

Abraham Fleming's
The Diamond of Deuotion,
Cut and squared into sixe seuerall points
A Documentary Edition

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ABSTRACT

This is a documentary edition of Abraham Fleming's 1581 devotional handbook, *The Diamond of Deuotion, Cut and squared into sixe seuerall points*. Protestant devotional manuals were an important part of the daily religious practices of the literate Elizabethan laity, though their place in literary history often goes ignored in Renaissance studies today. Few, if any, scholarly editions of early modern devotional handbooks have been produced and while general surveys and studies exist, there remains a tremendous amount of work to be done in this field before a thorough view of their significance can be attained. Despite his many contributions to the Elizabethan printing and bookselling industry, Abraham Fleming, too, has received less than his deserved share of critical attention. Featuring "manie fruitfull lessons, auailable to the leading of a godlie and reformed life," and drawing on a variety of educational and literary devices, *The Diamond of Deuotion* is demonstrative of some of the most interesting and prevalent social and spiritual forces of the day. I have included in this edition a general introduction, discussing the genre of devotional handbooks in the early modern era, the life and works of Abraham Fleming, and the social and religious context of *The Diamond*. I have assembled and transcribed a complete text of the 1581 *Diamond* and have included explanatory annotation to clarify and describe for the modern reader obscure vocabulary and historical events, and, where possible, have documented sources for the material.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
GB	Geneva Bible, 1560
BB	Bishops' Bible, 1568
GR. B	Great Bible, 1540
Cf.	<i>confer</i> (Latin): 'compare'

INTRODUCTION

In his definitive study of the life and writing of Abraham Fleming, William Miller laments *The Diamond of Deuotion*'s "almost total absence" of "historically interesting" topical references (*Abraham Fleming* 110). This disparaging assessment, pronounced in the principal of only a handful of critical examinations, has perhaps contributed to *The Diamond*'s obscurity. Abraham Fleming's *Diamond of Deuotion, Cut and squared into sixe seuerall points* emerged onto London's bustling literary market in 1581, boasting "manie fruitfull lessons, auailable to the leading of a godlie and reformed life." It is the third of Fleming's original religious works, and his most popular, having gone through five editions between 1581 and 1608. Yet, despite its relative commercial success, *The Diamond of Deuotion* has gone largely unnoticed in the 425 years since its original publication. Critical attention has generally been focused on Fleming's editorial contributions to influential works like Holinshed's *Chronicles* and Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*. Fleming, often ridiculed for his inadequacies as a poet and rarely credited for the quality of his prose, will likely never be embraced by mainstream scholarship; yet, *The Diamond*, a work so deliberately attuned to the social and spiritual movements of its time, does indeed present a valuable addition to our understanding of early modern culture and literature. It is in the belief that *The Diamond* will repay both historical and literary analysis that I have prepared this documentary edition.

The Diamond of Deuotion belongs to an influential, yet seldom-studied, tradition of religious writing. Protestant devotional handbooks supplemented public worship by providing instruction on the tenets of reformed Christianity, direction on the value and methods of prayer, and lessons on social duties and ethical ideals (Davies 415). England's break with the Church of Rome and the rise of the Protestant reformation stimulated a veritable explosion of guides for personal piety. As literacy rates increased and a new Protestant emphasis on private and familial devotion took hold, the laity's demand for simplified, accessible devotional material grew. Religious reformers,

anxious to promote the tenets of the new religion, and printers and booksellers, equipped with efficient presses and eager to capitalize on a lucrative market, responded prolifically. Yet, despite their popularity and influence, devotional handbooks have rarely been the subjects of sustained critical study. This is an unfortunate oversight, as devotional handbooks promise to provide new insights into the complexities of religious culture in Renaissance England and to illustrate the avenues chosen by authors to market private devotion to the masses.

Although the production of devotional literature for layfolk was a prominent part of the Protestant campaign to win adherents to the reformed faith, its roots lie in the Catholic tradition. Catholic works of private devotion, such as Psalters, Books of Hours, and Primers, were available to those who could afford them throughout the later Middle Ages. Designed as guides to private meditation as well as participation in the Mass, these works generally include a shortened form of the Church service, the Hours of the Cross and Blessed Virgin, psalms, prayers, treatises on Christian duty, and calendars marking the saints' days (Butterworth 3). Throughout the long and often laborious process of religious change in England, reformist writers recognized the potential influence of private devotional literature, and adopted elements of Catholic devotional works, editing, adapting, and expunging as necessary in order to make them consistent with the Protestant platform (White, "Sixteenth Century" 443). This level of continuity between the Catholic and Protestant traditions may have eased the laity's conversion and helped them to cope with religious upheaval (Marsh, *Popular Religion* 29).

The more ardent religious reformers, variously referred to as 'Puritans,' the 'godly,' and 'hotter sorts of Protestants,' were among the most prolific authors of devotional handbooks. Their desire for reform, ecclesiastical, social, and personal, was served in part by the dissemination of affordable, simplified devotional literature for the laity, and the press became a significant adjunct to the pulpit (Haller, *Rise of Puritanism* 5). Emphasizing the "individual's responsibility before God," Puritan authors attempted to inculcate an understanding of elementary theology and a preference for prayer and Scripture over worldly pleasures and activities (Stranks 62; Davies 425). Although the stress placed on individual, rather than collective, piety would later weaken the uniformity of their stance (Wright 240), the reformists believed in the capacity of

devotional handbooks to fortify their cause: “If private and familial piety was strong, so would public worship be vigorous. If personal and family prayer was sparse or sporadic, then worship would be perfunctorily celebrated and sparsely attended” (Davies 406-407). Like catechisms, pamphlets, ballads, hornbooks, and a host of other cheap and ephemeral religious publications, Protestant devotional handbooks were intended to complement public worship and to bolster the laity’s allegiance to the reformed faith (Green, *Christian’s ABC* 71).

In her pioneering 1951 study, *Tudor Books of Private Devotion*, Helen C. White extols the untapped resourcefulness of devotional handbooks, asserting that they “may well be expected to afford a more direct and more dependable way to the understanding of the religious consciousness of much of sixteenth-century England than any other single avenue of approach now available to us” (3-4). Alexandra Walsham is somewhat more circumspect in her evaluation of what can be gained from the study of devotional literature for layfolk, suggesting that “we may learn more about the nature and agencies of cultural midwifery than about the elusive quarry ‘culture’ itself” (*Providence* 38); in either case, devotional handbooks present an enlightening avenue of early modern religious and cultural studies. *The Diamond of Deuotion*, though it has received less than its deserved share of critical attention, is exemplary of some of the most interesting and prevalent social and spiritual forces of its day.

The Diamond of Deuotion: Content and Readership

The appeal of *The Diamond of Deuotion* is due, in part, to the sheer range of its material. Featuring treatises on theology and Christian duty, prayers for a variety of occasions, graces, proverbial wisdom, “Hymnes, and Spirituall Songs,” questionnaires, “exhortations,” “dehortations,” poetry and prose, *The Diamond of Deuotion* is, in many ways, broader in scope than Fleming’s previous devotional offerings. Fleming went to considerable lengths to make *The Diamond* accessible and attractive to a wide range of readers, although his actual audience may have comprised a fairly narrow margin of society. Yet, *The Diamond of Deuotion* was by no means a wholly “new” publication, as a sizeable portion of its material had already appeared in print. *The Footepath of Faith, leading the Highwaie to Heauen. Wherevnto is annexed the Bridge to blessednes*, likely

first published in 1578,¹ is a direct precursor to *The Diamond of Deuotion* (Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 79-80). A section entitled “A handfull of holie Hymnes, and Spirituall songs” was later transferred nearly verbatim into *The Diamond of Deuotion* under the new title of “A Plant of Pleasure.” The introduction to the *Bridge to blessednes* and “Christian exercises, short, sweete and comfortable” were expanded on and renamed “The Footepath to Felicitie” and “A Guide to Godlines,” respectively. “Exhortations or lessons, Alphabetically” was copied almost directly to *The Diamond of Deuotion* under the title of “The Schoole of Skill,” as was “A Hiue full of Bees” (with a few stylistic revisions) renamed “A Swarme of Bees” in *The Diamond*. A section similar to “A Groue of Graces” appears in *The Footepath* under the title of “Graces to be said before and after meales,” although *The Diamond*’s graces appear to be original.² The inclusion of so much material from *The Footepath of Faith*, printed by Henry Middleton, did not go unnoticed when *The Diamond of Deuotion* appeared in 1581, printed by Henry Denham. The Court of the Stationers’ Company held proceedings against Denham for alleged plagiarism and ordered that material taken from *The Footepath of Faith* be excluded in all subsequent printings of *The Diamond*. The ruling apparently went unheeded, but no further action seems to have been taken against either Fleming or Denham (Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 102).

One interesting feature that distinguishes *The Diamond of Deuotion* from *The Footepath of Faith* is the development of various organizational and literary devices, all calculated to increase the work’s aesthetic appeal and ease of reference. Whereas *The Footepath of Faith* is divided into two sections and lumps its subsections together without a clear organizing principle, *The Diamond*’s six sections are clearly marked and self-contained. A border of alternating square and round cut diamonds surrounds each page of the handsome duodecimo volume, and each section features its own title page, including an introductory Bible verse, the date and place of publication, and the printer’s

¹ The first extant edition dates from 1581.

² The level of correlation between the graces of *The Footepath of Faith* and *The Diamond of Deuotion* is difficult to ascertain, as the only available 1581 edition of *The Footepath* is lacking several pages; however, an examination of the 1619 edition shows little correspondence to the 1581 “Groue of Graces.”

name.³ In addition, each features a “Preface to the Christian Reader,” in which Fleming outlines the purpose and organization of the section. He develops an overarching theme or allegory, and reminds the reader of the benefits of regular perusal. Some sections also contain a brief poem of summation, or “Referendarie,” which once again emphasizes the utility of the material: “The vse thereof is generall, / God graunt it proue effectual” (158). The material within each section is organized for the reader’s convenience into easily accessible subsections and chapters, often including a brief summary of the contents. The compartmentalization of this material may reflect the growing divide between public and private that arose in the Renaissance. A new Protestant emphasis on private study and an increasing tendency to compartmentalize space within the home, through the development of closets for prayer and cabinets for reading, is reflected in the popular literature of the day. According to Jagodzinski, sixteenth-century “readers and publishers were quite aware that the publication of books was a means to discovery, to laying out truths and making revelations...It was easy to make the link between the ‘discovery’ power of print and...private rooms and storage places” (15-16). “A Swarme of Bees,” with its separate “Honicombes” of proverbial “Be” and “Be Not” advice, is a particularly interesting example of the correlation between sixteenth-century print and architecture.

In addition to providing an accessible principle of organization, Fleming drew upon existing religious and educational traditions in order to ensure that *The Diamond* would be remembered and incorporated into daily life. The Hours featured in Catholic works of private devotion were designed to be read and meditated upon at appointed times throughout the day. In place of prayers and hymns to be recited according to the Hours, “A Guide to Godlinesse” features prayers for the regular course of daily activities, such as “vprising in the morning,” “the putting on of our clothes,” “when we are at worke,” and “going to take naturall rest.” Although a theological emphasis on providence, election, and the insufficiency of works to achieve salvation distinguishes *The Diamond* from its Catholic counterparts, some similarity is evident in the occasional nature of its prayers and meditations, which, like the Catholic Hours, are intended to

³ It is possible that each section was sold individually, although all six have been bound into the three extant copies of *The Diamond*.

guide the reader in pious reflection throughout the course of the day (Davies 410). As an aid to daily study, and perhaps as a means of entertainment, Fleming employs both acrostic and alphabetical devices throughout *The Diamond*. “A Plant of Pleasure” is divided into subsections according to fourteen letters which spell out “Abraham Fleming”; the first letters of each sentence within a subsection also spell the author’s name. This device is repeated in “A looking glasse for the Christian Reader” (at the end of “The Footepath to Felicitie”) and “A Groue of Graces,” in which the first letters of each grace spell “Abraham Fleming” continuously. “The Schoole of Skill” is arranged into “three sententious sequences of the A, B, C,” wherein successive letters introduce alphabetically arranged sequences of proverbial wisdom. The second sequence doubles the number of alphabetical admonitions for each letter, and the third triples it. Fleming may have borrowed this strategy from James Cancellar’s *Alphabet of Prayers* (Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 87), but it was a common device, based on methods for teaching children the alphabet (Watt 102). Structuring aphorisms around an overarching alphabetical or acrostic device may have been intended to help the reader to commit them to memory and integrate them into everyday experience (Watt 103).

Fleming’s descriptions of social duties provide some indication of what sort of audience he expected to benefit from daily participation in devotional study. In the dedication to *The Diamond of Deuotion*, Fleming proclaims the wide ranging appeal of his work, asserting that it is “generallie appliable to euerie priuate person,” including the “high and lowe, rich and poore, yong and old” (31). Yet, it is clear that *The Diamond* was targeted primarily towards a fairly narrow audience. In “The Footepath to Felicitie,” he addresses the religious responsibilities of “housholders” to their servants and families, and the “dutie of all such as beare office in a Common-wealth,” including magistrates and officers (47). In “A Plant of Pleasure,” Fleming describes a reader with sufficient “leasure” to take part in “recreations and refreshings” (160-161). By contrast, while he does occasionally address “the poore,” Fleming does little more than reinforce the existing social hierarchy, admonishing “that they be not idle, neglecting the good and ordinarie meanes, prouided of God to liue by: namelie, labour”; if unable to sustain themselves and reduced to destitution, Fleming recommends “that they hold themselues contented with this their crosse of affliction” (50). Fleming’s attitude towards the poor is

not unsympathetic (*The Diamond* contains several exhortations to charity), but his lack of specific interest in their situation suggests that they were not his primary intended audience.

Indeed, it is unlikely that the many members of the lower orders of Elizabethan society would have had either the means to purchase devotional handbooks or the level of literacy required to read them, despite increasing opportunities for education and the diminishing costs of printed material. Whiting's study of book ownership in Devon and Cornwall suggests that Bibles and other religious texts were beyond the means of the average layperson (190).⁴ Moreover, literacy in sixteenth-century England was dependent to a significant degree on economic status and geographic locale. According to David Cressy, exposure to formal education was "irregular and intermittent" for many children, particularly those of the lower and middle levels of society (28). Though the offspring of the wealthy gentry were often educated by private tutors and expensive specialists, the education of 'the middling sort' could fluctuate with the demands of the agricultural season, and the finances of the family and community (Cressy 28). According to Spufford's study of literacy in Cambridgeshire, the lowest orders of society, including the children of labourers and small-holdings farmers, had "little prospect of acquiring even a rudimentary education" (*Contrasting Communities* 173), although literacy rates in London were consistently higher than those in rural areas (Sharpe 270). Generally, literacy was most common amongst the gentry, the clergy and members of professions, such as doctors, lawyers, and schoolmasters (Cressy 122). Yeomen and tradesmen were the most literate group of the non-gentry, as their professions often required the ability to read and write, and they seem to have had sufficient leisure to achieve an education (Spufford, *Contrasting Communities* 217). Literacy rates among labourers and husbandmen were perhaps as low as 10-20%, and women likely had a level of literacy as low as that of the least educated men, though there were exceptions (Sharpe 270).

Of course, an inability to read may not have been a total barrier to interaction with devotional texts. Elizabethan culture was still largely oral/aural, and private, silent

⁴ Then again, if the sections of *The Diamond* were marketed individually, parts of it may have been within the reach of the lower class.

reading would hardly have been the only option for absorbing information. Illiterate households could derive enjoyment and instruction from texts if they were read aloud by a guest or neighbour, and some may have kept devotional handbooks on hand for this purpose (Whiting 199). Fleming envisions domestic worship as a communal exercise, in which the male “housekéeper” guides his illiterate family and household servants in worship:

In the morning powre foorth thy praiers vnto God...beséeching him to guide thée & thy whole houshold...to followe their functions and callings...and instill into their eares wholesome precepts of Christian knowledge. At noone tide...laie before them in plaine speach, according to their slender capacities, the tender care and fatherlie loue of God...The like exercise also vse at supper, and at euerie ordinarie and extraordinarie refection (48)

This scenario would, however, require at least the male head of household to have sufficient literacy and leisure to lead his family through the daily routine of devotion, and it is unlikely that many lower class families would have had such privileges. The connection between Protestantism and the so-called Elizabethan middle class has been posed by several scholars, though Sharpe cautions that “any easy assumption...should be regarded with extreme scepticism” (236); however, that the financially stable and often reasonably educated ‘middling sort’ should make up a significant portion of the readership for Protestant devotional handbooks makes sense, given their level of literacy and available leisure (Sharpe 236). The Elizabethan “middling social strata” may have had greater motivation to attend to private devotion as well, as Stone postulates that they were more deeply attached to the tenets of reformed Christianity than either the “pleasure-seeking court aristocracy” or the illiterate poor (9).

Like many early modern conduct books and agrarian improvement manuals, devotional handbooks tend to address the concerns of the ‘good hows-holder’: the ‘middling sort’ of patriarch who approached both religion and the management of his family with “practical, mercantile virtues like thriftiness, and foresight” (Watt 225).⁵ Fleming employs the discourse of profit and improvement throughout *The Diamond* in an effort to enhance the work’s appeal and efficacy: “Thou hast heere...a plant of

⁵ While devotional literature for women certainly existed, Fleming refers to women in an abstract, impersonal sense as wives, “weaker vessels,” and “wanton minions.” The exceptions are references to Biblical heroines and Queen Elizabeth.

pleasure...to reade at thy leasure for thy recreation, and not so much for thy recreation, as for thy profit” (161). While scholars have posited the enthusiasm of the middle class for the literature of improvement, both secular and religious (Wright 121; Sharpe 61), the frequency with which Elizabethan readers interacted with their devotional handbooks, and, by implication, the sincerity and ardour of their religious belief, is, in the words of Christopher Marsh, “a matter of educated guesswork” (*Popular Religion* 138). There is little doubt that religion was a matter of central importance in the lives of the majority of Elizabethan men and women, but scholars have recognized that the degree of their conviction was by no means uniform (Doran and Durston 75). Although evidence suggests that church attendance and participation in communion were on the rise in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it is not often possible to differentiate between outward conformity and inward conviction (Doran and Durston 77). As Spufford points out, “Orthodoxy, like happiness, has no history” (*Contrasting Communities* 319). Whiting has suggested that while a range of “essentially non-spiritual” considerations, such as fear of punishment and a sense of obligation to authority, may have induced outward conformity, these very factors may also have prevented the development of a lasting emotional and intellectual commitment to the reformed faith (187). Though it has been established that devotional handbooks were a “popular” genre of literature, we cannot distinguish how much of this popularity is attributable to the actual desire of layfolk, and how much is due to the influence of authors, publishers, and censors (Marsh, *Popular Religion* 143). Yet, despite the influence of reformist propagandists, it is highly unlikely that the market for devotional handbooks could have continued to thrive, if not for a genuine interest on the part of its readers.

Abraham Fleming: Elizabethan Man of Letters

Few authors would have understood the economics of private devotion better than Abraham Fleming, who is most notable in early modern English studies for his editorial contributions to London’s rapidly expanding printing and bookselling industry. Employed by several prominent printing houses, Fleming corrected and augmented more than thirty publications, including the 1587 edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*. Though his failure to produce much that accords with traditional standards of literary merit has

made him an easy target for ridicule and dismissal, the very range of his work makes a study of Abraham Fleming compelling, as he was so heavily immersed in the social and literary trends of his time.

Abraham Fleming was born in London in 1552⁶ to parents who likely belonged to the middle or lower orders of society.⁷ He had an elder brother, Samuel, and a younger sister, Esther, and the choice of Old Testament namesakes for their children has led Miller to suggest that Fleming's parents may have harboured Puritan sympathies (*Abraham Fleming* 11). There may be some basis to this speculation, as McCain has noted the Puritans' apparent "zeal" for Biblical names (11). Little else is known of Fleming's early life. Samuel Fleming, who appears to have been an able student, attended Eton for two years before entering Cambridge, but there is no record of Abraham's education before his matriculation.

Fleming enrolled at Cambridge in Michaelmas term, 1570 as a sizar, or poor scholar, of Peterhouse College. Peterhouse seems to have been characterized by a range of religious opinions, and headmaster Andrew Perne, friend and mentor to the future Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, apparently encouraged an atmosphere of toleration (Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 12; Collinson, "Perne"). Fleming evidently formed a friendship with the headmaster, as he dedicated his 1576 translation of Caius' *Of Englishe Dogges* in gratitude to Perne for his assistance in alleviating an unnamed affliction (Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 9). Perhaps due to financial constraints, Fleming's academic career was marked by interruptions. He appears to have left Cambridge from 1575-1581, possibly because he was unable to pay his fees, and did not receive his B.A. until 1581-2 (Cooper 459; Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 16). At the completion of his degree, Fleming ranked 116th out of 213 students.

During his approximately six year absence from Cambridge, Fleming returned to London, where he worked as a "servant" to the printer Richard Tottel. The exact nature

⁶ Although this is the generally accepted date, a deposition signed by Fleming in 1591 places his date of birth in 1544; because this contrasts with Fleming's epitaph, and places him at the unlikely age of twenty-seven at the time of his matriculation, consensus regards the deposition as incorrect (Brace 131).

⁷ This assumption is based on Fleming's entry into Cambridge as a sizar, and the financial difficulties that seem to have dogged him throughout his studies (Miller, *Abraham Fleming* 3).

of Fleming's service is uncertain, as he was never presented to the Company of Stationers as an apprentice. While it is possible that Tottel simply failed to register him, it is more likely that he made use of Fleming's scholarly training by hiring him to proofread and correct texts (Brace 132). Between 1576 and 1588, Fleming was employed by at least fifteen printing houses, and he enjoyed an enduring business relationship with Henry Denham, the printer of *The Diamond of Deuotion* and a former apprentice of Tottel. Aside from organizing, amending, proofreading, translating, and augmenting texts, Fleming also provided tables, indexes, addresses to the reader, and commendatory verses to a number of publications. The term 'learned corrector' probably best describes Fleming's role in the printing industry (Donno 202), a position he held in common with Miles Coverdale, John Rogers, and John Foxe. Fleming received recognition for his literary contributions in the first edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, in which he is listed on the roll of English writers.

Fleming is most widely known today for his work as the general editor of the 1587 edition of *The Chronicles, comprising...The description and historie of England*. After the death of Raphael Holinshed in 1580, the task of updating and revising the first edition (1577) was overseen by Fleming. Although he was assisted by John Hooker, John Stow, and Francis Thynne, it was Fleming who, as an editor and contributor, had the greatest impact on the style and tone of the work (Stockard 99). He imposed a more rational paragraph structure, added editorial comments, Latin epigrams and marginalia, and created detailed indexes (Clegg). Fleming also gave the work a decidedly polemical bent, particularly evident in his anti-Catholic commentary and his description of the Babington conspiracy (Taufers 39). The virulence with which he expressed such views may have led, in part, to the censorship of the second edition (Clegg). Taufers is critical of Fleming's contribution to *The Chronicles*, asserting that any organizational weaknesses and Protestant diatribes in the 1587 edition can be attributed to Fleming, rather than Holinshed (38); yet, for better or worse, it was Fleming's edition that would influence some of the greatest minds of the day, most notably Shakespeare.

Fleming's literary output ceased soon after he took holy orders in August, 1588, perhaps coinciding with Henry Denham's retirement from the printing trade in 1589 (Miller, "Abraham Fleming" 90). He served as chaplain to Catherine Howard, countess

of Nottingham, and became rector of St. Pancras Soper-lane in London on October 19, 1593. Between 1589 and 1606, he preached eight times at St. Paul's Cross, though none of his sermons were printed. Fleming died in Bottelford in Leicestershire on September 18, 1607 during a visit to his brother Samuel, the rector of that parish. He was buried in the chancel of the parish church.

Fleming left behind only traces of autobiographical information, so scholars have turned to his literary output to discern something more of his personality and interests. His proficiencies as a classicist are evident in his various translations, including the two versions of Virgil's *Bucoliks* with which he began and ended his career. Traces of humour remain in his translation of Synesius' *Paradoxe, Prouing by reason and example, that Baldnesse is much better than bushie hair. A Panoplie of Epistles... Conteyning a perfecte platfforme of inditing letters of all sorts*, and his editorial involvement in various dictionaries, reveals Fleming's interest in rhetoric and humanist pedagogy. Fleming's contributions to John Knox's *Fort for the afflicted*, John Calvin's *Sermons... Vpon The Fifth Booke of Moses called Deuteronomie*, and Philips van Marnix's *Bee hiue of the Romishe Church*, a work which purports to be an exposition of Catholic doctrine, but is actually a satire on the Church of Rome, seem to support the common conclusion that Fleming was a 'hotter sort of Protestant,' although a further examination of his original religious writing reveals an image somewhat more complex.

Determining Religious Persuasion in *The Diamond of Deuotion*

Critics and biographers alike have noted the ardent desire for reform which pervades Fleming's writing, and most have described his religious leanings, with Miller, as "puritanical and anti-papist" (*Abraham Fleming* 142). Certainly, there is substance in Fleming's writing to support this assertion, including exhortations for personal and institutional reform, a reliance on Scripture for spiritual and worldly guidance, a marked antipathy towards Catholicism, and a preference for "holie exercises, and godlie meditations" (161), rather than singing, storytelling, and dancing—indicators which scholars have traditionally associated with Puritanism (Davies 43-44; Stranks 62); however, aspects of Fleming's life and religious work seem to disrupt the "starkly dichotomous model" employed by some scholars to draw clear-cut distinctions between

Protestant conformity and Puritan defiance (Walsham, *Providence* 4). Fleming's use of the officially sanctioned Bishops' Bible, his praise for Queen Elizabeth and the *via media*, his dedications to John Whitgift,⁸ and his entry into the ministry of the Church of England complicate the archetypal depiction of the Puritan as a militant nonconformist. While an examination of the theology of *The Diamond of Deuotion*, Fleming's use of the Bible, and his petitions for reform does not dismiss the possibility that Fleming was one of the 'hotter sort of Protestants,' it does suggest, with Collinson, Walsham, and others, the limitations of traditional attempts to define Puritanism, and their inadequacies to distinguish all but the extremes of the 'Puritan' and 'Anglican' spectrum. Neither a separatist, nor a radical, Fleming's theological stance differed little in substance from that of his contemporaries, although it was, perhaps, 'hotter' in temperature (Walsham, *Providence* 2). Nor should *The Diamond* be read solely as a manifesto of Fleming's personal beliefs; his rhetorical aims as the author of a didactic and hortatory devotional manual also deserve consideration in any attempt to define the religious stance of *The Diamond*.

In an attempt to determine Fleming's specific religious affiliation, scholars have looked to *The Diamond of Deuotion* (and its predecessor, *The Footepath of Faith*), as Fleming's editorial work is too "slippery and inconclusive" an indicator, and a complete edition of *The Conduit of Comfort*, Fleming's other original devotional handbook, is extant only from 1624 (Wooton 127). Miller boldly proclaims that Fleming's "major religious beliefs are easily discoverable" in *The Diamond of Deuotion*, asserting that he was "a Calvinist with all the trust in the validity and necessity of faith and the Scriptures taught at Geneva" (*Abraham Fleming* 4). This view is borne out to some extent in "The Footepath to Felicitie" and "A Guide to Godlinesse," the two sections which seem to reveal the most about *The Diamond's* doctrinal stance, although theological boundaries are not always so easily defined. For example, Fleming's description of humanity's innate sinfulness seems to accord with Calvin's description of original and total depravity: "the uncleanness of the parents is so transmitted to the children that all

⁸ Fleming dedicated his 1589 translations of Virgil's *Bucolics* and *Georgics* to Whitgift. A powerful opponent of religious nonconformity, the Archbishop of Canterbury (1583-1604) implemented measures which effectively prevented the further reform of the Church of England (Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan* 13).

without any exception are defiled at their begetting...Original sin, therefore, seems to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, diffused into all parts of the soul” (248-251). Fleming echoes this sentiment, confessing, “we are most vile sinners, conceiued and borne in sinne, and... we are by nature nothing else, but a lumpe of all wickednes, whose naturall propertie is to growe in sinne” (76). According to New, both Puritans and moderate Protestants accepted the doctrine of total depravity, but while ‘Anglicans’ believed in the human capacity for morality, Puritans tended to disparage and distrust ‘natural’ reason, asserting humanity’s “total inability...to desire and to choose rightly” (10). There is evidence of this conviction in Fleming’s profession that “we haue no abilitie nor power of our selues, to fulfill the commandements...such is our pronenesse to do amisse” (44); however, he also calls reason an “excellent blessing” and an indication of “the dignitie of man,” as it separates humanity from animals “lead by lust” (45). While the emphasis Fleming places on the innateness of sin and the inadequacy of human morality may indicate a Puritanical perspective, his appreciation for reason complicates such a precise distinction.

Fleming’s search for the hand of God in all circumstances also seems consistent with a ‘hotter’ reformed stance, although degree is a more precise indicator than substance in distinguishing between Protestant and Puritan. Both Puritans and their more moderate counterparts believed in “fatherlie prouidence,” but the Puritans, taking their cue from Calvin, analyzed even minute events for signs of eschatological certainty (Walsham, *Providence* 19). As Walsham explains, “Every happening, catastrophic or trivial, was held to be relevant to the quest for assurance that one numbered among the ‘saints’” (*Providence* 15). Fleming’s writing resonates with allusions to providence and demonstrates this tendency to analyze each occurrence as if it were a divine signal. Agreeable events are described as “comfortable appearances” of God’s “eternall prouidence, and infallible arguments and tokens of...endlesse loue” (105). Adversity, too, is interpreted as a sign of “fatherlie loue and affection” (95):

yea, on them whome thou most tenderlie louedst, thou diddest laie some portion of thy correction: partlie, to trie them in tribulation, and to confirme their faith by patience in aduersitie: but speciallie to assure their spirit, that they are thy children, and thou their father (94)

‘Godly’ readers are encouraged not to despair in times of trouble, as “chastisement” is a sign of God’s vested interest in their spiritual well-being. Although the distinctions between a temperate interest in providence and a more intense one are fairly slippery, Fleming’s confidence in divine chastisement as an assurance of salvation seems to indicate a Puritanical stance. According to Walsham, “It was the at once arrogant and humbling assumption that one was the personal preoccupation of an officious and omnipotent deity...which helped to mark out ‘puritans’ from...the unholy multitude” (Walsham, *Providence* 19).

On the other hand, Fleming’s treatment of predestination, the doctrine most often associated with Calvinism and, therefore, Puritanism, is interesting precisely because of what it fails to reveal about Fleming’s religious affiliation. In a prayer of “thankesgiuing for the benefite of our election,” Fleming lays out an essentially uncontroversial description of predestination: “thou hast vouchsafed to call and elect vs a peculiar and chosen people vnto thy selfe, and to reckon vs in the lot of thine inheritance, being ordeined to saluation, whereas contrariwise, a great number are appointed to condemnation” (108). This “gratious gift” of election is attributed entirely to the “méere mercy, and bountifull liberalitie” of God, rather than to “anie worthines in vs, or to anie merits of workes” (108). Although predestination often calls to mind the ‘five points’ of Calvinism, this doctrine is by no means exclusive to Calvin, nor to the ‘hotter’ sort of reformed persuasion (Hughes 232). As Hughes points out, all Christian denominations accept that “the number of the elect and reprobate is fixed from eternity,” and all attribute salvation to divine predestination, rather than to human merit (226). Fleming does not delve into the complexities of whether predestination is supralapsarian or infralapsarian, nor does he attempt, with Calvin, to distinguish the ‘temporary’ faith of the reprobate from the ‘saving’ faith of the elect (Kendall 21). He avoids depicting God’s predestination as tyranny by portraying the reprobate as the worst sinners amongst humanity: “couetous persons, robbers, adulterers, swearers, rebels, blasphemers, bloudsuckers” and “enimies to Gods truth” (38)—in short, those who “runne so desperatelie into voluntarie destruction” (52). Thus, Fleming maintains a strictly orthodox position by attributing salvation solely to divine predestination, but also

manages to evade some of the more troubling complexities of the doctrine by creating a simple dichotomy between good and evil, elect and reprobate.

While scholars have tended to view *The Diamond of Deuotion* as an expression of Fleming's religious beliefs, his aims in writing and his intended audience also deserve consideration. Devotional manuals supplemented public worship by providing instruction on social duties and basic theology. As the author and 'learned corrector' of a variety of publications for the laity, Fleming would have been keenly aware of the preferences and discernment of his audience. Although the theology of *The Diamond* may, in fact, be indicative of his religious persuasion, Fleming likely also found the "plain" but "powerful" Puritan rhetoric useful in his attempts to edify the laity and to exhort them to amend their sinful lives (Haller, *Rise of Puritanism* 129). According to Haller, Puritan preachers and writers emphasized total depravity so that the unlearned could perceive their transgressions and be moved to seek reform. They also stressed the importance of examining both the inner conscience and outward events so that layfolk would have the basic means to seek assurance of salvation (*Rise of Puritanism* 130). Fleming may have placed an emphasis on humanity's innate corruption and divine providence to urge his readership to repent and reform, and also to provide instruction on leading a godly life. Likewise, he may have concluded that the doctrinal debates that absorbed many of his contemporaries were beyond the concern of the average lay man or woman (Collinson, *Religion of the Protestants* 190). This does not imply any lack of sincerity in Fleming's religious writing (indeed, it seems highly unlikely that he would go to such earnest lengths to inculcate a system of values which he did not endorse), but it does suggest that a modicum of discretion should be used to distinguish between Fleming as a historical figure and an author in attempting to define his religious persuasion.

Although the pronounced Biblicism of *The Diamond of Deuotion* is reminiscent of the oft-noted Puritan reliance on Scripture, Fleming's choice of translation is not an unambiguous indicator of his personal affiliation. While general allusions, imagery, and sometimes even specific words and phrases from Scripture appear quite frequently throughout the whole text, two sections in particular, "The Schoole of Skill" and "A Swarme of Bees," are almost word-for-word arrangements of passages from the Book of

Proverbs. At the time Fleming was writing, seven different English translations of the Bible had been printed, with varying degrees of official approval or censure. The most popular version by far was the Geneva Bible (Sheppard, “Geneva Bible” 1). First produced in 1560 in “the centre of international Calvinism,” the Geneva Bible was an early modern best-seller (Katz 44). Over 140 editions were published between 1560 and 1644, a resounding triumph over its competition, the Bishops’ Bible (Danner 5). A brief sampling shows the level of correspondence between the “diuers doctrines” of “The Schoole of Skill” and Proverbs from the Geneva Bible:

SCHOOLE OF SKILL: Commit thy works vnto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be directed (119).

GENEVA BIBLE (1560): Commit thy workes vnto the Lord, & thy thoghts shal be directed (Prov. 16:3).

BISHOPS’ BIBLE (1568): Commit thy workes vnto the Lorde: and what thou deisest it shall prosper (Prov. 16:3).

SCHOOLE OF SKILL: Looke not vpon the wine when it is redde, and when it sheweth his colour in the cup, or goeth downe pleasantlie (124).

GENEVA BIBLE (1560): Loke not thou vpon the wine, when it is red, & when it sheweth his colour in the cuppe, *or* goeth downe pleasantly (Prov. 23:31).

BISHOPS’ BIBLE (1568): Looke not thou vpon the wine howe red it is, and what a colour it geueth in the glasse (Prov. 23:31).

SCHOOLE OF SKILL: The heart of man purposeth his waie, but the Lord doth direct his steps (126).

GENEVA BIBLE (1560): The heart of man purposeth his way: but the Lord doeth direct his steppes (Prov. 16:9).

BISHOPS’ BIBLE (1568): A man deiseth a way in his heart: but it is the Lorde that ordereth his goynges (Prov. 16:9).

It may be unsurprising that Fleming would rely so heavily on the Geneva Bible in his religious writing, given its widespread popularity and his own seemingly Puritanical leanings. The excellent scholarship behind the Geneva translation and the Calvinist tone of the annotations made it the “favoured choice of many Protestants and Puritans,” even after the publication of the King James version in 1611 (Dewey 107; Anderson 6).

An examination of “A Swarme of Bees,” however, reveals that the Geneva translation was not the only source Bible on which Fleming relied. While “A Swarme of Bees” also borrows heavily from the Book of Proverbs, the source for most of the text is clearly the Bishops’ Bible. Published in 1568, the Bishops’ Bible is the result of an attempt, headed by Archbishop Matthew Parker, to undermine the success of the Geneva Bible, which “was far from acceptable to the authorities of the Church of England because of its Calvinist notes” (Pope 234). Generally considered a work of inferior scholarship, the Bishops’ Bible failed to equal the popularity of its rival (Dewey 108); however, the Bishops’ Bible was regarded as the official translation of the Church of England, and was distributed to churches and cathedrals throughout the country. A brief comparison illustrates the correspondence between “A Swarme of Bees” and Proverbs from the Bishops’ Bible:

A SWARME OF BEES: Be thou a drinker of the water of thine owne well, and of the riuers that run out of thine owne spring (140).

BISHOPS’ BIBLE (1568): Drinke of the water of thyne owne well, and of the riuers that runne out of thyne owne spring (Prov. 5:15).

GENEVA BIBLE (1560): Drinke the water of thy cisterne, and of the riuers out of the middes of thine owne well (Prov. 5:15).

A SWARME OF BEES: Be not sluggish, but consider the Emmet, and by her example learne to be wise (150).

BISHOPS’ BIBLE (1568): Go to the emmet thou sluggarde, consider her wayes, and learne to be wyse (Prov. 6:6).

GENEVA BIBLE (1560): Go to the pismire, o sluggard: beholde her waies, and be wise (Prov. 6:6).

A SWARME OF BEES: Be contented with a little in righteousnes, for that is better than great rents wrongfullie gotten (145).

BISHOPS’ BIBLE (1568): Better it is to haue a litle with ryghteousnesse, then great rentes wrongfully gotten (Prov. 16:8).

GENEVA BIBLE (1560): Better is a litle with righteousnes, then great reuenues without equitie (Prov. 16:8).

Specific references and general allusions echoing the phrasing of both the Bishops' and Geneva Bible proliferate throughout *The Diamond*. Interestingly, while Fleming relies primarily on the Geneva Bible for "The Schoole of Skill" and the Bishops' Bible for "A Swarme of Bees," he also includes passages from the 1540 Great Bible.

The Diamond of Deuotion presents a problem not anticipated by studies which suggest that Puritans exclusively preferred the Geneva Bible, whereas religious conformists chose the Bishops' Bible. Fleming's use of the different translations does not seem to contribute to overall shifts in tone or connotation. For example, Fleming's choice of the Geneva translation, "thy thoughts shalbe directed," over the Bishops' Bible, "what thou deuisest it shall prosper," does not imply a significant shift in meaning. An analysis of Fleming's work also challenges widespread assumptions about writing in the early modern era: although Fleming drew on his general knowledge of Scripture in some instances (for example, references to parables or biblical events), he clearly did not rely primarily on his memory. The level of correlation between the Book of Proverbs and passages from "The Schoole of Skill" and "A Swarme of Bees" suggests that Fleming likely had copies of both the Geneva and the Bishops' Bible close at hand as he composed these sections. If this was the case, then the question of why he did not simply choose one source Bible over the other remains. Perhaps in the comparatively public space of the print shop, subject to scrutiny, it was deemed more prudent to keep a copy of the official Bible of the Church of England on hand; it may be that Fleming composed sections which derive from the Geneva Bible in the privacy of his home, with the aid of his own personal Bible. Perhaps he made clear references to both translations in an effort to retain credibility as an ardent reformist, while attempting to mollify the powerful authorities of the Church of England. Or perhaps the demarcations between the translations are not so divisive as some scholars have suggested. Shaheen has pointed out that moderate Protestants, including Lancelot Andrews, Richard Hooker, and even John Whitgift himself, made use of the Geneva Bible (158), while Trinterud has noted that many Puritan divines did not scruple to depart from the Geneva translation: Peter Wentworth and John Gough both borrowed from the Great Bible of 1540, and John Knewstub, James Morice, John Foxe, and Edward Derring all occasionally relied on their own translations of Scripture. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude with

Trinterud that the Geneva Bible was a useful tool to English Protestants of varying persuasions, but not necessarily “a test of party loyalty” (208).

If neither the theology discussed in *The Diamond*, nor Fleming’s choice of Bible translation are precise indicators of his religious affiliation, then Fleming’s complaints against the ills of church and state might provide further insight. According to Davies, the quintessential image of the Elizabethan Puritan was that of a warrior, “fighting the good fight of faith, with the courage of obedience, empowered by the sword of the Spirit” (69). Fleming presents the “godlie man” as a soldier dedicated to the service of Christ, and “armed at all points with the spirit of fortitude and strength” against the forces of sin:

What afflictions can alter his happines, that hath the King of glorie to be his helper?...What temptations can ouercome him, whose right hand holdeth fast the sword of Gods word, which cutteth in sunder whatsoeuer it smiteth, and pearseth betwéene the marrowe and the bones? (39).

The iniquities the reformist soldier seeks to amend are corruption, backsliding, and vestiges of the unreformed Church. Fleming’s criticisms of national and institutional degeneration may impart a more comprehensive image of his religious leanings, as it was often a pronounced desire for further reform, as well as an expressed dissatisfaction with the prevailing state of religion, that set ‘hotter’ Protestants apart from the “lukewarm” conforming mass (Trinterud 9; Lake 7); however, even in this respect, contradictions and ambiguities cloud clear-cut distinctions. Fleming’s exhortations for reform appear to be ardent and sincere, but are complicated by expressions both of frustration with and respect for the current state of the Church in England.

Fleming’s complaint mainly concerns the widespread indifference to the reformed religion, and the failure of the authorities to take action against it. Impatient with the lack of reform in accordance with the “iewell of Gods word,” Fleming describes the fruitless toils of the true believers in the face of persecution and repression:

This word, notwithstanding it be the trumpet, whereby we are called into the waie of the Lord...is contemned, neglected, and despised, the preachers of the same derided, the prophaners thereof preferred, the professors of it abused, the suppressers thereof mainteined (65)

This reign of profanity and suppression is the result of individual and institutional failings. The “gouvernours ... haue not held so steadie a hand as they ought to haue done,” either in establishing or enforcing laws according to the will of God (79). The ministry is “sicke vnto death,” and has failed to inspire loyalty to the reformed religion (79). The people, “either through a déepe rooted affection and loue to Popish religion, or through a wicked opinion which they nourish of embracing the truth” reject the reformed religion (77), and the Church of England’s policy of demanding conformity only “in outward shew,” rather than in “sinceritie of hart” (86), enables recusancy and apathy to run rampant:

a great portion of the land, partlie neuer yéelding themselues to the obedience thereof, and partlie falling from it, after they had once yéelded: stand proudelie as it were at the staues end with thée. The rest, which make profession of their submission vnto it, do it not accordinglie. (77)

The result, according to Fleming, is national shame and failing in the eyes of God and other reformed nations:

we acknowledge that to be our great and horrible sinne, that being put in trust with this vnspeakeable treasure of thy holie Gospell, and preferred before our neighbors...yet we are in thankefull obedience vnto thée, behinde them all: first in knowledge, last in zeale (78)

Fleming’s complaint against national and ecclesiastical laxity and backsliding accords with Collinson’s evaluation of the Puritans’ most defining characteristic: their ardent desire for the “imposition of true reformation” and their disappointment in a legal and ecclesiastical system which “failed to conform to the pure model which they had set before the queen’s eyes” (*Elizabethan Puritan* 25-26). Fleming’s depiction of an ardent ‘godly’ minority railing against the iniquities of the Church and nation corresponds to even the most circumspect definitions of Puritanism.

However, Fleming’s complaint against the Church and state is not necessarily as ‘hot’ as it may initially appear. He also offers prayers for “our most gracious Queene and gouvernour, Elizabeth thine handmaid” and gives thanks for the deliverance of the Church from the persecution of its enemies (100). Fleming portrays Elizabeth as both a martyr and champion of the reformed cause, having suffered adversity for the sake of “thy glorious truth,” and having been “miraculouslie” delivered “to aduance thy glorie and Gospell” (101). In contrast to his former railing against the leniency of the Church’s

policy and his derision of the unreformed masses, he praises Elizabeth's "peaceable and vnbloudie gouernement" and implores that "such as be enimies of the Gospell, and her enimies also...may not despise the peace offered them to repentance" (101). In another passage, he offers thanksgiving for the salvation of "the ship of thy Church shaken with the tempests of tyrannous & tempestuous seas" and for its protection "from the malice of spitefull pirats" (115). The image of a Church and nation beset by spiritual indifference and corruption has changed to one of triumph and exultation: the enemies have been confounded, and the 'godly' soldiers are crowned with "garlands of victorie, contrarie to hope and expectation" (115). How, then, can such disparate shifts in tone and disposition be accounted for?

An analysis of Fleming's changing rhetorical strategies sheds some light on the problem of these contrasting positions. "A Guide to Godlinesse," the section which contains the majority of Fleming's social criticisms, as well as the prayers for Queen Elizabeth and the deliverance of the Church, is divided into three "branches": Confession, Petition, and Thanksgiving. It is in "The First Branch, of Confession" that Fleming rails against the failings of the Church and nation, lamenting "defections in godlie zeale and discipline" (76). Here, where it is most necessary that readers should be mindful of their innate depravity so they will be moved to "humblie prostrate" themselves and make a full confession of their transgressions, Fleming heaps up accounts of the overwhelming faults of all (84). Even those who "through grace haue trulie, and faithfullie beléeued" are not spared a recital of their sins, which include "weakenes of faith" and "small reformation of manners" (77). Fleming's complaint is not directed only at the unreformed Church and population, but also at the "a huge companie of horrible sinnes" of every individual (84). While this section seems to represent a genuine criticism of Church and state, it is also an example of the rhetoric of complaint, in which "authorial indignation is exaggerated" to arouse a recognition of sins and a desire for repentance and reform (Walsham, "Philip Stubbes" 192). In "The Footepath to Felicitie," Fleming seems to raise a similar national and institutional complaint:

Such lepers there are among vs not a few... all infected, lothsome, and filthie...If among this great and infinite number, one Samaritane might be found, some

signe it were, that the graces of God are not powred vpon vs in waste, neither his benefites ill bestowed (64)

Although this seems to portray the author as a ‘godly’ Puritan railing against a specific group of unregenerate sinners, it is also a rhetorical strategy to point out the universality of sin. In the passage that follows, Fleming admits that “it is so far vnlike, that anie of vs should be a Samaritane” (64). Thus, while Fleming’s complaint may reflect his own sincere desire for reform, it is also an authorial strategy to inculcate the same desire in the reader.

Further analysis of the rhetorical structure of “A Guide to Godlinesse” may also help to explain why Fleming’s criticism shifts to praise and even thanksgiving. It is likely that Fleming’s praise for Elizabeth and the *via media* in “The Second Branch, of Petition” is, to some extent, an attempt to appease the authorities for his earlier criticisms; however, it may also be the result of his changing rhetorical aim. In a prayer of petition, an emphasis on the recognition of sin is less important than the request for the means by which to amend it, so the rhetorical focus shifts to entreaty, rather than complaint. In “The Third Branch, of Thanksegiuing,” in which Fleming gives thanks for the salvation of the Church, the rhetorical emphasis shifts again, from complaint and entreaty to gratitude. In a prayer of thanksgiving, the appropriate rhetorical focus is an expression of appreciation for help given in the past, in anticipation of future assistance. Fleming encourages the reader to call to mind the mercies of God and to derive hope for further deliverance by recalling blessings already bestowed. While an examination of Fleming’s shifts in rhetorical strategy may not sort out all of the ambiguities and contradictions present in *The Diamond*, it may at least help to provide a more comprehensive view of Fleming’s role as an author of private devotional literature, and it illustrates the complexities of discerning religious affiliation in the early modern era.

There has been a renewed effort on the part of Renaissance scholars to explore and bring to light aspects of early modern culture that have previously been overlooked. The range and significance of his work as both a ‘learned corrector’ and author merits Fleming a more prominent position in the study of early English literature than he has received. From dictionaries to devotional handbooks, epistolaries to classical

translations, the span of Fleming's work is demonstrative of the diversity of Renaissance print culture. What emerges most clearly, however, is an earnest and unflagging desire for the improvement of his readership. The vast majority of his works contain moral, social, educational, or religious lessons and exhortations to the reader, and his writing is characterized by a zealous, didactic tone (Dodson 51). His work has rarely been credited with literary merit, but as both an author and 'learned corrector,' Fleming seems to have been concerned with the reform of his own society, rather than the judgments of posterity.

EDITORIAL PROCEDURES

The source for most of the text that follows is STC (2nd ed.) 11041, reel number 495:08, a reproduction of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, available on *Early English Books Online*. Where the Huntington copy is wanting leaves (E1, 2, E11, M12, N1, and all leaves after N11), I have conflated the text with another copy of the 1581 edition (HH87/28) from the Folger Shakespeare Library;¹ although the Folger copy is likewise imperfect (A4 has been bound before A2; A1, B12, and the last blank leaf are missing), it includes every leaf that the Huntington does not, thus allowing the assembly of a complete copy text for the 1581 *Diamond of Deuotion*.

Due to the absence of Fleming's manuscript collection, which was catalogued in Francis Peck's *Desiderata Curiosa* (1735), but has since been lost, the text is based on the earliest printed edition of *The Diamond*, in accordance with Greg's theory that an early authoritative text is likely to contain fewer non-authorial corruptions than a later one (29). Fleming's intimate connection to the sixteenth-century printing and bookselling industry enhances the appeal of creating a documentary edition that represents the product of the complex social interactions between author, printer, and audience. Whatever insights Fleming's lost manuscripts may have provided, it was the 1581 printed edition that first reached his Elizabethan audience, and considerations about how the text might have been read and received are at least as compelling, from a literary historical point of view, as speculation about authorial intention.

Every effort has been made, however, to preserve authorial intention in substantives as well as accidentals. Aspects of the original text which appear to be based on editorial necessity, rather than authorial intent, have been emended. Unambiguous hyphens at the right-hand margin have been removed, macrons over vowels, representing the letter "m," have been expanded (e.g. cōmeth to commeth), and, in verse,

¹ At least one other copy of the 1581 edition is extant at the British Library.

parts of lines constrained by the physical limitations of the page to be placed on subsequent lines have been restored to their authorial order, as these features were necessitated by the duodecimo format of the original text (see Fig. 1). All capitalized letters following a drop-cap in the original text have been emended (e.g. ALl to All), unless precedent exists elsewhere in the text for maintaining the capitalization. One character is used in the original text to represent both a capitalized ‘V’ and ‘U,’ but because the use of the lower-case ‘v’ and ‘u’ follows a consistent pattern in the original, I have emended the capitalized character according to its use in the lower-case, and have included a note where the character has two different uses in the same section. I have maintained all italics in the original text, with the exception of those which appear in headings (which I have standardized in the interests of consistency and ease of reference); I have used bold font to represent emphasis in the original text. Phonetic features of the original text, such as the acute accent which often appears over the first ‘e’ in a series of two (see Fig. 1), have been preserved; however, archaic characters which do not have phonetic value, such as the long ‘s’ and ‘(+)’ (a form of the ampersand), have been modernized.

The distinctive and varied design of *The Diamond of Deuotion* presents a unique challenge to the editor attempting to recreate the appearance of the original, and due to constraints of format, some fidelity to the original physical layout of the text has been sacrificed (in spacing, font, line and page breaks, and page numbers), although each section features a type-facsimile of its original title page.

Explanatory annotation in the form of footnotes has been included to clarify for the modern reader obscure vocabulary, and to describe persons, places, and historical events mentioned in the text. The vast majority of literary allusions in *The Diamond of Deuotion* are Biblical, and where a passage or phrase is in fairly direct accordance with the Bible, I have provided a citation of the book, chapter, verse(s) and, where possible, the particular translation that Fleming drew the reference from; in cases where the correlation between Fleming’s writing and the Bible is less obvious, I have included a brief passage for comparison.

When he talketh moſt friend-
lie, he meaneth leaſt honeſtie.

G God ouerthroweth the wic-
ked, and they are not: but the
houſe of the righteous ſhall
ſtand.

G Giue no eare to the report of
a ſlanderer, for in his tongue
lieth deadly poiſon.

H He that keepeth his tongue,
keepeth his life: but he that
openeth his lippes, deſtruction
ſhall be to him.

H He ſhall be ſore vexed that is
ſuretie for a ſtranger: and he
that hateth ſuretiſhip is ſure.

I Intend nothing that may
turne to the harme of thy nei-
bour, for he is as thine owne
ſelfe.

I Juſtice and truth are in ſuch
as feare God, as for the wic-
ked, they abhorre vertue.

K Keepe not companie with
drunkards, nor with gluttons:
for the ſeete of ſuch go to death.

K Knowe him well whom thou
makeſt

makeſt of thy counſell, leaſt he
betraye thy ſecrets.

L Looke not vpon the wine
when it is redde, and when it
ſheweth his colour in the cup,
or goeth downe pleaſantlie.

L Let not thine heart be enui-
ous againſt ſinners, but let it
be in the feare of the Lord con-
tinuallie.

M Mercie and truth do preſerue
the King, for his throne ſhall
be eſtabliſhed with mercie.

M Make no friendſhip with an
angrie man, neither go with
the furious man.

N Notorious liers flee from, as
from a Scorpion: for they are
the verie frie of Sathan.

N Neuer giue thy conſent in a
thing that is wicked, for God
rewardeth both with ſhame.

O Opprobrious words defile
the ſoule of him from whome
they procede, and wound to
the death.

O Of thine increaſe ſpare ſome-
what

THE DIAMOND

of Devotion,
Cut and squared into fixe
seuerall points:

Namelie,

- 1 The Footpath to Felicity
- 2 A Guide to Godlines
- 3 The Schoole of Skill. 181
- 4 A Swarme of Bees. 209
- 5 A Plant of Pleasure. 245
- 6 A Grove of Graces. 283

Full
Of manie fruitfull lessons, available
to the leading of a godlie and
reformed life:

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

Psal. 119. Verse. 72, 127.

- ¶ The Lawe of thy mouth (O Lord) is deerer to
me than thousands of gold and silver.
- ¶ I love thy commandments above gold and
precious stones.

Printed by Henrie Denham dwelling in
Pater Noster Rowe; being the assignee
of William Seres.

1581

Cum Privilegio Regie Maiestatis.

TO THE
Right Worshipfull, Sir GEORGE
Carey,¹ Knight, Knight Marshall of hir
Maiesties most Honorable houshold,
*Sonne and heire apparent to the right
Honourable Lord HENRIE,²
Lord of Hunsdon, &c.*

AND
To the most vertuous and godlie
*mindèd Ladie, the Ladie ELIZA-
BETH³ his wife, long life,
and happie daies.*

*Not vnadvisedlie (Right Worshipfull) but vpon singular circumspection did the ancient
Greekes call Hercules by the name of Musagetes.⁴ It is also recorded, as a thing
memorable, that Fuluius Nobilior, at the great spoiles of Ambratia, preserued harmeles
and vndamnified the images of the nine Muses, and conueieng them into Hercules
Temple, kept them there verie carefullie.⁵*

*Now (right worshipfull) vpon what consideration those worthie Seniours did this,
I scarselie vnderstand, vnlesse this might be the reason, because they perceiued and
sawe, that betweene the affaires of learning, and the exploites of valiantnes, there is a*

¹ Sir George Carey [Carew], second Baron Hunsdon, 1546/7-1603. He was appointed marshal of the Queen's household in 1578 (*DNB*).

² Henry Carey [Carew], first Baron Hunsdon, 1526-1596. A cousin to Elizabeth I, Carey played a significant role in England's relationship with the Scottish, and served as a privy councillor from 1577-1588 (*DNB*).

³ Lady Elizabeth Carey [Carew; *née* Spencer], 1552-1618. In 1582, Fleming also dedicated *A Monomachie of Motives* to the well-known literary patroness. Edmund Spenser, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Churchyard, Thomas Playfere, John Dowland, and Henry Lok address or mention her in dedications to their works (*DNB*).

⁴ **Musagetes:** "Leader of the Muses;" this epithet is usually applied to Apollo, but Fulvius Nobilior is said to have built the Herculis Musarum aedes because he learned that the Greeks considered Hercules a musagetes (Platner and Ashby 255).

⁵ After capturing Ambracia in 189 B.C.E., M. Fulvius Nobilior erected the Herculis Musarum aedes, dedicated to Hercules and the Muses, where he placed statues of the nine Muses and of Hercules playing a lyre.

certaine intercourse of dutifulnes, and a necessarie kinde of seruice interchangeable required.

For they (wiselie no doubt) foresawe, and preciselie noted this as a warranted principle, that the liberall sciences stood no lesse in neede of the fauorable patronage of Great men for their supportation and maintenance: than the strategemes and noble actes of Great men, of the liberall sciences, for the reuiuing of their renowme, and the continuing of their remembrance.

For Bookes are dedicated vnto such as be of Worship and Honour, that vnder their tuteleship and protection, as vnder the couert of Mineruas shield,⁶ they might lodge in safetie, and be sufficientlie defended against the venemous teeth of malicious mouthes: and the commendable vertues and valiant actes of woorthie Gentlemen, are registred and sealed vp in the monuments of the Muses, that by their incessant vtterance, and perpetuall speech, they might be exempted and set free from the enuious shot of consuming time.

Plinie presented his naturall Histories vnto Vespasian:⁷ Lucane his historicall poëtrie vnto Nero:⁸ Oppian his golden Booke of fishes vnto Antonine:⁹ and Iulius Pollux his volume of the names and termes of things vnto Commodus:¹⁰ of whome they were so well accepted, that they do at this instant, and shall for euer heereafter, remaine euen to the end of the last generation.

⁶ **Mineruas shield:** (also known as the Aegis). Conversely described as either a magical goatskin or shield, the Aegis was worn by Minerva as a display of power.

⁷ Pliny the Elder dedicated *Naturalis Historia* to Titus Flavius Vespasianus between 77 and 78 C.E.

⁸ Marcus Annaeus Lucanus began his unfinished epic poem *Pharsalia* (also known as *De bello civili*) between 60-65 C.E. While Lucan flatters Nero in Book 1, his relationship with the emperor evidently soured, and when his involvement in a plot to overthrow Nero was discovered, Lucan committed suicide.

⁹ Oppian of Cilicia's *Halieutica*, a poem on fishing written between 176-180 C.E., is addressed to a Roman emperor, called Antoninus, and his son; this is likely a reference to Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus (Easterling and Knox 862).

¹⁰ Julius Pollux, an Alexandrian grammarian and sophist, wrote *Onomasticon*, a Greek thesaurus of Attic synonyms and phrases, for the emperor Commodus in the second century C.E.

The example of which aged writers, and the vsuall manner of our moderne Polygraphers,¹¹ both strangers-borne, & home-bread, as heeretofore I haue bene induced, so presentlie I am persuaded to folowe, for two allowable reasons.

First, because the hypothesis or argument of this Booke, is generallie appliable to euerie priuate person, and will (I hope) requite the trauell of the vnderstanding Reader, with reasonable profit and aduantage.

Secondlie, for that your Worship hath the common name and report to be indued with sundrie singular gifts of minde, as vtterance of foraigne tongues, varietie of knowledge in the Artes of greatest difficultie, iudgement in affaires of policie: beside the gifts of bodie and fortune, which if I might deseruedlie decipher (though I spake the truth, yet should I incurre suspicion of Gnatonisme)¹² time would first faile me, before I could make an end.

But aboue all, (which is the foundation of my hope and confidence) for that your Worship is so noblie minded, as with rare courtesie to fauour and incline vnto such as professe themselues learned: or not professing, are so reputed: or not reputed, appeare so to be, by some extrinsecall testimonie exhibited to the open world.

But desirous to knit vp that breeflie, which, were it not for the abusing of your Woorship with vanitie of words, would be written at large, I beseech you fauourable to accept this my trauell, being a mixt treatise, partlie theologicall, and partlie morall, and to vouchsafe it your Woorships protection.

Which I craue so much the more instantlie, because the patronage of such, so worshipfull, so learned, so deuout, and studious, will be meanes to prefer this booke, and to bring it the more in vse and exercise, being (to speake allegoricallie) a Ship of safegard, wherein euerie Christian, high and lowe, rich and poore, yong and old, may saile through all seas and streights of this troublesome and wicked world, without running vpon the rocke of repentance, and come at last by a direct current, to the port of endles peace and happines, euen the kingdome of Heauen, whereof the Lord God make you, and all your Worships affinitie and consanguinitie partakers, for the merits of his Sonne Iesus Christ, Amen.

¹¹ **Polygraphers:** authors of copious or various literary works (*OED*).

¹² **Gnatonisme:** Gnathonism; sycophancy (*OED*).

At your Worships commandement alwaies most dutifull

Abraham Fleming.

THE
FOOTEPATH
to Felicitie,

VVhich euerie Christian
must walke in, before
he can come to the land
of Canaan.

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

*Psal. 25.11, 12.*¹

11 What man is he that feareth the Lord?
him shall he teach in the waie that he shall
choose.

12 His soule shall dwell at ease, and his seede
shall inherit the land.

*Apoc. 22, 14.*²

14 Blessed are they that do Gods commande-
ments, that their right may be in the tree
of life, and may enter in through the gates
into the Citie.

AT LONDON,

Printed by Henrie Denham, &c.

1581

¹ Ps. 25:12-13 (GB).

² Rev. 22:14 (GB).

A Preface to the true Christian Reader.

There is some reason, why this first Treatise beareth the name and title of the *Footepath to Felicitie*: although some, more captious³ than cunning, pretending notwithstanding a singular secrete knoweledge and iudgement, condemne manie Bookes by their outward face, being nothing seene in the bowels of the same, and vtterlie ignorant to what issue the conueiance of the matter is like to growe. But to leaue them in their owne follie, albeit they would be counted wise, and to touch the name of this present discourse, called *The Footepath to Felicitie*, I thinke it not vnnesessarie.

The present treatise, whereof this, for fault of a better, may be the Preface, is named *The Footepath to Felicitie*, and not without speciall reason. For, to growe in fauour with Princes, Potentates, and Gouvernours of prouinces, we see there is a waie, after the which diligent inquisition and search must be made, and being found, it must be walked in with sinceritie and vprightnes of mind. Some by this gift, some by that ornament, either of minde or bodie, become gracious and acceptable in the eies of their Lords and maisters: in which waie whiles they keepe their feete with integritie and simplenes, they are so much the more fauoured, by how much their good gifts are well and rightlie vsed: and in this grace and liking of their betters they are sure to continue, so long as they make vertue the foundation of their seruice.

To drawe to our purpose, God is omnipotent, all Princes are impotent: he immortall, they mortall: he aboue, they belowe: he Creator, they creatures:⁴ finallie, he a cleare fountaine of all goodnes,⁵ they filthie puddles of wickednes: is it our wish, is it our will, is it our intent, affection, and desire to please him, and to direct our liues after his good pleasure? then must we know, then must we learne, then must we envre⁶ our selues to tread in the Footepath of Faith, which conducteth such as walke in it to perpetuall felicitie, and therefore deseruedlie hath this denomination or name, to be called *The Footepath to Felicitie*. Now touching Faith, it is such a generall inclusiue, as that it admitteth the exception of no vertue, either morall or intellectuall, wherewith

³ **captious**: “disposed to find fault” (*OED*).

⁴ **creatures**: created beings generally, rather than animals specifically (*OED*).

⁵ Cf. Ps. 36:9, “For with thee is the fountaine of lyfe” (BB)

⁶ **envre**: enure.

whosoeuer are indued, they haue furniture⁷ enough to enable them to serue both God and man. By this our forefathers grewe famous, this they possessed in full measure and weight, and therewith a supplie of all other good giftes: for Faith hath her traine, she hath her retinue, she commeth not without a companie of confederates.

To passe this ouer, because it is a point, wherein none (as I thinke) is to seeke: it is to be vnderstood, that this footepath to felicitie consisteth in sundrie particularities, which though they be manie, yet may they be reduced vnto two principall heads, the first concerning God, the second touching man.⁸ But cutting off all diuisions & subdiuisions, for the auoiding of tediousnes, abruptlie concluding this Preface, I submit the title and the matter of the treatise ensuing, to the censure of the wise and discret Reader, vnto whose iudgement, after due obseruation of the whole inuention and conueiance, as vnto a sufficient referendarie,⁹ I appeale: and now to the purpose.

⁷ **furniture**: provisions; the means to be equipped (*OED*).

⁸ An echo of the widely maintained distinction between the Two Tables of the Decalogue, the first of which expresses one's duties towards God, and the second of which deals with one's duties towards humanity (McGee 70).

⁹ **referendarie**: one to whom judgement is referred; a referee (*OED*).

THE FOOTEPATH TO FELICITIE.

The first Chapter.

1 Who they be that walke in the footepath which leadeth to felicitie. 2 The sentence of the Prophet Dauid to the same purpose. 3 Of the waies wherein men continuallie and commonlie do walke. 4 Examples of Gods iudgements, vpon such as walked in the waies of wickednes. 5 The reward of the wicked, and who they be that haue their portion in hell fire. 6 What they are by name, and common course of life.

1 This question was demanded of our sauior Christ: namelie, what a man might do to win eternal life? The answer was directlie made, By kéeping the commandements. The Ruler (for so Luke noteth him by that title of dignitie, but Mathew and Marke speake indefinitelie,¹⁰ making mention of one, but not describing him by anie name of preeminence) the Ruler I saie, redemanding and alledging for his owne iustification, the obseruation of the commandements from his youth, and requiring to knowe what he did lacke, as though he had fulfilled all things in such ample manner, that he néeded no further supplie: Christ, to laie open before him his inward disease, which the Ruler felt not before, enioined him, if he would be perfect, and finallie obtaine euerlasting life, to go and sell his lands, his fermes, his impropriations¹¹ (if he had anie) his purchases, his great offices, his corne, his cattell, his apparell of rich and costlie silke, his plate of siluer and gold: finallie, his dwelling house, with the implements of the same, and to distribute the reuenues of all these his possessions to the poore. Which doctrine of Christ, the quesie stomach of this wealthie Gentleman could in no case digest, albeit our sauour, immediatelie vpon his iniunction, annexed a promise, that for recompense of his transitorie substance, he should haue treasure in heauen. Whereby then we sée, that the bare opinion of innocencie, and the extrinsecall and ceremonious righteousness, which was the foundation of this Rulers iustification, is so far from deseruing the name of truth and holines, that it is iudged méere hypocrisie & dissimulation. Whervpon I inferre this, that whosoeuer leadeth his life within the limits of this resolution giuen by our Sauour

¹⁰ Luke 18:18-30; Matt. 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31.

¹¹ **impropriations**: private properties (*OED*).

Christ, that is to saie, hath not onlie the knowledge, but also the practise, vse, and experience of his counsell and aduise, the selfe-same person treadeth the footepath to felicitie, and is passing ouer into the Paradise of perpetuall and perfect pleasure.

2 When the Prophet Dauid, after sundrie holie saiengs, sauoring of spirituall vnderstanding and knowledge, thought in his heart, that albeit he said neuer so much, yet he could not speake inough: to expresse the feruent zeale of his heart towards God the author of all true felicitie, he asketh this question: Wherby shall a yong man redresse his waie? and answering the demand, thus he saith: In taking héede thereto, according to thy word.¹²

3 Which speach of the Prophet hath this meaning, that the waie wherein men take pleasure and delight, is the waie of wantonnes, sensualitie, and lasciuiousnes: the waie of all vncleanes, vanitie, and wickednes: the waie wherein flesh and blood triumpheth, and repositeth¹³ perfect happines: the waie which God hateth and abhorreth, being as contrarie to the prescript rule of his commandements, as light and darkenes, Christ and Antichrist, Heauen and Hell, God and the Diuell: the waie which leadeth to the dongeon of destruction: the waie of Gods heaueie wrath and vengeance:¹⁴ the waie wherein sinners walke at will, and pitch their paulions of pleasure.

4 In this wicked waie the old world went forward so long, till they were ouerwhelmed with the irrecoverable plague of the flood:¹⁵ this waie brought vpon Sodome, Gomorrha, and Pentapolis, fire and brimstone from heauen:¹⁶ in this waie Pharaoh of Aegypt and his people tooke so long delight, that at last they were all ouerthrowne and cast awaie:¹⁷ by haunting this waie, the Israelites prouoked God to be their aduersarie:¹⁸ yea, this waie brought Babylon to desolation,¹⁹ Hierusalem to ruine,²⁰ Samaria to decaie,²¹ Absolon to

¹² Ps. 119:9 (GB).

¹³ **repositeth**: repress (*OED*).

¹⁴ Cf. Ps. 1:6, “For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the wicked shal perish” (GB).

¹⁵ Gen. 7.

¹⁶ Gen. 19:1-29; **Pentapolis**: the region where Sodom, Gomorrha, Segor, Adama, and Seboim stood, five cities punished by God for their vice.

¹⁷ Exod. 7-14.

¹⁸ Exod. 32; Num. 14.

¹⁹ Isa. 13:19-22; the Babylonian empire was conquered by the Persian emperor Cyrus in 539 B.C.E.

shame,²² Saule to reproch,²³ Achan to his end,²⁴ Iudas to desperation,²⁵ and all wicked liuers, that walowe in the filthie puddle of their sinnes, without remorse of conscience, or care of repentance, to vtter damnation.

5 This is the waie that leadeth, as it were by a right and direct line, to that bottomlesse pit, where Sathan and his Angels dwell in darke dens of discomfort, whither must repaire all such as God hath cast off from the hope of euerlasting ioie, and blotted their names out of the booke of life.²⁶ Thither shall be thrust all such as are diuided and cut off from the communion and fellowship of Saints, such as haue not oile prepared in their lampes,²⁷ such as haue not on the wedding garment,²⁸ such as are not sealed in the forehead,²⁹ such as are not of the true shéepefold,³⁰ such as march not vnder Christes banner to fight in his field,³¹ such as haue not in them the spirit of sanctification,³² such as haue their consciences séered with an hoat iron,³³ such as are appointed to be crushed in péeces in the winepresse of Gods wrath,³⁴ such as haue made themselues strangers from the kingdome of heauen.

6 To be short, and to speake summarilie, in this pit is the portion of all such, as haue cast the commandements of God contemptuouslie behind them, couetous persons, robbers, adulterers, swearers, rebels, blasphemers, bloudsuckers, extortioners, vsurers, idle liuers, wantons, enimes to Gods truth, Antichristians, liers, false disciples, teachers of diuelish doctrines, prophaners of holie things, superstitious persons, sowers of sects and schismes

²⁰ 2 Chron. 36:15-21.

²¹ 2 Kings 17:1-6.

²² 2 Sam. 18:1-18.

²³ 1 Sam. 15.

²⁴ Josh. 7.

²⁵ Matt. 27:1-5.

²⁶ Exod. 32:33; Ps. 69:28.

²⁷ Matt. 25:1-13.

²⁸ Matt. 22:1-14.

²⁹ Rev. 7:1-8; 9:4.

³⁰ Cf. John 10:1, He that entreth not in by the dore into the shepefolde, but climeth vp another way, he is a thefe and a robber” (GB).

³¹ Cf. Ps. 20:5, “reioyce in thy saluacion, and set vp the banner in the Name of our God” (GB).

³² 2 Thess. 2:13.

³³ 1 Tim. 4:2.

³⁴ Rev. 14:19; 19:15.

in the Church, Atheists, Nullifidians,³⁵ Apostataes, maintainers of erroneous opinions, Papists: and to conclude, all that liue after the flesh, blundering like Bitelles in blindnes,³⁶ hating the light like Bats and Owles, whose lot is to drinke the dregs of Gods wrath and vengeance, out of a full cup, to their comfortlesse condemnation.³⁷

The second Chapter.

1 Of the waie of the righteous. 2 Nothing can hurt them whom the Lord defendeth. 3 Of the power of God and his grace: also who are fortunate, and who miserable. 4 The same opened and prooued by one speciall example in stead of manie. 5 What we must do if we will walke in the waie of the Lord. 6 Of the waie of righteousness, and who walke in the same. 7 Wholsome counsels and admonitions.

Then, since it is apparent by this recitall of offenders, who they be that walke in the wide waie that leadeth to destruction: it is soone to be gathered, who they be that abhorre and auoide, who they be that detest and defie it, woorse than a Scorpion which stingeth vnto death.

1 The waies of the righteous are in the hands of God, and he disposeth the footesteps of the iust:³⁸ he is at the elbowe of the faithfull to staie them from falling, and by his spirit he maketh their treadings stedfast. How then is it possible for the godlie man to miscarrie, hauing the Lord God his gracious gouernour?

2 What afflictions can alter his happines, that hath the King of glorie to be his helper? What weapon can wound his soule, that is armed at all points with the spirit of fortitude and strength? What temptations can ouercome him, whose right hand holdeth fast the sword of Gods word, which cutteth in sunder whatsoever it smiteth, and pearseth betwéene the marrowe and the bones?³⁹

³⁵ **Nullifidians:** atheists (*OED*).

³⁶ **Bitelles:** beetles, associated with intellectual blindness (*OED*).

³⁷ Ps. 75:8; Jer. 25:15-29.

³⁸ Cf. Ps. 119:35, "Direct me in the path of thy commandments: for therein is my delite" (GB).

³⁹ Heb. 4:12.

3 With whome Gods power is present, nothing can turne to his annoiance. Before whome the grace of God breaketh the yse, his passage cannot be perillous:⁴⁰ and therefore that man is most happie and fortunate, whome God vouchethsafe to gouerne: as he contrariwise is most miserable and accursed, whom the spirit of the Almighty hath forsaken.

4 Examples hereof are in the holie Scriptures, most plentifulle to be gathered. For let vs but looke vnto the two first sonnes of Adam, Caine and Abell, who being brethren, and both comming of the loines of the same parents, were notwithstanding contrarie in all respects: the one a murtherer, the other a Martyr: the one bloudthirstie and violent, the other mercifull and innocent: the first a persecuter, the second a sufferer: the elder refused, the yonger receiued: Caine accursed, Abell blessed.⁴¹ Héere we see the effects of Gods grace, and his iudgements in one example for manie.

5 But to returne vnto the footpath of felicitie, which is nothing else, but the waie wherein the Lord hath commanded vs to walke: it is necessarie that we heare the counsel of the holie scripture: namelie, that if we will be perfect, we must walke before the Lord, as Noah did, who for so doing, was called the iust and vpright man of his time. Salomons aduice ought not onelie to be receiued, but also folowed, who teacheth vs a néere and readie waie to the footpath of felicitie, exhorting vs in all our waies to thinke vpon God, and he will direct our steps.⁴²

6 There is a beginning of this good waie, which the wicked haue not the grace to attaine vnto: but it pleaseth the Lord to reueale it to the iust. This beginning is expresselie noted by the holie Ghost to be righteousnes,⁴³ which is the greatest riches that anie Christian hart can wish. This waie of righteousnes is the Lords waie, it is the holie waie, wherein the Iewes in Esaies time,⁴⁴ and in them we and our posterities after vs, are commanded to walke, without shrinking aside either to the right hand, or to the left.

⁴⁰ **yse:** ice; cf. Ps. 147:17-18, "He casteth forthe his yce like morsels...He sendeth his worde and melteth them" (GB). Miller suggests that this may be a reference to Martin Frobisher's quest for the Northwest Passage in 1576-1578 (*Abraham Fleming* 103).

⁴¹ Gen. 4:1-12.

⁴² Prov. 3:6.

⁴³ Cf. Rom. 14:17, "For the kingdome of God is not meat nor drinke, but righteousnes, and peace, & ioye in the holie Gost."

⁴⁴ **Esaies:** Isaiah's; Isa. 35:8.

7 In this waie, being the waie of perfection, it is not possible for vs, vnlesse we put off our imperfections, to walke: for it is a sanctified and holie waie, and therefore nothing that is common or vnclane can treade in the same. Let the counsell of Tobie teach vs what to do in this case: namelie, to beséech the Lord that he would guide our paths, and direct vs in our waies.⁴⁵ Let vs harken to the counsell of Daud, and praie as he praied: Staie my steps in thy paths, O Lord, that my féete do not slide.⁴⁶ For the saieng of Salomon is most agréable vnto truth, That the heart of man purposeth his waie, but the Lord doth direct his steps.⁴⁷ Let vs therefore go vp to the Lords hill, and to the house of the God of Iacob, and he shall teach vs his waies, that we may treade in his pathes.

The third Chapter.

1 The maner how we ought to examine our selues, whether we walke in the waie of the Lord, or no: and first, of our Christian beliefe. 2 Of the keeping of the commandements, and how we haue discharged our duties therein. 3 Of the violating of the sabboth daie, and how it is prophaned. 4 The sundrie waies whereby concupiscence is kindled. 5 A testimonie and token of a cleere and vnguiltie conscience.

How shall a man persuade himselfe that he walketh in the waie of the Lord, and is guided and conducted by his grace? Let him enter into his own conscience, and call to examination his continuall trade of life & conuersation, thus communing with his owne heart.

1 Hast thou perfourmed the solemne vowe which thou madest with God in thy baptisme? Hast thou renounced and detested the diuell and all his workes? Hast thou beléeued in God the father, in God the sonne, and in God the holie Ghost? Hast thou bene a maintainer of the ancient and apostolicall faith, which acknowledgeth the incarnation of Iesus Christ, his passion, his descension, his resurrection, his ascension, and his glorification?⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Tob. 4:20 (BB).

⁴⁶ Ps. 17:5 (GB).

⁴⁷ Prov. 16:9 (GB).

⁴⁸ Cf. the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty...And in Iesus Christ his only Son our Lord. Which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin

2 Hast thou bene an vnfeigned worshipper of God, and not mingled his diuine and sincere seruice with mens imaginations, vaine ceremonies, irreligious rites, superstitious traditions, and hereticall constitutions? Hast thou not bene derogatorie in thought, word, nor déede to the honour of God, whereby he hath bene depriued of some part of his glorie? Hast thou not bene a worshipper of images, a fauourer of idolatrie, a popish canonist, an anoiled sacramentarie,⁴⁹ a Franciscane, a Dominicane, a Trinitarie,⁵⁰ a popish Sectarie,⁵¹ a Iesuite, a seede of Antichrists seminarie, a bringer in of nouelties into the Church, to the sowing of sectes, schismes, and heresies? Hast thou not bene a swearer, a forswearer, a blasphemer, a liar, a dissembler, an hypocrite, and falsehearted, whereby thou hast taken the name of God in vaine,⁵² and abused the calling of a Christian? Hast thou not béene obstinate of life, rebellious, and disobedient, casting behinde thée the commandements of thy parents?⁵³

3 Hast thou not béene a breaker of the holie Sabboth,⁵⁴ which God himselfe sanctified for the imitation of all men, that with circumcised harts⁵⁵ they should celebrate and solemnize the same? Hast thou not applied that daie, seuered⁵⁶ to holie exercises, to vaine pastimes for thine owne pleasure and recreation? Yea, hast thou not spent it in beastlie behauour, as in Epicurisme,⁵⁷ bellie cheare, sensualitie, Gentilisme,⁵⁸ and otherwise than the precise vocation of a well reformed Christian requireth? Hast thou not bene maliciouslie minded, enuious, mercillesse, vncharitable, couetous, an extortioner, a

Mary. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty” (*Book of Common Prayer* 58).

⁴⁹ **sacramentarie**: Sacramentarian; one who holds that the divine is present in the Eucharist only in a metaphorical or ‘sacramental’ sense (*OED*).

⁵⁰ **Trinitarie**: Trinitarian; (in early use) one whose views on the Trinity are considered to be unorthodox (*OED*).

⁵¹ **Sectarie**: a member of a schismatic or heretical sect (*OED*).

⁵² Exod. 20:7.

⁵³ Exod. 20:12.

⁵⁴ Exod. 20:8.

⁵⁵ Jer. 4:4.

⁵⁶ **seuered**: set apart for special purpose (*OED*).

⁵⁷ **Epicurisme**: Epicureanism; adherence to the principles of Epicurus, including devotion to a life of ease, pleasure, and luxury (*OED*).

⁵⁸ **Gentilisme**: Gentilism; heathenism, paganism (*OED*).

briber, a vsurer, a violent oppresser, a defrauder of the poore, a gréedie gatherer, all which, with thousands the like enormities, tend to the violating of the lawe of God?

4 Hast thou not bene wanton, lewd, lecherous, bawdie in speach and communication, a defiler of thy vessell, an adulterus person,⁵⁹ led into sundrie lusts and concupiscences, a tempter of maidens and wiues to naughtines, an allurer of yong damsels to the violating of their virginitie, a singer of light songs and sonets, a teller of tales and stories of loue, and what loue is, a nice danser, and such like? all which tend to the peruerting of honestie, and are as it were bellowes to blowe and kindle the fire of fleshlie lust and concupiscence? Hast thou not bene a priuie pilferer, an open stealer, a robber, a theefe,⁶⁰ an vsurper of that which is not thine owne, a challenger of another mans right, a false dealer, a seeker after filthie lucre, and a shamelesse slaunderer, which is a kinde of stealth most detestable? Hast thou not coueted this and that,⁶¹ as thou hast bene caried awaie with the violence of thy desires, knowing, that although it might make for thy profite, yet it could not but turne to the damage of thy brother?

5 Hast thou offended in these cases, or art thou cleare? If thou haue so walked, that thy conscience can pleade faultles & vngiltie, betwixt thée and thine innocencie, then maist thou boldlie beléeue, that the grace of God is thy guide and gouvernour: then maist thou be assured, that thou art in the verie footepath to felicitie, & passing into the land of promise, Hierusalem the Lords citie, not built with hands, as subiect to ruine and corruption, but eternall and euerlasting.⁶²

The fourth Chapter.

1 None is voide of sinne, no not one: all haue transgressed, and gone astraie. 2 The mercie of God the cause of mans restitution after his fall. 3 To what end Christ suffered torments in this world. 4 None is able to fulfill the commandements of God: and, that God hath a regard to our infirmities. 5 What he must do that would liue eternallie.

⁵⁹ Exod. 20:14.

⁶⁰ Exod. 20:15.

⁶¹ Exod. 20:17.

⁶² 2 Cor. 5:1.

But alas! what is he that hath not offended? Is there anie man that is able to stand in triall of his innocencie?

1 Our parents sinne stained vs, and their transgression was deliuered to vs by lineall descent:⁶³ how then can we, comming of vnrighteous parents, be inculpable and blamelesse children? Truth it is, A corrupt trée bringeth forth corrupt fruite:⁶⁴ and pitch defileth them that touch it.⁶⁵

2 Neuerthelesse, the mercie of God was such, after the fall of Adam and Eue in Paradise, that in the bloud of his sonne, shed vpon the crosse, in the open face of the world, he wrought his restitution, and placed him in the hope of saluation, from whence before he fell.

3 This did he, to the end that by his death, the force of sinne being broken, and the power of Sathan crushed, we might no longer wallowe in the mire of filthines, like swine: but reare vp our selues to heauen, there to haue our harts fixed, where he sitteth, in whome the fulnes of our felicitie is reposed.

4 And though the lawe of the Lord be so vpriight and iust: and our nature so corrupt and defiled, that we haue no abilitie nor power of our selues, to fulfill the commandements: (for we haue not so much as the least sparkle of sufficiencie in this consideration, such is our pronenesse to do amisse:) yet the Lord God is so louing vnto vs, that he holdeth himselfe contented with our weake working of his will, for his sonnes sake, in whome our want is supplied.

5 Who so therefore is desirous to taste of the fruite of the trée of life, and to drinke of the pleasant running riuers of rest:⁶⁶ who so (I saie) longeth after true happines, and faine would see good daies, let him endeuour to the vttermost of his might, to tame and bridle his wandering desires, which if they be not brought vnder, and constrained to grone vnder the yoke of subiection, he shall haue his mind so bent vpon transitorie vanities, and his wil so wedded to this wicked world, that the light of his vnderstanding being put

⁶³ Cf. Ps. 51:5, "I was borne in iniquitie, and in sinne hath my mother conceived me" (GB).

⁶⁴ Cf. Luke 6:43, "For it is not a good tre that bringeth forth the euil fruite: nether an euil tre, that bringeth forth the good fruite" (GB).

⁶⁵ Ecclus. 13:1.

⁶⁶ Cf. Rev. 22:2, "of ether side of the riuer, was the tre of life, which bare twelue maner of frutes" (GB).

out, he shall neuer finde the footepath of faith leading the high waie to heauen. In this respect therefore let vs learne what is to be done?

The fift Chapter.

1 The looking glasse of Gods word, and the effects of the same. 2 The dignitie of man in comparison of al other creatures. 3 His state in the first Adam, and his state in the second. 4 The assaultes of Sathan, notwithstanding our redemption, and what we must do in temptation. 5 Our duties towards God for his gracious giftes and benefites in prosperitie.

1 Thou that wouldst treade the footepath to felicitie, must take into thy hands the looking glasse of Gods word, where thou shalt see in thy selfe all the staines and blemishes of sinne, and shalt likewise finde in a readines, swéete water to wash them awaie, and to cleanse thée from all such filthines and pollusion.⁶⁷

2 There thou shalt see the dignitie of man, in comparison of all other creatures: he onelie being indued with reason, and all other liuing things beside lead by lust. Consider of this excellent blessing, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

3 Againe, let this be thy dailie meditation, that through the fall of the first Adam, thou becamest a castawaie: but by the death of the second Adam, thine attonement in his bloudshed being accomplished, thou wast receiued againe into fauour. Consider of this excellent blessing, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

4 And though thy redemption be wrought by and through the innocent passion of Christ, yet Sathan thy cankered enimie is assaulting thée afresh, with newe traines⁶⁸ and snares séeking to vndermine thée: praie God to fortifie thy faith, cast out thine anchor on the firme land of constancie, crie for helpe at his hand, whose helpe is in a readines, repose all thy hope in him that hath care of thy safetie, and is of power to confound thy ghostlie

⁶⁷ Cf. Ps. 51:2, “Wash me throughly from mine iniquitie, and clense me from my sinne” (GB).

⁶⁸ **traines**: drag-nets or seines (*OED*).

enimie. Consider of this excellent blessing, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

5 If thou be crowned with the graces and gifts of God, either corporall or mentall, as with welth, wisdom, strength, comelines, possessions, children, knowledge, vnderstanding, faith, honestie, credit, estimation, and such like: Consider of this excellent blessing, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

If thou haue a house to hide thy head in, lodging fit for thy naturall nightes rest and quietnes, cloathing to couer thy shame and nakednes, sustenance to preserue thee alieue, substance to mainteine thy house and familie: Consider of this excellent blessing, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

The sixt Chapter.

1 What we ought to do when God punisheth vs with aduersitie. 2 Affliction in bodie and conscience, with an exhortation to patience. 3 Of what behauiour we should be, in the alteration of our state. 4 Considerations for him that is disfranchised, either for some offence committed, or otherwise.

1 Moreouer, if thou be punished of the Lord for thy sinne, either in thy wife, children,⁶⁹ or anie other thing that thou possessest, despaire not therefore, neither let diffidence or mistrust ransacke thy soule, and drowne thee in disquietnes: Consider of this fatherlie chastisement,⁷⁰ be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

2 If thou be afflicted in thine owne bodie, and pricked in conscience⁷¹ at the horreur of thy sinne, cal to God for comfort,⁷² beseech him to mitigate and assuage thine anguish,

⁶⁹ Cf. Exod. 20:5, “for I am the Lord thy God, a ielouse God, visiting the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children” (GB).

⁷⁰ Cf. Heb. 12:6-7, “For whome the Lord loueth, he chasteneth: and he scourgeth euerie sonne that he receiueth...for what sonne is it whome the father chasteneth not?” (GB).

⁷¹ Cf. Job 6:4, side note c, “he was not onely afflicted in body, but wounded in conscience, which is the greatest battel that the faithful can haue” (GB).

⁷² Cf. Ps. 88:9, “Lorde, I call daiely vpon thee: I stretche out mine hands vnto thee” (GB).

and to set thee at libertie: Let this be thy meditation dailie, in patience pitch thy pavilion, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

3 If thou wast once rich, and now art poore: once in plentie, now in penurie: once a maister, now a seruant: once a commander, now an obeier: once fauoured, now forsaken: once clothed, now naked: once a harbourer, now harbourles: once a man, now a wretch: Consider thy condition: God can raise thee vp, as he hath throwne thee downe, murmur not at his chastisements: for he punisheth his children in compassion like a Father, and not with rigour like a Tyrant: in anie case be thankfull, and giue him the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

4 If thou hauing bene sometimes a Citizen, art now an alien, be not therewithall discontented, he can worke thy restitution, by whose sufferance thou art fallen into that condition. Consider whereof this alteration sprang, either from some offence which purchased vnto thee this punishment: or from a good cause, as the quarell of Christ, and his holie gospell, the profession whereof hath brought thee into such extremitie. O be ioiful and glad in this respect: thy banishment is libertie, thy heauines is comfort, thy bitterness is sweetnes, thy shame is fame, thy dammage is aduantage, thy losse is lucre, thy death is life. Consider this throughlie, & faint not vnder the crosse, but praie vnto the Lord to arme thee with constancie and patience, shewing thy selfe thankfull, & giuing vnto God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

The seuenth Chapter.

1 The dutie of all such as beare office in a Common-wealth, principallie towards God, and consequentlie towards man. 2 Admonitions for fathers of families, and houlders, concerning domesticall gouernement. 3 Lessons for all estates and degrees. 4 Exhortations vnto the rich and the poore. 5 The peruerse state of the world. 6 Of the waie of death, and of such as walked therein. 7 Of the waie of life, and what is to be done of such as would walke in the same.

1 Furthermore,⁷³ if thou bearest office in the Common-wealth, and hast autoritie to command by vertue of thy place, praie to God to direct thy spirit, by his spirit of equitie and iudgement, that thy vocation may be so followed and discharged, as that by thy sinceritie and vprightnes, thou maist become a mirrour to all magistrates and officers.⁷⁴ Praie instantlie that this may so come to passe: it is his speciall blessing, be thankfull for it, and giue God the glorie: This is the footepath to felicitie.

2 If thou be a housekéeper, and hast hanging on thy hands, wife, children, seruants, and a familie: first sée that God be sincerelie serued, and then thou thy selfe honoured. In the morning powre foorth thy praiers vnto God vnfeignedlie, beséeching him to guide thée & thy whole houshold in his faith, feare, and loue, trulie and vprightlie to followe their functions and callings at their handiworke, or other exercise whatsoever it be: put them in minde of Gods goodnes, and instill into their eares wholesome precepts of Christian knowledge. At noone tide, preparing to dinner, laie before them in plaine speach, according to their slender capacities, the tender care and fatherlie loue of God, in prouiding for them such foode as is requisite toward the supportation and maintenance of life: wherevpon, put them in minde to haue alwaies in their hearts a register of Gods care ouer his déere children, whose bowels of compassion⁷⁵ are so farre extended, that he will not sée his people perish, through penurie and want of necessarie prouision. The like exercise also vse at supper, and at euerie ordinarie and extraordinarie refection, that as the externall & elementarie sustnance, which entreth in at the mouth, and goeth downe the stomach, where, after it is digested, it is dispersed by iust measure and proportion, to the nourishment of all their bodilie members: so their minds may be fed fat with the foode of the soule, that is, with spirituall exercises, holy meditations, godly thoughts, Christian conuersation, obedience & whatsoever else is acceptable in the sight of God. When the night approacheth, by reason of the declining and shrinking of the

⁷³ Although the original text features a character used elsewhere as an upper-case ‘V’ (see note 133, below), Fleming consistently employs a ‘u’ in words such a “further” and “furniture.”

⁷⁴ An inversion of William Baldwin’s approach in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, which was to move readers “to the soner amendment” by providing examples of men who abused their authority (65-66).

⁷⁵ **bowels of compassion**: the bowels were considered the seat of sympathetic emotions (*OED*).

Sunne to the westerne angle of the world, call together, like a good shepheard, thy whole familie or flocke, and thou among them, as a perfect patterne of pietie, knéeling downe with humilitie, thanke God for the vse of the daie past, for the luckie successe of your labours, for his louing kindnes, in preseruing you from perill: and beséech him with integritie and holines of heart, to make this night comfortable vnto you, to ouershadowe you with the shield of safetie,⁷⁶ when you are asléepe, that you may by no meanes be indangered: but as you lie downe, so you may rise vp, the beloued of the Lord, and the adopted children of your heauenlie Father.⁷⁷ Consider these circumstances, and account them all Gods blessings, ascribe nothing to thy selfe, which art a lumpe of sin:⁷⁸ but attribute all vnto Gods prouidence, which hath wrought all in all, be thankefull for it, and giue the glorie to his eternall name. This is the footepath of faith, which leadeth the high waie to heauen.

3 To speake of all states and degrés of people, generallie and inclusiuelie: If thou be King or Quéene, noble or vnnoble, forren or frée, maister or seruant, rich or poore, acknowledge thy selfe but dust and ashes,⁷⁹ be not proude in thine owne conceite, glorie in nothing, vaunt of nothing, bragge of nothing: remembring the saieng of Paule, what hast thou that thou hast not receiued?⁸⁰ and that of Iob, The Lord giueth, and the Lord taketh awaie.⁸¹ and that of Dauid, The earth is the Lords, and all that therein is.⁸² Praise him therefore, aduance him, magnifie him, vnto whom all glorie doth of right belong: This is the footepath to felicitie.

4 Let not the King triumph in his strength, least the omnipotencie of the most mightie confound him with Pharao,⁸³ with Nabuchodonor,⁸⁴ with Achab,⁸⁵ with Saule.⁸⁶ Let

⁷⁶ Ps. 91:4.

⁷⁷ Rom. 8:14-17 (GB).

⁷⁸ Cf. Rom. 9:21, "Hathe not the potter power of the claie to make of the same lompe one vessel to honour, and another vnto dishonour?" (GB).

⁷⁹ Gen. 18:27.

⁸⁰ 1 Cor. 4:7.

⁸¹ Job 1:21.

⁸² Ps. 24:1.

⁸³ Exod. 14.

⁸⁴ Dan. 4:28-33.

⁸⁵ 2 Chron. 18.

⁸⁶ 1 Sam. 31.

not the Quéene trust to her glittering pompe, least it happen to her as vnto Iesabell.⁸⁷ Let not the Noble man build too boldlie vpon the sand of his honor, least he come tumbling downe with Haman,⁸⁸ and Achitophel.⁸⁹ Let not the vnnoble repine at his basenes, for the Lord is able to crowne him with noblenes. Let not the forrener grudge at the want of his frédome: for if he feare the Lord, he shall lacke no good thing.⁹⁰ So I saie to him that is frée, boast not in it, for God is able to turne thy libertie into bondage: remember the Iewes. So I saie to him that is a maister, that he behaue himselfe humblie, casting an eie vp to heauen, where he sitteth that séeth all secrets. So I saie to the seruant, that he be trustie and honest, faithfull and obedient: forget not Ioseph.⁹¹ So I saie to the godlie rich, that they be mercifull, distribute to the néedie, make amends where they haue done wrong, restore their euill gotten goodes, and be liberall like Zacheus:⁹² and to the wicked rich, that they howle and wéepe, mourne, and wring their hands, for that the daie of their torment approacheth, and houre of their horrible vexation draweth néerer and néerer, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone,⁹³ with hard harted Diues.⁹⁴ So I saie to the poore, that they be not idle, neglecting the good and ordinarie meanes, prouided of God to liue by: namelie, labour, if they be able to endure it, therby to susteine themselues and their familie: if vnable, and yet distressed, vncomforted, vnestéemed, forsaken, miserable, compelled to beg, and commonlie denied, rebuked, rated and threatned: that they hold themselues contented with this their crosse of affliction, whereby they are in possibilitie to haue entrance to life euerlasting: remember Lazarus, This is the footepath to felicitie.

5 If all states and degrés of men, would thus aduise themselues, the footepath to felicitie should be more frequented, the pathwaie to paradise more troden, and the streight gate to heauen more violentlie thrust at. But alas! what is he that thinketh vpon this? Euerie man déemeth his owne waie best, as for the waie of heauen, it is not

⁸⁷ 2 Kings 9:30-37.

⁸⁸ Esth. 7.

⁸⁹ 2 Sam. 17:1-23.

⁹⁰ Ps. 34:9 (BB).

⁹¹ Gen. 41:1-44.

⁹² Luke 19:1-9.

⁹³ Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8.

⁹⁴ Luke 16:19-31; **Diues**: (Latin for “rich man”) the wealthy man in the parable of Lazarus.

regarded. The fathers haue eaten soure grapes, and the childrens téeth are set on edge.⁹⁵ the successors haue vowed to tread in the steps of their progenitors, the yongers to kéepe the footepath of their elders, the people to applie themselues to the example of the Prince, and all degrés to sweare allegiance to the diuell, the prince of this world: the word of the Lord continuallie sounded by the mouth of his Ambassadors notwithstanding. Alas for pitie!

6 There is a waie, saith Salomon, which men take to be good, but the ende thereof is death.⁹⁶ In this waie walked Adam⁹⁷ and Caine,⁹⁸ the father and the Sonne: mother Eue, and Lots wife:⁹⁹ yea, Daud, by your leaue, though he was a man according to Gods owne hart and liking, before his conuersion and penance at the sermon of Nathan.¹⁰⁰ In this waie walked proude Nemrod,¹⁰¹ Senacherib,¹⁰² Ieroboam,¹⁰³ and Manasses,¹⁰⁴ in whose heart, if the grace of God had not kindled the fire of repentance, he had receiued his portion with the wicked.

7 The safe and sure waie, the plaine and perfect waie that leadeth to life euerlasting, Christ himselfe pointeth out, as it were with his finger, saieng, I am the waie, the truth, and the life.¹⁰⁵ If therefore we will go to the father, and wish to enter into the shéepefold of Saincts, we must forsake the synagogue of Satan, we must take our leaue of the pleasures of this world: yea, if there be anie one thing déerer vnto vs than another, be it life it selfe, than which nothing is more pretious, we must set it naught, to finde Christ

⁹⁵ Ezek. 18:2.

⁹⁶ Prov. 14:12.

⁹⁷ Gen. 3.

⁹⁸ Gen. 4:1-12.

⁹⁹ Gen. 19:15-26.

¹⁰⁰ 2 Sam. 12:1-20.

¹⁰¹ Nimrod is traditionally believed to have led the construction of the Tower of Babel; cf. Gen. 10:9, sidenote f, "His tyrannie came into a [prouerbe] as hated bothe of God and man: for he passed not to commit crueltie euen in Gods presence" (GB).

¹⁰² 2 Kings 19:20-37.

¹⁰³ 1 Kings 14:1-17.

¹⁰⁴ 2 Chron. 33:1-13.

¹⁰⁵ John 14:6.

the true waie, by whome we come to the Father,¹⁰⁶ and the dore which letteth vs in to the shéepfold of the Saints:¹⁰⁷ This is the footepath to felicitie.

The eight Chapter.

1 Of the waie of flesh, the remembrance and forgetfulnes thereof. 2 The state of man in this life like a plaier vpon a stage. 3 The compasse of the world compared to a Theatre. 4 The long life of Adam, who notwithstanding died, and other Patriarches. 5 Of Abraham, Moses, and Enoch. 6 None exempted from paieng tribute vnto Caesar. 7 Of Samson, and Salomon, walking the waie of all flesh. 8 One waie of all flesh, though the meanes be diuers.

1 Thus far we haue waded, in shewing the waies of the world, wherein the wicked are not onlie desirous, but also delighted to walke. It shall not be amisse, to touch the waie of all flesh, which if some did consider, they would not runne so desperatelie into voluntarie destruction: for the due and dailie remembrance of this waie, maketh men to retire and drawe backe from seruing Satan in the wide and large field of sinne: as the forgetfulnes thereof blindeth the eies of their mindes, and maketh them growe past grace, out of hope to be reclaimed, reprobates, forsaken, and castawaies. To this purpose it was wiselie spoken, and as the counsell is good and necessarie, so it is to be embraced and folowed: namelie, to remember our ende, if we will not sinne eternallie:¹⁰⁸ This is the footepath to felicitie.

2 We are not placed in this world as continuers: for the scripture saith, that we haue no abiding citie héere:¹⁰⁹ but as trauellers and sojourners, whose custome it is to take vp a newe Inne, and to change their lodging, sometimes here, sometimes there, during the time of their trauell. Héere we walke like plaiers vpon a stage,¹¹⁰ one representing the person of a King, another of a Lord, the third of a plowman, the fourth of an artificer,

¹⁰⁶ John 14:6.

¹⁰⁷ John 10:9.

¹⁰⁸ Ecclus. 7:36.

¹⁰⁹ Heb. 13:14.

¹¹⁰ A Renaissance commonplace, associated but not originating with Shakespeare. Cf. Richard Edwards, "Pithagoras said, that this world was like a stage, / Wheron many play their partes" (*Damon and Pithias*); Shakespeare, "All the world's a stage, / And all the men and women, meerely Players" (*As You Like It* 2.7.139-141).

and so forth, as the course and order of the enterlude requireth, euerie acte whereof béeing plaid, there is no more to do, but open the gates, and dismisse the assemblie.

3 Euen so it fareth with vs: for what other thing is the compasse of this world, beautified with varietie of creatures reasonable and vnreasonable, but an ample and large Theatre, whereon all things are appointed to plaie their pageants, which when they haue done, they die, and their glorie ceaseth. We may see this proued in men, the most excellent creatures of all other, and therefore it must néedes be confessed in the rest of the baser and inferiour kind.

4 Adam was the first that entred vpon this stage: a long time it was before he had rehearsed and plaid all his part, euen the tearme of nine hundred and thirtie yeares,¹¹¹ neuerthelesse, when death came, and gaue him his last Q,¹¹² he had not a word to answere, but was conueied awaie, and went from whence he came, euen to the earth, out of whose bowels he sprang. The like lawe of necessitie tooke hold of mother Eue, of Caine, Abel, Sheth, and the issue of him and his, to the daies of Noah, who notwithstanding his preseruacion in the Arke from the generall floud,¹¹³ went the waie of his predecessors, hauing liued the space of nine hundred and fiftie yeares.¹¹⁴

5 Abraham, the father of the faithfull, so named by the holie Ghost, and after him all the Patriarches:¹¹⁵ yea Moses that good man, at whose intercession God spared the wicked Iewes manie a time,¹¹⁶ and withdrew the whip of his vengeance, wherewith he was purposed to smite them: euen he, and the rest (Enoch onelie excepted, who after his assumption was no more séene among men)¹¹⁷ had but their time, beyond which they might not by anie dispensation passe, so that we see euen in them, notwithstanding their excellencie, the waie of all flesh, which is naturall death, manifestlie expressed.

6 It were more laborious and cumbersome, than necessarie and requisite, to adde anie more examples in so plain & vndoubted an argument. Considering then, that these men,

¹¹¹ Gen. 5:5.

¹¹² Q: cue (*OED*).

¹¹³ Gen. 7.

¹¹⁴ Gen. 9:29.

¹¹⁵ Gen. 17:5.

¹¹⁶ Exod. 32:1-14; Deut. 9:7-29.

¹¹⁷ Gen. 5:24.

being longer liuers than the rest, paide tribute vnto Cesar:¹¹⁸ it is verie vnlikelie that anie, inferiour vnto them in all respects, should be exempted from the discharge of a so due a debt.

7 This waie of all flesh walked Samson, notwithstanding his wonderfull strength diuers waies declared:¹¹⁹ Salomon for all his wisdom, the brute whereof, together with his magnificence and roialtie, caused him to be renowned far and néere: so that neither the one, were his fortitude and might incomparable:¹²⁰ yea, so rare and strange, as that the Lion, of all beastes the valiantest, was in his handling as weake as a Lambe: nor the other, were his knowledge so profound and heauenlie, as that the signification of no secret was too high for his wit, could adde one daie, one houre, no not so much as one minute to the length of their life,¹²¹ no more than it is in mans power to put one cubite to his stature, or to make one heare white or blacke.

8 The conclusion therefore is euident, that there is one waie of all flesh, and that is death, chance it either on land by sicknes, on sea by drowning, in battell by the sword: chance it either by fire or famine, by pestilence, or other maladie: chance it either sléeing, or waking, eating or drinking, riding or running, laughing or wéeing: the common and ordinarie ende is death, and all is but death, be the meanes neuer so diuers. This considered, and aduisedlie thought vpon, there were no better bridle to raine in the coltish nature of man, and to restraime him from the filthie custome of sinne, wherevpon dependeth eternall death and damnation: for this is the footepath to felicitie.

The ninth Chapter.

1 A dead coarse compared to a looking glasse, and the necessarie doctrine therevpon depending. 2 Of two differing waies deciphered by the letter Y. 3 The testimonie of Christ touching these two waies. 4 Who they be that walke in the wide waie of wickednes, and of the preposterous course of the world. 5 That no man hath the power to reforme himselfe. 6 Necessary considerations for true Christians. 7 Of such as hauing gone astraie in the wrong waie, retired and drewe backe into the

¹¹⁸ Matt. 22:21.

¹¹⁹ Judg. 16.

¹²⁰ 1 Kings 4:29-34.

¹²¹ Matt. 6:27; Luke 12:25.

right: and of one that would not be persuaded to tread in crooked pathes. 8 Of such as walked in the wide waie of wickednes, and of their wofull case. 9 An exhortation how we ought to walke.

1 The waie of all flesh remembred, as it is rehearsed, the hearts of men by litle and litle must néeds growe into a misliking of sinne. For as to haue a looking glasse before thy face, and therin to take a view of thy phisiognomie,¹²² is a present and readie waie to make thée sée anie blemish, wart, speckle, freckle, mole, staine, spot, or wrinkle in thy countenance, and to amend and reforme it, if it be not naturall, and brought euen from the verie cradle: so, to consider in a dead coarse, the state of thine owne bodie, when thou shalt be called, if thou be touched with anie care of conscience, should not onlie put into thy minde the remembrance of death, but also the cause of the same, which is sinne: for, that men die, and returne to earth, from whence they came, the cause is sinne onlie: wherewith, if the nature of man had not ben corrupted, his state had bene heauenlie, diuine, angelike, immortall.

2 This common and vsuall waie of all flesh, is an entrance vnto two other waies, beside which waies there is no third to be looked for. These two waies, as they differ in description, as they varie in compas, as they are vnlike in proportion: so the walkers in these two waies are contrarie in disposition, diuers in qualitie, nothing like inclined.

These two waies, manie hundred yeares past, were signified and set foorth by a prophane Philosopher,¹²³ in a letter of the crosse rowe, namelie Y, wherein we may sée, with what wisdom that heathen man weighed the waies of worldlings, cutting his letter in two parts, the one toward the left hand broad, ample, large, and wide, because of the multitudes which it receiue: the other toward the right, narrow and streight, for that they are but few in number which treade in it, and yet roome enough remaining, and more indéede than is like to be occupied:¹²⁴ the more to be lamented.

3 Of these two waies spake he, in whome the thrée principall and soueraigne callings were crowned, I meane Christ, King, Priest, and Prophet. For he, tendering from time to

¹²² **phisiognomie**: physiognomy; face, countenance (*OED*).

¹²³ **prophane Philosopher**: Pythagoras.

¹²⁴ Cf. Maximinus, "The Pythagoric Letter two ways spread, / Shows the two paths in which Man's life is led. / The right hand track to sacred Virtue tends, / Though steep and rough at first, in rest it ends; / The other broad and smooth, but from its Crown / On rocks the Traveller is tumbled down" (qtd. in Guthrie 158).

time the sicklie soule of man, and séeing by the mysterie of his diuinitie the manifold miseries wherein he was wrapped, like a fish in a net: besides the danger of damnation, whereinto he was like, had not the grace of God preuented him, deseruedlie to runne, did not onlie by preaching, but also by working miracles, séeke to laie a plaister to his festered sore, but he refused the helping hand of the Physician: the more pitie he had so little grace. This Christ, the expresse image of his father, noted these two waies, no doubt to singular purpose, when he gaue vs this lesson worthie the learning, saieng: Enter in at the narowe waie: for wide is the waie, and broade is the gate that leadeth to destruction, and manie they be that walke in it: but narowe is the waie, and streight is the gate that leadeth to life, and few they be that go in at it,¹²⁵ because it is the footepath to felicitie.

4 In this wide waie walke the wicked, whome no counsell, no admonition, no preaching, no teaching, no denouncing of Gods iudgements can reuoke: whose happines and felicitie séemeth vnto them so much the more perfect, as they excéede in heaping sinne vpon sinne, and make no conscience of their inordinate liuing: naie, who is in better case, who in greater credite, who more supported than he that glorieth in his filthines, and counteth it no shame to beare about him, euen in his forehead, the notes, markes, and prints of his abominations?¹²⁶ How farre these swine are from the footepath to felicitie, anie man may iudge.

5 It is not to be spoken, for the truth trieth it selfe, that these men sit in the shadowe of death:¹²⁷ and though they séeme to haue their heauen in this life, yet doubtles both their féete are in hell mouth, and their bodies and soules are like to followe one daie, except the wonderfull grace of God, and his vnspeakeable mercie, worke in them a strange and vnthought vpon alteration. For, no man of himselfe can streighten his crookednes, plaine his roughnes, soften his hardnes, swéeten his sowrenes, tame his wildnes, refourme his wickednes, cleanse his filthines, supplie his vnperfectnes: this is the worke of Gods spirit, the aide and assistance whereof, we must séeke by praier and inuocation, before we can treade the footepath to felicitie.

¹²⁵ Matt. 7:13-14.

¹²⁶ Cf. Isa. 3:9, sidenote h, “When God shal examine their dedes... he shal finde the marke of their impietie in their forehead” (GB).

¹²⁷ Ps. 107:9 (BB).

6 Now, séeing that we are subiect vnto falling, and not able to stand, vnlesse the Lord staie vs: moreouer, for that the waie of the King and the begger, in respect of this life, is all one: Againe, séeing we haue a daie of resurrection, when we all shall receiue as we haue deserued, paine in hell, or ioie in heauen: were it not madnes, naie, were it not desperatenes in vs, the cogitation of these things, with a number more neglected, to runne on still with full raine in wickednes, to become slaues to sinne, to serue Sathan, to fight against God, to adnihilate or make of none effect the merits of Christs passion, to minister occasion to the Angels of mourning, to gréeue the holie Ghost, to buffet and wound thine owne soule, to throwe thy selfe wilfullie into destruction? I thinke yes: what is thine opinion?

7 Well fare the prodigall childe, for he wandering in this wrong waie, and being touched in conscience, and taught that he was not right, retired, and came home with a sorrowfull song, and lamentable outcrie, Father I haue sinned.¹²⁸ Well fare Marie Magdalene, for she traueilling in this bypath of perdition, and inwardlie called to a reformation of her filthie life, for she was a gréeuous sinner, submitted her selfe, fell on the ground, stooped & knéeled vpon her knées, washed the féete of Iesus with her teares, and wiped them with the heares of her head.¹²⁹ Well fare the poore and contemned Publicane, for he in the heauines of his hart lamented that euer he ranne at randon in this crooked waie: he thumped his breast with his fistes, and from the verie bottome of his heart, cried out for mercie, saieng, O Lord, haue mercie vpon me a sinner.¹³⁰ Well fare the Niniuites, for they hauing gone astraie like lost shéepe, and walking in the waie of sinners, which is the waie of death, heard the Prophet Ionas ringing vnto them the alarum bell of repentance, and being reuoked from their wickednes, escaped threatened destruction.¹³¹ Well fare Ioseph, that paterne of integritie and vprightnes: for he would not in anie wise walke with the wife of Potiphar in the waie of wantonnes: her alluring lookes, her flattering enticements, her proffered violence, her instant and importunate temptations

¹²⁸ Luke 15:11-32.

¹²⁹ Luke 7:36-50; Mary Magdalene is often associated with this passage, although she is not named specifically.

¹³⁰ Luke 18:10-14.

¹³¹ Jon. 3.

notwithstanding.¹³² These, with millions more, may teach and instruct such as tender the saluation of their owne soules, that it is better to treade the streight and narrowe path of vertue and innocencie, which leadeth vnto life, though it séeme vnpleasant and troublesome, than to wander in the wide waie of wickednes, which tendeth vnto eternall death, though it be most delectable, and fragrant: for this is no footepath to felicitie.

8 But wo worth that cruell cutthroate, whose maister hauing forgiuen him a great debt, euen the summe of ten thousand talents, arrested his fellow seruant for a debt of an hundred pence, cruellie cast him in prison, and would not release him, till he had discharged the whole summe, which was but fiue and twentie shillings.¹³³ This fellowe walked in the waie of wickednes, and therefore he is condemned vnto death eternall. Wo vnto that graceles and dissembling sonne, who being commanded of his father to go and worke in his Vineyard,¹³⁴ answered, that he would, and yet went not, but spent the time otherwise vnthrifilie:¹³⁵ this man walked in the waie of disobedience, which is sinne, and therefore is in danger of eternall death. Wo vnto those merciles husbandmen, vnto whome the traouelling housholder hauing let out his Vineyard,¹³⁶ and requiring the increase of the same by his seruants, whome he had sent to that purpose, was not onlie withstoode in his message, but had not onelie his seruants, but also his onelie sonne, the heire of all his lands, kéeping possession, abused, beaten, and killed.¹³⁷ These husbandmen, for their crueltie, and vniust dealing, shall abie at the daie of iudgement, and as they walked in the waie of death, so death, euen euerlasting death, shall be their portion. Wo vnto those vnthankfull and careles worldlings, who being solemnelie inuited and bidden to that great supper in the Gospell, excused themselues by the necessitie of their weightie affaires, and refused to come:¹³⁸ for they, in so doing, neglected their owne soules health, & therby most wilfullie ran in danger of eternall death. Wo vnto him, that being vngarnished with a wedding garment, durst

¹³² Gen. 39.

¹³³ Matt. 18:23-34.

¹³⁴ Although the original text features a character used elsewhere as a ‘U’ (see note 72, above), Fleming consistently employs a ‘v’ in words such as “vanitie” and “vertue.”

¹³⁵ Matt. 21:28-32.

¹³⁶ See note 133, above.

¹³⁷ Luke 20:9-18.

¹³⁸ Luke 14:15-24.

notwithstanding sit downe at the banquet, for he in so doing did highlie offend the maister of the feast, and by his presumption ranne in danger of death and damnation.¹³⁹ Wo vnto that yong man, whom Christ by his owne mouth taught how to become perfect: namelie, by selling all that he had, and giuing it vnto the poore: which doctrine séeming bitter vnto him, and too sharp for his digestion, he departed too too heaueie and sorrowfull, as very loth to pay so deare for heauenlie treasure.¹⁴⁰ This rich Gentleman would not pay so hie a price for the discipline of Christ, and therefore was so much the further off from life and saluation, by how much he was nearer vnto death and condemnation. Wo vnto that couetous foole, who hauing his hart set vpon his halfepeunie, enlarged his barnes to receiue his plentiful crop, singing swéetelie to his soule, Be merrie, and take thine ease, thou hast wealth enough for manie yeares: not mistrusting or doubting anie thing, that the diuels were agréed that same night to fetch his soule away.¹⁴¹ And thus he, wretched worldling, walked in the way of death and destruction. Wo vnto the vncleane & beastlie Gergesens, among whom Christ working manie miracles, was so farre from any curteous intertainment, that he was desired, for the safetie of their swine, to depart from their coasts:¹⁴² thus, preferring their hogs before their soules health, they wilfullie walked the way of death and vtter desolation, not passing a point¹⁴³ for the footpath to felicitie. 9 The Scripture abounding with such examples, teacheth vs the danger of walking in darknesse,¹⁴⁴ and sitting in the shadowe of death. And therefore néeding no better schoolemaister vnto Christ, let vs be content to learne in them the wholsome lessons of life, which if we print in the tables of our hart,¹⁴⁵ & kéepe grauen in memorie, as in a marble stone, to imitate and followe them, to be ruled and guided by them, to square and frame the whole course of our life by their rule, we shall not onelie not walk in the wais of the wicked, to eate with them in hel fire the bread of affliction, and to drinke the dregs

¹³⁹ Matt. 22:1-14.

¹⁴⁰ Matt. 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-30.

¹⁴¹ Luke 12:16-21.

¹⁴² Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:11-17; Luke 8:26-36.

¹⁴³ **not passing a point**: caring very little, or not at all (*OED*).

¹⁴⁴ Isa. 9:2.

¹⁴⁵ Prov. 7:3; 2 Cor. 3:3.

of torments:¹⁴⁶ but we shall tread in the footpath of the godlie, & at last enter into the Common wealth of Israel, the kingdome of heauen: which God grant, Amen.

The tenth Chapter.

1 Of waies the sundrie kinds. 2 Of the way of life opened by authoritie of Scripture. 3 A lesson how to be perfect and vpright. 4 The safetie of such as walke in the Lords way. 5 The benefites flowing from this way. 6 The mischiefe folowing the transgression of Adam and Eue. 7 Notable mens names remembred, who walked in Gods way, and of the eternitie of the word. 8 The excellencie of the Lords way set forth by similitudes. 9 Peters boldnesse in venturing to tread the Lords way without the staffe of faith. 10 Of ten leapers, and the thankefull Samaritane. 11 That we of England are like to the Gaderens. 12 Of Marie Magdalene, Ioanna, and Susanna, and what we may learne of them. 13 What we must doe if we meane to walke in the Lords way, and of the merchant and the husbandman by way of example. 14 Of Nichodemus who sought the way of the Lord by night. 15 Of the pretiousnesse of our soules. 16 The way of the Lord, and the waies of the world are quite contrarie. 17 How they differ is proued by things that vtterlie disagree. 18 All creatures couet places correspondent to their nature: of the Salamander and the Hydra: with an application of this doctrine. 19 The immortalitie of the soule, and a lesson for all Christians to learne. 20 A praier or request, that it would please God to guide our feete in his way.

1 There is a waie for the birds in the aire, a waie for the beasts in the field, a waie for the wormes in the earth, a waie for the fish in the sea. There is a waie for the winde, a waie for the raine, a waie for the sunne, a waie for the moone. There is a waie from the East, a waie from the West, a waie from the North, a waie from the South. There is a crooked waie, a streight waie, a rough waie, and a plaine waie. There is a sandie waie, a stonie waie, a soft waie, and a hard waie. There is a waie aboue, a waie beneath, a waie before, a waie behinde, a waie on the right hand, and a waie on the left. There is an open waie, a secret waie, a darke waie, a bright waie. There is a waie to hell, a waie to heauen, a waie

¹⁴⁶ 1 Kings 22:27 (GB).

to death, and a waie to life. Of this last waie I meane to open the commoditie, and so to make a conclusion.

2 The waie to life euerlasting, is the waie wherein we all should walke: it is the safe waie for the soule, to saue it from all annoiances: all other waies, this onelie excepted, are dangerous to enter: for they are darke lanes, as it were, leading to the dungeon of death. The excellencie of this way, is such as that it cannot be described. For it is the way of God, euen his owne way, established in righteousness and perfection. And therefore the Prophet verie notablie speaking of this matter, hath this worthie sentence: My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my waies your waies, saith the Lord.¹⁴⁷ As if he should say, Your thoughts are vncleane, corrupt, earthie, vile, vnpure, vnperfect, sinfull, abominable, wicked, variable, momentanie, vncertaine, wauering: for they are ingendered in your hearts, which are nothing else but a sinkehole of sinfulness, a dunghill of naughtinesse, a puddle of filthinesse, a lake of vncleanness, and what is worst that is your heart. As for your waies, they are no better. Thus by an antithesis, or opposition, the Lord teacheth vs what his waies are, euen the waies of truth, righteousness, puritie, and perfection: wherein who soeuer walketh, no doubt, he is in the high way to heauen, and treadeth the footpath to felicitie.

3 Abraham being nintie & nine yeares old, was instructed and taught how to become perfect, the Lord appearing vnto him, and giuing him his lesson in that behalf: I am God all sufficient, walke before me (that is, kéepe thée within the compasse of my paths, wander not this way, or that way, but walke in one way, euen my way) and be thou vpright.¹⁴⁸ There was no meanes, either for Abraham, or anie other holie man to vse, wherby to attaine and come to vprightnesse, but onlie the walking in the way of the Lord, as we may see prooued & confirmed in this place by Gods owne mouth. How preposterouslie therefore they goe to worke, which seeke sinisterlie and indirectlie to recouer perfection and vprightnesse: some building vpon traditions of men, some vpon custome, some vpon ceremonies, some vpon Paule, some vpon Apollo, some vpon Cephas,¹⁴⁹ some vpon good woorkes, some vpon merits, some vpon pardons, some vpon indulgences, some vpon pilgrimages, some vpon professions, all which to be but sand

¹⁴⁷ Isa. 55:8.

¹⁴⁸ Gen.17:1 (GB).

¹⁴⁹ **Cephas**: Aramaic for “rock” (referring to Simon Peter); 1 Cor. 3:22.

(Christ the rocke¹⁵⁰ refused) a blind man may discern. For, is this to walke in the waie of the Lord? nothing lesse.

4 This waie of the Lord is the waie of beautie & peace, saith Salomon:¹⁵¹ it is the waie of holinesse, saith Esaie:¹⁵² it is the waie of streightnesse, éeuennesse, plainnesse and smoothnesse, saie Ose¹⁵³ and Ieremie:¹⁵⁴ in this waie whosoeuer walketh, the moone shall not hurt him by night, nor the sunne annoie him by day: the pestilence shall not touch him, the arrowes of the hunter shall not wound him, he shall not stumble, nor hit his foot against a stone, the Lord will ouershadowe him with the shield of safetie, the Lord will be his defence, his buckler, his speare against all his enimies,¹⁵⁵ no lightning from aboue, no earthquake beneath, no consuming fire on this side, no raging sea on that, no element, no planet, finallie, no creature shall do him anie harme. This honor will the Lord vouchsafe all such as walke in his waie, which is the waie of life, the high waie to heauen, and the footpath to felicitie.

5 Daud oppressed with the crueltie of his enimies, and fearing great dangers, calleth vnto God for succour. His petition consisting of manie partes, whereof some concerne himselfe, othersome his aduersaries, this is one thing which he craueth at the hands of his maker, Make thy waie plaine before my face, saith that good man.¹⁵⁶ Giuing vs to vnderstand, that by walking in the waie of the Lord, we haue our felicitie fulfilled, as by the contrarie, the measure of our confusion and cursednes is made vp. Yea, to walke in the waie of the Lord, is the rule to make our crooked waies streight, the plainer to make our rugged waies smooth, the lanthorne to make our darke waies bright and lightsome,¹⁵⁷ according to that saieng of the Prouerbe writer, The waie of the righteous shineth as the light, that shineth more and more vnto the perfect daie.¹⁵⁸ This is the waie of wisdom and knowledge, wherein who so walketh, he shall haue roome enough, and when he runneth, he shall not stumble or fall.

¹⁵⁰ 1 Cor. 10:4.

¹⁵¹ Prov. 3:17 (BB).

¹⁵² Isa. 35:8.

¹⁵³ Hos. 4:10.

¹⁵⁴ Jer. 6:16.

¹⁵⁵ Ps. 91:4.

¹⁵⁶ Ps. 5:8.

¹⁵⁷ Prov. 6:23.

¹⁵⁸ Prov. 4:18 (GB).

6 In this waie once were placed our great progenitors Adam and Eue, if they could haue béene content: but they forsooth, so busie were they, and inquisitiue after another waie, which the diuell put into their heads, forsooke the first waie, which was the safe-waie, and tooke a second waie, which was the waie of death, wherevnto they were persuaded by Sathans subtill suggestion, and ouercome at length by his malignitie and hellish vndermining, tasted of the trée of life, wherevpon did growe the fruite which they were bidden, not so hardie of their hearts, so much as once to taste.¹⁵⁹ Ah fooles, void of wisdom, and destitute of grace! why did you so? fie vpon your follie, which hath purchased immortall shame. Were you placed in the waie of perfection, in the waie of plentifulnes, in the waie of felicitie, in the waie of blessednes, in the Lords owne waie, and yet would be better? but sée the iudgement of God, the earth by this meanes became accursed, and all the ofspring of man subiect vnto death.

7 There haue béene, that haue walked in this waie of the Lord, some, though in number not manie, whose names, for perpetuall memorie, are recorded in Scripture. Among these were Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Iacob, Moses, Aaron, Phinees, Iosue, Caleb, Samuell, Nathan, Daud, Salomon, Elias, Elizeus, Ezechiell, Isaias, and diuers other, whome by name to rehearse, were labour necessarie I confesse, but for tediousnes. That these men walked not in the waie of the Lord, who dare be so bold as to affirme, séeing the finger of the holie Ghost hath registred the same in the euerlasting courtrolles of the holie Scripture, the vnchangeable word of the eternall God, whereof not so much as one iot or tittle shall passe,¹⁶⁰ when all things else shall be consumed, and vtterlie come to naught.

8 Thinke you that this waie of the Lord is anie other thing, than the rich treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he departeth for ioie, and selleth all that he hath for readie monie to purchase that field?¹⁶¹ Or is not the waie of the Lord that rich and pretious pearle, which liked a Merchantman so well, that he was content to make an exchange of all that he was worth for the same?¹⁶² Or is not the waie of the Lord that pure and fine siluer, seauen times tried in the fire, and purged from all kinde of drosse,

¹⁵⁹ Gen. 3.

¹⁶⁰ Matt. 5:18.

¹⁶¹ Matt. 13:44.

¹⁶² Matt. 13:45-46.

so that nothing is comparable therevnto?¹⁶³ Or is not the waie of the Lord that same rich iewell house, wherein are laide vp for all such as walke therein, gifts of excéeding great valuation: yea, so excellent, as that they cannot sufficientlie be commended? I thinke yes, and to warrant me herein, I haue the expresse word of God.

9 We reade in the Gospell, that Iesus Christ walking vpon the sea, was supposed and thought of his disciples to be a spirit: for the resolution whereof, Peter among the rest required to come vnto him vpon the water, which being granted, he lept out of the ship, and walked on the waues toward Iesus: but a mightie winde arising, Peter was afraide, and began to sinke?¹⁶⁴ Why was this? euen because he wanted the walking staffe, which euerie one that would go in the waie of the Lord, ought to hold in their hand, and that is faith. For had not Christ stretched out his hand, and supported him, he had perished, had he had a thousand liues.

10 Christ passing vpon a time betwéene Samaria and Galile, opened the waie of his father vnto ten lepers. Among these ten, there was one Samaritane, who onlie and alone, notwithstanding the benefit which they receiued was generall, had this walking staffe, whereby he kept his féete right in the way of the Lord. For the other nine, as soone as they were cured, forgat themselues, and returned not to giue thanks vnto him, by whose helpe they were healed.¹⁶⁵ Such lepers there are among vs not a few, who from the crowne of the head, to the sole of the foote, haue no sound place, but all infected, lothsome, and filthie, that is, ouergrowne with sinne, in so much, that there is no part of their soule, but it is attainted. If among this great and infinite number, one Samaritane might be found, some signe it were, that the graces of God are not powred vpon vs in waste, neither his benefites ill bestowed.

11 But it is so far vnlike, that anie of vs should be a Samaritane, that we shew and proue our selues rather to be Gadarens,¹⁶⁶ vpon whome the common prouerbe is iustlie veriefied, that it is no casting of pearles before swine.¹⁶⁷ It is now twentie and odde

¹⁶³ Cf. Prov. 25:4, "Take the drosse from the siluer, and there shal procede a vessel for the finer" (GB).

¹⁶⁴ Matt. 14:25-31.

¹⁶⁵ Luke 17:11-19.

¹⁶⁶ Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:11-17; Luke 8:26-36; **Gadarens**: variant of "Gergesens" (see note 141, above).

¹⁶⁷ Matt. 7:6.

yeares, since we haue had among vs the iewell of Gods word,¹⁶⁸ than the which nothing is more pretious, vnto the which anie thing compared, appeareth méere mucke, by the which anie thing tried, is found lighter than vanitie. This word, notwithstanding it be the trumpet, whereby we are called into the waie of the Lord, and continuallie moued to treade the footpath to felicitie, is contemned, neglected, and despised, the preachers of the same derided, the prophaners thereof preferred, the professors of it abused, the suppressers thereof mainteined, so that it is no maruell though the waie of the Lord be so little, naie, nothing at all in comparison, frequented or vsed, séeing the ordinarie meanes whereby we are called and lead therevnto, is so careleslie reiected.

12 Among manie that were healed of their infirmities, deliuered of diuels, and restored to their right wits, we reade of thrée women, namelie, Marie Magdalen, Ioanna, and Susanna: these (saith the holie text) ministred vnto Christ of their substance,¹⁶⁹ thereby acknowledging the benefits which they had receiued, and declaring in like maner, by their perceiuerance and knowledge of God, that they were in the waie of the Lord. Is it not a shame that women, which are the weaker vessels,¹⁷⁰ should put vs in minde what we ought to do? That which they receiued, was temporall, it was corporall, it was transitorie, and yet they shewed themselues thankfull: we haue had at Gods hands the riches of his truth, which are spirituall, and euerlasting, subiect to no change, vnder no alteration, & yet we haue not the grace to glorifie and praise God, as we ought, for the same: naie rather, we loath the truth, we surfet of it, such fulnes we haue thereof: we are wearie of hearing it taught, we prefer vanities, yea, diuelish vanities before it, whereby we bewraie our hellish inclination, and manifestlie proue how far wide we wander out of the Lords waie, and leaue the footpath to felicitie we knowe not in what corner.

13 To passe through this waie, we must be content to carrie the crosse, euen the crosse of Christ, I meane afflictions and persecutions for his holie name sake: otherwise we shall not bée thought woorthie followers of him. We must renounce our selues, we must forsake friends and kindred, we must cast awaie wicked mammon, we must refuse no

¹⁶⁸ This may be a reference, as Miller suggests, to the Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer of 1559 (*Abraham Fleming* 105), the Geneva Bible, first printed in 1560, or the teachings of Hendrick Niclaes (H.N.), which were first proclaimed in England in 1561 (Wooton 129).

¹⁶⁹ Luke 8:2-3.

¹⁷⁰ 1 Pet. 3:7.

tribulation, no torment, no losse, no damage, no wrong, no iniurie, no anguish, no not death it selfe, were it neuer so terrible. For if the merchant man for lucre sake, and increase of commoditie, aduentureth life and goods vpon the sea, enduring all tempests that arise, and suffering euen the woorst lucke that maie light vpon him, with a contented mind, in hope to obtaine the fruite and profit of his trauell: if the husbandman repineth not to tarie the time of the yeare, after his painful plowing, his diligent sowing, and other his necessarie labours, with sweating browes, and bedewed lims susteined, & then gathereth into his barnes the plentiful crop of his ground: shall we thinke much to suffer for Christs sake, for the truths sake, for safe conscience sake, for our soules sake, temporall paines, and momentanie troubles: knowing that these are preparatiues to life euerlasting, & that we can not walke in Gods waie, vnlesse we yeeld our neckes to beare his yoke?

14 Fondlie plaid Nichodemus, that great lawier and ruler among the Iewes, his part, in comming to seeke the waie of the Lord by night.¹⁷¹ For hée preferring his worldlie reputation and countenance, before the knowledge of Gods kingdome, and being ashamed to be séene in the day time, to haue recourse vnto so contemned a person as Christ, prooued himselfe to be as he was, euen a louer of himselfe, a popular fellowe, that is, such a one as esteemed more of his worship and credit, than of the doctrine of truth. Wherein he declared his infancie and grosse ignorance touching regeneration: his great learning, knowledge, and experience in other points naught auailing. Thus wée sée, that for one furtherance and help to leade vs to the waie of the Lord, and to bring vs to the footpath of felicitie, there are twentie: yea, and twice twentie hinderances and lets,¹⁷² which lie like blockes, ouer which there is no leaping, vnlesse the Lord put vnder his hand, and lift vs ouer them.

15 Now therefore, forsomuch as there is but one waie vnto life euerlasting, but manie waies vnto death and condemnation: requisite it is, that we which are placed in this world, as in a wilderness, and haue a pilgrimage to walke, should first and principallie haue, as they saie, an eie to the maine chance, that is, should haue a singular regard to the safetie of our soules: the pretiousnesse wherof Christ commended vnto vs, when he

¹⁷¹ John 3:1-21.

¹⁷² **lets**: obstructions, impediments (*OED*)

said, What will it profit a man to gaine all the world, and to lose his soule?¹⁷³ Meaning indéed thereby, that all the pompe, the riches, the treasure, the pleasure, and whatsoeuer belongeth to this life, are nothing counteruailable or equiualent to the soule, the excellencie whereof, if there were none other prooffe to confirme it, is sufficientlie set forth by the rich ransome that was paid for it, to redéeme it out of captiuitie and thraldome: I meane the pretious bloud of Iesus Christ.

16 Setting aside therfore all bywaies which leade vnto death, it standeth vs vpon, if we tender our saluation, to séeke the waie of the Lord whiles it may be found. The maner how, is declared before at large, euen by denieng our selues, and forsaking the world, with whom whosoeuer doth acquaint himselfe, vnpossible it is that hée should once set foote in the waie of the Lord. For the waies of the Lord are good and righteous altogether, as saith the Psalme writer:¹⁷⁴ but the whole world is set vpon mischief and villanie, saith the Apostle.¹⁷⁵ So that betwene the waies of the Lord, and the waies of the world there is no affinitie, no likenesse, no equalitie: naie, there is a flat opposition and contrarietie.

17 Is it possible that the lambe and the wolfe, the spider and the flie, the falcon and the feasant, the hound and the hare, the peacocke and the snake, the cat and the mouse, the owle and the nightingale, the iuie and the oke,¹⁷⁶ the vinetrée and the colewort,¹⁷⁷ or what else is of contrarie inclination, should agré together, & the one not spoile the other? The waies of the Lord, & the waies of the world, are much more at variance. For fire being hot and drie, is not a greater enimie vnto water that is cold and moist: life being sensible, quickening, and pleasant, is not a more mortal foe vnto death, that is senslesse, ouglie, and dreadfull: blacke being darke and dim, is not more contrarie vnto white, that is lightsome and bright: Christ being perfection it selfe, is not more contrarie vnto Antichrist the child of perdition: heauen aboue, is not more vnlike to hell belowe: finallie the triumphs of celestiall Sion, are not more differing from the torments of the

¹⁷³ Matt. 16:26.

¹⁷⁴ Ps.145:17.

¹⁷⁵ Rom. 1:18-32.

¹⁷⁶ **the iuie and the oke:** the ivy and the oak.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Rabelais, “for it is more their opponent and enemy...than cabbage to vines” (*Gargantua and Pantagruel* 370).

infernall lake: than the waies of the Lord, which are pure and cleane, and the waies of the world, which are filthie and lothsome.

18 We see that euerie thing coueteth a place to liue in agréable to their nature. The fish in the riuer, the beast in the medowe, the bird in the aire, the worme in the earth.

Experience teacheth vs no lesse, and reason proueth it to be true. Wherevpon it is recorded in monuments of memorie, that the Salamander, and the Hydra,¹⁷⁸ two mortall enimies, and creatures of contrarie qualitie, encountring vpon the land, did so wound one another, that they were well nigh destroied. The Salamander, desirous to recouer himselfe, left off fighting, and flew into the fire, which restored vnto him his former strength:¹⁷⁹ the Hydra seeing this, retired in like maner, and lept into the water, where he recouered all the force that he had lost: and thus they both, by betaking themselues to their naturall places, preserued their liues, which otherwise had béene in hazard.

19 These creatures, and diuerse other, maie teach vs wit. For seeing that we haue no continuing citie here, but looke for one to come:¹⁸⁰ is it not our partes to direct our steps thitherward, considering that we are not like vnto beasts, birds, fishes, wormes, serpents, or anie vnreasonable thing: but immortall, like our maker, whose image we beare about vs?¹⁸¹ It were vantage for vs to meditate herevpon, and to haue our minds aboue, not raking like dunghill cocks for a barlie corne in mucke: but like eagles lifting our selues aloft with the wings of faith.¹⁸²

20 And thus much touching the waie of all flesh, which is death: the waies of the world, which are sinfull and lead vnto hell: the waies of the Lord, which conduct vs vnto the footpath of felicitie, and so to life euerlasting. In which waie, being the right waie, the true waie, the perfect waie, the certaine waie, the pure waie, the cleane waie, the vndefiled waie, the Lord giue vs grace to walke whiles we liue and drawe breath in this our earthlie tabernacle, that we maie, when we are called out of the same, treade the

¹⁷⁸ **Hydra:** a many-headed water snake, defeated by Hercules in classical mythology (T.H. White 179).

¹⁷⁹ The salamander was believed from antiquity to dwell in flames (T.H. White 184);

¹⁸⁰ Heb. 13:14.

¹⁸¹ Gen. 1:26-27.

¹⁸² Isa. 40:31.

footepath to felicitie, enter in at the glorious gate of heauenlie Hierusalem, and there
enioie our appointed mansions, not made with hands,¹⁸³ but established by the word of
eternitie, to whome be all dominion, power, and maiestie, Amen.

¹⁸³ 2 Cor. 5:1.

A looking glasse for the Christian Reader,
containing summarilie the substance of all the
doctrines deliuered before at large.

A listning eare that loues to learne
how to amend that is amisse,
By grace diuine shall haue the choice
of that which good & healthfull is.
Resist the force and strength of sinne
with spirituall artillerie,
Absteine from noisome lusts: This is
the footepath to felicitie.
Haue alwaies in remembrance
Christ Iesus crucifide to death,
And let the same thy comfort be,
till vtter gaspe of life and breath.
Meeke minded be, all pride detest,
and learne of Christ humilitie,

Forbeare thy furious foe: This is
the footepath to felicitie.
Lament the lacke of faith and truth,
which lies forsaken and forlorne,
Exhort to peace where it doth want,
and of the needie thinke no scorne.
Make much of such as pleasure take
in fostring loue and charitie,
In such is hope of grace: This is
the footepath to felicitie.
Nothing so much doth like the Lord,

as louing of his heauenlie lawe,
Giue eare therto, and from the same,
let no alurement thee withdrawe.

An vpright life delight to leade,
thy lust keepe in captiuitie,
By vertue honour seeke: This is
the footepath to felicitie.
Reuolt not from the word of truth,
but euen to death the same professe,
And make account that thy reward
will be eternall happinesse.
Hell is the hire of euerie one,
that is to truth an enimie,
A true beleeuers die: This is
the footepath to felicitie.
Marke what reposed is in heauen,
for such as do their maisters will,

Free libertie from thraldoms yoke,
and blessed Angels food their fill.¹⁸⁴
Lord lighten thou our mistie eies,
that we may loue the veritie,
Extend to vs thy spirit: This is
the footepath to felicitie.
Make vs to ioie in nothing more,
than in thy word procuring peace,
I meane thy Gospell full of grace,
the loue whereof O Lord increase.
New harts, new minds create in vs

¹⁸⁴ Ps. 78:25.

and make vs like thy maiestie,
Good, like thy selfe, so shall we finde
the footepath to felicitie.

Amen.

FINIS.

A Guide to Godlinesse,
diuided into three speciall
branches: namelie,

Confession, Petition, Thanks-
giuing, and their seuerall
blossomes.

A Christian treatise, and no lesse sweete
and comfortable, than necessarie
and profitable to be read, both for
common and priuate
vse, &c.

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

I. *Timoth.* 4, 8.

Godlines is profitable vnto all things,
which hath the promise of the life
present, and of that which is to come.¹

¶ Printed at London by Henrie
Denham, dwelling in Pater noster
rowe, at the signe of
the Starre.

1581.

¹ 1 Tim. 4:8 (GB).

A Preface to the true Christian Reader.

Among all the meanes which God hath ordeined to bring man to the state of blessednes, I finde praier to be pretious, profitable, and necessarie. Pretious, because it is the incense which we are commanded to burne vnto the Lord in the sanctuarie of our harts: pretious I saie, because thereby we obtaine at the hands of God, whatsoever tendeth to the good estate of the soule: and yet once againe pretious, because the Lord God, at the ascending thereof vp into heauen, stretcheth foorth his bountifull hand, and largelie bestoweth vpon vs whatsoever is beneficiall for our mortall bodies.

Profitable, because it procureth vnto vs the ministration of all maner commodities behoofull for this life. For it is the onlie instrument, which we are commanded by Christ in the Gospell to vse, if we stand in neede of anie thing, either temporall or spirituall, during our pilgrimage in this life, as the verie words of our sauour seeme to import in this sense, saieng: Whatsoever ye aske of the father in my name, it shall be giuen you.² Againe, Aske, and ye shal haue:³ as if he said, If ye aske not, ye are worthie to want, because you neglect the vse of the precept.

Now, who is so ignorant, but knoweth, that the asking, which Christ meaneth, is praier. For to aske of God, is not to aske after the maner of men, with a kind of carnal and corruptible affection, the end whereof is to staie the force of concupiscence, or desire, and the obtaining of that which is required: but it is an inward, secret, heauenlie, and ⁴spirituall motion of the minde, lifted vp aloft with the wings of faith,⁵ and presenting it selfe before the throne of his diuine maiestie, there attending vpon the will of his good pleasure.

Necessarie also, because we may not, neither can be without it, vnlesse we meane to leade a defectiue life, euen a life full of wants and imperfections. For if there had not beene a necessitie in praier, Christ would not haue charged vs therewith, by a

² John 14:13-14.

³ Matt. 7:7-8; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9-10.

⁴ Transcription of the Folger copy begins.

⁵ Cf. Isa. 40:31, "But vnto them that haue their trust in the Lorde, shall strength be increased: Egles winges shall growe vpon them" (BB).

speciall commandement, not so seldome as a hundred times recited.⁶ Being therefore pretious, profitable, and necessarie, it is our parts to vse it, to frequent it, & to make it our dailie exercise, knowing that to praie often, is often to receiue: and by often receiuing we waxe rich to Godward: and by waxing rich in that respect, we become happie & blessed. Now to attaine vnto these ioies, though thou hast (gentle Reader) not so few as a thousand helps and furtherances, yet thinke not scorne, I beseech thee, in the bowels of Christ,⁷ to vse this my guide to godlines, though it be ministred vnto thee by a poore earthen vessell. Wherein I haue obserued this course, diuiding it into three branches, the first, Confession: the second, Petition: and the third, Thankesgiuing, each folowing other in sequence orderlie, as by prooffe in perusing shall appeare. Esteeme my trauell accordinglie as it is meant, praieng the Lord to increase my knowledge in the mysteries of his truth, and I will beseech his goodnes to kindle and keepe quicke thy godlie zeale and loue to the same.

Abraham Fleming.

⁶ Among others, Matt. 6:5-13; Luke 11:1-4; Rom. 12:12; Phil. 4:6; 1Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:1; Jas. 1:5; 5:13-16.

⁷ Phil. 1:8 (BB).

The first Branch, of Confession.

The first Blossome, conteining

1 A generall inuocation vpon GOD, with a common confession of our owne vilenes. 2 Our cursed estate, notwithstanding Gods grace offered by the Gospell. 3 The peruersenes and crookednes of our nature, with our corruption farre exceeding all other. 4 The small regard that we haue of the Gospell, with our ignorance of Gods truth, and his true seruice. 5 The knowledge of God ioined with hypocrisie, is detestable, and what insueth our vnfruitefull profession. 6 A confession of our defections in godlie zeale and discipline. 7 How we are affected to the Lawe and the Gospell. 8 The treasure of the truth maketh our guilt the greater. 9 The little effect that Gods great liberalitie hath among vs wretches vngratious.

1 O Lord, which art glorious in power and holines, we being but dust and ashes,⁸ with the casting of our selues down at the féet of thy high Maiestie: confesse that we are most vile sinners, conceiued and borne in sinne,⁹ and that we are by nature nothing else, but a lumpe of all wickednes,¹⁰ whose naturall propertie is to growe in sinne, as we growe in yeares, and to waxe strong in wickednes, as the powers of our minds and bodies receiue strength.

2 There is in vs, no holsome nor sound knowledge how to obeie thée: there is no maner of good will or affection to please thée: finallie, there dwelleth no good thing in our flesh.¹¹ And although our cursed estate doth herein greatlie appeare, yet our sinne is made out of measure sinfull, through the excéeding grace which thou offerest by the Gospell of thy déere sonne: whereby¹² we are so farre from profiting, that of our selues we should waxe worse and worse.

3 For the more light of knowledge is shewed, the blinder would we remaine: the greater obedience is taught, the frowarder and stubberner would we become: if thou by the

⁸ Gen. 18:27.

⁹ Ps. 51:5.

¹⁰ A allusion to *massa damnata*, Augustine's doctrine of human depravity, based on his allegorized reading of Rom. 9:21, and also referenced by Calvin in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

¹¹ Rom. 7:18.

¹² Transcription of the Huntington copy resumes.

mightie working of thy holie spirit, shouldest not cause it to be fruitfull. And although we haue this naturall corruption in common, with the whole rotten race of Adam: yet we confesse, that in vs it hath budded, and shot forth so much more than in others, as we haue had mo¹³ meanes to kill it, and to cause it to wither, than others haue had.

4 Where first of all, the gracious offer of the treasure of thy holie Gospell vnto vs, maketh vs guiltie manie waies. For where passing by manie other nations, thou hast trusted our nation withall: yet with a number of vs, it hath found as small entertainment, and felt as great resistance, as amongst them, at whose gates it neuer knocked. For a great portion of the land, partlie neuer yéelding themselues to the obedience thereof, and partlie falling from it, after they had once yéelded: stand proudelie as it were at the stauess end with thée. The rest, which make profession of their submission vnto it, do it not accordinglie. For first, there bée heapes of our people, which either through a déepe rooted affection and loue to Popish religion, or through a wicked opinion which they nourish of embracing the truth set foorth, are so nousled,¹⁴ blinded, and misled, as that they still abide in an vtter ignorance of the truth it selfe, in such sort, that although there be no want of preaching, yet they are as rawe in the knowledge of the true seruice of thée, as they were expert before in the seruice of the diuell.

5 And where knowledge is to anie such sufficiencie as is requisite, for the inheritors of the kingdome of heauen: there is it (for a great part) ioined with such hypocrisie, as maketh them more detestable before thée, (which searchest the verie reines,) ¹⁵ than if they had still continued in their ignorance. Now, for the remnant of vs, which through grace haue trulie, and faithfullie beléeued, it is with so great weakenes of faith, and so small reformation of manners, that our glorious profession of the Gospell, supported and borne out with so small shewe of good fruites, which the excellencie therof doth require, maketh not onelie the enimies to condemne vs, but our selues to suspect one another, whether we belong vnto thée or no.

¹³ **mo:** more (*OED*).

¹⁴ **nousled:** nuzzled; deceived (*OED*).

¹⁵ Ps. 26:2; Jer. 17:10; **reines:** the kidneys, referred to in Biblical usage as the seat of feelings or affections (*OED*).

6 Wherein O Lord, we acknowledge that to be our great and horrible sinne, that being put in trust with this vnspeakeable treasure of thy holie Gospell, and preferred before our neighbors, professors about vs: yet we are in thankefull obedience vnto thée, behinde them all: first in knowledge, last in zeale: before them in the doctrine of thy holie Gospell, behinde them in the discipline of the same.

7 The yoke of the slauerie of our bodies, which the Popish religion laide vpon vs, we willinglie shake off: but the holie bands of thy lawe, whereby our riotous life and affections should be brought into bondage, we do hardlie and heauilie admitte. The Gospell, which brought a fréer vse of our lawfull honors, pleasures, and commodities, was welcome vnto vs: but the same Gospell, which restraineth the vnlawfull licentiousnes of our ambition, intemperancie and couetousnes, is not so. Finallie, so much of the Gospell, as doth more néerelie respect our saluation, we séeme to haue some care to retaine: but so much of it as doth more directlie respect thy glorie, and the profite one of another, we make small accompt of.

8 And séeing the naked treasure of thy holie Gospell, had ben a rich reward of a most seruiceable subiection: it comming vnto vs not alone, but accompanied with so long a peace, with so great a welth, so plentifull aboundance of all things, as this land hath neuer or seldome vsed, other lands about vs haue long looked after, maketh our guilt a great deale more: because that in thy so great a larges towards vs, we haue bene so vngratious towards thée againe.

9 Here therefore is another staier, whereby our sinne climeth higher. For that we, in the commodities of this life, surmounting our auncestours of the same profession of the Gospell, in the time of King Henrie the eight of most famous memorie, and King Edward the sixt:¹⁶ are, for the fruits that such a liberalitie asketh at our hands, a great deale worse than they: and going beyond other lands in these outward blessings, are outrunne of them, euen in the verie outward testimonies and tokens of our obedience towards thée.

¹⁶ Although Henry VIII broke with the Church of Rome and assumed control over the Church of England in 1534, religious doctrine under his regime remained essentially Catholic. His successor, Edward VI, was an avid Reformer, and introduced the Book of Common Prayer as a replacement to the Latin liturgy.

The second Blossome, conteining

1 A confession of particular sinnes in seuerall estates, and first against Gouvernours. 2 Against Iudges, and their indirect proceedings. 3 Against ministers. 4 Their inordinate affections. 5 Their imperfections, wants, and infirmities. 6 Against the people, and their lacke of loue to the truth. 7 Our securitie, and want of grace. 8 The aggrauating of our sinnes, and making of them more huge and heinous. 9 The burthen which Gods Lawe laieth vpon our shoulders. 10 Our vnworthines of anie benefit, or good blessing, either temporall, or eternall.

1 Ouer¹⁷ and besides this huge heape, and (as it were) réeke of our generall and common sinnes, we haue to confesse (at the¹⁸ barre of thy iudgement seate) the particular sinnes that we haue cocked vp¹⁹ in our seuerall estates. For our gouernours, O Lord, for the most part, being more mindfull of the fulfilling of their affections, than either of thy glorie, or of their good estate, which are committed vnto them, haue not held so steadie a hand as they ought to haue done, either for the stablishing of the lawes, by which (vnder thée) they should haue ruled vs, and we by them should haue bene gouerned of thée, or for the thorough execution of so manie, and so farre foorth as they haue bene well established.

2 Our Iudges, and other ministers of iustice likewise, haue either ignorantlie, or corruptlie declined from righteous iudgement: or giuing sentence for the truth, they haue done it (diuers of them) with no conscience of thy true feare, or loue of truth, but for respect, either of vaine glorie, or of persons.

3 The Ministers, which should haue bene lightes vnto all estates, haue for the most part, no light in themselues: and their estate, in whose good constitution and sound health, the rest should haue recouered their health, is of all other the most sicke vnto death. For if the whole number be surueied, scarce the hundred will be found to be in the lotte of a faithfull ministerie.

4 For ah alas! how manie are there, which occupieng the place of Ambassadors, either for want of abilitie, or for that they loue ease and sléepe, carrie no tollerable ambassage

¹⁷ Although the original text features a character used elsewhere as an upper-case ‘V’ (see note 30, below), Fleming consistently employs a ‘u’ in words such as “ouer.”

¹⁸ An additional “the” appears in the original text.

¹⁹ **cocked vp**: performed boastfully or defiantly (*OED*).

at all? How manie which carrieng the light of the Gospell in their mouthes, carrie also in their hands, the filthie water of ambition and couetousnes, wherewith to quench it?

5 And those which by thy grace, are for their might and will in some good measure iustifiable: notwithstanding, for the most part, beare it with such infirmitie, through slippes,²⁰ as well in a sound and substantiall maner of teaching, as also in an euen life answering therevnto, that if thy blessing were not maruellous vpon their labours, we should not néede to feare the quenching of this fire of the holie Gospell, kindled among vs by the enimies: as that which hauing so small attendance of blowing, would die of it selfe.

6 Finallie, the people beare so small loue vnto their gouernours of all sorts, in loue so small reuerence, and in them both so little willing obedience, that it may be (not vneasilie séene) that all the partes of the Church and Commonwealth, haue conspired to prouoke the Lord God against them. These our great and ouergrowne sinnes, albeit they are gotten aboue our heads, yet rest they not here. For where thou hast by thy holie seruants, the Ministers of thy blessed word, sharplie chidden vs, and in a seueare denouncing of thy iudgements due vnto them, fearefullie threatned vs for them: yet haue we not trembled at thy voice, at which the Mountaines do melt, and the rockes do rent asunder.²¹

7 A strange thing, that the Lion should roare, & the weake Lambes should not be affraide: ²² that the Lord of hoastes should proclame warre against vs, and we should not goe foorth and méete him, for intreatie of peace. Naie, his wrath (as hath bene shewed) hath bene and yet is kindled amongst vs: and yet as senslesse men, and as dead flesh, we are not moued: We are pricked, and we féele it not. We are wounded, and we do not so much as aske, who hath stricken vs. The tempest that is comming toward vs, threateneth our vtter drowning: and yet as a drunken man, we lie sléeing in the verie toppe of the mast.

8 Whereby it is euident against our selues, that vnto the multitude of our sinnes, we haue added another degré of wickednes, which is the continuance in them: vnto our

²⁰ **slippes**: faults, errors in conduct (*OED*).

²¹ Mic. 1:4.

²² Hos. 11:10; Amos 3:8.

disobedience, we haue ioined stubbornes, and the biles and botches²³ of our rebellion being ouglie in thy sight, do through the putrefaction, and festrednes of them cast out such a stincke, as the earth which we tread vpon, the waters which we drinke, and the aire which we breath, are tainted and poisoned with the infection of them.

9 Yea Lord, taught by the wonderfull iustice of thy righteous lawe, we charge vpon our heads all the sinnes of our fathers and grandfathers, to the vttermost of our generations which are past:²⁴ as those wherevnto we are iuster inheritours, than vnto anie landes or goodes that they haue left vs. Whereby it falleth out against vs, that our sinnes touch the cloudes, yea, breake into the heauens of thy Maiesties owne residence:²⁵ whose measure being alreadie (as it seemeth) filled, there remaineth nothing, but that it should be turned vpon our heads.

10 Wherevpon we make against our selues another confession, that we are vnworthie of all the benefites of this life, or of the life to come: both those which we either haue, or yet hope to enioie, from the greatest, to the smallest, from the kingdome of heauen, to one onelie drop of water: that we are worthie of all the plagues, which either haue heretofore seized, or bene yet possessed of vs. Yea, if thou shouldest ransacke all the hid and secret treasures of thy fearefull iudgements, which in thy lawe thou threatenest against the breakers thereof, not onlie to the rasing and swéeeping of vs from the face of the earth, but also to the throwing of vs headlong into the bottomles pit of hell: yet would we therin also acknowledge thy righteous iudgements. For to vs belongeth shame and confusion of faces, but vnto thée glorie and righteousness.²⁶

The third Blossome, conteining

1 An appeale to Gods promises in Christ, for the remission of our sinnes. 2 The bloud of the Lambe washeth vs wooll white. 3 A praier in the behalfe of the dispersed Church, against Papists and Heretikes: and for godlie vnitie. 4 Gods blessing maketh

²³ **biles:** boils; **botches:** ulcers, sores (*OED*).

²⁴ Cf. Exod. 20:5, “for I the Lord thy God, am a gelous God, and visite the sinne of the fathers vpon the chyl dren, vnto the thirde and fourth generation of them that hate me” (BB).

²⁵ Cf. 1 Esd. 8:76, “For our sinnes are become many, euen aboue our heades, and our ignoraunces are lifted vp euen vnto heauen” (BB).

²⁶ Dan. 9:7.

our land fruitfull: and that we are the Lords sheepe, our vnworthinesse notwithstanding. 5 A request for the continuance of his loue and mercie. 6 To what end it is to be desired.

1 All this, both guilt of sinne, and desert of punishment notwithstanding, (O father of mercies, and God of all comfort)²⁷ we trusting vnto the promises which thou hast made vs in Iesus Christ, are bold through him, humblie to call for the performance of them. And first we humblie desire thée, to forgiue vs all our sins. Thou hast said, that if we confesse our sinnes, thou art faithfull to forgiue vs them.²⁸ We acknowledge the debt, cancell therefore the obligation: let not the multitude of them preuaile against vs, but where our sinne hath abounded, let thy grace more abound: and as we haue multiplied our sinnes, so we praie thée to multiplie thy mercies.²⁹

2 And although we haue by continuance in them, so soked our selues, that thereby we are not onlie lightlie stained, but also haue gotten as it were the scarlet and purple die of them: yet let them all (we praie thée) being washed in the bloud of thy swéete Lambe, be made as white as the snowe in Salmon,³⁰ and as the wooll of the shéepe which come from washing.³¹ And to conclude, as our sinnes haue magnified themselues in an infinite length, breadth, deapth, and height: so let thy mercies (which passe all vnderstanding) of all sides and assaies outreach them.

3 Therefore also we most humblie desire thée, O Lord, that the sinne being pardoned, thy wrath which is alreadie declared, may be appeased towards all the Churches of our profession, and especiallie towards vs, that the manifold breaches of the Churches, and Commonwealthes maie be made vp, that those being receiued into the bosome of the Church, which belong to thine election, the rest of the Papists and Heretikes may be vtterlie rooted out, and that our enimies in religion béeing slaine, we may to the vttermost thinke all one thing, in the honest and peaceable gouernement of the Commonwealth.

²⁷ 2 Cor. 1:3.

²⁸ 1 John 1:9.

²⁹ Rom. 12:1 (GB).

³⁰ Ps. 68:14 (BB).

³¹ Isa. 1:18 (BB).

4 Vpon³² which vniting of vs in all truth and honestie, the curses of the plague and barrennesse being remoued, a waie may be made to thy blessings, which (as the hills do the vallies) may make our land holesomelie fruitefull.³³ And that not onlie the wrath, which is alreadie kindled, may be quenched, but that which hath bene latelie threatened, may be caused to retire. For the graunt whereof vnto vs, we beséeche thee to remember, that how vnworthie soeuer, yet are we thy people, and the shéepe of thy pasture,³⁴ whome thou hast redéemed with thy most pretious blood, watched ouer with a carefull eie, defended with a mightie hand: despise not therefore, O Lord, the workes of thy hands.³⁵

5 And séeing thou hast loued vs, when we hated thee, visited vs, when we desired thee not, then acknowledged vs, when we knewe thee not: now that there be a number of vs, which loue thee, desire thine abode, and acknowledge thee: hold on thy loue still, depart not from vs, denie vs not, O thou God of truth, which art the God that chan³⁶gest not.³⁷ And if thou wouldest or couldest forget vs, calling vpon thee, yet what should become of thy great name, which is called vpon by vs? And therefore for thy glories sake, and for thy blessed name sake, which in our destruction should be rent and runne through, spare vs, spare vs good Lord, according to the vsuall dealing, which thou hast euer kept with those, which in praier haue had recourse vnto thee, and according to the old and vnchangeable nature of a mercifull, kind, sparing, and long suffering God.

6 Which mercie we do not (O Lord) desire, to the end that we should tumble and wallowe our selues in our accustomed neglect, and contempt of thy holie word: but together with mercie for our sinnes, and the reward of them, we most humbly craue vpon the knées of our hearts,³⁸ that for the time to come, (how long or how short soeuer) we with deniall and detestation of our selues, and of our wicked lustes, may offer vp

³² Although the original text features a character used elsewhere as a ‘U’ (see note 17, above), Fleming consistently employs a ‘v’ in words such as “vpon.”

³³ Cf. Deut. 8:7, “For the Lorde thy God bryngeth thee into a good lande, a lande in the whiche are riuers of water, and fountaines and deapthes that spring out of valleys and hylles” (BB).

³⁴ Ps. 79:13; 100:3; Ezek. 34:31.

³⁵ Isa. 64:8.

³⁶ Transcription of the Folger copy begins.

³⁷ Mal. 3:6.

³⁸ Pr. Man. 1:1.

vnto thée in Iesus Christ, our selues, our bodies, and soules to be seruants at thy holie commandement in that reasonable seruice, which the high reason of thy holie word doth prescribe:³⁹ and to be weapons, or instruments of righteousnes,⁴⁰ and holines, as they haue bene heretofore of the contrarie. All which things, as whatsoever thou knowest to be further néedefull for vs, or for anie of the Churches, we praie thée, as our Sauour hath taught vs, saiong: Our father which art in heauen, &c.⁴¹

The fourth Blossome, conteining

1 A confession of sinnes, and their due desert. 2 Transgression in thought, word, and deede. 3 None able to beare the burthen of our offences but Christ alone. 4 A petition for a liuelie and feeling faith, and the fruites of the same. 5 For victorie against⁴² sinne, by the assistance of Gods spirit. 6 For the due examination of our thoughts, and an vpright hart. 7 For conuersation fit and agreeable to our calling. 8 For constancie in our profession, against all temptations and impediments.

1 O mercifull and heauenlie Father, we thy seruants do humblie prostrate our selues before thy diuine Maiestie, acknowledging here in thy sight our hainous offences committed against thine omnipotencie, séeing and beholding thy heaue wrath against them. We féele our selues laden (O Lord our God) with a huge companie of horrible sinnes,⁴³ whereof euen the verie least (being but conceiued in thought) is sufficient in iudgement, to throwe vs downe to the euerlasting burning lake.⁴⁴

2 Our owne consciences, O Lord, do beare witnes against vs, of our manifold transgressions of thy blessed lawe, of our securitie⁴⁵ and senslesse blindnes, running headlong to destruction, committing sinne after sinne, although not notorious to the world, yet horrible before thine eies. The thoughts of our hearts rise vp in iudgement

³⁹ Rom. 12:1.

⁴⁰ Rom. 6:13.

⁴¹ Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

⁴² Transcription of the Huntington copy resumes.

⁴³ Cf. Eccclus. 3:29, “An obstinate heart shalbe laden with sorowes, and the vngodly sinner wyll heape one sinne vpon another” (BB).

⁴⁴ Cf. Rev. 21:8, “But the fearefull and vnbeleuing, and the abhominable, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, & all lyers, shall haue their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brymstone” (BB).

⁴⁵ **securitie**: “culpable absence of anxiety, carelessness” (OED).

against vs: the vanitie of our talke before thy Maiestie condemneth vs: the wickednes of our déedes from thy sight reiecteth vs: all our wicked thoughts, words, and déedes, with the inward corruption of our nature, do altogether, as it were a whole lumpe and loade of sinne, lie heauie vpon vs, and with their intollerable weight, do euen presse vs downe to Hell.⁴⁶

3 We do dailie grone vnder the burthen of them, inwardlie lamenting our owne follie, so gréedilie running into them. In heauen, earth, or hell, we sée none able to susteine the weight of them, but euen thy dearelie beloued sonne Iesus Christ, who in mercie infinite, and compassion endlesse, hath sustained and ouercome that endlesse punishment due vnto them: in him therefore, in him most mercifull Father, and through him, we come to thée,⁴⁷ being fullie assured according to thy promise, that thou wilt accept and take that full recompense, which he thy deare son hath made for vs, as a iust ransome for all the sinnes of all those, who with a true faith take hold on him.⁴⁸ In him therefore we sée thine anger towards vs appeased, thy wrath satisfied, and our debts paied.

4 Increase in vs (good Lord) we beséech thée, this liuelie and féeling faith:⁴⁹ for we féele it oftentimes in vs verie weake, and troubled with manie doubts: increase it in vs (O Lord) that we maie through thy holie spirit be assured, that the punishment of our sinnes is fullie in thy sonne discharged. Make vs, O Lord our God, to féele this same in our soules and consciences, that Iesus Christ is ours, and all that he hath done, that we are graffed into his bodie, and made one with him, and therefore fellow heires with him of euerlasting life.⁵⁰ Let vs not onelie haue these words in our mouthes (good Lord:) but through thy holie spirit, let vs féele the comfort of them in our hearts fullie sealed and settled in vs, that we féeling our selues inwardlie before thy iudgement seate discharged, and our consciences towards thée released, may be swallowed vp with an vnfeined loue toward thy heauenlie Maiestie, and towards our brethren for thy sake.

⁴⁶ Cf. Ps. 38:4-6, "For my manyfolde wickednes is gone ouer my head: and like a sore burthen is to heauie for me to beare... I am become crooked, and am exceedingly pulled downe" (BB).

⁴⁷ John 14:6.

⁴⁸ Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:15.

⁴⁹ Luke 17:5.

⁵⁰ Cf. Rom. 8:10, side note d, "when we are grafted in Christe, his spirite of lyfe geueth vs lyfe, and iustifieth vs" (BB).

5 Make sinne to die in vs dailie more and more, that we may hate, detest, and vtterlie abhorre all sinne and wickednes in all men, but especiallie in our selues: that we may stronglie (through thy holie spirit) set our selues in open warre and defiance against all sin and wickednes, that we please not our selues in our sinnes, but streightlie examining sinne by the iust rule of thy holie lawes, we may vtterlie from the bottome of our hearts, condemne euen the least sinne in our selues, hauing our whole ioie, comfort, and consolation vpon those things which be agréable to thy blessed will.

6 Giue vs grace alwaies to be afraide to do anie thing contrarie to thy good pleasure: and from the bottome of our hearts, to examine and trie our thoughts, before thy presence, that they be vpright and vnfeined, not hypocriticall in outward shew onlie, and appearance,⁵¹ but that euen all corners of our hearts being opened and disclosed before thée, we may euen as though it were openlie before the face of the whole world, bring them in shewe, knowing that a double hart is detestable in thy sight.⁵²

7 O Lord, direct and guide our féete,⁵³ that we may walke alwaies as before thine eies, not onelie before the eies of man, being more carefull to walke circumspectlie, in this respect, that we haue thée to be a viewer of our doings, a thousand fold more than the eies of man, that thus we may walke as becommeth thy children, not onlie in outward shew, but also in sinceritie of hart, abhorring euen the least sinne in our selues, striuing, resisting, and fighting against sinne, not delighting our selues in sinne, nor nourishing the same in our breast, but earnestlie embracing, and studiouslie séeking after those things which be pleasant in thine eies.

8 O good Lord, make vs constant, and firme harted, that neither the feare of man, nor losse of goods, life, lands, possessions, or friendes, drawe vs awaie from thée, to do anie the least thing contrarie to thy will and pleasure: neither the fauour or friendship of man, nor yet the flattering enticements of this world, nor the vaine promotions of the same, do moue vs anie whit from the true and endles ioie, delight, & pleasure, which we ought to haue in those things which be agréable to thy will, and the constant performance of the same, but that alwaies to the end of our life we may continue in thy pathes, growing and

⁵¹ Cf. Matt. 23:28, “Euen so, ye also, outwardly appeare ryghteous vnto men: But within, ye are full of hypocrisie and iniquitie (BB).

⁵² Ecclus. 1:33.

⁵³ Cf. Luke 1:79, “guide our feete into the way of peace” (BB).

increasing from faith to faith, from strength to strength,⁵⁴ till at the length we shall come to thy euerlasting rest, Amen. T. C.

The second Branch, of Petition.

The first Blossome conteining

A praier to God, at our vprising in the morning.

O bountifull GOD, which among all other thine abundant blessings, hast giuen vs the bright daie and Sunne shine, to be the guide and gouernour of all our doings, we beséech thée, that as thou art the father of light, and hast sent light among vs, not onlie the light of the cléere daie, but also the light of thy glorious Gospell, so thou wouldest direct all that we go about in light, that we may shew our selues children of light, in applieng our labour, and occupieng both our minds and bodies in the workes of light, that when the daie of retribution shall come, when thou wilt reward euerie one according to the measure of their merits, we maie enter into that light, whose brightnes shall neuer be darkened, there to liue with him, who is the light of the world, Iesus Christ the righteous, to whome, with thée, and the holie Ghost, be all laud, praise, honour, and glorie for euermore, Amen.

The second blossome conteining

A petition to be said at the putting on of our clothes.

O eternall and most mercifull Father, we beséech thée, as thou hast giuen vs clothes to couer our bodies, to hide our nakednes, & to preserue our corporall health: so to decke and beautifie our soules with the riches of thy true knowledge, which is the summe and substance of all perfect happines: through Iesus Christ our sauour, Amen.

The third Blossome conteining

A petition to be said at the washing of our hands.

⁵⁴ Ps. 84:7 (GB).

Grant O mercifull sauour, that as with this water, the filth and vncleannes of our bodilie members are washed and scowred: so our inward soules may by the dailie remembrance and vertue of thy bloudie death and passion, be purged from all sinne and iniquitie:⁵⁵ that both bodie and soule being voide of blemish, we maie come the néerer vnto thée in perfection, Amen.

The fourth Blossome conteining
A petition to God, at our going abroade,
about our worldlie businesse.

O gracious God, which sanctifiest the hearts of thy chosen seruants, and circumcisest their thoughts,⁵⁶ in so much that they become wholie acceptable vnto thée, and are altogether cleansed from carnalitie and corruption: we beséech thée so to pitch the tents of thy protection and prouidence about vs this present daie,⁵⁷ that all things whatsoever we purpose, may by thy gracious guiding be so disposed and prospered, that our hearts be not carried awaie with the cares of this world, as hauing little hope in thine all sufficiencie and bountifulnes. O Lord, so season vs with the salt, not of vnsauourinesse, least we be throwne out vpon the dunghill of reprobation, and so troden vnder foote as outcasts of none account:⁵⁸ but with the salt of sinceritie and righteousness so powder our spirits, that whatsoever we take in hand this present daie, may be so furthered, helped forward, and prospered by thy goodnes, that we thereby may reape sufficient commoditie, none offended or discontented either with vs, or our labour, nor thou by anie meanes dishonoured, but highlie praised and glorified both in vs and in our doings, according to the saieng of thy sonne, in the holie Gospell: Let your light so shine before men, that they séeing your good workes, may glorifie your father which is in heauen.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Ps. 51:2.

⁵⁶ Deut. 30:6.

⁵⁷ Cf. Num. 24:5, “Howe goodly are thy tentes O Iacob, and thyne habitations O Israel? Euen as the valleys are they layde abrode, & as gardens by the riuers side, as the tentes whiche the Lorde hath pitched” (BB).

⁵⁸ Matt. 5:13.

⁵⁹ Matt. 5:16.

This, O Lord, and all other graces necessarie, grant vnto vs for thy sonnes sake, our onlie mediatour and aduocate, Amen.

The fift Blossome conteining

A petition to be said when we are at worke,
and about our businesse.

Prosper, O Lord, by the presence & assistance of thy grace, the businesse which we haue in hand. Put into our minds to do it faithfullie, and rather for conscience sake, than couetousnes. Further our affaires, we beséeche thee of thine infinite goodnes, giue our labours prosperous & happie successe, and graunt vs grace to glorifie thee in thy blessings, Amen.

The sixt Blossome conteining

A petition vnto God at the leauing off from our labour,
whether it be of bodie or minde.

Almightie God, and most mercifull father, which cloathest the lillies of the field, with such roialtie, as Salomon when he sat vpon the throne of his maiestie, neuer possessed:⁶⁰ which feedest the birds of the aire, the beasts of the land, and the fish of the sea with sustenance conuenient and agréeing with their nature: We beséeche thee to accept at our hands, this sacrifice of thankesgiuing, offered vp vnto thee for thy manifold benefits, and among all other, for that thou hast hitherto prospered vs in our busines and labour, which thou hast not made frustrate and vnfruitfull, but with due measure and weight of profit & aduantage, hast let it passe out of our hands.

And we beséeche thee, O father, that as thou hast hitherto bene the ouerséer of all our studies and trauels, making them fruitfull and beneficiall vnto vs, so it would please thee to continue still thine accustomed bountifulnes, and to giue vs grace, that for the same we may offer vnto thee not onlie the calues of our lips,⁶¹ but also of our hearts, through Christ Iesus our onlie sauour and redéemer, Amen.

⁶⁰ Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-31.

⁶¹ Hos. 14:2.

The seuenth Blossome conteining

A petition to be said at the putting off of our apparell.

Grant, O gracious God, thou giuer and preseruer of all creatures, that as we put off this our apparell, and cast it from vs: so we may also, thy grace helping and assisting vs, put off the old man, euen the man of sinne,⁶² that clogged with the lesse vice, and clothed with the more vertue, we may be found fit for thée, whensoever it shall please thée to call vs out of this world: thorough Iesus Christ our sauour, Amen.

The eight Blossome conteining

A petition vnto God at our going to take naturall rest.

Heauenlie God, which art so prouident, and watchfull for the health and preservation of thy children, that they want nothing necessarie for the supportation and maintenance of this their transitorie life, not houses to harbour in, not garments to put on, not foode wherewith to be nourished: finallie, nothing, whatsoever it is, that they stand in néede of, whiles they leade their liues in this transitorie tabernacle: we beséech thée, that as thou hast let this daie passe luckilie ouer our heads, safelie defending vs from all dangers, and giuing vs the fruits of our labours, least our working should be waste: so it would please thée in like measure of mercie, and peize⁶³ of compassion, to be our watchman, this present night, and euerie night, so long as our bodies and soules remaine coupled in this vale of vilenes and miserie.

Also, O father, we heartilie beséech thée, that although darkenes dimme the eies of our bodie, wherby the vse of our externall and outward sight is made frustrate and voide, yet the eies of our mind may still be broade waking and open,⁶⁴ continuallie looking for that comfortable comming of thy Christ in glorie, that we may be in a readinesse, when the trumpet soundeth, Arise ye dead and come to iudgement,⁶⁵ which whether it be in the euening, at midnight, at the cockcrowing, or at the dawning of the

⁶² Cf. Eph. 4:22-24, “lay downe...ye olde man, which is corrupt, accordyng to the lustes of error” (BB).

⁶³ **peize**: peise; a standard measure of weight (*OED*).

⁶⁴ Eph. 1:18.

⁶⁵ Matt. 24: 31.

daie, none can tell, no not the Angels.⁶⁶ But whensoever it is, O Lord, so kéepe vs waking, that when thou comest, our lamps may be found burning. Graunt this most mercifull father, for thy sons sake, Iesus Christ the righteous, to whome, with thée, and the holie Ghost, thrée persons, and one omnipotent, almightie, euerlasting, and onlie wise God, be all laud, praise, honour, dominion, and glorie, now and for euer, Amen.

The ninth Blossome conteining

A petition for a godlie life.

Open our eies, O Lord, that we may behold the woonderfull secrets of thy lawe,⁶⁷ and therin as in a stéele glasse, discerne and sée our owne weakenes, and by our weakenes our wickednes, and by them both our accursednes. O procure thou the pleasant comforts and consolations contained in thy Gospell, to sound the verie deapth and bottome of our soules, by the plummet⁶⁸ of a true and liuelie faith in Christ Iesus.

Graunt also, we beséech thée, that our drie and stonie harts, by the swéete dewes and showres of thy heauenlie grace, dropping downe and soking therinto, may be so moistened and softened,⁶⁹ that like good ground they may euer be yéelding forth plentifull and pleasant fruits, to the glorifieng of thy most holie name, the supplanting of sin, and the aduancement of vertue: through the death and bloudshead of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ, Amen.

The tenth Blossome conteining

A petition to be said in time of health,

being a thankesgiuing vnto God for that good blessing.

We knowe O mercifull father, that a rotten trée can not fructifie,⁷⁰ no more can the bodie of man diseased, take anie pleasure in the vse of thy creatures, at leastwise verie little, if anie at all. For as the morning deaw, or waterie clouds, falling vpon the field, moisteneth

⁶⁶ Matt. 24:36.

⁶⁷ Ps. 119:18.

⁶⁸ **plummet**: a piece of metal, attached to a line, used for sounding depth (*OED*).

⁶⁹ Cf. Ezek. 36:26, “as for that stony heart I wyll take it out of your fleshe, and geue you a fleshy heart” (BB).

⁷⁰ Matt. 7:18; Luke 6:43.

the ground, and maketh it fruitfull and pleasant: euen so health and soundnes
possessing euerie limme, maketh the whole bodie, and all the members of the same, apt
and able for anie exercise. By the benefit whereof, we purueie for our selues, all such
necessaries as are requisite for this our fraile life. Knowing this most mercifull father, we
referre it vnto thy goodnes, praising and magnifieng thée for the same, and humblie
beséeching thée to continue it in vs, and to giue vs grace that we abuse it not anie
manner of waie. Graunt this O bountifull God, for Iesus sake, Amen.

The eleuenth Blossome conteining

A petition in forme of a confession, to be said in the time of sicknesse,
or otherwise, when the partie diseased seemeth to be in danger.

Almightie and most mercifull father, the punisher of sinne, and the iust rewarder of
iniquitie, I confesse vnto thée, that the multitude of my transgressions, and the
lothsomnes of my life, cannot but déepelie displease thy diuine Maiestie, and deseruedlie
crie out for vengeance against me: yea, vengeance to death, for my misdéedes craue no
better reward. I knowe that sinne is such a filthie and ouglie thing in thy sight, that who
soeuer are stained and defiled therwith, are euen an abomination vnto thée: for thou
being the God of righteousnes, delightest not in wickednes,⁷¹ neither canst take anie
pleasure in iniquitie. I confesse that for sinne, thou hast sent manie strange and terrible
punishments vpon diuers people.

The olde world, in the fulnes of their offences, were ouerwhelmed with water
from heauen, to their vtter destruction.⁷² The Sodomites were burned, and their
neighbours about them, euen with fire and brimstone, for the filthines of their offences.⁷³
The Aegyptians, a people obstinate and rebellious, and alwaies setting shoulder against
the Prophets, were rewarded for their misdéedes, with most horrible plagues, in the heate
of thine indignation.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Cf. Ps. 11:5, "God wyll trye the righteous: but his soule abhorreth the vngodly, and
hym that delighteth in wickedness" (BB).

⁷² Gen.7.

⁷³ Gen. 19:1-29.

⁷⁴ Exod.7-11.

Yea, the Israelits, a people peculiarlie chosen to serue thée, at what time they sinned gréuouslie, and displesed thy diuine Maiestie, turning by the manifoldnesse of their transgressions, thy mercie into furie, thy clemencie into anger, thy long suffering into reuengement, they felt the smart of thy rod, not wrathfullie confounding them as castawaies, but louinglie correcting them like children.⁷⁵

So most mercifull father, hoping that in the bloud of Christ Iesus, I am adopted into the number of thy children,⁷⁶ albeit my misdéedes are so manie, that they far passe the sands in the seas, or the starres in the skies: yet I beléeue that thy mercie, which is about all thy workes, is able to dispense with the multitude of my sinnes, and throughlie to cleanse and wash me from the blots and spots of mine iniquities.⁷⁷

And therefore (O gracious God) with vnfeined repentance I prostrate my selfe before thée, crieng and calling vnto thée, to deale with me in the measure of thy mercie, and not in the weight of thy furie, though my transgressions excéede number. For if thou shouldest reckon with me in rigour, I should be found more light than vanitie, it would fare with me as with chaffe before the winde,⁷⁸ or as with bauen⁷⁹ in a scorching fornace: mine end would be death, my reward confusion. O heare me therefore, O louing Lord, faithfullie calling vpon thée, with him that said, O sonne of Daud, haue mercie vpon me.⁸⁰ and with her that said, If I might but touch the hemme of his garment, I shall be whole:⁸¹ and with him that said, Lord, I beléeue, oh helpe mine vnbeléefe:⁸² and with him that said, Father I haue sinned against heauen, and against thée:⁸³ and with him that said, O Lord be mercifull vnto me a sinner.⁸⁴ Cast downe thy louing lookes vpon me,

⁷⁵ Cf. Deut. 8:5, “as a man chastiseth his sonne, euen so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee” (BB).

⁷⁶ Cf. Eph. 1:3-5, “Blessed be God...Who hath predestinate vs into the adoption of childre, by Iesus Christ vnto hym selfe, according to the good pleasure of his wyll” (BB).

⁷⁷ Ps. 51:2.

⁷⁸ Ps. 1:4.

⁷⁹ **bauen**: bavin; firewood (*OED*).

⁸⁰ Bartimaeus, a blind beggar of Jericho; Matt. 20: 29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18: 35-43.

⁸¹ A sick woman, afflicted for twelve years; Matt. 9:20-22.

⁸² The father of a boy possessed by a spirit; Mark 9:17-29.

⁸³ The prodigal son; Luke 15:11-32.

⁸⁴ A tax collector; Luke 18:9-14.

lamenting Lazarus, lieng in wofull case,⁸⁵ visited by thy hand, and groning vnder the rod of thy correction: spare me O God, spare me O good Lord, and be not angrie with me for euer.⁸⁶ I take it for an vndoubted truth, that all manner of punishments procéde from thée, as accustomed meanes and wonted waies which thou vsest to call thy best children home: and therefore I am in so much the more comfort, that this thy visitation and chastisement is no signe of thine endles anger against me, though sicknes, and all kind of annoiances sprang and issued from sinne: but a token and argument of thy fauour and louing kindnes.⁸⁷

Yea Lord, though it tend to temporall death, whereby my bodie is wounded, yet I am reposed in this hope and affiance,⁸⁸ that my soule shall not see corruption, but shall be receiued into heauen, to rest in the bosome of faithfull Abraham, till the time be come of the generall iudgment & glorious resurrection.

I knowe, and it is the duetie of all true Christians to confesse no lesse, that from the beginning thou visitedst thy children: yea, on them whome thou most tenderlie louedst, thou diddest laie some portion of thy correction: partlie, to trie them in tribulation, and to confirme their faith by patience in aduersitie:⁸⁹ but speciallie to assure their spirit, that they are thy children, and thou their father: they thy shéepe, and thou their shepheard:⁹⁰ they thy people, and thou their gouernour: they thy souldiours, and thou their captaine: they thy chosen, and thou their glorie. Thou calledst to the inheritance of thy kingdome, after the daies of his pilgrimage were spent, Abraham the father of the faithfull. Thou calledst vnto the ioies of heauen Iacob and Ioseph, when they had runne their appointed race. Thou calledst vnto endlesse blessednesse, that mild minded man, the mirrour of méekenes, Moses I meane, thy righteous seruant, when he had fulfilled his course. Thou calledst vnto the place of eternitie, Iosua and Caleb, and

⁸⁵ The rich man who ignored the plight of Lazarus; Luke 16:19-31.

⁸⁶ Cf. Ps. 79:5, “O God, howe long wylt thou be angry? shall thy ielousie burne lyke fire for euer?” (BB).

⁸⁷ Cf. Heb. 12:6, “For whom the Lord loueth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth euery sonne that he receaueth” (BB).

⁸⁸ **affiance**: faith, trust (*OED*).

⁸⁹ Cf. Ps. 94:12, “Blessed is the man O Lorde, whom thou wylt chasten: and whom thou wylt instruct in thy lawe. That thou mayest geue hym patience in tyme of aduersitie” (BB).

⁹⁰ Ps. 79:13; 100:3; Ezek. 34:31; 1 Pet. 2:25.

other gracious Iudges of thy people, when the houreglasse of their life was run out. Thou calledst vnto the fort of felicitie, Samuells and Dauid, prophets of thine owne appointment, when their full yeares were expired. Thou calledst vnto the Paradise of perfect pleasure, Ezechias, Iosias, & other vertuous Kings, when their earthlie tabernacle was torne and rent in sunder.

Thou calledst vnto euerlasting happinesse, Esaie, Ieremie, and the rest of thy seruants the Prophets, when they had liued their full time in this world. Thou calledst vnto thy kingdome, Iames, Iohn, Paule, Peter, and other thine Apostles, when they had discharged their dutie in fulfilling their commission. And to conclude, thou calledst vnto the throne of triumph and victorie, Iesus Christ thy son, that immaculate and vnblemished lambe,⁹¹ that innocent shéepe, that swéete Samaritan and surgion of our soules,⁹² when he had finished the spirituall building, whereof he himselfe was the foundation, and chéefe corner stone:⁹³ when (I saie) he had accomplished thy will, and vanquished sinne, Sathan, death, and hell. In bringing which things about, thou didest vse ordinarie meanes, euen death the waie of all flesh: that by their example, thy seruants might be comforted in sicknes, that as thy kindnes was plentifully declared vnto them, in deliuering them out of this wildernes, and translating them to eternall happinesse: so to me no lesse than vnto them, though for a time thou laiest thy hand vpon me, and scourgest me with thy rod,⁹⁴ thy fatherlie loue and affection is manifest. For whome thou louest, him thou chastenest, and whippest euerie child thou adoptest and chooseth,⁹⁵ that the consolation of their spirit may be the more increased. Wo were I, if thou shouldst not visit me (O Lord:) wretched were my state, and condition, if thou shouldst not trie me with the fire of afflictions.⁹⁶ Sicknes is thy messenger: pouertie is thy messenger: yea, death is thy messenger, whome thou incessantly sendest vnto thy seruants, to call them vnto thée and thy kingdome. In consideration whereof, I thy child,

⁹¹ 1 Pet. 1:19.

⁹² Cf. Exod. 15:26, “for I am the Lord that healeth thee” (BB).

⁹³ Isa. 28:16.

⁹⁴ Cf. Heb. 12:14, “My father also chastised you with roddes, but I will chastise you with scourges” (BB).

⁹⁵ Heb. 12:6.

⁹⁶ Isa. 48:10 (BB).

as I faithfullie beléeue, adopted in Christ,⁹⁷ visited at this present by thy hand, and patientlie abiding the sharpenesse of thy scourge, am erected and encouraged with a certaine and infallible hope, that at thy good pleasure thou wilt worke all in me for the best, to my soule saluation, and to thy selfe glorification.

Why should I murmur against thée, though I am griped with anguish? Why should I mistrust thy mercie, though my paines be somewhat extreame? Why should I despaire, as though thou wert not mercifull? No, no: so long Lord, as there remaineth breath in my nostrels: and so long as mine eies are open: and so long as my tong hath the power of speach, thy spirit being present with me, and comforting me, I will thus thinke with my selfe: The Lords will be fulfilled:⁹⁸ when he séeth best time he will make an end of my tribulation. He doth not punish me as a reprobate, to my condemnation: but he correcteth me as a child, to my saluation. I am the worke of his hands,⁹⁹ he created me, and made me of nothing: to the honour of himselfe did he make me, and therefore I hope he will not destroie his owne workemanship, though it resteth in his will and pleasure, to dispose all things as séemeth best to his diuine Maiestie.

His child I am, adopted in the bloud of his sonne Iesus Christ,¹⁰⁰ inheritour of the kingdome of heauen through the spirit of sanctification, a member of his mysticall bodie, a grape of his vine, a sheafe of his haruest, a shéepe of his flocke: and therefore I trust he will be my gracious God. This is my comfort, that thus thou doest chastise me, not in iudgement, to desperation: but in mercie, to consolation: and this is my ioie, that hereby I am assured, that my name is written in his register: and as for my faults, he hath raced them out of his reckoning booke.¹⁰¹

Why then should I hang downe my head, as though confusion were the portion of mine inheritance? To them that loue God, all things turne to good. This his visitation is but a preparatiue to further felicitie, which in due time he will reueale to me his seruant, when he hath taken sufficient prooffe and experience of my patience, which I beséech

⁹⁷ Eph. 1:3-5.

⁹⁸ Matt. 6:10.

⁹⁹ Isa. 64:8

¹⁰⁰ Eph. 1:3-5.

¹⁰¹ Ps. 51:1.

him to establish and confirme, that the possession of eternitie may be the reward of my sufferance.

Wherefore, O most mercifull father, if it be thine appointment, (as thy determinations are secret, and hidden from the heart of man,) that this my sicknes and trouble be vnto death, O then gratuslie heare my supplication, and let the voice of my crie enter into thine eares.¹⁰² Giue me not ouer in my distresse and weakenesse, when Sathan is most busie to spoile me: but stand thou like an inuincible Giant on my right hand,¹⁰³ let the wings of thine almightines ouershadowe me,¹⁰⁴ euen vntill my last gaspe. Moreouer, graunt most mercifull father, that at the separation and dissolution of my soule and bodie, I may still continue thine, my bodie turning into dust, whence it tooke first substance: and my soule possessing heauen, whence it receiued being. O Lord, send me a ioifull resurrection, at the daie of iudgement, and let me be numbred among the lambes, whome thou hast chosen to be ioint-heires with thée of thine owne happines in heauenlie ioies.

O Lord heare my praier, and let my crie come vnto thée. Lord haue mercie vpon me, Christ haue mercie vpon me, O holie Ghost be my comforter: O blessed Trinitie, receiue my soule into the place of glorie, Amen.

The twelfe Blossome conteining

A petition to be said at the houre of death,
ouer the partie visited, and lieng speechlesse.

O eternall God, the welspring of life,¹⁰⁵ and the treasure of true and euerlasting riches, thou God of the quicke and the dead,¹⁰⁶ thou which hast appointed euerie man a mansion in this earthlie pilgrimage, and placed vs here as tenants at thy pleasure, to remoue and depart when it is thy will to call vs: thou, euen thou which ridest vpon the wings of the

¹⁰² Ps. 61:1.

¹⁰³ Cf. Isa. 42:13, "The Lorde shall come foorth lyke a giaunt...and ouercome his enemies" (BB).

¹⁰⁴ Ps. 91:4.

¹⁰⁵ Ps. 36:9; Prov. 14:27.

¹⁰⁶ Rom. 14:9.

winde,¹⁰⁷ whose seate is the heauen of heauens: whose footstoole is the earth:¹⁰⁸ whose messengers are the Angels and celestiall hoast: O bow downe thine eies of pitie, & looke vpon vs, O thou glorie of Sion, thou beautie of Hierusalem, thou Alpha and Omega,¹⁰⁹ thou which art incomprehensible, the first person of the holie Trinitie, open thy gracious eares, and heare the petitions of vs thy seruants. O heare vs, and that betimes, thou sauer of soules, whiles breath is in the nostrels of this thy diseased and sicke creature: for after this life, it is too late to make intercession.¹¹⁰ Thou hast chastened him O Lord inwardlie and outwardlie, his strength is turned into weakenes, his health into sicknes, his flesh consumeth, his limmes are lame, his eiesight waxeth dimme, his spéech is stopped, all his senses are nummed, his hart panteth, life and death struggle within him, and wrestle for superioritie.¹¹¹ He lieth in pangs, he is past hope of recouerie to our iudgement, he refuseth sustenance, he can take no rest, O looke vpon him, thou comfort of Israell, and deliuer Ioseph out of this prison.¹¹² O Lord haue mercie vpon him, O God make him strong to endure this sharpe and bitter conflict. Let not the terrour of death, the torment of his sicknes, the losse of life, or departing from anie transitorie pleasure, withdrawe his heart from thée: but, as thou didst create it, and powredst it into his bodie, so vouchsafe to reserue it for thy selfe, that thou maist be glorified in it, both now, and héereafter, when it shall please thee to raise it vp with the rest of the bodie in the last resurrection.¹¹³

Behold Lord, he is not able to praie for himselfe, thy hand is so heaueie vpon him at this present,¹¹⁴ he can not so much as lift vp a limme, thou hast whipped him so sore: he is past hope of health in the eies of man, thou hast made such déepe furrowes vpon

¹⁰⁷ Ps. 104:3.

¹⁰⁸ Isa. 66:1.

¹⁰⁹ Rev. 1:8.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Ps. 6:5, “For in death no man remembreth thee: and in the graue who can acknowledge thee?” (BB).

¹¹¹ Cf. Ps. 38:3-10, “There is no helath in my flesh through thy displeasure: neither is there any rest in my bones by reason of my sinne...My heart panteth, my strength hath fayled me: and the lyght of myne eyes is gone from me” (BB).

¹¹² Gen. 39:20-23.

¹¹³ 1 Cor. 15:35-44.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Ps. 39:10, “I am euen consumed by the meanes of thy heauy hande” (BB).

his backe:¹¹⁵ he is spéechlesse, because thou hast taken awaie the vse of his tongue:¹¹⁶ lo Lord, he lifteth vp his eies vnto heauen, notwithstanding all these infirmities & weakenesses: O remember him, forgiue him his sins, remit and blot out of thy reckoning booke, the ten thousand talents which he oweth thée.¹¹⁷

He is not able to testifie the inward sorowe of his heart conceiued for sinne, so sharpe and seueare is thy present visitation, which iustlie and deseruedlie thou hast laid vpon him: and surelie, though thou didst punish him more rigorouslie, yet thou art not accusable of iniustice. For iust art thou O Lord in all thy workes, and righteous in all thy iudgements.¹¹⁸ But yet Lord we beséech thée, to asswage the heate of thy wrath, which if it burne still, and continue vnquenched, alas, who shall be able to abide it?¹¹⁹

Behold Lord how lowe he is brought, all his bones are out of course, which waie so euer he is turned, he féeleth nothing but anguish: no rest, no ease, no quietnes can he take, such is the weight of thine anger against him, for the instruction of vs that are aliue, and here present at his visitation, that we may learne thereby to detest sinne, which is the cause of thy displeasure, and to amend, least a worse thing happen vnto vs.

O Lord we beséech thée to consider our supplications, and to accept the praiers which we powre out in thy presence, in the behalfe of this our diseased brother. And louing Lord, if it be thy will to take him hence, O then we beséech thee to shorten his time, to end his lingering sicknes, and so to deliuer him from all earthlie trouble. But if it be thy pleasure to raise him vp, being thus cast downe, and to quicken & strengthen him, whome thy hand hath driuen almost to deathes dore, then at the intercession of vs thy seruants, hasten his time of recouerie, and restore him vnto health and soundnes. We praie for him O Lord, not knowing the secrets of thy counsell, which is vnchangeable, deale with him as it pleaseth thée: thine he is to order and dispose. For thou art the potter, and he but a lumpe of claie,¹²⁰ vnto thée we commit his soule and bodie: thy will

¹¹⁵ Ps. 129:3.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Ps.39:9, "I became dumbe, and opened not my mouth: for it was thy doying" (BB).

¹¹⁷ Matt. 18:21-35.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Ps. 111:7, "The workes of his handes are veritie and iudgement: all his commaundementes are true" (BB).

¹¹⁹ Ps. 130:3 (BB).

¹²⁰ Isa. 64:8.

be done in earth as it is in heauen, for thine is the kingdome, the power and the glorie,
for euer and euer, Amen.¹²¹

The thirteenth Blossome, conteining

1 Gods vniuersall gouernement. 2 That he annointeth Kings and Queenes, and why. 3 A petition vnto him in the behalfe of our gracious Queene Elizabeth. 4 His mercie in preseruing her in time of tribulation. 5 A praier for the continuance of her good estate. 6 Against the enimies of the truth, either to be conuerted, or confounded. 7 The Church of God, and the Commonwealth, two sisters. 8 The death of Christ a full ransome for all our sinnes. 9 Requestes to be dailie made of euerie true Christian.

1 O gracious Lord, and most mercifull father, we acknowledge thee the Lord of Lords, and the King of kings, creating at the beginning, & ruling all things euermore in heauen and earth, according to thy wonderfull wisdom and power: and our selues to be thy poore seruants, the worke of thy hands, and the shéepe of thy pasture,¹²² subiected to thy Maiestie, and depending vpon thy fatherlie prouidence for all things.

2 Neuerthelesse, séeing thou in thy wisdom annointest Kings and Quéenes, appointing them to rule ouer thy people, to sit as Lieutenants in thy seate, to minister iustice, and most of all, as Fathers and Nurses to mainteine and cherish thy Church: commanding vs not onlie to obey and honour them, but moreouer to praie for them, as watching ouer vs for our good.¹²³

3 We therefore beséech thée for thy great mercies sake, and for Iesus Christes sake, to shew thy mercie to all Kings and Princes, that mainteine thy glorious Gospell: but especiallie we praie thée to blesse our most gracious Queene and gouernour, Elizabeth thine handmaid, with all spirituall blessings in Christ Iesus, and with all temporall blessings, according to thy good pleasure, that in the great measures of thy effectuall loue, she may more and more finde great increase of vertue, and wisdom, and strength in Christ Iesus, to the faithfull and happie discharge of her dutie, that her holinesse, and ioie, and zeale of thy house may be multiplied and euerlasting.

¹²¹ Matt. 6:13.

¹²² Ps. 79:13; 100:3; Ezek. 34:31.

¹²³ 1 Tim. 2:1-2.

4 And séeing it hath pleased thée, of thy singular mercie, to giue her this speciall honour, first to suffer for thy glorious truth and afterward miraculously deliuering her out of the hands of her enimies, to set a crowne vpon her head, and to make her the instrument to aduance thy glorie and Gospell, for which she suffered, and to bring it out of darkenes into light, out of persecution, into this great and long peace.¹²⁴

5 As we giue thée most hartie thanks for this singular benefite, so we beséech thée to make her and vs euermore thankfull for it, and in thy good pleasure still to preserue her for the continuance of these blessings towards vs, with all increase from time to time, to thy glorie, the benefite of the Church, and her infinite peace in Christ Iesus, the prince of peace.

6 And furthermore, we praie thée for her, and the estate, that such as be enimies of the Gospell, and her enimies also, for the defence thereof, may not despise the peace offered them to repentance, but that they may account thy long suffering, and her peaceable and vnbloudie gouernement, an occasion of saluation to their soules, and vnfeigned loue to the truth, and their mercifull souereigne. Otherwise, if they still remaine disobedient to the truth, rebellious to her highnesse, and dangerous to the state, then (O God of our saluation) as thou hast discouered them, so discouer them still, as thou hast preuented them, so preuent them still, and let their eies waxe wearie with looking, and their hearts faint with waiting for the comming of that, which yet commeth not, neither let it come (O Lord) we beséech thee, but a blessed and a long reigne to her, and peace to Sion for euermore.

7 Also (deare father) so blesse, so loue, so in thy spirit sanctifie and kéepe her, that she may in the spirit of counsell and fortitude so rule that other sister also, namelie, this her Commonwealth, that they may flourish together, and growe vp together as palme trées,¹²⁵ in beautie, and in strength, giuing aide and helpe one to another, that in the Church the glorie of God may appeare, as the Sunne in his brightness, and that the land

¹²⁴ Because she was implicated in the Wyatt rebellion against the Catholic Mary I, Elizabeth was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1554; after her coronation in 1559, she re-established the Protestant Church of England.

¹²⁵ Ps. 92:12.

may flowe with milke and honie,¹²⁶ and true peace abound therein, as in the triumphant reigne of Debora.¹²⁷

8 These graces (O Lord) are great, and we miserable sinners vnworthie of the least of them: therefore looke not to vs, but to thy selfe, not to our iniquities, but to thy great mercies, accepting the death and passion of thy Sonne, as a full ransome for all our offences, throwing them into the bottome of the sea, and making his crosse and resurrection effectuall in vs to all obedience and godlinesse, as becommeth thy Saints: that to all other thy good blessings towards our gracious souereigne, this may be added, that she gouerneth blessedlie, ouer a blessed people, a people blessed of the Lord, and beloued of the Lord.

9 Yea Lord, that thy graces may abound as the waters of the Sea, in the Prince and in the people, in the Church, and in the Commonwealth, from daie to daie, till the daie of our translation into thy kingdome, where iustice inhabiteth, where also we shall inhabite and reigne with thee, according to thy promise for euer. Graunt these things (O mercifull father) for thy deare sonne our Lord Iesus Christ his sake, in whose name we craue them at thy mercifull hand, praieng furthermore for them, as he hath taught vs to praie: Our Father which art in heauen, +c.¹²⁸

The third Branch, of Thankesgiuing:

Generallie deciphering in a pithie and ample meditation, Gods great goodnes manifestlie appearing in the diuersitie of the blessings wherwith he hath crowned man. Also, a praier for grace to be thankefull. The contents more particularlie lie open in the sequeale,

The first Blossome.

1 An inuocation, or calling vpon God, ioined with submission. 2 An acknowledgement of Gods manifold blessings and his prouidence. 3 A petition for the gracious gift of

¹²⁶ Exod. 3:17.

¹²⁷ Judg. 5.

¹²⁸ Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

thankfulnes. 4 Testimonies of Gods infinite loue, and of the effects of the shining Sunne. 5 The sundrie vses of Gods good creatures appointed for mans releefe. 6 Ornaments of the minde. 7 A request for true knowledge and perceiuerance, with the operation of the same. 8 Another for thankfulnes. 9 What sacrifice God delighteth in. 10 A supplication for grace to offer vp the same.

1 Setting before vs (O most mercifull & louing father) the godlie Patriarches, the holie Prophets, the true Conuerts, the constant Martyrs, & all such as haue loued thy glory far aboute their owne life, we prostrate our selues with all submission of soule and spirit, before thy throne of Maiestie, humblie beseeching thée (for Iesus Christ his sake) who is the fulnes of our ioie and comfort, to bend downe thine eares, and to heare the praiers which we powre foorth before thée:¹²⁹ and for thy sonne sake, in whom thou art well pleased, grant the request of thy seruants made vnto thée at this present.

2 We know (most gracious God, and louing father,) yea, we cannot but in conscience acknowledge, and with tongue confesse, that manifold, yea innumerable are the gifts which thou hast heaped vpon vs:¹³⁰ yea so manie are they, that we can not with voice vtter, neither yet in heart conceiue the greatnes and worthines of them.¹³¹ For wheras all other creatures are made, framed, and fashioned to serue the vse of man, and to yéeld themselues obedient and tractable to his commandement and gouernment: onelie man representing and bearing thine owne image and likenesse, ruleth as a Lord, and reigneth as a king, ouer all creatures indued with life:¹³² yea, there is nothing within the compasse of the ample and wide world: but thou (most gracious God) of thine infinite loue, and incomprehensible prouidence, hast preordained and appointed from originall of all beginnings, to turne to the profite, commoditie, vse & benefite of mortall and miserable man. Beasts both wild and tame thou hast made subiect to his power: some seruing for sustenance and nourishment, othersome being made appliable and fit for his ease and

¹²⁹ 2 Kings 19:16.

¹³⁰ Cf. Ps. 104:24, "O God howe manyfolde are thy workes? thou hast made them al in wisdom, the earth is ful of thy ryches" (BB).

¹³¹ An example of the 'inexpressibility topos,' which Curtius describes as an "emphasis upon inability to cope with the subject," used when one can "find no words" to properly express praise or thanksgiving (159).

¹³² Gen. 1:26-28.

assistance in bodilie labour, as partakers of his paines, and fellowe labourers with him in his bodilie businesse.

3 These creatures, O Lord, being thus ordeined and ordered, by and through thine euerlasting and vnchangeable appointment, thou hast giuen and bestowed vpon vs men, most vnthankfull, and of all other the vnworthiest of such singular benefites: thou hast inriched vs with their continuall and incessant increase, and thou doest dailie more and more, with new accesse of graces and good gifts, inlarge thy bountifull liberalitie towards vs, in such wise, that if we had anie féeling of Christianitie: nay, if we were not altogether sold to sinne, and made bondslaues to our owne sensualitie and corrupt concupiscence, we could not, but with zeale of spirit, & burning heate of hart, crie out with the Prophet Daud: O Lord, how wonderfull are thy workes thorough all the world!¹³³ Great is God, and most worthie to be praised, and his greatnes can not be searched out. One generation shall praise thy workes vnto another, and they shall declare thy mightie power.¹³⁴ I will set foorth in words the glorious Maiestie of thine excellentnes, and thy wonderfull workes,¹³⁵ &c. In consideration therefore, O Lord, of the benefites, which thou hast, and at this present doest powre vpon vs, (which are so manie, that they can not be numbred, and so great, that they can not be measured,) we beséech thée to plant in our harts the good propertie & vertue of thankfulness, least we prouing a barren and vnfruitefull soile, be so farre from yéelding good and hoalesome hearbes, that we séeme altogether choaked with noisome wéedes, wherewith being ouergrowne, we become vile, despised, contemptible, and nothing worth.

4 There be most liuelie representations, and such testimonies of thy tender loue towards vs, as more plaine and manifest can not be by anie meanes, neither for the outward eie of the bodie to behold, nor yet for the inward eie of the mind to contemplate and marke: namelie, creatures both heauenlie and also earthlie: heauenlie, as the Sunne, wherein the brightnes of thine omnipotent and vnspeakable maiestie is testified to the world, which with his glorious beames, and most comfortable heate, (being the lampe of light and life to all things, which thou by thy word in the beginning didst create,)¹³⁶ ministreth not

¹³³ Ps. 66:2 (BB).

¹³⁴ Ps. 78:4.

¹³⁵ Ps. 145:3-5 (BB).

¹³⁶ Gen. 1:14-16.

onlie to man, but also to beast, foule, fish, yea to the créeping worme, occasion of inward delight and ioie. For, as when it declineth and draweth downe, auoiding the scope and compasse of our eies, it carrieth awaie with it in like maner the brightnes and glorie of the daie, whereby the darke and vnpleasant night approacheth, and créepeth vpon vs: euen so, when it appeareth, clad with roabes of maiestie, and commeth like a Bridegrome foorth of his chamber,¹³⁷ the fogges and mistes of the wearisome night are chased and driuen awaie, and thereby followeth, ouer the face of the whole earth, most comfortable appearances of thine eternall prouidence, and infallible arguments and tokens of thine endlesse loue, to the safetie and health of vs vile wretches, and cursed caitifes, notablie continued. Without the louelie light of this bright shining lampe, which this our transitorie life can by no meanes lacke, it is not possible to accomplish anie thing. Thou (most mercifull father) hast assigned and appointed the same to be the directer of all our doings: for the want of so necessarie a benefite, procureth palpable darkenes, and most vncomfortable blindnes.

5 For the former excellent benefite therfore (most gracious God) as also for all other: namelie, thy creatures framed and made for the succour of man: for cloath and apparell to couer his bodie, that it may not be annoied with the force of sharpe and nipping stormes, nor féele the smart of anie tempestuous season: for giuing him foules of the aire, fish of the salt sea and fresh riuers, and beasts of the field and forest to be his sustenance, against the assaultes of hunger, and to breake the force of famishment, to mainteine nature, prolong life, strengthen the bodie, cherish the heart, and to quicken and reuiue the spirits of the whole man: for prouiding to his vse whoalsome hearbes and plants of speciall vertue, to expell manie contagious and hurtfull diseases, and flowers of most fragrant sauour and pleasant smell, to delight the senses:¹³⁸ for making the earth bring foorth and yéeld trées of wonderfull force,¹³⁹ stones of maruellous indurance, and other metals of strange and singular qualitie, to make him commodious dwelling places, wherein to inhabite and harbour, that neither the rage of frostie winter, neither yet the heate of smothering summer, nor anie sudden tempest and storme (except it please thée to worke contrarie to the common course of nature and expectation) can worke his

¹³⁷ Ps. 19:4-5.

¹³⁸ Gen. 1:20-29.

¹³⁹ Gen. 1:12.

inconuenience: for bestowing vpon him the riches and treasures which lie hid in the secret celles and bosome of the ground, and the pretious pearles of the vnmeasurable and bottomlesse deapth of the Sea: finallie, for making all things, as well wanting, as indued with life, subiect to his rule, readie at his commandement, and appliable to his seruice, we giue thée most hartie thanks, and praise thée for thy goodnes.

6 Besides these externall gifts of thine, wherewith of thine vnspeakable and frée liberalitie, thou hast plentifully stored & furnished man, thou hast most graciously reuealed, and euidently giuen triall of thy singular care and tender affection wherewith thou louest him, thou hast illuminated and lightened him with the lampe of vnderstanding,¹⁴⁰ reason, and iudgement, whereby he being conducted and guided, hath knowledge to make choice of that which is good, and that which is euill: of that which is whoolsome, and that which is noisome: of that which is commodious, and that which is iniurious: of that which is hurtfull, and that which is fruitfull: and so consequentially, of that which with his nature is agréable, and that which is repugnant and contrarie to his being.

7 As these thy gifts are great (good God and most louing father) as indeede they are exceeding great and wonderfull: so we beseech thée to powre into our hearts the liquor of true perceiuerance and knowledge, that we somewhat, according as the deprauation and corrupt state of our nature will permit, may discearne the force and fruite of thy fatherly fauour, and that this vile and filthy vessell of our bodie, which is polluted, and as it were waxen mouldie with the dregges and léeze of sinne and wickednesse, being sanctified and clensed with the cléere watersprinkle of thy purifying spirit, may become a fit and well seasoned vessell, to receiue the swéete and comfortable water of the fountaine of life.

8 And because (most bountifull and gracious God) thou hast giuen vs the vse of all these things, and made vs possessours of the same, we hartily beseech thée, to instill and let drop into the furrowes of our hearts, the acceptable dew of thankfulness, wherewith our entrailes being throughly moistened and made souple, we may remember, and thinke

¹⁴⁰ Cf. 2 Esd. 14:25, “I shall lyght a candel of vnderstandyng in thine heart” (BB).

vpon thy tender loue, and more than fatherlie kindnesse, and in thy gifts giue thée glorie, and magnifie thy name with the sound of our tongues, and the consent of our hearts.¹⁴¹

9 For, alas, what are we miserable and beggerlie wretches, that haue nothing by inheritance but sinne and wickednes? What are we able to giue, considering that we haue nothing but that which we haue receiued? in respect wherof, our owne wretchednes bewraieth it selfe, and our continuall néede and nakednes is manifest. Onelie this thou requirest, euen the sacrifice of praise and thankesgiuing, which is the thing that we are commanded to paie vnto thée.¹⁴² For recompense thou requirest none, since that whatsoeuer thou giuest, thou giuest fréelie, without looking for reward.

10 Wherefore (most mercifull father and déere God,) make vs thankefull receiuers of thy benefites, and that we may giue a testimonie of our thankfulness, loose and vntwist the strings of our tongues,¹⁴³ and open the pipes of our hearts, that they both may sound forth thy most magnificent maiestie, and praise thée, to whome perpetuall praise belongeth. Graunt this necessarie petition most bountifull God, for the merits of thy sonne Christ Iesus, our onlie mediatour and aduocate, Amen.

The second Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the benefit of our creation.

We praise and magnifie thée O eternall GOD, for thy great mercie, in that it hath pleased thée, among all the workes of thine hands, to make vs the most excellent and noblest examples of thy iustice, wisdom, and goodnes. We glorifie thée also for that immortall essence, the principall part of our nature, euen our reasonable soule, which although it be not properlie comprehended in place, yet is it resident in our bodies, and there dwelleth as in a mansion house, not onelie to minister life to all the members and parts of our bodies, and to make the instruments thereof méete and fitlie seruing for the actions wherevnto they are apointed, but also to beare the chiefe office in the gouernement of our life, and that not onlie about the duties incident and belonging to this earthlie and

¹⁴¹ Ps. 34:3.

¹⁴² Ps. 51:17.

¹⁴³ Cf. Mark 7:35, “the stryng of his tongue was loosed, and he spake playne (BB)”

transitorie life, but also to stir and quicken vs vp to the seruice and worship of thée our most mercifull Creator.

And as we praise thée for creating vs like to thine owne image,¹⁴⁴ not onlie in the outward frame of our bodies, wherein thy glorie doth appeare: but also in the inward shape of the soule, which is the proper seate of thy likenesse: so do we magnifie thée for all the graces and blessings wherewith it hath pleased thée to beautifie, adorne, and enrich the one and the other. Beséeching thée to voutsafe vs the direction of thy spirit, that we may, during the time of our iournie in the wilderness of this world, emploie and vse them to that principall end whereto they were bestowed vpon vs, namelie, to the benefite of our brethren, and the setting foorth of thine eternall glorie: through Iesus Christ our onlie mediator and aduocate, Amen.

The third Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the benefite of our election.

Glorie and praise be giuen to thée, O Lord, in that thou hast vouchsafed to call and elect vs a peculiar and chosen people vnto thy selfe, and to reckon vs in the lot of thine inheritance, being ordeined to saluation, whereas contrariwise, a great number are appointed to condemnation. Which gracious gift of thine eternall election, we referre not to anie worthines in vs, or to anie merits of workes that we are able to do, but onlie to the méere mercy, and bountifull liberalitie of thée our maker, who adoptest some into the hope of euerlasting life,¹⁴⁵ and iudgeth othersome to eternall death: which myserie is laid vp in the height of thy heauenlie wisdom, far aboue the reach of our reason and vnderstanding, that, according to thy will and pleasure, thou mightest be honoured.

Like thanks be giuen vnto thée, O most mercifull Father, for that thou hast not onlie called vs vnto this glorious estate of grace, but hast so assigned the same vnto vs, that the certaintie of the effect thereof is not in suspense or doubtfull. For it hath pleased thée, of thine incomprehensible goodnes, to binde vs together one with another in Christ

¹⁴⁴ Gen. 1:26-27; this passage is reminiscent of the Christian ‘anthropology’ of Renaissance humanism, an exploration of the “true nature of man” and the rationality of the soul, based primarily on Classical philosophy rather than Hebrew scripture (Trinkhaus xx).

¹⁴⁵ Eph. 1:3-5.

our head, we being his mysticall members, and to knit vs vnto thy selfe with a knot vnpossible to be loosed.¹⁴⁶ For this thine vnspeakeable mercie we praise and magnifie thée, and thy sonne Iesus Christ our tender mediatour and aduocate, Amen.

The fourth Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the benefite of our redemption.

We giue thée most hartie thanks for all thy good gifts O eternall GOD, of thy great goodnesse testified vnto vs euen from the beginning of the world to this present houre, and speciallie for the performance of thy promise made vnto our forefathers the Patriarches, and their generations,¹⁴⁷ but accomplished to vs, vpon whome the ends of the world approach:¹⁴⁸ knowing that the noblenes and excellencie of our creation would so little profit vs, considering our fall in the person of Adam, that it would rather turne to our greater shame, such is thy iustice, who deniest vs, when we be defiled and corrupted with sinne, to be thy handieworke.¹⁴⁹

And therefore we cannot sufficientlie extoll thy bottomles bountie in tendering our decaied state, that when we were damned, dead, and lost in our selues, didst send downe from heauen, thy déerelie and onlie begotten sonne, to take our nature vpon him, and to die for our redemption, that in him we might séeke for righteousnes, deliuerance, life, and saluation, according to the testimonie of thy seruant Peter, teaching vs, that there is none other name vnder heauen giuen vnto men, wherein they must be saued.¹⁵⁰ By which name of Iesus, he was not vnadvisedlie called, or by chance and aduenture, nor yet by the will of men, but brought euen from heauen by an Angell, the publisher of thy decreée, & with a reason also giuen, because he was sent to saue the people from their sins.¹⁵¹ Vnto thée therefore O God the father our Creator, and O Christ the sonne our redéemer, be all honor and praise for euer and euer, Amen.

¹⁴⁶ Eph. 4:15-16.

¹⁴⁷ Gen. 12:1-3; 17:6-8; 22:16-18; Gal. 3:16.

¹⁴⁸ 1 Cor. 10:11.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Luke 13:27, "And he shall say, I tell you, I knowe you not, whence ye are: depart from me all ye that worke iniquitie" (BB).

¹⁵⁰ Acts 4:12.

¹⁵¹ Matt. 1:21.

The fift Blossome conteining
A thankesgiuing vnto Christ,
for the benefite of our reconciliation.

Most hartie thanks be giuen vnto thée, O tender sauour of our soules, who being the immaculate and vnspotted Lambe of God the father,¹⁵² wast well content to be charged with our offences, that we might taste the sweete frutes of thine innocencie, and didst most willinglie offer vp thy bodie an oblation vnto thy father, after that definitiue sentence, pronounced in the Consistorie,¹⁵³ had passed against thée in iudgement, that we the children of wrath,¹⁵⁴ outcasts from the Common wealth of Israell, strangers from the couenant,¹⁵⁵ & enimies vnto God, might by the diuine vertue of thy death and passion, be reconciled, and escape the penaltie of the lawe, to the curse whereof sinne had made vs subiect, but thou by thy sufferings hast set vs at libertie, and deliuered vs from danger of damnation.

We cannot imagine how to extoll thy mercie sufficientlie, in taking vpon thée a worke of such difficultie, euen the appeasing of thy fathers wrath kindled against vs, in whome the glorious image of our Creator was shamefullie defaced. Thy bowels of compassion,¹⁵⁶ and tender loue, excéede all comparison. For the manifold torments which thou in thy mortall bodie didst suffer, in the presence of most vniust Iudges, are assured warrants of thy tendernes ouer vs: whome to set frée from punishment, thou gauest thine owne déere and most swéete soule to be a satisfactorie oblation, vpon the which all our filth of sinne might be cast, and so cease, as not imputable vnto vs anie more,¹⁵⁷ thereby reconciling vs vnto thy father, and sealing the same attonement with thy pretious heart bloud. To thée therefore be honour and praise for euermore, Amen.

¹⁵² 1 Pet. 1:19.

¹⁵³ **Consistorie**: court of judgement (*OED*); Matt. 27:11-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Rom. 1:18, side note d, “For in the syght of God all men are godlesse, synners, and the chyl dren of wrath” (BB).

¹⁵⁵ Eph. 2:12 (GB).

¹⁵⁶ **bowels of compassion**: the bowels were considered the seat of sympathetic emotions (*OED*).

¹⁵⁷ 2 Cor. 5:19.

The sixt Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the benefite of our iustification.

Laude and praise be giuen vnto thée, O eternall God, who hast vouchsafed to adopt vs into the number of thy chosen children,¹⁵⁸ not for anie of our merits, but for thy mercie sake, the curse of the lawe taking force by sinne notwithstanding. And we extoll thy goodnes, O most bountifull father, for that thou hast of thy frée grace, for Iesus sake, in whome thou art delighted, staied the execution of thy wrath and vengeance against vs, who haue prouoked thée to indignation by our manifold sinnes and wickednes, which had vtterlie excluded and shut vs out of the gates of thy good will, did it not please thée, at the intercession of thy beloued sonne, to receiue vs into fauour, and to reckon vs for righteous, by the remission of our sinnes, and the imputation of thy sonnes righteousness.

We haue so lead our life since the first time that thy hand planted vs in this world, as that the whole race which we haue runne, hath bene a kind of continuall kindling of thy furie to consume vs: and yet (O vnmeasurable mercie!) thou hast so pitied our weakenesses, that thou hast and doest iustifie vs, that is to saie, acquite vs that were accused, from all filthines, and that by the mediation of thy sonne Iesus Christ, not by allowance of our innocencie, but by imputation of his righteousness, that in him, we which in our selues are iudged vnrighteous, might be counted righteous. To thée therefore, O most louing father, and to Iesus Christ thy sonne, be all honour and glorie, Amen.

The seuenth Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the gift of our sanctification.

Almightie God, which from time to time hast sanctified thy people, and purged their harts from the prophane imaginations of idolatrous and heathenish vnbeléeuers, that they might be a holie heritage, & a peculiar people vnto thee, zealous of good workes,¹⁵⁹ and addicted vnto the deuout seruice of thée: we praise and magnifie thy goodnes, in that it hath pleased thée to sequester vs from the number of the pagan people, who are altogether ignorant of thée, and thy diuine worship, and hast opened the eies of our

¹⁵⁸ Eph. 1:3-5.

¹⁵⁹ Tit. 2:14.

vnderstandings, and sanctified them by the visitation and presence of thy holie spirit, whereby we haue attained to the knowledge of thy truth, and the mysteries reuealed in the same.

Which sanctification, as thou hast vouchsafed to begin in vs, so we most humblie beséech thee to continue euen to the end & tearme of our life, that the old leauen of maliciousnes being quite cleansed awaie, we may be changed into new dowe,¹⁶⁰ to serue thee in holines and righteousnes, which is the end of our election. O holie Ghost, which didst descend in the similitude of a doue,¹⁶¹ and in the likenes of clouen tongues,¹⁶² ouershadowe vs, we beséech thee, and take vp thy dwelling in our harts, that whatsoever we saie, thinke, or do, may sauour and tast of sanctification: so shall we for this, and all other thy good graces, as we are bound by dutie, praise and glorifie thee for euer and euer, Amen.

The eight Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for our preservation.

Omnipotent God, most mightie in word and déede, which hatest nothing that thy holie hands haue created, we praise and magnifie thee for all thy benefites bestowed vpon vs from our infancie, vntill this our present age: for caring and prouiding for vs all necessities conuenient and agréable to this our mortall life: we thanke thee for our health, wealth, and libertie: our peace, quietnes, & tranquillitie: our children, offspring, and affinitie: all which are thy blessings, not due to vs by desert, but bestowed vpon vs of thy goodnes and frée will.

And as we glorifie thee for these thy temporall benefits, so we magnifie thee, and extoll thy most holie name,¹⁶³ for the rich treasure of thy word and Gospell, for thy holie sacraments, and other gifts powred vpon thy Church and congregation: of whome we confesse our selues to be members, and thy son Christ Iesus the principall and supreme

¹⁶⁰ **dowe:** dough.

¹⁶¹ Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32.

¹⁶² Acts 2:3-4.

¹⁶³ Ps. 34:3.

head: in whome, béeing knit together like liuelie stones, we make one spirituall building, erected to the honour of thy most blessed name.¹⁶⁴

We giue thée thanks also, O mercifull father, for thy patience, thy long sufferance, and forbearing to punish vs, dailie offending against thy diuine maiestie: for the preaching of thy word, to call vs home vnto thée by repentance, and to a reformed life: for defending vs from bodilie dangers at home and abroad, by water and land, in companie and alone: whereas manie a one doth miscarrie, as we sée, and by due prooffe are able to testifie. For some are drowned, some hanged, some burned, some boiled, some dismembred, some murthered, one this waie, another that waie destroyed, in strange forme and fashion, by fire, by water, by weapon, by famine, by sicknesse, and other casualties, some suddenlie, some lingeringlie, some infamouslie, and diuers diuerslie, as they are eating, as they are drinking, as they are dansing, as they are cursing, as they are forswearing, as they are sléeeping, as they are waking, some betraied of their counterfet friends, some insnared of their malicious enimies, some falling into the hands of théeues on land, some assaulted of pirats on sea, and manie by manifold meanes ouertaken with diuers dangers, oftentimes denouncing extremitie of death.

From the which perils, for that it hath pleased thée of thine infinite clemencie to preserue and saue vs from our verie cradle, wherewith we might haue bene ouerthrowne, and so spéedilie dispatched, had not thy holie hand ouershadowed vs, and compassed vs round about, being wrapped in our swathling cloutes, we giue thée most hartie thanks, and praise thy blessed name with pure & vndefiled lips. Accept our seruice, receiue our sacrifice, euen the eleuation and lifting vp of our hands and harts vnto thée & the oblation of thanksgiuing presented vnto thy diuine Maiestie, for thine innumerable graces and blessings plentifulle powred vpon vs from generation to generation. Glorie be to thée O Father, glorie be to thée O Son, glorie be to thée O holie Ghost, from age to age, from posteritie to posteritie, and let all people saie Amen, **Amen**.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ 1 Pet. 2:5.

¹⁶⁵ The second “Amen” is printed in a distinctive font in the original text.

The ninth Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the gracious gift of the Gospell.

O almightie God, which in thy due and appointed time didst abrogate the lawe of Moses, by planting in the place thereof the Gospell of thy Sonne Christ, whome, when the fulnes of yeares was come, thou didst send downe from heauen,¹⁶⁶ that he might for our safetie accomplish the summe of thy diuine pleasure and will. We giue thée most hartie thanks, for that it hath pleased thée, of thine especiall goodnes, to admit vs among the number of Gentiles, vnto whome the same Gospell, which he brought from the bosome of thée his heauenlie father, is preached, and the mysteries of the same reuealed.

We magnifie thy most excellent and right glorious Name,¹⁶⁷ for that thou hast called vs to this state of godlie life, lightening the dimme eies, and opening the dull eares of our vnderstandings by the finger of thy grace, whereby we are put in possession of the iewell of true Christian ioie, euen thy sacred and holie word, the key of knowledge conducting vs therevnto. Giue vs we beséech thée, O mercifull father, such measure of thy spirit, that we may highlie estéeme of this most pretious pearle, and shew our selues not vnthankfull, with the Gadarens, vnto whome thy sonne did disclose the vertue of his diuinitie:¹⁶⁸ but thankfull, with the Samaritane, whome he cured of the leprosie.¹⁶⁹ In the meane time, we praise thée, and as we haue hitherto magnified thée, though not as we should, yet as we could, so will we extoll thy goodnesse, which is praiseworthy world without end, Amen.

The tenth Blossome conteining

A thankesgiuing for the safetie of the Church.

O eternall God, who from the beginning didst so tenderlie loue thy little flocke, that as the henne couereth her chickens, so thou ouerspredest thy people with the wings of thy prouidence.¹⁷⁰ Example we haue of Noah and his familie,¹⁷¹ of Lot and his kindred,¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ Gal. 4:4.

¹⁶⁷ Ps. 34:3.

¹⁶⁸ Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:11-17; Luke 8:26-36.

¹⁶⁹ Matt 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-42; Luke 5:12-14;

¹⁷⁰ Ps. 91:4.

¹⁷¹ Gen. 7.

and of diuers other, whome thou preseruedst from imminent perill, when the contrarie part, euen the wicked thine enimies were vtterlie confounded.

We giue thée the glorie due vnto thy most blessed Name, for sauing the ship of thy Church shaken with the tempests of tyrannous & tempestuous seas: for protecting it from the malice of spitefull pirats, who with the gunshot of their bloudthirstines, séeke to sinke this thy little vessell, and to ouerwhelme it in the waues, that the remnant of thy beloued may be rooted out, and vtterlie destroyed.

Praise and thanks be ascribed vnto thée, for rescuing thy sellie¹⁷³ shéepe from the chops of rauening wolues, whome it hath pleased thée, whiles they haue attempted the ruine and vndoing of thy little houshold, to ouerthrowe, and to cast the shame of their owne enuious deuises in their owne faces, confounding thy foes, who bragged of triumph, by making flesh their arme: and crowning thy souldiers with garlands of victorie, contrarie to hope and expectation. Beséeching thée to continue this thy care and kindnes to thy congregation, cooped vp in narrowe and streight corners of the world, and trenched about with thousands of enimies, who watch a due time to mingle our bloud with our owne sacrifices.¹⁷⁴ From the which vnhappie hour deliuer vs, encreasing our number, strengthening our power, and fighting for vs thy people. For vnto thée onlie we appeale, who art able to preuent all the policies of Sathan, and euerie member of his ministerie. So shall we sing songs of thankesgiuing in thy sanctuarie, and lift vp our voices of praise both euening and morning vnto thée the holie one of Israell, Hosanna in the highest: Amen.

FINIS.

¹⁷² Gen. 19:12-29.

¹⁷³ **sellie**: seely; innocent (*OED*).

¹⁷⁴ Luke 13:1.

THE
Schoole of Skill,
OR
The rule of a reformed
life:
Digested into three sententious
sequences of the A, B, C.

Wherein the weake haue their full
measure of pure milke, and the
strong their iust weight of
sound meate.

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

Matth. 7, 12.

Whatsoever ye would that men should
do to you, euen so do ye to them: for
this is the Lawe and the Prophets.¹

¶ *Printed at London by*
Henrie Denham, dwelling in
Pater noster rowe, at the
signe of the Starre.
1581.

¹ Matt. 7:12 (GB).

A Preface to the true Christian Reader.

It is the custome of parents, disposed to traine vp their children in learning and knowledge of tongs, artes, and sciences: first in their infancie to commit them to some honest schoolemaister, vnder whome they might be taught the principles of their owne naturall tongue, and afterwards in tract of time, as their capacitie increased, the rudiments of foraigne speeches. For he that determineth to erect and build a dwelling house, beginneth not at the roofe, but at the foundation: otherwise, as it were a preposterous kinde of attempt, so all the world would iudge it fond & ridiculous.

Againe, we see, and experience teacheth no lesse, that the expertst and valiantst Captaine that euer fought in field, was not a perfect warriour borne, though peradventure there was in him some vehement inclination to martiall policie and prowesse, but first he had his slender beginnings, and simple trainings vp, fit and conuenient for the nature of his age, which trainings vp in militarie knowledge, & warlike actiuitie continued, the learner becommeth more skilfull and couragious, and at last, by frequenting the field, and envring¹ himselfe to trials of valiantnes, proueth a passing souldier.

Euen so we, whome nature indeede hath adorned with a goodlie likenes, with amiablenes of countenance, and with apt proportion of bodie, but yet thrust out into the world with polluted soules, if we be desirous to please God, and not to offend man, we must endeuour our selues to leade a life agreeable to the written word of the Lord. The waies and meanes to attaine herevnto, do stand vpon certaine principles, or positions, whereof some being affirmatiue, and some negatiue, dooe iointlie teach vs what we ought to followe, and what to eschue.

These principles or rules leading vs to the knowledge and practise of a godlie and vpright life, I haue thought good to call *The Schoole of skill*. For, as to neglect the due obseruation of such precepts, and vtterlie to contemne the vse of so wholesome counsels, is a manifest reason and argument of follie: so, to

¹ **envring**: enuring.

esteeme of them, as of acceptable treasures, and to order the course of life, according to their prescription and platforme, is an euident signe and token of good skill.

Now the Schoolemaister, whose Schoole I entitle this to be, is such a one indeede, as being taught by the holie Ghost from aboue, hath had the vse and practise of a godlie and blamelesse life: the commoditie whereof, and incomparable sweetnesse issuing from thence, when he had tasted, and sawe that the end of the same was the reward of eternall life, he pitied the miserable state of men walking in blindnesse, ignorance, and destruction: and to reuoke them, or rather instruct and teach them knowledge, that thereby they might amend their inordinate trade of life, he professed himselfe a teacher in this Schoole, to the end that others, as well as he, might perceiue what aduantage a well disposed life affoordeth.

This Schoolemaister we must presuppose to be such a one, whose hart the finger of the Lord had touched, and into whose vnderstanding the sunne of sanctification had shined. He was not one that walked in carnall libertie, neither in the concupiscence of the eie, neither in the vanitie of the mind, for then should there be a repugnancie and dissention betweene his conuersation and profession, which ought to agree like musicall concords. Take him therefore to be such a one, as being renewed in the spirit of the inner man, is able to teach, to instruct, to rebuke, and to informe, that the man of God might be made perfect in all righteousness.² But now entering into this Schoole of Skill, let vs like good scholers with full purpose (Gods grace being our gouernour) to profit and go forward in that we professe, learne by hart our A,B,C, in this Schoole, and according to our lessons frame the course of our life.

Abraham Fleming.

² 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

To the Reader.
The starkest foole,
if well he marke
This skilfull Schoole,
prooues greatest clarke.
Come therefore you
that wise would be,
And learne anew,
this A,B,C.

The Schoole of Skill,
or, The rule of a reformed life.

The first sententious sequence of the A, B, C, deliuering diuers
doctrines of vertue and vice to be folowed and auoided.

- A** A wise man shal heare and increase in learning, and a man of
vnderstanding shall atteine vnto wise counsels.³
- B** Be not wise in thine owne eies, but feare the Lord, and depart from
euill.⁴
- C** Commit thy works vnto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be directed.⁵
- D** Death and life are in the power of the tong, and they that loue it, shall
eat the fruit therof.⁶

³ Prov. 1:5 (GB).

⁴ Prov. 3:7 (GB).

⁵ Prov. 16:3 (GB).

⁶ Prov. 18:21 (GB).

- E** Euen a foole, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that stoppeth his lips, prudent.⁷
- F** Fauour is deceitfull, and beutie is vanitie: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.⁸
- G** Giue ye strong drinke vnto him that is readie to perish, and wine vnto them that haue gréeffe of heart.⁹
- H** He that turneth awaie his eare from hearing the lawe, euen his praier shall be abhominable.¹⁰
- I** In the transgression of an euill man is his snare, but the righteous doth sing & reioice.¹¹
- K** Kéepe thine hart with all diligence, for thereout commeth life.¹²
- L** Let thine eies behold the right, and let thine eielids direct thy waie before thée.¹³
- M** Manie reuerence the face of the prince, and euerie man is a friend to him that giueth gifts.¹⁴
- N** Northerne windes driue awaie the raine, so doth an angrie countenance the slandering tongue.¹⁵

⁷ Prov. 17:28 (GB).

⁸ Prov. 31:30 (GB).

⁹ Prov. 31:6 (GB).

¹⁰ Prov. 28:9 (GB).

¹¹ Prov. 29:6 (GB).

¹² Prov. 4:23 (GB).

¹³ Prov. 4:25 (GB).

¹⁴ Prov. 19:6 (GB).

¹⁵ Prov. 25:23 (GB).

- O Obey thy father that hath begotten thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.¹⁶
- P Pride goeth before destruction, and an high minde before the fall.¹⁷
- Q Quietnes in a poore cottage, is better than strife in a princes pallace.¹⁸
- R Riches gather manie friends, but the poore is separated from his neighbour.¹⁹
- S Smite a scorner, and the foolish will beware: reprotoe the prudent, and he will vnderstand knowledge.²⁰
- T The foolishnes of a man peruerteth his waie, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.²¹
- V Valiantnes in a King, is like the strength of a Lion, his lookes shall fraie his foes.²²
- W Wisedome is high to a foole, therefore he cannot open his mouth in the gate.²³
- Y Youth is worthie to be reuerenced, if it be adorned with discretion and continencie.²⁴

¹⁶ Prov. 23:22 (GB).

¹⁷ Prov. 16:18.

¹⁸ Prov. 17:1.

¹⁹ Prov. 14:20.

²⁰ Prov. 19:25 (GB).

²¹ Prov. 19:3 (GB).

²² **fraie**: fray; frighten (*OED*).

²³ Prov. 24:7 (GB).

²⁴ Cf. 1 Tim. 4:12, "Let no man despise thy youth, but be vnto them that beleue, an ensample, in worde, in conuersation, in loue, in spirit, in faith, & in purenes" (GB).

Z Zeale without knowledge is foolishnes, loue without honestie is lewdenes, and friendship without faith is flatterie.²⁵

The second sententious sequence of the A, B,C, deliuering diuers doctrines of vertue and vice, to be followed and auoided

A Applie thine heart to instruction, and thine eares to the words of knowledge.²⁶

A A man that wandereth out of the waie of wisdom, shall remaine in the congregation of the dead,²⁷

B Be not light of credit, but lay thine eare open to truth and honestie, so shalt thou be worshipfull.

B Be thou not enuious against euill men, neither desire to be with them.²⁸

C Count nothing thine owne, whiles thou liuest in this world, for euerie man hath his talent but lent.²⁹

C Cast out the scorner, and the seditious man, so shall contention and reproch cease.³⁰

²⁵ Cf. Rom. 10:2, “they haue the zeale of God, but not according to knowledge” (GB).

²⁶ Prov. 23:12 (GB).

²⁷ Prov. 21:16 (GB).

²⁸ Prov. 24:1 (GB).

²⁹ Cf. 1 Chron. 29:14, side note h, “We gaue thee nothing of our owne, but that which we haue receiued of thee: for whether the gifts be corporal or spiritual, we receiue them all of God” (GB).

³⁰ Prov. 22:10 (GB).

- D Do good to thine enimie to the vttermost of thy might, so shalt thou fulfill the law of charitie.³¹
- D Drawe towards the wise to learne wisdom, so shalt thou be had in reputation.³²
- E Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an euill eie, neither desire his deintie meates.³³
- E Euen in laughing the hart is sorowfull, and the end of that mirth is heauinesse.³⁴
- F Foolishnes is ioie to him that is destitute of vnderstanding, but a man of vnderstanding walketh vprightlie.³⁵
- F Flatterie is like vnto the wéeeping of a Crocodile, and when he talketh most friendlie, he meaneth least honestie.³⁶
- G God ouerthroweth the wicked, and they are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.³⁷
- G Giue no eare to the report of a slanderer, for in his tongue lieth deadlie poison.³⁸

³¹ Cf. Prov. 25:21, “If hee that hateth thee be hungry, giue him bread to eate, and if he be thirstie, giue him water to drinke” (GB).

³² Cf. Prov. 18:15, “A wise heart getteth knowledge, and the eare of the wise seeketh learning” (GB).

³³ Prov. 23:6 (GB).

³⁴ Prov. 14:13 (GB).

³⁵ Prov. 15:21 (GB).

³⁶ **wéeeping of a Crocodile:** the tears of a crocodile are traditionally associated with hypocritical or malicious shows of emotion (*OED*).

³⁷ Prov. 12:7 (GB).

³⁸ Cf. Jas. 3:8, “But the tongue can no man tame. *It is* an vnruilie euil, ful of deadelie poyson” (GB).

- H** He that keepeth his tongue, kéepeth his life: but he that openeth his lippes, destruction shall be to him.³⁹
- H** He shall be sore vexed that is suretie for a stranger: and he that hateth suertiship is sure.⁴⁰
- I** Intend nothing that may turne to the harme of thy neibour, for he is as thine owne selfe.⁴¹
- I** Iustice and truth are in such as feare God, as for the wicked, they abhorre vertue.⁴²
- K** Kéepe not companie with dronkards, nor with gluttons: for the féete of such go to death.⁴³
- K** Knowe him well whom thou makest of thy counsell, least he bewraie thy secrets.⁴⁴
- L** Looke not vpon the wine when it is redde, and when it sheweth his colour in the cup, or goeth downe pleasantlie.⁴⁵
- L** Let not thine heart be enuious against sinners, but let it be in the feare of the Lord continuallie.⁴⁶
- M** Mercie and truth do preserue the King, for his throne shall be established with mercie.⁴⁷

³⁹ Prov. 13:3 (GB).

⁴⁰ Prov. 11:15 (GB).

⁴¹ Prov. 3:29.

⁴² Prov. 1:7.

⁴³ Prov. 23:20 (GB).

⁴⁴ Prov. 20:19 (BB).

⁴⁵ Prov. 23:31 (GB).

⁴⁶ Prov. 23:17 (GB).

⁴⁷ Prov. 20:28 (GB).

- M** Make no friendship with an angrie man, neither go with the furious man.⁴⁸
- N** Notorious liers flée from, as from a Scorpion: for they are the verie frie of Sathan.
- N** Neuer giue thy consent in a thing that is wicked, for God rewardeth both with shame.⁴⁹
- O** Opprobrious words defile the soule of him from whome they procéde, and wound to the death.⁵⁰
- O** Of thine increase spare somewhat to the poore, that God may blesse thy store.⁵¹
- P** Pitie the case of such as be succourlesse, and shut not thine eies against the naked.⁵²
- P** Patience is a souereigne vertue, and bringeth the soule of the iust to euerlasting comfort.⁵³
- Q** Quicken thy heart with honest mirth, least too much heauines ouerthrowe thy health.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Prov. 22:24 (GB).

⁴⁹ Cf. Jer. 15:4, side note d, “Not that ye people was punished for the kings sinne onely, but for their owne sinnes also, because they consented to his wickednes” (GB).

⁵⁰ Cf. Prov. 10:14, “the mouth of the foole *is* a present destruction” (GB).

⁵¹ Tob. 4:8-9 (GB).

⁵² Cf. Prov. 28:27, “He that giueth vnto the poore, shal not lacke: but he that hideth his eyes, *shal haue* many curses” (GB).

⁵³ Cf. Prov. 10:28, “The pacient abiding of the righteous *shalbe* gladnes” (GB).

⁵⁴ Cf. Prov. 17:22, “A ioyful heart causeth good health: but a sorowful minde dryeth the bones” (GB).

- Q** Quietlie tarrie the Lordes leasure in the time of thy trouble: for so to do is wisdom.⁵⁵
- R** Rob not the poore, because he is poore: neither oppresse the afflicted in iudgement.⁵⁶
- R** Righteous lips are the kings delight, and he loueth them that speake right things.⁵⁷
- S** Set not thy mind vpon vanitie, for therein consisteth nothing that is sound.
- S** Submit thy necke to the yoke of obedience, so shalt thou be praised among the people.⁵⁸
- T** The wrath of a King, is as the messenger of death: but a wise man will pacifie him.⁵⁹
- T** The heart of man purposeth his waie, but the Lord doth direct his steps.⁶⁰
- V** Violence and tyrannie are the ruine of a Realme, but mercie vpholdeth the Kings throne.⁶¹
- V** Vpbraide not thy better with contumelious talke, least thou heape hot coles vpon thine owne head.

⁵⁵ Cf. Lam. 3:26, "The good man with stilnesse and pacience, taryeth for the health of the Lorde" (BB).

⁵⁶ Prov. 22:22 (GB).

⁵⁷ Prov. 16:13 (GB).

⁵⁸ Ecclus. 51:26.

⁵⁹ Prov. 16:14 (GB).

⁶⁰ Prov. 16:9 (GB).

⁶¹ Prov. 20:28 (GB).

- W Without counsell, thoughtes come to naught: but in the multitude of counsellers is stedfastnesse.⁶²
- W Wisedome resteth in the heart of him that hath vnderstanding, and is vnknowne in the minds of fooles.⁶³
- Y Yeald to the magistrate dutifulnes, and with thine equall vse courtesie.
- Y Yong or old, rich or poore, strong or weake, thou art not thine owne, but Gods who made thee.⁶⁴
- Z Zacheus the Publicane, offering to make restitution if he had done anie man wrong, teacheth the rich of this world what their duties should be.⁶⁵
- Z Zerubbabell shall laie the highest stone of the spirituall temple, his hands haue laid the foundation of the same.⁶⁶

The third sententious sequence of the A,B,C, deliuering diuers doctrines of vertue and vice, to be folowed and auoided.

- A A sound heart is the life of the flesh, but enuie is the rotting of the bones.⁶⁷
- A A faithfull witnes deliuereth soules, but a deceiuer speaketh lies.⁶⁸

⁶² Prov. 15:22 (GB).

⁶³ Prov. 14:33 (GB).

⁶⁴ Prov. 22:2.

⁶⁵ Luke 19:1-10.

⁶⁶ Zech. 4:9.

⁶⁷ Prov. 14:30 (GB).

⁶⁸ Prov. 14:5 (GB).

- A An angrie man stirreth vp strife, but he that is slowe to wrath appeaseth strife.⁶⁹
- B Better is a dinner of gréene hearbes where loue is, than a stalled oxe & hatred therewith.⁷⁰
- B Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith.⁷¹
- B Better is a drie morsell, if peace be with it, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.⁷²
- C Childrens children are the crowne of the elders, and the glorie of the children are their fathers.⁷³
- C Contemne not anie that is in authoritie, for that is the readie waie to runne into Gods wrath.
- C Chasten thy sonne whiles there is hope, and let not thy soule spare for his murmurings.⁷⁴
- D Diuers weights are an abhomination vnto the Lord, and deceitfull balances are not good.⁷⁵
- D Depart from the foolish man, when thou perceiuest not in him the lips of knowledge.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Prov. 29:22.

⁷⁰ Prov. 15:17 (GB).

⁷¹ Prov. 15:16.

⁷² Prov. 17:1 (GB).

⁷³ Prov. 17:6 (GB).

⁷⁴ Prov. 19:18 (GB).

⁷⁵ Prov. 20:23 (GB).

⁷⁶ Prov. 14:7 (GB).

- D** Destruction shall light vpon them that imagine euill, but to such as thinke on good things, shall be mercie and truth.⁷⁷
- E** Enter not into lawe with a rich man, for it is in him to peruert equitie and right.⁷⁸
- E** Exercise thy selfe in that which is honest, so shall no shame followe therevpon.⁷⁹
- E** Exempt thy selfe from the companie of wanton women, for they leade thee the waie to hell.⁸⁰
- F** Foolishnesse is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall driue it awaie.⁸¹
- F** Frowardnesse is the token of a foole, and inconstancie is a signe of little trust.⁸²
- F** Followe not the counsell of the wicked, least thou be partaker of their punishment.⁸³
- G** Giue admonition to the wise, and he will be the wiser: teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.⁸⁴

⁷⁷ Prov. 14:22 (GB).

⁷⁸ Cf. Eccclus. 8: 2, “Make not variance with a riche man...for golde [and siluer] hathe destroyed manie & hathe subuerted the hearts of Kings” (GB); 8:14, “Go not to law with the Iudge: for thei wil giue sentence according to his owne honour” (GB).

⁷⁹ Cf. Ecclesus. 14:21, “Blessed is the man that doeth meditate honest things by wisdom, [and exerciseth himselfe in iustice,]” (GB).

⁸⁰ Prov. 7:25-27 (BB).

⁸¹ Prov. 22:15 (GB).

⁸² Cf. Prov. 17:20, “The froward heart findeth no good” (GB).

⁸³ Ps. 1:1.

⁸⁴ Prov. 9:9 (GB).

- G Good vnderstanding maketh acceptable, but the waie of the disobedient is hated.⁸⁵
- G Grudge not to giue of thine abundance to him that is néedie, least God be angrie.⁸⁶
- H He that mocketh the poore, reprocheth him that made him: and he that reioiceth at destruction, shall not escape vnpunished.⁸⁷
- H He that is slowe vnto anger, is better than the mightie man: and he that ruleth his owne mind, is better than he that winneth a citie.⁸⁸
- H How much better is it to get wisdom, than golde? and to get vnderstanding, is more to be desired than siluer.⁸⁹
- I In the mouth of the foolish is the boasting of pride, but the lips of the wise will beware of such.⁹⁰
- I It is a great abomination when Kings are wicked, for a Kings seate should be vpholden with righteousness.⁹¹
- I If thou smitest a scornfull person, the ignorant shall take better héede: and if thou reouest one that hath vnderstanding, he will be the wiser.⁹²

⁸⁵ Prov. 13:15 (GB).

⁸⁶ Cf. Prov. 28:27, “He that giueth vnto the poore, shal not lacke: but he that hideth his eyes, *shal haue* many curses” (GB).

⁸⁷ Prov. 17:5 (GB).

⁸⁸ Prov. 16:32 (GB).

⁸⁹ Prov. 16:16 (GB).

⁹⁰ Prov. 14:3.

⁹¹ Prov. 16:12 (GR. B).

⁹² Prov. 19:25.

- K** Kéepe thy selfe from strife, for therein consisteth a mans honour: but they that haue pleasure in bralling, are fooles euerie one.⁹³
- K** Kings ought to be feared, as the roaring of a Lion: who so prouoketh him vnto anger, offendeth against his owne soule.⁹⁴
- K** Kindle not contention betwéene neighbour and neighbour, for the Lord will roote such out of the land.
- L** Laie no priuie wait wickedlie vpon the house of the righteous, and disquiet not his resting place.⁹⁵
- L** Let not thy wrath and gelousie moue thée to follow the wicked and vngodlie.⁹⁶
- L** Like as the cold of snowe in the haruest, so is a faithfull messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth his maisters minde.⁹⁷
- M** Make not thy boast of to morrowe, for thou knowest not what may happen to daie.⁹⁸
- M** Manie there be that séeke the princes fauour, but euerie mans iudgmente commeth from the Lord.⁹⁹
- M** Mercie in a King, is like a pearle of great value in a golden crowne: O happie is the land that hath such a King!

⁹³ Prov. 20:3 (GR. B).

⁹⁴ Prov. 20:2 (GR. B).

⁹⁵ Prov. 24:15 (GR. B).

⁹⁶ Prov. 24:19 (GR. B).

⁹⁷ Prov. 25:12 (BB).

⁹⁸ Prov. 27:1 (GR. B).

⁹⁹ Prov. 29:26.

- N Nourture thy sonne with correction, and thou shalt be at rest: yea, he shall do thée good at thine hart.¹⁰⁰
- N Neuer trust a flatterer with anie secret: for such a one can not kéepe counsell.¹⁰¹
- N Notwithstanding thou be poore, and yet hast wisdom, thou shalt be had in reuerence.¹⁰²
- O One poore man oppressing another by violence, is like a continuall raine that destroyeth the fruit.¹⁰³
- O Oppresse not the fatherlesse and widowe, for the Lord himselfe will take vengeance.¹⁰⁴
- O Overcome euill with good, so shall the Lord blesse thée in all thy proceedings.¹⁰⁵
- P Put thou nothing vnto the word of the Lord, least he reprove thée, and thou be found a liar.¹⁰⁶
- P Plentie bringeth lothsomnes, and forgetfulness of God: O well is he that keepeth measure!¹⁰⁷
- P Pitch not thy tents among the wicked, least thou be overthrowne in their destruction.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰ Prov. 29:17.

¹⁰¹ Prov. 20:19.

¹⁰² Cf. Eccles. 4:13, "A poore chylde beyng wise, is better then an olde kyng that doteth" (BB).

¹⁰³ Prov. 28:3 (GR. B).

¹⁰⁴ Exod. 22:22-24; Jer. 7:6.

¹⁰⁵ Rom. 12:21.

¹⁰⁶ Prov. 30:6.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Prov. 4:23, side note 1, "Kepe a measure in all thy doings" (GB).

- Q** Quéenes and Kings are to be feared of their subiects, O well is he whose heart is obedient!
- Q** Quench the wrath of thine aduersarie with patience, so shall his anger asswage.
- Q** Quicklie reforme thy selfe, if thou haue offended, and excuse not the thing wherein thou hast done amisse.¹⁰⁹
- R** Riches and honour wait vppon wisdom: yea, excellent goodes and righteousnesse.¹¹⁰
- R** Receiue knowledge before siluer, and vnderstanding before the finest gold.¹¹¹
- R** Remoue from thée all malice and enuie, for the heart of the froward is a tormenting hell.¹¹²
- S** Some men are rich, though they haue nothing: againe, some men are poore hauing great riches.¹¹³
- S** Séeke wisdom in thy youth, so shalt thou be honoured in thine age.¹¹⁴
- S** Set aside all slouthfulnesse, and walke vprightlie in thy vocation and calling.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Num. 16:26, “Depart I pray you from the tentes of these wicked men...lest ye perishe in all their sinnes” (BB).

¹⁰⁹ Isa. 59:12 (BB).

¹¹⁰ Cf. Ecclus. 1:20, “To feare God is the wisdom that maketh riche” (BB).

¹¹¹ Prov. 8:10.

¹¹² Cf. Prov. 17:20, “Who so hath a frowarde heart, obteyneth no good” (BB).

¹¹³ Prov. 13:7 (GR. B).

¹¹⁴ Cf. Ecclus. 6:18, “receaue doctrine from thy youth vp, so shalt thou fynde wisdom tyll thou be olde” (BB).

- T** The lawe is a well of life vnto the wise, that it may kéepe him from the snares of death.¹¹⁵
- T** The righteous eateth and is satisfied, but the bellie of the vngodlie hath neuer enough.¹¹⁶
- T** The poore is hated, euen of his owne neighbours, but the rich hath manie friends.¹¹⁷
- V** Visit thy friend in the time of his aduersitie, so shalt thou shew thy faithfulness.¹¹⁸
- V** Vaine are all things vnder the Sunne, onelie the word of God lasteth for euer.¹¹⁹
- V** Vnto the counsell of the wise let thine eares be open, but flée the conuersation of the wicked.¹²⁰
- W** When it goeth well with the righteous, the citie is merrie: and when the vngodlie perish, there is gladnesse.¹²¹
- W** Wéepe ouer the sinnes which thou hast committed, and praie to God penitentlie for pardon.
- W** Where pride is, there is shame and confusion: but where lowlines is, there is wisdom.¹²²

¹¹⁵ Prov. 13:14 (GR. B).

¹¹⁶ Prov. 13:25.

¹¹⁷ Prov. 14:20.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Prov. 17:17, “He is a frende that alway loueth, and in aduersitie a man shall knowe who is his brother” (BB).

¹¹⁹ Eccles. 1:14.

¹²⁰ Cf. Prov. 14:7, “Get thee from a foolishe man, when thou perceauest not in hym the lippes of knowledge” (BB).

¹²¹ Prov. 11:10.

- Y Yrcke and loath the follies of the flesh, for the end of them is euerlasting confusion.¹²³
- Y Yéeld not thy selfe into the hands of thine enimies, for they séeke nothing but to sucke thy bloud.
- Y Youthfull arraie is vnséemelie for the aged, but grauitie maketh youth louelie and gracious.
- Z Zealouslie mainteine the truth, yea before a Iudge, for truth will preuaile and get the victorie.¹²⁴
- Z Zeale in a good cause is commendable and praiseworthie, O happie is he that hath such a zeale!
- Z Zealouslie to follow the commandements of God, and trulie to loue his lawe, is life euerlasting.

FINIS.

¹²² Prov. 11:2.

¹²³ Cf. Rom. 8:13, “For if ye liue after ye fleshe, ye shall dye” (BB).

A Referendarie to the Premisses.¹²⁵

*Though praise it be to fight in feeld
With valiant magnanimitie,
Yet, till thy foe be forst to yeeld,
As prisoner in captiuitie,
Thou canst not vaunt of victorie:*

*Subdue the band rebellious,
So shalt thou be victorious.*

*Againe, in running of a race,
We see by plaine experience,
That he which hath the swiftest pace,
And gets the goale by diligence,
Receiues a winners recompence:*

*The rest with running wried,
are slenderlie considered.*

*Euen so this Schoole of godlie skill,
In order Alphabeticall,
To Scholers wanting wit and will
Is nothing beneficiall
Because they are the principall,*

*Requird in each capacitie:
Bring these, and reape commoditie.*

A.F.

¹²⁴ Cf. Prov. 12:17, “A iust man wyll tell the trueth and shewe the thyng that is ryght: but a false witness deceaueth” (BB).

¹²⁵ **Referendarie**: an epilogue referring to the preceding subject matter (*OED*).

A swarme of Bees:
VWith their honie, and
Honicombes.

Gathered out of the sweete
and odoriferous Garden of
Gods Word.

Heerein such lessons are to be lear-
ned, as concerne the whole course of our
life, both towards God and man,
being in number two hundred:
whereof some persuade vs to
vertue and godlinesse, o-
thersome dissuade vs
from vice and wic-
kednesse.

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

*Ecclesiasticus. 11.3.*¹

¶ The Bee is but small among fowles, yet
doth her fruit passe in sweetenesse.

AT LONDON,

Printed by Henrie Denham.
Anno Dom. 1581.

¹ Ecclus. 11:3 (GB).

The Preface to the Christian Reader.

We see that Bees being a sociable creature, that is, apt for companie, flee together in swarmes, and assembled vnder one hiue, discharge the dutie wherevnto they are ordeined, namelie, to make Honie. The benefite of this labouring and diligent creature is so necessarie, that such as haue knowne and tasted by due prooffe and experience the fruite of their trauell, and the sweetnesse of their worke, will be hardlie persuaded to neglect the fostering of them, for feare of losing so singular commodities as they do yeeld.

Euen so this swarme of Bees, which I, not by the sound of a basen,² but by the painefulnesse of my pen, haue gathered together out of the pleasant garden of Gods most holie word,³ where I found them scattered heere and there among the fragrant flowres, and sweete beds of wholesome hearbes, making most comfortable Honie, and offering thee a tast thereof, are not lightlie to be esteemed, considering that the issue and euent of their trauell, well ordered and vsed, is so beneficiall, as nothing more, if anie thing like.

For their Honie hath this vertue, that to such as eate it, and digest it throughlie, it giueth a regenerated mind, a sanctified soule, a circumcised hart,⁴ a mortified bodie, and all good things that man can imagine or deuise: of which spirituall graces, who so hath once possession, his conscience will tell him what it is to taste, to sucke, to eate, and thoroughlie to digest Honie made by such a swarme of Bees. These Bees followe one another orderlie and decentlie, without desire of first or highest place: out of one garden they gathered it, in one hiue they made it, and for all godlie disposed peoples feeding heere they leaue it in their Honicombes.

There is none that hauing wit, will finde fault with water of the cleerest fountaine, with floure of the finest wheate, with a garment of the costliest silke, with a ring of the purest golde, with a iewell of the highest price. For it is the nature of man to couet the verie best things, yea, and to obtaine them, if they may be gotten for anie

² **basen**: basin; cymbal (*OED*).

³ The connection between bees and religious instruction was drawn in Virgil's *Georgics* (which Fleming translated in 1589) and was a Renaissance commonplace. Cf. William Hunnis, "Let vs likewyse learne of this Beast, / Each one in his Degree, / To Sucke the Sappe of Sacred Woorde, / That Heauen our Hyue may bee" (*A Hyue full of Hunnye*).

⁴ Jer. 4:4.

monie. Heere thou hast a swarme of Bees, making most excellent Honie, sweete, pleasant, and whoalsome. It differeth from ordinarie Honie, because the Bees that made it, are extraordinarie, and the flowers whereout they suckt it, grew in no common garden: it is offered vnto thee gratis, no gaine looked for, but onelie thy good will in receiuing it, and thy diligence in vsing it. Make much therefore of these Bees, and open thy mouth wide, that thy throte swallowing their sweete Honie, may distribute the same to all thine inward partes, and that the outward and inward man may be reformed.

Abraham Fleming.

A SVVARME of Bees.

The first Honicombe, yeelding most wholesome exhortations
vnto vertue and vertuous life.

- 1 Be mercifull and faithfull, binde these two iewels about thy neck, and write them in the tables of thine heart.⁵
- 2 Be ioifull in the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and leane not vpon thine owne will.⁶
- 3 Be obedient to the lawe of the Lord, honour him with thy substance, and with thy firstlings.⁷
- 4 Be a searcher after wisdom, and an inquirer after vnderstanding and knowledge.⁸
- 5 Be wise, so shalt thou haue honour in possession, but shame is the promotion that fooles shall haue.⁹
- 6 Be a louer of wisdom, she shall beautifie thy head with manifold graces, and garnish thee with a crowne of glorie.¹⁰
- 7 Be conuersant with the righteous, for their path shineth as the light that is brighter & brighter.¹¹
- 8 Be carefull to keepe thine owne counsell in a matter of weight: for therein consisteth the safetie of thy soule.¹²
- 9 Be obedient to the voice of thy teachers, and harken vnto them that informe thee.¹³
- 10 Be circumspect in choosing thy waie, so shalt thou escape misfortune and danger.¹⁴
- 11 Be thou a drinker of the water of thine owne well, and of the riuers that run out of thine owne spring.¹⁵

⁵ Prov. 3:3.

⁶ Prov. 3:5.

⁷ Prov. 3:9 (BB).

⁸ Prov. 3:13; 4:5.

⁹ Prov. 3:35 (BB).

¹⁰ Prov. 4:9 (BB).

¹¹ Prov. 4:18 (BB).

¹² Cf. Prov. 4:23, "Kepe thyne heart with all diligence, for out of it issueth lyfe" (BB).

¹³ Prov. 5:13 (BB).

¹⁴ Cf. Prov. 4:26, "Ponder the path of thy feete, and let all thy wayes be ordred aright" (BB).

12 Be bountifull, & let thy welles flowe abroade, that there may be riuers of waters in the stréetes.¹⁶

13 Be thou contented with thine own prouision, and be glad with the wife of thy youth.¹⁷

14 Be glad with thy yong wife, let her be as the louing hinde and pleasant roe, let her breasts alwaie satisfie thée.¹⁸

15 Be wise & warie in thy waies, for the Lord séeth thy footesteps, and pondereth all thy goings.¹⁹

16 Be carefull to saue thy selfe as a Doe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.²⁰

17 Be prouident in Summer what shall serue thée in Winter, least thou haue not to supplie thy want.²¹

18 Be obedient to thy fathers commandement, and forsake not the lawe of thy mother.²²

19 Be at defiance with a wicked and naughtie woman, for her house is the high waie to hell.²³

20 Be temperate in thy diet: for gluttonie and gormondising is vnméete for a man.²⁴

The second Honicombe, yeelding most wholesome exhortations
to vertue, and vertuous life.

21 Be true and trustie to thy friend, so shall he be bold to commit the secrets of his soule into thy hands.

¹⁵ Prov. 5:15 (BB).

¹⁶ Prov. 5:16 (BB).

¹⁷ Prov. 5:18 (BB).

¹⁸ Prov. 5:19 (BB).

¹⁹ Prov. 5:21 (BB).

²⁰ Prov. 6:5 (BB).

²¹ Prov. 6:8; 10:5.

²² Prov. 1:8; 6:20 (BB).

²³ Prov. 7:27 (BB).

²⁴ Prov. 13:25; 21:17; 23:2-3; **gormondising**: gormandizing; excessive eating, gluttony (*OED*).

- 22 Be conuersant with the wise, and with such as be of vnderstanding kéepe companie.²⁵
- 23 Be desirous of the feare of the Lord: for it is the beginning of wisdom and vnderstanding.²⁶
- 24 Be a wise sonne, so shalt thou make thy fathers heart glad, and driue awaie heauines from thy mother.²⁷
- 25 Be a worshipper of the Lord thy God, and in the daie of thine hunger, he will refresh thee.²⁸
- 26 Be thou painefull and laborious in thy trade and occupation, so shalt thou attaine to be rich.²⁹
- 27 Be iust and righteous in thy life and conuersation, so shalt thou haue a good report.³⁰
- 28 Be warned at the mouth of the wise, & despise not the counsell of such as haue experience.³¹
- 29 Be diligent in doing thy dutie, and towards such as are thy betters vse reuerence.³²
- 30 Be a moderate spender, so shalt thou be thriftie: for prodigalitie bringeth pouertie.³³
- 31 Be earnest in a quarell of equitie, and whiles thou liuest be neuer ashamed of the truth.
- 32 Be zealous in religion and righteousness, rebuke the offender that he may amend.³⁴
- 33 Be patient in the time of trouble, so shalt thou receiue a garland of glorie at the last.³⁵

²⁵ Prov. 13:20; Tob. 4:18.

²⁶ Prov. 1:7; 9:10.

²⁷ Prov. 10:1.

²⁸ Cf. Prov. 10:3, “The Lorde wyll not let the soule of the righteous suffer hunger” (BB).

²⁹ Prov. 10:4 (BB).

³⁰ Prov. 10:7 (BB).

³¹ Prov. 10:8 (BB).

³² Cf. Prov. 13:4, “the soule of the diligent shall haue plentie” (BB).

³³ Cf. Prov. 13:11, “Uaynly gotten goodes are soone spent: but they that be gathered together with the hande, shall encrease” (BB).

³⁴ Cf. Prov. 24:25 (BB).

³⁵ Cf. Prov. 10:28, “The patient abydyng of the righteous shalbe turned to gladnesse” (BB); 14:29, “He that is patient hath much vnderstanding” (BB).

- 34 Be worldlie wise according to honestie, and in all thy dealings haue an vpright conscience.³⁶
- 35 Be painefull in thy life whiles thou art strong and healthfull, so shalt thou be counted wise.
- 36 Be rich in vertue, and poore in vice, with such riches God is glorified, and with such pouertie he is honoured.³⁷
- 37 Be mercifull to the néedie, and from such as lacke, turne not thy face, least God be displeased.³⁸
- 38 Be a harbourer of the succourles, and let thine hands be open to the refreshing of the néedie.³⁹
- 39 Be plentifull in good workes, and where occasion is ministred, leaue a testimonie of compassion.
- 40 Be sparing in spéech & laughter, for a babbler is abhorred of such as be sober and wise.⁴⁰

The third Honicombe, yeelding most whoalsome exhortations
to vertue and vertuous life.

- 41 Be mercifull, so shalt thou do thy selfe a benefite: for who so hurteth his neighbour, is a Tyrant.⁴¹
- 42 Be liberall in giuing, so shalt thou haue plentie: for he that watereth, shall be watered also himselfe.⁴²
- 43 Be a sercher after good things, so shalt thou finde fauour: for who so séeketh after mischiefe, it shall happen vnto him.⁴³

³⁶ Cf. Ps. 25:19, “Let integritie and vprighteous dealing kepe me safe” (BB).

³⁷ Cf. Prov. 28:6, “Better is the poore that walketh in his vprightnes, then he that peruerteth *his* waies, thogh he be riche” (GB).

³⁸ Tob. 4:7.

³⁹ Deut. 15:11.

⁴⁰ Prov. 10:19; 15:2.

⁴¹ Prov. 11:17 (BB).

⁴² Prov. 11:25 (BB).

⁴³ Prov. 11:27 (BB).

- 44 Be a louer of correction, so shalt thou loue knowledge: for he that hateth to be reprobued, is a foole.⁴⁴
- 45 Be true in thy talk, and speake that which is right: for a false witnesse deceiueh by his lieng.⁴⁵
- 46 Be iust and righteous, so shall no aduersitie happen vnto thée: but the vngodlie shall be filled with miserie.⁴⁶
- 47 Be a wise sonne, and hearken to thy fathers warning, least being scornefull thou be reprobued.⁴⁷
- 48 Be sure to kéepe thy mouth, so shalt thou kéepe thy life: for who so rashlie openeth his lips, destroieth himselfe.⁴⁸
- 49 Be righteous, and thou shalt abhorre lies: whereas the vngodlie shameth himselfe, and is put to silence.⁴⁹
- 50 Be innocent and harmelesse in thy waie: for vngodlinesse ouerthroweth & drowneth the sinner.⁵⁰
- 51 Be righteous if thou wilt excell, and loue wisdom if thou wilt be honourable and worshipfull.⁵¹
- 52 Be a walker in the waie of righteousness, for therein is life: but in the contrarie is death and destruction.⁵²
- 53 Be vertuous, and thou shalt leaue vnto thy children an euerlasting inheritance, and riches that shall neuer rust.⁵³
- 54 Be plentiful in thine almes, and God shall increase thy store, and giue thée his blessing abundantlie.⁵⁴

⁴⁴ Prov. 12:1 (BB).

⁴⁵ Prov. 12:17 (BB).

⁴⁶ Prov. 12:21 (BB).

⁴⁷ Prov. 13:1 (BB).

⁴⁸ Prov. 13:3 (BB).

⁴⁹ Prov. 13:5 (BB).

⁵⁰ Prov. 13:6 (BB).

⁵¹ Prov. 12:26 (BB).

⁵² Prov. 12:28.

⁵³ Prov. 13:22 (BB).

⁵⁴ Tob. 4:8-9 (GB).

55 Be faithfullie occupied in the feare of the Lord, and thou shalt walke vprightlie before him all thy life long.⁵⁵

56 Be contented with a little in righteousnes, for that is better than great rents wrongfullie gotten.⁵⁶

57 Be content to commit thy workes vnto the Lord, so shall that prosper which thou deuiseest and intendest.⁵⁷

58 Be righteous in thy tong, and sober in thy talke, for such are pleasant vnto Kings and great estates.⁵⁸

59 Be obedient and loiall, so shalt thou be in fauour, and thine order of liuing shall be a good example vnto others.

60 Be carefull to do thy duetie, and haue a single eie ouer the charge committed vnto thine hand.

The fourth Honicombe, yeelding most wholesome exhortations
to vertue and vertuous life.

61 Be humble and lowlie in the whole course of thy life, let the lawe of the Lord be the rule to guide thy goings.⁵⁹

62 Be readie to do thy friend good in the daies of his distresse, for in so doing thou sauest his life.⁶⁰

63 Be comforted in thy heauinesse with the counsell of thy neighbour, & cast not awaie all hope.

64 Be to other, as thou wouldst haue other be to thee: that is, iust, louing, fauourable, gentle, and courteous.⁶¹

65 Be in thy youth mindfull of thine age, and laie vp in thy yong yeares, to keepe thee when thou art old.

⁵⁵ Prov. 14:2 (BB).

⁵⁶ Prov. 16:8 (BB).

⁵⁷ Prov. 16:3 (BB).

⁵⁸ Prov. 16:13 (BB).

⁵⁹ Prov. 16:19.

⁶⁰ Cf. Eccclus. 22:23, "Be faithful vnto thy friend in his pouertie... Abide stedfast vnto him in the time of his trouble" (GB).

⁶¹ Matt. 7:12.

66 Be merrie of hart, for that maketh a lustie age: but a sorrowfull mind drieth vp the bones.⁶²

67 Be wise, and vse few words, embrace vnderstanding, & make much of knowledge and science.⁶³

68 Be a searcher after vertue, and an enimie to vice, so shalt thou finde perfect blessednesse in the end.

69 Be merrie with them that be merrie, and mourne with them that mourne, yet exceede not measure.⁶⁴

70 Be carefull ouer thy charge, so shalt thou get double credit, and encrease in fauour.

71 Be discrét in thy talke & communication, and in thy behauior be mild, humble, & courteous.

72 Be pitifull to the distressed, succour such as be afflicted, and to the néedie reach out thine hand.⁶⁵

73 Be to thy friend in aduersitie a present helpe, that in thy necessitie he may make retribution.⁶⁶

74 Be true and trustie in thy vocation, and in all thy dealings set Gods feare before thy face.

75 Be content with thine estate, and breake not beyond thy tedder:⁶⁷ for in so doing thou wantest wisdom.

76 Be gentle and courteous in spéech: for a smooth tongue purchaseth fauor among the people.

77 Be liberall and lend, laie not vp thy treasure and see thy brother lacke, but giue of thy goodes to the néedie.⁶⁸

78 Be obedient to thy parents, to thy betters giue reuerence, liue within lawe and loialtie.⁶⁹

⁶² Prov. 17:22 (BB).

⁶³ Prov. 17:27 (BB).

⁶⁴ Rom. 12:15.

⁶⁵ Deut. 15:11.

⁶⁶ Cf. Prov. 17:17, “He is a frende that alway loueth, and in aduersitie a man shall knowe who is his brother” (BB).

⁶⁷ **tedder**: tether.

⁶⁸ Ecclus. 29:2.

79 Be circumspect and warie in all thy busines, and attempt nothing without
aduisement.⁷⁰

80 Be gealous ouer thine honest name, least thou bring thy selfe to shame among the
people.⁷¹

The fift Honicombe, yeelding most whoalsome exhortations
to vertue and vertuous life.

81 Be néere to thy selfe in the time of néede, least such as be wise laugh thée to scorne,
and make thée a byword.

82 Be faithfull to thy friend in all his affaires, for therevpon dependeth thine estimation
and credit.⁷²

83 Be a companion with honest women, but of wanton minions beware: for they are the
verie dores of death.

84 Be modest at the table, least they that sit by, séeing thine intemperance, abhorre
thée.⁷³

85 Be sparing at wine, for too much drinking therof inféebleth the wit, and weakeneth
the memorie.⁷⁴

86 Be louing and carefull ouer thy wife, for to vse her hardlie, and not like a husband,
is the next way to make her an harlot.

87 Be warie how thou viewest the beautie of a woman too narrowlie, least thou be
taken in her loue, and so fall to follie.⁷⁵

88 Be chaste in communication and talke, for manie times the heart giueth vtterance to
the tongue.

89 Be carefull to kéepe thée in one place, and continue in thy calling, if thou intend to
be thriftie.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20.

⁷⁰ Ecclus. 32:20.

⁷¹ Cf. Prov. 22:1, "A good name is more to be desired then great riches" (BB).

⁷² Cf. Ecclus. 22:23, "Be faithful vnto thy friend in his pouertie" (GB).

⁷³ Prov. 13:25; 21:17; 23:2-3.

⁷⁴ Prov. 20:1.

⁷⁵ Ecclus. 25:23 (BB).

⁷⁶ 1 Cor. 7:17.

- 90 Be more desirous to saue than to spend, least in the time of néede thou haue not to serue thy turne.⁷⁷
- 91 Be a true paimaister of thy hired seruant, and let him haue his wages for his worke.⁷⁸
- 92 Be courteous and gentle, so shall such as be absent commend thée, and they that be present, shall reioice in thy companie.
- 93 Be merrie at thy meate, and giue God thanks for the same, so shalt thou haue alwaies enough.
- 94 Be mindfull of thy dutie to God, & euerie morning & euening magnifie his holie name.
- 95 Be sober and continent among yong women, in the presence of thy wife, least she burne in gealousie ouer thée.
- 96 Be in thy conuersation humble and gentle, and haue a regard to the whole course of thy life.
- 97 Be in thine apparell modest, in thy communication honest, in thy behauiour sober, and in all thy doings discrète.
- 98 Be to the stranger courteous, to thy neighbour friendlie, to all a wellwiller, to none an enimie.
- 99 Be to thy prince trustie and loiall, to the magistrate obedient, and to thy betters dutifull.⁷⁹
- 100 Be thankefull to God for all his benefites, and let his praise be alwaies in thy mouth.⁸⁰

The sixt Honicombe, yeelding most whoalsome dehortations
from vice and vitious life.

- 1 Be not forgetfull of the lawe of the Lord, but sée that thine hart kéepe his commandements.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Cf. Prov. 21: 20, “In a wise mans house there is a great treasure and oyle: but a foolishe body spendeth vp all” (BB).

⁷⁸ Tob. 4:14.

⁷⁹ Rom. 13:1-7.

⁸⁰ Ps. 34:1. Transcription of the Folger copy begins.

- 2 Be not wise in thine owne conceipt, but feare the Lord, and depart from euill.⁸²
- 3 Be not a murmurer at the chastisement of the Lord, neither faint when thou art corrected of him.⁸³
- 4 Be not a withdrawer of anie good thing from him that hath néede, so long as thine hand is able to do it.⁸⁴
- 5 Be not a procurer of hurt against thy neighbour, séeing he hopeth to dwell in rest by thée.⁸⁵
- 6 Be not a striuer with anie man without a cause, whereas he hath done thée no harme.⁸⁶
- 7 Be not a follower of the wicked in their wicked waies, and choose not to be their companion.⁸⁷
- 8 Be not scornefull, for the Lord laugheth such to scorne, but vnto the lowlie he giueth grace.⁸⁸
- 9 Be not inquisitiue after the footesteps of the froward, least thou be partaker of their frowardnesse.⁸⁹
- 10 Be not a companie kéeper with the vngodlie: for their waie is darkenesse, and they knowe not where they goe.⁹⁰
- 11 Be not thou of a froward mouth, and let the lips of slander be far from thée.⁹¹
- 12 Be not wandering either to the right hand or to the left, but withhold thy foote from euill.⁹²
- 13 Be not the lips of a strange woman a dropping Honicombe, and her throte more glistering than oile?⁹³

⁸¹ Prov. 3:1 (BB).

⁸² Rom. 11:25 (BB); Prov. 26:12.; 3:7 (BB).

⁸³ Prov. 3:11 (BB).

⁸⁴ Prov. 3:27 (BB).

⁸⁵ Prov. 3:29 (BB).

⁸⁶ Prov. 3:30 (BB).

⁸⁷ Prov. 3:31 (BB).

⁸⁸ Prov. 3:34 (BB).

⁸⁹ Cf. Prov. 21:8, "The way of the vngodly is frowarde and straunge" (BB).

⁹⁰ Prov. 4:19.

⁹¹ Prov. 4:24 (BB).

⁹² Prov. 4:27 (BB).

⁹³ Prov. 5:3 (BB).

14 Be not delighted with an harlot: for shée is as bitter as wormewood, and as sharpe as a two edged sword.⁹⁴

15 Be not pleasant and sportfull with a common woman, and embrace not the bosome of an harlot.⁹⁵

16 Be not suertie for a stranger, and for him whome thou knowest not, be not handfasted.⁹⁶

17 Be not in thy neighbours danger: if thou be, humble thy selfe, and with thy friends intreate thy creditour.⁹⁷

18 Be not sluggish, but consider the Emmet, and by her example learne to be wise.⁹⁸

19 Be not slouthfull and idle, least pouertie créepe vpon thée, and beggerie ouertake thée as a traueller.⁹⁹

20 Be not proud of countenance, abhorre a lieng tongue, and detest hands that shed innocent bloud.¹⁰⁰

The seuenth Honicombe, yeelding most whoalsome dehortations
from vice and vitious life.

21 Be not haunted with an hart that is full of wicked imaginations: for that is the next waie to mischief.¹⁰¹

22 Be not a false witnesse that bringeth lies, nor a sower of discord among brethren.¹⁰²

23 Be not a companie kéeper with a faire woman, least thou be taken and intrapped with her faire lookes.¹⁰³

24 Be not familiar with an harlot, for she bringeth a man to beggerie: but an honest woman is worth gold.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁴ Prov. 5:4.

⁹⁵ Prov. 5:20. Transcription of the Huntington copy resumes.

⁹⁶ Prov. 6:1 (BB).

⁹⁷ Prov. 6:3 (BB).

⁹⁸ Prov. 6:6 (BB); **Emmet**: ant (*OED*).

⁹⁹ Prov. 6:10-11.

¹⁰⁰ Prov. 6:17 (BB).

¹⁰¹ Prov. 6:18 (BB).

¹⁰² Prov. 6:19 (BB).

¹⁰³ Prov. 6:25 (BB).

¹⁰⁴ Prov. 6:26 (BB).

25 Be not a tempter of thy neighbours wife to lewdnesse, least thou runne in danger of Gods cursse.¹⁰⁵

26 Be not a blasphemmer of the Lords name, least he be sharplie auenged of thée for thy presumption.¹⁰⁶

27 Be not a reprouer of the scornfull, least he owe thée euill will: but rebuke a wise man, and he will loue thée.¹⁰⁷

28 Be not of the number that saie, Stolne waters are swéete, and the bread that is priuilie eaten hath a good taste.¹⁰⁸

29 Be not a gatherer of goodes wrongfullie, for they profit nothing in the end.¹⁰⁹

30 Be not a stirrer vp of hatred and strife, but embrace loue: for loue couereth the multitude of sinnes.¹¹⁰

31 Be not a much babbler, for therein is great offence: but refraine thy lips, so shalt thou be wise.¹¹¹

32 Be not double of tongue, and a dissembler: for the Lord abhorreth the counterfeite hypocrite.¹¹²

33 Be not an extortioner, nor an oppresser of the poore: for the Lord will take their cause in hand.¹¹³

34 Be not fugitiue and lightfooted from place to place, but continue content with thine owne estate.

35 Be not gealous ouer thy faire and youthfull wife, least thou turne her loue into hate.¹¹⁴

36 Be not couetous and gréedie of monie, for in time both thou and thy wealth shall awaie.

¹⁰⁵ Prov. 6:29.

¹⁰⁶ Exod. 20: 7.

¹⁰⁷ Prov. 9:8 (BB).

¹⁰⁸ Prov. 9:17 (BB).

¹⁰⁹ Prov. 10:2 (BB).

¹¹⁰ Prov. 10:12 (BB).

¹¹¹ Prov. 10:19 (BB).

¹¹² Prov. 17:20 (BB); Ecclus 28:13.

¹¹³ Prov. 22:16 (GB).

¹¹⁴ Ecclus. 9:1.

- 37 Be not delicate and nice: for that is the propertie of women, but auoid all such vanities.
- 38 Be not inquisitiue after things aboue thy knowledge, least thou be counted a busie bodie.
- 39 Be not a maintainer of wrong iudgement, least the Lord confound thée in thy wickednesse.
- 40 Be not ouer carefull for thy life, least thou fall into mistrust & despaire of Gods prouidence.

The eight Honicombe, yeelding most whoalsome dehortations
from vice and vitious life.

- 41 Be not a talebearer from eare to eare, least thou be forsaken of thy friends, and made an outcast.¹¹⁵
- 42 Be not vniust in buieng and selling, let thy balance be euen, and thy weights without fault.¹¹⁶
- 43 Be not a dissembler, nor a discouerer of secrets: but faithfull of heart, and trustie in counsell.¹¹⁷
- 44 Be not a purchaser of thy neighbours house ouer his head, for in so doing thou suckest his bloud.
- 45 Be not suertie for a stranger, least thou smart for it: for he that hateth suertiship is sure.¹¹⁸
- 46 Be not a worker of deceitfull workes, but a sower of righteousness, so shalt thou receiue thy reward.¹¹⁹
- 47 Be not corrupt in heart, for such doth the Lord abhorre: but in such as are of an vndefiled conuersation, he hath pleasure.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Ecclus. 5:15 (GB).

¹¹⁶ Prov. 20:10; 20:23.

¹¹⁷ Prov. 11:13 (BB).

¹¹⁸ Prov. 11:15 (BB).

¹¹⁹ Prov. 11:18.

¹²⁰ Prov. 11:20 (BB).

- 48 Be not ouer bold to trust in thy riches, least thou haue a fall, but vse them in the feare of the Lord.¹²¹
- 49 Be not a sower of disquietnes in thine owne house, least thou haue wind for thine heritage.¹²²
- 50 Be not malicious, least thou be insnared with thine owne mouth: but be méeke of spéech, so shalt thou be honoured.¹²³
- 51 Be not a medler in other mens matters, least thou be ill thought of, and haue small thanks for thy labor.¹²⁴
- 52 Be not hastie in vttering thy wrath, least thou be counted a foole, and in the end thou discouer thine owne shame.¹²⁵
- 53 Be not a slanderous person, for such a one woundeth like a sword: but a wise mans tongue is wholesome.¹²⁶
- 54 Be not an imaginer of euill, for commonlie mischiefes doth followe: but be a counsellor of that which is honest.¹²⁷
- 55 Be not a liar, and a forger of vntrueths, for such doeth the Lord abhorre: but they that deale trulie, please him.¹²⁸
- 56 Be not a sluggard, faine to haue, and not to get: but be diligent, and thou shalt haue plentie and abundance.¹²⁹
- 57 Be not proud, for after pride followeth strife, whilest thou thinkest none comparable in worthines vnto thy selfe.¹³⁰
- 58 Be not a getter of thy goodes by vanitie, for they are soone spent: but they that are gathered together with the hand, shall increase.¹³¹

¹²¹ Prov. 11:28 (BB).

¹²² Prov. 11:29 (BB).

¹²³ Prov. 12:13 (BB).

¹²⁴ Prov. 26:17.

¹²⁵ Prov. 12:16 (BB).

¹²⁶ Prov. 12:18 (BB).

¹²⁷ Prov. 12:20.

¹²⁸ Prov. 12:22 (BB).

¹²⁹ Prov. 13:4 (BB).

¹³⁰ Prov. 13:10 (BB).

¹³¹ Prov. 13:11 (BB).

59 Be not desperate, and out of hope in thy heauinesse: for that is the next waie to kill thy hart.¹³²

60 Be not a bolsterer of the wicked in his wickednesse, least thou be partaker of his punishment.¹³³

The ninth Honicombe, yeelding most whoalesome dehortations
from vice and vitious life.

61 Be not deceitfull: for such a one shall not roste that he tooke in hunting: but the riches of the iust are of great value.¹³⁴

62 Be not shamelesse in sinning, least the vengeance of the Lord ouertake thee, and thou be crushed in péeces.¹³⁵

63 Be not sparing in vsing the rod, least thou hating thy sonne, be an occasion that he curse thee another daie.¹³⁶

64 Be not scornefull, least in séeking for wisdom, thou find it not, though thou wouldest giue gold for it.¹³⁷

65 Be not familiar with a foolish man, when thou perceiuest not in him the lips of knowledge and vnderstanding.¹³⁸

66 Be not iniurious and wrongfull to the poore: for therein thou blasphemest thy maker, and dishonourest his maiestie.¹³⁹

67 Be not proud and haughtie of heart: for such doth the Lord abhorre, and he hateth them euen to hell.¹⁴⁰

68 Be not froward in thy waies, if thou wilt please the Lord, but followe the path of peace and equitie.¹⁴¹

¹³² Prov. 12:25.

¹³³ Prov. 13:20, side note i, “As he is partaker of their wickednes and beareth with their vices, so shall he be punished alike as they are” (GB).

¹³⁴ Prov. 12:27.

¹³⁵ Cf. Prov. 14:34, “sinne is a shame to the people” (GB).

¹³⁶ Prov. 13:24.

¹³⁷ Prov. 14:6.

¹³⁸ Prov. 14:7.

¹³⁹ Prov. 14:31.

¹⁴⁰ Prov. 16:5.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Prov. 21:8, “The way of the vngodly is frowarde and straunge” (BB)

- 69 Be not a deuiser of vanities which please thine owne heart, for with such toies is the Lords wrath kindled.¹⁴²
- 70 Be not a wicked dooer: for such as exercise themselues in naughtinesse, are an abhomination vnto him.
- 71 Be not carelesse at the Kings displeasure: for the wrath and anger of the Prince, is the messenger of death.¹⁴³
- 72 Be not rash in thine enterprises: for of rashnesse and hardinesse commeth repentance and sorrowe.¹⁴⁴
- 73 Be not a controller of thy betters: for in so doing, thou doest run among thorns and thistles.
- 74 Be not offensiuie to thy brother in anie thing, least he being gréeued, complaine against thée bitterlie.¹⁴⁵
- 75 Be not a prouoker of the angrie, least by heaping fire vpon fire, thou thy selfe féele the flaming heate.¹⁴⁶
- 76 Be not acquainted with a sorcerer, and with an inchanter or soothsaier kéepe not companie.
- 77 Be not curious in vanities, least thou become a scorne among the wise, and a mockingstocke among the sober.¹⁴⁷
- 78 Be not ouercome with wine and strong drinke: for thereby manie a wise man hath shewed him selfe a foole.¹⁴⁸
- 79 Be not fauourable to the malefactour, and seueare against the innocent, for that is to peruert iustice.
- 80 Be not a shifter, to liue by other mens sweate, but let thine owne labour minister vnto thée allowance.

¹⁴² Cf. Prov. 16:29-30, “A wicked man...shutteth his eyes to deuise wickednes” (GB).

¹⁴³ Prov. 16:14.

¹⁴⁴ Ecclus. 5:16 (BB).

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Prov. 18:19, “A brother offended *is harder to winne* then a strong citie” (BB).

¹⁴⁶ Ecclus. 28:10-11.

¹⁴⁷ Ecclus. 3:24.

¹⁴⁸ Prov. 20:1.

The tenth Honicombe, yeelding most whoalsome dehortations
from vice and vitious life.

81 Be not wanton nor light in thy behauiour, least thy maners being marked, thou reape shame and rebuke.¹⁴⁹

82 Be not a couerer of an offence, where the offender falleth wilfullie, but open his fault that he may be reprovèd.¹⁵⁰

83 Be not seditious and giuen to discord and strife, least thou be counted a maintainer of mischief.¹⁵¹

84 Be not vainglorious and confident in thy foolishnesse, for such a one is like a shee Beare robbed of her whelps.¹⁵²

85 Be not a rewarder of euill for good: for if thou so do, euill shall not depart from thy house.¹⁵³

86 Be not a iustifier of the vngodlie, nor a condemner of the innocent: for both these doth the Lord abhorre.¹⁵⁴

87 Be not delighted in sinne and wickednesse: for that is to bring destruction & euerlasting death to thine owne soule.¹⁵⁵

88 Be not froward of heart, least thou thereby obtaine no good: neither beare thou a double tong in thy mouth.¹⁵⁶

89 Be not wilfull in thine owne opinion, neither defend thou obstinatelie that which is not right.¹⁵⁷

90 Be not wise in thine own conceipte, least in so doing thou be counted a foole among the discrète.¹⁵⁸

¹⁴⁹ Rom. 13:13.

¹⁵⁰ Prov. 17:9.

¹⁵¹ Prov. 17:11.

¹⁵² Prov. 17:12.

¹⁵³ Prov. 17:13.

¹⁵⁴ Prov. 17:15.

¹⁵⁵ Prov. 17:19.

¹⁵⁶ Prov. 17:20.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Ecclus. 3:29, "An obstinate heart shalbe laden with sorowes" (GB).

- 91 Be not married to thine owne fansie, and like not so well of thy selfe, as to haue other in contempt.¹⁵⁹
- 92 Be not hastie to be reuenged vpon thine enimie, but bridle thy raging lust for a time with reason.¹⁶⁰
- 93 Be not stubborne and rebellious against a magistrate, least thou heape coles of fire vpon thine head.¹⁶¹
- 94 Be not presumptuous, and of an haughtie heart: for the end of pride is shame and confusion.¹⁶²
- 95 Be not a listener after newes, nor a raiser vp of reports, least thou become a common scorne.
- 96 Be not a laugher at other mens miseries: for thine estate is subiect to the like wretchednesse and calamitie.¹⁶³
- 97 Be not a grudger against God, if he afflict thee: but patientlie beare all tribulations and sorowes.
- 98 Be not suspicious where there is no appearance, and though there be, yet be not too rash in thy iudgement.
- 99 Be not liberall of another mans, least thereby thou growe out of credit with thy friends.
- 100 Be not a deceiuer of the simple, nor guilefull in thy dealings: for that is the waie to lose loue and fauour.

The Conclusion.

Taste of the honie
heere in this hiue,
If thou wilt learne
to liue well, and thriue.

¹⁵⁸ Rom. 11:25 (BB); Prov. 26:12.

¹⁵⁹ Prov. 18:2.

¹⁶⁰ Rom. 12:19.

¹⁶¹ Rom. 13:1-7.

¹⁶² Prov. 16:5.

¹⁶³ Cf. Ps. 70:3, side note d, “we are taught not to mocke at others in their miserie, lest ye same fall on our owne necks” (GB).

F I N I S.
A Referendarie to the
Premisses.¹⁶⁴

*No cookerie is so exquisite,
 No dish so deintie dressed,
But ouercommes the appetite,
 By gluttonie oppressed:
And therefore wise King Salomon
Commendeth moderation.*

*No kind of sweete restoritie,
 Though curiouslie compounded,
No instrumentall melodie,
 In time and measure sounded,
But by degrees superlatiue,
Offends the vertue sensitiue.*

*Such store of honie is gathered,
 Heere in this swarming Beehiue,
As being often swallowed,
 So whets the power digestiue,
That more and more it coueteth,
And neuer faints or surfeteth.*

*Who would not then most hungerlie,
 Eate plentie of this honie,
Which tastes so sweete and sauourlie,
 And costs so little monie?
The vse thereof is generall,
God graunt it proue effectuell.*

¹⁶⁴ **Referendarie:** an epilogue referring to the preceding subject matter (*OED*).

A. F.

A
Plant of Pleasure,
*Bearing fourteene seuerall flowres,
called by the names of Holie
Hymnes, and Spirituall
Songs.*

Wherein such godlie exercises are
presented to the hands of euerie particular
person, as may conuenientlie be ap-
plied to their priuate vse, not onlie in the
pleasant Spring of prosperitie: but
also in the hard Winter of
aduersitie.

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

Ephes. 5. verse, 18,19.

¶ Be ye fulfilled with the spirit, speaking vnto
your selues in Psalmes, and Hymnes, and
Spirituall Songs, singing and making me-
lodie in your hearts.¹

AT LONDON,

Printed by Henrie Denham.
Anno Dom. 1581.

¹ Eph. 5:18-19 (GB).

A Preface to the true Christian Reader.

It is a naturall inclination of man, for the delighting and solacing of himselfe, after some labour or exercise, to seeke such recreations, as dooe best agree with his disposition. Herevpon, some couet this game, othersome that: and euerie man indeede what maketh most for his contentment. Which kind of recreations and refreshings, men are not forbidden in Gods word to vse, so that the feare of his diuine maiestie preuent them in all their actions: and that they abuse not those benefites of recreation to a licentious and wanton libertie.²

Verie necessarie it is, that consideration be had of the state of the bodie, which cannot alwaies endure labour, but that now and then it must be refreshed, not onlie with some intermission & ceassing from trauell, but also with some kind of exercise coupled with delectation and pleasure, whereby not onelie the bodie, and euerie member thereof, is comforted, but the mind also, and the faculties or powers of the same iollilie quickened.

Such care taken for the bodie, which is earthlie and corruptible, should teach vs (I thinke) a point of wit, which we want, touching the regard wherewith we ought to be moued for the good estate of the mind or soule, which is heauenlie and immortall. For how much the minde is more pretious than the bodie, so much the more, wisdom would, it should be esteemed: otherwise we shall seeme to preferre the shell before the kernell, the barke before the pith, the shadowe before the substance, yea, most absurdlie, we shall refuse wheate for chaffe,³ pure gold for drosse, cleere wine for dregs, and in conclusion repent our want of grace.

It were behoofull therefore for vs, first and principallie to see to our mind, which is chiefest part of our essence and being, that the same, after some serious studie and contemplation, desiring to be refreshed, be not fed with fond fansies, fables, dotages, imaginations, dreames, & I cannot tell what idle and vnfruitefull discourses, which

² A aversion to wordly pleasures and activities has traditionally been associated with, although not limited to, Puritanism. Phillip Stubbes, Fleming's contemporary, lists "whoremongering," "drunknes," "baudie Stage-playes," "dauncing, dicing, carding, bowling, [and] tennisse playing" as inappropriate forms of recreation (*The anatomie of abuses*).

³ Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17.

kindle the affections, and set the flesh a gogge: but rather with holie exercises, and godlie meditations, such as are and may be prouided for the purpose, to reuiue the spirit, and quicken the new man, if the partie be gratiouſlie affected.

Thou haſt heere therefore preſented vnto thine hand (good Reader) a plant of pleaſure, bearing fourteene ſeuerall flowers, called by the name of holie Hymnes and ſpirituall Songs, to reade at thy leaſure for thy recreation, and not ſo much for thy recreation, as for thy profit: which I haue put partlie in rythme, and partlie in proſe, for the ſatisfaction of ſundrie Readers deſires, ſome beeing addicted to this, and ſome delighted in that kind of writing. I would to God it were in me to frame my wit to the will of the well diſpoſed in all points. I haue done what I could, the Lord knoweth what I would: his name be praiſed for all, whoſe glorie to ſeeke and ſet foorth, I beſeech him giue vs all grace, ſo ſhall the faithfull reioice and clap their hands,⁴ but ſhame ſhall fall vpon the reprobate, & force them to hang downe their heads.

Abraham Fleming.

³ Ps. 47:1.

A Plant of Pleasure,
bearing fourteene seuerall Flowres.

¶ The first Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

*1 A petition vnto God for the remission of sinnes. 2 A description of Gods greatnesse. 3
Of his habitation, and that he seeth all things.*

A.

1 As the Sunne is the soule and life of the world, so is thy word (O God) the comfort of my heart.⁵

Be gracious & fauourable vnto me thy seruant, that I may be frée from the malice of mine enimies.

Reward me not according to my deseruings (O Lord) for I am full of sinne, and in me there is no righteousness.⁶

According to thy louing kindnesse therefore (O mercifull father,) blot mine offences out of thy register, and pardon me.⁷

Haue mercie on me, O founteine of all mercie, cleanse me from the corruption of sinne, and wash me with the water of thy word.⁸

Am not I a reasonable creature, indued with knowledge and vnderstanding? O Lord, to whom should I then come, but to thee?⁹

2 Men, beasts, fishes, and foules, they are the works of thine hands, by the vertue of thy word they were created and made.¹⁰

From the rising of the Sunne, to the going downe of the same, I will continue in the contemplation and view of thy greatnes.¹¹

Lighten the eies of my hart (O Lord) that they may see the mightines of thy maiestie in thy creatures.¹²

⁵ Cf. Ps. 84:11, "For God the Lorde is a sunne and a shielde" (BB).

⁶ Ps. 143:2.

⁷ Ps. 51:1.

⁸ Ps. 51:2.

⁹ John 6:68.

¹⁰ Ps. 8:6-7.

¹¹ Ps. 113:3.

Endlesse is thy glorie, and thy power is incomprehensible: wonderfull art thou in thy iudgments.¹³

Maruellous things are wrought by thine omnipotent hand day by day, the eies of all people are witnesses of thy power.¹⁴

3 In heauen is thy dwelling place, from whence thou beholdest the commings in, and the goings out of all men.¹⁵

Nothing is hidden from thine eies, O Lord, the brightnesse of thy maiestie can not be absent.¹⁶

Giue me grace (O God) to leade my life in the loue of thy lawe, so shall I not miscarrie.

The second Flowre called a spirituall Song, conteining

1 A commemoration or remembrance of the benefites of Christes death and passion. 2

A petition for thankfulnessse. 3 A confession of Gods greatnesse and almightinesse.

B.

1 Al people praise the Lord,

with faithfull heart and voice,

Be bold to magnifie his name,¹⁷

and therein to reioice.

Remember well the worke,

which he for vs hath wrought,

And laud his name accordinglie,

in word, in deed, and thought.

Hell gates he hath shut vp,

in spite of Sathans power,

And saued the soules of sinfull men

¹² Ps. 19:8.

¹³ Cf. Ps. 119:137, "Righteous art thou, O Lorde, and iust *are* thy iudgements" (GB).

¹⁴ Ps. 118:23.

¹⁵ Ps. 121:8.

¹⁶ Ecclus. 39:19.

¹⁷ Ps. 34:3.

from torments sharpe and sower.
 Most mightie is his arme,¹⁸
 his greatnesse hath none end,
 From force of foes that vs assault,
 all his he doth defend.
 2 Lord lighten thou our hearts,
 that we may praise thy power,
 Eternallie which flourisheth,
 and worketh euerie hower.
 3 Most mightie is thy word,
 thy maiestie surmounts,
 In glorie none so excellent,
 (as scriptures cast accounts.)
 No Prince nor Potentate,
 may once with thee compare,
 Giue vs thy grace no lesse to learne,
 (O Lord) with Christian care.

The third Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

*1 A request for assistance against our aduersaries. 2 A confession of our vilenesse by
 reason of sinne. 3 A petition for true mortification and regeneration. 4 Of the
 pretiousnesse of mans soule.*

R.

1 According to thine vnmeasurable mercies, O God, heare my praier, and let thine eares
 be open to the crie of my complaint.¹⁹
 Be my sauour and deliuerer from danger and distresse, & bridle thou the
 desperatenesse of mine aduersarie, that he do me no mischefe.²⁰

¹⁸ Ps. 89:13.

¹⁹ Ps. 17:1 (BB).

²⁰ Ps. 107:6-28.

Rebuke them (O Lord) that go about to raise reproches against me: chastise them, that they may see wherein they have offended.

As for me, I will withstand them in their maliciousnesse: for I hope thou wilt arme me with the spirit of fortitude and patience.²¹

Holie one of Israell, heare the supplication of me thy seruant, and in the time of necessitie assist me.²²

2 A worme and no man I confesse my selfe to be, yea, more vile and contemptible, than anie vnreasonable creature: for sinne hath stoong my soule.²³

My heart is defiled with a thousand corrupt cogitations: yea, the thoughts which are hidden in my heart, are not so infinite, as they are wicked.²⁴

From mine infancie and cradle I haue bene blemished with sinne, and as for righteousnes or iustice, there is none in mine entrailes.²⁵

Lord, I am so ouerwhelmed in sinne and iniquitie, that I stand in continuall feare of thy punishment: Oh giue me grace to repent!

Euening and morning I call my sinnes to memorie, and they are more in number than the haire of my head: yet (O Lord) be mercifull.²⁶

3 Make me a new creature by the inspiration of thy sanctifieng spirit, and let mine inward man be circumcised with the razour of mortification.²⁷

Increase in me godlie desires, and let all carnall concupiscences be quite quenched in me, that I may long after nothing, but the loue of thy lawe.

4 Nothing is more pretious in thy sight (O Lord) than the soule of man, O let not sinne preuaile against it.

Grant me thy grace euen to the last houre of my life, that I may haue in heauen mine inheritance, purchased by Christ his death and passion, Amen.

²¹ Ps. 18:32.

²² Ps. 119:170.

²³ Ps. 22:6; **stoong**: stung.

²⁴ Cf. Dan. 7:28, "I...had many cogitations [which] troubled me," (BB).

²⁵ Ps. 51:5.

²⁶ Ps. 40:12.

²⁷ Cf. Deut. 30:6, "And the Lorde thy God wyll circumcise thine heart...that thou mayest lyue" (BB).

The fourth Flowre called a Spirituall Song, conteining

1 A glorifieng of God. 2 An exhortation to praise him. 3 A repetition of certaine properties in him. 4 A protestation or vow of Christian dutie to do him reuerence.

A.

1 All glorie vnto God,
the guider of the iust,
Blest be his name in heauen & earth
whereto the righteous trust.
2 Repaire his temples to,
him worship and adore,
Alleluiah sing and saie,²⁸
to him for euermore.
3 He is the God of grace,
whose kingdom knows none end,²⁹
A mightie God, from all annoies
that can his flocke defend.
Most mercifull is he,
to such as do repent,
Forgiuing them, which for their sins
are sorie and lament.
Laud we his holie name,
as dutie doth command,
Each tongue sound out his maiestie,
adore him sea and land.
4 My heart, my tongue, and voice,³⁰
shall plaie the organ pipes
In praising him, out of the skore
our desperate debts which wipes.

²⁸ “Alleluiah” is printed in a distinctive font in the original text.

²⁹ Luke 1:33.

³⁰ Ps. 108:1 (GB).

No time will I let slip,
 (if God do giue me grace)
Great thanks to render to his name
 which filleth euerie place.

The fift Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

1 The reward of the proud and impenitent. 2 An admonition not to be high minded. 3 To be touched with compassion towards the afflicted. 4 To be mindfull of Gods mercies in tribulation. 5 A declaration of his omnipotencie and power. 6 A petition that the word of God might be the rule of our life.

H.

1 An humble heart is a sacrifice vnto the Lord, a contrite spirit he will not despise: as for the proud and impenitent, he casteth them out of his fauour in the heate of his indignation.³¹

2 Be not high minded, neither puft vp with a vaine opinion of thy selfe: but consider that thou art but dust and ashes,³² and that thou hast nothing but naughtinesse by nature.

3 Relent at the aduersities and afflictions of thy neighbour, and in the bowels of compassion mitigate his miserie, for nothing falleth vpon him, but the same may in time chance to thee.³³

Arme thy selfe with patience, to endure all tribulations: if God chastise thee with anie kind of punishment, acknowledge thine owne transgressions in that behalfe, and be penitent.³⁴

4 Haue in thy mind the greatnes of Gods mercies, which are aboue all his workes: put thy trust in him in the time of trouble, he will deliuer thee, and set thee at libertie.³⁵

³¹ Ps. 51:17.

³² Gen. 18:27.

³³ **bowels of compassion:** the bowels were considered the seat of sympathetic emotions (*OED*).

³⁴ Cf. Ps. 94:12, “Blessed is the man O Lorde, whom thou wylt chasten: and whom thou wylt instruct in thy lawe. That thou mayest geue hym patience in tyme of aduersitie” (BB).

³⁵ Cf. Ps. 37:39, “saluation of the righteous commeth of God: whiche is also their strength in time of trouble” (BB).

Aske after succour where it is to be found, the Lord is all sufficient, he hath treasures of good things for them that loue him: as for the wicked of this world, they are out of his fauour.

Much mightier is the mercie of the Lord, than the heart of man can conceiue: of his power there is no end: all the world is replenished with his greatnes most excellent and glorious.³⁶

5 Fall downe ye hils before his presence, tremble ye deepes at the sight of his maiestie: for the whole compasse of the world he holdeth in his hand, to dispose the same at his pleasure.³⁷

Lord God of Iacob, who is like vnto thée? Heauen and earth are witnesses of thine excellencie: the Sunne and the Moone declare the greatnesse of thy glorie to all nations.³⁸

Euerie creature telleth abroad that thou art omnipotent: for at thy becke all things obeie, yea heauen it selfe, which is thine owne habitation, trembleth and quaketh at thy thundering voice.³⁹

6 Make me (O Lord God) obedientlie to leade my life, direct thou my footesteps by the rule of thy lawe, and let thy holie word be a lanthorne before me, that I go not astraie.⁴⁰

If I haue at anie time swarued and done amisse, it hath come to passe through the want of thy word, which (I beséech thée) let lighten my goings, like a bright burning lampe.⁴¹

Notwithstanding (O Lord) I deserue no such fauour and loue at thy hands: yet for thine owne sake, which art the founteine of mercie, vouchsafe to shew thy selfe gracious.

Glorie, honour, and praise be ascribed vnto thée, which hast béene from beginning of beginnings, and shalt continue in power and maiestie, when all things vanish and decaie.

³⁶ Ps. 104:13 (BB).

³⁷ Ps. 104:32.

³⁸ Cf. Ps. 148:3-4, "Prayse ye hym sunne and moone...Prayse ye hym all ye heauens" (BB).

³⁹ 2 Sam. 22:8.

⁴⁰ Ps. 119:105.

⁴¹ Cf. Ps. 119:10, "suffer me not to swarue from thy commaundementes" (BB).

The sixt Flowre called a spirituall Song, conteining

1 A petition for humilitie, and assistance against our enimies. 2 For mercie and loue of Gods lawe. 3 For the leading of a good life.

A.

1 An humble heart, O God,
vnto thy seruants giue,
Be thou to them a louing Lord,
whiles in this world they liue:
Regard thy little flocke,
be thou to them a sheeld,⁴²
And them defend from greedie Wolues,
least ouercome, they yeeld.

2 Haue mercie on vs all,
whose waies most wicked are,
And to the path of Paradise,
our speedie steps prepare.
Make vs to loue thy lawe,
and therein to delight,⁴³
For that is an oblation
most pleasant in thy sight.

3 Let me so leade my life,
that what I thinke, or saie,
Extend vnto the laud and praise,
of thee (my God) alwaie.
Make me an instrument,
thine excellence to sound,
In faith and in good works (O God)
vouchsafe I may abound.
Nothing, though high of price,

⁴² Ps. 18:30.

⁴³ Ps. 119:77, 174.

and glorious to the eie,
Grant mightie God from thy precepts
may drawe my feete awrie.

The seuenth Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

1 An inuocation to God for succour in affliction. 2 For restitution of perfection lost by sinne. 3 For the fortifieng of faith in time of triall. 4 For prosperous successe of our enterprises. 5 For protection and strength in persecution of the Gospell. 6 A deprecation against Gods enimies, and the aduersaries of his Word.

M.

1 At euening and at morning I praise thée, O God, earlie do I call vpon thee: yea, before the rising of the Sunne do I direct my voice to thee, my King, and my God.⁴⁴

Be not far from me in the time of mine affliction, but when troubles assault me, be thou present and at hand to defend me, so shall I féele comfort in my soule, and glorifie thy most excellent name.⁴⁵

2 Restore to me the fulnesse of thy grace, which mine owne sins, and the transgressions of my progenitours haue diminished, that by the restitution of the same, I may the more vprightlie leade my life before thy face.

3 And though the world be full of wickednesse, and thy glorie dailie derogated by the diuelish deuises of lewd liuers, yet so fortifie my faith, that I fall not awaie from thee.

Helpe me, O God, to withstand the subtile suggestions of Sathan, and all Sathanicall souldiours, such I meane as set shoulder against thee, & thy son Christ.

4 Accept me among thy chosen children, and ouershadowe me with the shield of thine omnipotencie, that whatsoeuer I take in hand, may haue happie successe, to my profit, and to thy glorie.⁴⁶

5 Mightilie protect me in all perils and dangers, speciallie in the time of persecution, when thy Gospell is called in question among false Heretikes, superstitious Papists, and cauilling Scismatikes.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Ps. 5:3; 88:13; 113:3.

⁴⁵ Ps. 22:19.

⁴⁶ Eph. 1:3-5; Ps. 91:4.

Fortifie my spirit with the armour of thy word, that I may powre it out plentifulle in the presence of thine enimies, to their shame and confusion, and to the aduancement of thy name.⁴⁸

Let not their sophisticall assertions intangle or intrap me, but let thy sacred Scripture so flourish and fructifie in my heart, that by thy gracious gift of vnderstanding, I may controll them in their errours.⁴⁹

Enter thou with me, O Lord, when I am cited to appeare before the Sathanicall synagogue, which presumptuously call the professors of thy Gospell to a reckoning of their religion: O be thou mine assistant!

Make them ashamed of their malicious imaginations, and in their owne snares let them be intangled, ouerwhelme them in the pit which they haue prepared for others, so shall I magnifie thy heauenlie power.⁵⁰

Increase in them the spirit of wilfull blindness,⁵¹ because they haue not béene harbourers of thy faithfull ministers, and because they haue contemptuously withstood thy word, which is the liquor of life.⁵²

Neuerthelesse, if it be thy pleasure, such as feeble anie remorse of conscience, and be sorie for their obstinacie, vouchsafe to receiue them into thy fauour, that they may be witnesses of thine vnspeakeable mercie.

God the father, God the sonne, and God the holie Ghost, heare my praier, and let my crie be considered: for thine owne sake, and for thy sonnes sake (O God) looke downe from aloft, and shew thy louing kindnesse to all people.

⁴⁷ **cauilling**; cavilling: fraudulent, deceptive (*OED*). **Heretikes** may refer to the Anabaptists, persecuted by Protestants and Catholics alike, or to the Jesuits, known for their ability to make a convincing case for their faith (such apologetics were often labeled “sophisticall” by Protestants). **Scismatikes** may refer more generally to non-conforming English Protestants, whose recusancy promoted division in the national church.

⁴⁸ Eph. 6:11-17.

⁴⁹ Cf. 2 Chron. 30:10, side note h, “Thogh the wicked mocke at the seruants of God...yet the worde ceaseth not to fructifie in the hearts of Gods elect” (GB).

⁵⁰ Cf. Ps. 69:21, “Let their table be as a snare before them: and in steade of aboundaunce of peace, let it be a meanes of destruction” (BB).

⁵¹ Cf. Ps. 69:22, “Let their eyes be blynded that they see not” (BB).

⁵² Cf. Rev 22:1, “he shewed me a pure ryuer of water of lyfe...proceedyng out of the throne of god” (BB)

The eight Flowre called a spirituall Song, conteining

1 The chieftest comfort in this life. 2 The meanes whereby to obtaine blessednesse. 3 The cause of a quiet conscience, and how it is come by. 4 An exhortation to glorifie GOD.

F.

1 Amid so manie miseries

depending on our life,

Behold a comfort, namelie this,

with sinne to be at strife.

2 Resisting of concupiscence,⁵³

subduing fleshlie lust,

Are meanes to come to blessednesse,

enioied of the iust.

3 Hereof the true tranquillitie,

remaining in the minde,

According to her qualitie,

doth flourish in her kind.

Most mightie Ioue be praised,

whose grace doth compasse this,

For no deserts of ours, whose liues

are dailie lead amis.

4 Laud we his holie name,

as doth vs best become,

Exalt him in his holinesse,

O nations all and some.⁵⁴

Make all your mirth and glee,

on him alone to rest,

In him reioice and clap your hands,⁵⁵

⁵³ Rom. 13:14; 1 Thess. 4:3-5; Col. 3:5.

⁵⁴ Ps. 86:9

oblations such are best.
Nothing so much becoms
a Christian, than doth this:
Grant vs the same, O gracious God
that liuest aloft in blis.

The ninth Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

*1 A petition for repentance and remission of sinnes. 2 A deliuerance from our enimies.
3 An inuocation vpon God for present help. 4 A deprecation against the aduersaries of
Gods truth.*

L.

1 A penitent heart (O God) thou wilt not despise, O teach me thy statutes, that I may see
my sinne.⁵⁶

Be fauourable vnto me, whose iniquities are gone ouer my head: O heale my
sores and vlcers, which stinke in thy sight.⁵⁷

2 Rise vp thou holie one of Israell, like a Giant in triumph, and rescue me from the
irruptions and inrushings of mine enimies.⁵⁸

According to thy greatnesse deliuer me, O set me free from the furiousnesse of
my foes, from the furiousnesse of my mortall and deadlie foes.⁵⁹

Horrible are the mischēefes which they haue imagined against me: but thou
which art omnipotent, wilt ouerwhelme them in their maliciousnesse.

3 As for me, I will be confident, vpon thy prouidence will I depend, vpon an assured
hope of thy heauenlie helpe will I attend, O Lord.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Ps. 47:1.

⁵⁶ Ps. 51:17; 119:12.

⁵⁷ Ps. 38:4-5 (GB).

⁵⁸ Cf. Isa. 42:13, "The Lorde shall come foorth lyke a giaunt...and ouercome his
enemies" (BB).

⁵⁹ Cf. Ps. 55:3, "[Deliuer me] from the voyce of the enemy, and from the present
affliction of the wicked: for they are minded to do me mischief, and are set maliciously
against me" (BB).

⁶⁰ Cf. Ps. 56:11, "In the Lorde I put my trust: I wyll not be afraide what man can do vnto
me" (BB).

Make no long tarieng, O my King and my God: for vpon thée onlie doth the anchor of my saluation rest, thou art my health and my safetie.⁶¹

Forsake me not in the time of néede, least mine enimies taking courage against me, scorne at me in their pride, and saie, Where is thy God?⁶²

4 Let not the enimies of thy truth, beare vp their bristles against thée, and contemptuouslie cast thy glorie to the ground: O Lord destroie both them and their deuises.

Euen as the Sunne consumeth snowe, and as waxe wasteth in the fornace, so let them be put to silence in the rigour of thy wrath and iudgement.⁶³

Make them like vnto Sodom, and like vnto Gomorrha, make them like vnto Pentapolis and Babylon, that they may knowe thou liuest which art Lord ouer all.⁶⁴

Inlarge their torments far aboute the torments wherwith they haue persecuted thy people: deale with them according to thine own pleasure.

Not my will, but thy will be fulfilled, O father: according to thine owne decreée deale with them, either in mercie, or in iudgement.⁶⁵

Giue them proofes of thine omnipotencie, that they may knowe thée which sittest aboute, whose eies see their deuises, and art able to reuenge thine owne cause.

The tenth Flowre called a spirituall Song, conteining

1 An exhortation to praise the Lord. 2 That all states and degrees ought to stoope before him, and do him reuerence. 3 Wherein our mirth and melodie should consist. 4 That all creatures must magnifie Gods Maiestie.

E.

1 Attend ye nations & giue eare,
O learne to laud the Lord,

⁶¹ Ps. 40:18 (BB).

⁶² Ps. 42:3.

⁶³ Ps. 68:2 (GB).

⁶⁴ Gen. 19:1-29; Isa. 13:19-22; **Pentapolis**: the region where Sodom, Gomorrha, Segor, Adama, and Seboim stood, five cities punished by God for their vice; **Babylon**: the Babylonian empire was conquered by the Persian emperor Cyrus in 539 B.C.E., and was conventionally identified with the Roman Catholic Church in Protestant polemics.

⁶⁵ Matt. 6:10.

Behold his wondrous works, and praise ⁶⁶
his name with one accord.
2 Rich, poore, weake, strong, old folke & yong, ⁶⁷
approch and praises sing,
All people dwelling in the world,
to God oblations bring.
High potentates and all estates,
the King that crowne doth weare,
And subiects sworne to loialtie,
the Prince of Princes feare.
3 Make all your mirth and melodie,
his honour to resound,
Feare him in truth and faithfulnessse,
whose blessings do abound.
Let euerie thing lift vp their voice,
and laud his holie name,
4 Each creature drawing vital breth,
extoll and praise the same.
Magnificent and wonderfull,
yea, onlie God is hee,
In these his works before our eies,
his puissance we may see.
No time therefore let vs omit,
in publishing his praise,
Giue glorie, oh heauen, oh earth and sea, ⁶⁸
to him which liues alwaies.

⁶⁶ Ps. 66:4 (BB).

⁶⁷ Ps. 49:1-2.

⁶⁸ Ps. 69:33.

The eleuenth Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

1 A petition to God vnder a continued allegorie, for a renewed life. 2 The weedes of the heart. 3 The good and wholesome hearbes of the soule.

M.

1 As siluer is purged from drosse by the force of the fire, so by thy mercie, O Lord GOD, let me be purged from mine offences and sinnes.⁶⁹

Be fauourable vnto me an vnfruitefull bough of old Adams rotten and putrified stocke, O water thou me with thy sanctifieng spirit.

Raine downe from heauen vpon me, I beséech thee: O let the drops of thy grace fall vpon me, that I may bud and beare blossoms.⁷⁰

As for the wéedes of wickednesse and sinne, let them wither and die in me, that I may leade an vpriht life in thy sight and glorious presence.

Husband me in such wise, O Lord, that I may fructifie and increase abundantlie, that I may bring foorth thirtie, sixtie, and an hundred fold, according to thy good pleasure.⁷¹

A riuer of pleasantnesse be thou vnto me, whereby I may be filled full of sap, and flourish continuallie like the gréene Baie trée.⁷²

Make my leaues neuer to wither or vade, let not the Sunne scotch or drie them, to the losse of their beautifull colour and séemelinesse.⁷³

From all stormes and tempests shéeld and ouershadowe me, that my roote may be replenished with pith, and my branches spread abroad.⁷⁴

Let not the blustering blasts of Winter do me anie harme, but as in⁷⁵ a continuall calme of Summer season, let me bring foorth fruits most abundantlie.

⁶⁹ Isa. 1:25.

⁷⁰ Cf. Ezek. 34:26, "I wyll cause raine to come downe in due season, [and] there shalbe raine of blessing" (BB).

⁷¹ Matt. 13:8, 23; Mark 4:8, 20.

⁷² Ps. 37:35 (BB).

⁷³ Ps. 1:3 (BB).

⁷⁴ Cf. Isa. 25:4, "thou hast bene a strength vnto the poore ... a refuge against the tempest" (GB).

⁷⁵ Transcription of the Folger copy begins.

2 Enuie and malice, dissimulation and hypocrisie, strife and variance, superstition and idolatrie, extortion and vsurie, these wéedes, O Lord, roote out of my heart.

3 Méekenesse and humblenesse, innocencie of life and conuersation, loue of thy lawes and commandements, thankfulnesse, and faith vnfeigned.

Integritie and vprightnesse, holinesse and sinceritie, iust and honest dealing, constancie in thy word and Gospell, plant these vertues in my soule.

Nothing that sauoureth of the flesh let preuaile against me, but season me with the salt of thy holie spirit, my King and my God.⁷⁶

Guide me and gouerne me thou shéepeheard of my soule, that béeing frée from all inconueniences and dangers, I may glorifie thy name.⁷⁷

The twelfe Flowre called a spirituall Song, conteining

1 The sacrifice wherewith God is best pleased. 2 A petition to be cleansed from the sores of sinne. 3 An intercession for offenders. 4 A commendation of Gods mercie.

I.

1 A contrite heart and broken spirit,

O Lord thou doest accept,⁷⁸

Behold the selfe same sacrifice,

for thee preserud and kept.

Regard the sorrowes of my heart,

my mourning songs attend,

And giue me grace my sinfull life,

with Christian care t'amend.

2 Heale thou my festred sores which stinke,⁷⁹

and sauour in thy sight,

And plasters to my wounds applie,

by vertue of thy might.

⁷⁶ Cf. Mark 9:49, "Euery man shalbe salted with fire: and euery sacrifice shalbe seasoned with salt" (BB).

⁷⁷ 1 Pet. 2:25.

⁷⁸ Ps. 51:17 (GB).

⁷⁹ Ps. 38:5 (BB).

Make me as free from filthinesse,
 as is the child new borne,
 From all pollutions, blots, & spots,
 O cleanse me wretch forlorne.⁸⁰
 3 Looke downe from heauen thy dwelling place,
 vpon the sons of men,
 Extend thy grace, O God, to such
 as haue transgressours ben.
 Most mercifull and iust art thou,
 to such as do thee feare,
 3 In time of trouble to their cries
 thou bendest downe thine eare.⁸¹
 None hath ben helples in their need
 that made their mone to thee,
 Good God therefore be mercifull,
 and gracious vnto mee.

The thirteenth Flowre called a holie Hymne, conteining

1 An inuocation for comfort in distresse. 2 For restitution of former perfection. 3 For diuers godlie and commendable ornaments of the mind. 4 For mercie against iudgement. 5 A vowe or promise of thankesgiuing, and deuotion.

N.

1 Attend vnto my cries, O God, oh heare me and helpe me in this my heauinesse,
 assuage the sharpnes of my sorrowes with the medicine of thy mercie.⁸²
 Be thou my Surgeon, O Almightye God: be the curer of my woundes, O most
 high Iehoua, so shall sing vnto thee the songs of thankesgiuing.⁸³

⁸⁰ Ps. 51:2..

⁸¹ Ps. 10:17 (GB).

⁸² Ps. 17:1; 39:12; 61:1; 102:1.

⁸³ Cf. Exod. 15:26, "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (BB).

2 Restore me to that perfection from whence I am fallen, and let the fruites of thy sonnes death and passion, be a continuall comfort to my soule.

As thou art gracious and mercifull, so fauour me thy seruant, succour and assist me in the daie of distresse, oh saue and defend me from all danger.

Heale the blaines and bloches of sinne, wherewith mine vnrighteous soule is defiled, and purge my heart with the water of thy word and glorious Gospell.⁸⁴

3 A mild spirit and a lowlie mind powre into my bodie, that I may the more liuelie féele the operation and working of thy grace in me.

Make me in méekenesse like Moses, in patience and sufferance like Iob, in obedience and dutifulnesse like Tobie, thy faithfull seruants.⁸⁵

Farre from flatterie remoue⁸⁶ my lips and my tongue, grafte in me a desire and delight to speake the truth iustlie, vprihtlie, and Christianlie.⁸⁷

Lighten thou my waies, and direct all my goings, let the deaw of thy blessed spirit drop into my heart, so shall I be obedient vnto thy lawe.⁸⁸

4 Enter not against me in iudgement and rigour, but let thy mercie preuent thy iustice, so shall I be sure to escape shame, reproch, and confusion.⁸⁹

5 My heart, my tongue, and my voice, shall become instruments of praise, to sound out thy greatnesse and goodnesse, in the eares of all people and nations.⁹⁰

In my bed will I meditate of thy commandements, at my meate thy lawe shall be in my mouth, thine ordinances & statutes shall be my dailie exercise.⁹¹

Neither gold nor siluer, neither precious stones, neither robes of roialtie, nor princelie treasure, delight me like thy word.⁹²

Gréedilie will I séeke after the loue of thy lawe, at morning and at euening: yea, at midnight will I comfort my soule in thy gracious Gospell.⁹³

⁸⁴ **blains**: blisters, sores (*OED*); **bloches**: eruptions, boils (*OED*); cf. Ps. 51:7, “Purge thou me with hyssop and I shalbe cleane” (BB).

⁸⁵ Num. 12:3; Jas. 5:11.

⁸⁶ Transcription of the Huntington copy resumes.

⁸⁷ Cf. Ps. 12:3, “God wyll cut away all flatteryng lippes” (BB).

⁸⁸ Cf. Ps. 40:2, “He...set my feete vpon a rocke, and directed my goynges” (BB).

⁸⁹ Ps. 143:2.

⁹⁰ Ps. 108:1 (GB).

⁹¹ Ps. 119:15.

⁹² Ps. 119:72.

The fourteenth Flowre called a spirituall Song, conteining

1 Sententious exhortations from sundrie sinnes. 2 To liue according to Gods lawe. 3 Not to mistrust his power in the time of trouble. 4 The reward of them that do after Gods will. 5 To esteeme the Preachers of the Gospell. 6 To take no euill thing in hand.

G.

1 Abstaine from fleshlie lust,⁹⁴

and spirituall peace possesse,

Be slowe to followe wanton waies,

all wicked thoughts suppressse.

Reuolt from vitious workes,⁹⁵

forbidden deedes detest,

Alluring lookes, and lieng lips,

in silence let them rest.

2 Haue God before thine eies,

who searcheth hart and raines,⁹⁶

And liue according to his lawe,

then glorie is thy gaines.

3 Mistrust not thou his might,

when sorrowes thee assaile,

For he is of sufficient force,

in perils to preuaile.

Laie vp within thy heart,

his testament and will,

4 Eternall life is their reward,

that do his lawes fulfill.

5 Make much of such as teach,

⁹³ Ps. 119:62.

⁹⁴ Rom. 13:14; 1 Thess. 4:3-5; Col. 3:5.

⁹⁵ **vitious**: vicious.

⁹⁶ Ps. 26:2; Jer. 17:10; **raines**: the kidneys, referred to in Biblical usage as the seat of feelings or affections (*OED*).

and preach his gospell pure,
In them, if thou attend their talke,
God will thy peace procure.
6 Nothing attempt in hast,
which hurtfull may be found,
Growe daie by daie from grace to grace
so shall thy blisse abound.

The Conclusion.

Not onlie with tongue,
and sound of thy voice,
But with thy whole hart,
in IESVS reioice.

FINIS.

A Referendarie to the premisses
for the godlie Reader.⁹⁷

*Some liue in fleshlie pleasure,
And some in courtlie brauerie,
Consuming lands and treasure,
About a golden slauerie,
Whose sweetenesse whiles they couit,
They cannot choose but loue it.*

*Some neuer ceasse lamenting,
Because they are in penurie,
And alwaies are inuventing
Their end by mortall iniurie,
Whereas they should content them,
With that which God hath sent them.*

*But be thou better learned,
Which louest Christ his veritie,
Whereby thou hast discearned,
That euerie thing is vanitie,
The world, and all within it,
Though worldlings sweate to win it.*

*And when conuenient leasure,
Doth serue for recreation,
Then vse these plants of pleasure,
And gifts of consolation.⁹⁸
Yea then, and alwaies vse them,
And at no time refuse them.*

A. F.

⁹⁷ **Referendarie:** an epilogue referring to the preceding subject matter (*OED*).

⁹⁸ **gifts:** grafts (*OED*).

A Groue of Graces,
Supplied with plentie
of Plants, appliable to
pleasure and pro-
fit:

Whereof whosoeuer be disposed deuout-
lie to take a view, they shall haue the
choice of fortie (and not so few) godlie exer-
cises of Christian dutie: ordinarilie to be
vsed before and after their
dailie diet.

BY ABRAHAM FLEMING.

1. *Tim. 4. ver. 4, 5.*

¶ Euerie creature of God is good, and nothing
ought to be refused, if it be receiued with
thankesgiuing, for it is sanctified by the word
of GOD, and praier.¹

AT LONDON,
Printed by Henrie Denham.
Anno Dom. 1581.

¹ 1 Tim. 4:4-5 (GB).

A Preface to the true Christian Reader.

As the benefits of God are manifold, or rather infinite, bestowed vpon man, from the time of his creation, euen so ought the fruites of his obedience & thankfulness to be abundant and plentiful. For, if a man hauing diuers good friends, but some more beneficiall than othersome, sheweth himselfe most officious and dutifull to them, of whome he hath receiued most commoditie: by how much the greater reason ought we so to behaue our selues in all kinde of holie seruice towards God, who hath heaped vpon vs more blessings, than the tongue of anie man can vtter, or his memorie conteine?

We see that all things are created by God, all things nourished by him, all things increased by him, all things multiplied by him, and all things preserued by him, for the vse of man, vnto whose gouernement he hath committed them, put him in full possession, and giuen him a lordlie title ouer them, to vse and dispose at his pleasure:² requiring at his hands for this singular bountifulnesse, nothing but an vnderstanding hart, a renewed mind, and religious lips, which might tell abroad the great goodnes of so louing a God, and stir vp others to magnifie his name.³

And although we ought to glorifie God at all times, according to the continued course of his compassion and kindnesse shewed vnto vs, from the daie of our birth, vntill this present houre, sundrie and manie waies, as well in clothing vs, as also in nourishing and feeding vs, besides other inuisible graces, which not appearing to the world, can not so well be remembred: yet, because my purpose is particular, and stretcheth no further than to Christian dutifulnesse, proper vnto God for his dailie blessings presented vnto vs all vpon our ordinarie tables, I would not wish thee (good Reader) to looke for anie other matter at my hands, than the verie title of this treatise doth import, which I haue called by the name of *A Groue of Graces*.

For as in a Groue there do growe manie plants of great varietie and choice, the weakest and slenderest whereof may in due and conuenient time do some good and necessarie seruice: euen so (gentle Reader) thou hast heere in this Groue sundrie good Graces put into thine hands, some in verse, and othersome in prose, all and euerie of them tending to Gods glorie, as blessings and thanksgiuing vnto his diuine Maiestie, for

² Gen. 1:20-28.

³ Ps. 34:3.

his vnspeakeable clemencie, and fatherlie prouidence, which he hath ouer vs sinfull and wretched creatures,⁴ whereof the Lord giue vs grace to continue mindfull, and keepe vs in the reuerent vse of his good gifts, for Iesus Christes sake, our onlie mediator and aduocate, Amen.

Abraham Fleming.

⁴ **creatures:** created beings generally, rather than animals specifically (*OED*).

A Groue of Graces.

The first Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Almightie God, thou giuer of all good things, blesse we beséech thée the meate which is set before vs for our repast, and vs the receiuers of the same, that we may prosper with it, and that the substance thereof conuerted into nourishment, may make vs strong, and able of bodie to endure and goe through our dailie labour. Open our eies also, O Lord, that we may see from whome all things do come,⁵ and séeing, may extoll and magnifie thy name,⁶ through Iesus Christ, Amen.

The 2. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

Brethren and Sisters assembled and refreshed with the blessings of God, forget not to giue him thanks for the present vse of these his comfortable and nourishing creatures, beséeching him to continue them among vs, and to make vs thankfull partakers of the same, for his sonnes sake Iesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

The 3. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Reason requireth, and dutie demandeth, that in partaking of these good creatures of God, we vse a Christian reuerence, & haue before our eies the feare of his diuine Maiestie,⁷ which we beséech thée, O God, to vouchsafe vs, for his sake, in whome thou art best pleased, Iesus Christ our sauour, Amen.

⁵ Cf. Ps. 119:18, “Open thou myne eyes: and I will beholde the wonderous thynges of thy lawe” (BB).

⁶ Ps. 34:3.

⁷ Cf. Eccles. 8:12, “it shall go well with them that feare God, whiche haue hym before their eyes” (BB).

The 4. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

A thankefull hart, which is the sacrifice that thou requirest O Lord,⁸ graunt vnto vs thy seruants, nourished and fed at this present by thy prouidence. Open our mouthes, that we may sound forth thy praise,⁹ and also with one consent glorifie thy diuine Maiestie, saieng: Blessed be thou O eternall God in all thy gifts, and extolled in all thy workes. All glorie, honour, power, and dominion, be ascribed vnto thée world without end, Amen.

The 5. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Here we see most manifest and apparant signes of Gods loue and fatherlie care ouer vs: who dailie feedeth our mortall bodies with nourishment conuenient and agréable to our nature. Let vs therefore soberlie receiue them as preseruatiues against hunger, and forget not to magnifie his goodnes, which so mercifullie and fauourable tendereth our weakenesse, through Iesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

The 6. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

All praise and thanks be giuen vnto thée O God omnipotent, which hast fed vs, not onlie this daie, but the whole tearme of our life. We bring vnto thée the bullocks of our lips,¹⁰ beséeching thée to accept our oblation of thankfulness, offered and presented vnto thée for thine vnmeasurable and vnderdeserued bountiffulness. This we do, O Lord, in his name, who for our sakes became accursed, Iesus the righteous, who with thée and the holie Ghost, be euermore glorified, Amen.

⁸ Ps. 51:17.

⁹ Ps. 51:15.

¹⁰ Hos. 14:2.

The 7. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Most gracious God, the giuer of all good giftes, without whome nothing is nourishable,¹¹ be it neuer so delicate: we beséech thée that these thy creatures, procéding from thine almightie prouidence, and set vpon this table for our sustenance, may turne into wholesome substance of flesh and bloud in our bodies.

And because manie times, euen thy good creatures, through our intemperance, turne into poison,¹² and by our owne abuse, bréede sundrie diseases: graunt (we beséech thée) that we may moderatelie eate and drinke that which is dailie ministred vnto vs for our reléefe, and giue thée continuall thanks for these and all other thy benefits, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

The 8. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

Father euerlasting, continuall thanks and praise be ascribed vnto thée, which from our creation and first comming into the world, euen till this present daie & houre, hast giuen vs all things necessarie for our bodies: grant (we beséech thée) that as we haue receiued corporall food and sustenance from thy hands, so we may be faithfull and true partakers of the spirituall Manna, whereby our soules are sustained to euerlasting life,¹³ through Iesus Christ our Sauour, Amen.

The 9. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Lord God, whose dailie hand doth feed
the beast, the foule, and fish,
Vouchsafe to blesse and sanctifie,

¹¹ **nourishable**: “capable of affording nourishment,” rather than “able to be nourished” (*OED*).

¹² Cf. Job 20:14, “The bread that he did eate, is turned to the poyson of serpentes within his bodye” (BB).

¹³ Deut. 8:3; John 6:51.

this boord, and euerie dish:
That as we touch & taste the things
 proceeding from thy grace,
Our bodies to susteine, and feed
 our flesh in euerie place:
So we may yeeld thee thanks therfore
 and giue thy name the praise,
Which doth deserue of all the world,
 extold to be alwaies, Amen.

The 10. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

Eternall God thy name be blest,
 which doest vs dailie feed,
And soule and bodie satisfiest,
 when as they stand in need:
The bodie by the staffe of bread,
 which giueth strength and power,
The soule with sweetnesse of thy word
 and gospell euerie hower:
Thy holie name perpetuallie,
 be magnified therefore,
As hath ben since the world began,
 and shalbe euermore, Amen.

The 11. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Most gracious God, which cloathest the Lillies of the field with beautie, far aboute the
 roialtie of Salomon: and féedest the little Sparrowes, which fall not to the ground

without thy prouidence:¹⁴ be present (we beséeche thee) at this table, and season with the salt of thy blessing these thy creatures,¹⁵ that in receiuing them, as becommeth Christians, we may also be sanctified, and in all our eatings & drinkings euermore remember to confesse and acknowledge thee in thy benefites, from whome all good things procéede, for the succour of thy seruants, and receiue them according to the rule of true Christianitie, through Christ our Lord & onlie Sauour, So be it.

The 12. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

In so much as it hath pleased thee (O mercifull father) to call vs to the communicating¹⁶ and partaking of thy creatures, and by them hast refreshed vs at this present: we giue thee hartie thanks for this thy bountifull liberalitie, beséeching thee to kindle in vs a Christian care and compassion of them that are in necessitie, that we considering their poore and succourlesse estate, may with pitifull eies tender their pouertie, and with charitable hands reléeue them in miserie:¹⁷ alwaies remembring, that whatsoever is done to thy néedie and naked members, thou doest accompt it done to thine owne bodie.¹⁸ Graunt this (O gracious God) for Iesus Christes sake thy sonne our sauour, Amen.

The 13. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

No grace the glutton nor his gests,
 amid their deintie fare,
 Vouchsaft to shew to Lazarus,¹⁹
 a begger poore and bare.
 Their seruice was superfluous,

¹⁴ Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-34.

¹⁵ Cf. Mark 9:49, “Euery man shalbe salted with fire: and euery sacrifice shalbe seasoned with salt” (BB).

¹⁶ **communicating**: sharing in, partaking (*OED*).

¹⁷ Deut. 15:11.

¹⁸ Matt. 25:40.

¹⁹ Luke 16:19-25

their meate was ouermutch,
 Poore Lazarus, who scarce could go,
 or stand without a crutch,
 Lay begging at the gluttons gates,
 some crumbes for his releefe,
 But none there was that of his case,
 were toucht with anie greefe.
 His dog laie licking of his limmes,
 the botches, biles and blaines,²⁰
 And with his tong did seeke a meane
 and waie t'asswage his paines.
 This deede of pitie in the dog,
 condemneth such as saue
 All for themselues, and for the poore
 and needie nothing haue.
 God grant that we may not be such,
 as this rich glutton was,
 Least we with him in pit of Hell,
 crie out, wo and alas.
 From thence the Lord deliuer vs,
 and guide vs by his grace,
 That when we die in earth, in heuen
 we may possesse a place.

The 14. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

Good Zache entreteining Christ,²¹
 became a ioifull man,
 His soule to feede on foode of life,

²⁰ **botches**: ulcers; **biles**: boils; **blains**: sores (*OED*).

²¹ Luke 19:1-10.

with faith and hope began.
 Then called he to streight account,
 his thoughts, his words, & deeds,
 His conscience, and his life misseled,
 and thus in speech proceeds:
 Lord, if I haue done anie man
 shrewd turne, or offred wrong,
 Or causd the poore to make complaint,
 with sobs and sighings strong:
 Lo restitution I will make,
 and fourfold them reward,
 With readie purpose so to do,
 lo hand and hart prepard.
 Marke Zaches speech, & ponder it,
 with wisdom in thy thought,
 And do thy best, that works like his
 may well of thee be wrought.
 Vnto the hungrie breake thy bread,²²
 the thirstie giue to drinke,
 And on the prisoners fast in gaile,
 with pitie alwaies thinke.
 The naked cloth, the widowe helpe,
 lodge them that lodging lacke,
 And thinke no scorne the crosse of Christ,
 to beare vpon thy backe.
 When he shall com to iudge the world
 with fan in hand prepard,²³
 To clense the floure from chaffe, then hope
 in heauen for thy reward.

²² Matt. 25:35-36.

²³ **fan**: A specialized basket or shovel used for separating grain from chaff (*OED*); Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17.

The 15. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Almightie GOD, whose prouidence reacheth to the vttermost ends of the world, and to the deapth of the Sea: which nourishest all creatures with sustenance agréeeable vnto their natures, the fish, the foule, the fourefooted beast, & the créeping worme: we beséech thée, that the meate and drinke which is set before vs on this table, at this present, may be so moderatelie receiued, that our bodies thereby may be refreshed, and our senses comforted, through Iesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

The 16. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

Blessed God, eternall thanks and praise be ascribed vnto thée, which hast opened thine hand at this time, and made vs partakers of thy benefites:²⁴ and hast supplied the necessitie of our nature with these nourishing elements: without the which our life cannot be mainteined. We beséech thée to kindle in vs a continuall remembrance of thy bountifull goodnesse towards vs, that as thou neuer withdrewest thy fatherlie care from vs, so we may neuer cease to offer vnto thée the sacrifice of praise and thankesgiuing, through Iesus Christ our Lord and Sauour, Amen.

The 17. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Remember more is lost than won,
by hauing wealth in hand,
And by receiuing yerelie rents,²⁵
for hire of house and land:
Small gaine is got by trade of life,

²⁴ Ps. 145:16.

²⁵ Cf. Prov. 16:8, “Better it is to haue a litle with ryghteousnesse, then great rentes wrongfully gotten” (BB).

in pompe and pleasure spent,
 In deintie fare, and costlie cares,²⁶
 more than sufficient:
 If losse of soule we do susteine,
 and broiling lie in hell,
 The place where wicked worldlings be
 appointed aie to dwell.²⁷
 Wherefore, so let vs eate and drinke,
 as godlie Christians ought,
 And giue God thanks for euermore,
 as well in tounge as thought.
 Amen.

The 18. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

All we which at this present time
 with foode are well amended,
 From God aboue, our father deere,
 confesse the same descended:
 Who to this end both flesh and fish,²⁸
 and all things else hath made,
 That man, the image of the highest,
 should vse them in their trade:
 Wherefore since God so gracious is,
 to vs that are vniust,
 As dutie bindes, his maiestie
 extoll and praise we must.

²⁶ Cf. Proverbs 23:3 “Be not desirous of...daintie meates, for meate begyleth and deceaueth” (BB).

²⁷ **aie**: aye; always.

²⁸ Gen. 1:24-28.

The 19. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Holie of holiest, father almightie, and God eternall, whose loue to thy creatures is so excéeding great and vnmeasurable, that no hart can conceiue, neither anie tongue expresse it:²⁹ we beséech thée to sanctifie, not onlie these elements visible before our eies, but to vs the receiuers of these thy present and dailie gifts, giue an vnderstanding hart,³⁰ that we knowing from what founteine they do flowe,³¹ may reuerentlie receiue them, setting apart all intemperancie, and gluttonous gréedines: continuallie remembring, that we are created and borne to this end and purpose, namelie, to extoll and glorifie thy diuine Maiestie in the manifoldnesse of thy bountie and goodnes,³² through Christ our Lord, the true bread of life euerlasting,³³ Amen.

The 20. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

As there is nothing that can prosper, except the Lord of life & light vouchsafe to blesse it with his grace, and be present therewith to further it with the operation of his sanctifieng spirit: so doubtles, this corporall foode and bodilie sustenance, whereof we haue tasted, for the comfort and refreshing of our fleshie members, is to small commoditie and profite, except it please thée (O heauenlie father) to blesse the same in vs: that as we féele our selues inwardlie strengthened, so we may magnifie thine immortal name, which art the well head, and storehouse of all good things: to whome, not onelie for this present prouision, but for all thy former benefites, we render praise and thanks vnfeignedlie, in and through Christ Iesus that vnspotted Lambe,³⁴ the fulnesse of our felictie, Amen.

²⁹ An example of the ‘inexpressibility topos,’ which Curtius describes as an “emphasis upon inability to cope with the subject,” used when one can “find no words” to properly express praise or thanksgiving (159).

³⁰ 1 Kings 3:9.

³¹ Cf. Ps. 36:9, “For with thee is the fountaine of lyfe” (BB).

³² Cf. Ps. 104:24, “O God howe manyfolde are thy workes...the earth is ful of thy ryches” (BB).

³³ John 6:51.

³⁴ 1 Pet. 1:19.

The 21. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Most louing sheeheard of our soules³⁵

Christ Iesus iust & true,

Be present at our sustenance,

and vs thy seruants view.

O giue vs grace, of ghostlie foode

to haue no lesse a care,

Than of the bodies nourishment

our minds affected are.

That soule and bodie being fed,

with exquisite repast,

They both by giuing God the praise,

may liue in heauen at last:

Of Angels foode to haue their fill,³⁶

at God almighties table,

Which grant vs all O gracious God

for thou alone art able. Amen.

The 22. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

For our releefe and sustenance,

what is there, farre or neere,

But Gods good gift, and grace it is,

whiles we do harbour heere?

Meat, drinke & cloth to saue the flesh,

from feeling of annoie,

All needful things that we can name

³⁵ 1 Pet. 2:25.

³⁶ Ps. 78:25.

through him we do enioie.³⁷
This foode his holie hand did reach
to vs for our auaile,
Our bodies to support and staie,
which feeble are and fraile.
To him be honour, praise, & thanks,
throughout the world therefore,
His maiestie be magnifide,
henceforth for euermore.³⁸

The 23. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Let vs with one hart and voice confesse, that it is the wonderfull prouidence of God, whereby this whole world, which otherwise would decaie, is preserued. It is his loue and kindnesse towards his creatures, whereby the life of each breathing thing is continued.³⁹ All things without the grace of God, are vile and contemptible. It is he onlie in whome we liue, moue, and haue our being. Let vs therefore, as becommeth true Christians, craue at the hands of his goodnesse, the blessing of his holie spirit, to be powred vpon these his present gifts, provided for our nourishment: and with the moderate receiuing thereof, to increase in our hearts thankfulnessse for the same, which is the onlie sacrifice that he doth require.⁴⁰ Graunt this O heauenlie father for thy sonnes sake, Iesus Christ the righteous, Amen.

The 24. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

³⁷ Cf. Phil. 4:19, "My God shall supplie all your neede, through his riches in glorie, in Christe Iesus" (BB).

³⁸ 2 Sam. 7:26; 1 Chron. 17:24.

³⁹ Cf. Acts 17:24-25, "God that made the worlde, & all that are in it... he him selfe geueth life and breath to all, euery where" (BB).

⁴⁰ Ps. 51:17.

Earnestlie and in faith, as behoueth true Christians, let vs lift vp our hearts and hands vnto the Lord God almightie,⁴¹ who hath vouchsafed at this time, and at all times, since the daie of our natiuitie and birth, to succour and nourish vs with temporall foode: beséeching him of his abundant grace and goodnesse, to drop into our minds the deawe of his comfortable spirit, that as our bodies haue bene sufficientlie susteined, our soules may in like case, by the swéete and pleasant repast of his glorious Gospell, be refreshed: through Iesus Christ the onlie sauour and succourer of his faithfull people, Amen.

The 25. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Meate, drinke & cloth, ordeined are
the life of man to lengthen,
His health from hazard to defend,
and euerie limme to strengthen:
Wherfore tis euerie Christians part
with reuerence them to vse,
Excesse to shun, which surfet breeds,⁴²
and health doth much abuse:
Remembring alwaies God aboue,
from whome these gifts proceed,
Whose prouidence appointed hath
these creatures for our need.⁴³
Vouchsafe therfore O gracious God,
that euer as we eate,
We may remember thee that sitst,
in thy tribunall seate:
To feare thee for thy benefites,
and reuerence thy name,

⁴¹ Lam. 3:41.

⁴² 1 Peter 4:3 (BB).

⁴³ Gen 1:26-28.

From age to age: Amen, Amen,
saie all vnto the same.

The 26. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

Iehouah high, whose holie hand
his people doth protect,
And as a shield of safe defence⁴⁴
preserueth his elect:
That King, whose kingdome endlesse is,
whose powre fills euerie place,
Whom Sun & Moone obey & feare,⁴⁵
so glorious is his Grace:
His name be praised euermore,
of people high and lowe,⁴⁶
His goodnesse dailie vnto vs,
who ceaseth not to showe.
O let vs giue him hartie thanks,
with heart and eke with tong,
Let praises spring most plentiouslie,
from lips of old and yong.⁴⁷
No better sacrifice than this,⁴⁸
before him can we laie,
This is the sweete oblation,
that Christians ought to paie.
Wherefore the gifts of God most high
with thanks let vs partake,

⁴⁴ Ps. 28:7; 115:9.

⁴⁵ Cf. Ps. 148:3, "Prayse ye hym sunne and moone" (BB).

⁴⁶ Ps. 49:1- 2.

⁴⁷ Ps. 148:12-13.

⁴⁸ Psalm 51:17.

Releeuing them that liue in lacke,
and beg for Christes sake:
So shall we finde, when we do seeke,⁴⁹
and haue when as we craue,
As saith our Sauour Iesus Christ,
whose death our life did saue.
Amen.

The 27. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Now and alwaies, O thou king of glorie, be present at our refection, blesse and sanctifie this our foode and sustenance, increase in vs the gift of thy grace, and kindle in our hearts the feruent fire of Christian charitie, that when we haue tasted and digested this our bodilie foode, we may be touched with compassion towards them that are pinched with pouertie and want: imparting of our prouision to succour their néedinesse, for his sake, that in the bowels of mercie and pitie⁵⁰ gaue his heart bloud to be shead for the deliuerance of our soules from the dongeon of damnation, Iesus Christ the iust, whose name be praised world without end, Amen.

The 28. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

Greatlie are we bound to giue God thanks, by whose grace we haue enioied his creatures to our bodilie reléefe, and féele our selues satisfied. As it is therefore a speciall point of Christian dutie to praise God for his benefits: so let vs with humilitie & reuerence lift vp the eies of our hearts vnto heauen, from whence all good gifts do descend,⁵¹ beséeching God to féede our soules with the foode of life and immortalitie: namelie, with his comfortable word and gospell, which quickeneth our soules, and

⁴⁹ Matt. 7:7.

⁵⁰ Cf. Col. 3:12, “Put on therfore...bowels of mercie, kyndenesse, humblenesse of mynde, mekenesse, long suffering” (BB).

⁵¹ Cf. Ps. 121:1, “I will lift vp myne eyes vnto the hilles: from whence my helpe shall come” (BB).

maketh them able to flie aloft vnto heauen, that we may there haue our conuersation⁵²
and abiding, where our father God almightie, our elder brother Iesus Christ, and our
comforter the holie Ghost, dwell together in all felicitie and happines, to whome be all
honour, power, and dominion, for euermore, Amen.

The 29. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

As watchmen watch in waste,
if God their watch withstand:
So builders build, but yet in vaine,
without Gods helping hand.⁵³
These be the words of Dauid iust,
of Israell crowned King,
Which true to be, the holie ghost,
hath proued in manie a thing.
And seeing good successe doth cease,
where God his helpe withholds,
But all things prosper luckilie,
where he his hand vnfolde:
Let euerie one that present is,
beseech the Lord in minde,
To blesse the meate and drink which we
prepared here do finde:
That we may feele such fruit therin,
as comfort may restore,
Remembring God, whose gifts they be,
and thanking him therfore, Amen.

⁵² **conuersation**: habitation (*OED*).

⁵³ Ps. 127:1.

The 30. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

Blessed be God, who daie by daie
his people doth preserue,
And giues vs store of sustenance,
which otherwise might sterue.
Increase in vs his heauenlie grace,
his blessings to behold,
That we may praise and magnifie
his mercies manifold.
The hungrie he replenisheth,
with necessarie food,
And filleth them with euerie thing
that healthfull is and good.
Extoll therefore his powre will we,
and praise his holie name,⁵⁴
Which hath ordeind to serue our vse,
both creatures wilde and tame.⁵⁵
Not onlie beasts, but fish and foule,
are made the meate of men:
His name be praisd therefore, all ye
here present saie, Amen.

The 31. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Redéemer and sauour of mankinde, swéete Iesus, which in the daies of thy pilgrimage
vpon earth, among other thy diuine miracles, didst féede seuen thousand with fiue barlie
loaues and two fishes,⁵⁶ we beséech thée to be present at this our table, and ouersée vs

⁵⁴ Ps. 34:3.

⁵⁵ Gen. 1:26-28.

⁵⁶ Matt.14:19-21; Mark 6:41-44; Luke 9:14-17.

thy seruants in receiuing our bodilie sustenance, so disposing our hearts by the secret inspiration of thy power, that we may for these and all other thy benefits shew our selues thankefull, Amen.

The 32. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

Almightie God, and most mercifull father, we knowe that from thee, which art the rich treasure of all good gifts, this our present foode doth procéde, in consideration whereof, like humble, obedient, louing, and faithfull children, we giue thee thanks through Christ our sauour, Amen.

The 33. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Haue ye not hard that cretures all,⁵⁷
which reason want and wit,
Are made to serue the vse of men,⁵⁸
by nature framed fit?
The end of mans creation is,
to glorifie the Lord,
Which graunt (O gracious God) we may
fulfill with one accord.
Amen.

The 34. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

As we do feelee our selues refresht,
so let vs thinke of others lacke,
Exalting God, who hath vs blest,

⁵⁷ **hard:** heard.

⁵⁸ Gen. 1:26-28

from bellie leane, and naked backe.
And though we leade our life in ease,
and nothing want that needfull is,
Yet if we thinke our selues to please,
and not the Lord, we do amis.
The hungrie therefore let vs feed,
and to the needie turne our eies,
Then God will wrap vs in the weed
of blissfull state in starrie skies.
Amen.

The 35. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Most swéete Sauour, the second person in trinitie, which art the Manna of immortalitie, and the bread of life,⁵⁹ as thou thy selfe testifiest in thy holie Gospell: we beséeche thee to purifie our hearts and entrailes with the fire of thy spirit,⁶⁰ from the drosse of sinne and vncleannesse,⁶¹ that being well clarified, these thy creatures may worke in vs their naturall qualitie: which is, to nourish and reléeue these our bodies subiect to manie wants, weakenesses, and infirmities. Grant this we beséech thee for thy mercie sake, Amen.

The 36. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

For so much as thy prouidence is woonderfull, O gracious God, as appeareth by the increase & multiplieng of thy creatures in their kinde, to maintaine and prolong the life of man,⁶² to continue his health, to augment his strength, and naturall abilities, we giue thee immortall thanks, as Christian dutie and obedience bindeth: beséeching thee to

⁵⁹ John 6:51.

⁶⁰ Cf. Jas. 4:8, “purifie your heartes ye double mynded” (BB).

⁶¹ Isa. 1:25.

⁶² Gen. 1:24-28.

establish in vs a perpetuall remembrance of all thy benefits, for Iesus Christes sake thy déere sonne, and our tender sauour, Amen.

The 37. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Lord Iesus sauour of mankinde,
with publicans that satst at meat,⁶³
These creatures by thy grace assinde,
vouchsafe we may so drinke & eate,
As thou that sitst in glorious seate,
of endlesse blisse maist praised be,
Grant this O God, Amen saie we.
Amen.

The 38. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

Eternall thanks with hart & voice
to thee O Lord we render,
Of sundrie meates which sendest choice
our state thou dost so tender.
From this time forward giue vs grace
in praises to perseuer,
And thanke thee for thy benefites,
at this time and for euer.
Amen.

⁶³ Matt. 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32.

The 39. Plant.

¶ Grace before Dinner.

Most mightie and mercifull father, of whose bountifull liberalitie we taste the continuall swéetenesse: vouchsafe to cast downe thine eies vpon vs héere prepared to receiue these thy creatures, which thou hast of thy goodnesse sent vs for our sustenance and nourishment: sanctifie both them and vs for thy sonnes sake Iesus Christ our sauour, Amen.

The 40. Plant.

¶ Grace after Dinner.

In God the founteine & the spring,⁶⁴
of all things that are healthfull,
Let vs reioice in heart, and sing
his praises with the faithfull:
His mercies are so manifold,⁶⁵
that they exceede all number,
And Christianlie them to behold,
would offer cause to wonder.
Him onlie let vs laud and praise,
and magnifie his name alwaies.

The 41. Plant.

¶ Grace before Supper.

Notwithstanding we haue deserued no sparke of pitie nor compassion, (most mercifull father) such is the horrour and hainousnes of our sinnes:⁶⁶ yet it pleaseth thée to let runne at libertie the riuers of thy prouidence for our refection: and daie by daie thou

⁶⁴ Ps. 36:9, “For with thee is the fountaine of lyfe” (BB).

⁶⁵ Ps. 119:156.

⁶⁶ Cf. Ps. 6:1, side note a, “Thogh I deserue destruction, yet let thy mercie pitie my frailtie” (GB).

openest thy hand, filling vs with thy blessings:⁶⁷ for the which we beséeche thée giue vs
grace to bée thankfull, through Iesus Christ our Lord and Sauour, Amen.

The 42. Plant.

¶ Grace after Supper.

Giue God all glorie, laud, & praise,
Who hath so freelie sent vs food,
By due receipt whereof alwaies
The force of hunger is withstood:
O magnifie his holie name,⁶⁸
For endlesse is his care and loue,
Lo, daie by daie we taste the same.
O let such loue our spirits moue,
To honour him as doth behoue,
And magnifie his name therefore,
Which praised be for euermore.

Amen.

FINIS.

⁶⁷ Ps. 145:16.

⁶⁸ Ps. 34:3.

¶ A briefe Praier
in place of a Conclusion.

Let thy mightie hand and outstretched arme (O Lord) be still our defence, thy mercie and louing kindnesse in Iesu Christ thy déere Sonne our saluation, thy true and holie word our instruction, thy grace and holie spirit our comfort and consolation, vnto the end, and in the end: So be it.

O Lord increase our faith.⁶⁹

Amen.

⁶⁹ Luke 17:5.

1581.



¶ Printed at London by
*Henrie Denham, dwelling in Pater
noster rowe, at the signe of
the Starre.*

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