

Renascence Editions

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The Wonderfull yeare. 1603.

Thomas Dekker.

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THE VVonderfull yeare. 1603.

Wherein is shewed the picture of *London*, lying sicke of the Plague.

At the ende of all (like a mery Epilogue to a dull Play) certaine Tales are cut out in sundry fashions, of purpose to shorten the liues of long winters nights, that lye watching in the darke for vs.

Et me rigidi legant Catones.

L O N D O N
Printed by Thomas Creede, and are to be solde
in Saint Dontones Church-yarde

in Fleet-streete.

TO HIS VVEL- RESPECTED GOOD

*friend, M. Cutbert Thuresby, VVa-
ter-Bayliffe of London.*

BOokes are but poore gifts, yet *Kings* receiue them: vpo[n] which I presume, you will not turne *This* out of doores. Yet cannot for shame but bid it welcome, because it bringes to you a great quantitie of my loue: which, if it be worth litle, (and no maruell if *Loue* be solde vnder-foote, when the God of Loue himselfe goes naked) yet I hope you will not say you haue a hard bargaine, Sithe[n]ce you may take as much of it as you please for nothing. I haue clapt the *Cognizance* of your name, on these scribled papers, it is their liuery: So that now they are yours: being free fro[m] any vile imputation, saue only, that they thrust themselues into your acquiانتance. But generall erros, haue generall pardons: for the title of other mens names, is the common *Heraldry* which all those laie claime too, whose crest is a Pen-and-Inckhorne. If you read, you may happilie laugh; tis my desire you should, because mirth is both *Phisicall*, and wholesome against the *Plague*: with which sicknes, (to tell truth) this booke is, (though not sorely) yet somewhat infected. I pray, driue it not out of your companie for all that; for (assure your soule) I am so iealous of your health, that if you did but once imagine, there were gall in mine Incke, I would cast away the Standish, and forswear medling with anie more *Muses*.

To the Reader.

AND why to the *Reader*? Oh good Sir! theres as sound law to make you giue good words to the *Reader*, as to a *Constable* when hee carries his watch about him to tell how the night goes, tho (perhaps) the one (oftentimes) may be serued in for a *Goose*, and the other fitly furnish the same messe: Yet to maintaine the scuruy fashion, and to keepe *Custome* in reparations, he must be honeyed, and come-ouer with *Gentle Reader*, *Courteous Reader*, and *Learned Reader*, though he haue no more *Gentilitie* in him than *Adam* had (that was but a gardner) no more *Ciuilitie* than a *Tartar*, and no more *Learning* than the most errand *Stinkard*, that (except his owne name) could neuer finde any thing in the Horne-booke.

How notoriously therefore do good wits dishonor, not only their *Calling*, but euen their *Creation*, that worship *Glow-wormes* (in stead of the *Sun*) because of a litle false glistering? In the name of *Phoebus* what madnesse leades them vnto it? For he that dares hazard a pressing to death (thats to say, *To be a man in Print*) must make account that he

shall stand (like the olde Weathercock ouer Powles steeple) to be beaten with all stormes. Neither the stinking Tabacco-breath of a *Sattin-gull*, the *Aconited* sting of a narrow-eyed *Critick*, the faces of a phantastick Stage-monkey, nor the *Indeede-la* of a Puritanicall Citizen must once shake him. No, but desperately resolute (like a French Post) to ride through thick & thin: indure to see his lines torne pittifully on the rack: suffer his Muse to take the *Bastoone*, yea, the very stab, & himselfe like a new stake to be a marke for euery *Hagler*, and therefore (setting vp all these rests) why shuld he regard what fooles bolt is shot at him? Besides, if that which he presents vpon the Stage of the world be Good, why shuld he basely cry out (with that old poetically mad-cap in his *Amphitruo*) *Iouis summi causa claré plaudite*, beg a *Plaudite* for God-sake! If *Bad*, who (but an *Asse*) would intreate (as Players do in a cogging Epilogue at the end of a filthie Comedy) that, be it neuer such wicked stuffe, they would forbear to hisse, or to dam it perpetually to lye on a Stationers stall. For he that can so cosen himselfe, as to pocket vp praise in that silly sort, makes his braines fat with his own folly.

But *Hinc Pudor!* or rather *Hinc Dolor*, heeres the Diuell! It is not the ratling of all this former haile-shot, that can terrifie our *Band of Castalian Pen-men* from entring into the field: no, no, the murdring Artillery indeede lyes in the roaring mouthes of a company that looke big as if they were the sole and singular *Commanders* ouer the maine Army of *Poesy*, yet (if *Hermes* muster-booke were searcht ouer) theile be found to be the most pitifull pure fresh-water souldiers: they giue out, that they are heires-apparent to *Helicon*, but an easy *Herald* may make them meere yonger brothers, or (to say troth) not so much. Beare witnes all you whose wits make you able to be witnesses in this cause, that heere I meddle not with your good Poets, *Nam tales, nusquam sunt hic amplius*, If you should rake hell, or (as *Aristophanes* in his *Frog* sayes) in any Celler deeper than hell, it is hard to finde Spirits of that *Fashion*. But those Goblins whom I now am co[n]iuring vp, haue bladder-cheekes puft out like a *Swizzers* breeches (yet being prickt, there comes out nothing but wind) thin-headed fellowes that liue upon the scraps of inuention and trauell with such vagrant soules, and so like Ghosts in white sheets of paper, that the Statute of Rogues may worthily be sued vpon them, because their wits haue no abiding place, and yet wander without a passe-port. Alas, poore wenches (the nine Muses!) how much are you wrongd, to haue such a number of Bastards lying vpo[n] your hands? But turne them out a begging; or if you cannot be rid of their Riming company (as I thinke it will be very hard) then lay your heauie and immortall curse vpon them, that whatsoever they weaue (in the motley-loome of their rustie pates) may like a beggers cloake, be full of stolne patches, and yet neuer a patch like one another, that it may be such true lamentable stuffe, that any honest Christian may be sory to see it. Banish these *Word-pirates*, (you sacred mistresses of learning) into the gulfe of *Barbarisme*: doome them euerlastingly to liue among dunces: let them not once lick their lips at the *Thespian* bowle, but onely be glad (and thanke *Apollo* for it too) if hereafter (as hitherto they haue alwayes) they may quench their poetically thirst with small beere. Or if they will needes be stealing your *Heliconian Nectar*, let them (like the dogs of *Nylus*,) onely lap and away. For this *Goatish* swarme are those (that where for these many thousand yeares you went for pure maides) haue taken away your good names, these are they that deflowre your beauties. These are those ranck-riders of Art, that haue so spur-gald your lustie wingd *Pegasus*, that now he begins to be out of

flesh, and (euen only for prouander-sake) is glad to shew tricks like *Bancks* his Curtall. O you Bookes-sellers (that are Factors to the Liberall Sciences) ouer whose Stalles these Drones do dayly flye humming; let *Homer*, *Hesiod*, *Euripides*, and some other mad Greekes with a band of the Latines, lye like musket-shot in their way, when these Goths and Getes set vpon you in your paper fortifications; it is the only Canon, vpon whose mouth they dare not venture, none but the English will take their parts, therefore feare them not, for such a strong breath haue these chese-eaters, that if they do but blow vpon a booke they imagine straight tis blasted; *Quod supra nos; nihil ad nos*, (they say) that which is aboue our capacitie, shall not passe vnder our commendation. Yet would I haue these Zoilists (of all other) to reade me, if euer I should write any thing worthily: for the blame that knowne-fooles heape vpon a deseruing labour, does not discredit the same, but makes wise men more perfectly in loue with it. Into such a ones hands therefore if I fortune to fall, I will not shrinke an inche, but euen when his teeth are sharpest, and most ready to bite, I will stop his mouth only with this, *Hæc mala sunt, sed tu, non meliora facta*.

Reader.

*W*Hereas there stands in the Rere-ward of this Booke a certaine mingled Troope of straunge Discourses, fashioned into Tales, Know, that the intelligence which first brought them to light, was onely flying Report: whose tongue (as it often does) if in spreading them it haue tript in any materiall point, and either slipt too farre, or falne too short, beare with the error: and the rather, because it is not wilfully committed. Neither let any one (whom those Reports shall seeme to touch) cauill, or complaine of inury sithence nothing is set downe by a malitious hand. Farewell.

THE VVONDER- full yeare.

*V*Ertumnus being attired in his accustomed habit of changeable silke, and newly passed through the first and principall Court-gate of heauen: to whom for a farewell, and to shewe how dutifull he was in his office, Ianus (that beares two faces vnder one hood) made a very mannerly lowe legge, and (because he was the onely Porter at that gate) presented vnto this King of the Moneths, all the New-yeares gifts, which were more in number, and more worth then those that are giuen to the great Turke, or the Emperour of *Persia*: on

went *Vertumnus* in his lutie progresse, *Priapus*, *Flora*, the *Dryades*, and *Hamadryades*, with all the wooden rabble of those that drest Orchards & Gardens, perfuming all the wayes that he went, with the sweete Odours that breathed from flowers, hearbes and trees, which now began to peepe out of prison: by vertue of which excellent aires, the skie got a most cleare complexion, lookte smug and smoothe, and had not so much as a wart sticking on her face: the Sunne likewise was freshly and very richly appareled in cloth of gold like a Bridegroom, and in stead of gilded Rosemary, the hornes of the Ramme, (being the signe of that celestiall bride-house where he lay, to be married to the Spring) were not like your common hornes parcell-gilt, but double double-gilt, with the liquid gold that melted from his beames, for ioy w[h]ereof the Larke sung at his windowe euery morning, the Nightingale euery night: the Cuckooe (like a single sole Fidler, that reeles from Tauerne to Tauerne) plide it all the day long: Lambes friskte vp and downe in the vallies, kids and Goates leapt too and fro on the Mountaines: Shepherds sat piping, country wenches singing: Louers made Sonnets for their Lasses, whilst they made Garlands for their Louers: And as the Country was frolike, so was the Citie mery: Oliue Trees (which grow no where but in the Garden of peace) stood (as common as Beech does at Midsomer) at euery mans doore, braunches of Palme were in euery mans hand: Streetes were full of people, people full of ioy: euery house seemde to haue a Lorde of misrule in it, in euery house there was so much iollity: no Scritch-Owle frightened the silly Countryman at midnight, nor any Drum the Citizen at noone-day; but all was more calme than a still water, all husht, as if the Spheres had bene playing in Consort: In conclusion, heauen lookt like a Pallace, and the great hall of the earth, like a Paradiſe. But O the short-liu'de Felicitie of man! O world of what slight and thin stuffe is thy happinesse! Iust in the midst of this iocund Holy-day, a storme rises in the West: Westward (from the toppe of a *Ritchmount*) descended a hidious tempest, that shooke Cedars, terrified the tallest Pines, and cleft in sunder euen the hardest hearts of Oake: And if such great trees were shaken, what thinke you became of the tender Eglantine, and humble Hawthorne; they could not (doubtlesse) but droope, they could not choose but die with the terror. The Element (taking the Destinies part, who indeed set abroach this mischief) scowled on the earth, and filling her hie forehead full of blacke wrinckles, tumbling long vp and downe (like a great bellied wife) her sighes being whirlwindes, and her grones thunder, at length she fell in labour, and was deliuered of a pale, meagry, weake child, named *Sickness*, whom Death (with a pestilence) would needes take vpon him to nurse, and did so. This starueling being come to his full growth, had an office giuen him for nothing (and thats a wonder in this age (Death made him his Herauld: attirde him like a Courtier, and (in his name) chargde him to goe into the Priuie Chamber of the English Queene, to sommon her to appeare in the Star-chamber of heauen.

Vertum-
nus God
of the
yeare.

Descrip-
tion of
the
Spring.

Vpon the
23. of
March the
Spring
begins,
by reason
of the
Sunnes
entrance
into
Aries.

The
Queenes
sicknes.

The sommons made her start, but (hauing an inuincible spirit) did not amaze her: yet

whom would not the certaine newes of parting from a Kingdome amaze! But she knewe where to finde a richer, and therefore lightlie regarded the losse of this, and thereupon made readie for that heauenlie Coronation, being (which was most strange) most dutifull to obey, that had so many yeares so powrefull commaunded. She obeyed Deaths messenger, and yeelded her body to the hands of death himselfe. She dyes, resigning her Scepter to posteritie, and her Soule to immortalitie.

Her
death.

To report of her death (like a thunder-clap) was able to kill thousands, it tooke away hearts from millions: for hauing brought vp (euen vnder her wing) a nation that was almost begotten and born vnder her; that neuer shouted any other *Aue* than for her name, neuer sawe the face of any Prince but her selfe, neuer vnderstoode what that strange out-landish word *Change* signified: how was it possible, but that her sicknes should throw abroad an vniuersall feare, and her death an astonishment? She was the Courtiers treasure, therefore he had cause

to mourne: the Lawyers sword of iustice, he might well faint: the Merchants patronesse, he had reason to looke pale: the Citizens mother, he might best lament: the Shepherds Goddess, and should not he droope? Onely the Souldier, who had walkt a long time vpon wodden legs, and was not able to giue Armes, though he were a Gentleman, had brisseld vp the quills of his stiffe Porcupine mustachio, and swore by no beggers that now was the houre come for him to bestirre his stumps: Vsurers and Brokers (that are the Diuels Ingles, and dwell in the long-lane of hell) quakt like aspen leaues at his oathes: those that before were the onely cut-throates in *London*, now stoode in feare of no other death: but my I was deceiued, the Tragedie went not forward.

The
generall
terror
that her
death
bred.

Neuer did the English Nation behold so much black worne as there was at her Funerall: It was then but put on, to try if it were fit, for the great day of mourning was set downe (in the booke of heauen) to be held afterwards: that was but the dumb shew, the Tragicall Act hath bene playing euer since. Her Herse (as it was borne) seemed to be an Iland swimming in water, for round about it there rayned showers of teares, about her deathbed none: for her departure was so sudden and so strange, that men knew not how to weepe, because they had neuer bin taught to shed teares of that making. They that durst not speake their sorrowes, whisperd them: they that durst not whisper, sent them forth in sighes. Oh what an Earth-quake is the alteration of a State! Looke from the Chamber of Presence, to the Farmers cottage, and you shall finde nothing but distraction: the whole Kingdome seemes a wildernes, and the people in it are transformed to wild men. The Map of a Countrey so pitifullie distracted by the horror of a change, if you desire perfectlie to behold, cast your eyes then on this that followes, which being heretofore in priuate presented to the King, I thinke may very worthily shew it selfe before you: And because you shall see them attirde in the same fashion that they wore before his Maiestie, let these few lines (which stood then as Prologue to the rest) enter first into your eares.

*NOt for applauses, shallow fooles aduenture,
I plunge my verse into a sea of censure,*

*But with a liuer drest in gall, to see
So many Rookes, catch-polls of poesy,
That feede vpon the fallings of hye wit,
And put on cast inuentions, most vnfit,
For such am I prest forth in shops and stalls,
Pasted in Powles, and on the Lawyers walls,
For euery basilisk-eyed Criticks bait,
To kill my verse, or poison my conceit:
Or some smoakt gallant, who at wit repines,
To dry Tabacco with my holesome lines,
And in one paper sacrifice more braine,
Than all his ignorant scull could ere containe:
But merit dreads no martydome, nor stroke,
My lines shall liue, when he shall be all smoake.*

Thus farre the Prologue, who leauing the Stage cleere, the feares that are bred in the wombe of this altring kingdome do next step vp, acting thus.

*THE great impostume of the realme was drawne
Euen to a head : the multitudinous spawn
Was the corruption, which did make it swell
With hop'd sedition (the burnt seed of hell.)
Who did expect but ruine, blood, and death,
To share our kingdome, and diuide our breath.
Religions without religion,
To let other blood, confusion
To be next Queene of England, and this yeere
The ciuill warres of France to be plaid heere
By English-men, ruffians, and pandering slaues,
That faine would dig vp gowtie vsureres graues :
At such a time, villaines their hopes do honey,
And rich men looke as pale as their white money :
Now they remoue, and make their siluer sweate,
Casting themselues into a couetous heate,
And then (vnseene) in the confederate darke,
Bury their gold, without or Priest, or Clarke.
And say no prayers ouer that dead pelfe,
True : Gold's no Christian, but an Indian elfe.
Did not the very kingdome seeme to shake
Her precious massie limbes? did she not make
All English cities (like her pulses) beate*

*With people in their veines? the feare so great,
that had it not bene phisickt with rare peace,
Our populous power had lessend her increase.
The Spring-time that was dry, had sprung in blood,
A greater dearth of men, than e're of foode :
In such a panting time, and gasping yeare,
Victuals are cheapest, only men are deare.
Now each wise-acred Landlord did dispaire,
Fearing some villaine should become his heire,
Or that his sonne and heire before his time,
Should now turne villaine, and with violence clime
Vp to his life, saying father you haue seene
King Henry, Edward, Mary, and the Queene,
I wonder you'le liue longer! then he tells him
Hees loth to see him kild, therfore he kills him,
And each vast Landlord dyes like a poore slaue,
Their thousand acres makes them but a graue,
At such a time great men conuey their treasure
Into the trusty Citie : wayts the leisure
Of bloud and insurrection, which warre clips,
When euery gate shutts vp her Iron lips,
Imagine now a mighty man of dust,
Standeth in doubt, what seruant he may trust,
With Plate worth thousands : Jewels worth farre more,
If he proue false, then his rich Lord proues poore :
He calls forth one by one, to note their graces,
Whilest they make legs he copies out their faces,
Examines their eye-browe, consters their beard,
Singles their nose out, still he rests afeard :
The first that comes by no meanes heele alow,
Has spyed three Hares starting betweene his brow,
Quite turnes the word, names it Celeritie,
For Hares do run away, and so may he :
A second shewne : him he will scarce behold,
His beard's too red, the colour of his gold :
A third may please him, but tis hard to say,
A rich man's pleasde, when his goods part away.
And now do cherrup by, fine golden nests
Of well hatcht bowles: such as do breed in feasts,
For warre and death cupboards of plate downe pulls,
Then Bacchus drinkes not in gilt-bowles, but sculls.
Let me descend and stoope my verse a while,
To make the Comicke cheeke of Poesie smile ;
Ranck peny-fathers scud (with their halfe hammes,*

*Shadowing their calues) to saue their siluer dammes,
At euery gun they start, tilt from the ground,
One drum can make a thousand Vsurers sound,
In vnsought Allies and vnwholesome places,
Back-wayes and by-lanes, where appeare fewe faces,
In shamble-smelling roomes, loathsome prospects,
And penny-lattice-windowes, which reiects
All popularitie : there the rich Cubs lurke,
When in great houses ruffians are at worke,
Not dreaming that such glorious booties lye
Vnder those nasty roofes : such they passe by
Without a search, crying there's nought for vs,
And wealthie men deceiue poore villaines thus:
Tongue-traueling Lawyers faint at such a day,
Lye speechlesse, for they haue no words to say.
Physitions turne to patients, their Arts dry,
For then our fat men without Phisick die.
And to conclude, against all Art and good,
Warre taints the Doctor, lets the Surgion blood.*

Such was the fashion of this Land, when the great Land-Lady thereof left it: Shee came in with the fall of the leafe, and went away in Spring: her life (which was dedicated to Virginitie,) both beginning & closing vp a miraculous Mayden circle: for she was borne vpon a Lady Eue, and died vpon a Lady Eue: her Natiuitie & death being memorable by this wonder: the first and last yeares of her Raigne by this, that a *Lee* was Lorde Maior when she came to the Crowne, and a *Lee* Lorde Maior when she departed from it. Three places are made famous by her for three things, *Greenwich* for her birth, *Richmount* for her death, *White-hall* for her Funerall: vpon her remounting from whence, (to leand our tiring prose a breathing time) stay, and looke vpon these *Epigrams*, being composed,

1. Vpon the Queenes last Remoue
being dead.

THE *Queene's remou'de in solemne sort,
Yet this was strange, and seldome seene,
The Queene vsde to remoue the Court,
But now the Court remou'de the Queene.*

2. Vpon her bringing by water
to White Hall.

*The Queene was brought by water to White Hall,
At euery stroake, the Oares teares let fall.
More clung about the Barge : Fish vnder water
Wept out their eyes of pearle, and swom blind after.
I thinke the Barge-men might with easier thyes
Haue rowde her thither in her peoples eyes :
For howsoe're, thus much my thoughts haue skand,
S'had come by water, had she come by land.*

3. Vpon her lying dead at
White Hall.

*The Queene lyes now at White Hall dead,
And now at White Hall liuing,
To make this rough obiection euen,
Dead at White Hall at Westminster,
But liuing at White Hall in Heauen.*

Thus you see that both in her life and her death shee was appointed to be the mirror of her time: And surely, if since the first stone that was layd for the foundation of this great house of the world, there was euer a yeare ordained to wondred at, it is only this: the *Sibils, Octogesimus, Octauus Annus*, That same terrible 88. which came sayling hither in the Spanish Armado, and made mens hearts colder

then the frozen Zone, when they heard but an inckling of it: That 88. by whose horrible predictions, Almanack-makers stood in bodily feare their trade would be vtterly ouerthrowne, and poore *Erra Pater* was threatned (because he was a Iew) to be put to baser offices, then the stopping of mustard-pots: That same 88. which had more prophecies waiting at his heeles, tha[n] euer *Merlin* the Magitian had in his head, was a yeare of *Iubile* to this. *Platoes Mirabilis Annus*, (whether it be past alreadie, or to come within these foure yeares) may throw *Platoes* cap at *Mirabilis*, for that title of wonderfull is bestowed vpon 1603. If that sacred Aromatically-perfumed fire of wit (out of whose flames Phoenix poesie doth arise) were burning in any brest, I would feede it with no other stufte for a twelue-moneth and a day than with kindling papers full of lines, that should tell only of the chances changes, and strange shapes that this Protean Climactericall yeare hath metamorphosed himselfe into. It is able to finde ten Chroniclers a competent liuing, and to set twentie Printers at worke. You shall perceiue I lie not, if (with *Peter Bales*) you will take the paines to drawe the whole volume of it into the compasse of a pennie. As first, to begin with the Queenes death, then the Kingdomes falling into an Ague vpon that. Next, follows the curing of that feauer by the holesome receipt of a proclaymed

1603. A
more
wonder-
full yeare
than 88.

King. That wonder begat more, for in an houre, two mightie Nations were made one: wilde *Ireland* became tame on the sudden, and some English great ones that before seemed tame, on the sudden turned wilde: That same Parke which great *Iulius Cæsar* inclosed, to hold in that Deere whome they before hunted, being new circled (by a second *Cæsar*) with stronger pales to keepe them from leaping ouer. And last of all (if that wonder be the last and shut vp the yeare) a most dreadfull plague. This is the abstract, and yet (like *Stowes Chronicle* of *Decimo Sexto* to huge *Hollinshead*) these small pricks in this Set-card of ours, represent mighty Countreys; whilst I haue the quill in my hand, let me blow them bigger.

The Queene being honoured with a Diademe of Starres, *France*, *Spaine*, and *Belgia*, lift vp their heads, preparing to do as much for England by giuing ayme, whilst she shot arrowes at her owne brest (as they imagined) as she had done (many a yeare together) for them: and her owne Nation betted on their sides, looking with distracted countenance for no better guests than Ciuill Seditiō, Vprores, Rapes, Murders, and Massacres. But the wheele of Fate turned, a better Lottery was drawne, *Pro Troia stabat Apollo*, God stuck valiantlie to vs. For behold, vp rises a comfortable Sun out of the North, whose glorious beames (like a fan) dispersed all thick and contagious clowdes. The losse of a Queene, was paid with the double interest of a King and Queene. The Cedar of her gouernment which stood alone and bare no fruit, is changed now to an Oliue, vpon whose spreading branches grow both Kings and Queenes. Oh it were able to fill a hundred paire of writing tables with notes, but to see the parts plaid in the compasse of one houre on the stage of this new-found world! Vpon Thursday it was treason to cry God saue king *Iames* king of *England*, and vppon Friday hye treason not to cry so. In the morning no voice heard but murmures and lamentation, at noone nothing but shoutes of gladnes & triumphe. *S. George* and *S. Andrew* that many hundred yeares had defied one another, were now sworne brothers: *England* and *Scotland* (being parted only with a narrow Riuer, and the people of both Empires speaking a language lesse differing than english within it selfe, as the prouidence had enacted, that one day those two Nations should marry one another) are now made sure together, and king *Iames* his Coronation, is the solemne wedding day. Happiest of all thy Ancestors (thou mirror of all Princes that euer were or are) that at seauen of the clock wert a king but ouer a peece of a little Iland, and before eleuen the greatest Monarch in Christendome. now

King
Iames
pro-
claimed.

_____ *Siluer Crowds*

*Of blisfull Angels and tryed Martys tread
On the Star-seeling ouer Englands head :
Now heauen broke into a wonder, and brought forth
Our omne bonum from the holesome North
(Our fruitfull soueraigne) Iamus, at whose dread name
Rebellion swounded, and (ere since) became
Groueling and nerue-lesse, wanting bloud to nourish,
For Ruine gnawes her selfe when kingdomes flourish,
Nor are our hopes planted in regall springs,*

*Neuer to wither, for our aire breedes kings :
And in all ages (from this soueraigne time)
England shall still be calde the royall clime.
Most blisfull Monarch of all earthen powers,
Seru'd with a messe of kingdomes, foure such bowers
(For prosperous hiues, and rare industrious swarmes)
The world containes not in her solid armes.
O thou that art the Meeter of our dayes,
Poets Apollo! deale thy Daphnean bayes
To those whose wits are bay-trees, euer greene,
Vpon whose hye tops Poesie chirps vnseene :
Such are most fit, t'apparell Kings in rimes,
Whose siluer numbers are the Muses chimes,
Whose spritely characters (being once wrought on)
Out-liue the marble th'are insculpt upon :
Let such men chaunt thy vertue, then they flye
On Learnings wings vp to Eternitie.
As for the rest, that limp (in cold desert)
Hauing small wit, lesse iudgement, and least Art :
Their verse! tis almost heresie to heare,
Banish their lines some furlong, from thine eare :
For tis held dang'rous (by Apolloes signe)
To be infected with a leaprous line.
O make some Adamant Act (n'ere to be worne)
That none may write but those that are true-borne :
So when the worlds old cheekes shall race and peelee,
Thy Acts shall breath in Epitaphs of Steele.*

By these Comments it appears that by this time

King *Iames* is proclaimed: now does fresh blood leape into the cheekes of the Courtier the Souldier now hangs vp his armor, and is glad that he shall feede vpon the blessed fruites of peace: the Schollar sings hymnes in honor of the Muses, assuring himselfe now that *Helicon* will bee kept pure, because *Apollo* himselfe drinckes of it. Now the thriftie Citizen casts beyond the Moone, and seeing the golden age returned into the world againe, resolves to worship no Saint but money. Trades that lay dead & rotten, and were in all mens opinion vtterly dambd, started out of their trance, as though they had drunke of *Aqua Cælestis*, or Vnicornes horne, and swore to fall to their olde occupations. Taylors meant no more to be called Merchant-taylors but Merchants, for their shops were all lead forth in leases to be turned into ships, and with their sheares (in stead of a Rudder) would they haue cut the Seas (like Leuant Taffaty) and sayld to the West Indies for no worse stuffe to make hose and doublets of, than beaten gold: Or if the necessitie of

The ioyes
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the time (which was likely to stand altogether vpon brauery) should presse them to serue with their iron and Spanish weapons vpon their stalls, then was there a sharpe law made amongst them that no workman should handle any needle but that which had a pearle in his eye, nor any copper thimble, vnlesse it were linde quite through, or bumbasted with Siluer. What Mechanicall hardhanded Vulcanist (seeing the dice of Fortune run so sweetly, and resolving to strike whilst the iron was hote) but perswaded himselfe to bee Maister or head Warden of the company ere halfe a yeare went about? The worst players Boy stood vpon his good parts, swearing tragicall and busking oathes, that how villainously soeuer he randed, or what bad and vnlawfull action soeuer he entred into, he would in despite of his honest audience, be halfe a sharer (at least) at home, or else strowle (thats to say trauell) with some notorious wicked floundering company abroad. And good reason had these time-catchers to be led into this fooles paradise, for they sawe mirth in euery mans face, the streetes were plumd with gallants, Tabacconists fild vp whole Tauernes: Vintners hung out spicke and span new Iuy bushes (because they wanted good wine) and their old raine-beaten lattices marcht vnder other cullors, hauing lost both company and cullors before. *London* was neuer in the high way to preferment til now; now she resolved to stand vpon her pantoffles: now (and neuer till now) did she laugh to scorne that worme-eaten prouerbe of *Lincolne* was, *London* is, & *Yorke* shall bee, for she saw her selfe in better state then *Ierusalem*, she went more gallant then euer did *Antwerp*, was more courted by amorous and lustie suiters then *Venice* (the minion of *Italy*) more loftie towers stood (like a Coronet, or a spangled head-tire) about her Temples, then euer did about the beautifull forehead of *Rome*: *Tyrus* and *Sydon* to her were like two thatcht houses, to *Theobals*: y^e grand Cayr but a hogsty. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ*, She wept her belly full for all this. Whilst *Troy* was swilling sack and sugar, and mowsing fat venison, the mad Greekes made bonfires of their houses: Old *Priam* was drinking a health to the wooden horse, and before it could be pledged had his throat cut. Corne is no sooner ripe, but for all the pricking vp of his eares is pard off by the shins, and made to goe vpon stumps. Flowers no sooner budded, but they are pluckt vp and dye. Night walks at the heeles of the day, and sorrow enters (like a tauerne-bill) at the taile of our pleasures: for in the Appenine heighth of this immoderate ioy and securitie (that like Powles Steeple ouer-lookt the whole Citie) Behold, that miracle-worker, who in one minute turnd our generall mourning to a generall mirth, does nowe againe in a moment alter that gladnes to shrikes & lamentation.

Here would I faine make a full point, because posteritie should not be frighted with those miserable Tragedies, which now my Muse (as *Chorus*) stands ready to present. Time would thou hadst neuer bene made wretched by bringing them forth: Obliuion would in all the graues and sepulchres, whose ranke iawes thou hadst already closd vp, or shalt yet hereafter burst open, thou couldst likewise bury them for euer.

The
Plague.

A stiffe and freezing horror sucks vp the riuers of my blood: my haire stands an ende with the panting of my braines: mine eye balls are ready to start out, being beaten with the billowes of my teares: out of my weeping pen does the incke mournefully and more bitterly than gall drop on the palefac'd paper, euen when I do but thinke how the bowels of my sicke Country haue bene torne, *Apollo* therefore and you bewitching siluer-tongd

Muses, get you gone, Inuocate none of your names: Sorrow & Truth, sit you on each side of me, whilst I am deliuered of this deadly burden: prompt me that I may vtter ruthfull and passionate condolement: arme my trembling hand, that it may boldly rip vp and Anatomize the vlcerous body of this *Anthropophagized* plague: lend me Art (without any counterfeit shadowing) to paint and delineate to the life the whole story of this mortall and pestiferous battaile, & you the ghosts of those more (by many) then 40000. that with the virulent poison of infection haue bene driuen out of your earthly dwellings: you desolate hand-wringing widowes, that beate your bosomes ouer your departing husbands: you wofully distracted mothers that with disheued haire falne into swoonds, whilst you lye kissing the insensible cold lips of your breathlesse Infants: you out-cast and downe-troden Orphanes, that shall many a yeare hence remember more freshly to mourne, when your mourning garments shall looke olde and be for gotten; And you the *Genij* of all those emptied families, whose habitations are now among the *Antipodes*: Ioyne all your hands together, and with your bodies cast a ring about me: let me behold your ghastly vizages, that my paper may receiue their true pictures: *Eccho* forth your grones through the hollow truncke of my pen, and raine downe your gummy teares into mine Incke, that euen marble bosomes may be shaken with terrour, and hearts of Adamant melt into compassion.

Anthro-
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are
Scithians,
that feed
on mens
flesh.

What an vnmatchable torment were it for a man to be bard vp euery night in a vast silent Charnell-house? hung (to make it more hideous) with lamps dimly & slowly burning, in hollow and glimmering corners: where all the pauement should in stead of greene rushes, be strewed with blasted Rosemary: withered Hyacinthes, fatall Cipresse and Ewe, thickly mingled with heapes of dead mens bones: the bare ribbes of a father that begat him, lying there: here the Chaplesse hollow scull of a mother that bore him: round about him a thousand Coarses, some standing bolt vpright in their knotted winding sheets: others halfe mouldred in rotted coffins, that should suddenly yawne wide open, filling his nostrils with noysome stench, and his eyes with the sight of nothing but crawling wormes. And to keepe such a poore wretch waking, he should heare no noise but of Toads croaking, Screech-Owles howling, Mandrakes shrieking: were not this an infernall prison? would not the strongest-harted man (best with such a ghastly horror) looke wilde and runne madde? and die? And euen such a formidable shape did the diseased Citie appeare in: For he that durst (in the dead houre of gloomy midnight) haue bene so valiant, as to haue walkt through the still and melancholy streets, what thinke you should haue bene his musicke? Surely the loude grones of rauing sicke men; the struggling panges of soules departing: In euery house grieffe strinking vp an Allarum: Seuants crying out for maisters: wiues for husbands, parents for children, children for their mothers: here he should haue met some frantically running to knock vp Sextons; there, others fearfully sweating with Coffins, to steale forth dead bodies, least the fatall hand-writing of death should seale vp their doores. And to make this dismall consort more full, round about him Bells heauily tolling in one place, and ringing out in another: The dreadfulnessse of such an houre, is in-vtterable: let vs goe further.

If some poore man, suddeinly starting out of a sweete and golden slumber, should behold his house flaming about his eares, all his family destroyed in their sleepes by the

mercilesse fire; himselfe in the very midst of it, wofully and like a madde man calling for helpe: would not the misery of such a distressed soule, appeare the greater, if the rich Usurer dwelling next doore to him, should not stirre, (though he felt no part of the danger) but suffer him to perish, when the thrusting out of an arme might haue saued him? O how many thousands of wretched people haue acted this poore mans part? How often hath the amazed husband waking, found the comfort of his bedde lying breathlesse by his side! his children at the same instant gasping for life! and his seruants, mortally wounded at the hart by sicknes! the distracted creature, beats at death doores, exclames at windowes, his cries are sharp inough to pierce heauen, but on earth no eare is opend to receiue them.

And in this maner do the tedious minutes of the night stretch out the sorowes of ten thousand: It is now day, let vs looke forth and try what Consolation rizes with the Sun: not any, not any: for before the Iewell of the morning be fully set in siluer, hundred hungry graues stand gaping, and euery one of them (as at a breakfast) hath swallowed downe ten or eleuen liuelesse carcasses: before dinner, in the same gulfe are twice so many more deuoured: and before the sun takes his rest, those numbers are doubled: Threescore that not many houres before had euery one seuerall lodgings very delicately furnisht, are now thrust altogether into one close roome: a litle noisome roome: not fully ten foote square. Doth not this strike coldly to y^e hart of a worldly mizer? To some, the very sound of deaths name, is in stead of a passing-bell: what shall become of such a coward, being told that the selfe-same bodie of his, which now is so pampered with superfluous fare, so perfumed and bathed in odoriferous waters, and so gaily apparelled in varietie of fashio[n]s, must one day be throwne (like stinking carion) into a rank & rotten graue; where his goodly eies, y^t did once shoote foorth such amorous glances, must be beaten out of his head: his lockes that hang wantonly dangling, troden in durt vnderfoote: this doubtlesse (like thunder) must needs strike him into the earth. But (wretched man!) when thou shalt see, and be assured (by tokens sent thee from heauen) that to morroe thou must be tumbled into a Mucke-pit, and suffer thy body to be bruisde and prest with three-score dead men, lying slouently vpon thee, and thou to be vndermost of all! yea and perhaps halfe of that number were thine enemies! (and see how they may be reuenged, for the wormes that breed out of their putrifying carkasses, shall crawle in huge swarmes from them, and quite deuoure thee) what agonies will this strange newes driue thee into? If thou art in loue with thy selfe, this cannot choose but possesse thee with frenzie. But thou art gotten safe (out of the ciuill citie Calamitie) to thy Parkes and Pallaces in the Country, lading thy asses and thy Mules with thy gold, (thy god), thy plate, and thy Iewels: and the fruites of thy wombe thriftily growing vp but in one onely sonne, (the young Landlord of all thy carefull labours) him also hast thou rescued from the arrowes of infection; Now is thy soule iocund, and thy sences merry. But open thine eyes, thou Foole and behold that darling of thine eye, (thy sonne) turnd suddeinly into a lumpe of clay; the hand of pestilence hath smote him euen vnder thy wing: Now doest thou rent thine haire, blaspheme thy Creator, cursest thy creation, and basely descendest into brutish & vnmanly passions, threatning in despite of death & his Plague, to maintaine the memory of thy childe, in the euerlasting brest of Marble: a tombe must now defend him from tempests: and for that purpose, the swetty hinde (that digs the rent he paies thee out of the entrailes of the earth) he is sent for, to conuey foorth that burden of thy sorrow: But note how thy pride is disdained: that

weather-beaten sun-burnt drudge, that not a month since fawnd vpon thy Worship like a Spaniell, and like a bond-slaue, would haue stoopt lower than thy feete, does now stoppe his nose at thy presence, and is readie to set his Mastiue as hye as thy throate, to driue thee from his doore: all thy golde and siluer cannot hire one of those (whom before thou didst scorne) to carry the dead body to his last home: the Country round about thee shun thee, as a Basiliske, and therefore to *London* (from whose armes thou cowardly fledst away) poast vpon poast must be galloping, to fetch from thence those that may performe that Funerall Office: But there are they so full of graue-matters of their owne, that they haue no leisure to attend thine: doth not this cut thy very heart-strings in sunder? If that doe not, the shutting vp of the Tragical Act, I am sure will: for thou must be inforced with thine owne handes, to winde vp (that blasted flower of youth) in the last linnen, that he shall weare: vpon thine owne shoulders must thou beare part of him, thy amazed seruant the other: with thine owne hands must thou dig his graue, (not in the Church, or common place of buriall,) thou hast not fauour (for all thy riches) to be so happie, but in thine Orcharde, or in the proude walkes of thy Garden, wringing thy palsie-shaking hands in stead of belles, (most miserable father) must thou search him out a sepulcher.

My spirit growes faint with rowing in this Stygian Ferry, it can no longer endure the transportation of soules in this dolefull manner: let vs therefore shift a point of our Compasse, and (since there is no remedie, but that we must still bee vp and downe in this *Mare mortuum*) hoist vp all our sailes, and on the merry winges of a lustier winde seeke to arriue on some prosperous shoare.

Imagine then that all this while, Death (like a Spanish Leagar, or rather like stalking *Tamberlaine*) hath pitcht his tents, (being nothing but a heape of winding sheets tackt together) in the sinfully-polluted Suburbes: the Plague is Muster-maister and Marshall of the field: Burning Feauers, Boyles, Blaines, and Carbuncles, the Leaders, Lieutenants, Serieants, and Corporalls: the maine Army consisting (like *Dunkirke*) of a mingle-mangle, viz. dumpish Mourners, merry Sextons, hungry Coffin-sellers, scrubbing Bearers, and nastie Graue-makers: but indeed they are the Pioners of the Campe, that are employed onely (like Moles) in casting vp of earth and digging of trenches; Feare and Trembling (the two catch-polles of Death) arrest euery one: No parley will be graunted, no composition stood vpon, But the Allarum is strucke vp, the *Toxin* ringes out for life, and no voyce heard but *Tue, Tue, Kill, Kill*, the little Belles onely (like small shot) doe yet goe off, and make no great worke for wormes, a hundred or two lost in euery skirmish, or so: but alas thats nothing: yet by those desperat sallies, what by open setting vpon them by day, and secret Ambuscadoes by night, the skirts of *London* were pittifully pared off, by litle and litle: which they within the gates perceiuing, it was no boot to bid them take their heeles, for away they trudge thick and threefold; some some riding, some on foote: some without bootes, some in their slippers, by water, by land, In shoales swom they Westward, mary to *Grauesend* none went vnlesse they be driuen, for whosoeuer landed there neuer came back againe: Hacknies, water-men & Wagons, were not so terribly employed many a yeare; so that within a short time, there was not a good horse in Smith-field, nor a Coach to be set eyes on. For after the world had once run vpon the wheelles of the Pest-cart, neither coach nor caroach durst appeare in his likeness.

Let vs pursue these runnawayes no longer, but leaue them in the vnmercifull hands of

the Country-hard-hearted *Hobbinolls*, (who are ordaind to be their Tormentors,) and returne backe to the sieg of the Citie; for the enemie taking aduantage by their flight, planted his ordinance against the walls; here the Canons (like their great Bells) roard: the Plague tooke sore paines for a breach; he laid about him cruelly, ere he could get it, but at length he and his tiranous band entred: his purple colours were presently (with the sound of Bow-bell in stead of a trompet) aduanced, and ioynd to the Standard of the Citie; he marcht euen thorow Cheapside, and the capitall streets of *Troynouant*: the only blot of dishonor that struck vpon this Inuader, being this, that hee plaide the tyrant, not the conqueror, making hauocke of all, when he had all lying at the foote of his mercy. Men, women, & children dropt downe before him: houses were rifled, streetes ransact, beautifull maidens throwne on their beds, and ravisht by sicknes: rich mens Cofers broken open, and shared amongst prodigall heires and vnthriftie seruants: poore men vsde poorely, but not pittifully; he did very much hurt, yet some say he did very much good. Howsoeuer he behaued himselfe this intelligence runs current, that euery house lookt like *S*.

Bartholomewes Hospitall, and euery street like Bucklersbury, for poore *Methridatum* and *Dragon-water* (being both of them in all the world, scarce worth three-pence) were bort in euery corner, and yet were both drunke euery houre at other mens cost. *Lazarus* laie groning at euery mans doore, mary no *Diues* was within to send him a crum, (for all your Gold-finches were fled to the woods) nor a dogge left to licke vp his sores, for they (like Currs) were knockt downe like Oxen, and fell thicker than Acornes.

I am amazed to remember what dead Marches were made of three thousand trooping together; husbands, wiues & children, being led as ordinarily to one graue, as if they had gone to one bed. And those that could shift for a time, and shrink their heads out of the collar (as many did) yet went they (most bitterly) miching and muffled vp & downe with Rue and Wormewood stuf into their eares and nostrils, looking like so many Bores heads stuck with branches of Rosemary, to be serued in for Brawne at Christmas.

This was a rare worlde for the Church, who had wont to complaine for want of liuing, and now had more liuing thrust vpon her, than she knew how to bestow: to haue bene Clarke now to a parish Clarke, was better then to serue some foolish Iustice of Peace, or than the yeare before to haue had a Benefice. Sextons gaue out, if they might (as they hoped) continue these doings but a tweluemoneth longer, they and their posteritie would all ryde vpon footecloathes to the ende of the world. Amongst which worme-eaten generation, the three bald Sextons of limping *Saint Gyles*, *Saint Sepulchres*, and *Saint Olaues*, rulde the roaste more hotly, than euer did the *Triumui* of *Rome*. *Iehochanan*, *Symeon*, and *Eleazar*, neuer kept such a plaguy coyle in *Ierusalem* among the hunger-starued Iewes, as these three Sharkers did in their Parishes among naked Christians. Cursed they were I am sure by some to the pitte of hell, for tearing money out of their throates, that had not a crosse in their purses. But alas! they must haue it, it is their fee, and therefore giue the diuell his due: onely hearbe-wiues and gardeners (that neuer prayed before, vnlesse it were for Raine or faire Weather,) were now day and night vpon their marybones, that God would blesse the labors of those mole-catchers, because they sucke sweetnesse by this; for the price of flowers, Hearbes, and garlands, rose wonderfully, in so much that Rosemary which had wont to be sold for 12. pence an arnefull, went now for six shillings a handfull.

A fourth sharer likewise (these winding-sheete-weauers) deserues to haue my penne giue his lippes a Iewes Letter, but because he worships the Bakers good Lord & Maister, charitable S. *Clement* (whereas none of the other three euer had to do with any Saint) he shall scape the better: only let him take heede, that hauing all this yeare buried his praiers in the bellies of Fat ones, and plump Capon-eaters, (for no worse meat would downe this *Bly*-foxes stomach) let him I say take heede least (his flesh now falling away) his carcas be not plagu[ed] with leane ones, of whom (whilst the bill of *Lord haue mercy vpon vs*, was to be denied in no place) it was death for him to heare.

In this pittifull (or rather pittillesse) perplexitie stood *London*, forsaken like a Louer, forlorne like a widow, and disarmde of all comfort: disarmde I may well say, for fiue Rapiers were not stirring all this time, and those that were worne, had neuer bin seene, if any money could haue bene lent vpon them, so hungry is the Estridge disease, that it will deuoure euen Iron: let vs therefore with bag & baggage march away from this dangerous sore Citie, and visit those that are fled into the Country. But alas! *Decidis in Scyllam*, you are pepperd if you visit them, for they are visited already: the broad Arrow of Death, flies there vp & downe, as swiftly as it doth here: they that rode on the lustiest geldings, could not out-gallop the Plague, It ouer-tooke them, and ouer turnd them too, horse and foote.

You whom the arrowes of pestilence haue reacht at eighteen and twenty score (tho you stood far enough as you thought fro[m] the marke) you that sickning in the hie way, would haue bene glad of a bed in an Hospitall, and dying in the open fieldes, haue bene buried like dogs, how much better had it bin for you, to haue lyen fuller of byles and plague-sores than euer did Iob, so you might in that extremity haue receiued both bodily & spiritual comfort, which there was denied you? For those misbeleeuing Pagans, the plough-driuers, those worse then Infidels, that (like their Swine) neuer looke vp so high as Heauen: when Citizens boorded them they wrung their hands, and wisht rather they had falne into the hands of Spaniards: for the sight of a flat-cap was more dreadfull to a Lob, then the discharging of a Caliuier: a treble-ruffe (being once named the Merchants set) had power to cast a whole houshold into a cold sweat. If one new suite of Sackcloth had bene knowne to haue come out of Burchin-lane (being the common Ward-rope for all their Clowne-ships) it had bene enough to make a Market towne giue vp the ghost. A Crow that had bene seene in a Sunne-shine day, standing on the top of Powles, would haue bene better than a Beacon on fire, to haue raizd all the townes within ten miles of *London*, for the keeping her out.

Neuer let any man aske me what became of our Phisitions in this Massacre, they hid their Synodicall heads aswell as the prowdest: and I cannot blame them, for their Phlebotomies, Losinges, and Electuaries, with their Diacatholicons, Diacodions, Amulets, and Antidotes, had not so much strength to hold life and soule together, as a pot of *Pinders* Ale and a Nutmeg: their Drugs turned to durt, their simples [were] simple things: Galen could do no more good, than Sir Giles Goosecap: *Hipocrates, Auicen, Paraselsus, Rasis, Fernelius*, with all their succeeding rabble of Doctors and Water-casters, were at their wits end, or I thinke rather at the worlds end, for not one of them durst peepe abroad; or if any one did take vpon him to play the ventrous Knight, the Plague put him to his *Nonplus*; in such strange, and such changeable shapes did the Cameleon-like sicknes appeare, that they could not (with all the cunning in their budgets) make pursenets to take him napping.

Onely a band of Desper-veues, some fewe Empiricall madcaps (for they could neuer be worth veluet caps) turned themselues into Bees (or more properly into Drones) and went humming vp and downe, with hony-brags in their mouthes, sucking the sweetnes of Siluer (and now and then of *Aurum Potabile*) out of the poison of Blaines and Carbuncles: and these iolly Mountibanks clapt vp their bills vpon euery post (like a Fencers Challenge) threatning to canuas the Plague, and to fight with him at all his owne seuerall weapons: I know not how they sped, but some they sped I am sure, for I haue heard them band for the Heauens, because they sent those thither, that were wisht to tarry longer vpon earth.

I could in this place make your cheekes looke pale, and your hearts shake, with telling how some haue had 18. sores at one time running vpon them, others 10. and 12. many 4. and 5. and how those that haue bin foure times wounded by this yeares infection, haue dyed of the last wound, whilst others (that were hurt as often) goe vp and downe now with sounder limmes, then many that come out of *France*, and the *Nether-lands*. And descending from these, I could draw forth a Catalogue of many poore wretches, that in fieldes, in ditches, in common Cages, and vnder stalls (being either thrust by cruell maisters out of doores, or wanting all worldly succour but the common benefit of earth and aire haue most miserably perished. But to Chronicle these would weary a second *Fabian*.

We will therefore play the Souldiours, who at the end oof any notable battaile, with a kind of sad delight rehearse the memorable acts of their friends that lye mangled before them: some shewing how brauely they gaue the onset: some, how politickly they retirde: others, how manfully they gaue and receiued wounds: a fourth steps forth, and glories how valiantly hee lost an arme: all of them making (by this meanes) the remembrance euen of tragicall and mischieuous euent very delectable. Let vs striue to do so, discoursing (as it were at the end of this mortall siege of the plague) of the seuerall most worthy accidents, and strange birthes which this pestiferous yeare hath brought foorth: some of them yeelding Comicall and ridiculous stufte, others lamentable: a third kind, vpholding rather admiration, then laughter or pittie.

As first, to relish the pallat of lickerish expectation, and withall to giue an *Item* how sudden a stabber this ruffianly swaggerer (Death) is, You must beleeeue, that amongst all the weary number of those that (on their bare feete) haue trauaild (in this long and heauie vocation) to the Holy-land, one (whose name I could for neede bestow vpon you) but that I know you haue no need of it, (tho many want a good name) lying in that co[m]mon Innes of sick-men, his bed, & seeing the black & blew stripes of the plague sticking on his flesh, which he receiued as tokens (from heauen) that he was presently to goe dwell in the vpper world, most earnestly requested, and in a manner coniured his friend (who came to enterchange a last farewell) that hee would see him goe handsomely attirde into the wild Irish cuntry of wormes, and for that purpose to bestow a Coffin vpon him: his friend louing him (not because he was poore (yet he was poore) but because hee was a Scholler: Alack that the West Indies stand so farre from Vniuersities! and that a minde richly apparelled should haue a threed-bare body!) made faithfull promise to him, that he should be naid vp, he would boord him, and for that purpose went instantly to one of the new-found trade of Coffin-cutters, bespoke one, and (like the Surueyour of deaths buildings) gaue direction how this little Tenement should be framed, paying all the rent for it before hand. But note vpon what slippery ground life goes! little did he thinke to dwell in that

roome himselfe which he had taken for his friend: yet it seemed the common law of mortalitie had so decreede, for hee was cald into the colde companie of his graue neighbours an houre before his infected friend, and had a long lease (euen till doomes day) in the same lodging, which in the strength of health he went to prepare for another. What credit therefore is to be giuen to breath, which like an harlot will runne away with euey minute. How nimble is sicknesse, and what skill hath he in all the weapons he plays withall? The greatest cutter that takes vp the Mediterranean Ile in Powles for his Gallery to wake in, cannot ward off his blowes. Hees the best Fencer in the world: *Vincentio Sauuolo* is no body to him: He has his Mandrittaes, Imbrocataes, Stamazones, and Stoccataes at his fingers ends: heele make you giue him ground, though ye were neuer worth foote of land, and beat you out of breath, though *Aeolus* himselfe plaid vpo[n] your wind-pipe.

To witnes which, I will call forth a Dutchman (yet now hees past calling for, has lost his hearing, for his eares by this time are eaten off with wormes) who (though hee dwelt in *Bedlem*) was not mad, yet the lookes of the Plague (which indeed are terrible) put him almost out of his wits, for when the snares of this cunning hunter (the Pestilence) were but newly layd, and yet layd (as my Dutch-man smelt it out well enough) to intrap poore mens liues that meant him no hurt, away sneakes my clipper of the kings english, and (because Musket-shot should not reach him) to the Low-countries (that are built vpon butter-firkins, and Holland cheese) sailes this plaguie fugitiue, but death, (who hath more authoritie there then all the seauen Electors, and to shew him that there were other Low-countray besides his owne) takes a little Frokin (one of my Dutch runaways children) and sends her packing, into those Netherlands shee departed: O how pitifully lookt my Burgomaister, when he vnderstood that the sicknes could swim! It was an easie matter to scape the Dunkirks, but Deaths Gallyes made out after him swifter then the great Turkes. Which he perceiuing, made no more adoo, but drunke to the States fiue or sixe healths (because he would be sure to liue well) and backe againe comes he, to try the strength of English Beere: his old *Randeuous* of madmen was the place of meeting, where he was no sooner arriued, but the Plague had him by the backe, and arrested him vpon an *Exeat Regnum*, for running to the enemie, so that for the mad tricks he plaid to cozen our English wormes of his Dutch carcass (which had beene fatted heere) sicknesse and death clapt him vp in *Bedlem* the second time, and there he lyes, and there he shall lye till he rot before ile meddle any more with him.

But being gotten out of *Bedlem*, let vs make a iourney to *Bristow*, taking an honest knowne Citizen along with vs, who with other company travailing thither (onely for feare the aire of *London* should conspire to poison him) and setting vp his rest not to heare the sound of Bow-bell till next Christmas, was notwithstanding in the hye way singled out from his company, and set vpon by the Plague, who bad him stand, and deliuer his life. The rest at that word shifted for themselues, and went on, hee (amazed to see his friends flye, and being not able to defend himselfe, for who can defend himselfe meeting such an enemy?) yeilded, and being but about fortie miles from *London*, vsed all the slights he could to get loose out of the handes of death, and so to hide himselfe in his owne house, whereupon, he calld for help at the same Inne, where not long before he and his fellowe pilgrimes obtained for their money (mary yet with more prayers then a begger makes in three Termes) to stand and drinke some thirtie foote from the doore. To this house of

tipling iniquitie hee repaires againe, coniuring the *Lares* or walking Sprites in it, if it were Christmas (that if was well put in) and in the name of God, to succor and rescue him to their power out of the handes of infection, which now assaulted his body: th Diuell would haue bene afraid of this coniuration, but they were not, yet afraid they were it seemed, for presently the doores had their wodden ribs crusht in pieces, by being beaten together: the casements were shut more close than an Vsurers greasie veluet powch: the drawing windowes were hangd, drawne, and quartered: not a creuis but was stopt, not a mouse-hole left open, for all the holes in the house were most wickedly dambd vp: mine Hoste and Hostesse ranne ouer one another into the backe-side, the maydes into the Orchard, quiuering and quaking, and ready to hang themselues on the innocent Plumb-trees (for hanging to them would not be so sore a death as the Plague, and to die maides too! O horrible!) As for the Tapster, he fled into the Cellar, rapping out fiue or sixe plaine COUNTRY oathes, that hee would drowne himselfe in a most villanous Stand of Ale, if the sicke Londoner Stoode at the doore any longer. But stand there he must, for to go away (well) he cannot, but continues knocking and calling in a faint voyce, which in their eares sounded, as if some staring ghost in a Tragedie had exclaimed vpon *Rhadamanth*: he might knocke till his hands skte, and call till his heart akte for they were in a worse pickle within, then hee was without: hee being in a good way to go to Heauen, they being so frightened, that they scarce knew whereabouts Heauen stoode, onely they all cryed out, Lord haue mercy vpon vs, yet Lord haue mercy vpon vs was the only thing they feared. The dolefull catastrophe of all is, a bed could not be had for all *Babilon*: not a cup of drinke, no, nor cold water be gotten, though it had bin for *Alexander* the great: if a draught of *Aqua vitæ* might haue saued his soule, the towne denyed to do God that good seruice.

What miserie continues euer? the poore man standing thus at deaths doore, and looking euery minute when he should be let in, behold, another Londoner that had likewise bene in the *Frigida zona* of the COUNTRY, and was returning (like *Aeneas* out of hell) to the heauen of his owne home, makes a stand at this sight, to play the Physition, and seeing the complexion of his patient that he was sicke at heart, applies to his soule the best medicines that his comforting speech could make, for there dwelt no Poticary neere enough to helpe his body. Being therefore driuen out of all other shiftes, he leads him into a field (a bundle of Strawe, which with much adoe he bought for money, seruing in stead of a Pillow.) But the Destinies hearing the diseased partie complaine and take on, because hee lay in a field-bedde, when before hee would haue bene glad of a mattresse, for very spight cut the threade of his life, the crueltie of which dede made the other (that playd Charities part) at his wittes end, because hee knew not where to purchase tenne foote of ground for his graue: the Church nor Churchyard would let none of their lands. Maister Vicar was stricke dumbe, and could not giue the dead a good word, neither Clarke nor Sexton could be hired to execute their office; no, they themselues would first be executed: so that he that neuer handled shouell before, got his implements about him, ripped vp the belly of the earth, and made it like a graue, stript the cold carcasse, bound his shirt about his feete, pulled a linnen night cappe ouer his eyes, and so layde him in the rotten bedde of the earth, couering him with cloathes cut out of the same piece: and learning by his last words his name and habitation, this sad Trauailer arriues at *London*, deliuering to the amazed widdow and children, in stead of a father and a husband, onely the out-side of him, his apparrell. But by

the way note one thing, the bringer of these heauy tydings (as if he had liued long enough when so excellent a worke of pietie and pittie was by him finished) the very next day after his comming home, departed out of this world, to receiue his reward in the Spirituall Court of Heauen.

It is plaine therefore by the euidence of these two witnesses, that death, like a theife, sets vpon men in the hie way, dogs them into their owne houses, breakes into their bed chambers by night, assaults them by day, and yet no law can take hold of him: he deuoures man and wife: offers violence to their faire daughters: kils their youthfull sonnes, and deceiues them of their seruants: yea, so full of trecherie is he growne (since this Plague tooke his part) that no louers dare trust him, nor by their good wils would come near him, for he workes their downfall, euen when their delights are at the highest.

Too ripe a prooffe haue we of this, in a paire of Louers; the maide was in the pride of fresh bloud and beautie: she was that which to be now is a wonder, yong and yet chaste: the gifts of her mind were great, yet those which fortune bestowed vpon her (as being well descended) were not much inferiour: On this louely creature did a yong man so stedfastly fixe his eye, that her lookes kindled in his bosome a desire, whose flames burnt the more brightly, because they were fed with sweet and modest thoughts: *Hymen* was the God to whome he prayed day and night that he might marry her: his praier were receiued, at length (after many tempests of her deniall and frownes of kinsfolk) the element grew cleere & he saw y^e happy landing place, where he had long sought to ariue: the prize of her youth was made his own, and the solemne day appointed when it should be deliuered to him. Glad of which blessednes (for to a louer it is a blessednes) he wrought by all the possible art he could vse to shorten the expected houre, and bring it neerer: for, whether he feared the interception of parents, or that his owne soule, with excesse of ioy, was drowned in strange passions, he would often, with sighs mingled with kisses, and kisses halfe sinking in teares, prophetically tell her, that sure he should neuer liue to enioy her. To discredit which opinion of his, behold, the sunne had made hast and wakened the bridale morning. Now does he call his heart traitour, that did so falsly conspire against him: liuely bloud leapeth into his cheekes: hees got vp, and gaily attirde to play the bridegroom, shee likewise does as cunningly turne her selfe into a bride: kindred and friends are met together, soppes and muscadine run sweting vp and downe till they drop againe, to comfort their hearts, and because so many coffins pestred London Churches, that there was no roome left for weddings, Coaches are prouided, and away rides all the traine into the Countrey. On a monday morning are the lustie Louers on their iourney, and before noone are they alighted, entring (insteade of an Inne) for more state into a Church, where they no sooner appeared, but the Priest fell to his busines, the holy knot was a tying, but he that should fasten it, comming to this, *In sicknesse and in health*, there he stopt, for sodainely the bride tooke hold of, *in sicknes*, for *in health* all that stode by were in feare shee should neuer be kept. The maiden-blush into which her cheekes were lately died, now beganne to loose colour: her voyce (like a coward) would haue shrunke away, but that her Louer reaching her a hand, which he brought thither to giue her, (for hee was not yet made a full husband) did with that touch somewhat reuiue her; on went they againe so farre, till they mette with *For better, for worse*, there was she worse than before, and had not the holy Officer made haste, the ground on which she stood to be married might easily haue

beene broken vp for her buryall. All ceremonies being finished, she was ledde betweene two, not like a Bride, but rather like a Coarse, to her bed: *That*; must now be the table, on which the wedding dinner is to be serued vppe (being at this time, nothing but teares, and sighes, and lamentation) and Death is chiefe waiter, yet at length her weake heart wrastling with the pangs, gaue them a fall, so that vp shee stode againe, and in the fatall funerall Coach that carried her forth, was she brought back (as vpon a beere) to the Citie: but see the malice of her enemy that had her in chase, vpon the wensday following being ouertaken, was her life ouercome, Death rudely lay with her, and spold her of a maden head in spite of her husband. Oh the sorrow that did round beset him! now was his diuination true, she was a wife, yet continued a maide: he was a husband and a widdower, yet neuer knew his wife: she was his owne, yet he had her not: she had him, yet neuer enioyed him: heere is a strange alteration, for the rosemary that was washt in sweete water to set out the Bridall, is now wet in teares to furnish her buriall: the musike that was heard to sound forth dances, can not now be heard for the ringing of belles: all the comfort that happened to either side being this, that he lost her, before she had time to be an ill wife, and she left him, ere he was able to be a bad husband.

Better fortune, had this Bride, to fall into the handes of the Plague, then one other of that fraile female sex, (whose picture is next to be drawne) had to scape out of them. An honest cobbler (if at least cobblers can be honest, that liue altogher amongst wicked soales) had a wife, who in the time of health treading her shooe often awry, determined in the agony of a sicknesse (which this yeare had a saying to her) to fall to mending aswell as her husband did. The bed that she lay vpon (being as she thought or rather feared) the last bed that should euer beare her, (for many other beds had borne her you must remember) and the worme of sinne tickling her conscience, vp she she calls her very innocent and simple husband out of his vertuous shoppe, where like Iustice he sat distributing amongst the poore, to some, halfe-penny peeces, penny peeces to some, and two-penny peeces to others, so long as they would last, his prouident care being alway, that euery man and woman should goe vpright. To the beds side of his plaguy wife approacheth Monsieur Cobler, to vnderstand what deadly newes she had to tell him, and the rest of his kinde neighbours that there were assembled: such thicke teares standing in the both the gutters of his eies, to see his beloued lie in such a pickle, that in their salt water, all his vtterance was drown: which she perceiuing, wept as fast as he: But by the warme counsell that sat about the bed, the shower ceast, she wiping her cheekes with the corner of one of the sheetes: and he, his sullied face, with his leatherene apron[.] At last, two or three sighes (like a *Chorus* to the tragedy ensuing) stepping out first, wringing her handes (which gaue the better action) shee told the pittifull *Actæon* her husband, that she had often done him wrong: hee onely shooke his head at this, and cried humh! which humh, she taking as the watch-word of his true patience, vnrauelled the bottome of her frailetie at length, and concluded, that with such a man (and named him, but I hope you would not haue me follow her steppes and name him too) she practised the vniuersall & common Art of grafting, and that vpon her good mans head, they two had planted a monstrous paire of inuisible hornes: At the sound of the hornes, my cobbler started vppe like a march Hare, and began to looke wilde: his awle neuer ranne through the sides of a boote, as that word did through his heart: but being a polliticke cobbler, and remembering what peece of worke he

was to vnder-lay, stroking his beard, like some graue headborough of the Parish, and giuing a nodde, as who should say, goe on, bade her goe on indeed, clapping to her sore soule, this generall salue, that *All are sinners, and we must forgiue, &c.* For hee hoped by such wholesome Phisicke, (as Shooemakers waxe being laide to a byle) to draw out all the corruption of her secret villainies. She good heart being tickled vnder gilles, with the finger of these kind speeches, turnes vp the white of her eye, and fetches out an other. An other, (O thou that art trained vp in nothing but to handle peeces:) Another hath discharged his Artillery against thy castle of fortification: here was passion predominant: *Vulcan* strooke the colers ghost (for he was now no cobbler) so hardy vpon his breast, that he cryed Oh! his neighbours taking pitt[i]e to see what terrible stitches pulld him, rubde his swelling temples with the iuice of patience, which (by vertue of the blackish sweate that stode realing on his browes, and had made them supple) entred very easily into his now parlous-vnderstanding scull: so that he left wenching, and sate quiet as a Lamb, falling to his old vomite of councell, which he hasd cast vp before, and swearing (because he was in strong hope, this shoo should wring him no more) to seale her a generall acquittance, prict forward with this gentle spur, her tongue mends his pace, so that in her confession shee ouertooke others, whose bootes had beene set all night on the Coblers laast, bestowing vpon him the poesie of their names, the time, and place, to thintent it might be put into his next wifes wedding ring. And although shee had made all these blots in his tables, yet the bearing of one man false (whom she had not yet discouered) stucke more in her stomacke than all the rest. O valiant Cobbler, cries out one of the Auditors, how art thou set vpon? how art thou tempted? happy arte thou, that thou art not in thy shop, for in stead of cutting out peeces of leather, thou wouldst doubtlesse now pare away thy hart: for I see, and so do all thy neighbours here (thy wifes ghostly fathers) see that a small matter would now cause thee to turne turk, & to meddle with no more patches: but to liue within the compasse of thy wit: lift not vp thy collar: be not horne mad: thanke heauen that the murther is reueald: study thou *Baltazars* Part in *Ieronimo*, for thou hast more cause (though lesse reason) than he, to be glad and sad.

Well, I see thou art worthy to haue patient *Griseld* to thy wife, for thou bearest more than she: thou shewest thy selfe to be a right cobbler, and no sowter, that canst thus cleanly clowt vp the seam-rent sides of thy affection. With this learned Oration the Cobbler was tutord: layd his finger on his mouth, and cried *paucos palabros*: he had sealed her pardon, and therefore bid her not feere: heer vpon she named the malefactor, I could name him too, but that he shall liue to giue more Coblers heads the Bastinado. And told, that on such a night when he supt there (for a Lord may sup with a cobbler, that hath a pretty wench to his wife) when the cloth, O treacherous linnen! was taken vp, and *Menelaus* had for a parting blow, giuen the other his fist: downe she lights (this half-sharer) opening the wicket, but not shutting him out of the wicket, but conueis him into a by-room (being the ward-rob of old shooes and leather) from whence the vnicorne cobbler (that dreamt of no such spirits) being ouer head and eares in sleepe, his snorting giuing the signe that he was cock-sure, softly out-steales sir *Paris*, and to *Helenaes* teeth prooued himselfe a true Troian.

This was the creame of her confusion, which being skimd off from the stomach of her conscience, we looked euery minute to goe thither, where we should be farre enough out of the Coblers reach. But the Fates laying their heades together, sent a repriue, the plague

that before meant to pepper her, by little and little left her company: which newes being blowne abroad, Oh lamentable! neuer did the old buskind trgedy beginne till now: for the wiues of those husbands, with whom she had playd at fast and loose, came with nayles sharpened for the nonce, like cattes, and tongues forkedly cut like the stings of adders, first to scratch out false *Cressidaes* eyes, and then (which was worse) to worry her to dath with scolding.

But the matter was tooke vp in a Tauerne; the case was altered, and brought to a new reckoning (mary the blood of the *Burdeaux* grape was first shead about it) but in the end, all anger on euery side was powred into a pottle pot, & there burnt to death. Now whether this Recantation was true, or whether the steeme of infection, fuming vp (like wine) into her braines made her talke thus idlely, I leaue it to the Iury.

And whilst they are canuasing her case, let vs see what dooings the Sexton of *Stepney* hath: whose ware-houses being all full of dead commodities, sauing one: that one hee left open a whole night (yet was it halfe full too) knowing y^e theeues this yeare were too honest to break into such cellers. Besides those that were left there, had such plaguy pates, that none durst meddle with them for their liues. About twelue of the clock at midnight, when spirites walke, and not a mowse dare stirring, because cattes goe a catter-walling: Sinne, that all day durst not shew his head, came reeling out of an ale-house, in the shape of a drunkard, who no sooner smelt the winde, but he thought the ground vnder him danced the Canaries: houses seemed to turne on the toe, and all things went round: insomuch, that his legges drew a paire of Indentures, betweene his body and the earth, the principal couenant being that he for his part would stand to nothing what euer he saw: euery tree that came in his way, did he iustle, and yet challenge it the next day to fight with him. If he had clipt but a quarter so much of the Kings siluer, as he did of the Kings english, his carcas had long ere this bene carrion for Crowes. But he liued by gaming, and had excellent casting, yet seldome won, for he drew reasonable good hands, but had very bad feete, that were not able to carry it away. This setter vp of Malt-men, being troubled with the staggers, fell into the self-same graue, that stood gaping wide open for a breakfast next morning, and imagining (when he was in) that he had stumbled into his owne house, and that all his bedfellowes (as they were indeede) were in their dead sleepe, he, (neuer complaining of colde, nor calling for more sheete) soundly takes a nap till he snores again: In the morning the Sexton comes plodding along, and casting vpon his fingers ends what he hopes y^e dead pay of that day will come too, by that which he receiued the day before, (for Sextons now had better doings than either Tauernes or bawdy-houses) In that siluer contemplation, shrugging his shoulders together, he steppes ere he be aware on the brimmes of that pit, into which this worshipper of *Bacchus* was falne, where finding some dead mens bones, and a scull or two, that laie scattered here and there; before he lookt into this Coffe of wormes, those he takes vp, and flinges them in: one of the sculls battered the sconce of the sleeper, whilst the bones plaide with his nose; whose blowes waking his mustie worship, the first word that he cast vp, was an oath, and thinking the Cannes had flyen about, cryed zoundes, what do you meane to cracke my mazer? the Sexton smelling a voice, (feare being stronger than his heart) beleued verily some of the coarses spake to him, vpon which, feeling himselfe in a cold sweat, tooke his heeles, whilst the Goblin scrambled vp and ranne after him: But it appeares the Sexton had the lighter foote, for he

ran so fast, that hee ranne out of his wittes, which being left behinde him, he had like to haue dyed presently after.

A meryer bargaine than the poore Sextons did a Tincker meete withall in a Countrey Towne; through which a Citizen of *London* being driuen (to keepe himselfe vnder the lee-shore in this tempestuous contagion) and casting vp his eye for some harbour, spied a bush at the ende of a pole, (the auncient badge of a Countrey Ale-house:) Into which as good lucke was, (without any resistance of the Barbarians, that all this yeare vsed to keepe such landing places) veiling his Bonnet, he strucke in. The Host had bene a mad Greeke, (mary he could now speake nothing but English,) a goodly fat Burger he was, with a belly Arching out like a Beere-barrell, which made his legges (that were thicke & short, like two piles driuen vnder *London*-bridge) to stradle halfe as wide as the toppe of Powles, which vpon my knowledge hath bene burnt twice or thrice. A leatherene pouch hung at his side, that opened and shut with a Snap-hance, and was indeed a flaske for gun-powder when King *Henry* went to *Bulloigne*. An Antiquary might haue pickt rare matter out of his Nose, but that it was worme-eaten (yet that proued it to be an auncient Nose:) In some corners of it, there were blewish holes that shone like shelles of mother of Pearle, and to doo his nose right, Pearles had bene gathered out of them: other were richly garnisht with Rubies, Chrisolites and Carbunckles, which glistered so oriently, that the Hamburgers offered I know not how many Dollars, for his companie in an East-Indian voyage, to haue stode a nightes in the Poope of their Admirall, onely to saue the charges of candles. In conclusion, he was an Host to be ledde before an Emperour, and though he were one of the greatest men in all the shire, his bignes made him not proude, but he humbled himselfe to speake the base language of a Tapster, and vpon the Londoners first arriual, cryed welcome, a cloth for this Gentleman: the Linnen was spread, and furnisht presently with a new Cake and a Can, the roome voided, and the Guest left (like a French Lord) attended by no bodie: who drinking halfe a Can (in conceit) to the health of his best friend in the Citie, which laie extreame sicke, and had neuer more neede of health, I knowe not what qualmes came ouer his stomach, but immediately he fell downe without vttering any more wordes, and neuer rose againe.

Anon (as it was his fashion) enters my puffing Host, to relieue (with a fresh supply out of his Celler,) the shrinking Can, if hee perceiued it stode in daunger to be ouerthrowne. But seeing the chiefe Leader dropt at his feete, and imagining at first hee was but wounded a little in the head, held vp his gowty golles and blest himselfe, that a Londoner (who had wont to be the most valiant rob-pots) should now be strooke downe only with two hoopes: and therevpon iogd him, sembling out these comfortable words of a souldier, If thou be a man stand a thy legges: he stird not for all this: wherevpon the Maydes being raisde (as it had bene with a hue and cry) came hobling into the roome, like a flocke of Geese, and hauing vpon search of the bodie giuen vp this verdict, that the man was dead, and murdered by the Plague; Oh daggers to all their hearts that heard it! Away trudge the wenches, and one of them hauing had a freckled face all her life time, was perswaded presently that now they were the tokens, and had liked to haue turned vp her heeles vpon it: My gorbelly Host, that in many a yeare could not without grunting, crawle ouer a threshold but two foote broad, leapt halfe a yarde from the coarse (It was measured by a Carpenters rule) a nimble as if his guts had bene taken out by the hangman: out of the

House he wallowed presently, being followed with two or three dozen of napkins to drie vp the larde, that ranne so fast downe his heeles, that all the way he went, was more greazie than a kitchin-stuffe-wifes basket: you would haue sworne, it had beene a barrell of Pitch on fire, if you had looked vpon him, for such a smoakie clowde (by reason of his owne fattie hotte steeme compassed him rounde, that but for his voyce, hee had quite beene lost in that stincking myst: hanged himselfe hee had without all question (in this pittifull taking) but that hee feared the weight of his in tollerable paunch, would haue burst the Roape, and so hee should bee put to a double death. At length the Towne was raised, the Countrey came downe vpon him, and yet not vpon him neither, for after they vnderstood the Tragedie, euery man gaue ground, knowing my pursie Ale-cunner could not follow them: what is to be done in this straunge Allarum? The whole village is in daunger to lye at the mercy of God, and shall be bound to curse none, but him for it: they should do well therefore, to set fire on his house, before the Plague scape out of it, least it forrage higher into the Countrey, and knocke them downe, man, woman, and childe, like Oxen, whose blood (they all sweare) shall be required at his handes. At these speches my tender-hearted Hoste, fell downe on his maribones, meaning indeede to entreat his audience to bee good to him; but they fearing hee had beene pepperd too, as well as the Londoner, tumbled one vpon another, and were ready to breake their neckes for haste to be gone: yet some of them (being more valiant then the rest, because they heard him roare out for some helpe) very desperately stept backe, and with rakes and pitch-forkes lited the gulch from the ground: Co[n]cluding (after they had laid their hogsheads together, to draw out som hoesome counsel) that whosoeuer would venter vpon the dead man & bury him, should haue fortie shillings (out of the common towne-purse, though it would bee a great cut to it) with the loue of the Churchwardens and Side-men, during the terme of life. This was proclaimed, but none durst appeare to vndertake the dreadfull execution: they loued money well, mary the plague hanging ouer any mans head that should meddle with it in that sort, they all vowe to dye beggers before it should be Chronicled they kild themselues for forty shillings: and in that braue resulation, euery one with bagge & baggage marcht home, barricadoing their doores & windowes with firbushes, ferne, and bundels of straw to keepe out pestilence at the staues end.

At last a Tinker came sounding through the Towne, mine Hosts house being the auncient watring place where he did vse to cast Anchor. You must vnderstand hee was none of those base rascally Tinkers, that with a ban-dog and a drab at their tayles, and a pike-staffe on their necks, will take a purse sooner then stop a kettle: No, this was a deuout Tinker, he did honor God *Pan*: a Musicall Tinker, that vpon his kettle-drum could play any Countrey dance you cald for, and vpon Holly-dayes had earned money by it, when no Fidler could be heard of. Hee was onely feared when he stalked through some townes where Bees were, for he strucke so sweetely on the bottome of his Copper instrument, that he would emptie whole Hiues, and leade the swarmes after him only by the sound.

This excellent egregious Tinker calls for his draught (being a double Iugge) it was fild for him, but before it came to his nose, the lamentable tale of the Londoner was tolde, the Chamber-doore (where hee lay) being thrust open with a long pole, (because none durst touch it with their hands) and the Tinker bidden (if he had the heart) to goe and see if hee knew him. The Tinker being not to learne what vertue the medicine had which hee held at

his lippes powred it downe his throate merily, and crying trilill, he feares no plagues. In hee stept, tossing the dead body too and fro, and was sorrie hee knew him not: Mine Hoste that with grieffe began to fall away villanously, looking very ruthfully on the Tinker, and thinking him a fit instrument to be playd vpon, offred a crowne out of his owne purse, if he would bury the partie. A crowne was a shrewd temptation to a Tinker; many a hole might he stop, before he could picke a crowne of it, yet being a subtill Tinker (& to make all Sextons pray for him, because hee would raise their fees) an Angell he wanted to be his guide, and vnder ten shillings (by his ten bones) he would not put his finger into the fire. The whole parish had warning of this presently, thirtie shillings was saued by the bargaine, and the Towne like to be saued too, therefore ten shillings was leuyed out of hand, put into a rag, which was tyed to the ende of a long pole and deliuered (in sight of all the Parish, who stood aloofe stopping their noses) by the Headboroughs owne selfe in proper person, to the Tinker, who with one hand receiued the money, and with the other struck the boord, crying hey, a fresh double pot. Which armour of prooffe being fitted to his body, vp he hoists the Londoner on his backe (like a Schoole-boy) a Shouell and Pick axe standing ready for him; And thus furnished, into a field some good distance from the Towne he beares his deadly loade, and there throwes it downe, falling roundly to his tooles, vpon which the strong beere hauing set an e[dg]e, they quickly cut out a lodging in the earth for the Citizen. But the Tinker knowing that wormes needed no apparell, sauing onely sheetes, stript him starke naked, but first diu'de nimbly into his pocket, to see what linings they had, assuring himselfe, that a Londoner would not wander so farre without siluer: his hopes were of the right stamp, for from out of his pockets he drew a leatherne bagge with seuen pounds in it: this musicke made the Tinkers heart dance, he quickly tumbled his man into the graue, hid him ouer head and eares in dust, bound vp his cloathes in a bundle, & carying that at the end of his staffe on his shoulder, with the purse of seuen pounds in his hand, backe againe comes he through the towne, crying aloud, Haue yee any more Londoners to bury, hey downe a downe dery, haue ye any more Londoners to bury: the hobbinolls running away from him, as if he had beene the dead Citizens ghost, & he marching away from them in all the hast he could, with the song still in his mouth.

You see therefore how dreadfull a fellow Death is, making fooles euen of wisemen, and cowards of the most valiant; yea, in such a base slauerie hath it bound mens sences, that they haue no power to looke higher than their owne roofes, but seeme by their turkish and barberous actions to belieue that there is no felicitie after this life, and that (like beasts) their soules shall perish with their bodyes. How many vpon sight onely of a Letter (sent from *London*) haue started backe, and durst haue layd their saluation vpon it, that the plague might be folded in that empty paper, belieuing verily, that the arme of Omnipotence could neuer reach them, vnlesse it were with some weapon drawne out of the infected Citie: in so much that euen the Western Pugs receiuing money there, haue tyed it in a bag at the end of their barge, and so trailed it through the Thames, least plague-sores sticking vpon shillings, they should be naild vp for counterfeits when they were brought home.

More ventrous than these block-heads was a certaine Iustice of peace, to whose gate being shut (for you must know that now there is no open house kept) a company of wilde fellows being lead for robbing an Orchard, the stout-hearted Constable rapt most

couragiously, and would haue about with none, but the Iustice himselfe, who at last appeared in his likenesse aboue at a window, inquiring why they summond a parlie. It was deiliuered why: the case was opened to his examining wisdom, and that the euill doers were onely Londoners: at the name of Londoners, the Iustice clapping his hand on his brest (as who should say, Lord haue mercie vpon vs) started backe, and being wise enough to saue one, held his nose hard betweene his fore-finger and his thumbe, and speaking in that wise (like the fellow that described the villainous motion of *Iulius Cæsar* and the Duke of *Guize*, who (as he gaue it out) fought a combat together) pulling the casement close to him, cryed out in that quaile-pipe voice, that if they were Londoners, away with them to Limbo: take onely their names they were sore fellowes, and he would deale with them when time should serue: meaning, when the plague and they should not be so great together, and so they departed: the very name of Londoners being worse than ten whetstones to sharpen the sword of Iustice against them.

I could fill a large volume, and call it the second part of the hundred mery tales, onely with such ridiculous stuffe as this of the Iustice, but *Dij meliora*, I haue better matters to set my wits about: neither shall you wring out of my pen (though you lay it on the rack) the villainies of that damned Keeper, who kild all she kept; it had bene good to haue made her keeper of the common Iayle, and the holes of both Counters, for a number that lye there, that wish to be rid out of this motley world, shee would haue tickled them, and turned them ouer the thumbs. I will likewise let the Church-warden in Thames streete sleepe (for hees now past waking) who being requested by one of his neighbors to suffer his wife or child (that was then dead) to lye in the Churchyard, answered in a mocking sort, he kept that lodging for himselfe and his houshold: and within three dayes after was driuen to hide his head in a hole himselfe. Neither will I speake a word of a poore boy (seruant to a Chandler) dwelling thereabouts, who being struck to the heart by sicknes, was first caryed away by water, to be left any where, but landing being denied by an army of browne bill-men that kept the shore, back againe was he brought, and left in an out-celler, where lying groueling and groning on his face (amongst fagots, but not one of the set on fire to comfort him (there continued all night, and dyed miserably for want of succor. Nor of another poore wetch in the Parish of *Saint Mary Ouereyes*, who being in the morning throwne, as the fashion is, into a graue vpon a heape of carcasses, that kayd for their complement, was found in the afternoone, gasping and gaping for life: but by these tricks, imagining that many a thousand haue bebe turned wrongfully off the ladder of life, and praying that *Derick* or his executors may liue to do those a good turne, that haue done so to others: *Hic finis Priami*, heres an end of an old Song.

Et iam tempus Equum fumantia souere colla.

FINIS.

