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ERASMUS (DESIDERIIUS). MORA
or, a Panegyrick upon Folly. Done in
curious cuts design'd and drawn by Han
trait. 8vo, paneled calf, gilt.
Best edition. Rare.
W. Turman, April 15, 1724
Stift a-om now
Morie Encomium;
OR, A
PANEGYRICK
UPON
FOLLY.

Written in Latin by
DESIDERIUS ERASMUS.

Done into English, and Illustrated 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.
TO THE READER.

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 cer-
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 eall Result of each Man's Experience, as well as the Induction of the following Particulars, will abundantly convince, that alway Anxiety and Forecon, and not seldom Discontent and Regret, being Handmaids to the Wife, while an immoveable Complacency is a constant Guest to the Fool, this last is as much more happy as he is less harraisd, 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 Aierly
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 Property 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 ever it may sound, that the being poss'd of all we do, but suppose God, is the commencing all we can imagine Happy, (which by the by were it unconditionally grant'd 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 them- selves.
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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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therwise 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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There are certainly then best handled: when they are reflected on and in the same periods laugh'd out of their Mistakes, and yet flattered into Amendment. By this Artifice, in the following Tracks, all the Scandal: Corruptions, grosser Aburdities, or more trivial Failures of a crazy World, are expos'd with as equal a Dose of Insinuation and Sarcasm, as either the Oyliness 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 Profession, out of Cowart, Side or Partiality, so, to the most Corrosive, where the Sore was most Cankerous, he is less niggardly of his Tauntes and Strictures, upon the Boreths and Excessencies of the Roman Church, whose Martyrs of Indulgence, Thinkers of Superstition, Blindness of the Laity, Impostures of the Priest, and most other Appendages of Cheat and Delu-
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Delusion, are so boldly ript up and smartly animadverted on, as no Confidence could have outbraved; 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 L.I.VITIES crept into the Church of Rome, by a Person that, inaugur 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 rendered 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 Phanatical Faction: A Faction that has been the Scandal of Christianity, and the meek 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, imposed 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 resented: As Princes en-
To the Reader.
gaged in a hazardous War are ob-
lig'd to connive at some little En-
croachments 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 Confi-
dence of speaking Truth, and the
Impudence of a Lie,) our Govern-
ment 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
flared even Majesty itself out of
Countenance.

Yet however our Author was
not questioned by Publick Autho-
ry, we are sure that he here-
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 settled 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 Lister, 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 touched, while great Pains and Caution is
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is employed in either perverting, or at least muddying, those Passages, which lay too heavy a Hand upon any of their hallowed Corruptions; Nay, the whole Catholic Party were so incensed at his Liberty of Reflecting, that though for the forehinted Inducements they did not by any Form of Intimidation send him in Person to the Devil while Alive, yet since his Death they have dispatched him half Way to Hell in his Æsthetic, and few of their late Historians do anywhere occasionally mention him without some little Wiping-Chauffer, as it were 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 Easy 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 Lyra, 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
To the Reader

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 to) 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 merit-ing 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,
To the Reader,

Tongue, so that the Republishing at least of one of those Translations might have superceded 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 Foreignment 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 Physics, and Mathematics, 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 preferable, than a bold, though tunable, Variation: Whereas on the contrary, in Poëzie, Oratory, Panegyrick, Satyr, or such like lesser Subjects, the Excellency resulting rather from the Stile and Fancy in general, than from the strictness of particular Periods, there may, may, 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 Landscape, 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 Resin'd since the first Appearance of this Declamation in English, * that had it fallen

* Done by Sir Thomas Chalonier, 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 pursuine 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 unpleasant 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-
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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 Humoursomeness 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 licentious, 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-
To the Reader.

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 persuasive 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,
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&c. 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.
TO THE

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 Iye,
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 Iye.
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
All Things content a Fool, and nothing cloys,
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 Météor 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, 
Impait 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 afflick 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 saucacious pretence of being wise:  
Of critics they assume the furious state,  
And censure those they cannot imitate.  
Like bladders only they of wind are full,  
And hide with gravity their being dull.  
Thou they with scorn the world do ridicule,  
Yet the affected wise 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 work 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 choose Erasmus to translate.  
If with such versions you the world 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 writing once was thought a vice,  
But now the touches of it are so nice,

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 Μάξιμος 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 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 Rapiers 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 Guilt of Pleasure gives:
Whilst Wisdom's Patron with discreet Alley,
Palls his Delights, and deadens all his Joy:
Than this naught more does evidence the Love,
Of more ensures the Care of Powers above.
Heaven still bestows on those it does despise
The creditable Plague of being Wise.
And Socrates, that Prudent, Thinking Tool,
Had the Gods, 'twere 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 Metempsuchosis be true,
And Souls do change their Case, and all anew.)
his next Life be 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 Brow
Pay all these Laurels which we justly owe?
For thou fresh Honours to the Work dost bring,
And to the Theme: Now 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 sullen, 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 Grinaces become
Your moody Musings: on your selves at Home.
But no Infernal Village must be seen;
Where all are to be folly by design.
Vail then, or vanish, die, or disappear;
And leave us Fools to our Careless Hete.
My thundering Mandates having purged the Air,
The Gods consenting, and the Passage clear,
I thus attempt my Grandeur to extol,
Acting my own Encomium in a Droll:
I'll make descriptive Glosses on a Straw,
And cant the World 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 Intros to those Rights I had;
They fetter Souls with magisterial Rage,
And lecture Freemen into Vassalage;
Nay, by the Circumstences 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, ridiculously Fine,
In all the Colours of an Indian Queen,
Which Magazine of Rarities presents,
A Gallimaufry of Divertisements;
For beautified by Art, or Nature's Drefs,
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 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, uneasie 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 cares
In endless Circles of unstinted Bliss;
Let universal 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,
With equal Frankness, and with greater Love,
Will I show down my Blessings from Above.
That peaceful Days may still my Reign await,
I'll give the God of War an Opiate.
Your Starch'd Puny Bravoes can't conclude
A private Quarrel but with Lods of Blood:
But my kind Fools are naturally Brave.
To all the Means and Mischief of Revenge,
And thus I'll lay all Discords that arise
From being really or reputed Wise,
Let not the Jolly Heir, who revels on,
Unravelling all his Father's Thrift had span,
Turn Saint, for fear of some restrictive Ties,
Or that penurious Project, Legacies;
I'll keep the Sire so doating, he shall never
Impoverish this, or chuse another Heir.
Thus with a Princely Care will I contrive
To guard your Rights, and my Pretogative.
The peevish Cynick, in a whining Strain,
Will strive to Preach Tub-learning up again,
And prove that none but Anchories are Man.

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 repoll'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 die in your Souls of all their Earth,
Ne'er think, but laugh, and breathe no Air but Mirth.
And now Farewel, I milt with speed away,
The Bucksome Gods keep Jubilee to Day,
And all their Jollity will soon conclude,
If I don't come and ask an Interméde:
They vote me still the Prolocutor's Chair,
Befides, I am to make th' Encænia there.
Occasioned by the Translation of Erasmus his Moriae Encomium.

Since awkward Folly is so neatly drawn,
And all its Charms in Nakedness are shown,
Since barren Wisdom unattended sits,
And no Respect, and few Encomiums, meets,
Too poor to keep an Equipage of Wisdom,
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 Worths the Preis doth often speak with Pain,
The Preis, to all a Pimp, and Bawd for Gain.
To the World each strives to shew his Learned Soul,
And in great Letters writes himself an O V V 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 Phyfick Tracts would oft folicit,
Our only Sickness, and the worst Disease,
Hither their vast dull Commentaries fail,
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,
With Parsons rock'd, and Dutch Divinity:
Yet these our wise, mistaken, Croud defire,
And all that from Beyond-Sea come admire.

To
To our Fine Ladies Paris thus unleash
Its Ribbons, Lackies, and its Chamber-maids.
The French indeed have often broke the Peace,
But Fashions and Romance do plague us lefts.
For no Man now securely lives at Home,
The Turks and Dutch invade our Christendom.
In's 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 must us obey,
As Lords and Sovereigns by Land and Sea.
De Wit, Trump, Rayter, 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 Clumsiness, a Sin that's National.
In Comick Drees he gravely preaches Sense,
Dires, 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 Buffonery would imitate.
You that by Tavern-Jests a Fame would get,
And feed upon the Excrements of WVit,
To rai'fe up Mirth who basely rob the Crowd,
Sing nobly out of Tune, and laugh aloud.
This from Erasman 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 Erasman Welcome to our English Shore.

On the Argument and Design of the following Oration.

W hate' er the Modern Satyrs o'th' Stage,
To mock 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 bye,
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 biggest flows.

No.
Nor was more Expence of Blushes hence arise,
Than while she left. Matron does advise
To guard her Virtue, and her Honour prize.

Satyr and Panegyrist, dispatch be,
In joint, whereupon both in one agree.
The Whole's a Sacrifice of Salt and Fire;
So does the Humour of the Age require,
To chafe the Touch, and so foment Desire.
As Downsmo-dandling Preachers lull asleep
Their unattentive pent-up Fold of Sheep;
The Opiated Milk glows up the Brain,
And 'b' 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 failing Hairs are hoisted in a Fright.
So does it fare with croaking Spaws oth' Press,
The Mould oth' 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 commend'd here,
Showed, 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 Spartans laid their soaking Slaves before
The Boys, to jostle, 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

From Erasmus

to

Sir Tho. Moor.

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 absent
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 Panegyric upon Folly. How! What Maggot (say you) put this in your Head? Why, the First hint (Sir) was your own Surname 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 suppos'd that this kind of Sporting Wit would be by you more especially accepted of, by you (Sir) that are wont with this Sort of Jocose Rallery (such as, if I mistake not, is neither dull nor impertinent,) to be mightily pleased, and in your ordinary Conversations to approve your self a Democritus Junior: For truly, as you do from a singular Vein of Wit, ve-
by much dissent from the Common Herd of Mankind; so by an Incredible Affability and Pliableness of Temper you have the Art of Sutting 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 Quarellsome 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 vamping up some Old Farse, 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; Vitgill of a Gnat and a Pudding-Cake, and Ovid of a Nut. Polycrates commended the Cruelty of Busiris, and Hocrates, that corrects him for this, did as much for the Injustice of Glauclus. Favorinus extoll'd Therites, and wrote in Praise of a Quatane 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 myself, 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
such a Manner as not to have deserved the Name of a Fool for my Pains. To reply now to the Objection of Satirical-ness Wits have been always allowed this Privity edge, 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 Great-
est Affronts against our Saviour, than be content that a Prince, or a Pope, should be nettled with the least Joke or Gird; especially in what relates to their Ordi-

nary Customs. But he who so blames Mens Irregularities, as to laugh 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 con-

cerned to make any farther Excuse? Be-
side, he who in his Strictures points in-
differently
(vii)
differently at all, he feels not angry at one Man, but at all Vices.
Therefore if any singly Complain, they are particularly resented 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 perceive. 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.

[ d 4 ]

But
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 CATALOGUE
OF THE
PAINTINGS
OF
Hans Holbein.

I. The 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 Basel, in a Withdrawing Room of the Town-House, vulgarly 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 NAZARENUM REX IUD. 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 glazed 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 Scour'd by his Executioners. This being not so exquisitely done, seems to be 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 Adjoint Inscript:ion in High Dutch:

Wer jemand his der gern wol lernen. Deutsch schreiben, &c. i.e. If any has a Mind to learn to Write and Read Dutch, &c. And on the other Part An. M. CCCCCC 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 Basel.

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

IX. The Picture of the Renowned Christian Bonifacius Amerbachius, Professor of the Law. On the Branch of a Tree hangs a Board with this Inscription;

PICT A licet facies, vive non cedo; sed infar
Sum Domini, justis nobis Lincoln.
Ofo es dum peragit tempor, sic gravior in me
Id quod naturae est exprimit Artis Opus.
A. M. DXIX. eit. Octobr. In the Library of the University of Basel.

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 Basel. Engrav'd by Jo. Wirtz.

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

XII. The Picture of a Beautiful Woman with this Inscription, Laet Corinthiaca, 1526. In the Library of the University of Basel.

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

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 Basel.

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

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 Basel.

XVII. Choice Sketches upon Paper, or the First Draughts of Pictures, by the Ancients call'd Σχέδια. These were by the Famous Amerbachius carefully Collected, and Mark'd with this Title, HANS HOLBEIN GENUINA, 103 Stock: 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 Glass. In the Library at Basel.

XVIII. The Picture of James Mejer, Consul, vulg. Burgber-master of Basel, and Anna Scheckenburlin, his Wife, together with the First Draught, or Σχέδια, which Limmers call Exquisite, 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 Eifengassen, 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 Chsea in the Farum at Rane 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. Apodomica, 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 Wifcher 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 there-
A Catalogue of the Paintings

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

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

XXV. A Piece of about Three Base Ellis Square, containing the Pictures of James, Me-

 só, Count of BasLI, on the Right Side, with his Sons; on the other the Count’s Wife and Daughters: All of them done to the Life, kneeling before the Altar. This was first sold at Basle for an Hundred Pieces of Gold; for which Le Blond, the Painter of Amsterdam, paid a Thousand Six Hundred Dollars in 1639 at Basle, and sold it again for Three Times as much to Mary of Mecklenburg, Grandmother to Louis 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 Catholic, and Elizabeth. Upon the Wall of the King’s Bed-chamber in Whitehall, London.

XXVII. The Picture of Thomas How-

ward, Earl of Norfolk, &c. Lord High Ad-

miral, &c. Engrav’d by L. Vorsterman.

In Arundel-House; London.

XXVIII. The Picture of a Maid of Basle, 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.


XXXI. A Piece representing Sir Thomas Moor with all his Family; of which Eras-amus 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 Bafil, 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 75th 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 Heroins, 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. Erasmius, 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. Æstatis sua 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 Nicolaus, 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 Erasmius 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 fastened to it, which he holds in one Hand, and a Scroll in the other: Of a smaller Size. In the French King's Closet.

XL. A Picture of Sir Thomas Moore, less than the Life; on the Ground of which is this Inscription, Ex Julii, Anno H. VIII. XXXVIII. Etatis suae 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, Fishtings, 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. Werdymuler, 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 luxiris vixi: & quing; infueram annos:
Fatuide quoque cum Simeone precor,
Nunc in pace tuum Deus O dimitte Ministrum,
Domus & in Christi regna redire tui.

[ e ]
A Catalogue of the Paintings

In the House of Mr. Martin Werdinlicher, 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 Wise-men. 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 Chirurgeon 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 CEsus, 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 Basel, 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-wise.

FOLLY Speaks.

HOW slightlie soever I am esteemed 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 receives her Ferment of Mirth and Jollity: Of which this may be urged as a Convincing Argument, in that as soon as I appeared to speak before this Numerous Assembly, all their Countenances were gilded o'er with a lively sparkling
Erasmus's Panegyrick

ling Pleasantness: [Fig. 1.] 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 nowflush'd with a good Dose of Reviving Nectar, when as just before you fate Drowsy 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
The Praise of Folly.

me you all Unmask, and appear in more lively Colours. That therefore which expert Orators can scarce effect by all their little Ar-

tifice of Eloquence, to wit, a raising the At-

tentions 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 inform-
ed 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 famed 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 Knock of Braining; but in Imitation of those Ancient Ones, who to avoid the Scandalous Epithet of Wife, 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 Panegyric, yet not upon Hercules, Solomon, or any other Grandee, but on my self, that is, upon Folly.

And here I value not their Censure that pre-

tend 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 need-

ful: And indeed what is more befitting than that Folly should be the Trumpet of her own Praise, and Dance after her own Pipe?
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?

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 Bribes to flatter them with some Highflying 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 stolen 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 complaint as to have bestowed on me a Commendatory Oration, especially when there have not been wanting such as at a great Expenditure of
of Sweat, and loss of Sleep, have in Elaborate Speeches given high Encomiums to Tyrants, Agues, Flies, Baldness, and such like Trum-
peries.

I shall entertain you with a hasty and unpre-
meditated, but so much the more natural Discourse. My venting it ex tempore I would
not have you think proceeds from any Princi-
ples of Vainglory, by which ordinary Orators
square their Attempts, who (as it is easy to ob-
serve) 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 I ses 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. my self. For it is equally hazar-
dous 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
saint Resemblance, and mere 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 Moneta,
the Latins Stultitia.
Exafmus's Panegyrick

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 Liars 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 Distinguishing, 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 extremely 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
a very doughty Exploit, if they can but Entertain 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 furnish up a long Scroll of old obsolete Terms out of some muddy 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 understand 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 themselves will nod and smile, and prick up their Ears, that they may be thought easily to apprehend 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, what Additional Epithet to give you I know not, except you’ll be content with that of Most Foolish; for under what more proper Appellation can the Goddess Folly greet her Devotes? 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, but Plutus, the very same that, Maugre Homer, Hesiod, nay, in spight of Jove himself, was the primary Father of the Universe: At whose
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 myself 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: Whomsoever he combats with as an Enemy, nothing can be Armour-proof against his Assaul ts; 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 Baut, 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.

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 Birthplace, (the Quality of the Place we are Born in, being now look'd upon as a main Ingredient of Gentility,) I was 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 Fortunate Islands, where all Things grow without the Toil of Husbandry, wherein there is no Drudgery, no Distemper, no Old Age, where in the Fields grow no Daffodillies, 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 Drunkenness, 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 Head...
Head so high, is Self-Love. She that looks so spruce, and makes such a noise and bustle, is Flattery. That other, which sets her drum, as if she were half asleep, is called Forgetfulness. She that leans on her elbow, and sometime yawningly stretches out her arms, is Laziness. 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 rolls 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, jording it over the greatest kings and potentates.

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 goddess, 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 unparalleled bounty and beneficence?
on the Praise of Folly.

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 Pattos, 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 namely Parts, that serve for Instruments of Generation? I trow not, but it is that Mem-
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 inefficual. 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.justle for Elbow-
on the Praise of Folly.

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 uneasie, unless we spice it with Pleasure, that Hautgoult 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,

To know nothing is the sweetest Life.

Yet abating from this, let us examine the Cafe 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 kis, 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,
[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? 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? 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 with Old Age comes on, a Burthen to itself as well as others, and that so heavy and oppressive, as none would bear the Weight of, unless out of Pity to their Sufferings. I again intervene, and lend a Helping-hand, afflicting 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
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 date, 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 found 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 Plantus, 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
my Assistance, they carry off all well, and to their respective Friends approve themselves good, sociable, jolly Companions. Thus Homer makes Aged Nestor fair'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 fale 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 Smallness of Stature, their Milk Diet, their Bald Crowns, their Pratling, their Playing, their short Memory, their Heedlessness, 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 now let any one compare the excellence 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 Kindness 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 squeeze'd caseless; 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 Contagion of Wisdom, with the Le-prosie whereof, if at any time they are infected, it is only for Prevention; left they should otherwise have been too happy.

For

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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 Brahms, 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 lies 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 Sappho 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
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 alway painted as a Young Man, [Fig. VII.] but only because he is Frea-
Erasmus's Panegyrick

kifh, Drunk and Mad, and spending his Time in Toping, Dancing, Masking and Revelling, seems to have nothing in the least to do with Wisdom? Nay, so far is he from the Affection 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 Cafe, alway Merry, Youthful, soak'd in Wine, and drown'd in Pleasures, who (I say) in such a Cafe 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 Whiptster, 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 Kinshenmen 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 intrigues of Jove himself are so notorious, and when the pretendedly chaste Diana so oft unloak'd her modesty to run a hunting after her beloved Endymion. But I'll say no more, for I had rather they should be told of their faults by Moons, who was wont formerly to sting them with some close Reflections, till nettled by his abusive Rallery, 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 beauteous Priapus may recreate himself without Contradiction in Lust and Filthiness; now the hy Mercury may, without Discovery, go on in his Thieveryes, and nimble-finger'd Juggles; the footy Vulcan may now renew his wonted Custom of making the other Gods laugh by his Hopping so limply, 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
Erasimus's Panegyrick

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, left 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 Inroads; An-
on the Praise of Folly.

ger, which keeps its Station in the Fortress of the Heart; and Luft, 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 Transact of Business, should have so much Wisdom as should fit and capacitate him for the Discharge of his Duty herein, and yet left such a Measure as is requisite for this Purpose might prove too dangerous and fatal, I were advised 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 Genius to rank Woman, whether among Brutes or Rational Creatures, was only meant to denote the extreme 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 Wise, is but to make themselves the more remarkable Fools, such an Endeavour, being
Erasimus's *Panegyrick*

being but a swimming against the Stream, nay, a turning the Court 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, the 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 Snatch 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 Symmetry 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, Wathes, 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 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 cram'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, Jesting, and such like Divertisements, which like Second Courses serve for the promoting of Digestion? And as to all those Shoveling-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 of
of drunken Catches, the calling in a Fiddler, 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.

But there are yet others perhaps that have no Guilt 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 steadfastly 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 Virtue, 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 Beam in their own Eyes. In short, Man being by Nature so prone to Frailties, so Humoursome 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 Ἐυταθεία, 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 falsely 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, Jestting, Dissembling, and such like Playing the Fool? Nay, how few Matches would go forward, if the hasty Lover did
but first know how many little Tricks of Lust and Wantonness (and perhaps more gross Failings) his Coy and seemingly bashful Mistresses had oft before been guilty of? And how fewer Marriages, when consummated, would continue happy, if the Husband were not either foolishly sensible 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 Cuckoo 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 Grunge and Submit, or after all fawningly Scratch and Flatter each other... This you'll say is much, but
Eralmus's Panegyrick

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 bar'd out, every Man would be so far from being able to bear with others, that he would be Burdenome 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 Perverseness 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 always clouded with Frowns and Sulleness? Or what Vigour in Youth, if it be harrassed with a pettish, dogged, waspsh, ill Humour? None sure. Nor indeed can there be any credible Acquittance 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
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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 untouch'd Instruments on the Wall; the completest Actors shall be his'd off the Stage; the Poet shall be burles't upon with his own doggrel Rhimes; the Painter shall himself vanish into an imaginary Landscape; and the Physician shall want Food more than his Patients do Phylick. 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 Gentle 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 Thracoan would not change his Boggy Soil for the best Seat in Athens, nor the brutish Scythian qult his Thorny
Erasmus's Panegyrick

Thorny Delights to become an Inhabitant of the Fortunate Island. And Oh! the incomparable Contrivance of Nature, who has ordered all Things in to 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 aver, 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 Loosers, 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 Battle shall be more successively fought
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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 Philosophers useless in the Management of such Concerns, Socrates and pernicious to a State (by the Oracle adjudged 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 faulted in the first Onset, and could never recover himself, but was hoisted and hissed Home again: Yet this Philosopher was the less a Fool for refusing the Appellation of Wise, and not accepting the Oracle's Complement, 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 Idea's, 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 Buzz and Hum; while he was intent upon these Fooleries he minded nothing of the World, or its ordinary Concerns.
Next to Socrates comes his Scholar Plato, a Famous Orator indeed, that could be so dast’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 confidante 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
on the Praise of Folly.

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 People's 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, left 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
of the Mother than the Father, [Fig. XI.] a
Phrase for their being Fools. However, it
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 dis-
oblige 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-
on the Praise of Folly.

Publlick 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 even turn a Second Timon, or Manhater, and by retiring into some unfrequented Desart, become a Recluse from all Mankind.

But to return to what I first proposed, what was it in the Infanty 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 jump
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 sinewy, starchy 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 Misy Bog, the Flies came swarming about him, and almost stuck'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 frightened off, there will come a new hungry Set that will be Ten times more Greedy and Devouring. The Moral of this be 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 what highest Advances of Policy could Sertorius have kept the Barbarians so well in Awe, as by a White Hare, which he pretended was presented to him by Diana, and brought him Intelligence of all his Enemies Design? 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, scratching 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 mere Cheat and Juggle; the first by pretending he was advised by Jupiter, the latter by making the Vulgar believe he had the Goddess Hecate 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

P 4

Injunctions
Erasmus's Panegyrick

Injunctions of Aristotle? Or the more unpracticable Tenets of Socrates? No, these would have been too strect 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 if 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 extremely ridiculous, that there is need of more than one Democritus to laugh at 'em. And yet hence only have been occasion'd those Memorable Achievements of Heroes, that have so much employ'd the Pens of many Laborious Writers.
on the Praise of Folly.

It is Folly that, in a several Dresfs, 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 Pussh-pin Diversion. The Invention of all Arts and Sciences are likewise owing to the same Cause: For what sedentary, thoughtful Men would have beat theirBrains 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.

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 confessed) is no more than a Readiness of doing Good, and an expedite Method of becoming serviceable to the World, to whom does this Virtue 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
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 Banish'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 Judgement 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 pass 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 mere Beggar, and on the other Side he is worse than a Galley-Slave to his own Luxts 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 would he not deserve to be his'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 Man 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 Tire-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 otherwife 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 indiscreet than an UnReasonable 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 Men, remembering the Law of Clubs and Meetings! That he who will not do
on the Praise of Folly.

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.

And here, in the first place, it has been already acknowledged, that all the Passions are Lifted 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
Erasimus's Panegyrick

Conclusion of the whole Man, and by putting the Spirit 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 mere Statue, immovable, senseless, and altogether inactive. 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-
on the Praise of Folly.

trample under foot all other Mens Reputation? And this is he that is the Stoick's compleat Wise Man. But prithee what City would choose 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 Love 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 Tollsome 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 pre-
produce? Not to mention such Miseries as Men are mutually the Cause of, as Poverty, Imprisonment, Slander, Reproach, Revenge, Treachery, Malice, Conflagration, Deceit, and so many more, as to reckon them all would be as puzzling Arithmetic 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 Privilege 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.

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 gras-
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 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 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 more
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, 

_Ab, Life is a sweet Thing_, and so run a Catterwauling, 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 laughed 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 Ingenious 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 say 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
bear but up in your own Thoughts, and be your self throughly 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 Cret 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 Ox miserable, for that he never learnt to Fence: But sure as a Horse, for not knowing a Letter is never the les 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 purposedly attainable by Men, that the Defect of Natural M easions 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 Egyptians feigned were invented by their God Thenth, as a Plague sure, and Punishment to Mankind, being so far from augment-
ing their Happiness, that they do not an-
swer that End they were first designed for,
which was the Improvement of Memory,
as Plato in his Phaedrus does wittily ob-
serves.

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 easy 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 suf-
ficient: And as to all the Mysteries of Prov-
dence, 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 Phenomena'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 Apprehen-
sion.

Thus was Ignorance, in the Infancy of the
World, as much the Parent of Happiness as it
has
On the Praise of Folly.

has been since of Deception: 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 Naturals 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.

Solutus: iuxta diep poUon ayedQ: διλω, 

While all these hard-nam'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 Custome; and indeed this whole Art, as it is now practised, 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 fitly 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 unfurled from all Artificial Garnish.

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 inimitable 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,
on the Praise of Folly.

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-employ'd Domitian would not persecute the former, nor the fly Fowler way Snares and Gins for the intrapping of the other? And if young Birds, before their un-sleddg'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 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-
Erasmus's Panegyrick

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 Incantation of Circe he had been turned into a Hag, he would not lay down his Swinishness, nor forake his beloved Stee, 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
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 found 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 Privilege 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 start 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
Erasmus's Panegyrick

tur'd with; reckon up all those Inconvenience

cies that you are unavoidably subject to, and

den tell me whether Fools, by being exempt

ted from all these Embroilments, are not infini

tely 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, bugg'd,

care'd, and defended, a Liberty given them

of laying or doing any thing; so well Belo

ved, that none dares to offer them the least

Injury; nay, the most ravenous Beasts of Prey

will pass them by untouched, 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-fake 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,
on the Praise of Folly.

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

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 Drun-
kennes 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, μη δια μηδε
λημ, Children and Fools always speak the Truth.

Whatever the Fool has in his Heart, he be-
trays it in his Face; or what is more notifying,
discovers it by his Words: While the Wife
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 Judg-
ment, 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 anot-

Farthermore, Princes in their greatest Splen-
dor seem upon this Account unhappy, in that
they miss the Advantage of being told the
Truth, and are shamm'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
Erasmus's Parergonick

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 confessed, 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 are must be as acceptable as it was here upon Earth.
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 Puerile and Fasting, and in his latter Days he never tastes one Mouthful of Delight, but is always stingy, poor, dejected, melancholy, burdensome 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 Rakes pluck'd before they shatter. Thus have you the Draught of a Wise Man's Happiness, more than of an 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 Fallacy, the Discovery whereof solves the Force of the whole Syllogism. Well then, they argue subtilly, 'tis true; but 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 distinguished between

The Stoicks reviewed.
Erasmus's Panegyric

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 Æneid, gives this Epithet to his industrious Æneas,

Quod si——

—- Insano juvæt 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, iraged 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 lath'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 destrable: And this happens when by a harmless Mistake in the Judgment of Things the Mind is freed from those Cares which would otherwise gratefully 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 Insensible 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 fit 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 uxorom, possetque ignoscere servis,
Et signo lege non insanire legem.

Sweet to his Friends, to’s Wife obliging, kind,
And so averse from a revengeful Mind,
That had his Servants unleal’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
Eratimus's Panegyrick

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

Pol me occidistis amici,
Non servasti, — cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et dentus 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 recall 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 Genss 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 cenfured 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,
on the Praise of Folly.

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 Frenzie. 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 Gracum of a Dog's Tart. When they have run down their Game, what strange Pleasure they take in cutting off it up! Cows

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A desirable
Kind of
Madness.
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.

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.

To these are to be added those plodding Virtuoso's, that plunder the most inward Receves of Nature for the Pillage of a New Invention, and rake over Sea and Land for the
on the Praise of Folly.

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 Game 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 Comfort with the Motion of the Dice: They are egg'd on so long with the Hopes of always Win-
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, thou'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.

The next to be placed among the Regimen 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 Proselytes 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 invented,
Erasmus's Panegyric

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 Happines 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 relish 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, Lufts, Drunkennes, Quatrels, Bloodsheds, Cheats, Treacheries, and all Sorts of Débaucheries, 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 myself am even ashamed to own, are practised and admired, not only by the Vulgar, but by such Proficients in Religion
on the Praise of Folly.

igion 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 loft 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 extremally tedious.

There are some more Catholick Saints petition'd to upon all Occasions, as more-especially the Virgin Mary, whose blind Devo-tees 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 Sub-
stance of them is no more than downright Folly. Among all the Trophies that for To-

kens 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 Shipwreck 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

F 4

Rope
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 Loozeness, 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 mibi fii linguae centum sint, oraque centum, Ferrea vox, omnes fatuorum evolvere formas, Omnia stultitiae percurrere nomina possim.

Had I as many Tongues as Argus Eyes, 
Briareus Hands, they all would 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 unreasonably 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.

Now though I am in so great haste, as I would not willingly be stopp'd 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 Aeneas, 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? Conceitedness 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 Cburl 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 time 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
Erasimus's Panegyrick

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?

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.
on the Praise of Folly.

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 Inventors 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-souled Fools. The Jews to this Day expect their Messiah 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 jumbles 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 to
Erasmus's Panegyrick
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 Extrem of Friendship, namely, a stiff, sower, dogged Mordlessness: 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 reproves 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 conflicts 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
tiency 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 Glass 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. Christophor, 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 refer'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 possesse'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 Joul of Sturgeon, if it go against his Stomach to eat any, he may fit a Hungry, and bite his Nails with greater Appetite than his Viéuals. If a Woman be never so ugly and nauseous, yet if her Husb
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 Van Dike, 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
Erasmus’s Panegyrick

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 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 Knop, 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 Elest 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 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 Goddess 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 Address 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 Hu-
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 admired (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 myself 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
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 immediately 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 Phæbus 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 Lampsaicum; while my Worship extending as far as my Influence, the Whole World is my One Altar, where-on the most valuable Incense and Sacrifice is perpetually offered up.

But
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 rendered more apparently evident what Large Iessses 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 Comonalty 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 listening to those Petitions that are offered up, and in succouring such as they are appealed to for Redress; but when they are a little enticed at a Glass of Nectar, they then throw off all serious Concerns, and go and place themselves on
on the Praise of Folly.

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 stuffed and crammed 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 Jealousy of his visiting Neighbours: Another sobs, and roars, and plays the Child, for the Death of a Friend or Relation; and left 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 glutinous Cormorant, whatever he can scrape up, thrusts all into his Guts to pacifie the cryings of a hungry Stomach: There a lazy Wretch sits yawning and stretching, and thinks nothing so desirable as Sleep and Idleness: Some are extremely industrious in other Men's Business, and fondly 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 Livelihod: Another will depend on the Plunders of War, rather than on the Honest Gains of Peace: Some will clothe with, and humour such warm Old Blades as have a good Estate, and no Children of their own to bequeath 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 fly 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 Carets 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 fasting 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 commen’d real Truth.
on the Praise of Folly.

Truly: 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 Eafe, 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 Knave and 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 forlooth 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, justling, 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, Pesti-
Erasmus's Panegyrick

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

But hold; I should but expose myself 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 flavish, 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 Noife 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 Formes, and
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 Afs, and think themselves as fitly as a Lion, that domineers over all the inferior Herd. Elivated with this Conceit, they can hold Filth and Naughtiness 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 Persuasion 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 Subsequa, 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 to admire them, they are presently flush'd with the least Hint of Commendation, and devoutly thank Pythagoras for his grateful Hypothecis, whereby they are now become actu-
ated with a Descent of Virgil's Poetic 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 cor-
rect him for it, and then to it they go in a Tongue-combat, with all the Fervour, Spleen and Eagerness imaginable. May Priscian him-
sel 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 ut-
most Perfection, who after Threescore Years Experience in the World, had spent the last Twenty of them only in drudging to con-
quer 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 Gramma-
rian, whether Greek or Latin, had yet accu-
rately done. If any chance to have placed that as a Conjunction which ought to have been used as an Adverb, it is a sufficient A-
ramid 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,)
on the Praise of Folly.

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 posed 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 professed 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 mere Toys and fabulous Shams, with which (however ridiculous) they are so bolster'd 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,
Erasimus's Panegyrick

Topicks of compleating the Art of Oratory, they all particularly insist upon the Knack of Jesting, 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 consult.

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 sICKLE 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 In-
vention. Add to this the impairing of their
Health, the weakening of their Constitution,
their contracting sore Eyes, or perhaps turn-
ing stark Blind; their Poverty, their Envy,
their Debarment from all Pleasures, their ha-
stening 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 Pe-
nance 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-scribblers which I first
mention'd, who never stand much to con-
der, but write what comes next at a Venture,
knowing that the more silly their Compo-
sures 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 Per-
sons, 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 Wifeflt who tran-
scribe 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
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 embossed 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 'oetisome 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 Stelesus, a Third Polycrates, another Thrasymachus, and so on. By the same Liberty we may ranfack 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 Alcman, another shall be character'd for the incomparable Callimachus; this shall be commended
mended 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 at Dispute and Controversie, while the unwary Readers draw Sides according to their different Judgments: The longer the Quarrel holds, the more irreconcileable 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 Greatness, 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 them
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 mutly *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.
on the Praise of Folly.

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 Happinefs is only a frantick Crasines 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 Rife of Thunder, of the Origin of Winds, of the Nature of Eclipses, and of all the other abstruseft Difficulties in Physis, without the leaft 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 fo 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 conftrue the Mechanism of their own Body: Nay, when they are fo Purblind as not to be able to fee a Stone's call before them, yet they shall be as sharp-fighted as possible in spying out Idea's, Uni-
versals, separate Forms, first Matters, Quiddities, Formalities, and a Hundred such like Niceties, so diminutively small, that were not their Eyes extremly magnifying all the Art of Opticks could never make them discernible. But they then most despite 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 Muster, 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.

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-
Excommunication, which is their Spiritual Weapon to wound such as lift up a Hand against them. It is true, no Men own a less Dependance on me, yet have they Reason to confess themselves indebted for no small Obligations. For it is by one of my Properties, Self-love, that they fancy themselves, with their Elder Brother Paul, caught up into the Third Heaven, from whence, like Shepherds indeed, they look down upon their Flock the Lairy, grazing, as it were, in the Vales of the World below. They fence themselves in with so many Surrogates of Magisterial Definitions, Conclusions, Corollaries, Propositions Explicit and Implicit, that there is no falling in with them; or if they do chance to be urged to a seeming Nonplus, yet they find out so many Evasions, that all the Art of Man can never bind them so fast, but that an easy Distinction shall give them a starting-hole to escape the Scandal of being baffled. They'll cut asunder the toughest Argument with as much Ease as Alexander did the Gordian Knot: They'll thunder out so many rattling Terms, as shall fright an Adversary into Conviction. They are exquisitely dexterous in unfolding the most intricate Mysteries: They'll tell you to a Tittle all the successive Proceedings of Omnipotence in the Creation of the Universe: They'll explain the precise Manner of Original Sin, being derived from our First Parents: They'll satisfy you in what manner, by what degrees, and in how long a time,
time, our Saviour was conceived in the Virgin’s Womb, and demonstrate in the Consecrated Wafer how Accidents may subsist without a Subject. Nay, these are accounted trivial, easy Questions; they have yet far greater Difficulties behind, which notwithstanding they solve with as much Expedition as the former: As namely, whether Supernatural 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? Whether 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 possible that the Godhead had appeared 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? Whether if St. Peter had celebrated the Eucharist at the same time our Saviour was hanging 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 Sacramental Wafer his Humanity be not abstracted from his Godhead? Whether after the Resurrection 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,
on the Praise of Folly.

Quiddities, Heccities, and such like Absurdities, 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 Opinions, 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 aggravating Fault to kill a Hundred Men, than for a poor Cobbler 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 Sublime by the abstracting Brains of their several Schoolmen; the Realists, the Nominalists, the Thomists, 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 Difficulty, that I believe the Apostles themselves would stand in need of a new Illuminating Spirit if they were to engage in any Controversie with these new Divines. St. Paul no question had a full Measure of Faith, yet when he lays down Faith to be the Subsance 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 inaccurately, 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 Subtlety broach'd by Scotus, that he may have
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, gratia 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 Feast of Gamaliel, was certainly more Eminently a Scholar than any of the rest, yet he often exclaims against vain Philosophy, warns us from dotting 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 modell'd, 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 anything 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 met 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 fairly.
ly resolve that they lay under a Mistake: Yet these Ancient Fathers were they who confused both the Jews and Heathens, though they both obstinately adher'd to their respective Prejudices; they confused them, (I say,) yet by their Lives and Miracles, rather than by Words and Syllogisms; and the Persons they thus prolyted were downright honest, well-meaning People, such as understood plain Sense, better than any Artificial Pomp of Reasoning. Whereas if our Divines should now let 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 Assausts 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, 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 Turbands at so Solemn an Appearance? Which of the fiercest Janizaries would not throw away his Scimitar, 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 capricious 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
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they think that they support the Catholic 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 Privileges 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 Solomon'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
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 uneasy 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 Pedagogue, and be tied to the lavish Observance of the Rules of Grammar. Finally, they take a vast Pride, among other
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 Pelfilent Heretick, and Underminer of the Catholick Faith.

The next to these are another Sort of Brain-fick 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 Etymology 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 immorg’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
greater Proficients in Divine Mysteries the less they are poisoned with any Humane Learning. They Imagine, that they bear a sweet Comfort with the Heavenly Choire, when they tune 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 Waggons, 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 Puncheon. 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 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 impossibly 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 Frock's 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 Cordeliers, and these subdivided into Capuchines, I Minors,
Minors, Mimms, and Mendicants: Some again are filed 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 Stresses 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-erogation, that One Heaven can never be a Con dign 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 Lope 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 singe'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 Authorities, 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 pitiably think 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 revenge'd of him, and in their next Publick Harangue give him such fire'ed Wipes and Reflections, that the whole Congregation must needs take notice at whom they are level'd; nor will they ever desist from this Way of declaiming, till their Mouth
on the Praise of Folly.

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

mere Stage-playing, and their Deliveries the very Transports of Ridicule and Droolly. 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.
Erasimus's Panegyrick

ther. The Manner of if 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 Egypt; 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 Zodiac; 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 making in a laborious Discourse the Mystery of the Holy Trinity, in 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 Horace,igitur. Quoniam hsec tam patrida tendunt?
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 Intenseness 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 easy Purchase for the Gain of Glory and Credit.

I heard at another time a Grave Divine, of Four-score 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 $V$, 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-
die from the Two extreme Syllables, making it a kind of Pentametree; the Word consisting of Five Letters: And this intermedial, 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 Pulpitier 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 took'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 Pream-ble (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-
On the Praise of Folly.

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

—Quo nunc se prospit 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 enticed, they shall start some Theological Queries, far enough off from the Matter in Hand, and handy it about Pro and Con till they lose it in the heat of Scuffle. And here they shall cite their Doctors, Invincible, Subtle, Scrupick, Chebick, 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 persuade 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 famous History, and this they descant upon Allegorically, Tragically, and Analogically. And so they draw to a Conclusion of their Discourse, which

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Erasmus's _Panegyrick_

is a more Brain-sick Chimæra than ever _Hbræce_
could describe in his _De Arto 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 overhear 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 if were mutter their
Words inwardly, and then of a sudden hol-
low them out, and be sure at last in such a flat
falt'ring 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 _Jeets_ and _Puns_ that must pass
for _Ingenuity_, though they are only the _Froth_
of _Folly_ and _Affectedness_. Sometime they'll
nibble at the _Wit_ of being _Satyrical_, though
their utmost _Spleen_ is so _Toothless_, that they

[Note: The end of the sentence is not legible.]
on the Praise of Folly.

Fool 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 Healers, 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 honoured, 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-Hermites 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 Pretenders
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 abject 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 Prince by 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 Wounds and Failings are less discernible; whereas Princes, being set in a more exalted Orbit, and accompanied with a brighter
brighter dazzling Lustre; their Spots are more apparently visible, and their Eclipses, or other Defects, influential on all that is inferiour to them. Kings are bariit 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 Assaulds 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 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 Care’s 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 intrigue into the Affections of the Vulgar, as they may not tumultuous 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 professed 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 Pourtrature, and draw a Comparison between that and himself, certainly he would be ashamed of his
on the Praise of Folly.

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

Next to Kings, themselves may come their Couriers, (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 unfruited; 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, Supereminent Excellence, and Most Serene Majesty, that they can boldly usher in any Diffcoursé, 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 Breakfast, 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 supp’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 justle 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.

And now for some Reflections upon Popes, Cardinals and Bishops, who in Pomp and Splendor have almost equal’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 car-

Bishops Fools.
ied 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 Simoniacaal Contracts they are in a Profane Sense Episcopi, i.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 then I ride, nay, would be big enough to over a Camel, but only a Diffusive Charity, that should spread itself for a Succour and Potection to all, by Teaching, Exhorting, Comforting, Reproving, Admonishing, Com-
Erasimus's Panegyric

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 conferred 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 unintermittent 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 Vacancy of that See: And those who by Bavery, or other indirect Courses, should themselves Elected, would never secure the sitting firm in the Chair by Pistol, Poll, Force and Violence. How much of the Pleasure would be abated if they were endow'd with one Dram of Wisdom? I did I say? Nay, with one Grain of
on the Praise of Folly.

Salt which our Saviour bid them not lose the savour of. All their Riches, all their Honour, their Jurisdictions, 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, Amateurs, Notaries, Advocates, Proctors, Secretaries, the Offices of Grooms, Ostrlers, 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, that
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 Installation, 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 cowardly and unmanly, to fast is too mean and fordid, to be easy and familiar is beneath the Grandeur of him, who, without being hard 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 Denunciation, 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
on the Praise of Folly.

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 Aposto-

ficall Maintainers of Christ’s Spoile, 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 Interpreta-

tions, 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 licencio-

ous, 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 unaactive, 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 Reprint 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 Warriors, 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 inferior Clergy (Fig. XXXVII.) deeming it unmannerly not to conform to their Patrons and Dioceleans, devoutly tug, and fight
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 Staven 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 beftow 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 expole the Weaknesses of Popes and Priests, lest I should seem to recede from my Title, and make a Satyr instead of a Panegyric: 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
and turn me for his Friend. Nor indeed can it be otherwise, since Fortune, [Fig. XXXVIII.] that Empress of the World, is so much in League and Amity with me, that to Wife Men she is always Stingy, and Sparing of her Gifts, but is profusely Liberal and Lavish to Fools. Thus Timothenus, the Athenian Commander, in all his Expeditions was a Mirror of good Luck, because he was a little Underwitted; from him was occasioned the Grecian Proverb, *το άλμα της Νείτης* the Net fills though the Athenian Sleeps: There is also another favour-able Proverb, *τοι, που γειτνιά, ο αε πτερνά* the Owl flies, an Omen of Success. But against Wise Men are pointed these Ill-boding Proverbs, [*Εγείρεται ο Άνθρωπος τος ἀλλοτριος θεος, Born under a bad Planet*; *Equum habet Sejanum, He cannot ride the Forebode*; *Aurum Tholosanum, Ill-gotten Gods' will never Prosper, and more to the same Purpose.* But I forbear from any farther Pro-verbializing, lest I should be thought to have rifled my Erasmius's Adages. To return there-fore, 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 Fol-lowers Bathful, Sneaking, and Timorous, and therefore you commonly see that they are re-duced to hard Shifts, must grapple with Poverty, Cold and Hunger, must lye Recluse, Despised and Unregarded, while Fools roll in Money, are advanced 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 Wile and Squire, 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 Afs, 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 ever we turn our selves, 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.

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 laid 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 confess almost to a Proverb, that the Art of Dissembling is a very necessary Accomplishment; and therefore it is a common Verse among Schoolboys,

\[ Stultitiam simulare loco sapientia summa est. \]

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,

\[ Me pinguem et nitidum—\]
\[ —Epicuri de grege Porcum, \]

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

[Fig. XXXIX.]

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

Missce Statistam consilis 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 desperè in loco,

Well-timed Folly has a sweet Relish.

And in another Place,

Mallem deletiis incersque sideri,  
Quam sapere \\

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

Homer praiseth Telemachus as much as any one of his Heroes, and yet he gives him the Epithet of Néptiô, 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 continent estus.

They
They Kings and Subjects Dotes 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 flight 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}
to so much of Divinity as must appear in
my following Discourse. Yet however, it may
not seem strange, that after so long and fre-
quent a Converse, I have gleaned some
Scraps from the Divines; since Horace’s
Wooden God, by hearing his Master read Ho-
mer, learned some Words of Greek; and Lu-
cian’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 inclu-
ded 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 Jerem. speaks yet more plain-
ly in his Tenth Chapter, where he saith, That
every Man is Britifh in his Knowledge. He
just before attributes Wisdom to God alone,
saying, That the Wise Men of the Nations are
altogether Britifh, 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 In-
terlude of Folly? This confirms that Asser-
tion of Tully, which is delivered in that no-
ted Passage we but just now mentioned, name-
ly,
ly, That all Places swarm with Fools. Farther, what does the Son of Sirach mean when he faith 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 Fraitles and Infinities of Hymane 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 observ'd, that as to the Order of Words Folly for its Advantage is put in the Left 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 Ecclesiastes 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, [ἀθανάτι] ἀθανάτος, 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 Dunghill 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 lie 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 left lies unregarded, 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. Befide, 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 cenfures 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 faileth to every one that he is a Fool. Now what greater Argument of Candor or Ingenuity can there be, than to demean yourself 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
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 Erasmius (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 Privilege 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 deter-
mine. In my own Judgment at least I prefer the Opinion of the Good Old Tun-bellied Di-vines, with whom it's safer and more creditable to Err, than to be in the Right with Smat-tering, Raw, Novices.

Nor indeed should any one mind the late Criticks any more than the sensless 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, Ἐννοεῖς οὐκεῦ. At Lyram Asinus) Magisterially and Dogmatically descending 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 my self to those false Apostles would have been construed as the Vaunt of a Fool, I will willingly be accounted a greater Fool, by ta-king 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 be-fore delivered, tacks about, and shifts to anot-her Interpretation.
Erasmus's Panegyrick

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 Assaulted 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 be that hath a Purse let him take it, and likewise a Scrip; and be that hath no Sword let him Sell his Garment, and Buy one: Now when the whole Doctrine 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 Recapitulation 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 **Belles** 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 Skin; he pretended that the Word Tent did here signify the Skin of St. Bartholomew, who was slain for a Martyr.

I myself 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 express 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-splitting 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 5] now then every Maleficious or Witch is to be kill'd, but an Heretick is Maleficious, which in the Latin Translation is put
put for a Witch, Ergo, &c. All that were present wondered 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 Evildoer, then Drunk ennels 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 Foolsly; 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-
himself with Two of his Disciples travelling to Emmaus, 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 re-ferr’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 Caesar 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 revealed them to Babes, i.e. to Fools; for the Original Word ἐνθλοις being opposed to σοφοῖς: if one signifies 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 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, Ἐξοδον ἡ θηρίων, 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 Prophets termed Sheep, but even he himself would be call'd a Lamb; as when John the Baptist saith 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
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 excusable, 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 Acquittal 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 (faith 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? MyFault 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 Mysteries Pfalmist, which I forgot to mention in its proper Place, namely, Ob remember not the Sins and Offences of my Youth! The Word which we render Offences, is in Latin Ignorationes, Ignorances: Observe, the Two Things he alleges in his Excuse are, First, His Rapeness 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 Follisness.

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 re-
pairing to Church, and most Zealous, Devout and Attentive in the Performance of the several Parts of Divine Service: Nay, the first Promulgators 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 easy Forgiveness of past Injuries; they suffer themselves to be cheated and imposed 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 to destitute of Common Sense, that their Soul seems already separated from their Dead and Unavailing 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
on the Praise of Folly.

And since I have had the Confidence to go thus far, I shall venture yet a little farther, 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 being
ing Maggoty and Crack-brain'd; nay, if there be any Defect in the External Organs it is then termed downright Madne\textls{ss}. 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 experienced what Plato dreams to have happened between some, who, inclosed in a dark Cave, did only ruminate 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 Madman.

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 Invisible 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 slinging Money as the Dirt and Rubbage of the World, or if at
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, employing 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 Employment, 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 observed 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 irreconcileable 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 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 Distinguished from the Intanglement of the Body, may have a better Relish to Spiritual Objects, and take an Ante-past 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 re-present 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 listening 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 Intentness 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 Madness.

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
as Love is more Hot and Eager, so is the Madness 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 Beatitude Vision, so as the whole Man will be then perfectly beyond all its own Bounds, and be no otherwise happy than as Transported into Extasis 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-
on the Praise of Folly.

abundantly over-ballance 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 myself, 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,

Πολλακι τοι ου μωρες ανη η κατακαθησον ειςν.

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