

Letter to a Friend

Upon occasion of the Death of his Intimate Friend.

By: *Sir Thomas Browne* – 1674

Give me leave to wonder that News of this nature should have such heavy Wings, that you should hear so little concerning your dearest Friend, and that I must make that unwilling Repetition to tell you, *Ad portam rigidos calces extendit*,¹ that he is Dead and Buried, and by this time no Puny among the mighty Nations of the Dead; for tho he left this World not very many days past, yet every hour you know largely addeth unto that dark Society; and considering the incessant Mortality of Mankind, you cannot conceive there dieth in the whole Earth so few as a thousand an hour.

Altho at this distance you had no early Account or Particular of his Death; yet your Affection may cease to wonder that you had not some secret Sense or Intimation thereof by Dreams, thoughtful Whisperings, Mercurisms, Airy Nuncio's, or sympathetical Insinuations, which many seem to have had at the Death of their dearest Friends: for since we find in that famous Story, that Spirits themselves were fain to tell their Fellows at a distance, that the great *Antonio* was dead;² we have a sufficient Excuse for our Ignorance in such Particulars, and must rest content with the common Road, and *Appian* way of Knowledge by Information. Tho the uncertainty of the End of this World hath confounded all Humane Predictions; yet they who shall live to see the Sun and Moon darkned, and the Stars to fall from Heaven, will hardly be deceived in the Advent of the last Day; and therefore strange it is, that the common Fallacy of consumptive Persons, who feel not themselves dying, and therefore still hope to live, should also reach their Friends in perfect Health and Judgment. That you should be so little acquainted with *Plautus's* sick Complexion,³ or that almost an *Hippocratical* Face should not alarum you to higher fears, or rather despair of his Continuation in such an emaciated State, wherein medical Predictions fail not, as sometimes in acute Diseases, and wherein 'tis as dangerous to be sentenced by a Physician as a Judge.

Upon my first Visit I was bold to tell them who had not let fall all hopes of his Recovery, That in my sad Opinion he was not like to behold a Grashopper, much less to pluck another Fig; and in no long time after seemed to discover that odd mortal Symptom in him not mention'd by *Hippocrates*, that is, to lose his own Face and look like some of his near Relations; for he maintained not his proper Countenance, but looked like his Uncle, the Lines of whose Face lay deep and invisible in his healthful Visage before: for as from our beginning we run through variety of Looks, before we come to consistent and settled Faces; so before our End, by sick and languishing Alterations, we put on new Visages: and in our

Retreat to Earth, may fall upon such Looks which from community of seminal Originals were before latent in us.

He was fruitlessly put in hope of advantage by change of Air, and imbibing the pure Aerial Nitre of these Parts;⁴ and therefore being so far spent, he quickly found *Sardinia* in *Tivoli*,⁵ and the most healthful Air of little effect, where Death had set her Broad Arrow;⁶ for he lived not unto the middle of *May*, and confirmed the Observation of *Hippocrates*:⁷ of that mortal time of the Year when the Leaves of the Fig-tree resemble a Daw's Claw. He is happily seated who lives in Places whose Air, Earth, and Water, promote not the Infirmities of his weaker Parts, or is early removed into Regions that correct them. He that is tabidly inclined, were unwise to pass his days in *Portugal*: Cholical Persons will find little Comfort in *Austria* or *Vienna*: He that is weak-legg'd must not be in Love with *Rome*, nor an infirm Head with *Venice* or *Paris*. Death hath not only particular Stars in Heaven, but malevolent Places on Earth, which single out our Infirmities, and strike at our weaker Parts; in which Concern, passager and migrant Birds have the great Advantages; who are naturally constituted for distant Habitations, whom no Seas nor Places limit, but in their appointed Seasons will visit us from *Greenland* and Mount *Atlas*, and as some think, even from the *Antipodes*.⁸

Tho we could not have his Life, yet we missed not our desires in his soft Departure, which was scarce an Expiration; and his End not unlike his Beginning, when the salient Point scarce affords a sensible motion, and his Departure so like unto Sleep,⁹ that he scarce needed the civil Ceremony of closing his Eyes; contrary unto the common way wherein Death draws up, Sleep lets fall the Eye-lids. With what strift and pains we came into the World we know not; but 'tis commonly no easie matter to get out of it: yet if it could be made out, that such who have easie Nativities have commonly hard Deaths, and contrarily; his Departure was so easie, that we might justly suspect his Birth was of another nature, and that some *Juno* sat cross-legg'd at his Nativity.¹⁰

Besides his soft Death, the incurable state of his Disease might somewhat extenuate your Sorrow, who know that Monsters but seldom happen, Miracles more rarely, in Physick.¹¹ *Angelus Victorius* gives a serious Account of a Consumptive, Hectical, Pthysical Woman, who was suddenly cured by the Intercession of *Ignatius*.¹² We read not of any in Scripture who in this case applied unto our Saviour, tho some may be contained in that large Expression,¹³ That he went about *Galilee* healing all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Diseases. Amulets, Spells, Sigils and Incantations, practised in other Diseases, are seldom pretended in this; and we find no Sigil in the Archidoxis of *Paracelsus* to cure an extreme Consumption or *Marasmus*, which if other Diseases fail, will put a period unto long Livers, and at last make dust of all. And therefore the *Stoicks* could not but think that the firy Principle would wear out all the rest, and at last make an end of the World, which notwithstanding without such a lingring period the Creator

may effect at his Pleasure: and to make an end of all things on Earth, and our Planetical System of the World, he need but put out the Sun.

I was not so curious to entitle the Stars unto any concern of his Death, yet could not but take notice that he died when the Moon was in motion from the Meridian; at which time, an old *Italian* long ago would persuade me, that the greatest part of Men died: but herein I confess I could never satisfie my Curiosity; altho from the time of Tides in Places upon or near the Sea, there may be considerable Deductions; and *Pliny* hath an odd and remarkable Passage concerning the Death of Men and Animals upon the Recess or Ebb of the Sea.¹⁴ However, certain it is he died in the dead and deep part of the Night, when *Nox* might be most apprehensibly said to be the Daughter of Chaos, the Mother of Sleep and Death, according to old Genealogy;¹⁵ and so went out of this World about that hour when our blessed Saviour entred it, and about what time many conceive he will return again unto it. *Cardan* hath a peculiar and no hard Observation from a Man's hand, to know whether he was born in the day or night, which I confess holdeth in my own. And *Scaliger* to that purpose hath another from the tip of the Ear.¹⁶ Most¹⁷ Men are begotten in the Night, most Animals in the Day; but whether more Persons have been born in the Night or the Day, were a Curiosity undecidable, tho more have perished by violent Deaths in the Day; yet in natural Dissolutions both Times may hold an Indifferency, at least but contingent Inequality. The whole course of Time runs out in the Nativity and Death of Things; which whether they happen by Succession or Coincidence, are best computed by the natural, not artificial Day.

That *Charles* the Fifth was Crowned upon the day of his Nativity, it being in his own power so to order it, makes no singular Animadversion; but that he should also take King *Francis* Prisoner upon that day,¹⁸ was an unexpected Coincidence, which made the same remarkable. *Antipater* who had an Anniversary Fever¹⁹ every Year upon his Birth day, needed no Astrological Revolution to know what day he should dye on. When the fixed Stars have made a Revolution unto the points from whence they first set out,²⁰ some of the Ancients thought the World would have an end; which was a kind of dying upon the day of its Nativity. Now the Disease prevailing and swiftly advancing about the time of his Nativity, some were of Opinion, that he would leave the World on the day he entred into it: but this being a lingring Disease, and creeping softly on, nothing critical was found or expected, and he died not before fifteen days after. Nothing is more common with Infants than to dye on the day of their Nativity, to behold the worldly Hours and but the Fractions thereof; and even to perish before their Nativity in the hidden World of the Womb, and before their good Angel is conceived to undertake them.²¹ But in Persons who out-live many Years, and when there are no less than three hundred sixty five days to determine their Lives in every Year; that the first day should make the last, that the Tail of the Snake should return into its Mouth precisely at that time,²² and they should wind up upon the day of their Nativity, is indeed a remarkable Coincidence, which tho Astrology hath taken witty pains to salve, yet hath it been very wary in making Predictions of it.

In this consumptive Condition and remarkable Extenuation he came to be almost half himself, and left a great part behind him which he carried not to the Grave. And tho' that Story of Duke *John Ernestus Mansfield* be not so easily swallowed,²¹ that at his Death his Heart was found not to be so big as a Nut; yet if the Bones of a good Sceleton weigh little more than twenty pounds, his Inwards and Flesh remaining could make no Bouffage,²² but a light bit for the Grave. I never more lively beheld the starved Characters of *Dante* in any living Face;²³ an Aruspex might have read a Lecture upon him without Exenteration, his Flesh being so consumed that he might, in a manner, have discerned his Bowels without opening of him: so that to be carried *sextâ cervice* to his Grave, was but a civil unnecessary; and the Complements of the Coffin might out-weigh the Subject of it.

Omnibonus Ferrarius in mortal Dysenteries of Children²⁴ looks for a Spot behind the Ear; in consumptive Diseases some eye the Complexion of Moals;*Cardan* eagerly views the Nails,²⁵ some the Lines of the Hand, the Thenar or Muscle of the Thumb; some are so curious as to observe the depth of the Throat-pit, how the proportion varieth of the Small of the Legs unto the Calf, or the compass of the Neck unto the Circumference of the Head: but all these, with many more, were so drowned in a mortal Visage and last Face of *Hippocrates*, that a weak Physiognomist might say at first eye, This was a Face of Earth, and that *Morta*²⁶ had set her Hard-Seal upon his Temples, easily perceiving what *Caricatura* Draughts²⁷ Death makes upon pined Faces, and unto what an unknown degree a Man may live backward.

Tho' the Beard be only made a distinction of Sex and sign of masculine Heat by *Ulmus*,²⁸ yet the Precocity and early growth thereof in him, was not to be liked in reference unto long Life. *Lewis*, that virtuous but unfortunate King of *Hungary*, who lost his Life at the Battel of *Mohacz*, was said to be born without a Skin, to have bearded at Fifteen, and to have shewn some gray Hairs about Twenty;²⁹ from whence the Diviners conjectured, that he would be spoiled of his Kingdom, and have but a short Life: But Hairs make fallible Predictions, and many Temples early gray have out-lived the Psalmist's Period.³⁰ Hairs which have most amused me have not been in the Face or Head, but on the Back, and not in Men but Children, as I long ago observed in that Endemial Distemper³¹ of little Children in *Languedock*, called the *Morgellons*, wherein they critically break out with harsh Hairs on their Backs, which takes off the Unquiet Symptomes of the Disease, and delivers them from Coughs and Convulsions³².

The *Egyptian* Mummies that I have seen, have had their Mouths open, and somewhat gaping, which affordeth a good opportunity to view and observe their Teeth, wherein 'tis not easie to find any wanting or decayed: and therefore in *Egypt*, where one Man practised but one Operation, or the Diseases but of single Parts, it must needs be a barren Profession to confine unto that of drawing of Teeth, and little better than to have been Tooth-drawer unto King *Pyrrhus*, who had but two in his Head.³³ How the *Bannyans* of *India* maintain the Integrity of those Parts, I

find not particularly observed; who notwithstanding have an Advantage of their Preservation by abstaining from all Flesh, and employing their Teeth in such Food unto which they may seem at first framed, from their Figure and Conformation: but sharp and corroding Rheums had so early mouldered those Rocks and hardest parts of his Fabrick, that a Man might well conceive that his Years were never like to double or twice tell over his Teeth.³⁵ Corruption had dealt more severely with them, than sepulchral Fires and smart Flames with those of burnt Bodies of old; for in the burnt Fragments of Urns which I have enquired into, altho I seem to find few Incisors or Shearers, yet the Dog Teeth and Grinders do notably resist those Fires.³⁷

In the Years of his Childhood he had languished under the Disease of his Country, the Rickets; after which notwithstanding many I have seen become strong³⁸ and active Men; but whether any have attained unto very great Years the Disease is scarce so old as to afford good Observations.³⁹ Whether the Children of the *English* Plantations be subject unto the same Infirmary, may be worth the observing. Whether Lameness and Halting do still encrease among the Inhabitants of *Rovigno* in *Istria*, I know not; yet scarce twenty Years ago Monsieur *Du Loyr* observed, that a third part of that People halted: but too certain it is, that the Rickets encreaseth among us; the Small-Pox grows more pernicious than the Great: the Kings Purse knows that the King's Evil grows more common. *Quartan* Agues are become no strangers in *Ireland*; more common and mortal in *England*: and tho the Ancients gave that Disease very good Words,⁴⁰ yet now that Bell makes no strange sound which rings out for the Effects thereof.⁴¹

Some think there were few Consumptions in the Old World, when Men lived much upon Milk; and that the ancient Inhabitants of this Island were less troubled with Coughs when they went naked, and slept in Caves and Woods, than Men now in Chambers and Feather-beds. *Plato* will tell us, that there was no such Disease as a Catarrh in *Homer's* time,⁴² and that it was but new in *Greece* in his Age. *Polydore Virgil* delivereth that Pleurisies were rare in *England*, who lived but in the days of *Henry* the Eighth. Some will allow no Diseases to be new, others think that many old ones are ceased; and that such which are esteemed new, will have but their time: However, the Mercy of God hath scattered the great heap of Diseases, and not loaded any one Country with all: some may be new in one Country which have been old in another. New Discoveries of the Earth discover new Diseases: for besides the common swarm, there are endemial and local Infirmities proper unto certain Regions, which in the whole Earth make no small number: and if *Asia*, *Africa*, and *America* should bring in their List, *Pandoras* Box would swell, and there must be a strange Pathology.

Most Men expected to find a consumed Kell,⁴³ empty and bladder-like Guts, livid and marbled Lungs, and a withered *Pericardium* in this exuccous Corps: but some seemed too much to wonder that two Lobes of his Lungs adhered to his side; for the like I had often found in bodies of no suspected Consumptions or difficulty of Respiration. And the same more often happeneth in Men than other Animals; and

some think, in Women than in Men: but the most remarkable I have met with, was in a Man,⁴ after a Cough of almost fifty Years, in whom all the Lobes adhered unto the Pleura, and each Lobe unto another; who having also been much troubled with the Gout, brake the Rule of *Cardan*,⁴ and died of the Stone in the Bladder. *Aristotle* makes a Query, Why some Animals cough as Man, some not, as Oxen.⁴ If coughing be taken as it consisteth of a natural and voluntary motion, including Expectoration and spitting out, it may be as proper unto Man as bleeding at the Nose; otherwise we find that *Vegetius* and Rural Writers² have not left so many Medicines in vain against the Coughs of Cattel; and Men who perish by Coughs dye the Death of Sheep, Cats and Lyons: and tho Birds have no Midriff, yet we meet with divers Remedies in *Arrianus* against the Coughs of Hawks. And tho it might be thought, that all Animals who have Lungs do cough; yet in cetaceous Fishes, who have large and strong Lungs, the same is not observed; nor yet in oviparous Quadrupeds: and in the greatest thereof, the Crocodile, altho we read much of their Tears, we find nothing of that motion.⁴

From the Thoughts of Sleep, when the Soul was conceived nearest unto Divinity, the Ancients erected an Art of Divination, wherein while they too widely expatiated in loose and inconsequent Conjectures, *Hippocrates*² wisely considered Dreams as they presaged Alterations in the Body, and so afforded hints toward the preservation of Health, and prevention of Diseases; and therein was so serious as to advise Alteration of Diet, Exercise, Sweating, Bathing and Vomiting; and also so religious, as to order Prayers and Supplications unto respective Deities, in good Dreams unto *Sol*, *Jupiter cūlestis*, *Jupiter opulentus*, *Minerva*, *Mercurius*, and *Apollo*; in bad unto *Tellus* and the Heroes.

And therefore I could not but take notice how his Female Friends were irrationally curious so strictly to examine his Dreams, and in this low state to hope for the Fantasms of Health. He was now past the healthful Dreams of the Sun, Moon, and Stars in their Clarity and proper Courses. 'Twas too late to dream of Flying, of Limpid Fountains, Smooth Waters, white Vestments, and fruitful green Trees, which are the Visions of healthful Sleeps, and at good distance from the Grave.

And they were also too deeply dejected that he should dream of his dead Friends, inconsequently divining, that he would not be long from them; for strange it was not that he should sometimes dream of the dead whose Thoughts run always upon Death: beside, to dream of the dead, so they appear not in dark Habits, and take no thing away from us, in *Hippocrates* his Sense was of good signification:² for we live by the dead, and every thing is or must be so before it becomes our Nourishment. And *Cardan*, who dream'd that he discoursed with his dead Father in the Moon, made thereof no mortal Interpretation: and even to dream that we are dead, was no condemnable Fantasm in old *Oneirocriticism*, as having a signification of Liberty, vacuity from Cares, exemption and freedom from Troubles, unknown unto the dead.

Some Dreams I confess may admit of easie and feminine Exposition: he who dream'd that he could not see his right Shoulder, might easily fear to lose the sight of his right Eye; he that before a Journey dream'd that his Feet were cut off, had a plain warning not to undertake his intended Journey. But why to dream of Lettuce should presage some ensuing Disease, why to eat Figs should signifie foolish Talk, why to eat Eggs great Trouble, and to dream of Blindness should be so highly commended, according to the *Oneirocritical* Verses of *Astrampsychnus* and *Nicephorus*, I shall leave unto your Divination.

He was willing to quit the World alone and altogether, leaving no Earnest behind him for Corruption or Aftergrave, having small content in that common satisfaction to survive or live in another, but amply satisfied that his Disease should dye with himself, nor revive in a Posterity to puzzle Physick, and make sad *Memento's* of their Parent hereditary. Leprosie awakes not sometimes before Forty, the Gout and Stone often later; but consumptive and tabid Roots sprout more early,⁵¹ and at the fairest make seventeen Years of our Life doubtful before that Age. They that enter the World with original Diseases as well as Sin, have not only common Mortality but sick Traductions⁵² to destroy them, make commonly short Courses, and live not at length but in Figures; so that a sound *Cæsarean* Nativity⁵³ may out-last a natural Birth, and a Knife may sometimes make way for a more lasting fruit than a Midwife; which makes so few Infants now able to endure the old Test of the River,⁵⁴ and many to have feeble Children who could scarce have been married at *Sparta*, and those provident States who studied strong and healthful Generations; which happen but contingently in mere *pecuniary* Matches, or Marriages made by the Candle,⁵⁵ wherein notwithstanding there is little redress to be hoped from an Astrologer or a Lawyer, and a good discerning Physician were like to prove the most successful Counsellor.

Julius Scaliger, who in a sleepless Fit of the Gout could make two hundred Verses in a Night, would have but five plain Words upon his Tomb.⁵⁶ And this serious Person,⁵⁷ tho no *minor*⁵⁸ Wit, left the Poetry of his Epitaph unto others; either unwilling to commend himself, or to be judged by a Distich, and perhaps considering how unhappy great Poets have been in versifying their own Epitaphs; wherein *Petrarcha*, *Dante*, and *Ariosto*, have so unhappily failed, that if their Tombs should out-last their Works, Posterity would find so little of *Apollo* on them, as to mistake them for Ciceronian Poets.⁵⁹

In this deliberate and creeping progress unto the Grave, he was somewhat too young, and of too noble a mind, to fall upon that stupid Symptom observable in divers Persons near their Journeys end, and which may be reckoned among the mortal Symptoms of their last Disease; that is, to become more narrow minded, miserable and tenacious, unready to part with any thing when they are ready to part with all, and afraid to want when they have no time to spend; mean while Physicians, who know that many are mad but in a single depraved Imagination, and one prevalent Desipiency;⁶⁰ and that beside and out of such single Deliriums a Man

may meet with sober Actions and good Sense in *Bedlam*; cannot but smile to see the Heirs and concerned Relations, gratulating themselves in the sober departure of their Friends; and tho they behold such mad covetous Passages, content to think they dye in good Understanding, and in their sober Senses.

Avarice, which is not only Infidelity but Idolatry, either from covetous Progeny or questuary Education, had no Root in his Breast, who made good Works the Expression of his Faith, and was big with desires unto publick and lasting Charities; and surely where good Wishes and charitable Intentions exceed Abilities, Theoretical^a Beneficency may be more than a Dream. They build not Castles in the Air who would build Churches on Earth; and tho they leave no such Structures here, may lay good Foundations in Heaven. In brief, his Life and Death were such, that I could not blame them who wished the like, and almost to have been himself; almost, I say; for tho we may wish the prosperous Appurtenances of others, or to be an other in his happy Accidents; yet so intrinsecal is every Man unto himself, that some doubt may be made, whether any would exchange his Being, or substantially become another Man.

He had wisely seen the World at home and abroad, and thereby observed under what variety Men are deluded in the pursuit of that which is not here to be found. And altho he had no Opinion of reputed Felicities below, and apprehended Men widely out in the estimate of such Happiness; yet his sober contempt of the World wrought no *Democritism*^a or *Cynicism*, no laughing or snarling at it, as well understanding there are not Felicities in this World to satisfie a serious Mind; and therefore to soften the stream of our Lives, we are fain to take in the reputed Contentations of this World, to unite with the Crowd in their Beatitudes, and to make our selves happy by Consortion, Opinion, or Co-existimation: for strictly to separate from received and customary Felicities, and to confine unto the rigor of Realities, were to contract the Consolation of our Beings unto too uncomfortable Circumscriptions.

Not to fear Death, nor desire it,^a was short of his Resolution: to be dissolved, and be with Christ, was his dying ditty. He conceived his Thred long, in no long course of Years, and when he had scarce out-lived the second life of *Lazarus*^b; esteeming it enough to approach the Years of his Saviour, who so ordered his own humane State, as not to be old upon Earth.

But to be content with Death may be better than to desire it: a miserable Life may make us wish for Death, but a virtuous one to rest in it; which is the advantage of those resolved Christians, who looking on Death not only as the sting, but the period and end of Sin, the Horizon and Isthmus between this Life and a better, and the Death of this World but as a Nativity of another, do contentedly submit unto the common Necessity, and envy not *Enoch* or *Elias*.

Not to be content with Life is the unsatisfactory state of those which destroy themselves;^a who being afraid to live, run blindly upon their own Death, which no Man fears by Experience: and the *Stoicks* had a notable Doctrine to take away the fear thereof; that is, In such Extremities to desire that which is not to be avoided, and wish what might be feared; and so made Evils voluntary, and to suit with their own Desires, which took off the terror of them.

But the ancient Martyrs were not encouraged by such Fallacies; who, tho they feared not Death, were afraid to be their own Executioners; and therefore thought it more Wisdom to crucifie their Lusts than their Bodies, to circumcise than stab their Hearts, and to mortifie than kill themselves.

His willingness to leave this World about that Age when most Men think they may best enjoy it, tho paradoxical unto worldly Ears, was not strange unto mine, who have so often observed, that many, tho old, oft stick fast unto the World, and seem to be drawn like *Cacus's* Oxen, backward with great struggling and reluctancy unto the Grave.^a The long habit of Living makes meer Men more hardly to part with Life, and all to be nothing, but what is to come. To live at the rate of the old World, when some could scarce remember themselves young, may afford no better digested Death than a more moderate period. Many would have thought it an Happiness to have had their lot of Life in some notable Conjunctions of Ages past; but the uncertainty of future Times hath tempted few to make a part in Ages to come. And surely, he that hath taken the true Altitude of Things, and rightly calculated the degenerate state of this Age, is not like to envy those that shall live in the next, much less three or four hundred Years hence, when no Man can comfortably imagine what Face this World will carry: and therefore since every Age makes a step unto the end of all things, and the Scripture affords so hard a Character of the last Times; quiet Minds will be content with their Generations, and rather bless Ages past than be ambitious of those to come.

Tho Age had set no Seal upon his Face, yet a dim Eye might clearly discover Fifty in his Actions; and therefore since Wisdom is the gray Hair, and an unspotted Life old Age; altho his Years came short, he might have been said to have held up with longer Livers, and to have been *Solomon's* Old Man.^a And surely if we deduct all those days of our Life which we might wish unlived, and which abate the comfort of those we now live; if we reckon up only those days which God hath accepted of our Lives, a Life of good Years will hardly be a span long: the Son in this sense may out-live the Father, and none be climacterically old.^a He that early arriveth unto the Parts and Prudence of Age, is happily old without the uncomfortable Attendants of it; and 'tis superfluous to live unto gray Hairs, when in a precocious Temper we anticipate the Virtues of them. In brief, he cannot be accounted young who out-liveth the old Man. He that hath early arrived unto the measure of a perfect Stature in Christ, hath already fulfilled the prime and longest Intention of his Being: and one day lived after the perfect Rule of Piety, is to be preferred before sinning Immortality.

Although he attained not unto the Years of his Predecessors, yet he wanted not those preserving Virtues which confirm the thread of weaker Constitutions. Cautelous Chastity and crafty Sobriety were far from him; those Jewels were Paragon, without Flaw, Hair, Ice, or Cloud in him: which affords me an hint to proceed in these good Wishes and few *Memento's* unto you.⁶

Tread softly and circumspectly in this funambulous Track and narrow Path of Goodness: pursue Virtue virtuously; be sober and temperate, not to preserve your Body in a sufficiency to wanton Ends; not to spare your Purse; not to be free from the Infamy of common Transgressors that way, and thereby to ballance or palliate obscure and closer Vices; nor simply to enjoy Health: by all which you may leaven good Actions, and render Virtues disputable; but in one Word, that you may truly serve God; which every Sickness will tell you, you cannot well do without Health. The sick mans Sacrifice is but a lame Oblation. Pious Treasures laid up in healthful days, excuse the defect of sick Non-performances; without which we must needs look back with Anxiety upon the lost opportunities of Health; and may have cause rather to envy than pity the Ends of penitent Malefactors, who go with clear parts unto the last Act of their Lives; and in the integrity of their Faculties return their Spirit unto God that gave it.

Consider whereabouts thou art in *Cebes* his Table, or that old philosophical Pinax of the Life of Man;⁷ whether thou art still in the Road of Uncertainties; whether thou hast yet entred the narrow Gate, got up the Hill and asperous way which leadeth unto the House of Sanity, or taken that purifying Potion from the hand of sincere Erudition, which may send thee clear and pure a way unto a virtuous and happy Life.

In this virtuous Voyage let not disappointment cause Despondency, nor difficulty Despair; think not that you are sailing from *Lima* to *Manillia*,⁸ wherein thou may'st tye up the Rudder, and sleep before the Wind; but expect rough Seas, Flaws,⁹ and contrary Blasts; and 'tis well if by many cross Tacks and Verings thou arrivest at thy Port. Sit not down in the popular Seats and common Level of Virtues, but endeavour to make them Heroical. Offer not only Peace-Offerings but Holocausts unto God. To serve him singly, to serve our selves, were too partial a piece of Piety, nor likely to place us in the highest Mansions of Glory.

He that is chaste and continent, not to impair his Strength, or terrified by Contagion, will hardly be heroically virtuous. Adjourn not that Virtue unto those Years when *Cato* could lend out his Wife, and impotent Satyrs write Satyrs against Lust: but be chaste in thy flaming days, when *Alexander* dared not trust his Eyes upon the fair Daughters of *Darius*, and when so many Men think there is no other way but *Origen's*.¹⁰

Be charitable before Wealth makes thee covetous, and lose not the Glory of the Mite.¹¹ If Riches increase, let thy Mind hold pace with them; and think it not enough

to be liberal, but munificent. Tho a Cup of cold Water from some hand may not be without its Reward; yet stick not thou for Wine and Oyl for the Wounds of the distressed: and treat the Poor as our Saviour did the Multitude, to the Relicks of some Baskets.

Trust not to the Omnipotency of Gold, or say unto it, Thou art my Confidence: Kiss not thy Hand when thou beholdest that terrestrial Sun, nor bore thy Ear unto its Servitude. A Slave unto Mammon makes no Servant unto God: Covetousness cracks the Sinews of Faith, numbs the Apprehension of any thing above Sense, and only affected with the certainty of things present, makes a peradventure of Things to come; lives but unto one World, nor hopes but fears another; makes our own Death sweet unto others, bitter unto our selves; gives a dry Funeral, Scenical Mourning, and no wet Eyes at the Grave.

If Avarice be thy Vice, yet make it not thy Punishment: miserable Men commiserate not themselves, bowelless unto themselves, and merciless unto their own Bowels. Let the fruition of Things bless the possession of them, and take no satisfaction in dying but living rich: for since thy good Works, not thy Goods, will follow thee; since Riches are an Appurtenance of Life, and no dead Man is rich, to famish in Plenty, and live poorly to dye rich, were a multiplying improvement in Madness, and Use upon Use in Folly.

Persons lightly dip'd, not grain'd in generous Honesty, are but pale in Goodness, and faint hued in Sincerity: but be thou what thou virtuously art, and let not the Ocean wash away thy Tincture: stand magnetically upon that Axis where prudent Simplicity hath fix'd thee, and let no Temptation invert the Poles of thy Honesty: and that Vice may be uneasie, and even monstrous unto thee, let iterated good Acts, and long confirmed Habits, make Vertue natural, or a second Nature in thee. And since few or none prove eminently vertuous but from some advantageous Foundations in their Temper and natural Inclinations; study thy self betimes, and early find, what Nature bids thee to be, or tells thee what thou may'st be. They who thus timely descend into themselves, cultivating the good Seeds which Nature hath set in them, and improving their prevalent Inclinations to Perfection, become not Shrubs, but Cedars in their Generation; and to be in the form of the best of the Bad, or the worst of the Good, will be no satisfaction unto them.

Let not the Law of thy Country be the *non ultra* of thy Honesty, nor think that always good enough which the Law will make good. Narrow not the Law of Charity, Equity, Mercy; joyn Gospel Righteousness with Legal Right; be not a meer *Gamaliel* in the Faith,²⁵ but let the Sermon in the Mount be thy *Targum*²⁶ unto the Law of *Sinai*.

Make not the Consequences of Vertue the Ends thereof: be not beneficent for a Name or Cymbal of Applause, nor exact and punctual in Commerce, for the Advantages of Trust and Credit, which attend the Reputation of just and true

Dealing; for such Rewards, tho unsought for, plain Virtue will bring with her, whom all Men honour, tho they pursue not. To have other bye ends in good Actions, sowers laudable Performances, which must have deeper Roots, Motions, and Instigations, to give them the Stamp of Vertues.

Tho humane Infirmary may betray thy heedless days into the popular ways of Extravagancy, yet let not thine own depravity, or the torrent of vicious Times, carry thee into desperate Enormities in Opinions, Manners, or Actions: if thou hast dip'd thy foot in the River, yet venture not over *Rubicon*^z; run not into Extremities from whence there is no Regression, nor be ever so closely shut up within the holds of Vice and Iniquity, as not to find some Escape by a Postern of Resipiscency.^z

Owe not thy Humility unto Humiliation by Adversity, but look humbly down in that State when others look upward upon thee: be patient in the Age of Pride and days of Will and Impatiency, when Men live but by Intervals of Reason, under the Sovereignty of Humor and Passion, when 'tis in the Power of every one to transform thee out of thy self, and put thee into the short Madness.^z If you cannot imitate *Job*, yet come not short of *Socrates*, and those patient Pagans,^z who tired the Tongues of their Enemies, while they perceiv'd they spet their Malice at Brazen Walls and Statues.

Let Age, not Envy, draw Wrinkles on thy Cheeks: be content to be envied, but envy not, Emulation may be plausible, and Indignation allowable; but admit no Treaty with that Passion which no Circumstance can make good. A Displacency at the good of others, because they enjoy it, altho we do not want it, is an absurd Depravity, sticking fast unto humane Nature from its primitive Corruption; which he that can well subdue, were a Christian of the first Magnitude, and for ought I know, may have one foot already in Heaven.

While thou so hotly disclaimst the Devil, be not guilty of Diabolism; fall not in to one Name with that unclean Spirit, nor act his Nature whom thou so much abhorrest; that is, to accuse, calumniate, backbite, whisper, detract, or sinistrously interpret others; degenerate Depravities and narrow-minded Vices, not only below *S. Paul's* noble Christian, but *Aristotle's* true Gentleman.^z Trust not with some, that the Epistle of *S. James* is Apocryphal,^z and so read with less fear that stabbing truth, that in company with this Vice thy Religion is in vain. *Moses* broke the Tables without breaking of the Law; but where Charity is broke the Law it self is shattered, which cannot be whole without Love, that is the fulfilling of it. Look humbly upon thy Virtues, and tho thou art rich in some, yet think thy self poor and naked without that crowning Grace, which thinketh no Evil, which envieth not, which beareth, believeth, hopeth, endureth all things. With these sure Graces, while busie Tongues are crying out for a drop of cold Water, Mutes may be in Happiness, and sing the *Trisagium* in Heaven.^z

Let not the Sun in *Capricorn*⁸⁵ go down upon thy Wrath, but write thy Wrongs in Water; draw the Curtain of Night upon Injuries; shut them up in the Tower of Oblivion,⁸⁶ and let them be as tho they had not been. Forgive thine Enemies totally, and without any Reserve of hope, that however, God will revenge thee.

Be substantially great in thy self, and more than thou appearest unto others; and let the World be deceived in thee, as they are in the Lights of Heaven. Hang early Plumets upon the Heels of Pride, and let Ambition have but an Epicycle or narrow circuit in thee.⁸⁶ Measure not thy self by thy Morning shadow, but by the Extent of thy Grave; and reckon thy self above the Earth by the Line thou must be contented with under it. Spread not into boundless Expansions either of Designs⁸⁷ or Desires. Think not that Mankind liveth but for a few, and that the rest are born but to serve the Ambition of those, who make but Flies of Men, and Wildernesses of whole Nations. Swell not into Actions which embroil and confound the Earth; but be one of those violent ones which force the Kingdom of Heaven.⁸⁸ If thou must needs reign, be *Zeno's King*,⁸⁹ and enjoy that Empire which every Man gives himself. Certainly the iterated Injunctions of Christ unto Humility, Meekness, Patience, and that despised Train of Virtues, cannot but make pathological Impressions upon those who have well considered the Affairs of all Ages, wherein Pride, Ambition, and Vain-glory, have led up the worst of Actions, and whereunto Confusion, Tragedies, and Acts denying all Religion, do owe their Originals.

Rest not in an Ovation,⁹⁰ but a Triumph over thy Passions; chain up the unruly Legion of thy Breast; behold thy Trophies within thee, not without thee: Lead thine own Captivity captive,⁹¹ and be *Cæsar* unto thy self.

Give no quarter unto those Vices which are of thine inward Family; and having a Root in thy Temper, plead a Right and Propriety in thee. Examine well thy complexional Inclinations. Raise early Batteries against those strong-holds built upon the Rock of Nature, and make this a great part of the Militia of thy Life. The politick Nature of Vice must be opposed by Policy, and therefore wiser Honesties Project and plot against Sin; wherein notwithstanding we are not to rest in Generals, or the trite Stratagems of Art: that may succeed with one Temper which may prove successless with another. There is no Community or Commonwealth of Virtue; every Man must study his own åconomy, and erect these Rules unto the Figure of himself.

Lastly, If length of Days be thy Portion, make it not thy Expectation: reckon not upon long Life, but live always beyond thy Account.⁹² He that so often surviveth his Expectation, lives many Lives, and will hardly complain of the shortness of his Days. Time past is gone like a shadow; make Times to come, present; conceive that near which may be far off; approximate thy last Times by present Apprehensions of them: live like a Neighbour unto Death, and think there is but little to come. And since there is something in us that must still live on, joyn both Lives together; unite them in thy Thoughts and Actions, and live in one but for the other. He who thus

ordereth the Purposes of this Life, will never be far from the next; and is in some manner already in it, by an happy Conformity, and close Apprehension of it.

FINIS.

Notes

1. [Persius [Satire III](#).105 (which edition reads "in portam").]
2. [see [a note](#) from Notes and Queries referring this to a story in George Sandys's *Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610*.]
3. [Plautus *Captivi* [III.iv](#):646-648 "Dicam tibi:/ macilento ore, naso acuto, corpore albo, oculis nigris,/subrufus aliquantum, crispus, cincinnatus."]
4. [Parts of East Anglia being known for healthy air; see, for instance, Defoe's *Tour through the Eastern Counties of England* (1722): "[St. Edmunds] is a town famed for its pleasant situation and wholesome air, the Montpelier of Suffolk, and perhaps of England." (He goes on to say that the monks transferred St Edmund's body to the place because of its healthy air, which seems too little, too late; cum mors venerit....) The "nitre" in nitrous air is putative.]
5. *Cum mors venerit, in medio Tibure Sardinia est.* [Martial Epig. [iv.60.5](#)]
6. In the King's Forest they set the Figure of a broad Arrow upon Trees that are to be cut down.
7. *Hippoc. Epidem.*
8. *Bellonius de Avibus.*
9. [1690 has "Sheep" here and below "Sheep let" rather than "Sleep lets".]
10. [Or Lucina, at Juno's behest: Ovid *Metamorphoses* [IX](#)]
11. *Monstra contingunt in medicina Hippoc.* Strange and rare Escapes there happen sometimes in Physick.
12. *Angeli Victorii Consultationes.*

[13.](#) Matth. iv. 25.

[14.](#) *Aristoteles nullum animal nisi oestu recedente expirare affirmat: observatum id multum in Gallico Oceano & duntaxat in Homine compertum*, lib. 2. cap. 101. [Pliny [NH ii.220](#); in Holland's translation, [Chap. XCVIII.](#)]

[15.](#) [Night, daughter of Chaos: Hesiod Theogony 124; Night, mother of Sleep, Death, Strife, etc., [211 ff.](#).]

[16.](#) *Auris pars pendula Lobus dicitur, non omnibus ea pars est auribus; non enim iis qui noctu nati sunt, sed qui interdium, maxima ex parte. Com. in Aristot. de Animal.* lib. I.

[17.](#) [1690 has "ear, most"]

[18.](#) [At the Battle of Pavia, February 24, 1525. Charles V was born on February 24, 1500 and crowned Emperor (of the Holy Roman Empire) in Bologna on February 24, 1530.]

[19.](#) [1690 (and other editions): "Feast"; but MS Sloan 1862 has "Fever"; Pliny [vii.51](#) says that Antipater was afflicted with an annual *fever*.]

[20.](#) [Referring to the so-called "precession of the equinoxes" which yields the "Ages" (of Aquarius, of Pisces, etc.). The calculation is fraught with difficulties, if not impossibilities, the first of them being the exact location the "beginning". The equinox precesses one sign in approximately 2,100 years.]

[21.](#) [Cf. *Religio Medici* XXXI, [p. 70](#) giving Paracelsus' view and Browne's comment.]

[22.](#) According to the *Egyptian Hieroglyphick*.

[23.](#) *Turkish History*. [Knolles, *General History of the Turks*.]

[24.](#) [Something that puffs up the cheeks — hence, a satisfying meal.]

[25.](#) In the Poet *Dante* his description. [See Browne's [note](#) in Chapter III of *Hydriotaphia*.]

[26.](#) *De morbis Puerorum*.

[27.](#) [As in *Pseudodoxia* [V.xxiii](#), as above.]

[28.](#) *Morta*, the Deity of Death or Fate.

[29](#). When Mens Faces are drawn with resemblance to some other Animals, the *Italians* call it, to be drawn in *Caricatura*.

[30](#). *Ulmus de usu barbæ humanæ*.

[31](#). [Louis II, crowned the last king of Hungary in 1508 (at the age of 2), said to have been "sickly but intelligent" as a child; he died at the disastrous battle of Mohács on August 29, 1526, possibly by drowning in the Danube. Hungary was subsequently divided between the Ottoman and the Habsburg empires.]

[32](#). The Life of a man is Threescore and Ten. [Or fourscore, for the strong; Psalm 90:10.]

[33](#). See *Picotus de Rheumatismo*. [Morgellons, crinons, masclous: a pediatric skin disease possibly caused by a worm, as in the dracunculus of tropical areas. See "[Sir Thomas Browne and the Disease called the Morgellons](#)" for a discussion of the disease. The reference to Picotus does not seem to belong here, as Picotus does not discuss this disease. See [note 36](#).]

[34](#). {MS. Sloan 1862, in Wilkin, continues:

Though hairs afford but fallible conjectures, yet we cannot but take notice of them. They grow not equally on bodies after death: women's skulls afford moss as well as men's, and the best I have seen was upon a woman's skull, taken up and laid in a room after twenty-five years' burial. Though the skin be made the place of hairs, yet sometimes they are found on the heart and inward parts. The plica or gluey locks happen unto both sexes, and being cut off will come again: but they are wary of cutting off the same, for fear of headache and other diseases.

[Plica, plica polonica, a matted condition of the hair, common in Poland of former days, resulting from disease, dirt and insects; said largely to have disappeared by the late 19th century.}]

[35](#). His upper and lower Jaw being solid, and without distinct rows of Teeth. [Plutarch, [Pyrrhus](#) III.6, says that Pyrrhus had only one upper tooth, with slight incised lines where teeth would be separated. He says nothing about the lower tooth or teeth. On the state of ancient teeth, Lanciani, [Pagan and Christian Rome](#), makes much the same observation on dentists in Rome: he is surprised at the number of dentists buried (their tombs marked with symbols of their craft) compared to the very good quality of the teeth of Roman corpses. Perhaps they were very good dentists.]

[36](#). Twice tell over his Teeth never live to threescore Years. [It is probably here that the note ([33](#)) on Picotus belongs. Bannyans, or banians, a caste or group of Indians who were familiar because they were traders, refers to Hindus in general.]

37. {Wilkin supplies from MS. Sloan 1862 a paragraph that followed here:
Affection had so blinded some of his nearest relations, as to retain some hope of a postliminious life, and that he might come to life again, and therefore would not have him coffined before the third day. Some such virbiasses [so in MS.] I confess we find in story, and one or two I remember myself, but they lived not long after. Some contingent re-animations are to be hoped in diseases wherein the lamp of life is but puffed out and seemingly choaked, and not where the oil is quite spent and exhausted. Though Nonnes will have it a fever, yet of what disease Lazarus first died, it is uncertain from the text, as his second death from good authentic history; but since some persons conceived to be dead do sometimes return again unto evidence of life, that miracle was wisely managed by our Saviour; for had he not been dead four days and under corruption, there had not wanted enough who would have cavilled the same, which the scripture now puts out of doubt; and tradition also confirmeth, that he lived thirty years after, and being pursued by the Jews, came by sea into Provence, by Marseilles, with Mary Magdalen, Maximinus, and others: where remarkable places carry their names unto this day. But to arise from the grave to return again into it, is but an uncomfortable reviction. Few men would be content to cradle it once again: except a man can lead his second life better than the first, a man may be double condemned for living evilly twice, which were but to make the second death in scripture the third, and to accumulate in the punishment of two bad livers at the last day. To have performed the duty of corruption in the grave, to live again as far from sin as death, and arise like our Saviour for ever, are the only satisfactions of well-weighed expectations.

[Biliminous: In Roman law, "biliminium" is the legal right of a person banished or held hostage to return to his home (to cross the threshold); hence, Browne's use as a metaphor for returning to life. Virbias: presumably vir + bi-, twice a man?]]

38. [1690: "many have been become strong"; MS Sloan 1862 reads "I have seen many to have become strong"; Wilkin "many have become"]

39. [The disease of rickets is presumed to be ancient, although archeological evidence is scant. According to Alfred Hess, *Rickets*, (Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1929), the first "satisfactory description of rickets" — that is, a description that meets the current clinical descriptions of the disease — was given by Soranus of Ephesus around A.D. 100; Galen also gives a description of the disorder. (It is, of course, only conjectural that the disorder they are describing *is* rickets, but it sounds like it.) When it began to reappear, or began to be noticed again, in the late 16th century, it was thought of as a new disease. John Mayow, in his *De rachitide* of 1668, says

There has been only one, as far as I know, who has written anything on the subject of rickets, namely, the distinguished Dr Glisson; and that

may seem strange, because as a rule disease scarcely rages so much as the incurable passion of writing about it....

This disease made its appearance some forty years ago in the western parts of England; and since then (as it is the way of diseases and other evils to spread themselves) has infested infants' cradles through nearly the whole of England, though more rarely in the northern part.

This latter remark is strange, given the etiology of rickets, which scarcely ever occur in sunny climates; perhaps the air of southern England was already sufficiently smoggy to render the south less sunny than the north. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the disease seemed *new* to the English physicians, who were mostly thoroughly conversant with classical medical treatises. The name itself, whose etymology is controversial, is almost certainly English. The Germans called it, and still call it sometimes, "die englische Krankheit". Hess, however, remarks that the disease had earlier been described by Guillimeau (1609, translated into English in 1612) and by Paré (1633), both of whom treat the disorder as common. It first appears in the London Bills of Mortality in 1634, when it caused 14 deaths; by 1659, the number of deaths was 476, and, according to Hess, from 1655-1658 it reached 1598, a scarcely credible number. The 1731 bills of mortality for London list 54 deaths from rickets, about half the number of deaths from measles and less than a third the number of deaths from "stoppage of the stomach", whatever that might be. But rickets was to make a hideous come-back in the nineteenth century before the early twentieth-century discoveries of its etiology and treatment rendered it more or less a curiosity in the developed world.]

[40.](#) Ασφαλεστατος και ρηιστος *seucrissima & facillimæ* Hippocrat.

[41.](#) Pro febre quartana raro sonat campana. [The original saying meaning, of course, that quartan ague rarely caused death; Browne is saying that, whatever was formerly the case, it causes frequent deaths in his day. The Penguin editor adds a peculiar gloss about the hours of divine services, indicating he's not paying much attention, one of the common side-effects of editing Browne. There are several types of malaria, the quartan being probably the least serious. It's doubtful, however, that seventeenth century physicians distinguished among the various forms, some of which were apparently new.]

{Wilkin supplies a paragraph that follows this in the MS. (Sloan 1862):

Some I observed to wonder how, in his consumptive state, his hair held on so well, without that considerable defluvium which is one of the last symptoms in such diseases; but they took not notice of a mark in his face, which if he had lived was a probable security against baldness (if the observation of Aristotle will hold, that persons are less apt to be bald who are double-chinned), nor of the various and knotted veins in his legs, which they that have, in the same author's assertions, are less

disposed to baldness (according as Theodorus Gaza renders it: though Scaliger renders the text otherwise).}

[42.](#) [In a manner of speaking; in the Republic [405d](#) he accuses moderns of living luxuriously and then giving names to and requiring treatments for the discomforts or diseases that result (or possibly are just noticed), using Homer as a reference. In fact, it's really just Plato on one of his high and eccentric horses; probably not too much should be made of it as an historical comment.]

[43.](#) [The caul or omentum; lining of the stomach and intestines.]

[44.](#) Sir A. J. [Sir Arthur Jenny. 1690 has "So A. F".]

[45.](#) Cardan in his *Encomium Podagræ* reckoneth this among the *Dona Podagræ*, that they are delivered thereby from the Pthisis and Stone in the Bladder.

[46.](#) [See Pseudodoxia Epidemica [I.vi](#) for another brief treatment of this question. The *Problemata* of Pseudo-Aristotle, X.]

[47.](#) [P. Vegetius Rhenanus' *Mulomedicina*, usually published with Q. Gargilius Martialis' (fragmentary) *De curis boum*.]

[48.](#) [Nor have I found anything that indicates that crocodiles cough. The crocodile is incapable of expectorating; anything in its mouth, such as excess water, simply dribbles out. An elongated palatal structure insures against inhaling water. It has, however, a diaphragm-like organ, the *septum posthepaticum*, so it is perhaps capable of coughing if necessary. Again, none of the sources on crocodilian anatomy makes any mention of such a motion. They seem to be inordinately healthy beasts after crocodilehood, when their chief discomfort is that of being eaten; maybe they simply never need to cough.]

[49.](#) *Hippoc. de Insomniis*.

[50.](#) *Hippoc. de Insomniis*.

[51.](#) *Tabes maxime contingunt ab anno decimo octavo ad trigesimum quintum*, Hippoc. [in the *Aphorisms*, V, 9.]

[52.](#) [This word, more common in seventeenth century use than now, has a rich theological history, particularly with regard to (1) original sin and (2) the nature of the soul. Browne uses it to mean "transmission" in many senses; see the miscellany tract [On Languages](#); [Pseudodoxia Epidemica I.i](#), where it is used twice in two different meanings; *Religio Medici*, [page 81](#); etc.]

[53.](#) A sound Child cut out of the Body of the Mother.

[54.](#) *Natos ad flumina primum deferimus fævoq; gelu duramus & undis.* [Virgil [Æneid IX.603-604.](#)]

[55.](#) [That is, like an auction; cf. Pepys, 3 September 1662: "After dinner we met and sold the hulkes, where pleasant to see how backward men are at first to bid; and yet when the candle is going out how they bawl." A candle was used as a timer for the acceptance of bids.]

[56.](#) *Julii Cæsaris Scaligeri quod fuit. Joseph Scaliger in vita patris.*

[57.](#) [The dead "intimate friend", not Scaliger.]

[58.](#) [This use (= "comparatively small or unimportant"), common today, is a "favourite use with Sir T. Browne, and common in subsequent writers", says the OED.]

[59.](#) ["*Cicero*, the worst of Poets": [Religio Medici](#). The epitaphs on the present tombs of Dante and of Petrarch are not, so far as I can tell, their own work.]

[60.](#) [1690: "Decipiency"; etymologically, a lack of understanding; foolishness, trifling.]

[61.](#) [*Not* "theoretical".]

[62.](#) [1690: "Democratism"]

[63.](#) *Summum nec metuas diem nec optes.* [Martial, Epigrams [x.lxvii](#)]

[64.](#) Who upon some Accounts, and Traditions, is said to have lived 30 Years after he was raised by our Saviour. *Baronius*. [Cardinal Cesare Baronio, 1538-1607]

[65.](#) In the Speech of *Vultei* in *Lucan*, animating his Souldiers in a great struggle to kill one another. *Decernite Lethum & metus omnis abest, cupias quodcunq; necesse est.* All fear is over do but resolve to dye, and make your Desires meet Necessity. [Lucan [IV.486-487.](#)]

[66.](#) [*Æneid VIII 205.*]

[67.](#) *Wisdom cap. iv.* [4:8-9; in the KJV: "For honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age."]

[68.](#) [The climacterical years are 49, 63, and 81. See [Pseudodoxia Epidemica IV.xii.](#)]

[69.](#) [The remainder of the *Letter to a Friend* is largely reproduced in [Christian Morals](#). Wilkin's edition stops at this point and refers the reader to that work.]

[70.](#) [See the note to *Christian Morals* on [Cebes' Pinax](#).]

[71.](#) Through the Pacifick Sea, with a constant Gale from the East.

[72.](#) ["Sudden gusts or violent attacks of bad weather" — Dr. Johnson's note to the corresponding section of *Christian Morals*. Hereafter "Dr. J."]

[73.](#) Who is said to have castrated himself.

[74.](#) [1690: "Mitre", but *Christian Morals* has "Mite". Luke 21, the story of the widow's mites: "And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."]

[75.](#) [Acts 5, 22.]

[76.](#) [As in *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* [Li](#); the targums are amplified paraphrases of scripture. Thus, "allow the teaching of the New Testament to gloss the law of the Old".]

[77.](#) [Cæsar's crossing of the Rubicon with force in 49 B.C. essentially ended the Republic and forever altered the balance of power in the Roman state in favor of demagogues, dictators, and the army.]

[78.](#) [1690: "Recipiscency"; a recovery of one's senses followed, presumably, by regret.]

[79.](#) *Ira furor brevis est*. [Horace Epist. [L.ii.62](#).]

[80.](#) [Dr. J, quoting Thomas Creech's translation of the 13th Satire of Juvenal, lines 185-187:

.... Dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ sæva inter vincla cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare — Juv.

Not so mild Thales, nor Chrysippus Thought;
Nor the good man who drank the pois'nous draught
With mind serene, and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drinkn as drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates! — Creech.]

[81.](#) See *Arist. Ethicks*. Chapt. of Magnanimity.

[82.](#) [Although almost universally accepted, the Epistle has its detractors; doubts about its origin date from the early Church, but Protestants especially disliked its emphasis on justification by works (the Easton Bible Encyclopedia attempts to reconcile the difference by asserting that James is speaking of "justification before men"). Luther called it a "letter of straw". See the [article](#) in the Catholic Encyclopedia.]

[83.](#) Holy, Holy, Holy. [Properly "ter-sanctus"; "trisagion" (= "trishagion") in *Christian Morals*.]

[84.](#) Even when the days are shortest.

[85.](#) Alluding to the Tower of Oblivion mentioned by *Procopius*, [in *History of the Wars* I, 4-5], which was the name of a Tower of Imprisonment among the *Persians*: whoever was put therein, he was as it were buried alive, and it was Death for any but to name him.

[86.](#) [Dr. J.: "An epicycle is a small revolution made by one planet in the wider orbit of another planet. The meaning is, 'Let not ambition form thy circle of action, but move upon other principles; and let ambition only operate as something extrinsic and adventitious.' "]

[87.](#) [1690: "to Designs", but *Christian Morals* has "of"]

[88.](#) *Matthew* xi. [12: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."]

[89.](#) [1690: "Zeno, King". Cicero *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, [cap. III](#). Dr. J: "That is, 'the king of the stoics,' whose founder was Zeno, and who held, that the wise man alone had power and royalty."]

[90.](#) Ovation a petty and minor kind of Triumph.

[91.](#) [Ps. 68:18 and, less familiarly, Jud. 5:12]

[92.](#) [Dr. J quotes Horace Epist. I.iv.13-14 and Francis' translation:

Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum,
Grata superveniet quæ non sperabitur hora.

Believe, that ev'ry morning's ray
Hath lighted up thy latest day;
Then, if no to-morrow's sun be thine,
With double lustre shall it shine.]