

A DISCOURSE
OF LIFE AND
DEATH.

Written in French by Phil.
Mornay.

Done in English by the Countess of Pembroke.



AT LONDON,
Printed for William Ponsonby.

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*death, written in French by Phil.
Mornay, Sieur du Plessis
Marly.*



IT seemes to me strange,
and a thing much to be
marueiled, that the labo-
rer to repose himselfe
halsteneth as it were the course of
the Sunne : that the Mariner rowes
with all force to attaine the port, &
with a ioyfull crie salutes the des-
cried land: that the traueller is neuer
quiet nor content till he be at the
end of his voyage : & that we in the
meane while tied in this world to a
perpetuall taske, tossed with conti-
nuall tempest, tyred with a rough &

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combersome way, canot yet see the end of our labour but with griefe, nor behold our port but with teares, nor approch our hōme and quiet abode but with horrour and trembling . This life is but a *Penelopes* web, wherin we are alwayes doing & vndoing: a sea open to all winds, which sometime within , sometime without neuer cease to torment vs: a wearie iourney through extreame heats, and colds , ouer high mountaines, steepe rockes, and thecuish deserts . And so we terme it in weaving at this web , in rowing at this care , in passing this miserable way. Yet loe when death comes to end our worke, whē she stretcheth out her armes to pull vs into the port, when after so many dangerous pas- sages , and lothsoime lodgings she would

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would conduct vs to our true hōme and resting place: in steede of reioy- cing at the end of our labour , of ta- king cōfort at the sight of our land, of singing at the approch of our happie mansion , we would faine, (who would beleue it?) retake our worke in hand , we would againe hoise saile to the wind, and willing- ly vndertake our iourney anew. No more thē remember we our paines, our shipwracks & dangers are for- gotten : we feare no more the tra- uailes nor the theeuies. Cōtrariwise, we apprehēd death as an extreame paine, we doubt it as a rocke, we flie it as a thiefe: We do as litle childrē, who all the day complaine, & when the medicine is brought them , are no longer sicke: as they who all the weeke long runne vp & downe the

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streetes with paine of the teeth, and
seeing the Barber comming to pull
them out , feele no more paine : as
those tender & delicate bodies, who
in a pricking pleurisie complaine,
crie out , and cannot stay for a Sur-
gion, and when they see him whet-
ting his Launcet to cut the throate
of the disease, pull in their armes, &
hide them in the bed , as if he were
come to kill them . We feare more
the cure then the disease, the Surgi-
on the paine, the stroke then the
impostume. We haue more sence of
the medicines bitternesse soone
gone, the of a bitter lāguishing long
continued: more feeling of death
the end of our miseries , then the
endlesse miserie of our life . And
whence proceedeth this follie and
simplicitie? we neither know life,

nor

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nor death. We feare that we ought
to hope for , and wish for that we
ought to feare . We call life a conti-
nuall death : and death the issue of a
liuing death , and the entrance of a
neuer dying life. Now what good,
I pray you, is there in life , that we
should so much pursue it? or what
euil is there in death, that we should
so much eschue it ? Nay what euill
is there not in life ? and what good
is there not in death ? Consider all
the periods of this life . We enter it
in teares, we passe it in sweate , we
endit in sorow. Great and litle, rich
and poore , not one in the whole
world, that cāpleade immunitie frō
this cōdition. Mā in this point worse
then all other creatures , is borne
vnable to support himselfe : neither
receiuing in his first yeares any plea-

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sure, nor giuing to others but annoy
and displeasure, & before the age of
discretion passing infinite dangers.
Onely herein lesse vnhappie then in
other ages , that he hath no sence
nor apprehension of his vnhappi-
nesse . Now is there any so weake
minded , that if it were granted him
to liue alwayes a child, would make
account of such a life ? So then it is
evident that not simplie to liue is a
good , but well and happily to liue.
But proceede . Growes he? with
him grow his trauailes . Scarcely
is he come out of his nurses hands,
scarcely knowes what it isto play,
but he falleth into the subiectiōn of
some Schoolemaister : I speake but
of those which are best and most
precisely brought vp. Studies he? it
is euer with repining. Playes he? ne-

uer

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uer but with feare. This whole age
while he is vnder the charge of ano-
ther, is vnto him but as a prison. He
onely thinkes , and onely aspires to
that time when freed from the ma-
stership of another, he may become
maister of himself: pushing onward
(as much as in him lies) his age with
his shoulder, that soone he may en-
joy his hoped libertie . In shoit, he
desires nothing more then the end
of this base age , and the beginning
of his youth . And what else I pray
you is the beginning of youth , but
the death of infancie? the beginning
of manhood, but the death of youth?
the beginning of to morow , but
the death of to day? In this sort the
desires he his death, and iudgeth his
life miserable : and so cannot be re-
puted in any happiness or contēt-

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ment. Behold him now, according to his wyl, at libertie: in that age, wherein *Hercules* had the choise, to take the way of vertue or of vice, reason or passion for his guide, and of these two must take one. His passion entertaines him with a thousand delights, prepares for him a thousand bates, presents him with a thousand worldly pleasures to surprize him: and few there are that are not beguiled. But at the recknings end, what pleasures are they? pleasures ful of vice which hold him still in a restlesse feauer: pleasures subject to repentance, like sweete meates of hard digestion: pleasures bought with paine and perill, spent and past in a moment, and followed with a long and lothsome remorse of conscience. And this is the very nature

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nature (if they be well examined) of all the pleasures of this world. There is in none so much sweetnes, but there is more bitterness: none so pleasant to the mouth, but leaues an vnsauery after-tast and lothsome disclaine: none (which is worse) so moderated but hath his corosive, & caries his punishment in it selfe. I will not here speake of the displeasures confessed by all, as quarels, debates, woundes, murthers, banishments, sicknesse, perils, whereinto sometimes the incontinencie, sometimes the insolēcie of this ill guided age conductes him. But if those that seeme pleasures, be nothing else but displeasures: if the sweetnesse thereof be as an insulio of wormewood: it is plaine enough what the displeasure is they feele, and how great the

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bitternesse that they tast. Behold in summe the life of a yong man, who rid of the gouernement of his parents and maisters, abandons himselfe to to all libertie or rather bondage of his passion : which right like an vn-cleane spirit possessing him , casts him now into the water , now into the fire : sometimes caries him cleane ouer a rocke , and sometime flings him headlong to the bot-tome . Now if he take and follow reason for his guide , behold on the other part wonderfull difficulties: he must resolute to fight in euery part of the field: at euery step to be in conflict , and at handstrokes , as hauing his enemy in front,in flankes, & on the rearward , neuer leauing to assaile him. And what enemy? all that can delight him,all that he sees

neare,

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neare,or far off: briefly the greatest enemy of the world , the world it self. But which is worse, a thousand treacherous and dangerous intelligences among his owne forces, and his passion within himselfe despe-rate: which in that age growne to the highest,awaits but time, hour, and occasion to surprize him , and cast him into all viciousnesse . God onely & none other , can make him choose this way:God onely can hold him in it to the end : God onely can make him victorious in all his combats. And wel we see how few they are that enter into it , and of those few , how many that retire againe. Follow the one way ,or follow the other,he must either subiect himself to a tyrannical passion,or vndertake a weery and continuall combat,

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willingly cast himself to destrucciō,
or fetter himself as it were in stocks,
easily sincke with the course of the
water, or painfully swimme against
the stremme . Loe here the young
man, who in his youth hath drunke
his full draught of the worlds vaine
and deceiuable pleasures , ouertakē
by them with such a dull heauines,
and astonishment, as drunkards the
morow after a feast: either so out of
cast, that he will no more, or so glut-
ted, that he can no more : not able
without grief to speake, or thinke of
them . Loe him that stoutly hath
made resistance : he feeles himselfe
so weery , and with this continuall
conflict so bruised and broken , that
either he is vpon the point to yeeld
himselfe, or content to dye , and so
acquit himselfe. And this is all the

good.

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good , all the contentment of this
flourishing age, by childrē so earnest-
ly desired, and by old folks so hart-
ily lamented . Now commeth that
which is called perfectage , in the
which we haue no other thoughts,
but to purchase themselves wise-
dome and rest . Perfect indeede, but
herein onely perfect, that all imper-
feccions of humanc nature, hiddē be-
fore vnder the simplicitie of child-
hood, or the lightnesse of youth, ap-
peare at this age in their perfection.
We speake of none in this place but
such as are esteemed the wifest, and
most happy in the conceit of the
world . We played as you haue
seen in feare : our short pleasures
were attended on with long repen-
tance . Behold, now present them-
selues to vs auarice , and ambition,

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promising if we will adore them, perfect contentment of the goods and honors of th s world. And surely there are none, but the true children of the Lord , who by the faire illusions of the one or the other cast not themselues headlong from the top of the pinnacle. But in the end, what is all this contentment ? The couetous man makes a thousand voyages by sea and by land : runnes a thousand fortunes : escapes a thousand shipwrackes in perpetual feare and trauell : and many times he either looseth his time, or gaineth nothing but sicknesses, gouts, and oppilations for the time to come . In the purchase of this goodly repose, he bestoweth his true rest: and to gaine wealth looseth his life . Suppose he hath gained in good quan-

titie:

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titie:that he hath spoyled the whole East of pearles , and drawen dry all the mines of the West: will he therefore be settled in quiet ? can he say that he is content? All charges and iourneys past , by his passed paines he heapeth vp but future disquietnesse both of minde and body:from one trauell falling into another, neuer ending, but changing his miseries . He desired to haue them, and now feares to loose them:he got the with burning ardour, and possesfeth in trembling cold:he aduentured among thecues to seekethem, & having found them, thecues and robbers on all sides , runne mainely on him:he laboured to dig them out of the earth, and now is enforced to redig, and rehide them. Finally coming from all his voiajes he comes

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into a prison : and for an end of his
bodily trauels, is takē with endlesse
trauels of the minde . And what at
length hath this poore soule attai-
ned after so many miseries? This de-
uill of couetise by his illusions , and
enchantments , beares him in hand
that he hath some rare and singular
thing: and so it fareth with him , as
with those sillie creatures , whom
the Deuill seduceth vnder colour of
releeuing their pouertie, who finde
their hands full of leaues, supposing
to finde them full of crownes . He
possesseth or rather is possessed by a
thing , wherein is neither force nor
virtue: more vnprofitable , & more
base , then the least hearbe of the
earth . Yet hath he heaped together
this vile exrement , and so brutish
is growne , as therewith to crowne
his

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his head, which naturally he should
tread vnder his feete . But howsoc-
uer it be , is he therewith content?
Nay contrariwise lesse now, then e-
uer. We commēd most those drinks
that breedē an alteration , & soonest
extinguish thirst : and those meates,
which in least quantitie do longest
resist hunger . Now herof the more
a man drinks, the more he is a thirst,
the more he eats, the more an hun-
gred : It is a dropsie , (and as they
terme it) the dogs hunger : sooner
may he burst then be satisfied . And
which is worse , so straunge in some
is this thirst , that it maketh them
dig the pīes , & painefullly draw the
water, and after wil not suffer them
to drinke . In the middest of a riuer
they are dry with thirst : and on a
heape of corne cry out of famine:

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they haue goods & dare not vse thē: they haue ioyes it seemes , & do not enjoy thē: they neither haue for thē selues , nor for another : but of all they haue, they haue nothing: & yet haue want of all they haue not . Let vs thē retурne to that, that the attaining of all these deceiuable goods is nothing else but weerines of body, & the possessiō for the most part, but weeriness of the minde: which certeinly is so much the greater, as is more sensible, more subtile, & more tēder the soule then the body . But the heape of all miserie is whē they come to loose thē, whē either shipwrack, or sacking, or iuasīō, or fire, or such like calamities , to which these frayle things are subiect, doth take & cary thē fro thē. Thē fal they to cry, to weepe, & to torment them selues,

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selues, as little childrē that haue lost their playgame, which notwithstanding is nothing worth. One cannot periwade thē, that mortall mē haue any other good in this wrold , but that which is mortall . They are in their owne conceits not onely spoiled, but altogether slayed . And for asmuch as in these vaine things they haue fixed al their hope, hauing lost them, they fall into despaire , out of the which commonly they cannot be withdrawen. And which is more, all that they haue not gained according to the accounts they made, they esteeme lost : all that which turnes them not to great and extraordinary profit, they account as damage: whereby we see some fall into such despaire , as they cast away themselues. In short , the recom-

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pence that Couetise yeeldes those
that haue serued it all their life , is
oftentimes like that of the Deuill:
whereof the end is, that after a small
time hauing gratified his disciples,
either he giues them ouer to a hang-
man, or himselfe breaks their necks.
I will not here discourse of the wic-
kednesse and mischiefes whereunto
the couetous men subiect themselues
to attaine to these goods, whereby
their conscience is filled with a per-
petuall remorse, which neuer leaues
them in quiet: sufficeth that in this
ouer vehement exercise, which bu-
sieth and abuseth the greatest part
of the world, the body is slaine, the
minde is weakened, the soule is lost
without any pleasure or content-
ment.

Come we to ambition , which

by

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by a greedinesse of honour fond-
ly holdeth occupied the greatest
persons . Thinke we there to finde
more? nay rather lesse . As the one
deceiueth vs , giuing vs for all our
trauell, but a vile excrement of the
earth : so the other repayes vs ;
but with smoke and winde : the
rewardes of this being as vaine,
as those of that were groſſe . Both
in the one and the other , we fall
into a bottomlesſe pit ; but into
this the fall by so much the more
dangerous , as at the firſt ſhew, the
water is more pleasant and cleare.
Of those that giue themſelues to
court ambition , ſome are great a-
bout Princes , others commanders
of Armies: both ſortes according to
their degree, you ſee ſaluted , reue-
renceſed, and adored of thoſe that are

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vnder them. You see them apparelled in purple, in scarlet, and in cloth of gold: it seenies at first sight there is no contentment in the world but theirs. But me know not how heauy an ounce of that vaine honour weighes, what those reuerences cost them, and how dearely they pay for an ell of those rich stuffes: who knew them well, would never buy them at the price. The one hath attainted to this degree, after a long & painefull seruice hazarding his life vpon euery occasion, with losse oftentimes of a leg or an arme, and that at the pleasure of a Prince, that more regards a hundred perches of ground on his neighbours frōtiers, then the liues of a hundred thousand such as he: vnfortunate to serue who loues him not: and foolish to thinke him-

selfe

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selfe in honor with him, that makes so little reckening to loose him for a thing of no worth. Others grow vp by flattering a Prince, and long submitting their rounings and hands to say and do without difference whatsoeuer they will haue them: whereunto a good mind can neuer commaund it selfe. They shall haue indured a thousand iniuries, received a thousand disgraces, and as neare as they seeme about the Prince, they are neuerthelesse alwayes as the Lions keeper, who by long patiēce, a thousand feedings, and a thousand clawings hath made a fierce Lion familiar, yet giues him neuer meat, but with pulling bische his hand, alwayes in feare least he should catch him: and if once in a yeare he bites him, he sets it so close, that he is paid

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for a long time after. Such is the end
of all Princes fauorites . When a
Prince after long breathings hath
raised a man to great height , he
makes it his pastime , at what time
he seemes to be at the top of his tra-
uell, to cast him down at an instant:
when he hath filled him with all
wealth , he wrings him after as a
sponge : louing none but himselfe,
and thinking euery one made , but
to serue, & please him. These blind
courtiers make themselues beleue,
that they haue friends , and many
that honour them : neuer consid-
ring that as they make semblance
to loue , and honor euery body , so
others do by them. Their superiors
disdaine them , and neuer but with
scorne do so much as salute them.
Their inferiors salute them because

they

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they haue neede of them (I meane
of their fortune , of their foode, of
their apparell , not of their person)
& for their equals betweene whom
commonly friendship consits, they
enuy each other, accuse each other,
crosse each other; continually grie-
ued either at their owne harme , or
at others good . Now what greater
hell is there, what greater torment,
then enuie? which in truth is nougnt
else but a feaute *Heclique* of the
minde : so they are vtterly frustrate
of al iſiendship, euer iudged by the
wifest the chiese and loueraigne
good among men . Will you see it
more clearely ? Let but fortune
turne her backe , euery man turnes
from them : let her frowne , euery
man lookeſ aside on them: let them
once be disroabed of their triun-

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phall garment , no body will any more know them. Againe, let there be apparelled in it the most vnworthy, and infamous whatsoeuer: euen he without difficultie by vertue of his robe, shall inherit all the honors the other had done him . In the meane time they are puffed vp, and grow proude, as the Assc which carried the image of *isis* was for the honors done to the Goddesse , and regard not that it is the fortune they carry which is honored , not them-selues, on whom as on Asses , many times she will be caried . But you will say: At least so long as that fortune endured, they were at ease , & had their cōtentment, & who hath three or 4. or more yeares of happy time, hath not bin all his life vnhappie. True, if this be to be at ease, continually

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tinually to feare to be cast downe from that degree , whereunto they are raised: and dayly to desire with great trauell to clime yet higher. Those (my friend) whom thou takest so well at their ease , because thou seest them but without , are within far otherwise. They are faire built prisons , full within of deepe ditches, and dungeons: full of darke-nesse, serpents and tormentes . Thou supposest them lodged at large, and they thinke their lodgings straite. Thou thinkest them very high , and they thinke themselves verie low. Now as sicke is he, and many times more sicke, who thinkes himself io, then who in deed is . Suppose them to be Kings: if they thinke themselves slaues, they are no better : for what are we but by opinion? You see the

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well followed and attended: and euen those whom they haue chosen for their guard, they distrust. Alone or in company euer they are in feare. Alone they looke behinde them: in companie they haue an eye on every side of the. They drinke in gold & siluer; but in those, not in earth or glasse is poison prepared & dronk. They haue their beds soft and well made: when they lay them to sleep you shall not heare a mouse stir in the chamber: not so much as a slie shal come neare their faces. Yet nevertheless, wherethe countreyman sleepes at the fall of a great riuver, at the noise of a market, hauing no other bed but the earth, nor couering but the heauies, these in the middest of all this silence and delicacie, do nothing but turne from side to side,

it

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it seemes still that they haerc some body, there rest it selfe is without rest. Lastly, wil you know what the diuersitie is beeweene the most hardly intreated prisoners & them? both are enchainged, both loaden with setters, but that the one hath them of iron, the other of gold, and that the one is tied but by the body, the other by the mind. The prisoner drawes his setters after him, the courtier weareth his vpon him. The prisoners mind somtyme comforts the paine of his bodie, and sings in the midst of his miseries: the courtier tormented in minde wearieth incessantly his bodie, and can neuer giue it rest. And as for the contentment you imagine they haue, you are therin yet more deceivēd. You judge and esteeme them great, be-

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cause they are raised high : but as fondly, as who shoulde iudge a dwarf great, for being set on a rōwer, or on the top of a mountaine . You measure (so good a Geometrician you are) the image with his base, which were conuenient (to know his true height) to be measured by it selte : whereas you regard not the height of the image , but the height of the place it stands vpon . You deeme them great (if in this earth there can be greatnesse , which in respect of the whole heauens is but a point.) But could you enter into their mindes, you would iudge, that neither they are great , true greatnesse consisting in contempt of those vaine greatnesses , whercunto they are flauies : nor seeime vnto them selues so, seeing dayly they are aspi-

ring

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ring higher , and neuer where they would be . Some one sets downe a boſd in his mind. Could I attaine to such a degree, lo, I were content : I would then rest my ſelue . Hath he attained it ? he giues himſelfe not ſo much as a breathing : he would yet ascend higher . That which is beneath he couſts a toy: it is in his opinion but one ſtep. He reputes himſelf low, because there is ſome one higher,in ſtead of reputing himſelf high, because there are a millio lower : & ſo high he climes at laſt , that either his breath failes him by the way, or he ſlides frō the top to the bottoome. Or if he get vp by all his trauell, it is but as to find himſelf on the top of the Alpes , not aboue the cloudes, windes and ſtormes : but rather at the deuotion of lightnings, & tempeſts, and whatſoever elſe horrible,

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and dangerous is engendred , and
conceiued in the aire : which most
commonly taketh pleasure to thun-
derbolt and dash into powder that
proude height of theirs . It may be
herein you will agree with me , by
reason of the examples wherewith
both histories , and mens memories
are full . But say you , such at least
whom nature hath sent into the
world with crowns on their heads ,
and scepters in their hands : such as
from their birth she hath set in that
height, as they neede take no paine
to ascēd: seeme without controuer-
sie exempt from all these iniurieſ,
and by consequence may call them
selues happie . It may be indeede
they feele leſſe ſuch incōmodities ,
hauing bin borne , bred & brought
vp among them:as one borne neare

the

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the downefals of *Nilus* becomes
deafe to the ſound: in prison, lamēts
not the want of libertie : among the
Cimerians in perpetuall night , wi-
lheth not for day: on the top of the
Alpes , thinkes not ſtraunge of the
miftes, the tempeſts, the ſnowes, &
the ſtorines. Yet free doubtlesſe they
are not when the lightening often
blasteth a flowre of their crownes ,
or breakes their ſcepter in their
hands : when a drift of ſnow ouer-
whelmes them: when a miſt of hea-
uiness, and grieſe continually bli-
ndeth their wit and vnderſtanding.
Crowned they are indeed, but with
a crowne of thornes. They beare a
ſcepter: but it is of a reede, more then
any thing in the world pliable, & o-
bediēt to al winds: it being ſo far off
that ſuch a crown can cure the mai-

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grims of the minde, & such a scepter
keepe off and fray away the grieses
and cares which houer about them:
that it is contrariwise the crowne
that brings them , and the scepter
which from all parts attracts them.
O crowne , said the Persian Mo-
narch, who knew how heauie thou
sittest on the head , would not
vouchsafe to take thee vp , though
he found thee in his way . This
Prince it seemed gaue fortune to
the whole world , distributed vnto
men haps and mishaps at his plea-
sure:could in shew make euery man
content:himself in the meane while
freely confessing , that in the whole
world , which he held in his hand
there was nothing but grieve , and
vnhappinesse. And what will all the
rest tell vs , if they list to vtter what

they

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they found? We will not aske them
who haue concluded a miserable
life with a dishonorable death: who
haue beheld their kingdomis buried
before them, and haue in great mi-
serie long ouertimed their greatnes.
Not of *Dionysē of Sicil*, more con-
teē with a handfull of twigs to whip
little childrē of *Corinth* in a schoole,
then with the scepter , wherewith
he had beaten all *Sicil*: nor of *Sylla*,
who hauing robbed the whole state
of *Rome* , which had before robbed
the whole world , neuer found
meanes of rest in himselfe , but by
robbing himselfe of his owne estate,
with incredible hazard both of his
power & authority. But deuid we
the opinion of king *Salomon*, a man
indued with singular gifts of God,
rich and wealthie of all things: who

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sought for treasure from the Iles.
He wil teach vs by a booke of purpose, that hauing tried all the felicities of the earth , he found nothing but vanitie, trauell, and vexation of spirit . Aske we the Emperour *Augustus*, who peaceably possessed the whole world . He will bewaile his life past , and among infinite toiles wish for the rest of the meaneſt mā of the earth : accounting that day most happy, whē he might vnloade himself of this insupportable greatness to liue quietly amōg the least. Of *Tiberius* his successor , he will confessē vnto vs , that he holds the Empire as a wolfe by the eares, and that (if without danger of biting he might) he would gladly let it go: complaining on fortune for lifting him so high , and then taking away the

ladder,

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ladder , that he could not come down again. Of *Dioclesian*, a Prince of ſo great wifedome and vertue in the opinion of the world : he will preferre his voluntarie banishment at *Salona* , before all the Romaine Empire. Finally, the Emperor *Charles* the fifth, elteemeed by our age the moſt happie that hath liued theſe many ages : he will curse his conqueſtes, his victories, his triumphes: and not be afhained to confesse that far more good in cōpariſon he hath felt in one day of his Monkis̄h ſolitarineſſe , then in all his triumphant life. Now ſhal we thinke thoſe happy in thiſ imaginante greatnesse who themſelues thinke themſelues , un-happie ? ſeeking their happinesse in leſſening themſelues, & not finding in the world one place to reſt thiſ

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greatnesse , or one bed quietly to sleepe in? Happy is he onely who in minde liues contented: and he most of ali vnhappie , whom nothing he can haue can content. Then misera-
ble *Pyrhus* king of *Albanie*, who would winne all the world , to win (as he sayd) rest : and went so far to seeke that which was so neare him. But more miserable *Alexander*, that being borne king of a great realme, & Conqueror almost of the earth, sought for more worldes to satisfie his toolish ambition , within three dayes content , with sixe foote of ground. To conclude, are they borne on the highest Alpes? they seeke to scale heauen. Haue they subdued all the kings of the earth ? they haue quarels to pleade with God, and in- deuour to tredre vnder foote his

king-

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kingdonne . They haue no end nor limite , till God laughing at their vaine purposes , when they thinke themselues at the last step, thunder- striketh all this presumption , brea- king in shiuers their scepters in their hands , and oftentimes intrap- ping them in their owne crownes. At a word , whatsocuer happinesse can be in that ambitiō promiseth, is but suffering much ill, to get ill. Me thinke by daily climbing higher to plucke themselues out of this ill, and the height whereunto they so pain- fully aspire , is the height of miserie it selfe . I speake not here of the wretchednesse of them , who all their life haue held out their cap to receiue the almes of court fortune, and can get nothing, often with in- credible heart griefe , seeing some

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by lesse paines taken haue riches fall
into their hands : of them , who iu-
stling one another to haue it , loose
it , & cast it into the hands of a third:
Of those , who holding it in their
hands to hold it fatter , haue lost it
through their fingers . Such by all
men are esteemed vnhappy , and are
indeed so , because they judge them
selues so . It sufficeth that all these
liberalities which the Deuill castleth
vs as out at a window . are but baits:
all these pleasures but embushes: &
that he doth but make his sport of
vs , who striue one with another for
such things , as most vnhappy is he,
that hath best hap to find the . Well
now , you will say , the Couetous in
all his goodes , hath no good: the
Ambitious at the best he can be , is
but ill . But may there not be some,
who

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who supplying the place of Justice,
or being neare about a Prince , may
without following such unbridled
passions , pleasantly enjoy their
goodes , ioyning honour with rest
and contentment of minde ? Surely
in former ages (there yet remaining
among men some sparkes of since-
titie) in some sort it might be so:
but being of that composition they
now are , I see not how it may be in
any sort . For deale you in affaires of
estate in these times , either you shal
do well , or you shall do ill . If ill , you
haue God for your enemy , & your
owne conscience for a perpetually
tormenting executioner . If wel , you
haue men for your enemies , and of
men the greatest : whose enuie and
malice will spie you out , and whose
crueltie and tyranny will euermore

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threathen you. Please the people you
please a beast : and pleasing such,
ought to be displeasing to your self.
Please your self, you displease God:
please him, you incurre a thousand
daggers in the world, with purchase
of a thousand displeasures. Where-
of it growes, that if you could heare
the talke of the wiest and least dis-
content of this kinde of men, whe-
ther they speake advisedly, or their
words passe them by force of truth,
one would gladly change garment
with his tenant: another preacheth
how goodly an estate it is to haue
nothing: a third complaining that his
braines are broken with the noise
of Court or Pallace, hath no other
thought, but as soone as he may to
retire himself thence. So that you
shall not see any but is displeased

with

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with his owne calling, and enuieth
that of another: ready neuerthelesse
to repent him, if a man should take
him at his word. None but is weerie
of the busynesses wherunto his age
is subiect, and wisheth not to be el-
der, to free himselfe of them: albeit
otherwiche he keepeh off old age as
much as in him lyeth.

What must we the do in so great
a contrarietie & confusion of minds?
Must we to find true humanitie, flie
the societie of men, & hide vs in for-
ests among wild beasts? to auoyde
these viruly passions, elchue the as-
sembly of creatures supposed reaso-
nable? to pluck vs out of the euils of
the world, sequester our selues fro
the world? Coud we in so doing
live at rest, it were something.

But alas ! men cannot take here-

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in what part they would : and euē they which do, find not there all the rest they sought for . Some would gladly do , but shame of the world recalls them . Fooles to be ashamed of what in their hearts they condemne : and more fooles to be aduised by the greatest enemie they can or ought to haue . Others are borne in hand that they ought to serue the publicke, not marking that who counsell them serue onely the selues: & that the more part would not much seeke the publicke , but that they found their owne particuler . Some are told , that by their good example they may amend others : and consider not that a hundred sound men , euē Phisitions themselues , may sooner catch the plague in an infected towne , then

one

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one be healed:that it is but to tempt God,to enter therein : that against so contagious an ayre there is no preseruatiue, but in getting far from it . Finally, that as little as the fresh waters falling into the sea, can take from it his saltnesse: so little can one Lot or two , or three reforme a court of *Sodome* . And as cōcerning the wisest, who no lesse carefull for their soules , then bodies , seeke to bring them into a sound & wholesome ayre , farre from the infection of wickednesse:and who led by the hand of some Angell of God, retire themselues in seacion , as *Lot* into some little village of *Segor* , out of the corruption of the world , into some countrey place from the infected townes,there quietly employing the time in some knowledge &

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serious contemplation : I willingly
yeeld they are in a place of lesse dan-
ger, yet because they carie the dan-
ger, in the selues , not absolutely ex-
empt from danger . They slie the
court , and a court followes them
on all sides: they endeuour to escape
the world : and the world pursues
the to death . Hardly in this world
can they finde a place where the
world findes them not : so greedi-
ly it seekes to murther them. And if
by some speciall grace of God they
seeme for a while free from these
dangers , they haue some pouertie
that troubles them , some domesti-
call debate that torments them , or
some familiar spirit that temptes the:
briefly the world dayly in some
sort or other makes it selfe felt of
them. But the worst is, when we are

out

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out of these externall warres and
troubles, we finde greater ciuill war
within our selues : the flesh against
the spirit , passion against reason,
earth against heauē, the world with-
in vs fighting for the world , euer-
more so lodged in the bottome of
our owne hearts, that on no side we
can slie from it. I will say more : he
makes profession to slie the world,
who seekes thereby the prayse of
the world : he faineth to run away,
who according to the prouerbe , by
drawing back lets himself forward:
he refuseth honours , that would
thereby be prayed to take them : &
hides him from me to the end they
should come to seeke him . So the
world often harbours in disguised
attire amōg thē that slie the world.
This is an abuse. But follow we the

D

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company of men, the world hath his court among thē: seeke we the Deserts, it hath there his dens & places of resort , and in the Desert it selfe tēpteth Christ Iesus . Retire we our selues into our selues , we finde it there as vncleane as any where. We cānot make the world dye in vs, but by dying our selues . We are in the world, & the world in vs , & to separate vs frō the world, we must separate vs from our selues. Now this separation is called Death. We are, we thinke , come out of the contagious Citie, but we are not aduised that we haue sucked the bad ayre, that we carrie the plague with vs, that we so participate with it , that through rockes , through desarts, through mountaines, it euer accōpanieth vs. Hauing auoyded the cōta-

gion

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gion of others,yet we haue it in our selues. We haue withdrawn vs out of mē: but not withdrawn mā out of vs. The tēpestuous sea torment vs:we are grieved at the heart , and desirous to vomit: & to be discharged thereof, we remoue out of one ship into another , frō a greater to a lesse : we promise our selues rest in vaine: they being alwayes the same winds that blow , the same waues that swell, the same humors that are stirred. To all no other port , no other meane of trāquilitie but onely death. We were sickē in a chamber neare the street,or neare the market: we caused our selues to be carried into some backer closet , where the noise was not so great . But though there the noise was lesse:yet was the feauer there neuertheles:& thereby

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A diſcourſe of life and death.

lost nothing of his heate . Change
bed , chamber, house , countrey, a-
gaine and againe : we shall euery
where find the ſame vnielt, because
euery where we finde our ſelues: &
ſeeke not ſo much to be others , as
to be other wheres . We follow ſo-
litarielle , to flic carefullelle . We
retire vs (ſo ſay we) from the wi-
cked: but carry with vs our auarice,
our ambition, our riotouſneſſe , all
our corrupt affections: which breed
in vs 1000 . remorſes , and 1000.
times each day bring to our reme-
mbrance the garlike and onions of E-
gypt . Daily they paſſe the Ferry with
vs: ſo that both on this ſide, and be-
yond the water , we are in continu-
all combat . Now could we caſtrefre
this company, which eates & gnawes
our mind , doubtleſſe we ſhould be

at

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at reſt, not in ſolitarineſſe onely, but
euen in the thicket of men . For the
life of man vpon earth iſ but a con-
tinuall warfare . Are we deliuereſ
from exterrall praetices ? we are to
take heed of internall eſpials . Are
the Greekes gone away? we haue a
Sinon within , that will betray them
the place . We muſt ever be waking,
hauiing an eye to the watch, & wea-
pons in our hands, if we will not e-
uery houre be ſurprized , and giuen
vp to the will of our enemis . And
how at laſt can we eſcape ? Not by
the woods, by the riuers, nor by the
mountaines : not by throwing our
ſelues into a preſſe, nor by thrulling
our ſelues into a hole , One onely
meane there iſ , which is death:
which in end ſeparating our ſpirit
from our fleſh, the pure and cleane

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part of our soule from the vncleane, which within vs euermore bandeth it se:fe for the world, appeaseth by this separation that, which conioyned in one & the same person could not, without vtter choaking of the spirit, but be in perpetuall contention.

And as touching the contentment that may be in the exercises of the wifelst me in their solitarines, as reading diuine or prophane booke, with all other knowledges & learnings: I hold well that it is indeed a far other thing, then are those mad hūtings, which make sauage a multitude of me possessed with these or the like diseases of the minde . Yet must they all abide the judgement pronounced by the wifelst amōg the wise, *Salomon*, that all this neuerthe-

lesse

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lesse applied to mās natural dispositiō, is to him but vanitie & vexation of minde. Some are euer learning to correct their speech, & never thinke of correcting their life . Others dispute in their Logique of reason, and the A:te of reason: and loose thereby many times their natural reason.

One learnes by Arithmetickē to diuide to the smallest fractions, and hath not skill to part one shilling with his brother. Another by Geometrie can measure fields, & towns, and countreys: but can not measure himselfe . The Musitian can accord his voyces, and soundes , and times together : hauing nothing in his heart but discordes, nor one passion in his soule in good tune . The Astrologer lookes vp on high, & falleth in the next ditch : foreknowes the

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future, and forgoes the present: hath often his eye on the heauens: his heart long before buried in the earth. The Philosopher discourses of the nature of al other things: & knowes not himselfe. The Historian can tell of the warres of *Thebes* & of *Troy*: but what is done in his owne house can tell nothing. The Lawyer will make lawes for all the world, and not one for himselfe. The Phisition will cure others, and be blind in his owne disease: finde the least alteration in his pulse, and not marke the burning feauers of his minde. Lastly, the Divine wil spend the greatest part of his time in disputing of faith, & cares not to heare of charitie: wil talke of God, and not regard to succour men. These knowledges bring on the minde an endless labour,

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hour, but no contentment: for the more one knowes, the more he would know.

They pacifie not the debates a man seekes in himself, they cure not the diseases of his mind. They make him learned, but they make not him good: cunning, but not wise. I say more. The more a man knowes, the more knowes he that he knowes not: the fuller the mind is, the emptier it findes it selfe: forasmuch as whatsoeuer a man can know of any science in this world is but the least part of what he is ignorant: all his knowledge consisting in knowing his ignorance, all his perfection in noting his imperfections, which who best knowes and notes, is in truth among men the most wise and perfect. In short we must conclude

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with Salomon , that the beginning
and end of wisedome is the feare of
God:that this wisedome neuerthe-
leſſe is taken of the world for meere
follie , and persecuted by the world
as a deadly enemy: and that as who
feareth God, ought to feare no euil,
for that all his euils are conuerted to
his good : so neither ought he to
hope for good in the world , hauing
there the deuil his profetted enemy,
whō the Scripture termeth Prince
of the world.

But with what exercise ſoeuer
we paſſe the time , behold old age
vnwares to vs comes vpon vs:which
whether we thrull our ſelues into
the preafe of men , or hide vs ſome
where out of the way , neuer failes
to finde vs out . Euer man makes
account in that age to reſt himſelfe

of

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of all his trauailes without further
care , but to keepe himſelfe at eaſe
and in health And ſee contrariwise
in this age , there is nothing but an
after taſt of all the foregoing euils:
& moſt commonly a plentifull har-
ueſt of all ſuch vices as in the whole
course of their life , hath held and
poſſeſſed them. There you haue the
vnabilitie and weakenesse of in-
fancie, and (which is worse) many
times accompanied with authori-
tie: there you are payed for the ex-
ceſſe & riotouſneſſe of youth , with
gowts,palſies , & ſuch like diſeaſes,
which take from you lime after
lime with extreame paine & tor-
ment. There you are recompenced
for the trauailes of minde , the wat-
chings and cares of manhood , with
loſſe of ſight , loſſe of hearing , and

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all the fences one after another, except onely the fence of paine. Not one part in vs but death takes in gage to be assured of vs, as of bad pay-maisters, which infinitely feare their dayes of payment. Nothing in vs which will not by & by be dead: and neuerthelesse our vices yet liue in vs, and not onely liue, but in despite of nature daily grow young againe. The couetous man hath one foote in his graue, and is yet burying his money: meaning b:like to find it againe another day. The ambitious in his will ordaineth unprofitable pompes for his funeralls, making his vice to liue and triumph after his death. The riotous no longer able to duncce on his feete, daunceth with his shoulders, all vices having left him, and he not yet able to
leauue

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leauue them . The child wisheth for youth: and this man laments it. The young man liueth in hope of the future, and this seeles the euil present, laments the false pleasures past, and sees for the time to come nothing to hope for . More foolish then the child , in bewailing the time he can not recall, and not remembryng the euill he had therein:and more wretched thē the yong mā , in that after a wretched life not able but wretchedly to dye , he sees on all sides but matter of despaire . As for him, who from his youth hath vndertaken to combate against the flesh, & against the world : who hath taken so great paines to mortifie himselfe & leauue the world before his time: who besides those ordinarie euils findest himself vexed with this great

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and incurable disease of old age , & feeleſ notwithſtanding his flesh how weake loeuer , ſtronger oftentimes then his ſpirite : what good I pray can be haue but onely herein : that he ſees his death at hand , that he ſees his combate finished , that he ſees himſelfe ready to depart by death out of this loathſome prison , wherein all his life time he hath bin racked and tormented ? I will not here ſpeake of the infinite euils wherewith men in all ages are annoyed, as loſſe of friends and parents , banishments, exiles, diſgraces , and ſuch others, common & ordinary in the world: one complayning of looſing his children, another of hauing the: one making ſorow for his wifes death, another for her life , one fin- ding fault , that he is too high in court,

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court , another, that he is not high enough. The world is ſo full of euils, that to write them all , would re- quire another world as great as it ſelſe . Sufficeth, that if the moſt happy in mens opinions do counter- poize his haps with his mishaps , he ſhall iudge himſelfe vnhappy : and he iudge him happy , who had he bene ſet three dayes in his place, would give it ouer to him that came next: yea, ſooner then he, who ſhall conſider in all the goods that euer he hath had the euils he hath endurēd to get them , and hauing them to retaine and keepe them (I ſpeake of the pleafures that may be kept, and not of thoſe that wither in a moment) wil iudge of himſelfe, and by himſelfe, that the keeping it ſelſe of the greateſt felicitie in this world,

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is full of vnhappinesse and infelicitie. Conclude then, that Childhood is but a fooleh simplicitie, Youth, a vaine heate, Manhood, a painefull carefulnesse, and Old-age, a noysome languishing : that our playes are but teares, our pleasures, feauers of the minde, our goods, rackes and tormentes, our honours, heauie vanities, our rest, vngret: that passing from age to age , is but passing from euill to euill and from the leesse vnto the greater: and that alwayes it is but one waue driving on another, vntill we be arrived at the banke of death . Conclude I say, that life is: but a wishing for the fUTURE, & a bewailing of the past: a loathing of what we haue tasted, and a longing for that we haue not tasted, a vaine memorie of the state past, &

a

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a doubtfull expectation of the state to come: finally, that in all our life there is nothing certaine, nothing assured, but the certaintie and vncertaintie of death . Behold, now comes Death vnto vs : Behold her, whose approach we so much feare . We are now to consider whether she be such as we are made beleue : and whether we ought so grealy to flee her, as commonly we do. We are afayde of her: but like little children of a vizard, or of the Images of *Hecate*. We haue her in horrour: but because we conceiuie her not such as she is, but oug'ly, terrible, and hideous: such as it pleaseth the Painters to represent vnto vs on a wall. We flee before her: but it is because foretaken with such

E

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vaine imaginations , we giue not our selues leasure to marke her . But stay we , stand we stedfast , looke we her in the face : we shall finde her quite other then she is painted vs : and altogether of other countenance then our miserable life . Death makes an end of this life . This life is a perpetuall miserie and tempest : Death then is the issue of our miseries and entraunce of the port where we sha'l ride in safetie from all windes . And should we feare that which withdraweth vs from miserie , or which drawes vs into our Hauen ? Yea but you will say , it is a paine to dye . Admit it be : so is there in curing of a wound . Such is the world , that one euill can not be cured but by another , to heale a contusion , must be made an incision .

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sion . You will say , there is difficultie in the passage : So is there no Hauen , no Port , whereinto the entraunce is not straite and combersome . No good thing is to be bought in this world with other then the coyne of labour and paine . The entrance indeede is hard , if our selues make it hard , comming thither with a tormented spirit , a troubled mind , a wauering & irresolute thought . But bring we quietnesse of minde , constancie , and full resolution , we shall not finde any daunger or diffi:ultie at all . Yet what is the paine that death brings vs ? Nay , what can she do with those paines we feele ? We accuse her of all the euils we abide in ending our life , and consider not how many more grieuous woundes or sickenesses we

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haue endured without death : or
how many more vehement paines
we haue suffered in this life , in the
which we called euen her to our
succour . All the paines our life
yeldes vs at the last houre we im-
pute to Death : not marking that
life begun and continued in all sortes
of paine, must also necessarily end in
paine . Not marking (I say) that it is
the remainder of our life, not death,
that tormenteth vs : the end of our
nauigation that paines vs , not the
Hauen we are to enter : which is
nothing else but a safegard against
all windes . We complaine of death,
where we should complaine of
life: as if one hauing bene long sicke,
and beginning to be well , should
accuse his health of his last paines,
and not the reliques of his disease.

Tell

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Tell me , what is it else to be dead,
but to be no more living in the
world? Absolutely & simply not to
be in the world, is it any paine? Did
we then feele any paine , when as
yet we were not ? Have we euer
more resemblance of Death , then
when we sleepe? Or euer more rest
then at that time? Now if this be no
paine , why accuse we Death of the
paines our life giues vs at our de-
parture? Valeſte also we will fond-
ly accuse the time when as yet we
were not , of the paines we felt at
our birth ? If the comming in be
with teares, is it wōder that ſuch be
the going out ? If the beginning of
our being, be the beginning of our
paine , is it maruell that ſuch be the
ending ? But if our not being in
times paſſ hath bene without paine,

E ,

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and all this being contrariwise full
of paine: whom should we by rea-
son accuse of the last paines, the not
being to come, or the remnant of
this present being? We thinke we
dye not, but when we yeed vp our
last gaspe. But if we marke well, we
dye euery day, euery houre, every
moment. We apprehend death as a
thing vnusuall to vs: and yet haue
nothing so common in vs. Our li-
uing is but continuall dying: looke
how much we liue, we dye: how
much we increase, our life de-
creases. We enter not a step into
life, but we enter a step into death.
Who hath liued a third part of his
yeares, hath a third part of himselfe
dead. Who halfe his yeares, is alrea-
dy halfe dead. Of our life, all the
time past is dead, the present liues

and

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and dyes at once, and the future
likewise shall dye. The past is no
more, the future is not yet, the
present is, and no more is. Briefly,
this whole life is but a death: it is
as a candle lighted in our bodies:
in one the winde makes it melt
away, in another blowes it cleane
out, many times ere it be halfe
burned: in others it endureth to
the end. Howsoever it be, looke
how much it shineth, so much it
burneth: her shining is her bur-
ning: her light a vanishing smoke:
her last fire, her last wike, and her
last drop of moisture. So is it in
the life of man, life and death in
man is all one. If we call the last
breath death, so must we all the rest:
all proceeding from one place, and
all in one manner. One ouely dif-

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ferēce there is betweene this life & that we call death : that during the one, we haue alwaies wherof to die: and after the other, there remaineth only wherof to liue. In sum, euен he that thinketh death ſimply to be the end of man, ought not to feare it : in as much as who desireth to liue long, desireth to dye longer : and who feareth ſoone to dye, feareth (to ſpeake properly) leſt he may not longer dye.

But vnto vs brought vp in a more holy Schoole, death is a farre other thing: neither need we as the Pagans of cōfolatiōs agaill death: but that death ſerue vs as a cōfolation againſt all ſorts of affliction: ſo that we muſt not only ſtrengthen our ſelues, as they, not to feare it, but accuſtome our ſelues to hope for it. For vnto vs it is

not

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not a departing from paine & euill, but an acceſſe vnto all good: not the end of life, but the end of death, and the beginning of life. Better, ſaith Salomon, is the day of death, thē the day of birth, and why? because it is not to vs a laſt day, but the dawning of an euerlaſting day. No more ſhall we haue in that glorious light, either ſorrow for the paſt, or expectation of the future: for all ſhall be there preſent vnto vs, & that preſent ſhall neuer more paſſe. No more ſhall we powre out our ſelues in vain and paſtfull pleasures: for we ſhall be filled with true & ſubtantiall pleasures. No more ſhall we paine our ſelues in heaping together the exhalations of the earth, for the heauens ſhall be ours, and this maſſe of earth, which euer drawes vs to-

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wardes the earth , shalbe buried in
the earth . No more shall we ouer-
wearie our selues with mounting
from degree to degree , and from
honour to honor: for we shall high-
ly be raised aboue all heights of the
world; and from on high laugh at
the follie of all thole we once ad-
mired , who fight together for a
point , and as little chilidren for lesse
then an apple. No more to be brief
shal we haue combats in our selues:
for our flesh shall be dead , and our
spirit in full life: our passion buried,
and our reason in perfect libertie.
Our soule delinered out of this
foule and filthy prison, where , by
long continuing it is growen into
an habite of crookednesse , shall a-
gaine draw her owne breath, reco-
gnize her auncient dwelling , and
againe

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againe remember her former glory
and dignitie . This flesh my friend
which thou seelest , this body which
thou touchest is not man : Man is
from heauen : heauen is his coun-
trey & his ayre. That he is in his bo-
dy , is but by way of exile and con-
finement. Man indeede is soule and
spirite : Man is rather of celestiall
and diuine qualitie , wherein is no-
thing grosse nor materiall. This bo-
dy such as now it is, is but the barke
and shell of the soule : which must
necessarily be broken , if we will be
hatched: if we will indeede liue and
see the light . We haue it semes,
some life , and some fence in vs: but
are so crooked and contracted,that
we cannot so much as stretch out
our wings , much lesse take our
flight towards heauen , vntill we be

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disburthened of this earthly burthen, We looke, but through false spectacles: we haue eyes but ouer-grown with pearles: we thinke we see, but it is in a dreame, where-in we see nothing, but deceipt. All that we haue, and all that we know is but abusē and vanitie. Death onely can restore vs both life and light: and we thinke (so blockish we are) that she comes to rob vs of them. We say we are Christians: that we beleeeue after this mortall, a life immortall: that death is but a separation of the body & soule: & that the soule returnes to his happie abode, there to ioy in God, who onely is all good: that at the last day it shall againe take the body, which shall no more be subiect to corruption. With these goodly discourses we

fill

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fill all our bookeſ: and in the meane while, when it comes to the point, the very name of death as the horribell thiſg in the world makes vs quake and tremble. If we beleeeue as we speake, what is that we feare? to be happy? to be at our easē to be more content in a moment, then we might be in the longest mortall life that might be? or coulſt not we of force confesse, that we beleeeue it but in part? that all we haue is but words? that all our discourses, as of thſe hardie trencher Knights, arbut vaunting and vanitie? Some you ſhall ſee, that will ſay: I know well that I paſſe out of this life into a better: I make no doubt of it: enſtly I ſcarē the mi-way ſtep, that I am to ſlep ouer. Weak herted creatures! they will kill themſelues to

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get their miserable living : suffer infinite paines , and inflame wounds at another mans pleasure : pale infinite decahes without dying , for things of nought, for things that perish , and perchance make them perish with them. But when they haue but one pace to passe to be at rest , not for a day, but for euer: not an indifferent rest, but such as mans minde cannot comprehend: they tremble , their hearts faile them , they are affrayde: and yet the ground of their harme is nothing but feare . Let them neuer tell me , they apprehend the paine: it is but an abuse : a purpose to conceale the little faith they haue . No, no, they would rather languish of the gowt , the scatica , any disease whatsoeuer : then dye one sweete death with the leal
paine

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paine possible : rather pynningly dye hymme after hymme , outliving as it were, all their fences, motions, and actions , then speedily dye , immediatly to liue for euer. Let them tell me no more that they would in this world learne to liue : for euery one is thereunto sufficiently instructed in himself , & not one but is cunning in the trade. Nay rather they should learne in this world to dye , & once to dye well, dye daily in themselves: so prepared , as if the end of euery dayes worke , were the end of our life . Now contrariwise there is nothing to their cates more offensiuie, then to heare of death . Senselesse people ! we abandon our life to the ordinary hazards of warre , for seauen frankes pay : are formost in an assault , for a little bootie : go into

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places, whence there is no hope of returning, with danger many times both of bodies and soules. But to free vs from all hazards, to waine things inestimable, to enter an eternall life, we faint in the paassage of one pace, wherein is no difficultie, but in opinion: yea we so faint, that were it not of force we must passe, and that God in despite of vs will do vs a good turne, hardly should we finde in all the world one, how vnhappy or wretched souuer, that would euer passe. Another will say, had I liued till fiftie or sixtie yeares, I should haue bene contented: I should not have cared to liue longer: but to dye so young is no reason. I should haue knownen the world before I had left it. Simple soule! in this world there is neither

young

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young nor old. The longest age in comparison of all that is past, or all that is to come, is nothing: and when thou hast liued to the age thou now desirest, all the past will be nothing: thou wilt still gape for that is to come. The past will yeeld thee but sorrow, the future but expectation, the present no contentment. As ready thou wilt then be to redemaund longer respite, as before. Thou sliest thy creditour from moneth to moneth, and time to time, as ready to pay the last day, as the first: thou seekest but to be acquitted. Thou hast tasted all which the world esteemeth pleasures: not one of them is new unto thee. By drinking oftener, thou shalt be neuer a whit the more satisfied: for the body thou cariest, like

F

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the bored paile of *Danaus* daugh-
ters, will never be full. Thou mayst
sooner weare it out, then wearie
thy selfe with vsing, or rather abu-
sing it. Thou crauest long life to
catt it away, to spend it on worth-
lesse delights, to mispend it on va-
nities. Thou art covetous in desi-
ring, and prodigall in spending.
Say not thou findest fault with the
Court, or the Pallace: but that thou
desirest longer to serue the com-
mon wealth, to serue thy countrey,
to serue God. He that set thee on
worke knowes vntill what day,
and what houre, thou shouldest
be at it: he well knowes how to di-
rect his worke. Should he leaue
thee there longer, perchance thou
wouldest marre all. But if he will
pay thee liberally for thy labour, as

much

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much for halfe a dayes worke, as
for a whole: as much for hauing
wrought till noone, as for hauing
borne all the heate of the day: art
thou not so much the more to
thankē & praise him? but if thou ex-
amine thine owne conscience, thou
lamētest not the cause of the widow,
and the orphane, which thou hast
left depending in iudgment: not the
dutie of a sonne, of a father, or of a
friend, which thou pretendest thou
wouldest performe: not the ambas-
sage for the commō wealth, which
thou wert euē ready to vndertake:
not the seruice thou desirest to do
vnto God, who knowes much bet-
ter how to serue himselfe of thee,
then thou of thy selfe. It is thy hou-
ses and gardens thou lamentest, thy
imperfect plots and purposes, thy

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life (as thou thinkest) imperfect: which by no dayes, nor yeares, nor ages, might be perfected: and yet thy selfe mightest perfect in a moment, couldst thou but thinke in good earnest, that where it end it skils not, so that it end well.

Now to end well this life, is only to end it willingly : following with full consent the will and direction of God , and not suffering vs to be drawne by the necessity of destinie. To end it willingly, we must hope, and not feare death. To hope for it, we must certainly looke after this life, for a better life. To looke for that, we must feare God: whom who so well feareth, feareth indeede nothing in this world, and hopes for all things in the other. To one well resolued

in

A dycourse of life and deatis.

in these points death can be but sweete and agreeable : knowing that through it he is to enter into a place of all joyes . The griefe that may be thereto shall be alliaied with sweetenesse : the sufferance of it, swallowed in the confidence of good: the stting of Death it selfe shall be dead, which is nothing else but Feare. Nay , I will say more, not onely all the euils conceived in death shall be to him nothing: but he shall even scorne all the milliaps men redeeme in this life, and laugh at all their terrors. For I pray what can he feare, whose death is his hope ? Think we to banish him his countrey ? He knowes he hath a countrey elsewhere, whence we can not banish him : and that all these countreyes

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are but Innes , out of which he
must part at the will of his host. To
put him in prison ? a more straite
prison he cannot haue , then his
owne body , more filthy , more
darke , more full of rackes and tor-
ments . To kill him and take him
out of the world? that is it he hopes
for : that is it with all his heart he
aspires vnto. By fire , by sword , by
famine , by sicknesse : within three
yeares , within three dayes , within
three houres , all is one to him : all
is one at what gate , or at what
time he passe out of this miserable
life . For his busynesse are euer en-
ded , his affaires all dispatched ,
and by what way he shall go out ,
by the same he shall enter into a
molt happy and euerlasting life.
Men can threaten him but death ,

and

A dyconrse of life and death.

and death is all he promiseth him-
selfe : the worst they can do , is , to
make him dye , and that is the belt
he hopes for . The threatnings of
tyrants are to him promises , the
swords of his greatest enemies
drawne in his fauour : for as much
as he knowes that threatening him
death , they threaten him life : and
the most mortall wounds can
make him but immortali : Who
feares God , feares not death : and
who feares it not , feares not the
worst of this life .

By this reckening , you will tell
me death is a thing to be wished
for : and to passe from so much
euill , to so much good , a man
should as it seemeth cast away his
life . Surely , I feare not , that for any
good we expect , we will hasten

one

A discourse of life and death.

one step the fatter: though the spirit aspire, the body it drawes with it, withdrawes it euer sufficiently towards the earth. Yet is it not that I conclude. We muste keepe to mortifie our flesh in vs, and to cast the world out of vs: but to cast our selues out of the world is in no sort permitted vs. The Christian ought willingly to depart out of this life, but not cowardly to runne away.

The Christian is ordained by God to fight therein : and cannot leaue his place without incurring reproch and infamy. But if it please the graund Captaine to recall him, let him take the retrait in good part, and with good will obey it. For he is not borne for himselfe, but for God : of whom he holds his life at farme, as his tenant at will.

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will, to yeeld him the profites. It is in the land-lord to take it from him, not in him to surrender it, when a conceit takes him. Diest thou young? praise God as the mariner that hath had a good wind, soone to bring him to the Port. Diest thou old? praise him likewise, for if thou hast had lesse wind, it may be thou hast also had lesse waues. But thinke not at thy pleasure to go fatter or softer: for the wind is not in thy power, & in stead of taking the shordest way to the Hauen, thou maiest happily suffer shipwrack. God calleth home from his worke, one in the morning, another at noone, and another at night. One he exerciseth till the first sweat, another he sun-burneth, another he rosteth and drieth throughtly. But of all his he leaues

G

A discourse of life and death.

all to rest, and giues them all their
hire, euery one in his time. Who
leaues his worke before God call
him, looses it: and who importunes
him before the time, looses his re-
ward. We must rest vs in his will,
who in the middelst of our troubles
sets vs at rest.

To ende, we ought neither to
hate this life for the toiles therein,
for it is slouth and cowardise: nor
loue it for the delights, which is fol-
ly and vanity: but serue vs of it, to
serue God in it, who after it shall
place vs in true quietnesse, and re-
plenish vs with pleasures which
shall neuuer more perish. Neither
ought we to flie death, for it is chil-
dish to feare it: and in flying from it,
we meete it. Much lesse to seeke it,
for that is temerity: nor euery one
that