

LETTERS TO SEVERALL PERSONAGES

THE STORME *To Mr Christopher Brooke*

Thou which art I, ('tis nothing to be soe)
Thou which art still thy selfe, by these shalt know
Part of our passage; And, a hand, or eye
By *Hilliard* drawne, is worth an history,
By a worse painter made; and (without pride) 5
When by thy judgment they are dignifi'd,
My lines are such: 'Tis the preheminance
Of friendship onely to'impute excellence.
England to whom we'owe, what we be, and have,
Sad that her sonnes did seeke a forraine grave 10
(For, Fates, or Fortunes drifts none can soothsay,
Honour and misery have one face and way.)
From out her pregnant intrailles sigh'd a winde
Which at th'ayres middle marble roome did finde
Such strong resistance, that it selfe it threw 15
Downeward againe; and so when it did view
How in the port, our fleet deare time did leese,
Withering like prisoners, which lye but for fees,
Mildly it kist our sailes and, fresh and sweet,
As to a stomack sterv'd, whose insides meete, 20
Meate comes, it came; and swole our sailes, when wee
So joyd, as *Sara*'her swelling joy'd to see.
But 'twas but so kinde, as our countrimen,
Which bring friends one dayes way, and leave them then.
Then like two mighty Kings, which dwelling farre 25
Asunder, meet against a third to warre,
The South and West winds joyn'd, and, as they blew,
Waves like a rowling trench before them threw.
Sooner then you read this line, did the gale,
Like shot, not fear'd till felt, our sailes assaile; 30
And what at first was call'd a gust, the same
Hath now a stormes, anon a tempests name.
Jonas, I pittie thee, and curse those men,
Who when the storm rag'd most, did wake thee then;

Sleepe is paines easiest salve, and doth fullfill 35
 All offices of death, except to kill.
 But when I wakt, I saw, that I saw not;
 I, and the Sunne, which should teach mee'had forgot
 East, West, Day, Night, and I could onely say,
 If the world had lasted, now it had beene day. 40
 Thousands our noyses were, yet wee'mongst all
 Could none by his right name, but thunder call:
 Lightning was all our light, and it rain'd more
 Then if the Sunne had drunke the sea before.
 Some coffin'd in their cabbins lye,'equally 45
 Griev'd that they are not dead, and yet must dye;
 And as sin-burd'ned soules from graves will creepe,
 At the last day, some forth their cabbins peepe:
 And tremblingly'aske what newes, and doe heare so,
 Like jealous husbands, what they would not know. 50
 Some sitting on the hatches, would seeme there,
 With hideous gazing to feare away feare.
 Then note they the ships sicknesses, the Mast
 Shak'd with this ague, and the Hold and Wast
 With a salt dropsie clog'd, and all our tacklings 55
 Snapping, like too-high-stretched treble strings.
 And from our totterd sailes, ragges drop downe so,
 As from one hang'd in chaines, a yeare agoe.
 Even our Ordinance plac'd for our defence,
 Strive to breake loose, and scape away from thence. 60
 Pumping hath tir'd our men, and what's the gaine?
 Seas into seas throwne, we suck in againe;
 Hearing hath deaf'd our saylers; and if they
 Knew how to heare, there's none knowes what to say.
 Compar'd to these stormes, death is but a qualme, 65
 Hell somewhat lightsome, and the'Bermuda calme.
 Darknesse, lights elder brother, his birth-right
 Claims o'r this world, and to heaven hath chas'd light.
 All things are one, and that one none can be,
 Since all formes, uniforme deformity 70
 Doth cover, so that wee, except God say
 Another *Fiat*, shall have no more day.
 So violent, yet long these furies bee,
 That though thine absence sterve me,'I wish not thee.

THE CALME

Our storme is past, and that storms tyrannous rage,
 A stupid calme, but nothing it, doth swage.
 The fable is inverted, and farre more
 A blocke afflicts, now, then a storke before.
 Stormes chafe, and soone weare out themselves, or us; 5
 In calmes, Heaven laughs to see us languish thus.
 As steady'as I can wish, that my thoughts were,
 Smooth as thy mistresse glasse, or what shines there,
 The sea is now. And, as the Iles which wee
 Seeke, when wee can move, our ships rooted bee. 10
 As water did in stormes, now pitch runs out:
 As lead, when a fir'd Church becomes one spout.
 And all our beauty, and our trimme, decayes,
 Like courts removing, or like ended playes.
 The fighting place now seamens ragges supply; 15
 And all the tackling is a frippery.
 No use of lanthornes; and in one place lay
 Feathers and dust, to day and yesterday.
 Earths hollownesses, which the worlds lungs are,
 Have no more winde then the upper valt of aire. 20
 We can nor lost friends, nor sought foes recover,
 But meteorlike, save that wee move not, hover.
 Onely the Calenture together drawes
 Deare friends, which meet dead in great fishes jawes:
 And on the hatches as on Altars lyes 25
 Each one, his owne Priest, and owne Sacrifice.
 Who live, that miracle do multiply
 Where walkers in hot Ovens, doe not dye.
 If in despite of these, wee swimme, that hath
 No more refreshing, then our brimstone Bath, 30
 But from the sea, into the ship we turne,
 Like parboyl'd wretches, on the coales to burne.
 Like *Bajazet* encag'd, the shepheards scoffe,
 Or like slacke sinew'd *Sampson*, his haire off,
 Languish our ships. Now, as a Miriade 35
 Of Ants, durst th'Emperours lov'd snake invade,
 The crawling Gallies, Sea-goales, finny chips,
 Might brave our Pinnaces, now bed-ridde ships.

Whether a rotten state, and hope of gaine,
 Or to disuse mee from the queasie paine 40
 Of being belov'd, and loving, or the thirst
 Of honour, or faire death, out pusht mee first,
 I lose my end: for here as well as I
 A desperate may live, and a coward die.
 Stagge, dogge, and all which from, or towards flies, 45
 Is paid with life, or pray, or doing dyes.
 Fate grudges us all, and doth subtly lay
 A scourge, 'gainst which wee all forget to pray,
 He that at sea prayes for more winde, as well
 Under the poles may begge cold, heat in hell. 50
 What are wee then? How little more alas
 Is man now, then before he was? he was
 Nothing; for us, wee are for nothing fit;
 Chance, or our selves still disproportion it.
 Wee have no power, no will, no sense; I lye, 55
 I should not then thus feele this miserie:

To Sir Henry Wotton

Sir, more then kisses, letters mingle Soules;
 For, thus friends absent speake. This ease controules
 The tediousnesse of my life: But for these
 I could ideate nothing, which could please,
 But I should wither in one day, and passe 5
 To'a bottle'of Hay, that am a locke of Grasse.
 Life is a voyage, and in our lifes wayes
 Countries, Courts, Towns are Rockes, or Remoraes;
 They breake or stop all ships, yet our state's such,
 That though then pitch they staine worse, wee must touch.
 If in the furnace of the even line, 10
 Or under th'adverse icy poles thou pine,
 Thou know'st two temperate Regions girded in,
 Dwell there: But Oh, what refuge canst thou winne
 Parch'd in the Court, and in the country frozen? 15
 Shall cities, built of both extremes, be chosen?
 Can dung and garlike be'a perfume? or can
 A Scorpion and Torpedo cure a man?

Cities are worst of all three; of all three
 (O knottie riddle) each is worst equally. 20
 Cities are Sepulchers; they who dwell there
 Are carcases, as if no such there were.
 And Courts are Theaters, where some men play
 Princes, some slaves, all to one end, and of one clay.
 The Country is a desert, where no good, 25
 Gain'd (as habits, not borne,) is understood.
 There men become beasts, and prone to more evils;
 In cities blockes, and in a lewd court, devills.
 As in the first Chaos confusedly
 Each elements qualities were in the other three; 30
 So pride, lust, covetize, being severall
 To these three places, yet all are in all,
 And mingled thus, their issue incestuous.
 Falshood is denizon'd. Virtue is barbarous.
 Let no man say there, Virtues flintie wall 35
 Shall locke vice in mee, I'll do none, but know all.
 Men are sponges, which to poure out, receive.
 Who know false play, rather then lose, deceive.
 For in best understandings, sinne beganne,
 Angels sinn'd first, then Devills, and then man. 40
 Onely perchance beasts sinne not; wretched wee
 Are beasts in all, but white integritie.
 I thinke if men, which in these places live
 Durst looke for themselves, and themselves retriue,
 They would like strangers greet themselves, seeing than 45
 Utopian youth, growne old Italian.
 Be thou thine owne home, and in thy selfe dwell;
 Inne any where, continuance maketh hell.
 And seeing the snaile, which every where doth come,
 Carrying his owne house still, still is at home, 50
 Follow (for he is easie pac'd) this snaile,
 Bee thine owne Palace, or the world's thy gaile.
 And in the worlds sea, do not like corke sleepe
 Upon the waters face; nor in the deepe
 Sinke like a lead without a line: but as 55
 Fishes glide, leaving no print where they passe,
 Nor making sound; so closely thy course goe,
 Let men dispute, whether thou breathe, or no.

Onely'in this one thing, be no Galenist: To make
 Courts hot ambitions wholesome, do not take 60
 A dramme of Countries dulnesse; do not adde
 Correctives, but as chymiques, purge the bad.
 But, Sir, I advise not you, I rather doe
 Say o'er those lessons, which I learn'd of yous
 Whom, free from German schismes, and lightnesse 65
 Of France, and faire Italies faithlesnesse,
 Having from these suck'd all they had of worth,
 And brought home that faith, which you carried forth,
 I throughly love. But if my selfe, I have wonne
 To know my rules, I have, and you have 70
 DONNE:

To Sir Henry Goodyere

Who makes the Past, a patterne for next yeare,
 Turnes no new leafe, but still the same things reads,
 Seene things, he sees againe, heard things doth heare,
 And makes his life, but like a paire of beads.

A Palace, when 'tis that, which it should be, 5
 Leaves growing, and stands such, or else decays:
 But hee which dwels there, is not so; for hee
 Strives to urge upward, and his fortune raise;

So had your body'her morning, hath her noone,
 And shall not better; her next change is night: 10
 But her faire larger guest, to'whom Sun and Moone
 Are sparkes, and short liv'd, claimes another right.

The noble Soule by age growes lustier,
 Her appetite, and her digestion mend,
 Wee must not sterve, nor hope to pamper her 15
 With womens milke, and pappe unto the end.

Provide you manlyer dyet; you have seene
 All libraries, which are Schools, Camps, and Courts;
 But aske your Garners if you have not beene
 In harvests, too indulgent to your sports. 20

Would you redeeme it? then your selfe transplant
A while from hence. Perchance outlandish ground
Beares no more wit, then ours, but yet more scant
Are those diversions there, which here abound.

To be a stranger hath that benefit, 25
Wee can beginnings, but not habits choke.
Goe; whither? Hence; you get, if you forget;
New faults, till they prescribe in us, are smoake.

Our soule, whose country's heaven, and God her father,
Into this world, corruptions sinke, is sent, 30
Yet, so much in her travaile she doth gather,
That she returnes home, wiser then she went;

It payes you well, if it teach you to spare,
And make you, 'asham'd, to make your hawks praise, yours,
Which when herselfe she lessens in the aire, 35
You then first say, that high enough she toures.

However, keepe the lively tast you hold
Of God, love him as now, but feare him more,
And in your afternoones thinke what you told
And promis'd him, at morning prayer before. 40

Let falshood like a discord anger you,
Else be not froward. But why doe I touch
Things, of which none is in your practise new,
And Tables, or fruit-trenchers teach as much;

But thus I make you keepe your promise Sir, 45
Riding I had you, though you still staid there,
And in these thoughts, although you never stirre,
You came with mee to Micham, and are here.

To Mr Rowland Woodward

Like one who'in her third widdowhood doth professe
Her selfe a Nunne, tyed to retirednesse,
So'affects my muse now, a chast fallownesse;

Since shee to few, yet to too many'hath showne
How love-song weeds, and Satyrique thornes are growne 5
Where seeds of better Arts, were early sown.

Though to use, and love Poëtrie, to mee,
Betroth'd to no'one Art, be no'adulterie;
Omissions of good, ill, as ill deeds bee.

For though to us it seeme, 'and be light and thinne, 10
Yet in those faithfull scales, where God throwes in
Mens workes, vanity weighs as much as sinne.

If our Soules have stain'd their first white, yet wee
May cloth them with faith, and deare honestie,
Which God imputes, as native puritie. 15

There is no Vertue, but Religion:
Wise, valiant, sober, just, are names, which none
Want, which want not Vice-covering discretion.

Seeke wee then our selves in our selves; for as
Men force the Sunne with much more force to passe, 20
By gathering his beames with a christall glasse;

So wee, If wee into our selves will turne,
Blowing our sparkes of vertue, may outburne
The straw, which doth about our hearts sojourne.

You know, Physitians, when they would infuse 25
Into any'oyle, the Soules of Simples, use
Places, where they may lie still warme, to chuse.

So workes retirednesse in us; To rome
Giddily, and be every where, but at home,
Such freedome doth a banishment become. 30

Wee are but farmers of our selves, yet may,
If we can stocke our selves, and thrive, uplay
Much, much deare treasure for the great rent day.

Manure thy selfe then, to thy selfe be' approv'd,
And with vaine outward things be no more mov'd, 35
But to know, that I love thee'and would be lov'd.

To Sir Henry Wootton

Here's no more newes, then vertue, I may as well
Tell you *Cales*, or *St Michaels* tale for newes, as tell
That vice doth here habitually dwell.

Yet, as to'get stomachs, we walke up and downe,
And toyle to sweeten rest, so, may God frowne, 5
If, but to loth both, I haunt Court, or Towne.

For here no one is from the'extremitie
Of vice, by any other reason free,
But that the next to'him, still, is worse then hee.

In this worlds warfare, they whom rugged Fate, 10
(Gods Commissary,) doth so thoroughly hate,
As in'the Courts Squadron to marshall their state:

If they stand arm'd with seely honesty,
With wishing prayers, and neat integritie,
Like Indians 'gainst Spanish hosts they bee. 15

Suspitious boldnesse to this place belongs,
And to'have as many eares as all have tongues;
Tender to know, tough to acknowledge wrongs.

Beleeve mee Sir, in my youths giddiest dayes,
When to be like the Court, was a playes praise, 20
Playes were not so like Courts, as Courts'are like playes.

Then let us at these mimicke antiques jeast,
Whose deepest projects, and egregious gests
Are but dull Moralls of a game at Chests.

But now 'tis incongruity to smile, 25
Therefore I end; and bid farewell a while,
At Court; though *From Court*, were the better stile.

H: W: in Hiber: belligeranti

Went you to conquer? and have so much lost
Yourself, that what in you was best and most,
Respective friendship, should so quickly dye?
In publike gaine my share's not such that I
Would lose your love for Ireland: better cheap 5
I pardon death (who though he do not reap
Yet gleanes hee many of our frends away)
Then that your waking mind should bee a prey
To lethargies. Lett shott, and boggs, and skeines
With bodies deale, as fate bids and restreynes; 10
Ere sicknesses attack, yong death is best,
Who payes before his death doth scape arrest.
Lett not your soule (at first with graces fill'd,
And since, and thorough crooked lymbecks, still'd
In many schools and courts, which quicken it,) 15
It self unto the Irish negligence submit.
I aske not labored letters which should weare
Long papers out: nor letters which should frare
Dishonest carriage: or a seers art:
Nor such as from the brayne come, but the hart. 20

To the Countesse of Bedford

MADAME,

Reason is our Soules left hand, Faith her right,
By these wee reach divinity, that's you;
Their loves, who have the blessings of your light,
Grew from their reason, mine from faire faith grew.

But as, although a squint lefthandednesse 5
Be'ungracious, yet we cannot want that hand,
So would I, not to encrease, but to expresse
My faith, as I beleeve, so understand.

Therefore I study you first in your Saints,
Those friends, whom your election glorifies, 10
Then in your deeds, accesses, and restraints,
And what you reade, and what your selfe devise.

But soone, the reasons why you're lov'd by all,
Grow infinite, and so passe reasons reach,
Then backe againe to'implicite faith I fall, 15
And rest on what the Catholique voice doth teach;

That you are good: and not one Heretique
Denies it: if he did, yet you are so.
For, rockes, which high top'd and deep rooted sticke,
Waves wash, not undermine, nor overthrow. 20

In every thing there naturally growes
A *Balsamum* to keepe it fresh, and new,
If 'twere not injur'd by extrinsique blowes;
Your birth and beauty are this Balme in you.

But you of learning and religion, 25
And vertue, and such ingredients, have made
A methridate, whose operation
Keepes off, or cures what can be done or said.

Yet, this is not your physicke, but your food,
 A dyet fit for you; for you are here 30
 The first good Angell, since the worlds frame stood,
 That ever did in womans shape appeare.

Since you are then Gods masterpeece, and so
 His Factor for our loves; do as you doe,
 Make your returne home gracious; and bestow 35
 This life on that; so make one life of two.
 For so God helpe mee, 'I would not misse you there
 For all the good which you can do me here.

To the Countesse of Bedford

MADAME,
 You have refin'd mee, and to worthyest things
 (Vertue, Art, Beauty, Fortune,) now I see
 Rarenesse, or use, not nature value brings;
 And such, as they are circumstanc'd, they bee.
 Two illls can ne're perplexe us, sinne to'excuse; 5
 But of two good things, we may leave and chuse.

Therefore at Court, which is not vertues clime,
 (Where a transcendent height, (as, lownesse mee)
 Makes her not be, or not show) all my rime
 Your vertues challenge, which there rarest bee; 10
 For, as darke texts need notes: there some must bee
 To usher vertue, and say, *This is shee.*

So in the country's beauty; to this place
 You are the season (Madame) you the day,
 'Tis but a grave of spices, till your face 15
 Exhale them, and a thick close bud display.
 Widow'd and reclus'd else, her sweets she'enshrines;
 As China, when the Sunne at Brasill dines.

Out from your chariot, morning breaks at night,
 And falsifies both computations so; 20

Since a new world doth rise here from your light,
We your new creatures, by new reckonings goe.

This shoves that you from nature lothly stray,
That suffer not an artificiall day.

In this you've made the Court the Antipodes, 25
And will'd your Delegate, the vulgar Sunne,
To doe profane autumnall offices,
Whilst here to you, wee sacrificers runne;
And whether Priests, or Organs, you wee'obey,
We sound your influence, and your Dictates say. 30

Yet to that Deity which dwels in you,
Your vertuous Soule, I now not sacrifice;
These are *Petitions*, and not *Hymnes*; they sue
But that I may survey the edifice.

In all Religions as much care hath bin 35
Of Temples frames, and beauty, 'as Rites within.

As all which goe to Rome, doe not thereby
Esteeme religions, and hold fast the best,
But serve discourse, and curiosity,
With that which doth religion but invest, 40
And shunne th'entangling laborinths of Schooles,
And make it wit, to thinke the wiser fooles:

So in this pilgrimage I would behold
You as you're vertues temple, not as shee,
What walls of tender christall her enfold, 45
What eyes, hands, bosome, her pure Altars bee;
And after this survey, oppose to all
Bablers of Chappels, you th'Escuriell.

Yet not as consecrate, but merely 'as faire,
On these I cast a lay and country eye. 50
Of past and future stories, which are rare,
I finde you all record, and prophecie.
Purge but the booke of Fate, that it admit
No sad nor guilty legends, you are it.

If good and lovely were not one, of both 55
 You were the transcript, and originall,
 The Elements, the Parent, and the Growth,
 And every peece of you, is both their All:
 So'intire are all your deeds, and you, that you
 Must do the same thinge still; you cannot two. 60

But these (as nice thinne Schoole divinity
 Serves heresie to further or repress)
 Tast of Poëtique rage, or flattery,
 And need not, where all hearts one truth professe;
 Oft from new proofes, and new phrase, new doubts grow,
 As strange attire aliens the men wee know.

Leaving then busie praise, and all appeale
 To higher Courts, senses decree is true,
 The Mine, the Magazine, the Commonweale,
 The story of beauty, 'in Twicknam is, and you. 70
 Who hath seene one, would both; As, who had bin
 In Paradise, would seeke the Cherubin.

To Sir Edward Herbert at Julyers

Man is a lumpe, where all beasts kneaded bee,
 Wisdom makes him an Arke where all agree;
 The foole, in whom these beasts do live at jarre,
 Is sport to others, and a Theater,
 Nor scapes hee so, but is himselfe their prey; 5
 All which was man in him, is eate away,
 And now his beasts on one another feed,
 Yet couple'in anger, and new monsters breed.
 How happy'is hee, which hath due place assign'd
 To'his beasts, and disaforested his minde! 10
 Empail'd himselfe to keepe them out, not in;
 Can sow, and dares trust corne, where they have bin;
 Can use his horse, goate, wolfe, and every beast,
 And is not Asse himselfe to all the rest.
 Else, man not onely is the heard of swine, 15
 But he's those devills too, which did incline

Them to a headlong rage, and made them worse:
For man can adde weight to heavens heaviest curse.
As Soules (they say) by our first touch, take in
The poysonous tincture of Originall sinne, 20
So, to the punishments which God doth fling,
Our apprehension contributes the sting.
To us, as to his chickins, he doth cast
Hemlocke, and wee as men, his hemlocke taste;
We do infuse to what he meant for meat, 25
Corrosivenesse, or intense cold or heat.
For, God no such specifique poyson hath
As kills we know not how; his fiercest wrath
Hath no antipathy, but may be good
At least for physicke, if not for our food. 30
Thus man, that might be his pleasure, is his rod,
And is his devill, that might be his God.
Since then our businesse is, to rectifie
Nature, to what she was, wee are led awry
By them, who man to us in little show; 35
Greater then due, no forme we can bestow
On him; for Man into himselfe can draw
All; All his faith can swallow, or reason chaw.
All that is fill'd, and all that which doth fill,
All the round world, to man is but a pill, 40
In all it workes not, but it is in all
Poysonous, or purgative, or cordiall
For, knowledge kindles Calentures in some,
And is to others icy *Opium*.
As brave as true, is that profession than 45
Which you doe use to make; that you know man.
This makes it credible; you have dwelt upon
All worthy bookes, and now are such an one.
Actions are authors, and of those in you
Your friends finde every day a mart of new. 50

To the Countesse of Bedford

T'have written then, when you writ, seem'd to mee
 Worst of spirituall vices, Simony,
 And not t'have written then, seemes little lesse
 Then worst of civill vices, thanklesnesse.
 In this, my debt I seem'd loath to confesse, 5
 In that, I seem'd to shunne beholdingnesse.
 But 'tis not soe; *nothings*, as I am, may
 Pay all they have, and yet have all to pay.
 Such borrow in their payments, and owe more
 By having leave to write so, then before. 10
 Yet since rich mines in barren grounds are showne,
 May not I yeeld (not gold) but coale or stone?
 Temples were not demolish'd, though prophane:
 Here *Peter Joves*, there *Paul* hath *Dian's* Fane.
 So whether my hymnes you admit or chuse, 15
 In me you'have hallowed a Pagan Muse,
 And denizend a stranger, who mistaught
 By blamers of the times they mard, hath sought
 Vertues in corners, which now bravely doe
 Shine in the worlds best part, or all It; You. 20
 I have beene told, that vertue in Courtiers hearts
 Suffers an Ostracisme, and departs.
 Profit, ease, fitnessse, plenty, bid it goe,
 But whither, only knowing you, I know;
 Your (or you) vertue two vast uses serves, 25
 It ransomes one sex, and one Court preserves.
 There's nothing but your worth, which being true,
 Is knowne to any other, not to you:
 And you can never know it; To admit
 No knowledge of your worth, is some of it. 30
 But since to you, your praises discords bee,
 Stoop, others ills to meditate with mee.
 Oh ! to confesse wee know not what we should,
 Is halfe excuse; wee know not what we would:
 Lightnesse depresseth us, emptinesse fills, 35
 We sweat and faint, yet still goe downe the hills.
 As new Philosophy arrests the Sunne,
 And bids the passive earth about it runne,

So wee have dull'd our minde, it hath no ends;
 Onely the bodie's busie, and pretends; 40
 As dead low earth eclipses and controules
 The quick high Moone: so doth the body, Soules.
 In none but us, are such mixt engines found,
 As hands of double office: For, the ground
 We till with them; and them to heav'n wee raise; 45
 Who prayer-lesse labours, or, without this, prayes,
 Doth but one halfe, that's none; He which said, *Plough*
 And looke not back, to looke up doth allow.
 Good seed degenerates, and oft obeyes
 The soyles disease, and into cockle strays; 50
 Let the minds thoughts be but transplanted so,
 Into the body, 'and bastardly they grow.
 What hate could hurt our bodies like our love?
 Wee (but no forraine tyrants could) remove
 These not ingrav'd, but inborne dignities, 55
 Caskets of soules; Temples, and Palaces:
 For, bodies shall from death redeemed bee,
 Soules but preserv'd, not naturally free.
 As men to'our prisons, new soules to us are sent,
 Which learne vice there, and come in innocent. 60
 First seeds of every creature are in us,
 What ere the world hath bad, or pretious,
 Mans body can produce, hence hath it beene
 That stones, wormes, frogges, and snakes in man are seene:
 But who ere saw, though nature can worke soe, 65
 That pearle, or gold, or corne in man did grow?
 We've added to the world Virginia, 'and sent
 Two new starres lately to the firmament;
 Why grudge wee us (not heaven) the dignity
 T'increase with ours, those faire soules company. 70
 But I must end this letter, though it doe
 Stand on two truths, neither is true to you.
 Vertue hath some perversenesse; For she will
 Neither beleieve her good, nor others ill.
 Even in you, vertues best paradise, 75
 Vertue hath some, but wise degrees of vice.
 Too many vertues, or too much of one

Begets in you unjust suspicion;
 And ignorance of vice, makes vertue lesse,
 Quenching compassion of our wretchednesse. 80
 But these are riddles; Some aspersion
 Of vice becomes well some complexion.
 Statesmen purge vice with vice, and may corrode
 The bad with bad, a spider with a toad:
 For so, ill thralls not them, but they tame ill 85
 And make her do much good against her will,
 But in your Commonwealth, or world in you,
 Vice hath no office, or good worke to doe.
 Take then no vitious purge, but be content
 With cordiall vertue, your knowne nourishment. 90

To the Countesse of Bedford

On New-yeares day

This twilight of two yeares, not past nor next,
 Some embleme is of mee, or I of this,
 Who Meteor-like, of stuffe and forme perplexed,
 Whose *what*, and *where*, in disputation is,
 If I should call mee *any thing*, should misse. 5

I summe the yeares, and mee, and finde mee not
 Debtor to th'old, nor Creditor to th'new,
 That cannot say, My thanks I have forgot,
 Nor trust I this with hopes, and yet scarce true
 This bravery is, since these times shew'd mee you. 10

In recompence I would show future times
 What you were, and teach them to'urge towards such.
 Verse embalms vertue; and Tombs, or Thrones of rimes,
 Preserve fraile transitory fame, as much
 As spice doth bodies from corrupt aires touch. 15

Mine are short-liv'd; the tincture of your name
Creates in them, but dissipates as fast,
New spirits: for, strong agents with the same
Force that doth warme and cherish, us doe wast;
Kept hot with strong extracts, no bodies last: 20

So, my verse built of your just praise, might want
Reason and likelihood, the firmest Base,
And made of miracle, now faith is scant,
Will vanish soone, and so possesse no place,
And you, and it, too much grace might disgrace. 25

When all (as truth commands assent) confesse
All truth of you, yet they will doubt how I,
One corne of one low anthills dust, and lesse,
Should name, know, or expresse a thing so high,
And not an inch, measure infinity. 30

I cannot tell them, nor my selfe, nor you,
But leave, lest truth b'endanger'd by my praise,
And turne to God, who knowes I thinke this true,
And useth oft, when such a heart mis-sayes,
To make it good, for, such a praiser prayes. 35

Hee will best teach you, how you should lay out
His stock of *beauty, learning, favour, blood*;
He will perplex security with doubt,
And cleare those doubts; hide from you, 'and shew you good,
And so increase your appetite and food; 40

Hee will teach you, that good and bad have not
One latitude in cloysters, and in Court;
Indifferent there the greatest space hath got;
Some pittie's not good there, some vaine disport,
On this side sinne, with that place may comport. 45

Yet he, as hee bounds seas, will fixe your houres,
 Which pleasure, and delight may not ingresse,
 And though what none else lost, be truliest yours,
 Hee will make you, what you did not, possesse,
 By using others, not vice, but weakenesse. 50

He will make you speake truths, and credibly,
 And make you doubt, that others doe not so:
 Hee will provide you keyes, and locks, to spie,
 And scape spies, to good ends, and hee will show
 What you may not acknowledge, what not know. 55

For your owne conscience, he gives innocence,
 But for your fame, a discreet warinesse,
 And though to scape, then to revenge offence
 Be better, he shoves both, and to represse
 Joy, when your state swells, *sadnesse* when'tis lesse. 60

From need of teares he will defend your soule,
 Or make a rebaptizing of one teare;
 Hee cannot, (that's, he will not) dis-inroule
 Your name; and when with active joy we heare
 This private Ghospell, then'tis our New Yeare. 65

To the Countesse of Huntingdon

MADAME,
 Man to Gods image; *Eve*, to mans was made,
 Nor finde wee that God breath'd a soule in her.
 Canons will not Church functions you invade,
 Nor lawes to civill office you preferre.

Who vagrant transitory Comets sees, 5
 Wonders, because they're rare; But a new starre
 Whose motion with the firmament agrees,
 Is miracle; for, there no new things are;

In woman so perchance milde innocence
A seldome comet is, but active good 10
A miracle, which reason scapes, and sense;
For, Art and Nature this in them withstood.

As such a starre, the *Magi* led to view
The manger-cradled infant, God below:
By vertues beames by fame deriv'd from you, 15
May apt soules, and the worst may, vertue know.

If the worlds age, and death be argued well
By the Sunnes fall, which now towards earth doth bend,
Then we might feare that vertue, since she fell
So low as woman, should be neare her end. 20

But she's not stoop'd, but rais'd; exil'd by men
She fled to heaven, that's heavenly things, that's you;
She was in all men, thinly scatter'd then,
But now amass'd, contracted in a few.

She guilded us: But you are gold, and Shee; 25
Us she inform'd, but transubstantiates you;
Soft dispositions which ductile bee,
Elixarlike, she makes not cleane, but new.

Though you a wifes and mothers name retaine,
'Tis not as woman, for all are not soe, 30
But vertue having made you vertue, 'is faine
T'adhere in these names, her and you to show,

Else, being alike pure, wee should neither see;
As, water being into ayre rarify'd,
Neither appeare, till in one cloud they bee, 35
So, for our sakes you do low names abide;

Taught by great constellations, which being fram'd,
Of the most starres, take low names, *Crab*, and *Bull*,
When single planets by the *Gods* are nam'd,
You covet not great names, of great things full. 40

So you, as woman, one doth comprehend,
And in the vaile of kindred others see;
To some ye are reveal'd, as in a friend,
And as a vertuous Prince farre off, to mee.

To whom, because from you all vertues flow, 45
And 'tis not none, to dare contemplate you,
I, which doe so, as your true subject owe
Some tribute for that, so these lines are due.

If you can thinke these flatteries, they are,
For then your judgement is below my praise, 50
If they were so, oft, flatteries worke as farre,
As Counsels, and as farre th'endeavour raise.

So my ill reaching you might there grow good,
But I remaine a poyson'd fountaine still;
But not your beauty, vertue, knowledge, blood 55
Are more above all flattery, then my will.

And if I flatter any, 'tis not you
But my owne judgement, who did long agoe
Pronounce, that all these praises should be true,
And vertue should your beauty, 'and birth outgrow. 60

Now that my propheties are all fulfill'd,
Rather then God should not be honour'd too,
And all these gifts confess'd, which hee instill'd,
Your selfe were bound to say that which I doe.

So I, but your Recorder am in this, 65
Or mouth, or Speaker of the universe,
A ministeriall Notary, for 'tis
Not I, but you and fame, that make this verse;

I was your Prophet in your yonger dayes,
And now your Chaplaine, God in you to praise. 70

To Mr T. W.

All haile sweet Poët, more full of more strong fire,
Then hath or shall enkindle any spirit,
I lov'd what nature gave thee, but this merit
Of wit and Art I love not but admire;
Who have before or shall write after thee, 5
Their workes, though toughly laboured, will bee
Like infancie or age to mans firme stay,
Or earely and late twilights to mid-day.

Men say, and truly, that they better be
Which be envyyed then pittied: therefore I, 10
Because I wish thee best, doe thee envie:
O wouldst thou, by like reason, pittie mee !
But care not for mee: I, that ever was
In Natures, and in Fortunes gifts, (alas,
Before thy grace got in the Muses Schoole) 15
A monster and a begger, am now a foole.

Oh how I grieve, that late borne modesty
Hath got such root in easie waxen hearts,
That men may not themselves, their owne good parts
Extoll, without suspect of surquedrie, 20
For, but thy selfe, no subject can be found
Worthy thy quill, nor any quill resound
Thy worth but thine: how good it were to see
A Poëm in thy praise, and writ by thee.

Now if this song be too 'harsh for rime, yet, as 25
The Painters bad god made a good devill,
'Twill be good prose, although the verse be evill,
If thou forget the rime as thou dost passe.
Then write, that I may follow, and so bee
Thy debter, thy 'eccho, thy foyle, thy zanee. 30
I shall be thought, if mine like thine I shape,
All the worlds Lyon, though I be thy Ape.

To Mr T. W.

Hast thee harsh verse, as fast as thy lame measure
 Will give thee leave, to him, my pain and pleasure.
 I have given thee, and yet thou art too weake,
 Feete, and a reasoning soule and tongue to speake.
 Plead for me, and so by thine and my labour 5
 I am thy Creator, thou my Saviour.
 Tell him, all questions, which men have defended
 Both of the place and paines of hell, are ended;
 And 'tis decreed our hell is but privation
 Of him, at least in this earths habitation: 10
 And 'tis where I am, where in every street
 Infections follow, overtake, and meete:
 Live I or die, by you my love is sent,
 And you're my pawnes, or else my Testament.

To Mr T. W.

Pregnant again with th'old twins Hope, and Feare,
 Oft have I askt for thee, both how and where
 Thou wert, and what my hopes of letters were;

As in our streets sly beggers narrowly
 Watch motions of the givers hand and eye, 5
 And evermore conceive some hope thereby.

And now thy Almes is given, thy letter's read,
 The body risen againe, the which was dead,
 And thy poore starveling bountifully fed.

After this banquet my Soule doth say grace, 10
 And praise thee for't, and zealously imbrace
 Thy love; though I thinke thy love in this case
 To be as gluttons, which say 'midst their meat,
 They love that best of which they most do eat.

To Mr T. W.

At once, from hence, my lines and I depart,
I to my soft still walks, they to my Heart;
I to the Nurse, they to the child of Art;

Yet as a firme house, though the Carpenter
Perish, doth stand: As an Embassadour
Lyes safe, how e'r his king be in danger:

5

So, though I languish, prest with Melancholy,
My verse, the strict Map of my misery,
Shall live to see that, for whose want I dye.

Therefore I envie them, and doe repent,
That from unhappy mee, things happy'are sent;
Yet as a Picture, or bare Sacrament,
Accept these lines, and if in them there be
Merit of love, bestow that love on mee.

10

To Mr R. W

Zealously my Muse doth salute all thee,
Enquiring of that mistique trinitee
Whereof thou,'and all to whom heavens do infuse
Like fyer, are made; thy body, mind, and Muse.
Dost thou recover sicknes, or prevent?
Or is thy Mind travail'd with discontent?
Or art thou parted from the world and mee,
In a good skorn of the worlds vanitee?
Or is thy devout Muse retyr'd to sing
Upon her tender Elegiaque string?
Our Minds part not, joyne then thy Muse with myne,
For myne is barren thus devore'd from thyne.

5

10

To Mr R. W.

Muse not that by thy mind thy body is led:
For by thy mind, my mind's distempered.
So thy Care lives long, for I bearing part
It eates not only thyne, but my swolne heart.
And when it gives us intermission 5
We take new harts for it to feede upon.
But as a Lay Mans Genius doth controule
Body and mind; the Muse beeing the Soules Soule
Of Poets, that methinks should ease our anguish,
Although our bodyes wither and minds languish. 10
Write then, that my griefes which thine got may bee
Cur'd by thy charming soveraigne melodee.

To Mr C. B.

Thy friend, whom thy deserts to thee enchainē,
Urg'd by this unexcusable occasion,
Thee and the Saint of his affection
Leaving behinde, doth of both wants complaine;
And let the love I beare to both sustaine 5
No blott nor maimē by this division,
Strong is this love which ties our hearts in one,
And strong that love pursu'd with amorous painē;
But though besides thy selfe I leave behind
Heavens liberall, and earths thrice-fairer Sunne, 10
Going to where sterne winter aye doth wonne,
Yet, loves hot fires, which martyr my sad minde,
Doe send forth scalding sighes, which have the Art
To melt all Ice, but that which walls her heart.

To Mr E. G.

Even as lame things thirst their perfection, so
 The slimy rimes bred in our vale below,
 Bearing with them much of my love and hart,
 Fly unto that Parnassus, where thou art.
 There thou oreseest London: Here I have beene, 5
 By staying in London, too much overseene.
 Now pleasures dearth our City doth posses,
 Our Theaters are fill'd with emptines;
 As lancke and thin is every street and way
 As a woman deliver'd yesterday. 10
 Nothing whereat to laugh my spleen espyes
 But bearbaitings or Law exercise.
 Therefore I'll leave it, and in the Country strive
 Pleasure, now fled from London, to retrieve.
 Do thou so too: and fill not like a Bee 15
 Thy thighs with hony, but as plenteously
 As Russian Marchants, thy selves whole vessell load,
 And then at Winter retaille it here abroad.
 Blesse us with Suffolks sweets; and as it is
 Thy garden, make thy hive and warehouse this. 20

To Mr R. W.

If, as mine is, thy life a slumber be,
 Seeme, when thou read'st these lines, to dreame of me,
 Never did Morpheus nor his brother weare
 Shapes soe like those Shapes, whom they would appeare,
 As this my letter is like me, for it
 Hath my name, words, hand, feet, heart, minde and wit;
 It is my deed of gift of mee to thee,
 It is my Will, my selfe the Legacie.
 So thy retyrings I love, yea envie,
 Bred in thee by a wise melancholy, 10
 That I rejoyce, that unto where thou art,
 Though I stay here, I can thus send my heart,
 As kindly'as any enamored Patient
 His Picture to his absent Love hath sent.

All newes I thinke sooner reach thee then mee; 15
 Havens are Heavens, and Ships wing'd Angels be,
 The which both Gospell, and sterne threatnings bring;
 Guyanaes harvest is nip'd in the spring,
 I feare; And with us (me thinkes) Fate deales so
 As with the Jewes guide God did; he did show 20
 Him the rich land, but bar'd his entry in:
 Oh, slownes is our punishment and sinne.
 Perchance, these Spanish businesse being done,
 Which as the Earth betweene the Moone and Sun
 Eclipse the light which Guyana would give, 25
 Our discontinued hopes we shall retrive:
 But if (as all th'All must) hopes smoake away,
 Is not Almightye Vertue'an India?

 If men be worlds, there is in every one
 Some thing to answere in some proportion 30
 All the worlds riches: And in good men, this,
 Vertue, our formes forme and our soules soule, is.

To Mr R. W.

Kindly I envy thy songs perfection
 Built of all th'elements as our bodyes are:
 That Litle of earth that is in it, is a faire
 Delicious garden where all sweetes are sowne.
 In it is cherishing fyre which dryes in mee 5
 Griefe which did drowne me: and halfe quench'd by it
 Are satirique fyres which urg'd me to have writt
 In skorne of all: for now I admyre thee.
 And as Ayre doth fullfill the hollownes
 Of rotten walls; so it myne emptines, 10
 Where tost and mov'd it did beget this sound
 Which as a lame Eccho of thyne doth rebound.
 Oh, I was dead; but since thy song new Life did give,
 I recreated, even by thy creature, live.

To Mr S. B.

O Thou which to search out the secret parts
Of the India, or rather Paradise
Of knowledge, hast with courage and advise
Lately launch'd into the vast Sea of Arts,
Disdaine not in thy constant travailing 5
To doe as other Voyagers, and make
Some turnes into lesse Creekes, and wisely take
Fresh water at the Heliconian spring;
I sing not, Siren like, to tempt; for I
Am harsh; nor as those Scismatiques with you, 10
Which draw all wits of good hope to their crew;
But seeing in you bright sparkes of Poetry,
I, though I brought no fuell, had desire
With these Articulate blasts to blow the fire.

To Mr I. L.

Of that short Roll of friends writ in my heart
Which with thy name begins, since their depart,
Whether in the English Provinces they be,
Or drinke of Po, Sequan, or Danubie,
There's none that sometimes greets us not, and yet 5
Your Trent is Lethe; that past, us you forget.
You doe not duties of Societies,
If from the'embrace of a lov'd wife you rise,
View your fat Beasts, stretch'd Barnes, and labour'd fields,
Eate, play, ryde, take all joyes which all day yeelds, 10
And then againe to your embracements goe:
Some houres on us your friends, and some bestow
Upon your Muse, else both wee shall repent,
I that my love, she that her guifts on you are spent.

To Mr B. B.

Is not thy sacred hunger of science
Yet satisfy'd? Is not thy braines rich hive
Fulfil'd with hony which thou dost derive
From the Arts spirits and their Quintessence?
Then weane thy selfe at last, and thee withdraw 5
From Cambridge thy old nurse, and, as the rest,
Here toughly chew, and sturdily digest
Th'immense vast volumes of our common law;
And begin soone, lest my grieve grieve thee too,
Which is, that that which I should have begun 10
In my youthes morning, now late must be done;
And I as Giddy Travellers must doe,
Which stray or sleepe all day, and having lost
Light and strength, darke and tir'd must then ride post.

If thou unto thy Muse be married, 15
Embrace her ever, ever multiply,
Be far from me that strange Adulterie
To tempt thee and procure her widowed.
My Muse, (for I had one,) because I'am cold,
Divorc'd her selfe: the cause being in me, 20
That I can take no new in Bigamye,
Not my will only but power doth withhold.
Hence comes it, that these Rymes which never had
Mother, want matter, and they only have
A little forme, the which their Father gave; 25
They are prophane, imperfect, oh, too bad
To be counted Children of Poetry
Except confirm'd and Bishoped by thee.

To Mr I. L.

Blest are your North parts, for all this long time
 My Sun is with you, cold and darke's our Clime;
 Heavens Sun, which staid so long from us this yeare,
 Staid in your North (I thinke) for she was there,
 And hether by kinde nature drawne from thence, 5
 Here rages, chafes, and threatens pestilence;
 Yet I, as long as shee from hence doth staie,
 Thinke this no South, no Sommer, nor no day.
 With thee my kinde and unkinde heart is run,
 There sacrifice it to that beauteous Sun: 10
 And since thou art in Paradise and need'st crave
 No joyes addition, helpe thy friend to save.
 So may thy pastures with their flowery feasts,
 As suddenly as Lard, fat thy leane beasts;
 So may thy woods oft poll'd, yet ever weare 15
 A greene, and when thee list, a golden haire;
 So may all thy sheepe bring forth Twins; and so
 In chace and race may thy horse all out goe;
 So may thy love and courage ne'r be cold;
 Thy Sonne ne'r Ward; Thy lov'd wife ne'r seem old;
 But maist thou wish great things, and them attaine,
 As thou telst her, and none but her, my paine.

To Sir H. W. at his going Ambassador to Venice

After those reverend papers, whose soule is
 Our good and great Kings lov'd hand and fear'd name,
 By which to you he derives much of his,
 And (how he may) makes you almost the same,

A Taper of his Torch, a copie writ 5
 From his Originall, and a faire beame
 Of the same warme, and dazeling Sun, though it
 Must in another Sphere his vertue streame:

After those learned papers which your hand
Hath stor'd with notes of use and pleasure too, 10
From which rich treasury you may command
Fit matter whether you will write or doe:

After those loving papers, where friends send
With glad griefe, to your Sea-ward steps, farewell,
Which thicken on you now, as prayers ascend 15
To heaven in troupes at'a good mans passing bell:

Admit this honest paper, and allow
It such an audience as your selfe would aske;
What you must say at Venice this meanes now,
And hath for nature, what you have for taske: 20

To sweare much love, not to be chang'd before
Honour alone will to your fortune fit;
Nor shall I then honour your fortune, more
Then I have done your honour wanting it.

But 'tis an easier load (though both oppresse) 25
To want, then governe greatnesse, for wee are
In that, our owne and onely businesse,
In this, wee must for others vices care;

'Tis therefore well your spirits now are plac'd
In their last Furnace, in activity; 30
Which fits them (Schooles and Courts and Warres o'rpast)
To touch and test in any best degree.

For mee, (if there be such a thing as I)
Fortune (if there be such a thing as shee)
Spies that I beare so well her tyranny, 35
That she thinks nothing else so fit for mee;

But though she part us, to heare my oft prayers
For your increase, God is as neere mee here;
And to send you what I shall begge, his staires
In length and ease are alike every where. 40

To Mrs M. H.

Mad paper stay, and grudge not here to burne
With all those sonnes whom my braine did create,
At lest lye hid with mee, till thou returne
To rags againe, which is thy native state.

What though thou have enough unworthinesse 5
To come unto great place as others doe,
That's much; emboldens, pulls, thrusts I confesse,
But 'tis not all; Thou should'st be wicked too.

And, that thou canst not learne, or not of mee;
Yet thou wilt goe? Goe, since thou goest to her 10
Who lacks but faults to be a Prince, for shee,
Truth, whom they dare not pardon, dares preferre.

But when thou com'st to that perplexing eye
Which equally claimes *love* and *reverence*,
Thou wilt not long dispute it, thou wilt die; 15
And, having little now, have then no sense.

Yet when her warme redeeming hand, which is
A miracle; and made such to worke more,
Doth touch thee (saples leafe) thou grow'st by this
Her creature; glorify'd more then before. 20

Then as a mother which delights to heare
Her early child mis-speake halfe uttered words,
Or, because majesty doth never feare
Ill or bold speech, she Audience affords.

And then, cold speechlesse wretch, thou diest againe, 25
And wisely; what discourse is left for thee?
For, speech of ill, and her, thou must abstaine,
And is there any good which is not shee?

Yet maist thou praise her servants, though not her,
And wit, and vertue, and honour her attend, 30
And since they're but her cloathes, thou shalt not erre,
If thou her shape and beauty and grace commend.

Who knows thy destiny? when thou hast done,
 Perchance her Cabinet may harbour thee,
 Whither all noble ambitious wits doe runne, 35
 A nest almost as full of Good as shee.

When thou art there, if any, whom wee know,
 Were sav'd before, and did that heaven partake,
 When she revolves his papers, marke what show 40
 Of favour, she alone, to them doth make.

Marke, if to get them, she o'r skip the rest,
 Marke, if shee read them twice, or kisse the name;
 Marke, if she doe the same that they protest,
 Marke, if she marke whether her woman came.

Marke, if slight things be'objected, and o'r blowne, 45
 Marke, if her oathes against him be not still
 Reserv'd, and that shee grieves she's not her owne,
 And chides the doctrine that denies Freewill.

I bid thee not doe this to be my spie;
 Nor to make my selfe her familiar; 50
 But so much I doe love her choyce, that I
 Would faine love him that shall be lov'd of her.

To the Countesse of Bedford

Honour is so sublime perfection,
 And so refinde; that when God was alone
 And creaturelesse at first, himselfe had none;

But as of the elements, these which wee tread,
 Produce all things with which wee'are joy'd or fed, 5
 And, those are barren both above our head:

So from low persons doth all honour flow;
 Kings, whom they would have honoured, to us show,
 And but *direct* our honour, not *bestow*.

For when from herbs the pure part must be wonne 10
From grosse, by Stilling, this is better done
By despis'd dung, then by the fire or Sunne.

Care not then, Madame, 'how low your prayzers lye;
In labourers balads oft more piety
God findes, then in *Te Deums* melodie. 15

And, ordinance rais'd on Towers, so many mile
Send not their voice, nor last so long a while
As fires from th'earths low vaults in *Sicil* Isle.

Should I say I liv'd darker then were true,
Your radiation can all clouds subdue; 20
But one, 'tis best light to contemplate you.

You, for whose body God made better clay,
Or tooke Soules stuffe such as shall late decay,
Or such as needs small change at the last day.

This, as an Amber drop enwraps a Bee, 25
Covering discovers your quicke Soule; that we
May in your through-shine front your hearts thoughts see.

You teach (though wee learne not) a thing unknowne
To our late times, the use of specular stone,
Through which all things within without were shown. 30

Of such were Temples; so and of such you are;
Beeing and *seeming* is your equall care,
And *vertues* whole *summe* is but *know* and *dare*.

But as our Soules of growth and Soules of sense
Have birthright of our reasons Soule, yet hence 35
They fly not from that, nor seeke presidence:

Natures first lesson, so, discretion,
Must not grudge zeale a place, nor yet keepe none,
Not banish it selfe, nor religion.

Discretion is a wisemans Soule, and so 40
 Religion is a Christians, and you know
 How these are one; her yea, is not her no.

Nor may we hope to sodder still and knit
 These two, and dare to breake them; nor must wit
 Be colleague to religion, but be it. 45

In those poor types of God (round circles) so
 Religions tipes, the peecelesse centers flow,
 And are in all the lines which all wayes goe.

If either ever wrought in you alone
 Or principally, then religion 50
 Wrought your ends, and your wayes discretion.

Goe thither still, goe the same way you went,
 Who so would change, do covet or repent;
 Neither can reach you, great and innocent.

To the Countesse of Huntington

That unripe side of earth, that heavy clime
 That gives us man up now; like *Adams* time
 Before he ate; mans shape, that would yet bee
 (Knew they not it, and fear'd beasts companie)
 So naked at this day, as though man there 5
 From Paradise so great a distance were,
 As yet the newes could not arrived bee
 Of *Adams* tasting the forbidden tree;
 Depriv'd of that free state which they were in,
 And wanting the reward, yet beare the sinne. 10

But, as from extreme hights who downward looks,
 Sees men at childrens shapes, Rivers at brookes,
 And loseth younger formes; so, to your eye,
 These (*Madame*) that without your distance lie,
 Must either mist, or nothing seeme to be, 15
 Who are at home but wits mere *Atomi*.
 But, I who can behold them move, and stay,

Have found my selfe to you, just their midway;
 And now must pittie them; for, as they doe
 Seeme sick to me, just so must I to you. 20
 Yet neither will I vexe your eyes to see
 A sighing Ode, nor crosse-arm'd Elegie.
 I come not to call pittie from your heart,
 Like some white-liver'd dotard that would part
 Else from his slipperie soule with a faint groane, 25
 And faithfully, (without you smil'd) were gone.
 I cannot feele the tempest of a frowne,
 I may be rais'd by love, but not throwne down.
 Though I can pittie those sigh twice a day,
 I hate that thing whispers it selfe away. 30
 Yet since all love is fever, who to trees
 Doth talke, doth yet in loves cold ague freeze.
 'Tis love, but, with such fatall weaknesse made,
 That it destroyes it selfe with its owne shade.
 Who first look'd sad, griev'd, pin'd, and shew'd his paine,
 Was he that first taught women, to disdaine.

As all things were one nothing, dull and weake,
 Untill this raw disordered heape did breake,
 And severall desires led parts away,
 Water declin'd with earth, the ayre did stay, 40
 Fire rose, and each from other but unty'd,
 Themselves unprison'd were and purify'd:
 So was love, first in vast confusion hid,
 An unripe willingnesse which nothing did,
 A thirst, an Appetite which had no ease, 45
 That found a want, but knew not what would please.
 What pretty innocence in those dayes mov'd?
 Man ignorantly walk'd by her he lov'd;
 Both sigh'd and enterchang'd a speaking eye,
 Both trembled and were sick, both knew not why. 50
 That naturall fearefulnesse that struck man dumbe,
 Might well (those times consider'd) man become.
 As all discoverers whose first assay
 Findes but the place, after, the nearest way:
 So passion is to womans love, about, 55
 Nay, farther off, than when we first set out.
 It is not love that sueth, or doth contend;

Love either conquers, or but meets a friend.
 Man's better part consists of purer fire,
 And findes it selfe allow'd, ere it desire. 60
 Love is wise here, keepes home, gives reason sway,
 And Journeys not till it finde summer-way.
 A weather-beaten Lover but once knowne,
 Is sport for every girle to practise on.
 Who strives through womans scornes, women to know, 65
 Is lost, and seekes his shadow to outgoe;
 It must bee sicknesse, after one disdaine,
 Though he be call'd aloud, to looke againe.
 Let others sigh, and grieve; one cunning sleight
 Shall freeze my Love to Christall in a night. 70
 I can love first, and (if I winne) love still;
 And cannot be remov'd, unlesse she will.
 It is her fault if I unsure remaine,
 Shee onely can untie, and binde againe.
 The honesties of love with ease I doe, 75
 But am no porter for a tedious woo.

But (madame) I now thinke on you; and here
 Where we are at our hights, you but appeare,
 We are but clouds you rise from, our noone-ray
 But a foule shadow, not your breake of day. 80
 You are at first hand all that's faire and right,
 And others good reflects but backe your light.
 You are a perfectnesse, so curious hit,
 That youngest flatteries doe scandall it.
 For, what is more doth what you are restraine, 85
 And though beyond, is downe the hill againe.
 We have no next way to you, we crosse to it:
 You are the straight line, thing prais'd, attribute;
 Each good in you's a light; so many a shade
 You make, and in them are your motions made. 90
 These are your pictures to the life. From farre
 We see you move, and here your Zani's are:
 So that no fountaine good there is, doth grow
 In you, but our dimme actions faintly shew.

Then finde I, if mans noblest part be love, 95
 Your purest luster must that shadow move.
 The soule with body, is a heaven combin'd

With earth, and for mans ease, but nearer joyn'd.
 Where thoughts the starres of soule we understand,
 We guesse not their large natures, but command. 100
 And love in you, that bountie is of light,
 That gives to all, and yet hath infinite.
 Whose heat doth force us thither to intend,
 But soule we finde too earthly to ascend,
 'Till slow accesse hath made it wholly pure, 105
 Able immortall clearnesse to endure.
 Who dare aspire this journey with a staine,
 Hath waight will force him headlong backe againe.
 No more can impure man retaine and move
 In that pure region of a worthy love: 110
 Then earthly substance can unforc'd aspire,
 And leave his nature to converse with fire:
 Such may have eye, and hand; may sigh, may speak;
 But like swoln bubbles, when they are high'st they break.
 Though far removed Northerne fleets scarce finde 115
 The Sunnes comfort; others thinke him too kinde.
 There is an equall distance from her eye,
 Men perish too farre off, and burne too nigh.
 But as ayre takes the Sunne-beames equall bright
 From the first Rayes, to his last opposite: 120
 So able men, blest with a vertuous Love,
 Remote or neare, or howsoe'r they move;
 Their vertue breakes all clouds that might annoy,
 There is no Emptinesse, but all is Ioy.
 He much profanes whom violent heats do move 125
 To stile his wandering rage of passion, Love:
 Love that imparts in every thing delight,
 Is fain'd, which only tempts mans appetite.
 Why love among the vertues is not knowne
 Is, that love is them all contract in one. 130

To the Countesse of Bedford

Begun in France but never perfected

Though I be *dead*, and buried, yet I have
 (Living in you,) Court enough in my grave,
 As oft as there I thinke my selfe to bee,
 So many resurrections waken mee.
 That thankfullnesse your favours have begot 5
 In mee, embalmes mee, that I doe not rot.
 This season as 'tis Easter, as 'tis spring,
 Must both to growth and to confession bring
 My thoughts dispos'd unto your influence; so,
 These verses bud, so these confessions grow. 10
 First I confesse I have to others lent
 Your stock, and over prodigally spent
 Your treasure, for since I had never knowne
 Vertue or beautie, but as they are growne
 In you, I should not thinke or say they shine, 15
 (So as I have) in any other Mine.
 Next I confesse this my confession,
 For, 'tis some fault thus much to touch upon
 Your praise to you, where half rights seeme too much,
 And make your minds sincere complexion blush. 20
 Next I confesse my'impenitence, for I
 Can scarce repent my first fault, since thereby
 Remote low Spirits, which shall ne'r read you,
 May in lesse lessons finde enough to doe,
 By studying copies, not Originals, 25
Desunt cætera

*Letter to the Lady Carey, and Mrs Essex Riche,
From Amyens*

MADAME,

Here where by All All Saints invoked are,
'Twere too much schisme to be singular,
And 'gainst a practise generall to warre.

Yet turning to Saincts, should my'humility
To other Saint then you directed bee,
That were to make my schisme, heresie.

5

Nor would I be a Convertite so cold,
As not to tell it; If this be too bold,
Pardons are in this market cheaply sold.

Where, because Faith is in too low degree,
I thought it some Apostleship in mee
To speake things which by faith alone I see.

10

That is, of you, who are a firmament
Of virtues, where no one is growne, or spent,
They're your materials, not your ornament.

15

Others whom wee call vertuous, are not so
In their whole substance, but, their vertues grow
But in their humours, and at seasons show.

For when through tastlesse flat humilitie
In dow bak'd men some harmelessenes we see,
'Tis but his *flegme* that's *Virtuous*, and not Hee:

20

Soe is the Blood sometimes; who ever ran
To danger unimportun'd, he was than
No better then a *sanguine* Vertuous man.

So cloysterall men, who, in pretence of feare
All contributions to this life forbear,
Have Vertue in *Melancholy*, and only there.

25

Spirituell *Cholerique* Crytiques, which in all
Religions find faults, and forgive no fall,
Have, through this zeale, Vertue but in their Gall. 30

We're thus but parcel guilt; to Gold we're growne
When Vertue is our Soules complexion;
Who knowes his Vertues name or place, hath none.

Vertue's but aguish, when 'tis severall,
By occasion wak'd, and circumstantiall. 35
True vertue is *Soule*, Alwaies in all deeds *All*.

This Vertue thinking to give dignitie
To your soule, found there no infirmitie,
For, your soule was as good Vertue, as shee;

Shee therefore wrought upon that part of you 40
Which is scarce lesse then soule, as she could do,
And so hath made your beauty, Vertue too.

Hence comes it, that your Beauty wounds not hearts,
As Others, with prophane and sensuall Darts,
But as an influence, vertuous thoughts imparts. 45

But if such friends by the honor of your sight
Grow capable of this so great a light,
As to partake your vertues, and their might,

What must I thinke that influence must doe,
Where it findes sympathie and matter too, 50
Vertue, and beauty of the same stuffe, as you?

Which is, your noble worthie sister, shee
Of whom, if what in this my Extasie
And revelation of you both I see,

I should write here, as in short Galleries 55
The Master at the end large glasses ties,
So to present the roome twice to our eyes,

So I should give this letter length, and say
 That which I said of you; there is no way
 From either, but by the other, not to stray. 60

May therefore this be enough to testifie
 My true devotion, free from flattery;
 He that beleeves himselfe, doth never lie.

To the Countesse of Salisbury. August. 1614

Faire, great, and good, since seeing you, wee see
 What Heaven can doe, and what any Earth can be:
 Since now your beauty shines, now when the Sunne
 Growne stale, is to so low a value runne,
 That his disshevel'd beames and scattered fires 5
 Serve but for Ladies Periwigs and Tyres
 In lovers Sonnets: you come to repaire
 Gods booke of creatures, teaching what is faire.
 Since now, when all is withered, shrunke, and dri'd,
 All Vertues ebb'd out to a dead low tyde, 10
 All the worlds frame being crumbled into sand,
 Where every man thinks by himselfe to stand,
 Integrity, friendship, and confidence,
 (Ciments of greatnes) being vapor'd hence,
 And narrow man being fill'd with little shares, 15
 Court, Citie, Church, are all shops of small-wares,
 All having blowne to sparkes their noble fire,
 And drawne their sound gold-ingot into wyre;
 All trying by a love of littlenesse
 To make abridgments, and to draw to lesse, 20
 Even that nothing, which at first we were;
 Since in these times, your greatnesse doth appeare,
 And that we learne by it, that man to get
 Towards him that's infinite, must first be great.
 Since in an age so ill, as none is fit 25
 So much as to accuse, must lesse mend it,
 (For who can judge, or witnesse of those times
 Where all alike are guiltie of the crimes?)

Where he that would be good, is thought by all
 A monster, or at best fantasticall; 30
 Since now you durst be good, and that I doe
 Discerne, by daring to contemplate you,
 That there may be degrees of faire, great, good,
 Through your light, largenesse, vertue understood:
 If in this sacrifice of mine, be showne 35
 Any small sparke of these, call it your owne.
 And if things like these, have been said by mee
 Of others; call not that Idolatrie.
 For had God made man first, and man had seene
 The third daies fruits, and flowers, and various greene, 40
 He might have said the best that he could say
 Of those faire creatures, which were made that day;
 And when next day he had admir'd the birth
 Of Sun, Moone, Stars, fairer then late-prais'd earth,
 Hee might have said the best that he could say, 45
 And not be chid for praising yesterday;
 So though some things are not together true,
 As, that another is worthiest, and, that you:
 Yet, to say so, doth not condemne a man,
 If when he spoke them, they were both true than. 50
 How faire a prooffe of this, in our soule growes?
 Wee first have soules of growth, and sense, and those,
 When our last soule, our soule immortall came,
 Were swallowed into it, and have no name.
 Nor doth he injure those soules, which doth cast 55
 The power and praise of both them, on the last;
 No more doe I wrong any; I adore
 The same things now, which I ador'd before,
 The subject chang'd, and measure; the same thing
 In a low constable, and in the King 60
 I reverence; His power to work on mee:
 So did I humbly reverence each degree
 Of faire, great, good; but more, now I am come
 From having found their *walkes*, to find their *home*.
 And as I owe my first soules thanks, that they 65
 For my last soule did fit and mould my clay,
 So am I debtor unto them, whose worth,
 Enabled me to profit, and take forth

This new great lesson, thus to study you;
 Which none, not reading others, first, could doe. 70
 Nor lacke I light to read this booke, though I
 In a darke Cave, yea in a Grave doe lie;
 For as your fellow Angells, so you doe
 Illustrate them who come to study you.
 The first whom we in Histories doe finde 75
 To have profest all Arts, was one borne blinde:
 He lackt those eyes beasts have as well as wee,
 Not those, by which Angels are seene and see;
 So, though I'am borne without those eyes to live,
 Which fortune, who hath none her selfe, doth give, 80
 Which are, fit meanes to see bright courts and you,
 Yet may I see you thus, as now I doe;
 I shall by that, all goodnesse have discern'd,
 And though I burne my librarie, be learn'd.

To the Lady Bedford

You that are she and you, that's double shee,
 In her dead face, halfe of your selfe shall see;
 Shee was the other part, for so they doe
 Which build them friendships, become one of two;
 So two, that but themselves no third can fit, 5
 Which were to be so, when they were not yet;
 Twinnes, though their birth *Cusco*, and *Musco* take,
 As divers starres one Constellation make;
 Pair'd like two eyes, have equall motion, so
 Both but one meanes to see, one way to goe. 10
 Had you dy'd first, a carcasse shee had beene;
 And wee your rich Tombe in her face had seene;
 She like the Soule is gone, and you here stay,
 Not a live friend; but th'other halfe of clay.
 And since you act that part, As men say, here 15
 Lies such a Prince, when but one part is there,
 And do all honour and devotion due
 Unto the whole, so wee all reverence you;
 For, such a friendship who would not adore
 In you, who are all what both were before, 20

Not all, as if some perished by this,
But so, as all in you contracted is.
As of this all, though many parts decay,
The pure which elemented them shall stay;
And though diffus'd, and spread in infinite, 25
Shall recollect, and in one All unite:
So madame, as her Soule to heaven is fled,
Her flesh rests in the earth, as in the bed;
Her vertues do, as to their proper spheare,
Returne to dwell with you, of whom they were: 30
As perfect motions are all circular,
So they to you, their sea, whence lesse streames are.
Shee was all spices, you all metalls; so
In you two wee did both rich Indies know.
And as no fire, nor rust can spend or waste 35
One dramme of gold, but what was first shall last,
Though it bee forc'd in water, earth, salt, aire,
Expans'd in infinite, none will impaire;
So, to your selfe you may additions take,
But nothing can you lesse, or changed make. 40
Seeke not in seeking new, to seeme to doubt,
That you can match her, or not be without;
But let some faithfull booke in her roome be,
Yet but of *Judith* no such booke as shee.