but One, that is God*: For if whoever is not *Wise* be consequently a *Fool*; and if, according to the Stoicks, every Man be *Wise* so far only as he is *Good*, the Meaning of the Text must be, all Mortals are unavoidably *Fools*, and there is none *Wise* but *One*, that is *God*. *Solomon* also in the Fifteenth Chapter of his *Proverbs* hath this Expression, *Folly is Joy to him that is destitute of Wisdom*; plainly intimating, that the *Wise Man* is attended with Grief and Vexation, while the *Foolish* only roul in Delight and Pleasure. To the same Purpose is that Saying of his in the First Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, *In much Wisdom is much Grief; and he that encreaseth Knowledge, encreaseth Sorrow*. Again, it is confess'd by the same Preacher in the Seventh Chapter of the same Book, *That the Heart of the Wise is in the House of Mourning, but the Heart of Fools is in the House of Mirth*. This Author himself had never attained to such a Portion of Wisdom if he had not applied himself to a Searching out

out the Frailties and Infirmities of Humane Nature ; as, if you believe not me, may appear from his own Words in his First Chapter, *I gave my Heart to know Wisdom, and to know Madness and Folly* ; where it is worthy to be observed, that as to the Order of Words *Folly* for its Advantage is put in the *last* Place. Thus *Ecclesiastes* wrote, and thus indeed did an *Ecclesiastical* Method require ; namely, that what has the *Precedence* in Dignity should come *hindmost* in Rank and Order, according to the Tenour of that Evangelical Precept, *The Last shall be First, and the First shall be Last*. And in *Ecclesiasticus* likewise, (whoever was Author of the Holy Book which bears that Name) in the Forty-fourth Chapter the Excellency of Folly above Wisdom is positively acknowledg'd : The very Words I shall not cite, till I have the Advantage of an Answer to a Question I am proposing, this Way of Interrogating being frequently made use of by *Plato* in his Dialogues between *Socrates*, and other Disputants : I ask you then, What is it we usually hoard and lock up, Things of greater Esteem and Value, or those which are more Common, Trite and Despicable ? Why are you so backward in making an Answer ? Since you are so shy and reserv'd I'll take the *Greek* Proverb for a satisfactory Reply ; namely, [τὴν ἐπὶ βύθου ὑ-
δρῶν, *Foul Water is thrown down the Sink* ; which Saying, that no Person may slight it, may be convenient to advertise that it comes from no meaner an Author than that Oracle
of

of Truth, *Aristotle* himself. And indeed there is no one on this Side *Bedlam* so Mad as to throw out upon the Dunghil his Gold and Jewels, but rather all Persons have a close Repository to preserve them in, and secure them under all the Locks, Bolts and Bars, that either Art can contrive, or Fears suggest: Whereas the Dirt, Pebbles, and Oyster-shells, that lye scattered in the Streets, ye trample upon, pass by, and take no notice of; if then what is more valuable be *coffer'd up*, and what *less* so lyes *unreguarded*, it follows, that accordingly Folly should meet with a greater Esteem than Wisdom, because that Wise Author advises us to the *keeping close* and concealing the first, and exposing or *laying open* the other: As take him now in his own Words, *Better is he that hideth his Folly, than him that hideth his Wisdom.* Beside, the Sacred Text does oft ascribe Innocence and Sincerity to Fools, while the Wise Man is apt to be a haughty Scornor of all such as he thinks or censures to have less Wit than himself: For so I understand that Passage in the Tenth Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, *When he that is a Fool walketh by the Way, his Wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a Fool.* Now what greater Argument of Candor or Ingenuity can there be, than to demean your self equal with all others, and not think their Deserts any Way Inferior to his own Folly, is no such Scandalous Attribute, but that the Wise *Agur* was not ashamed to confess it in the Thirtieth Chapter of *Proverbs*: Surely (saith he) *I am more brutish than any Man, and have*

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Erasmus's Panegyrick

not the Understanding of a Man. Nay, St. Paul himself, that great Doctor of the Gentiles, writing to his *Corinthians*, readily owns the Name, saying, *If any Man speak as a Fool, I more*; as if to have been *less so* had been a *Reproach* and *Disgrace*. But perhaps I may be censured for mis-interpreting this Text by some Modern Annotators, who like Crows pecking at one another's Eyes, find Fault, and Correct all that went before them, and pretend each their own Glosses to contain the only True and Genuine Explication; among whom my *Erasmus* (whom I cannot but mention with Respect) may challenge the Second Place, if not the Precedency. This Citation (say they) is purely impertinent; the Meaning of the Apostle is far different from what you dream of: He would not have these Words so understood, as if he desired to be thought a greater Fool than the rest, but only when he had before said, *Are they Ministers of Christ? So am I*: As if the equalling himself herein to others had been too little, he adds, *I am more*, thinking a bare *Equality* not enough, unless he were even *Superior* to those he compares himself with. This he would have to be believed as true; yet lest it might be thought offensive, as bordering too much on Arrogance and Conceit, he tempers and alleviates it by the Covert of Folly. *I speak* (says he) *as a Fool*, knowing it to be the peculiar Priviledge of Fools to speak the Truth, without giving Offence. But what St. Paul's Thoughts were when he wrote this I leave for them to determine.

mine. In my own Judgment at least I prefer the Opinion of the Good Old Tun-bellied Divines, with whom it's safer and more creditable to Err, than to be in the Right with Smattering, Raw, Novices.

Nor indeed should any one mind the late Criticks any more than the senseless chattering of a Daw: Especially since one of the most Eminent of them (whose Name I advisedly conceal, lest some of our Wits should be taunting him with the *Greek* Proverb, *Ὅνος ᾤεῖς λόγον*, *Ad Lyram Asinus*) Magisterially and Dogmatically descanting upon this Text, [*Are they the Ministers of Christ? (I speak as a Fool) I am more,*] makes a distinct Chapter, and (which without good store of Logick he could never have done) adds a new Section, and then gives this Paraphrase, which I shall *Verbatim* recite, that you may have his *Words Materially*, as well as *Formally* his *Sense*, (for that's one of their babbling Distinctions.) [*I speak as a Fool,*] that is, if the equalling myself to those false Apostles would have been construed as the Vaunt of a Fool, I will willingly be accounted a greater Fool, by taking place of them, and openly pleading, that as to their Ministry I not only come up even with them, but outstrip and go beyond them: Though this same Commentator a little after, as it were forgetting what he had just before delivered, tacks about, and shifts to another Interpretation.

Divines in-
terpret
Scripture
most foo-
lishly.

But why do I insist upon any one particular Example, when in general it is the Publick Charter of all Divines to mould and bend the Sacred Oracles till they comply with their own Fancy, spreading them (as Heaven by its Creator) like a *Curtain*, closing together, or drawing them back, as they please? Thus indeed St. *Paul* himself minces and mangles some Citations he makes use of, and seems to wrest them to a different Sense from what they were first intended for, as is confess'd by the great Linguist St. *Hierom*. Thus when that Apostle saw at *Athens* the Inscription of an Altar, he draws from it an Argument for the Proof of the Christian Religion; but leaving out great Part of the Sentence, which perhaps if fully recited might have prejudiced his Cause, he mentions only the Two last Words, viz. *To the unknown God*; and this too not without Alteration, for the whole Inscription runs thus: *To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa, to all Foreign and Unknown Gods*.

'Tis in Imitation of the same Pattern, I'll warrant you, that our Young Divines, by leaving out Four or Five Words in a Place, and putting a false Construction on the rest, can make any Passage serviceable to their own Purpose; though from the Coherence of what went before, or follows after, the Genuine Meaning appears to be either wide enough, or perhaps quite contradictory to what they would thrust and impose upon it. In which Knack the Divines are grown now so expert,
that

that the Lawyers themselves begin to be jealous of an Encroachment on what was formerly their Sole Priviledge and Practice. And indeed what can they despair of proving, since the forementioned Commentator (I had almost blundered out his Name, but that I am restrained by fear of the same *Greek* Proverbial Sarcaſm,) did upon a Text of St. *Luke* put an Interpretation no more agreeable to the meaning of the Place than one contrary Quality is to another? The Paſſage is this, when *Judas's* Treachery was preparing to be executed, and accordingly it ſeem'd requiſite that all the Diſciples ſhould be provided to guard and ſecure their Affaulted Maſter, our Saviour, that he might piously caution them againſt Reliance for his Delivery on any Worldly Strength, asks them, whether in all their Embaſſie *they lacked any thing*, when he had ſent them out ſo Unfurniſhed for the Performance of a long Journey, that they had not ſo much as *Shoes* to defend their Feet from the Injuries of Flints and Thorns, or a *Scrip* to carry a Meal's Meat in; and when they had answered that they lacked *nothing*, he adds, *But now he that hath a Purſe let him take it, and likewise a Scrip; and he that hath no Sword let him Sell his Garment, and Buy one*: Now when the whole Doctrin of our Saviour Inculcates nothing more frequently than Meekneſs, Patience, and a Contempt of this World, is it not plain what the Meaning of the Place is? Namely, that he might now diſmiſs his Embaſſadors in a more Naked, Defenceleſs, Condition,

tion, he does not only advise them to take no Thought for Shoes or Scrip, but even commands them to part with the very Cloaths from their Back, that so they might have the less Incumbrance and Entanglement in the going through their Office and Function. He cautions them, it is true, to be furnished with a Sword, yet not such a Carnal one as Rogues and Highway-men make use of for Murder and Bloodshed, but with the *Sword of the Spirit*, which pierces through the Heart, and searches out the innermost Retirements of the Soul, lopping off all our Lust, and corrupt Affections, and leaving nothing in Possession of our Breast but Piety, Zeal and Devotion: This (I say) in my Opinion is the most Natural Interpretation. But see how that Divine misunderstands the Place: By *Sword* (says he) is meant *Defence* against *Persecution*; by *Scrip*, or *Purse*, a sufficient Quantity of *Provision*; as if Christ had, by considering better of it, changed his Mind in reference to that mean Equipage which he had before sent his Disciples in, and therefore came now to a Recantation of what he had formerly Instituted: Or as if he had forgot what in time past he had told them, *Blessed are you when Men shall Revile you, and Persecute you, and say all manner of Evil against you for my Sake. Render not Evil for Evil, for blessed are the Meek, not the Cruel*: As if he had forgot that he encouraged them by the Examples of *Sparrows* and *Lillies* to take Thought for the *Morrow*; he gives them

them now another Lesson, and charges them, rather than go *without a Sword*, to *Sell their Garment, and Buy one*; as if the going Cold and Naked were more excuseable than the marching Unarmed. And as this Author thinks all Means which are requisite for the Prevention or Retaliation of Injuries to be implied under the Name of *Sword*, so under that of *Scrip* he would have every thing to be comprehended, which either the Necessity or Conveniency of Life requires.

Thus does this provident Commentator furnish out the Disciples with Halberts, [*Fig. XLI.*] Spears and Guns, for the Enterprize of *Preaching Christ Crucified*; he supplies them at the same time with Pockets, Bags and Portmanteaus, that they might carry their *Cupboards* as well as their *Bellies* always about them: He takes no Notice how our Saviour afterwards Rebukes *Peter* for *drawing* that Sword which he had just before so strictly charg'd him to *buy*; nor that it is ever Recorded that the Primitive Christians did by no ways withstand their Heathen Persecutors otherwise than with Tears and Prayers, which they would have Exchanged more effectually for Swords and Bucklers if they had thought this Text would have borne them out.

There is another, and he of no mean Credit, whom for Respect to his Person I shall forbear to Name, who Commenting upon that Verse in the Prophet *Habakkuk*, [*I saw the Tents of Cushan in Affliction, and the Curtains of the Land of Midian did tremble,*] because *Tents* were

sometimes made of *Skins*, he pretended that the Word *Tents* did here signifie the *Skin* of *St. Bartholomew*, who was flead for a *Martyr*.

I my self was lately at a Divinity Disputation, [*Fig. XLII.*] (where I very often pay my Attendance,) where one of the Opponents demanded a Reason why it should be thought more proper to Silence all *Hereticks* by *Sword* and *Faggot*, rather than Convert them by moderate and sober Arguments? A certain Cynical Old Blade, who bore the Character of a Divine, Legible in the Frowns and Wrinkles of his Face, not without a great deal of Disdain answered, that it was the expresse Injunction of *St. Paul* himself, in those Directions to *Titus*, [*A Man that is an Heretick, after the First and Second Admonition, Reject,*] quoting it in *Latin*, where the Word *Reject* is *Devita*, while all the Auditory wondred at this Citation, and deem'd it no Way applicable to his Purpose; he at last explain'd himself, saying, that *Devita* signified *de vita tollendum Hereticum*, a Heretick must be Slain. Some smiled at his Ignorance, but others approved of it as an Orthodox Comment. And however some disliked that such Violence should be done to so easie a Text, our Hair-sitting and Irrefragable Doctor went on in Triumph: To prove it yet (says he) more undeniably, it is commanded in the Old Law, [*Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live;*] now then every *Maleficus* or *Witch* is to be kill'd, but an Heretick is *Maleficus*, which in the *Latin* Translation is
put



OF HISTORY
LITERATURE

Put for a *Witch, Ergo, &c.* All that were present wondred at the Ingenuity of the Person, and very devoutly embraced his Opinion, never dreaming that the Law was restrained only to Magicians, Sorcerers and Enchanters: For otherwise, if the Word *Maleficus* signified what it most naturally implies, every Evil-doer, then Drunkenness and Whoredom were to meet with the same Capital Punishment as Witchcraft. But why should I squander away my Time in a too tedious Prosecution of this Topick, which if drove on to the utmost would afford Talk to Eternity? I aim herein at no more than this, namely, That since those Grave Doctors take such a swinging Range and Latitude, I, who am but a smattering Novice in Divinity, may have the larger Allowance for any Slips or Mistakes.

Now therefore I return to St. Paul, who uses these Expressions, [*Ye suffer Fools gladly,*] applying it to himself; and again, [*As a Fool receive me,*] and, [*That which I speak, I speak not after the Lord, but as it were Foolishly;*] and in another Place, [*We are Fools for Christ's sake:*] See how these Commendations of Folly are equal to the Author of them, both Great and Sacred. The same Holy Person does yet enjoin and command the being a Fool as a Virtue of all other most requisite and necessary: For, says he, [*If any Man seem to be Wise in this World, let him become a Fool, that he may be Wise.*] Thus St. Luke Records, how our Saviour, after his Resurrection, joining him-

Folly further commended from the Scripture.

himself with Two of his Disciples travelling to *Emmans*, at his first Salutation he calls them Fools, saying, [*O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe.*] Nor may this seem strange in Comparison to what is yet farther delivered by *St. Paul*, who adventures to attribute something of Folly even to the All-wise God himself, [*The Foolishness of God (says he) is Wiser than Men :*] In which Text *St. Origen* would not have the Word *Foolishness* any Way refer'd to Men, or applicable to the same Sense, wherein is to be understood that other Passage of *St. Paul*, [*The Preaching of the Cross to them that Perish, Foolishness.*] But why do I put my self to the Trouble of citing so many Proofs, since this one may suffice for all, namely, that in those Mystical Psalms, wherein *David* represents the Type of *Christ*, it is there acknowledged by our Saviour, in Way of Confession, that even he himself was guilty of Folly; *Thou (says he) O God know'st my Foolishness ?* Nor is it without some Reason that Fools for their Plainness and Sincerity of Heart have always been most acceptable to God Almighty. For as the Princes of this World have shrewdly suspected, and carried a jealous Eye over such of their Subjects as were the most observant, and deepest Politicians, (for thus *Cæsar* was afraid of the Plodding *Cassius* and *Brutus*, thinking himself secure enough from the careless Drinking *Anthony*; [*Fig. XLIII.*] *Nero* likewise mistrusted *Seneca*, and *Dionysius* would have been willingly rid of *Plato*,) whereas they can all put greater

Confi-

Confidence in such as are of less Subtilty and Contrivance. So our Saviour in like manner dislikes and condemns the Wise and Crafty, as St. Paul does expressly declare in these Words, *God hath chosen the Foolish Things of the World;* and again, *It pleased God by Foolishness to save the World;* implying that by *Wisdom* it could never have been *saved*. Nay, God himself testifies as much when he speaks by the Mouth of his Prophet, *I will destroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and bring to nought the Understanding of Learned.* Again, our Saviour does solemnly return his Father Thanks for that he had *hidden the Mysteries of Salvation from the Wise, and reveal'd them to Babes, i. e. to Fools;* for the Original Word *ἄνοιος* being opposed to *σοφῶν*, if one signifie *Wise*, the other must *Foolish*. To the same Purpose did our Blessed Lord frequently condemn and upbraid the Scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers, while he carries himself kind and obliging to the unlearned Multitude: For what other can be the Meaning of that tart Denunciation, *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, than Wo unto you Wise Men,* whereas he seems chiefly delighted with Children, Women, and illiterate Fishermen?

We may farther take notice, that among all the several Kinds of Brute Creatures he shews greatest liking to such as are farthest distant from the Subtilty of the Fox. Thus in his Progress to *Jerusalem* he chose to ride sitting upon an *Ass*, though, if he pleased, he might have mounted the Back of a *Lion* with more of State, and as little of Danger.

The

The *Holy Spirit* chose rather likewise to descend from Heaven in the Shape of a simple gall-less *Dove*, than that of an *Eagle*, *Kite*, or other more lofty *Fowl*.

Thus all along in the Holy Scriptures there are frequent Metaphors and Similitudes of the most Inoffensive Creatures, such as *Stags*, *Hinds*, *Lambs*, and the like. Nay, those Blessed Souls that in the Day of Judgment are to be placed at our Saviour Right Hand are call'd *Sheep*, which are the most Senseless and Stupid of all Cattle, as is evidenc'd by *Aristotle's* Greek Proverb, *ωρεβάτερον ἢ δόξω*, a *Sheepishness of Temper*, i. e. a Dull, Blockish, Sleepy, Unmanly Humour. Yet of such a *Flock* Christ is not ashamed to profess himself the *Shepherd*. Nay, he would not only have all his Profelytes termed *Sheep*, but even he himself would be call'd a *Lamb*; as when *John* the *Baptist* seeth *Jesus* coming unto him, he saith, *Behold the Lamb of God*; which same Title is very often given to our Saviour in the *Apocalypse*.

All this amounts to no less than that all Mortal Men are Fools, even the Righteous and Godly as well as Sinners; nay, in some Sense our Blessed Lord himself, who although he was *the Wisdom of the Father*, yet to repair the Infirmities of Fallen Man, he became in some Measure a Partaker of Human Folly, when he took our Nature upon him, and was found in Fashion as a Man; or when God made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God

in him. Nor would he heal those Breaches our Sins had made by any other Method than by the *Foolishness of the Cross*, publish'd by the Ignorant and Unlearned Apostles, to whom he frequently recommends the Excellence of Folly, cautioning them against the Infectiousness of Wisdom, by the several Examples he proposes them to imitate, such as *Children, Lilies, Sparrows, Mustard*, and such like Beings, which are either wholly Inanimate, or at least devoid of Reason and Ingenuity, guided by no other Conduct than that of Instinct, without Care, Trouble, or Contrivance. To the same Intent the Disciples were warned by their Lord and Master, that when they should be *brought unto the Synagogues, and unto Magistrates and Powers*, they should *take no Thought how, or what Thing they should answer, nor what they should say*: They were again strictly forbid to *enquire into the Times and Seasons*, or to place any Confidence in their own Abilities, but to depend wholly upon Divine Assistance.

At the first Peopling of Paradise the Almighty had never laid so strict a Charge on our Father *Adam* to refrain from *eating of the Tree of Knowledge*, except he had thereby forewarned that the Taste of Knowledge would be the Bane of all Happiness. *St. Paul* says expressly, that *Knowledge puffeth up, i. e. it is Fatal and Poisonous*. In pursuance whereunto *St. Bernard* interprets that *exceeding high Mountain* whereon the Devil had erected his Seat to have been the Mountain of

of Knowledge. And perhaps this may be another Argument which ought not to be omitted, namely, that Folly is acceptable, at least excuseable, with the Gods, in as much as they easily pass by the heedless Failures of Fools while the Miscarriages of such as are known to have more Wit shall very hardly obtain a Pardon; nay, when a Wise Man comes to Sue for an Acquittment from any Guilt, he must shroud himself under the Patronage and Pretext of Folly. For thus in the Twelfth of Numbers Aaron intreats Moses to stay the Leprosie of his Sister Miriam, saying, *Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee lay not the Sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly.* Thus when David spared Saul's Life when he found him Sleeping in a Tent of Hachilah, not willing to stretch forth his Hand against the Lord's Anointed, Saul excuses his former Severity by confessing, *Behold I have play'd the Fool, and have Erred exceedingly.* David also himself in much the same Form begs the Remission of his Sin from God Almighty with this Prayer, *Lord, I pray thee take away the Iniquity of thy Servant, for I have done very Foolishly;* as if he could not have hoped otherwise to have his Pardon granted except he petitioned for it under the Covert and Mitigation of Folly. The agreeable Practice of our Saviour is yet more convincing, who, when he hung upon the Cross, prayed for his Enemies, saying, *Father, forgive them,* urging no other Plea in their Behalf than that of their Ignorance, *for they know*

not

not what they do. To the same Effect St. Paul in his First Epistle to *Timothy* acknowledges he had been a Blasphemer and a Persecutor, But (saith he) *I obtain'd Mercy, because I did it ignorantly in Unbelief.* Now what's the Meaning of the Phrase, [*I did it ignorantly,*] but only this? My Fault was occasioned from a misinformed Folly, not from a deliberate Malice. What signifies [*I obtained Mercy,*] but only that I should not otherwise have obtained it, had not Folly and Ignorance been my Vindication? To the same Purpose is that other Passage in the Mysterious Psalmist, which I forgot to mention in its proper Place, namely, *Oh remember not the Sins and Offences of my Youth!* The Word which we render *Offences*, is in Latin *Ignorantias*, Ignorances: Observe, the Two Things he alledges in his Excuse are, First, His *Rawness of Age*, to which Folly, and want of Experience, are constant Attendants: And Secondly, His *Ignorances*, expressed in the Plural Number for an Enhancement and Aggravation of his Foolishness.

But that I may not wear out this Subject too far, to draw now toward a Conclusion, it is observable that the Christian Religion seems to have some Relation to Folly, and no Alliance at all with Wisdom. Of the Truth whereof, if you desire farther Proof than my bare Word, you may please, First, To consider, that Children, Women, Old Men and Fools, led as it were by a Secret Impulse of Nature, are always most constant in repairing

The Christian Religion itself related to Folly.

pairing to Church, and most Zealous, Devout and Attentive in the Performance of the several Parts of Divine Service: Nay, the first Promulgers of the Gospel, and the first Converts to Christianity, were Men of Plainness and Simplicity, wholly unacquainted with Secular Policy or Learning.

Farther, There are none more Silly, or nearer their Wits End, than those who are too [*Fig. XLIV.*] Superstitiously Religious: They are profusely Lavish in their Charity; they invite fresh Affronts by an easie Forgiveness of past Injuries; they suffer themselves to be cheated and impos'd upon by laying claim to the *Innocence* of the *Dove*; they make it the Interest of no Persons to oblige them, because they'll love, and *do good, to their Enemies*, as much as to the most Endearing Friends; they banish all Pleasure, feeding upon the Penance of Watching, Weeping, Fasting, Sorrow and Reproach; they value not their Lives, but, with *St. Paul*, *wish to be Dissolved*, and covet the Fiery Trial of Martyrdom: In a Word, they seem altogether so destitute of Common Sense, that their Soul seems already separated from their Dead and Unactive Body. And what else can we imagine all this to be than downright Madness? It is the less strange therefore that at the Feast of *Pentecost* the Apostles should be thought *Drunk with New Wine*; or that *St. Paul* was censured by *Festus* to have been *beside himself*.

And

Fig. 44.



Fig. 45.





And since I have had the Confidence to go thus far, I shall venture yet a little forwarder, and be so bold as to say thus much more : All that final Happiness, which Christians, through so many Rubs and Briars of Difficulties, contend for, is at last no better than a Sort of Folly and Madness. This no question will be thought extravagantly spoke ; but consider a while, and deliberately state the Case.

First then, the Christians so far agree with the *Platonists*, as to believe that the Body is no better than a Prison or Dungeon for the Confinement of the Soul. That therefore while the Soul is shackled to the Walls of Flesh, her soaring Wings are imp'd, and all her enlivening Faculties clogg'd and fetter'd by the gross Particles of Matter, so that she can neither freely range after, nor, when happily overtook, can quietly contemplate her proper Object of Truth.

Farther, *Plato* defines Philosophy to be the Meditation of Death, because the one performs the same Office with the other, namely, withdraws the Mind from all Visible and Corporeal Object ; therefore while the Soul does patiently actuate the several Organs and Members of the Body, so long is a Man accounted of a Good and Sound Disposition : But when the Soul, weary of her Confinement, struggles to break Goal, and fly beyond her Cage of Flesh and Blood, then a Man is censured at least for be-

ing Maggotty and Crack-brain'd ; nay, if there be any Defect in the External Organs it is then termed downright Madness. And yet many times Persons thus affected shall have Prophetick Extasies of foretelling Things to come, shall in a Rapture talk Languages they never before learned, and seem in all Things actuated by somewhat Divine and Extraordinary: And all this, no doubt, is only the Effect of the Soul's being more released from its Engagement to the Body, whereby it can with less Impediment exert the Energy of Life and Motion. From hence no question has sprung an Observation of like Nature, confirmed now into a settled Opinion, That *some long-experienced Souls in the World, before their Dislodging, arrive to the Height of Prophetick Spirits.*

If this Disorder arise from an Intemperance in Religion, and too high a Strain of Devotion, though it be of a somewhat differing Sort, yet it is so near akin to the former, that a great Part of Mankind apprehend it as a meer Madness; especially when Persons of that Superstitious Humour are so Pragmatical and Singular, as to separate, and live apart, as it were from all the World beside: So as they seem to have experienc'd what *Plato* dreams to have happened between some, who, inclosed in a dark Cave, did only ruminare on the Idea's, and abstracted Speculations of Entities; and one other of their Company, [*Fig. XLV.*] who had got abroad
into

into the open Light, and at his return tells them what a blind Mistake they had lain under; that he had seen the Substance of what their Dotage of Imagination reach'd only in Shadow; that therefore he could not but Pity and Condole their deluding Dreams, while they on the other Side no less bewail his Phrensie, and turn him out of their Society for a Lunatick and Mad-man.

Thus the Vulgar are wholly taken up with those Objects that are most familiar to their Senses, beyond which they are apt to think all is but Fairy-land; while those that are devoutly Religious scorn to set their Thoughts or Affections on any *Things below*, but mount their Soul to the pursuit of Incorporeal and Invisibile Beings: The former, in their Marshalling the Requisites of Happiness, place Riches in the Front, the Endowments of the Body in the next Rank, and leave the Accomplishments of the Soul to bring up the Rear; nay, some will scarce believe there is any such thing at all as the *Soul*, because they cannot Literally see a Reason of their Faith; while the other pay their First-fruits of Service to that most Simple and Incomprehensive Being, God, employ themselves next in providing for the Happiness of that which comes nearest to their Immortal Soul, being not at all mindful of their corrupt bodily Carcasses, and slighting Money as the Dirt and Rubbage of the World; or if at

Rubbish M 2

any

any time some urging Occasions require them to become intangled in Secular Affairs, they do it with Regret, and a kind of Ill-will, observing what *St. Paul* advises his *Corinthians*, *Having Wives, and yet being as though they had none; Buying, and yet remaining as though they Possessed not.*

There are between these Two Sorts of Persons many Differences in several other Respects. As first, though all the Senses have the same Mutual Relation to the Body, yet some are more gross than others; as those Five Corporeal ones, of Touching, Hearing, Smelling, Seeing, Tasting, whereas some again are more refined, and less adulterated with Matter, such are the Memory, the Understanding, and the Will: Now the Mind will be alway most ready and expedite at that to which it is naturally most inclined. Hence is it, that a Pious Soul, imploying all its Power and Abilities in the pressing after such Things as are farthest removed from Sense, is perfectly Stupid and Brutish in the Management of any Worldly Affairs; while on the other Side, the Vulgar are so intent upon their Business and Imployment, that they have not time to bestow one poor Thought upon a Future Eternity. From such Ardour of Divine Meditation was it that *St. Bernard* in his Study drank Oyl instead of Wine, and yet his Thoughts were so taken up that he never observ'd the Mistake.

Farther,

Farther, among the Passions of the Soul, some have a greater Communication with the Body than others, as Lust, the Desire of Meat and Sleep, Anger, Pride and Envy; with these the Pious Man is in continual War, and irreconcilable Enmity, while the vulgar Cherish and Foment them, as the best Comforts of Life.

There are other Affections of a middle Nature, common and innate to every Man; such are Love to one's Country, Duty to Parents, Love to Children, Kindness to Friends, and such like; to these the Vulgar pay some Respect, but the Religious endeavour to Supplant and Eradicate from their Soul, except they can Raise and Sublimate them to the most refined Pitch of Virtue; so as to Love or Honour their Parents, not barely under that Character, (for what did they do more than Generate a *Body*? Nay, even for that we are primarily beholden to God, the First Parent of all Mankind,) but as Good Men only, upon whom is Imprinted the lively Image of that Divine Nature which they esteem as the chief and only *Good*, beyond whom nothing deserves to be beloved, nothing desired.

By the same Rule they Measure all the other Offices or Duties of Life; in each of which, whatever is Earthly and Corporeal, shall, if not wholly rejected, yet at least be put behind what Faith makes *the Substance of Things not seen*. Thus in the Sacraments, and all other
Acts

Acts of Religion, they make a difference between the outward Appearance or Body of them, and the more inward Soul or Spirit. As to Instance, in Fasting, they think it very ineffectual to abstain from Flesh, or debar themselves of a Meal's Meat, (which yet is all the Vulgar understand by this Duty,) unless they likewise restrain their Passions, subdue their Anger, and mortifie their Pride; that the Soul being thus Disingaged from the Intanglement of the Body, may have a better Relish to Spiritual Objects, and take an Antepast of Heaven. Thus (say they) in the Holy Eucharist, tho' the outward Form and Ceremonies are not wholly to be despised, yet are these prejudicial, at least unprofitable, if as bare Signs only they are not accompanied with the Thing signified, which is *the Body and Blood of Christ*, whose Death, till his Second Coming, we are hereby to represent by the Vanquishing and Burying our vile Affections, that they may arise to a Newness of Life, and be United first each to other, then all to Christ.

These are the Actions and Meditations of the truly Pious Person; while the Vulgar place all their Religion in crowding up close to the Altar, in listning to the Words of the Priest, and in being very Circumspect at the Observance of each trifling Ceremony. Nor is it in such Cases only as we have here given for Instances, but through his whole Course of Life, that the Pious Man, without
any

Any Regard to the baser Materials of the Body, spends himself wholly in a fixed Intensity upon Spiritual, Invisible, and Eternal, Objects.

Now since these Persons stand off, and keep at so wide a distance between themselves, it is Customary for them both to think each other Mad: And were I to give my Opinion to which of the Two the Name does most properly belong, I should, I confess, adjudge it to the Religious; of the Reasonableness whereof you may be farther convinced, if I proceed to demonstrate what I formerly hinted at, namely, That that Ultimate Happiness which Religion proposes is no other than some Sort of Mad-
The highest
Happiness
a kind of
Madness
ness.

First therefore, *Plato* dream'd somewhat of this Nature when he tells us, that the *Madness of Lovers* was of all other Dispositions of the Body most desirable; for he who is once thoroughly smitten with this Passion, lives no longer within himself, but has removed his Soul to the same Place where he has settled his Affections, and loses himself to find the Object he so much doats upon: This Straying now, and Wandring of a Soul from its own Mansion, what is it better than a plain Transport of Madness? What else can be the Meaning of those Proverbial Phrases, *Non est apud se*, he is not himself; *Ad te redi*, recover your self, and, *Sibi redditus est*, he is come again to himself? And accordingly

as Love is more Hot and Eager, so is the Mad-ness thence ensuing more Incurable, and yet more Happy. Now what shall be that future Happiness of Glorified Saints, which Pious Souls here on Earth so earnestly groan for, but only that the Spirit, as the more Potent, and Prevalent Victor, shall over-master and swallow up the Body; and that the more easily, because while here below, the several Members, by being mortified, and kept in subjection, were the better prepared for this separating Change: And afterward the Spirit itself shall be lost, and drown'd in the Abyss of Beatifick Vision, so as the whole Man will be then perfectly beyond all its own Bounds, and be no otherwise happy than as Transport-ed into Extasie and Wonder, it feels some unspeakable Influence from that Omnipotent Being, which makes all Things compleatly Blessed, by assimilating them to its own Likeness. Now although this Happiness be then only Consummated, when Souls at the General Resurrection shall be Reunited to their Bodies, and both be *Cloathed with Immortality*: Yet because a Religious Life is but a continued Meditation upon, and as it were a Transcript of the Joys of Heaven, therefore to such Persons there is allowed some Relish and Foretaste of that Pleasure *here*, which is to be their Reward *hereafter*. And although this indeed be but a small Pittance of Satisfaction, compared with that future Inexhaustible Fountain of Blessedness, yet does it abun-

abundantly over-balance all Worldly Delights, were they all in Conjunction set off to their best Advantage; so great is the Precedency of Spiritual Things before Corporeal, of Invisible before Material and Visible. This is what the Apostle gives an Eloquent Description of, where he says by Way of Encouragement, *That Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive those Things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* This likewise is that *Better Part* which *Mary* chose, which *shall not be taken from her*, but perfected and compleated by her *Mortal putting on Immortality.*

Now those who are thus devoutly affected, (thou few there are so,) undergo somewhat of Strange Alteration, which very nearly approaches to Madness; they speak many Things at an Abrupt and Incoherent Rate, as if they were actuated by some possessing *Demon*; they make an Inarticulate Noise, without any distinguishable Sense or Meaning; they sometimes skrew and distort their Faces to Uncouth and Antick Looks; at one time beyond measure Cheerful, then as immoderately Sullen; now Sobbing, then Laughing, and soon after Sighing, as if they were perfectly Distracted, and out of their Senses. If they have any Sober Intervals of coming to themselves again, like *St. Paul* they then confess, that *they were caught up they know not where, whether in the Body, or out of the Body, they cannot tell*; as if they had been in a Dead Sleep or Trance, they remember

nothing of what they have heard, seen, said, or done: This they only know, that their past Delusion was a most Desirable Happiness; that therefore they bewail nothing more than the Loss of it, nor wish for any greater Joy than the quick Return of it, and more durable Abode for ever. And this (as I have said) is the Foretaste or Anticipation of Future Blessedness.

But I doubt I have forgot my self, and have already transgress'd the Bounds of Modesty. However, if I have said any Thing too Confidently or Impertinently, be pleas'd to consider that it was spoke by *Folly*, and that under the Person of a *Woman*; yet at the same time remember the Applicableness of that *Greek Proverb*,

Πολλάκι τοι κ' μωρὸς ἀνὴρ κατακαίριον εἶπεν,

A Fool oft speaks a Seasonable Truth:

Unless you will be so Witty as to object that this makes no Apology for me, because the Word *Ἀνὴρ* signifies a *Man*, not a *Woman*, and consequently my Sex debarrs me from the Benefit of that Observation.

I perceive now, that, for a Concluding Treat, you expect a Formal *Epilogue*, and the Summing up of all in a brief Recitation; but I'll assure you you are grossly Mistaken if you suppose that after such a Hodge-podge Medley of Speech I should be able to recollect
any



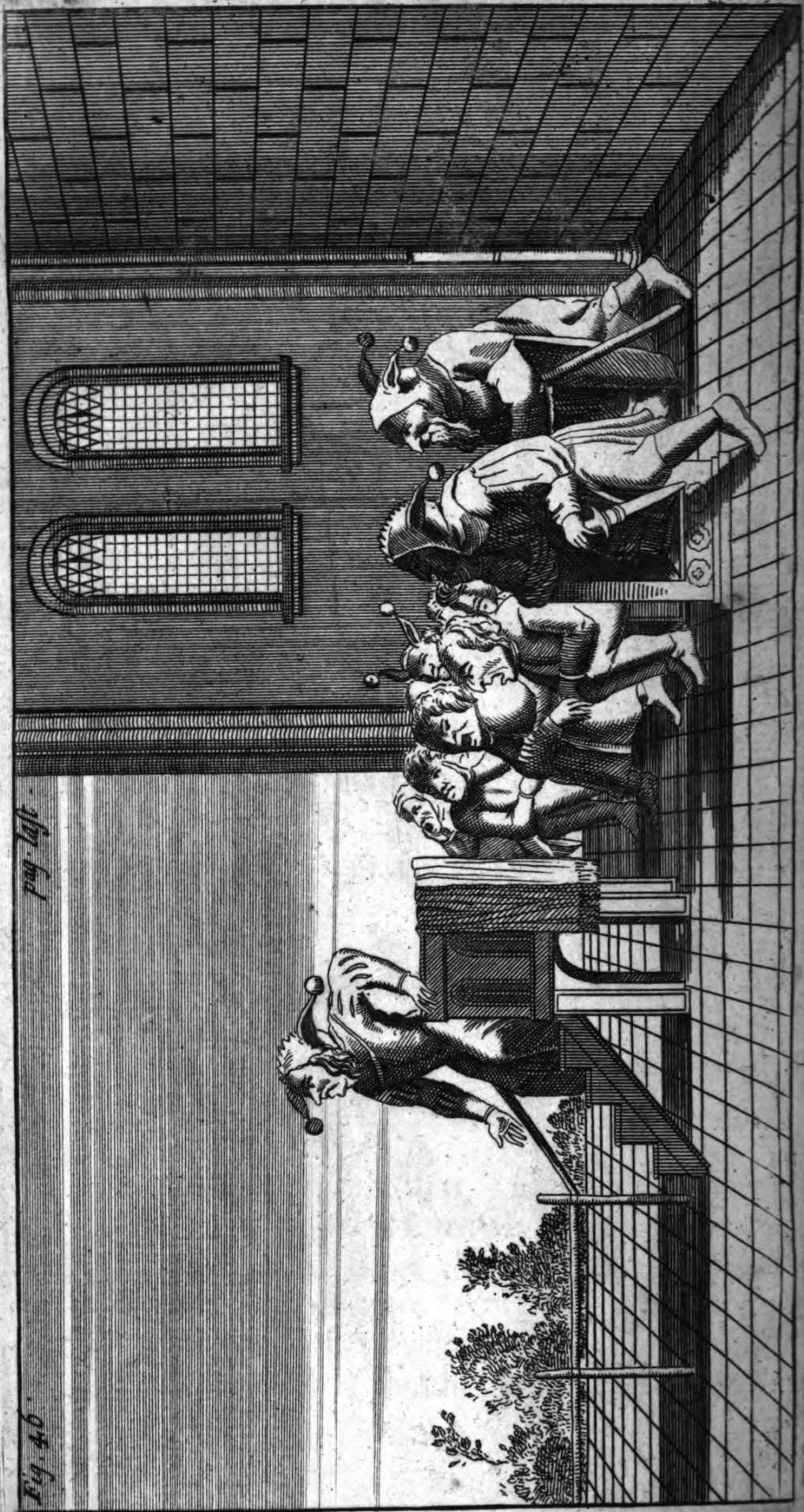


Fig. 46.

Fig. 46.

on the Praise of Folly.

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any Thing I have deliver'd. Beside, as it is
an Old Proverb, *μισῶ μνήμονα συμπότου*, *I hate*
a Pot-Companion with a Good Memory; so in-
deed I may as truly say, *μισῶ μνήμονα ἀγγελῶν*, *I*
hate a Hearer that will carry any Thing away with
him. Wherefore in short Farewel, be
Jolly, live Long, drink Deep, ye most Il-
lustrious Votaries of *FOLLY.* [Fig. XLVI.]

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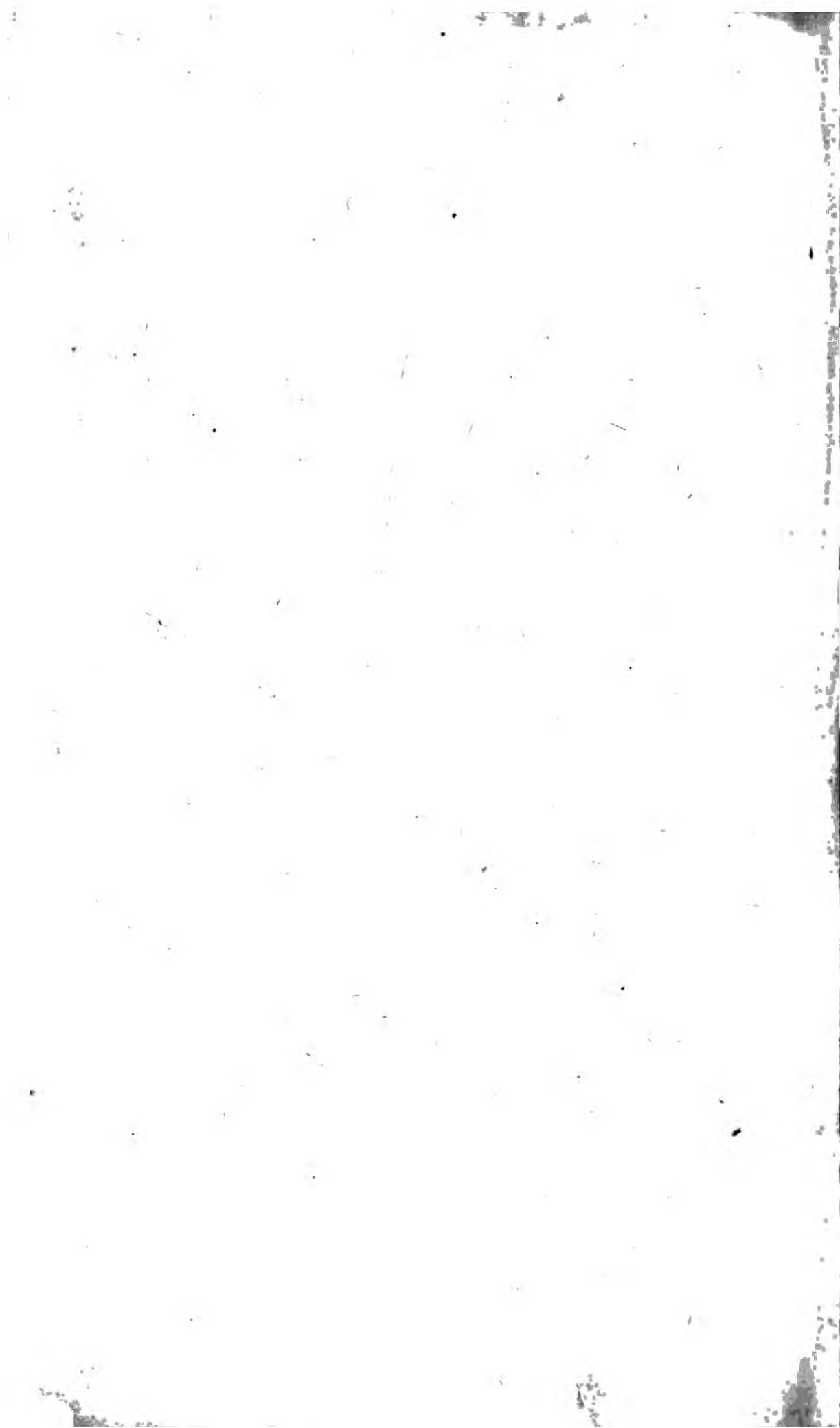


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