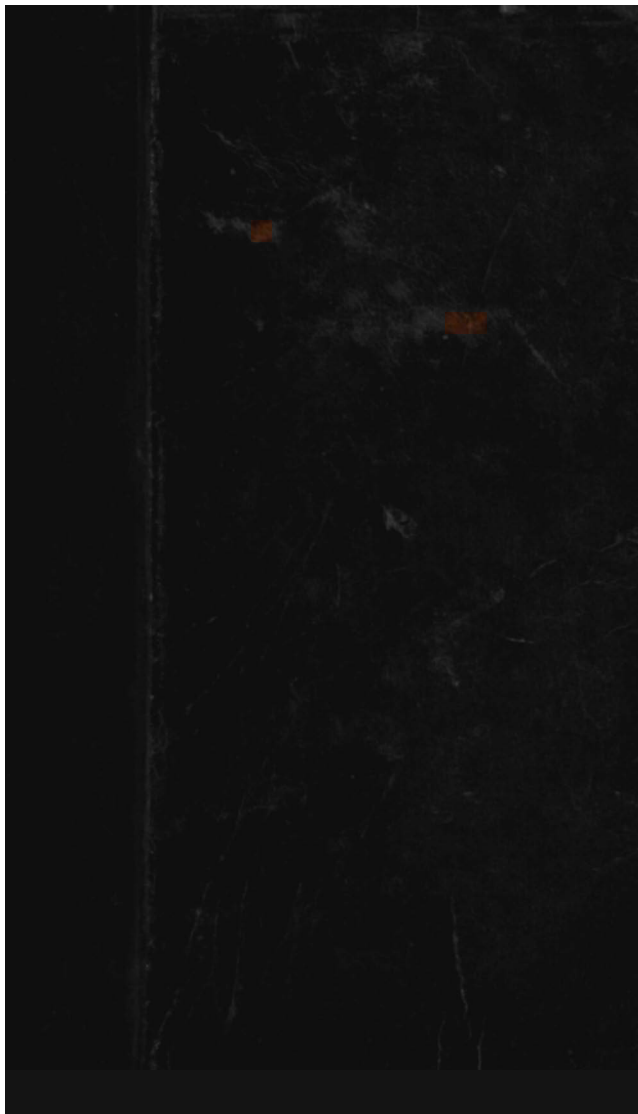
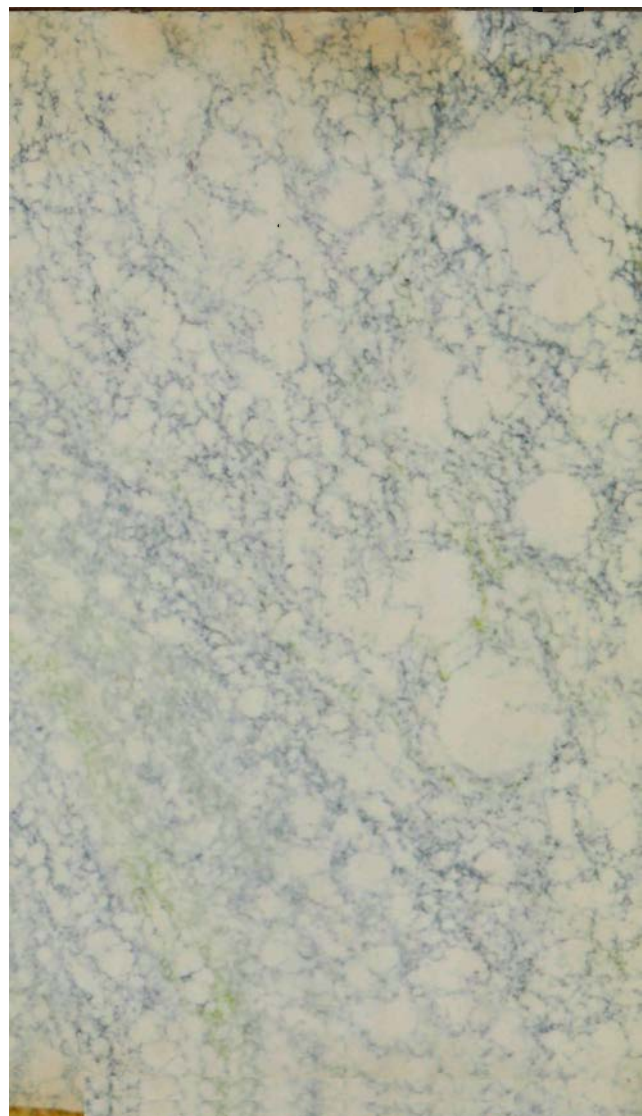
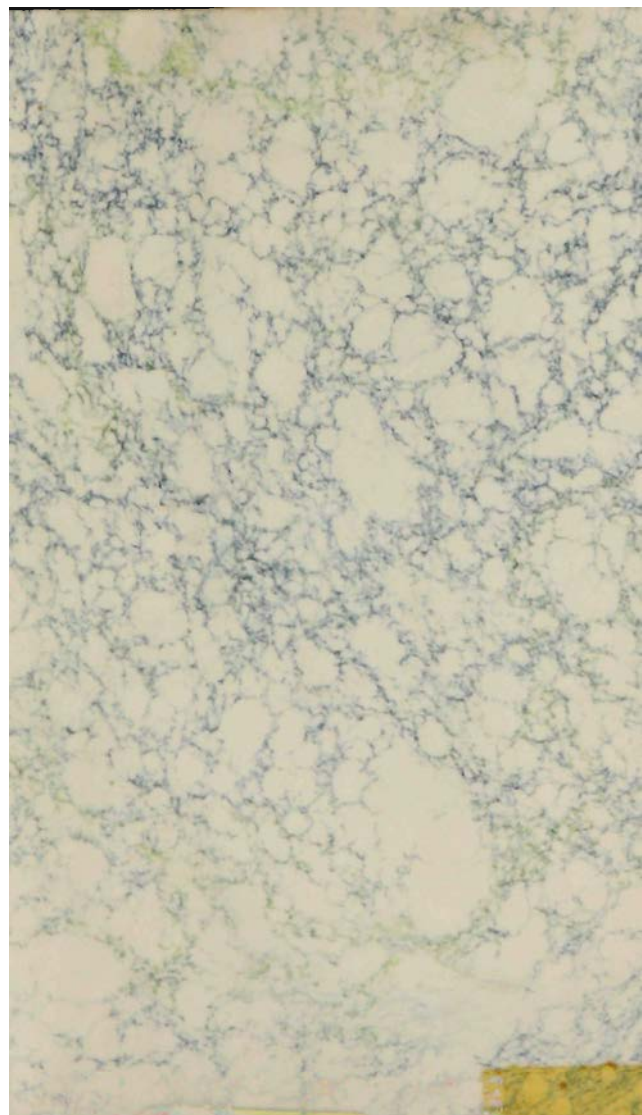








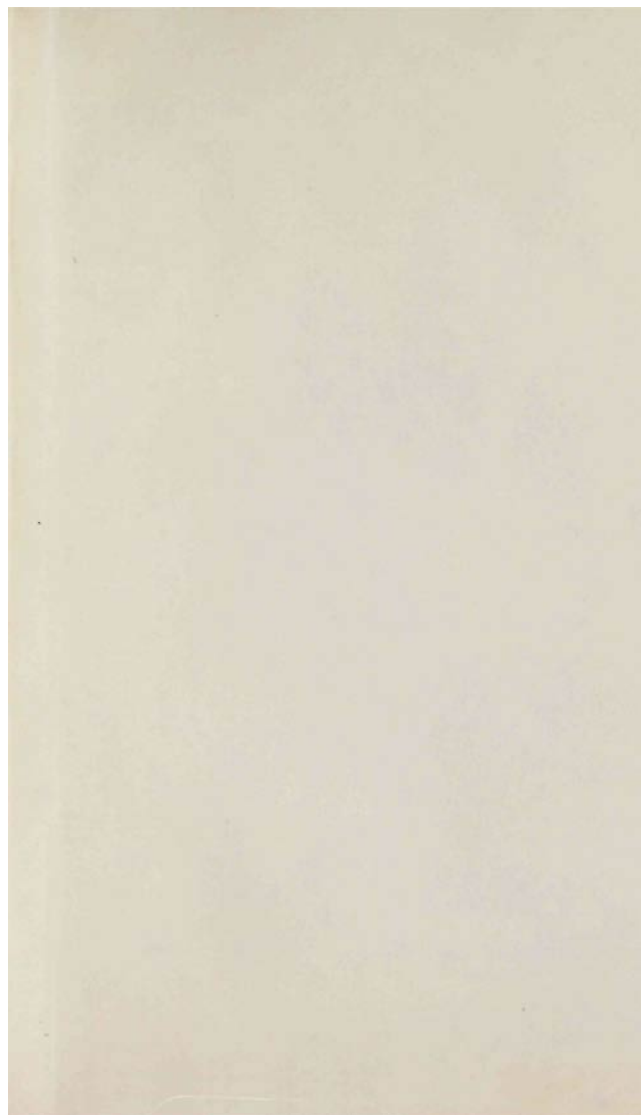
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A
RECORD
OF

ANCIENT HISTORIES,
Entituled in Latine:

Gesta Romanorum.

Discourſing of ſundry exam-
ples, for the advancement of
Vertue, and the abandoning
of Vice: No leſſe pleaſant in
Reading, than profitable
in Practiſe.

Now newly Peruſed and Cor-
rected, with ſome thing
added, By
R. R.

LONDON *a.*
Printed by *Richard Biſhop.*

Mary Hodgson
The Yongoe Book

398 22

G393 En.

1648

Spec. copy



THE HISTORIE OF *Gesta Romanorum.*

The Argument.

Mans soule is dearly beloved of God her Father. And yet for sundry good graces shee is tempted of the Divell by three divers meanes, at three severall ages in this mortall life: if she resist and overcome the same, shee is hereby adopted to the fruition of Matrimoniall ioy in heaven, with Christ the Sonne of God.

The first Historie.



Sometimes there dwelt in Rome a mightie Emperour, which had a faire creature to his Daughter, named Achalanta, whom divers great Lords, and many noble Knights desired to have to wife. This Achalanta was wondrous swift of foot: wherefore such a law was made, that no man should have her to wife except hee could out-runne her

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and take her by swiftnesse off foot. It befell that many came to run with her, but could not overtake her. At the last there came a Knight named Pomeis, unto her Father, and said to him: My Lord, if it please you to give me your daughter to wife, I will run with her. When said her father, there is a law made, that who so will have her to wife must first run with her: and if hee overtake her not he shall loose his head, and if he overtake her, then shall I wed her unto him.

And when the Emperour had told him all the perill that might fall in the winning of her, the Knight voluntarily granted to abide that jeopardy. When the Knight provided him three balls of gold against the running. And when they had begun to runne a litle space, the young Lady overranne him: then the Knight threw forth before her the first ball of gold: and when the Damsell saw the ball, shee stooped and tooke it up, and in the meane while the Knight gat before her, but that abailed little: for then shee perceived that shee ran so fast, that in short space shee gat before him againe. And then he threw forth the second ball of gold, and shee stooped as shee did before and tooke it up, and in that while the

the

the knight gat befoze her againe : which this young Damsell seeing , constrayned her selfe , and ranne so fast, that shee soone had him at a vantage againe , and was afoze him: now by that time they were nigh the marke where they shoulde abide, wherefoze the knight toze w forth the third Ball befoze her, and she stooped downe to take up the Ball , and while shee was taking up the third Ball, the knight gat befoze her, and was first at the marke. And thus was she wonne.

The Morall.

By this Emperour is understood the Father of Heaben , and by the Damsell is understood the Soule of man with whom many Devils desire to run , and to deceiue her thzough their temptations, but shee withstandeth them mightily , and overcommeth them. And when hee hath done his worst , and may not speed, then makes hee thzee Bals of Gold , and casteth them befoze her in the thzee ages of man, that is to say, in youth, in manhood, and in old age. In youth the Devill casteth the Ball of Lecherie befoze her , that is to say, the desire of the flesh : neverthelesse for all this ball, oftentimes man overcommeth the di-

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bell, by acknowledging of his finnes to God, by hearty repentance and amendment of life. The second ball is the ball of Pride, the which the Diuell casteth to man in his manhood, that is to say, in his middle age: but this ball, man oftentimes overcome as he did the first, but let him beware of the third ball, which is Covetousnesse, that the Diuell casteth to man in his old age, which is dreadfull: for except a man may overcome this Ball, with the other two, he shall lose his Honour, that is to say, the Kingdome of Heaven. For when a man burneth in Covetousnesse, he thinketh not on ghostly Riches (for ever his heart is set on worldly goods) and reckoneth not of Prayers, nor of wel-doing: and thus loseth he his heritage, to the which God hath bought him with his precious blood: unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ bring us all.

The Argument.

As God alloteth divers men divers callings and estates of living in this World, so is every man tried by the rules of life and doctrine, whether his practise agree with his profession, in profiting himselfe without preiudice to others, wherein if he

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hee so hold himselfe content; for such a Sonnethe heavenly Father hath planted a Tree of heavenly treasure in the life that shall be everlasting.

The second Historie.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a wise and mightie Emperour, named Anselme, which bare in his armes a shield of Silver with five red Roses. This Emperour had thre Sonnes whom hee loved much. hee had also continuall warre with the King of Egypt: in which warre hee lost all his temporall goods, except a precious Tree. It fortuned after on a day that hee gave battaile to the same King of Egypt wherein he was grievously wounded. Nevertheless hee obtained the victory, notwithstanding hee had his deadly wound, wherefore while he lay at point of death, he called unto him his eldest Sonne and said: My deare and wellbeloved Sonne, all my temporall riches I have spent, and almost nothing is left me, except a precious Tree, the which standeth in the midst of mine Empire: I give to thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the same Tree. O my reverend Father, (quoth hee) I thank you much.

When

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Then said the Emperour, call to mee my second Sonne. Anon the eldest Sonne greatly ioying of his fathers gift, called in his brother. And when hee came the Emperour said: My deare sonne (quoth he) I may not make my testament, for as much as I have spent all my goods, except a tree which standeth in mine Empire, of the which Tree I bequeath to thee all that is great and small. Then answered hee and said: My reuerend father, I thank you much. Then said the Emperour, call to me my third Sonne, and so it was done, And when he was come, the Emperour said: My deare sonne, I must die of these woundes, and I have only a precious tree, of which I have bequeathed thy Brethren their portions, and to thee I bequeath thy portion: for I will that thou have of the said Tree all that is wet and drie. Then said his Sonne: Father I thanke you.

Soone after the Emperour had made this bequest he died. And anon the eldest Son shortly after took possession of the tree. Now when the second Sonne heard this he came to him, saying: My Brother, by what Law or title occupie you this Tree? Deare brother (quoth he) I occupie it by this title, my father gave me all that is un-
der

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der the earth and aboue of the said tree,
by reason therfore the tree is mine. And
knowing to thee, quoth the secoud brother,
he gabe me all that is in breadth, length, &
deepe of the said tree, and therfore I
habe as great right in the tree as you. This
hearing the third son, he came to them and
said: My welbeloued brethren, it behobeth
you not to strife for this tree, for as much
right habe I in this tree as ye: for by the
law, yee wot, the last will and testament
ought to stand: for of truth he gabe mee
of the said tree all that is wet and dry,
and therfore the tree by right is mine: but
for as much as your words are of great
force and mine also, my counsell is that we
be iudged by reason: for it is not good nor
commendable that any strife or dissention
should be among us. Here beside dwelleth
a King of reason, therfore to avoid strife
let us goe unto him, and each of us lay his
right before him, and like as he shall iudge
let us stand to his iudgment: then said
his brethren, this counsell is good, where-
fore they went all three unto the King of
Reason, and each of them seberally shewed
forth his right unto him like as it is said
before

When the King had heard the titles, he
rehearsed

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rehearsed them all againe severally, first saying to the eldest Sonne, thus: You say (quoth the King) that thy father gave thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the said tree. And to the second brother he bequeathed al that is in breadth, length and deepnesse of that tree. And to the third brother he gave all that is wet and dry.

And with that he laid the law to them, and said, that this Will ought to stand.

Now my deare Friends, blessedly I shall satisfie all your requests: and when he had thus said, hee turned him unto the eldest Brother, saying, My deare friend, if you list to abide the judgement of right, it becombeth you to be lettered bloud of the right arme. My Lord (quoth he) your will shall bee done. When the King called for a discret Physician, commanding him to let him bloud.

When the eldest sonne was thus lettered bloud, the King said to them all three: My deare Friends (quoth hee) where is your father buried: then answered they and said: forsooth my Lord in such a place. Anon the King commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and to take a bone out of his breast, and to bury the body againe:

and

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and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the King commanded that it should bee laid in the blood of the elder brother, and it should lie till it had received kindly the blood, and then to bee laid in the Sunne and dyled, and after that it should bee washt with cleare water: his servants fulfilled all that he commanded: and when they began to wash, the blood vanished cleane away. When the King saw this, he said to the second sonne, it behoveth that thou bee letten blood as thy brother is. Then said he, my Lord, your will shall bee fulfilled, and anon hee was done unto like as his brother was in all things, and when they began to wash the bone, the blood vanished away. Then said the King to the third sonne, it behoveth thee to be letten blood likewise. He answered and said: My Lord it pleaseth mee well so to be. When the youngest brother was letten blood, and done unto in all things as his two brethren were before, then the Kings servants began to wash the bone but neither for washing nor rubbing might they doe away the blood off the bone, but it ever appeared bloody. When the King saw this, hee said: It appeareth openly now that this blood is of the nature of the bone

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bone, thou art his true sonne, and these other two be bastards, I iudge thee the true for evermore.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour is our Lord Iesus Christ. which bare a shield of Silber, with five red Roses, that is, his body that was so faire, so cleare, and more radiant than any Silber, according to the Psalmist: Speciolus forma præ filiis hominum, that is, he was more faire of shape than all the children of men. By the five Roses wee understand his five Wounds, which hee suffered for mankind. And by the King of Egypt wee understand the diuell, against whom he fought all the time of his life, and at the last he was slaine for mankind. Nevertheless before his death hee made his testament to his three sonnes.

By the first, to whom he gave of the tree all that was under the earth, & above the earth, we understand such mighty men and others of all estates in this world, as not content with their calling, seeke ambitious the subversion of others, to magnifie and exalt themselves. By the second sonne, to whom he gave the tree in length,

breadth,

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breadth and deepnesse, we understand such
worldly wise men in this world, which in
their subtiltie attempt to winne or to lose
all. By the third Sonne, to whom hee gave
all that was wet and dry of the Tree, wee
understand every good Christian Prince,
Noble-man, Magistrate, or meaner per-
son in every Common-wealth wheresoe-
ver, which (eschewing all ambition and
covetousnesse) holdeth himselfe content
with the Providence of God, and in his
owne calling laboureth truly to doe good
unto all men, yea, though himselfe su-
staine intaries, suffering now solace, then
care: now riches, then povertie: and re-
ceive all this thankfully to have this pre-
cious Tree thus bequeathed unto them,
This tree is the tree of Paradise, that is,
everlasting joy, which is given to us all if
wee take it thankfully. This every man
obtaineth not, therefore it behoveth them
to goe unto the King of reason, that is, un-
to the Father of heaven that knoweth all
things. The first Son was let blood, and
in his blood the bone was laid. By this
bone we shall understand our strong faith
in Christs merits, and by the blood, the
libely and fruitfull sap of good woordes pro-
ceeding out of the same, which are rare
things,

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things to be found in those that seeke their
owne privat gaine, which when they are
let blood by the sharp Lance of Gods Ju-
stice, though it be stablished with Divine
Predication, and made dry with the Sun
of outward Profession yet being washt
with the water of swelling Pride, Malice,
Envy & such like, then the faith in Christs
merits, is as though we had not received
it, and the lively and fruitfull sap of good
works hath no power to tarrle upon it, but
vanisheth away. And thus fareth it with
these other two the first and second Sons:
but the third Sonne being contrary unto
the other in profession and practise of life &
manners, be he Magistrate or meane per-
son, the bone of such a person will ever be
firme of faith in himselfe and towards
others, from such a mans bone the blood
of lively fruits, to himselfe and all others
profitable, will never be washed away
with the water of wretchednesse. But the
more it is dried in the Sunne of true tri-
all the better it is Such. are the true chil-
dren of God, of whom our Lord speaketh
thus: yee which have forsaken all things
for me, all, that is, yee that have forsaken
the will of sinne, shall receive an hundred
times more, that is, yee shall not onely re-
ceive

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ceiue the tree of Paradise, but also the heritage of heauen. These other two are bastards, because what they promised in their Baptisme, they wrought all the contrary, through their wicked liuing. And therefore he that desireth to obtaine the ioyes of heauen, must abide stedfastly in the profession and practise of good life & manners, and then by Christ hee shall obtaine the tree of Paradise. Vnto which he bring us, who libeth and raigneth for euer. Amen.

The Argument.

God so loved sinfull man, that hee sent his only begotten Sonne to redeeme him out of the captivity of the world, to rest with him in the ioyes of heauen.

The third History.

IN Rome there dwelt some time a noble Emperour named Dioclesian, who loved exceedingly the vertue of Charitie. Wherefore hee desired greatly to know what Fowle loved her Bird best, to the intent that hee might thereby grow to more perfect Charity. It fortuned upon a day, that the Emperour rode to a Forrest to take his disport, whereas hee found the nest of a great Bird called in Latine
at Struchio

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faire daughter and gracious in the sight of every man. This Emperour bethought him on a day, to whom he might give his daughter in marriage, reasoning thus: If I give my daughter to a rich man, and he be a foole, then is she lost, but if I give her to a poore man and a wise, then may he get his living by his wisdom.

There was at that time dwelling in the Citie of Rome, a Philosopher named Socrates, poore, and wise, which came to the Emperour and said: My Lord be not displeased though I put forth my petition before your Highnesse. The Emperour said: speake on, Then said Socrates: My Lord, yee have a daughter whom I desire above all things. The Emperour answered and said: My friend, I shall give thee my daughter to wife upon this condition, that if she die in thy fellowship after that she is espoused to thee, thou shalt without doubt lose thy head. Then said Socrates, upon this condition I will gladly take her to my wife. The Emperour hearing this, called all the Lords and States of his Empire, and made a great feast at their wedding. And after the feast Socrates led home his wife to his owne house, where they lived in peace and health long time. But at

at the last this Emperours daughter sickned to death. When Socrates perceiued this, hee said to himselfe. Alas and woe is me, what shall I doe, and whither shall I flye, if the Emperours daughter that is my wife should die, And for sorow this Socrates went to a Forrest there beside and wept bitterly.

Then while hee thus wept and mourned, there came an aged man habing a staffe in his hand, and asked him why hee mourned. Socrates answered and said: I espoused the Emperours daughter upon this condition, that if shee dye in my fellowship, I should lose my life, now shee is sickned to the death, and I can finde no pemeedy for help, and therefore I mourne. Then said the old man: Be of good comfort, for I shall help you if ye will doe after my counsell. In this Forrest be three hearbs, if you make a drinke of the first for your wife, and of the other two a plaister, and if ye use this medicinall drinke and plaister in due time, without doubt shee shall recouer her perfect health. Socrates did all that the old man had taught him. And when his wife had used a while that medicinall drinke and plaister, within short time shee was perfectly whole of all
her

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her sicknesse. And when the Emperour heard that Socrates had so recovered his wife, he promoted him to great honour.

The Morall.

Deare friends, the Emperour is our Lord Iesus Christ, his Daughter so faire and so gracious is the soule, made to the similitude of God, which is full glorious in the sight of him and of his Angels, while that she is not defiled, but abideth in her owne proper cleannesse. This soule God would not giue it to a rich man, but to a poore, that is, a man that is made of the slime of the earth.

This Socrates is a poore man, for why? every man cometh poore and naked into this world from his mothers belly, and every man takes his soule in wedlock up, on such condition, that if she dye in his fellowship by deadly sinne, without doubt hee shall lose eternall life. Therefore O thou man, if thy wife sicken through frailty of flesh, unto sinne, doe then as Socrates did, goe unto the Forrest, that is the Church of Christ, and thou shalt find there an old man with a staffe, that is, a discret Preacher, which shall minister unto thee these three hearbs, whereof may be collected the medicine

dicine of thy recoberte unto health. The first hearb is acknowledging of sinne: the second is Repentance: and the third is, newnesse of life according to the will of God. If these hearbs be used in plaister, the sinner without doubt shall receive his health, and his soule shall be delivered from sinne, and assuredly hee shall have everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus.

The Argument.

Many foolish Idiots of the world, which flow in abundance of the worldly wealth and pompe, thinking they shall live here alwayes, are laboured unto, by the Preachers of Gods Word, and admonished of their momentarie felicities, and to prepare themselves, in bestowing well their short time here, to enjoy the blessings of everlasting felicitie in the world to come.

The first History.

Sometime there raigned in Rome a mightie Emperour and a wise, named Fredericke, who had one onely Sonne whom hee loved much. This Emperour when he lay at point of death, called unto

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him his sonne, and said, Deare sonne, I have a ball of gold which I charge thee on my blessing that thou anon after my death shalt give to the veriest foole thou canst find. Then said his sonne: My Lord, without doubt your will shall be fulfilled. Anon this young Lord after the death of his Father, went and sought many Realmes, and found many wretched fooles, but because hee would satisfie his Fathers Will, he sought till hee came to a Realme where the law was such, that every yeare a new King was chosen, who had the ruling of the Realme for one yeare only, & at the yeares end hee was deposed, and exiled into an Island, where he finished his life.

When the Emperours sonne came to this Realme, the new King was chosen with great honour, and brought unto his Regall seat with much musick and great reverence. And when the Emperours sonne saw that, hee came unto him, and saluted him reberently, saying: My Lord, loe I give unto you this ball of gold on my Fathers behalfe. Then said hee, I pray thee tell mee the cause why thou givest mee this Ball. Then answered hee, and said: My Father charged mee on his death-bed, that I should give this ball to the most
foole

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foole that I could finde : wherefore I have sought many Realmes , and have found many fooles , but a moze foole than thou I never found : for it is not unknowne to thee that thou shalt raigne but a yeare, and at the yeares end thou shalt be exiled into such a place whereas thou shalt die a miserable death, wherefore I hold thee for the most foole that ever I found , for as much as for the Lordship of a yeare thou wilt so wilfully lose thy selfe : and therefore I gibe thee this ball. Then said the King, without doubt thou sayest truly, and therefore while I am now in full power of this Realme, I will send befoze me great treasure, wherewith I may sustaine my selfe from a miserable death , when I shall be exiled and put down. And so this was done: and at the yeares end when he was exiled, hee lived there in peace , and dyed after a good death.

The Morall

Deare friends, this Emperour is the Father of Heaven, the which bequeathed the ball, that is, worldly riches to fooles and ideots , who labour nothing but that is earthly. This Emperours Sonne is a Preacher or discret Minister, that travel-
leth

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leth about to many Realmes and Lands, to shew unbelauing men and fooles their perill. The Realme wherein no King might raigne but a yeare, is the world. For who so liueth an hundred yeares, when he dyeth he shall seeme to haue liued but the space of an houre: therefore doe as the King did, while ye be in power of life send before you your treasure, that is, firme faith in Christs merits, and the fruits of Gods word proceeding from the same. Then certainly when we be exiled out of this world, we shall liue in peace, and shall find the mercie of God plentifully, whereby we shall obtaine eternall life. Unto which bring us he, that for us shed his precious blood.

The Argument.

The euill disposed men of this world are here advertised of their greedy griping after the sweet temptations of the devil, wherein such doe rejoyce till death commeth suddenly upon them, and then they fall into the horrible pit of desolate darknesse due to their deserts.

The sixt Historic.

Diocteshan reigned in the city of Rome, in whose Empire dwelt anoble Philosopher

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losopher, who by his Art set up an Image
 in the middest of the Citie of Rome, which
 Image stretched out his arme, and his
 formost finger, whereupon stood this Wo-
 sey written in Latine: *Percede hic*: Strike
 here, This Image after the death of the
 Philosopher, stood along time, and many
 great Clarks came for to read the super-
 scription that was on the finger, but none
 understood it, wherefore the people wondered
 much. At last, a long time after, there came
 a Strange Clark out of a farre Country,
 and when hee saw the Image hee read the
 superscription, Strike here. And then upon
 a day when hee saw the shadow of the
 hand, hee tooke a mattock, and brake up
 the ground under the hand where the sha-
 dow was, according to the understanding
 of the superscription, and anon hee found
 an house all of Marble underneath the
 ground, wherein hee entred and came into
 an Hall, wherein hee found so much riches,
 so many Jewels, and so great marbels, as
 hee never saw before. And at the last he
 saw a Table ready covered, and all manner
 of things necessarie thereto set thereupon,
 He further beheld, and saw a Carbuncle
 in the Hall that lighted all the house. And
 against this Carbuncle on the other side,
stood

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stood a man holding a bow in his hand, and an arrow ready to shoot. The Clark marvelled much when he saw all these things, and thought in himselfe, if that I tell this forth, there will no man believe me, and therefore I will have somewhat of these goods in token thereof. And with that he saw a knife of gold upon the Table, the which he tooke and would have put in his bosome, but anon the Archer smote the Carbuncle & brake it, wherewith the whole house was shadowed and made dark, and when the Clark perceived it hee wept most bitterly, for hee knew no way to get out, for as much as the house was made dark through the breaking of the Carbuncle. And that darknesse abode still for ever after: And so finished the Clark his life therein that darknesse.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Image thus standing is the Devill, which saith evermore, Strike here, that is, seeke after earthly riches, and not for heavenly treasure. This Clark that digged with the mattock, be-tokeneth the worldly wise men of this world, as some evill disposed pleaders of the law, crafty Attournies, and other wicked

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ked worldlings that be eber smiting, what by right, and what by wrong, so that they may get the vanities of the world: and in their smiting they finde great wonders, that is, they finde therein the delights of the world, wherein many men resoyce. The Carbuncle that giveth light is the youth of man, which giveth hardinesse to take their pleasure in worldly riches. The Archer with his Arrow is Death, which layes watch against man to slay him. The Clarke that toke up the knife, is every worldly man that coveteth ever to have all things at his will. Death smiteth the Carbuncle, that is, the youth, strength, and power of man, and then lyeth he wrapped in darknesse of sinne, in which darknesse oftentimes he dieth. Therefore studie wee to flye the world and her vaine delights, and then wee shall be sure to win everlasting life, unto which Christ Jesus bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Wee are heere generally put in minde, that the devill besieging the world, our Champion Christ Iesus is readie to take our quarrell in hand, who defending and saving us from the invasion and circumvention

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vention of Sathan, is yet accursed for us as a transgressor, and is content to suffer death for our full justification.

The seventh Historie.

In Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperour named Titus, who ordained in his dayes such a Law, that what Knight dyed in his Empire should bee buried in his armour, and whosoever presumed to spoile any Knight of his armour after hee was dead, should dye without any gaine-saying. It befell after within few yeares that a Citie of the Empire was besieged of the Emperours enemies, and was in danger of losing, for none that were in the Citie could defend themselves by any manner of policie, wherefore great sorrow and lamentation was made throughout the Citie.

But at last, within few dayes, there came to the Citie a young Knight, well favoured, and valiant in feats of armes, whom the worthy men of the Citie beholding and understanding his prowesse, cryed to with one voyce: O thou most noble Knight, we beseech thee to help us now at our most neede, for you may see this City is like to be lost. Then he answered and said:

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said: sirs, ye see I have no armour, but if I had, I would defend your Citie.

This hearing a mighty man of the Citie, he said to him secretly, Sir, here liued sometime a valiant Knight, who now is dead, and buried within the Citie, and if it please you to take his armour, ye may defend this Citie, and deliver us from perill, and that will be honour unto you, and profit unto the Citie.

The young Knight hearing this, went to the grave and arraped himselfe with the armour, and after much fight obtained the victorie, and delivered the Citie. Which done, he laid the armour againe in the grave. But there were some men of the Citie who envied him because hee had obtained the victorie, and accused him to the Judge, saying thus: Sir, a Law was made by the Emperour, that whosoever dispoyled any dead Knight of his armour, should dye. This young Knight found a dead Knight, and tooke away his armour, therefore I beseech thee, that thou proceede in the Law against him with equitie and justice, in giving him severe punishment for so offending the Law. When the Justice heard this, he made the Knight to be taken: and when hee was examined of
this

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this his trespassse against the law, hee said thus: Sir, it is written in the Law, that of two harmes the least is to be chosen. It is not unknowne to you that this Citie was in perill to be lost, and had I not taken this armour, I had neither saved you nor the Citie, therefore mee thinks you ought rather to honour mee for this good dede that I have done, then thus shamefully to reprove me: for I am led as hee that is ready to be hanged. Also good Mrs, another thing I may alledge for my excuse, hee that stealeth or robbeth violently, purpouseth not to restore the thing which hee stealeth, but it is not thus with mee, for though I tooke the armour of the dead Knight for your defence and safegard, when I had obtained the victorie, I bare it againe to the same place, and to the dead Knight that is his by the Law.

Then said the Justice, a Thiefe that breaketh a house that hee may steale and beare away such as he can finde, although hee bring againe that hee hath taken, I aske of thee if that the breaking of the house be lawfull or not? The Knight answered, sometime the breaking of the house may be good, whereas it is made in a feble place, which would cause the Master of the house

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house to make his wall stronger, that the
Thebes after brake not by force the walls
so lightly, for avoyding of more harme.

Then said the Justice, if the breaking of
the house be good, neverthelesse, in that
breaking, violence is done to the Lord of the
house. And so, though thou didst restore the
armour of the dead Knight, neverthelesse
thou didst wrong to the dead Knight in ta-
king away his armour. The Knight said I
have told you, that of two harmes the least
is to be chosen: and that harme where
through great goodnesse cometh, ought
not to be called harme, but it should rather
be called good. For if an house within the
City were on fire, and began to burne, it
were better that three or foure houses there-
by should be throwne to the ground, than
that they should be set on fire also, whereby
all the City should be burned: right so, if
the Armour of the dead Knight had not been
taken, the City had been lost.

And when the Judge heard that hee an-
swered so well and so reasonably, hee could
give no judgement against him. But they
who had accused this Knight, slew him:
for whose death there was great weeping
throughout all the Citty, and his body was
honourably buried in a new Tombe.

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The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is the Father of Heaven, and this Citie is the world, which is besieged of the Diuell and deadly Sin, and as many as were within the Citie, were all in perill to be lost. This young Knight that came to the Citie, is our Lord Iesus Christ, who had not the armour of humanity, till hee went to the Grabe, that is, the wombe of the glorious Virgin Mary, by the Annunciation of the Angell, saying: The holy Ghost shall light on thee, &c. Lo, thou shalt conceive, and beare a Sonne. And thus in the Grabe of the Virgin he took the armour of the dead Knight, that is, the man-hood of Adam our Fore-father, and saved the Citie, that is, the world and Man-kind by his blessed Passion that hee suffered on the Crosse, and he put the Armour againe into the Grabe, when his blessed Body was buried, but the Citizens envied him, that is, the Jewes accused him to Pilate, saying: If thou suffer him thus, thou art not Cæsars friend: wee have a Law, and after the Law he ought to die, Iohn 19. 12. And thus our Lord Iesus Christ of his Enemies was condemned to the death of the Crosse, and after

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ter ascended up to Heaben, whither he bring
us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The fornication of wicked worldly men is
here detected. By the Providence of God
and by his gracious favour the sinner is
delivered out of the thraldome of sin, unto
the liberty of life everlasting.

The eight History.

There raigned sometime in Rome a
mighty Emperour and a wise, named
Berolde, who ordained a Law, that what
Woman was taken in Adultery, her Hus-
band being alive, shee should be cast into
perpetuall Prison. There was that time a
Knight that had a faire Lady to his wife,
who committed Adultery her husband be-
ing alive, and was with childe, therefore
by the Law shee was put in Prison, where
in short time shee was delivered of a faire
Sonne. The Child grew up till hee was
seven yeares old, and his Mother daily
wept bitterly: which when the Child
heard, he said to her, O Mother, why weepe
ye thus? and for what cause are you thus
perplexed? Then said his Mother: O my
Sweet Son, I have great cause to mourne,

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and then also, for above our heads are people walking, and the Sunne shineth in clearenesse, and we be here continually in such darknesse, that I can neither see thee nor thou me. Alas that ever I conceived thee. When said the Son, such joy as you speake I never saw, for I was borne here in this darknesse, therefore if I had meat and drink enough, I would live here all my life: therefore Mother wepe not, but be cheerefull. This lamentation that was betwene the Mother and the Sonne the Emperours Steward heard, that stood above their heads, whereof he had great compassion, and went to the Emperour, and kneeling besought him of his Grace, that the Mother and the Sonne might be delivered out of Prison. The Emperour as a mercifull Lord granted that they should be delivered. Nevertheless, if they trespassed so in time to come, they should be punished with double paine. And after shee was delivered shee dyed joyfully.

The Morall :

Deare Friends, this Emperour is the Father of heaven that made this Law, that what married women, that is, what soule that is espoused to the Lord, and both com-

mit adultery, that is, both worship strange Gods, should be cast into the prison of hell, therefore the sinfull soule hath great cause to weepe, for she is debarred from light, that is, from the joyes of Heaven. Her Sonne that desired meat and drinke, are the wealthy wicked Worldlings, that say to the Preachers that preach unto them the joyes of Heaven, that while wee may live and have all the solace of the world, we desire no other Heaven. The Steward that heard their lamentation is the Lord Jesus, who knowing all the privities of our sorrowfull and repentant hearts for our sins, besought the Father of Heaven for us, that wee might be delivered from the prison of sinne, and so come to everlasting life. Unto which he bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

Christ proclaimeth the joyfull feast of Heaven, whereto the lame, that is, the poore Preachers of the Gospell, having their sight or knowledge in Gods word supported by the blind Laytie, and each mutually comforting other, they approach unto the proclaimed feast of perpetuall felicity.

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The ninth Historic.

Sometime in Rome dwelt an Emperour named Pompey, who aboue all other things was mercifull. This Emperour proclaimed thzoughout all his Empire a great Feast, and that poore and rich should come to the Feast: and whosoever came to that Feast should not only be well fed, but also he should haue great gifts.

When the Herauld had warned all manner of men to come to this Feast, at that time there were two poore men lying by the way, the one being lame, and the other blind. Alas, said the one of these men to the other, woe to us both, how shall we doe? for the Emperour hath proclaimed a Feast, and whosoever cometh thither, shall not only be well fed, but also shall haue great gifts, and I am blind, and thou art lame, how shall we doe? When said the lame man to the blind man, I shall giue thee good counsell, if thou wilt doe after me, I am lame and feeble, and may not goe, nevertheless I can see, and thou art blind but strong: take thou mee upon thy back and beare me, and I shall direct thee the right way, and thus we shall both come to the Emperours Feast. When said the blind man, let it be so, get thou on my back, and

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I shall beare thee, and guide thou mee, and so they did, and came both to the feast, and receiued great rewards: and after ended their liues in peace.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our Saviour Iesus Christ, that proclaimeth a feast, that is the joyes of heauen, unto the which joyes he calleth all Mankinde, and forsaketh no man that will come unto him. This lame man betokeneth the poore Ministers of the Gospell, which wanting worldly wealth, liue by the Providence of God. And this blind man betokeneth the Laymen who know not the right way to Heauen. It behobeth the blind man, that is, the Laymen to beare the lame man, that is, the Ministers of the Gospell, sustaining and feeding them with the duties of the Church: and the Ministers in Gods cause are bound to teach and to informe us in the way to Heauen, whereas we shall not onely have a feast, but also great reward and joy. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Heaven and Hell are here compared to

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two Cities, to these Cities are two contrary wayes :to heaven (which is the Citie of all heavenly treasure and felicity) is a narrow, crooked, craggy, and painfull way, having three enemies, the Devill, the World, and the Flesh. To Hell (being the Citie or sink of sorrow and sadnesse) a faire way, broad, plain, and easie, having three guides, that is, Pride of life, Covetousnesse of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh.

The tenth Historie.

Sometime in Rome dwelt an Emperour named Folliculus, who was very wise and mercifull in all his works. This Emperour builded in the East a Noble Citie, wherein hee put all his treasure to be kept. Unto this Citie the way was stonie, full of Brambles and sharp Thornes, and three Knights were armed readie to fight with them that would come to that Citie. Therefore the Emperour ordained that whosoever overcame these Knights should enter the Citie, and take at his will of the Emperours treasure. After that, this Emperour did make in the North a Citie, wherein hee ordained all manner of paine, sorrow, and tormenting for malefactors,

factours, to which was a broad way very delectable, growing full of Roses and faire Lillies, & in their way were three Knights euer wayting, if any man came towards the Citie of their Port, to serue him with all manner of delicates and necessary provision. And if it fortuned that any man did enter within that Citie, the custome was such, that the people would binde him hand and foot, and cast him into prison, there to abide the sentence of the Iudge.

When this was cryed throughout all the Empire, there were two Knights dwelling in one Citie, one named Ionathas, who was a wise man: the other called Pirrus, who was a ffole, nevertheless there had continued betwene them great love. This Ionathas said to Pirrus, deare friend, there is a common cry made throughout all Lands, that the Emperour hath made a Citie in the East, wherein he hath put his treasure, and whosoever may enter that Citie, shall take what hee will of the treasure, therefore let us goe thither. Then said Pirrus thy Counsell is good, let us goe. The wise Knight said, if it be so that thou wilt follow my counsell, I pray thee that faithfull friendship may continue

continue betwene us, and in token of love thou shalt drinke my blood, and I will drinke thine, on this condition, that neither of us leade other in this journey. The foolish Knight said, it pleaseth me right well. Wherefore they were both let blood, and each of them drank others blood. When this was done, they went forth together on their journey, and when they had gone three dayes journey toward the Citie where their treasure was, they came to a place where were two wayes, one sharpe and thorne, and full of thornes, the other was faire, plaine, and full of delights. Then said the wise Knight to his fellow: Deare Friend, here are two wayes, one sharpe and thorne, neberthelesse if wee goe this way, wee shall come to the Citie that is so rich, and there we shall have that we desire. Then said the foolish Knight to his fellow, I wonder greatly at you, that you will speake such things, for I will rather beleve mine eyes than your words. I see here openly, and so doe you, that here is a hard way, and full of thornes, and as I have heard, there be three Champions armed in this way ready to fight against all men that goe towards the City of the East, and therfore I will not goe that way,

but

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but here is (as you may see) another way, plaine, and easie to walke in, and in this way there are three Knights ready to serue us, and giue us all manner of things delightfull for us: and therefore by this way will I goe, and not by that other way. Then said the wise Knight, certainly if wee goe by that way, we shall be led into the Citie of the North, wherein there is no mercie, but perpetuall paine and sorrow, and there wee shall be taken and bound and cast into prison. Certainly said the foolish Knight this way is the ready way, and as I beleeue, it is more profitable than the other way. Then went they both forth the faire way, and anon three Knights met with them, which receiued them courteously for one night, and gave them all manner of things that were pleasant to them. And on the morrow they tooke their journey forth toward the City, and when they were within the City, anon the Emperours Officers met with them, and said: friends, why came ye hither, insomuch that ye know the law of this City is so cruel of long time heretofore: surely ye shall be serued now after the Law. Anon they tooke the wise Knight, and brought him, and put him into prison, and after that they tooke the foolish Knight

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Knight, and bound him fast, and cast him into a Ditch. Sone after it befell that the Justice came to the Citie to giue judgement on them, that had trespassed the Law, and anon all the prisoners were brought forth before the Justice, among whom these two Knights were brought forth, one from Prison, and the other from the ditch. Then said the wise Knight to the Justice: My reberent Lord, I complaine of my fellow that is guilty of my death: for when we two came to the two wayes, whereof the one led to the Citie of the East, and the other to this Citie, I told him all the perill of this Citie, and the reward of that other City, but hee would not belæue mee, but said to mee in this wise: I will belæue mine owne eyes better than thy words, and because he was my fellow I would not let him goe alone in this way: and thus came I with him, wherefoze he is the cause of my death. Then said the foolish Knight, I complaine that hee is the cause of my death: for it is not unknowne to you all, that I am a ffole, and hee is a wise man, and therefore he should not so lightly have followed my folly, for if he had forsaken this way, I should have followed him, and therefore he is cause of my death. Then said the Justice

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Justice to the wise Knight, because that thou with all thy wisdomie, so lightly consentedst and followest the will of the foole, and his foolish woorks: and thou Foole because thou didst reject the good counsell, and advice of the wise, and wouldst not beleéve him, I gibe judgement, that yee both be hanged for your trespassse: and so it was done. Wherefore all men praised greatly the Judge for his discret judgement.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is Almighty God, and in the East is the Citie of heaben, whereth is treasure infinite: And unto this way is a hard way and full of Thornes, that is, the way of Repentance, by which way full few walk: for it is hard and straight, according to the holy Scripture, saying thus. *Arcta est via quæ ducit ad vitam*: It is a straight way that leadeth to everlasting life.

In this way are three armed Knights, that is, the Devil, the World, and the flesh, with whom it behoveth us to fight, and to obtaine the victory, before wee may come to Heaben. The second Citie that is in the North, is Hell: and to this accordeth the Scripture, saying thus: *Ab aquilone ponetur*

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netur omne malum : Out of the North cometh all euill. Certainly to this City the way is plaine and broad, and walled about on every side with all manner of delights, wherefore many men walke by this way. The three knights that giue to every man going this way what thing them pleaseth, are these, Pride of life, Covetousnesse of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh: in which three the wretched man greatly delighteth, and at the last they led him to Hell. This witty knight betokeneth the soule, and the foolish knight betokeneth the flesh, which is alway foolish; and at all times ready to doe euill. These two are fellows and knit in one: for either of them drinke others blood, that is, they shall drinke of one cup, either of joy or paine which they shall have after the day of Doome.

The Soule chooseth the way of Repentance, and in as much as shee may, shee stirreth the flesh to doe the same. But the flesh never thinketh what shall come after, and therefore she goeth on in the delights of this World, and flieth the vertue of Repentance. And thus the soule after death is cast into Hell, and the flesh is cast into the ditch, that is, into the grave. But when
the

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the Judge commeth, that is, our Lord Iesus Christ at the last day to judge all mankind. Then the Soule shall complaine upon the flesh, and the flesh upon the soule: But then the Judge that cannot be deceived shall condemne the Soule, because she followed the frailty of the flesh, and the flesh because it would not believe the soule. Wherefore let us study to tame our flesh that we may obey God, and then we shall have eternall life. Unto which bring us our Lord Iesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of Man being possessed of the Princely Territorie of Paradise, was by the Devill provoked to sinne against her Creator, and for the same transgression (being thence into the wide World exiled) lost that her heritage: but by Christs blessed Death and Passion was restored unto a more happie heritage of everlasting felicity.

The eleventh Historie:

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Frederick, which had no Childe, but one onely daughter,

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Daughter to whom this Emperour after his decease bequeathed all his Empire, This understanding an Earle that dwelt there beside, hee came to this young Lady and wooed her, and provoked her to sinne all that hee might: whereby this young Lady in short processe of time enclined to the Earle, and this Earle anon lay with her and defiled her: and after that hee drave her from her heritage, and exiled her out of the Empire, wherefore shee made great lamentation, and fled unto a Realme there beside, where she daily wept and mourned.

It befell after on a day, that while shee sat mourning by the high-way side, there came riding by her a faire young Knight upon a Horse, who came towards her a great pace, and very courteously saluted her, asking her the cause why shee mourned so sore. Then answered shee and said: My reverend Lord, I am an Emperours daughter, descended of Royall blood, my father is dead, who left me all his Empire, because he had no other heire. And after his decease an Earle there beside deceived me, deflored my virginity, and after that hee put mee violently out of my heritage, so that now I am faine to begge my bread
from

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from dooze to dooze, and this is the cause of my sorrow. Then said the Knight: faire Damsell, I have great compassion on thy beautie and thy comelineſſe: therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I will fight for thee against the Earle, and I will assure thee the victory. Then said shee, alas good sir, I have nothing that I may give unto you but my selfe. And I aske no more of thee said the Knight, but that thou wouldest be my wife, and love no man so much as me. Then said shee: Reuerend sir, that I will doe gladly, and more if I might. Then said the Knight: I will that you doe nothing for me, but if it fortune me to die in the fight for thee, and obtaine the victory, thou shalt take my bloudy shirt, and hang it upon a beame in thy Chamber: and this thou shalt doe for two causes. The first is, that whensoever thou beholdest the shirt, thou shalt weepe for me. The second is, that whatſoever man come to wooe thee to be his wife, thou shalt then hastily runne unto thy Chamber, and there beholding my bloudy shirt, think heartily within thy selfe thus.

The Lord of this shirt, dyed for my love in battaile, by which hee recovered my heritage. God forbid that I should take any
D
other

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other man after his death. Then said shee, Reverend Sir, all this I shall fulfill by the grace of God. And when the Knight heard this, he assayed to fight against the said Earle, and obtained the victory, and the Earle was overcome and fled, and this young Lady was brought and received againe into her heritage. Nevertheless the Knight was deadly wounded in that battell, wherof he died: but ere he dyed he bequeathed his bloudy shirt unto this Damsell, desiring her to keep her promise. When this young Lady heard of his death she wept sore, for in his shirt was wrought this:

Thinke on me, and have in minde
Him, that to thee was so kinde.

Anon when shee had received this shirt, shee hanged it upon a beame in her chamber, and as oft as she beheld it, shee wept bitterly. It befell not long after, that the States of the Empire came to her, and desired her to take an husband: but then shee went to her chamber, and beheld the bloudy shirt, and wared sorrowfull, and said oftentimes woe and alas, thou sufferedest death for my love, and thou also recoveredst againe my heritage: God forbid that I should take any other man but thee. And thus

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thus she answered every man that came to her : and so they went away disappointed of their purpose, and she ended her life in rest.

The Morall,

Deare Friends, this Emperour is the Father of Heaben, and his daughter is the Soule of Man, made to the similitude of God : to whom hee gave and bequeathed the Empire of Paradise. But there came the Carle, that is, the Devill, and provoked her to sinne, when she eat of the Apple, and said to her thus : In what houre yee eat of this Apple ye shall be like Gods. Wherefore wee breaking Gods commandement were exiled out of Paradise, to live in this world in great wretchednesse, as the Scripture saith : In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread. But then came a faire young knight, and a strong, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, who had compassion upon Mankind, and taking upon him our flesh and blood, gave battell to the Devill, and overcame him : and thus wan he again our heritage. Therefore let us do as this yong Lady did, let us lay this bloody shirt, that is, the remembrance of the Passion of Christ, on the beame of our hearts let us
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think how our Lord Jesus shed his pretious blood for us. And if any man, that is, if the Deuill, or any other would stirre us to sinne, let us think presently on the Passion of Christ, saying thus: I will take none other but thee, who hast shed thy blood for mee: and thus shall we winne everlasting life. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

We are here generally advertised of honouring the Sabbath day: how, for the redeeming of time, to be occupied in ghostly conuemplation, is profitable to the soule and body. Also Preachers of Gods Word oftentimes for saying truth purchase ill will. If we bestow our talents in the amplifying of Faith, and furthering one of another with good works, we shall then inherit the fruition of eternall life prepared for Christs Elect.

The twelfth Historic.

Sometimes dwelt in Rome a mightie Emperour named Apollinus, which ordained a Law that ebery man upon paine of death should celebrate the day of his nativity. This Emperour called to him a Clark

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Clark that hight Virgil, and said : My deare Master, there be many haynous offences done in my Empire contrary to the Law, therefore I pray thee that thou by thy cunning wouldst make some craft whereby I may know who trespasseth against the Law priuily or openly. Then said Virgil, My reverend Lord, your will shall be done. Anon this Virgil through his craft made an Image in the midst of the Citie of Rome, which denounced and told the Emperours messengers who trespassed against the Law, & who not. There was at that time dwelling in the Citie of Rome, a Smith that hight Focus: which by no meanes would celebrate the Pativisie of the Emperour. It befell upon a night, as the Smith lay in his bed, hee thought upon the Image that accused many men before, dreading least the Image would accuse him, wherefore hee arose and went to the Image, and said, I make a vow to God if thou accuse mee, I shall break thy head: and when he had thus said hee went home. The Emperour on the morrow following, sent messengers to the Image (as before time hee was accustomed) to know and understand who had trespassed against the Law: And to them then said the

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Image,

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Image lift up your eyes and behold what is engraven in my fore-head. And when they looked up, they saw this Poſey written. Times be changed, and men become worſe and worſe. For hee that will ſay the truth, ſhall have his head broken. Therefore goe ye forth to your Lord, and tell him all that ye have heard and ſene. The meſſengers went forth and told the Emperour all they had heard and ſene.

Then ſaid the Emperour, arme your ſelves and goe to the Image, and if that you finde any man that hath menaced or threated to hurt the Image, bind him hand and foot, and bring him unto mee. Then went the meſſengers forth to the Image, and ſaid to it: tell us the truth if any man have threated thee, and wee ſhall revenge thee anon. Then ſaid the Image: Take the Smith Focus, for hee is the man that will not honour the Pativitie of the Emperour. Straightway the meſſengers led forth the Smith before the Emperour: and there examined him why hee kept not the day of the Emperours Pativie in reverence and honour, according to the Lawe. Then answered the Smith and ſaid: Reverend Lord, I beſeech you that you will heare mine excuſe, and if I answer not

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reasonably to all manner of points that ye shall aske me. I will yeeld me fully to your Grace. Then said the Emperour, I will heare thee, and that which is right, that I will doe.

Then said the Smith, I must have eight pence ebery day in the weeke, and t^{he} I cannot get without great labour, and therefore I may not keepe that day holy day moze than other dayes. Then said the Emperour: why must thou have these eight pence? Then said the Smith: I am bound to pay daily two pence: and six pence I lend: and two pence I lose: and two pence I spend. Then said the Emperour: tell me moze expzeßely of these eight pence. Then said the Smith: I am bound ebery day to pay two pence to my Father: for when I was young, he spent dayly two pence on me which I am bound to pay him againe for his sustentation, and two pence I lose on my wife. Then said the Emperour, why losest thou that two pence on thy wife? Then said he: where sal we eber twoman but shee had one of these properties: either she was wilfull and contrary to her husband, or hot of complexion: and therefore that I giue her I lose. Also two pence I lend to my sonne, wherewith he

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is sustained, that when I come to age and poverty he may pay me two pence againe, like as I doe my Father. Also I spend two pence on my selfe in meat, and drinke, and that is little enough. Then said the Emperour, thou hast answered well and wisely. **P**ong after the Emperour dyed, and this Smith Focus was chosen to be Emperour, because he spent his eight pence so wisely and so profitably, and thus he ended his life in peace and rest.

The Morall

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, which ordained by his holy Law that every man should keepe the holy Sabbath day. This Virgill that made this Image, is the holy Ghost, who established among us Preachers to teach vertues and reprove vices, and they should not spare the poore nor the rich. But now if a Preacher should speake the truth against any man, hee shall be threatened by the enemies of Christ, that is, by evill men that neither love God nor man. Wherefore the Preacher may say now adayes, that **D**osey which was written in the fore head of the Image. Times be changed from good to ill, and men be daily worse: for who so
would

would speak the truth now adayes shall have his head broken. Therefore it is needfull they be armed, that is, Preachers ought to be armed with vertuous examples of good life, and then they need not feare, because they haue the truth of God to stand by them, according to the Apostles saying: If God be with us, who can be against us.

By this Smith Focus, is understood ebery good Christian man, who daily should spend his time in redeeming of ebery houres trauell with some profit corporall or spirituall: and then ought hee to be presented before the heavenly Emperour. This Focus paid two pence to his Father, and so wee should pay to our Father of heauen two pence, that is, honour and love. For when we were the Children of wretchednesse, and in bondage, Almighty God sent downe to the earth his Sonne to redeeme us, according to S. Iohn the Evangelist, saying: God loved the world so well that hee gave his onely begotten Sonne for the salvation of the world. Also this Focus lent two pence to his Sonne: that is, ebery Christian man ought to lend to the Son of God, our Lord Iesus Christ true and unfained faith, and fruitfull good works and deeds in our life, and hee will appre

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repay us againe at the day of doome with his heauenly mercy : when soule and body shall be glorified. And that he is our brother may be proved by the text of Esay, saying, A child is borne to us. This Focus lost two pence to his wife : his wife betokeneth the flesh , upon whom thou lovest two pence , that is, unlawfull love and consent to sinne, because the flesh is contrary to the spirit , and is euer subject to sinne. This Focus also spent two pence on himselfe : by the first penny ye shall understand repentance, whereat the Angells in heaven doe greatly rejoyce : by the second penny ye shall understand perfect perseuerance in amendment of life : for he that abideth unto the end shall be saved. And hee that spendeth well these two pence shall obtain everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Iesus Christ Amen.

The Argument.

Man being blind through sinne, and either by infirmitie of fraile flesh, or suggestion trespassing with evill and lewd company though God of his mercy be favourable unto him in his life time, by reason of the foresaid respect, yet if he accustomably walke on forward in this worldly wickednesse

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nesse his wilfull blindnesse shall not excuse him, but accuse him in the day of judgement, most grievously to have offended God, in abusing his mercie offered, and therefore the lesse worthy to have the reward of the simple soule that repentantly and with modesty liveth to the fruition of everlasting blisse.

The thirteenth History.

Sometime in Rome dwelt a noble Emperour, which among all other vertues loved best mercie: wherefore he ordained a Law, that every blind man should have an hundred shillings by the yeare of his treasure. It befell on a day that certaine men came to a Taverne to drink wine, and after that these men had sitten in the Taverne thre dayes, the fourth day they were greatly in debt for the wine: wherefore the Wintner came to them and demanded money for his Wine. Then said one of the Drinkers, Sirs, the Emperour hath made such a Law, that every blind man shall have an hundred shillings of his treasure: therefore let us cast lots among us, and to whom the lot falleth, let his eyes be put out, and so he may goe to the Emperours Pallace, and get an hundred shillings to dis-

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discharge us. Now this counsell liked them well: so they cast lots, and the lot fell on him that gave the counsell, and his fellowes immediately put out his eyes.

And when hee was blind, hee went to the Emperours Pallace, and asked an hundred shillings of the Steward according to the Emperours Decree. Deare Friend, said the Steward, thou didst see with both thine eyes a while since, thou also understandest the Law amisse: for the Law is made for men that are blind through infirmities, or by the will of God, but the other day thou hadst thy sight in the Taberne, and hast wilfully lost it. Therefore goe to the Taberne againe to the fellowes, and discharge there what thou owest, for here gettest thou not a farthing. Then went this wretched man forth and tolde his fellowes of the Stewards answer, and with that came in the Wintner and dispoyled them of all their ccothes, and beat them, and thus drove them with shame out of the Citie: And so were they never after scene there.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our Saviour Christ, who ordained a Law, that

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that ebery blind man should have an hundred shillings of his treasure. This blind man betokeneth ebery Sinner, who sinneth through infirmity, or the entising of the Devill, the World, and the Flesh, and shall receive an hundred shillings, if hee be inwardly repentant of his sinnes: that is, hee shall have an hundred times more joy, according to the Scripture, saying: Yee shall receive an hundred times more joy if yee repent and turne from sinne, and also yee shall have everlasting life. These men that came to the Taberne to drinke Wine, be Sinners, who oftentimes come to the Taberne of our Adversarie the Devill, to drinke of his carnall appetites, that is, they there consume and waste away all spirituall vertues, which they received when they received the Sacrament of Baptisme: Where the Devill our Enemy dispoyleth them of all their good deeds that ever they have wrought before. They cast lots, that is, they cast among them the custome of sinne, and this lot of sinne falleth on such as are unthankfull and mercilesse: and such a man wilfully becommeth blind, that is, hee becommeth wilfully a foule sinner like Iudas that betrayed our Lord without any suggestion

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gestion or intising. And therefore such men
sinne most grievously. When they come
before the Steward, that is, before the
Bishops of the Church, they can hardly ob-
taine an assurance of Heaben, because they
be not in the right way to leave their sin.
Therefore let us study with all diligence
to please God, that wee may obtaine ever-
lasting life, which is laid up in store for all
those that live modestly, looking for eternal
salvation. Unto which bring us our Lord
Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

A certain vow of love being made betweene
the soule of every faithfull Christian and
Jesus Christ, we are to consider the mer-
cifull and gracious Covenant of God to-
ward the faithfull, and to be carefull of
this Covenant, and we are to study to per-
forme our vow, so as wee at the prefixed
day of promise being undefiled, may ther-
by purchase the promised place of ever-
lasting glory, prepared for all them that
seek the glory of God, and their soules
health.

The fourteenth History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Em-
perour named Philominus, who had one
only

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only Daughter, who was faire and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglaes. There was also in the Emperours pallace a gentle Knight that loved dearly this Lady. It befell after upon a day, that this Knight talked with this Lady and secretly uttered his desire unto her. When she said courteously, seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart, and truly I say that above all other I love you best. Then said the Knight I purpose to visite the holy land. and therefore give mee your troth, that this seven yeares you shall take no other man, but only for my love to tarry for mee so long, and if I come not again by this day seven yeares, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you that within this seven yeares I will take no wife. Then said she this covenant pleaseeth mee well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other, and then this Knight tooke his leave of the Lady, and went to the holy Land. Shortly after the emperour treated with the King of Hungary for the marriage of his daughter. Then came the King of Hungary to the Emperours pallace to see his

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his daughter, and when hee had seene her, he liked marvellous well her beautie and her behavieur, so that the Emperour and the King were accorded in all things as touching the marriage upon the condition that the Damsell would consent. Then called the Emperour the yongg Lady to him, and said: O my faire Daughter, I have provided for thee, that a King shall be thy husband if thou list to consent, therefore tell me what answer thou wilt give to this. Then said she to her Father, it pleaseth me well: but one thing deare Father, I intreat you of, if it might please you to grant me: and this it is, I have vowed to keepe my virginity, and not to marry this seven yeares, therefore deare Father, I beseech you for all the love that is betwene your gracious Father-hood and mee, that ye name no man to be my husband till these seven yeeres be ended, and then I shall be ready in all things to fulfill your Will. Then said the Emperour, sith it is so that thou hast thus vowed, I will not break thy vow, but when these seven yeares be expired, thou shalt have the King of Hungary to thy husband.

Then the Emperour sent forth his Letters to the King of Hungarie, praying him

him if it might please him to stay seven yeares for the love of his Daughter, and then hee should speed without faile. Where with the King was pleased, and content to stay the prescribed day.

And when the seven yeares were ended save a day, the young Lady stood in her Chamber window and wept sore, saying: *Woe* and alas, as to morrow my Love promised to be with mee againe from the Holy Land, and also the King of Hungary to morrow will be here to marry mee, according to my fathers promise, and if my Love come not at a certaine houre, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I beare to him.

When the day came the King hastened toward the Emperour with a great earnestnesse to marrie his daughter, and was royally arrayed in Purple. And while the King was riding on his way there came a Knight riding by him, to whom hee said beare friend, whence art thou, and whence comest thou? the Knight answered and said, I am of the Empire of Rome, and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to doe you the best service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to raine so fast that all

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the Kings apparell was soze wet. When said the Knight: my Lord, yee haue done foolishly, for as much as ye brought not with you your house. When said the King: why speakest thou so? My house is large and broad, and made of stones, & moztter, how should I then bring with mee my House: thou speakest like a fowle. When this was said, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the King smot his Horse with his spurs and leapt into the water, so that hee was almost drowned. When the Knight saw this, and was ober on the other side of the water without perill, he said to the King: ye were in perill, and therefore ye did foolishly, because ye brought not with you your Bridge. When said the King thou speakest strangely, my Bridge is made of lime and stone, and containeth in quantity moze then halfe a mile, how should I then beare with mee my Bridge: therefore thou speakest foolishly. Well said the Knight, my foolishnesse may turne thee to wisdome. When the King had ridden a little further, hee asked the Knight what time of day it was. When said the Knight, if any man hath list to eat, it is time of the day to eat, and therefore my reuerend Lord, I pray you take a modicum

modicum with me, for that is no dishonour to you, but great honour to me before the States of this Empire. When said the King: I will gladly eat with thee. They sat both downe in a faire Wine Garden, and there dined together, both the King and the Knight. And when dinner was done, and that the King had washed, the Knight said to the King: My Lord, quoth he, ye have done foolishly, for that ye brought not with you your Father and Mother. When said the King: what sayest thou? my Father is dead, and my Mother is old and may not travell, how should I then bring them with me? therefore to say the truth, a foolishher man than thou art did I never see. When said the Knight, every work is praised at the end.

When the Knight had ridden a little further, and was nigh the Emperours Pallace, he asked leave to goe from him, for he knew a nearer way to the Pallace to the young Lady, that hee might come first and carry her away with him. When said the King, I pray thee tell me by what place purposest thou to rine? When said the Knight, I shall tell you the truth: this day seven yeares I left a net in a place, and now I purpose to visit it, and draw it to
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me and if it be whole, then will I take it to me, and keep it as a precious Jewell, but if it be broken then will I leave it: and when he had said thus hee tooke his leave of the King, and rode forth, but the King kept the broad high way.

When the Emperour heard of the Kings comming, hee went towards him with a great company, and royally receiued him causing him to shift his wet cloathes, and to put on fresh apparell. And when the Emperour and the King were set at meat, the Emperour welcomed him with all the cheare and solace that he could. And when he had eaten, the Emperour asked tidings of the King. My Lord, said hee, I shall tell you what I heard this day by the way. There came a knight to mee and reverently saluted mee: and anon after, there fell a great raine and greatly spoiled my apparell. And anon the knight said: Sir you have done foolishly, for that you brought not with you your house. Then said the Emperour: what cloathing had the knight on. A cloake, quoth the King. Then said the Emperour surely that was a wise man, for the house whereof he spake was a cloake, and therefore he said to you that you did foolishly, because you came without

without your cloak, for if ye had brought with you a cloak, then your cloathes had not been spoiled with raine. Then said the King, when hee had ridden a little further, we came to deepe water, and I smote my Horse with my spurres, and I was almost drowned, but hee rid through the water without any perill: then said he to me, yee did foolishly, for that yee brought not with you your Bridge. Verily, said the Emperour, he saith truth: for he called the Bridge your Squires, that should have ridden before you, and affraid the deepnesse of the water, Then said the King, we rode further, and at the last hee prayed mee to dine with him. And when he had dined, he said, I did unwisely, because I brought not with mee my Father and Mother. Truly said the Emperour, he was a wise man and said truth: for hee called your Father and Mother, bread and wine, and other viuals, Then said the King: we rode further, and anon after hee asked mee leave to goe from mee, and I asked earnestly whither hee went. And he answered againe, and said: This day seven yeares I left a net in a privat place, and now I will ride to see it, and if it be broken or torne, then will I leave it: but if it be as I left it, then shall

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it be unto mee right precious. When the Emperour heard this, he tryed with a loud voyce, and said: O yee my Knights and servants, come yee with mee speedily unto my Daughters Chamber, for surely that is the net of which hee spake. And forthwith his Knights and servants went unto his Daughters Chamber, and found her not, for the fore-said Knight had taken her with him. And thus the King was deceived of the Damsell. And he went home againe to his owne Countrey ashamed.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our Lord Iesus Christ, and his faire Daughter is everlasting life, which the Emperour had ordained for Kings, Knights, and other men. The Knight that loved this young Lady, is every good Christian soule, which holdeth himselfe not worthy to come into the sight of God unto such joy, as the Apostle saith, The sufferings of this time are not worthy to attaine to the glorie that is to come. This Knight was seven yeares absent from his love: like as a good Christian all the dayes of his life should labour and travell in fulfilling the seven woorkes of mercy. By the King that came with

without a Cloke in the raine; is to be understood some mighty men of this World which have Clokes to cover all their other clothes. By this Cloke is understood Charity as the Apostle saith: Charity covers a multitude of sins: but many men have not this Cloke, wherefore they are wet with the raine of Pride, Avarice, and Lethery. This King also was almost drowned, because he lacked his Bridge, that is, perfect faith: for as we see that no man may passe over a great water, broad and deepe, without a Bridge or some other thing that is able to beare him: Right so, without faith it is impossible to please God: for Christ saith, If yee have faith as a graine of Mustardseed, then may you say to the hills remove out of your places and they shall remove. But many of us now adayes have very feeble faith, and therefore do suddenly fall into the clay of desperation, & by deadly sins often times offend God. Also this King had not brought with him his father and his mother. By the Father which is cause of generation, is understood Humility, without which there is no vertue in any man, and thereto accordeth S. Gregory, saying, Hee that gathereth all other vertues without Humility, is like a man

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that casteth dust into the wind. His Mother betokeneth Hope: therefore he that will obtaine everlasting life, must have the cloke of Charity the brydge of Faith, and a Father of Weaknesse, and a Mother of Hope as the Apostle saith.

Also this Knight went the narrow way, and the King the broad way: for hee that will be saved, must goe a strait way, that is, the way of Fasting, Almesdeeds, Chastity, and Repentance. Of the which way speaketh the Apostle. The way is strait which leadeth unto everlasting life. But many men goe the other way which leadeth to Hell, that is, by the way of fleshly lust: and such men goe out of the way of everlasting life. Therefore study wee to walk the narrow way, that thereby wee may obtaine everlasting life.

The Argument.

By the History is figured, as appeareth in the Morall, the Soule of every good Christian, held of him as his Daughter: but being seduced, carried away, and defiled by Sathan her foule enemy, shee is reduced by the help and valiant prowesse of her heavenly Champion Christ Iesus unto her former Habitation. Yet man being
ungrate-

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ungratefull to his Redeemer, forgetteth his duty, and for good rewardeth evill to his Champion Christ Iesus, delivering him to be judged by the Law, as an Offender: but when the Champion avoucheth what hee hath done for man and his Soule, then is he with shame of his ingratitude constrained to remorse, and call for grace to repent and amend his life, that by the death of his Champion Christ, hee may obtaine eternall life.

The fifteenth Historie.

Sometime dwelt in Rome a noble Emperour named Agias, which had retained unto him a Knight named Gerard, which was a worthy Warriour, notwithstanding hee was as meeke as a Lamb in the Emperours Court, but in the field hee was like a Lyon. This Emperour had a faire Daughter, whom the strong and mightie Earle of Pelester caried perforce away, and defiled, which more displeased the Emperour than the carrying of her away. Therefore hee called unto him his Councell, and said: Deare Friends, the violence done to me in deflouring of my Daughter, is not unknowne to you, and therefore I purpose to give battell to the Earle: wherefore I
pray

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pray you to be ready at a day, that ye may proceed with me in battell. And they said: Sir, we be ready to live and die with you in battell.

When the appointed day of battell came they met on both sides, and a cruell sharp conflict was prosecuted on both sides, and almost all that were on the Emperours part were slaine. And as the Emperour himselfe was forcibly assailed, the Knight Gerard put himselfe among the Enemies before the Emperour and fought manfully, and so the Emperour escaped, and the Knight abode and due the Earle, nevertheless the Knight had divers wounds. Notwithstanding, this he abode till till the blood ranne down to his foot. And when the Enemies saw that the Earle was slaine, they fled, and the Knight with his people followed on the chase till they came to the place where the Emperours Daughter was, and led her with him. And thus with triumph and victoꝝ, he returned againe to the Emperour. For the which victoꝝ and recovering of the Emperours Daughter, he was greatly praised of all people. Not long after it befell that this Knight had a suit in the Emperours Court, wherefore the Knight came unto the Emperour and
prayed

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prayed him meekly to be favourable to his cause, and furthermore desired him to doe reason touching his honest demand.

When the Emperour had heard him, he called to him a Justice, and said, Sir our will is that you doe all equity unto this Knight. And when the Knight heard this, hee cryed with a loud voyce: Alas, alas, who ever heard of such an Emperour. Thou wert (said hee) in battell, where thy head should have bene smitten off, and I in mine own person, (and none other man) put my selfe in jeopardy for thee, and saved thee, and now thou hast assigned another man to be Judge in my cause: alas that ever thou wert borne, and with that word the Knight put off all his clothes, and shewed the wounds that he had received in the battell, unto all the men that were there present, and said: Doe, what have I suffered for thee, O Emperour. I did put no other man in my stead, and now thou assignest another man in my cause. Worthly I say to thee that I never served such a Lord before.

When the Emperour heard this, being almost confounded in himselfe, hee said: O deare friend, all that thou sayst is truth, thou savedst me from death, thou didst re-
obtaine

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obtaine my Daughter againe, and for my sake thou hast suffered many wounds: verily it is right, that I in mine owne person came downe and make an end of thy cause, so as may be to thy content and to mine honour. And then the Emperour laboured very busily in his matter, and made thereof an end according to the Knights request: wherefoze all men greatly commended the Emperour.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour may be called every Christian man, or else all mankind, which had a faire Daughter, that is to say, the soule, made to the similitude of God. This Earle betokeneth the Devil, which carrieth away, and despoileth by sinne the soule of man, through eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree: wherefoze all mankind was in thraldom, till a strong and valiant Knight came and put himselfe on the Crosse to suffer death, as a Redeemer of mankind from the Debitt. For if that had not bene, wee had all bene partakers of thraldom everlastingly: and this Knight reduced and re-obtained the soule of man unto the Church, wherefoze hee suffered many great wounds in his body.

And

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And now this Knight, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ hath a matter to doe among us, that is, to finde in us perfect faith: wherefore hee calleth on us daily that we would be ready at all times, saying thus in Apocalypse the 3. Loe I stand and knock at the doore, if any man will open to mee, I will come in and sup with him. But many men doe as the Emperour did, the which appointed the Knight another Judge than himselfe, for now adayes there bee some men that will doe no repentance for the love of him which assigned no other man but himselfe to fight for us. And therefore against unthankfull persons it shall be said thus. Loe hee suffered for us on the Crosse, dispoiled of all his clothing, and shewed to us all his wounds that hee suffered,

We wee therefore thankfull unto God for all his graces, and bee content that wee may suffer for his love some sorrowfull repentance. For hee that suffereth paine for the love of God in this life, shall receive a hundred times more reward in the life everlasting. Unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ bzing all mankind. Amen.

The

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The Argument.

The soule of man is here warned to eschue the pleasant baits and subtile crafts of the devill, that shee yeeld not to his allurements, lest he get the vantage of this mortall course from her, and bereave her of her joyes in the life to come.

The sixteenth History:

THere dwelt sometimes in Rome a wittie Emperour named Pompey, which had a faire Daughter named Aglas. This Daughter had many vertues aboue all other women in that Empire. First, shee was faire and gracious in the sight of every man, shee was also swift in running, so that no man might overtake her by a right space. When the Emperour understood these two vertues in his Daughter, he was right ioyfull: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that what man poore or rich would runne with his Daughter, should have her to wife, with great riches, if hee could over-runne her, and come sooner to the mark than shee, and if shee over-ranne him, and came sooner to the mark than hee, his head should be smitten off.

When

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When the States of that Empire, as Dukes, Earles, Barons, and Knights, heard this cry, they offered themselves one after another to runne with her, but euer this yong Lady over-ran them all, wherefore they lost their heads according to the Law. That time there was a poore man dwelling in Rome, which thought within himselfe, I am a poore man, and come of poore kindred, there is a common cry made, that what man soeuer can out-runne the Emperours Daughter by any meanes, shall be promoted to great honour & riches: now therefore if I might over-runne her by any manner of way, I should not onely be promoted to great honour, but also all my kindred. Then this poore man provided himselfe of three things, whereby he might winne her. First he made a Garland of red roses and white. Secondly, he made a rich Girdle of silke cunningly wrought. Thirdly, he made a Purse of silke, imbroydered with pretious stones, & within the Purse was a Ball of three colours, and upon this Ball was written this posy, Who playeth with me, shall never be weary of my play. Then put he these three things in his bosome and went forth to the Pallace gate, crying and saying: Come forth faire Lady,

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Lady for I am ready to runne with you,
and to fulfill the Law in all things.

When the Emperour heard this, he
commanded his Daughter to runne with
him. This young Lady went to her Cham-
ber window, and when shee saw him, shee
despised him, and said: I have overcome
many worthy Knights, and now I must
runne with a Churle: neverthelesse I will
fulfill my Fathers commandement.

Anon the damsell arrayed her for to run
with him. And at the last they ran toge-
ther, and within short space the Damsell
got farre before him. When the Jugler
saw this, hee threw forth his Garland of
flowers before her. And when the damsell
beheld and saw it, shee stooped downe and
tooke it up, and set it upon her head, and
that while the Jugler went afoze her. But
when this young Damsell saw this, shee
wept sore, and for sorrow shee threw the
Garland into a ditch, and ran after him,
and at last shee overtooke him, and lift up
her right hand, and gave him a buffet, say-
ing; abide thou wretch, it becometh not
thy fathers sonne to have mee to wife. And
then this Lady did over-run him, and went
before him a great space, And when the
Jugler saw this, he tooke the girdle out of
his

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his bosome, and thzew it befoze her. And when shee saw that, she stooped downe and took it up and girded her therewith, and the while the Augler got befoze her againe. Now when shee saw that, shee was vexed, and took the girdle, and with her teeth tare it in thzee peeces, and then thzew it from her: and then she ran fast after him, and at the last overtooke him, and then shee gave him a great blow, saying: O wretch, thinkest thou to overcome mee? and with that she ranne befoze him againe. The Augler was slye and subtile, and kept the purse till they were befoze the mark, and then hee thzew it befoze her, and anon shee stooped downe and took it up, and opened it, and took out the ball, and read the Poesy: Who playeth with me shall never be weary of my play. And she began to play, and continued so long in playing, till that the Augler was befoze her at the mark. And thus hee won the Emperours Doughter,

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour is our Saviour Christ, and his faire Daughter is the Soule of Man, which was made clean with the water of Baptisme, and was also swift in running, that is, in vertue,

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while

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while that shee was in her cleannesse, so that no deadly sinne might overcome her. This Jugler that is so subtil and crafty, is the Devill, which studieth day and night to deceiue innocents. Hee provided him of three things. First, of the Garland, which betokeneth Pride: for why? a garland of flowers is not set upon the arme, nor upon the foot, but upon the head, that it may be seene: so Pride would be seene. Wherefore S. Augustine saith. When thou seest a proud man, feare not to call him the child of the Devill. Doe thou therefore as the Payen did, be angry at thy sinnes, and cast off the garland of Pride, into the ditch of Repentance, and so shalt thou give the Devill a buffet, and overcome him. But when this Jugler, that is, our ghostly enemy the Devill, seeth himselfe overcome in one sinne, then hee returneth and tempteth a man in another sinne: and casteth before man the Girdle of Lecherie. And alas there be many girded with this Girdle of Lecherie: of the which Girdle speaketh Saint Gregory, saying: Gird we our loynes with the Girdle of Chastity, for whosoever is girt with this Girdle shall not lose the hope of life. Then casteth this Jugler (that is, the Devill) the purse with
the

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the Ball. The Purse that is open aboue, and close under, betokeneth the heart, which euermore should be close in the botome against earthly things, and open aboue to heavenly joy, and the two strings that open and shut the Purse, betoken the love of God, and of our neighbours: The Ball which is round and moveable, to every part of his difference, betokeneth covetousnesse, which moveth ever both young & old, and therfore the Poser was true, that was wrought on the Purse: Who so playeth with me, that is, with Covetousnesse, shall never be satisfied. Therefore saith Seneca. When all sinnes wax old, then Covetousnesse only waxeth young. Therefore let us take heed that we play not with this Ball of covetousnesse, and then without doubt we shall obtaine through the merits of Christ, the blisse of Heaven that never shall end. Unto the which he bring us that shed his pretious blood for us.

The Argument.

The preaching of Gods word, and every good prayer, is a sweet sounding melody in the eares of God, and hath a promised reward of God, yet there is now

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and then stirred up in us some let thereof by our whistling adversary the Devill and we are hindred for a time, untill by the providence of God, godly Preachers bee sent forth, which with the hooke of Gods Word doe winne againe our lost felicity, and so recover the fall of such soules as were seduced and led away into the joyfull and perpetuall fellowship of the blessed Angels of Heaven.

The seventeenth History.

Sometime dwelled in Rome a noble Emperour and wise, named Theodosius, which loved greatly the musick of the Harpe, & likewise the pastime of hunting. It befell upon a day as this Emperour hunted in a Forrest, he heard a sweet noise of a Harpe, so that through the sweetness thereat, he was almost ravished of his wits, wherefore he sought about the Forrest to finde that melody, and at the last he espied at the end of the Forrest a poore man sitting beside the water playing on a Harpe full sweetly. Then said the Emperour, good friend, proceedeth this melody from thy Harpe or no? The poore man answered and said: My reverend Lord, I shall tell you the truth. Here beside this
water

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water, my wife, my childe, & I, have dwelt
 this thirty yeares, and God hath giue me
 such a gift, that when I play on my
 Harp, I make such melody, that the fishes
 of this water come out to my hand, so that
 therewith, my wife, my childe, and I have
 bene sustained in great plenty. But alas,
 sometime on the other side of this water
 there commeth a Whistler & he whistleth
 so sweetly, that many times the fishes for-
 sake me and go to him: therefore my re-
 verend Lord, I crave your helpe against
 this Whistler. Then said the Emperour, I
 shall giue thee good helpe: I have here in
 my purse a golden hooke, which I will giue
 thee, take it, and binde it fast to the end of
 a rod, and put a Worme upon the hooke,
 then cast thy rod into the water, and play
 vpon the Harpe, and when thou perceivest
 the fish to bite on the bait, draw them vp
 to the land with that hooke, and then his
 whistling shall not availe. When the poore
 man heard this, he rejoiced greatly and
 did as he had taught him. And when this
 poore man beganne to play vpon his Harp,
 the fishes came to the bait, and then he
 took them vp with his hooke, and liued
 thereby in better estate long time, and at
 the last ended his life in peace and rest.

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The Morall

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ, which greatly delighteth to hunt the soule of mankinde in the Forrest, that is, the holy Church. He loveth also the melody of the Harpe, that is, he loveth much them that teach the holy Word of God. This poore man that saate by the water side, betokeneth the Prelates of the Church, and the Preachers of the Word of God, which ought to be alway resident in their charge, and not in the world, that is, they should not set their delight in worldly things. The Preachers ought to have the Harp of holy Scripture, wherewith they may praise & honour God, and also therewith draw out of this world the sinners. Therefore saith the Psalmist thus, Praise the Lord upon the Harpe, sing to the Lord with a Psalme of thanksgiving. Psal. 98. 6. But now a dayes the Preacher may say, alas: for when I preach & teach the holy Scripture, the Debill commeth & whistleth so swaetly, that the sinners draw to him, & will not heare the Word of God: but they turne themselves only to the delight of sinne. The Debill deceiveth also mankinde by divers wayes. First, in the
time

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time of preaching he maketh some to sleepe,
and them that hee cannot make to sleepe, hee
causeth them to talk and clatter, and them
that he cannot make to clatter, hee maketh
them so dull, that they cannot understand
what the Preacher saith: and them that he
cannot beguile by these meanes, he putteth
into them businesse, and causeth them to goe
out of the Church. Behold how many
wayes the Devill hath to deceive mankind,
and to let the Word of God. Therefore
every Prelate and every Preacher ought
to have the golden booke of Gods Word
against this whistling, by which they may
draw sinners out of this world up to hea-
ven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Je-
sus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Mans Soule the Daughter of our Saviour,
is right deare unto him, and though hee
bee carefull for the confirming of her in
state of sincere life, yet shee is seduced by
the suggestion of the flesh, which being
a greivous transgression, is yet by ear-
nest repentance and amendment of life,
brought by the soule unto dutifull obe-
dience towards God and man, that thence
forwards so continuing, they together

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may bee partakers of everlasting blessednesse.

The eighteenth History.

There dwell sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Ptolomeus, which had but one Childe, a Daughter whom he loved so much, that day and night she was guarded with armed Knights: and over those Knights hee ordained a Controulour to instruct them how they should doe. Hee ordained also a Steward for to guide his Household. And when all this was done, on a night as he lay in his bed, he resolved that he would goe visit the Holy Land. And when all things were ready for his journey according to his desire, he called unto him his Steward, and said: My trustie servant, I purpose now to goe see the Holy Land, and therefore I commit my Daughter to thy keeping, and I charge thee that she lack nothing, but that shee have all manner of joy that appertaineth to such a Virgin. Moreover, I leave to thy keeping five Knights that be her Guard, and I charge thee that they lack nothing that is fitting for them. Also I leave with thee my Grayhound, commanding that thou nourish and feed him as hitherto hee hath bene: and if thou

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thou fulfill all this that I have said, thou shalt at my coming again receive a great reward. Then said the Steward: My Lord, in all that I may I shall fulfill your command. Anon the Emperour tooke his journey toward the Citie of Ierusalem, and the Steward a long time kept well the Emperours command, and the charge given him.

But at the last it befell upon a day that this Steward had espied this young Lady walking alone in an Orchard, with whose love he was suddenly surprized: wherefore straight way, against her will, he deflowered her. And when he had committed sin with her, he gave her ill language, and hated her more than ever hee loved her before, and drove her out of the Pallace: wherefore the Damzell by this meanes being driven to necessity and great poverty, went from doore to doore and begged her bread. But when the Knights that were her keepers saw this, they reprobed shamefully the Steward of that inhumane deed. Then the Steward waxed wroth, and for great hate that hee had in his heart, hee spoiled the Knights of their goods, & drove them from the Pallace. And when they were thus robbed and exiled, some for lack of living became

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became thæbes, & some men-killers, so that through this inconueniency, they wrought great harme.

Not long after there came tidings that the Emperour was arrived in that land comming homeward. And when the Steward heard this, hee was greatly troubled and moped in himselfe and said: It cannot be but I shall be accused for my trespassse that I have committed against the Emperours commandement, and he hath ever bene my good and mercifull Lord, therefore better it were that I goe and meet him with all lowlinesse and humilitie, and accuse my selfe unto him, and ask him mer-
cie, then that any other should prevent mee, and accuse me to my Lord for my treason. Then the Steward straight put off all his clothes, save his hose and his shirt, and tooke threë Ropes with him in his right hand, and barefeet went and met the Emperour. Now when the Emperour had espied him comming a farre off in such manner, he wondered greatly. And when the Steward was come so nere that hee might speak to the Emperour, hee fell downe on his knees and saluted him reverently. Then said the Emperour, what is befallen thee, that thou maetest mee after
such

such a sort : for in that thou art my Steward, thou shouldest have met mee with a great company of noble Knights. Wh my Lord, quoth he, there is a heauie chance befallne me, for the which it behoues me to meet your Highnesse thus : Then said the Emperour, what chance is befallne thee? My reuerend Lord, quoth he, it behoues you first to ask me, why I bring with me these thre ropes. Then said the Emperour, why barest thou these thre ropes in thy hand? Then answered the Steward and said : This first rope I bring with me to binde my hands and feet so hard, till the blood burst out on ebery side, for that I have well deserbed : the second Rope I bring with me, to draw me at a Horse taile upon the pavement, till that my bones be bare without flesh, for that is but due to me for the great treason I have done against you. The third Rope I have brought is to hang me with, upon an high Gallows, so long till that the Birds light on my head and on my body, and feed themselves on my flesh, for these things are due to such trespassers and breakers of the Law as I am. Yet Wh my reuerend Lord, haue mercy on mee, for I dare not acknowledge my trespass, untill I haue obtained thy pardon.

Then

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Then said the Emperour: I see in thy great contrition, therefore tell me thy trespasses, and surely thou shalt find mercy and grace. Alas, alas, then said the Steward, I have defiled thine onely Daughter, and have driven her out of thy Pallace, so that now in great necessity shee beggeth her bread from doore to doore. I have also dispoyled thy Knights of all their goods, and now some of them in regard they lack liuing become thieues and robbers, & some men-killers, and the Controulour of the Knights I have slaine, but I fed thy Grayhound with the best meat as long as I might, and tyed him with a chaine, yet at the last he brake his chaine and went his way, so that now he runneth about the Countrey.

When the Emperour heard this, hee was sore astonied and said: Hast thou deflored my Daughter, whom I lobed so well, and also dispoyled my Knights, and slaine their Controulour, and the Grayhound which I lobed well, of whom I gave thee charge, he is gone also? Surely, were it not that I had forgiven thee, and that thou hast humbled thy selfe so much, I would have put thee to the vilest death that could be thought: notwithstanding depart hence forthwith

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forthwith, and bzing againe my Daughter, that thou mayest marry her, & if any harme hereafter befall to her through thy default, then will I double thy punishment. Also bzing againe my Knights, and restore to them their goods: and set them in their state and offices as they were before. Also seeke diligently for my Grayhound till thou find him, and then make him fast, so that hereafter in thee there be no fault found. Now when the Steward heard this, he bowed downe with most humble submission, and thanked the Emperour of his great mercy. and then he went forth and sought diligently through all the Empire, untill he found the Emperours Daughter, & the Knights, and the Grayhound, and brought them home againe. And after he had married the yong Lady, and restored againe the Knights goods, he ended his life in peace.

The Morall.

Deare friends this Emperour beokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ. His Daughter beokeneth the Soule of man, made after the similitude of our Lord God. The five Knights are the five Wits, armed with the vertue of Baptisme, for the preservation

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seruation of the soule. The Controuler of the Knights, is Reason, which ought to rule the Wits. The Grayhound is the flesh of man: and the Steward is every man, to whom God hath giben a life and soule to keepe, under paine of losing everlasting life. But wretched and wicked man, not remembzng what is to come, full often corrupteth and polluteth his Soule with sinne, and repelleth her from her palace of Heaben: and then wandzeth she from doore to doore, that is from sinne to sinne. He dispoileth these fife Knights of their goods, that is, the fife Wits, or rather gracious Vertues, taking away the naturall light from their eyes, giving them bad counsell, and also moving their eares to listen unto flander and backbiting, and so forth of all the ether Wits, and thus some be made cheeves, and some men-killers. The master of these fife Wits is slaine whensoever man is ruled by Will, and not by reason. The Grayhound, that is, the flesh, wherein a man delighteth, was fed & bound with a chaine of Reason, but breaking out, full oft doth much harme.

The coming againe of this Emperoꝛ from the Holy land, betokens the coming

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of our Lord Iesus Christ at the day of
doome to iudge all mankind. Wherefoze
let us, as the Steward did, accuse our selves
of our finnes first, lest the Debill and the
world accuse us, when it is too late to aske
mercie: therfoze put wee off our clothes
betime, that is, our sinfull life, and take
wee three Ropes in our hands. The first
Rope that should bind our hands and feet,
betokeneth the Rope of true Repentance,
which not onely ought to bind our hands
and feet, but also both our hearts within
us, and our outward conversations, in
such austeritie of life, that the blood burst
out on ebery side, that is, that sinne might
void it selfe. Hereto accoꝝdeth Ezekiel,
saying thus: Whensoever the sinfull man
doth repent himselfe, he shall be saved. The
second Rope, for to draw the trespasser, is
acknowledging of our finnes, which should
draw us from the beginning of our life,
unto our liues end, by a perfect reconcil-
iation of our liues to God and man, un-
to the time that the flesh bee fallen from
the bones, that is, till the lust of the flesh be
turned away by the stones of repentance:
For even as the Stone by nature is hard,
right so the way of Repentance ought to
bee hard, The third Rope, that should
hang

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hang the Fellow, is the Hope of amendment of life : for it is written in holy Scripture, There is more joy in Heaven over one Sinner that turneth unto the Lord in time, then over ninety and nine just ones.

Like as the Steward brought againe the Emperours Daughter, so it behobeth us to seeke about by a fruitfull Faith, untill wee finde againe our lost soule, and so bring her againe to the Church, to rule well our five Wits, to feed our Gray-hounds as wee should, and make our life so cleane and pure, that wee fall not againe to sinne, for feare that it fortune to us worse, and that we have no leisure to aske mercie againe at our needs. And if wee fulfill all this truly unto our lifes end, without doubt wee shall obtaine everlasting life, To the which our Lord bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

The violating of our innocencie in not imitating the Law of God, is here described, which being adjudged after the Law, is death, but by the merits of Christ our Saviour we obtaine saluation,

The

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The nineteenth Historic.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperour, and a wise, named Eufenne, who ordained a Law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin, should be at her discretion, whether she would put him to death, or would take him to her husband.

It befell after, that a man ravished in one night two faire Maydens: the first Damzell which he ravished desired that he should die, but the second desired him to her husband. The ravisher was taken and led before the Judge, that he might satisfie both these Damzels according to the equity of the cause. The first Damzell desired his death according to the Law. Then said the second, I desire to have him to my husband: and like as thou hast the Law for thee, so in like case I have it for me, and also my petition is much better then yours, for it is more charitable: therefore me thinks in my reason, that the Justice should give sentence in favour and furtherance of my desire. When the Justice heard the mercy of the second Damzell, he gave judgement that he should take her to Wife, and so it was done.

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The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour be-
tokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ. The Ra-
bisher betokeneth every sinner, which ra-
bisseth Gods mercie, as often as hee vio-
lateth the holy Commandements of God
by sinne, for the Devill can never over-
come man, except hee be suffered by the
will. For Saint Augustine saith, It is not
sinne except it be voluntary. The Rabisher
also is called before the Justice, when the
Soule is departed from the body: and anon
the first Damself (Innocencie) laid against
the Sinner, that hee ought to die everla-
stingly by the Law of righteousness: But
the other Mayden (that is, Christs merits)
alleadged for him, how the mercie of God
ought to help by hearty repentance, and ac-
knowledging of sinnes, which is the high
way to everlasting life. Unto the which
God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The Mother of the Childe of Grace and of
the Reprobate is here declared, and set
forth: but which of them shall be saved,
and which of them shall be damned, is
not

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not yet revealed to the World, untill the last
and dreadfull Day of judgement.

The twentieth History

Sometime there dwelled in Rome a
Mighty Emperour and a rich, named
Lypodus, which tooke to Wife a faire
Virgin and a gentle, the Daughter of the
King of Assyria. This young Lady con-
ceived and bare him a Sonne, and in the
birth she dyed: not long after her decease
the Emperour married another Wife,
and had by her a Sonne also: and imme-
diately after the second childe was borne,
hee sent them both into a strange Land
there to bee brought up. Now when the
children had bene there long, the Em-
presse said: my reverend Lord, ten yeres
be now fully expired since I bare my Son
and yet I never saw him but once, and that
was the first day of his birth, therefore I
beseech you my Lord, to send for him to
the end that I may once rejoyce me in his
sight. When said the Emperour, I have
another Childe by my first Wife, and if I
send for thy son, then must I send for them
both: notwithstanding, at the Empresses
request hee sent for them both: And when
they were come, they were of passing fea-
ture,

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ture, and well trained us, and so passing like in all things, that hardly the one might be knowne from the other, but the Father knew the difference.

Then said the Mother of the second Childe: My Lord, I pray you tell mee which of these is my Son. Then the Emperour called to him that Sonne that he begat on his first Wife. When the Emperesse heard this, she gave all care to cherish him, and neglected the other Childe. Now when the Emperour saw this, he said to his Wife, certainly I have deceived thee: for him that thou lovest so much is not thy Sonne, but the other is thy Son. Then set she all her care vpon the second, and set light by the first. When the Emperour saw this, he said: Truly I deceived thee: Without doubt this is not thy Sonne, but one of them two is thy Sonne. Then said the Mother: My Lord, I most earnestly intreat you that you would tell mee without dissembling, which of them is my Sonne, The Emperour answered and said, certainly I will not tell you, untill they bee both come to mans estate, and this is my reason. First, I told you that this was your Sonne, and you cherished him, and forsooke that other: and when

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When I told you that this was your Sonne, then thou slightly regarded the first, and cherished the second. Wherefore my desire is, that you cherish them both alike, that I may have like joy of them. When the Emperesse heard this, she cherished them both alike. And when they were both come to age, the Emperour made a great Feast, and before all his Nobles he told his wife openly which was her Sonne. When rejoiced the Emperesse greatly, and when she had lived a good time, she ended her life in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperours Son betokeneth those that be chosen to eberlasting life, & those that be not chosen. The Mother of them is the Providence of God that nourisheth them both: therefore our Lord will not that his providence should let the World know which be chosen, and which be not chosen. For if she knew that, then would she love the one and hate the other; and so Charity among us would be overthrowne, and we should live in discord and strife: but Truth at the day of Judgement shall tell to us which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be

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damned. Therefore pray we in this World
that we may come to the everlasting feast
in Heaven, Unto the which God bring
us all.

The Argument.

The ungodly of this World will not take
any paines to live vertuously, and yet of-
tentimes they are enriched for the most
part with the riches of Fortune, but they
are not carefull of the reward laid up for
the righteous in Heaven, neither doe
they feare the torments of Hell appointed
for the Reprobates.

The 21. Histodry.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a Po-
ble Emperour named Polinus, which
had three Sonnes whom hee loved much.
It befell upon a day, when this Empe-
rour lay upon his Bed, hee bethought him
to which of his Sonnes he might give his
Empire after his decease. Then called hee
to him his three Sons, and said: Which of
you is most slothfull, hee shall have mine
Empire after my decease. The first Son
answered and said: the Empire by rea-
son should be mine, for I am so slothfull
that if my foot were in the fire I had ra-
ther

ther it should be burnt, then I would take it out. Then said the second, I am (quoth he) more fit for the Empire than thou, for though there were a cord about my neck wherewith I should bee hanged, and if I had a sharp sword in my hand, for very sooth I will not once put forth my hand to cut the cord to save my life. And when these two Brethren had thus said, then the third spake for himselfe thus: I ought to be Emperour before you both, for I exceed you in sooth, and that I will prove thus: I lie upright in my bed, and there droppeth water upon my eyes, and for very sooth I will not move my head, neither to the right side of the bed, nor to the left, to save my selfe. When the Emperour heard this, he bequeathed the Empire unto the youngest, as to the soothfullest of the brethren.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth the Devill, which is the Lord and father over the ungodly in this World. By the first son is understood a man that chanceth into evill company, by which he falleth into misdoemeanour, and had lever be burnt in the fire of sinne, than depart from them.

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The second Sonne betokeneth him that knowes himselfe to be fast bound with the band of sinne, wherewith he is to be hanged on the gallowes of Hell, and is so slothfull that he will not cut it away with the sword of true Repentance. By the third sonne is understood a man that heares of the joyes of heaven and the paines of hell, yet will not move himselfe to the right nor to the left side to forsake his sins, for feare of eternall paine: such a man without doubt, for his sloth shall receiue the Kingdom of Hel, from which keepe us our Lord Iesus. Amen.

The Argument.

Mans soule, as a Captaine Generall, with his Forces of armed Vertues, fights against a strong Citie, the World, wherein is the Castle of Vanity, and in that are the poysoned forces of sinne, as mortall enemies of Mankind, against whom well to fight, is the meanes to obtaine victory, and triumph everlastingly.

The 22. Historie.

Alexander the mighty Emperour sometime ruled, who besieged a Citie of the King of Egypt with a great Host, nevertheless this Emperour lost many worthy knights

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knights without any hurt or stroke. And thus from day to day his people dyed suddenly, whereof this Alexander wondered greatly, and was full sorrowfull therefore in his mind, and hee called unto him the wisest Philosophers that might bee found, and demanded of them why his people dyed thus suddenly without any wounds. The Philosophers answered and said, By Lord it is no wonder: for upon the walls of that Castle within the Citie is a Cockatrice, thzough whose sight your men die, for they are infected with the benome that commeth from her eyes, and thereupon they die.

Then this Alexander asked if there were any remedie against the Cockatrice. The Philosophers answered, and said: By Lord, there is good remedie, for if it please you to set up a large Mirrour of cleare glasse ober against the Cockatrice, betwene your hoast and the wall of the Citie, when the Cockatrice beholdeth her selfe in the Mirrour, the deadly nature of her benemous sight shall retorne againe to her selfe, and thus she shall die, and your men shall thereby be saved. Then the Emperour did as the Philosophers counsailed him, and set up forth with a large Mirrour
of

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of excellent cleare glasse, and thus was the Cockatrice slaine, and the Emperour with his hoast made an assault to the Citie, and obtained the victoꝝy.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour may be called ebery Chꝛstian man, which ought to gather an hoast of vertues, for without vertue no man can fight spirituallly. The Citie against which yē shall fight, is the Woꝛld, wherein there is an high Castle, that is, Vanitie of Vanities, and all is but Vanitie. In this Vanitie standeth the Cockatrice, that is, pꝛide of life, desire of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, wherefoꝛe this pꝛide infecteth so many, that they die in sinne everlastingly. Wherefoꝛe the best remedie against this pꝛide, is the consideration of our uncleannesse, how wee came naked into the Woꝛld. And if it be asked why a man is pꝛoud, certainly it may be answered thus, for default of cloathing himselfe with vertues: what shall wee doe when wee die thus ghostly, but set up a pure mirrour of conscience, that by that conscience wee may consider our slidings: and our brittle nesse, as in a glasse where we may see our owne default: And if wee doe
thus

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thus without doubt, the Cockatrice, that is, Pride of life, desire of the eyes, & lust of the flesh, shall be utterly destroyed, and we shall obtaine the victorie of this worldly City, and by Christs merits win everlasting life. Unto the which he bring us all.

The Argument.

The Soule of man being conversant in the Body with the flesh; she seeketh by sinister meanes to overthrow the Soule with her uncleane lusts after the World, where though the Soule for a time suffereth wipwrack of worldly felicity, yet the Lion of the Tribe of Iuda is of power not only to comfort her in necessity, but also to revenge her injury, and to make her to repossesse her former estate in the World to come.

The 23. History.

A Righte Emperour sometime ruled the Romans, named Archelaus, who in his old age espoused a faire Lady, whom a young Knight loved, and had to doe with her as oft as him list. It befell on a night that this Emperour bethought him in his Bed, to visite the Citie of Jerusalem, wherefore without any more delay he ordained

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dained all things necessary for his journey, and taking his leave of his Emperesse, and of the States of his Empire, went towards the said City.

When the Emperesse heard this, shee tooke the Master of the Ship aside, & said. If thou wilt consent to me, and be true, aske of me what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it. The Master of the Ship was corrupt with covetousnesse, and said: O my deare Lady, whatsoever thou wilt command me, I shall without faile fulfill it, so that thou wilt reward me for my labour. Then said the Emperesse, before thou doest ought for me, I will give thee whatsoever thou desirest, so that thou wilt sweare to be true to me & keepe my counsell. Then the Master of the ship swore to be true to her.

Then said the Emperesse: my Lord goeth with you in your ship, therefore when he is in the midst of the Sea, cast him overboard, that he may be drowned, and thou shalt have what thou wilt for thy reward. Then the Master of the ship swore a great Oath, and said: By the great God Iupiter, after he cometh once within my ship, you shall never see him more. Then the Lady gave him as much gold as he would have, and he went to his ship.

And

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And within short time after, the Emperour tooke his Ship, and when he was in the midst of the Sea, the master of the Ship tooke the Emperour and threw him overboard into the Sea. When the Master returned againe, he told the Emperesse how he cast the Emperour into the Sea, whereof she was right glad.

This Emperour that was cast into the Sea, had learned in his youth to swim, and swam to an Island in the Sea. And when he was faint, & like to be drowned, he prayed to God to be his helpe. At the length he came into a little Island wherein was nothing but Lions and Leopards, and such other beasts as swim thither from other Lands. When the Emperour had got to Land in that Ile, he espied a young Lion fighting with an old Leopard, and the Lion was too weake, and was almost overcome. Now the Emperour had great compassion on the Lion, and drew out his Sword, and forthwith slew the Leopard. The Lion from that time forth followed the Emperour, and would not leave him for any thing, but every day he prey that the Lion tooke, he brought and layd at the Emperours feet, and the Emperour smote fire on a flint stone, and broyled the body of

of

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of the Beast in the skinn: and thus was he fed for a long season. At length, as he walked by the Sea shore he saw a goodly Ship come sailing by, and with a high voice he cryed. And when the Ship-men heard the voyce, they wondered what it might be, wherfore they sayled toward him: and when they were come nere him, he said: Good friends take me with you, and I shall pay you a good fraught. So they took him into their Ship, and the Lion followed him, swimming in the Sea after the Ship: and when the Lion was nere drowned, the Ship-men had pittie on him, and took him into the Ship. Now when the Emperour came to land, he paid his fraught and went forth with the Lion till he came nere his owne Palace, where he heard Trumpets, and all other Musick, and as he marvelled what it might be, there came from the Palace a Squire, toward him, that he knew, but the Squire knew not him: To whom the Emperour said thus: Good friend, I pray thee tell me what is the cause of this melody. The Squire answered and said, the Emperesse is married this day, and all the States of the Empire are at the feast, and therefore they make such melody. Then said the
Em

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Emperour to the Squire : where is her husband that was the Emperour before ? The Squire said that he went to the Holy Land and was drowned by the way. Then the Emperour said : Sir, I pray you tell the Emperesse, and the Lord that shall be her husband, that I (so please them) will shew their Majesties rare sport with my Lion. The Squire granted to doe his errand, and went in and told his Lord and Lady, that a goodly old man was at the gate, that would shew them sport with his Lion. Then said the new married Lady, bring him in, he perchance may deserve meat for his play. When the Emperour with his Lion was brought in, the Lion without any setting on ranne upon the young knight that was newly married, and slew him, and when hee had so done, he ranne upon the Emperesse also, and devoured her to the bones, before all the Lords of the Empire. And when the Nobles saw this, they were greatly agast and began to flie. But the Emperour with his faire speech perswaded them, and said : Loe, this is the vengeance of God, for this my Wife hath used Adulterie long time with this knight that lyeth dead, also she practised my death with the Master of the ship,

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ship, and thereupon hee threwe mee into the Sea, but God saved me from death, and because I holp once this Lyon at a need, he never forsook me since: and now as yee all see, when I came into the Pallace, without provoking of me, he hath slain both the Adulterers, and therfore understand yee for truth that I am your Emperour. Now when they heard this, they looked more serbently upon him, and discerned him to be their Emperour, and greatly rejoycing, praised God for that Miracle, which had saved their Lord and Emperour. And they lived together a long time in peace.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, by this Emperour wee may understand every Christian man that purposeth to visit the Citie of Ierusalem, that is, to get everlasting life through faith. But his wife, that is, the wretched flesh, murmureth against the soule, and loveth better an Adulterer, that is, deadly sinne, than her husband. This Emperour went into a Ship, taking his journey towards the Citie of Ierusalem, that is, hee went to the Church of God, which is the way to God: but the wife, that is, fleshly men, accused him to the Matter of the Ship, that is,

to the Prelates of the Church; for great
 rewards, which oftentimes doe blinde the
 sight of many Iustices, whereby many
 perfect men be cast out of the Ship into the
 Sea to bee drowned, that is, out of the
 Church into the Sea of this World. But
 what shall he doe then that is thus cast to
 be troubled in this World: Certainly this
 ought he to doe: let him learne to swim,
 that is, let him put all his hope in God,
 and by his grace he shall come to an Iland,
 that is the Religion of heart, and then hee
 shall love ever the better to keepe himselfe
 out of this world, and therefore S. Iames
 saith: A pure Religion and undefiled be-
 fore God, even the Father, is this, &c. And
 he that is in this Religion shall finde a Li-
 on, whom hee behoveth to have against
 the Devill. This Lion is our Lord Iesus
 Christ that came of the Tribe of Iuda, who
 fighteth ever against the Devill: and if a
 man hath holpe this Lion, that is, hath
 served God against his enemies at any
 time, he may trust well that hee will not
 forsake him at his need, according to the
 Psalmist, saying: I am with him in trou-
 ble. By this Lion thou must take thy
 wife, that is, thy flesh with repentance,
 and slay thy sinne, and then without doubt
 thou

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thou shalt obtaine the Empire of heauen.
Unto the which bring us our Lord Iesus
Amen.

The Morall.

The Soule of man espoused to Christ in Baptisme, yet dieth by meanes of sin leaving behind her her sonne, called Reason, or rather the Word of God, which searcheth the disease of man her sinfull father: and being sent for to cure the malady of his step-mothers Will, hee refuseth to administer ghostly comfort unto her.

The 24. Historie.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a noble Emperour named Gorgonie, who married a vertuous and beautifull Lady to his wife. This young Lady in due pro-
cesse of time conceived and bare a Sonne, a faire and an amiable childe. When this childe was ten yeares old, his mother the Emperesse died. Not long after, the Emperour married another wife: The second wife could not affect or love by any meanes the Emperours Sonne, but did him all the shame and reproach that she might. When the Emperour perceived this, wil-
ling

ling to please his wife, he exiled his Sonne out of his Empire. And when the Sonne was exiled, hee went and studied Physick, so that within short time he was a skilfull and a cunning Physician. It befell not long after, that the Emperour his Father sickned, and was almost at deathes doore, wherefore, when hee heard that his Sonne was so good a Physitian, he sent for him by letters, praying him that he would come to him without delay. Now the Sonne willing to obey his Fathers commandement, in all haste came to him: and when hee had felt his pulses, hee discerned the sicknesse, and ministred Physick to him, whereby he shortly recovered.

Not long after, the Emperesse his step-mother began to fall sick, and many Physicians said shee would die. And when the Emperour heard this, he sent to his Sonne to help her of her sicknesse. Then said his Sonne, certainly Father I will lay no hand on her. Then the Emperour began to wax wroth, and said: if thou wilt not obey my commandement, thou shalt henceforth depart my Empire. His Sonne answered and said, If you doe so (deare Father) you doe unrightly, for well you know, that you exiled me out of your Empire through
 W 2 her

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her suggestion, and my absence was cause of your sicknesse, now my presence is cause of her sicknesse, and therefore I will not meddle with her, nor use any Physick unto her: for oftentimes Physitians are deceived in their Patients, therefore I dare lay no hand on her, for if it should fortune her to die, men would judge that my Physick were the cause thereof.

Then said the Emperour: she hath the very same sicknesse that I had. His Sonne answered and said: though shee have the same sicknesse, neverthelesse you are not both of one constitution: for whatsoever I did to you, you were therewith content, and when you saw mee come within the Pallace, you rejoyced at my coming, and was greatly pleased with the sight of mee that you begat: but when this my Stepmother saw me, shee was angry, and tooke cosse at her heart, and therefore if I should but speak to her, her sorrow would much more increase, and if I should offer to touch her, shee would be in a rage. Also a Physitian profiteth little, except the Patient take pleasure in him. Now none can cure her of envie. And when he had spoken his mind, he tooke his leave, and departed thence.

The Morall.

Deare Friends , this Emperour be-
 tokeneth ebery Christian man , which is
 married to Christ in the Baptisme of re-
 generation , for then the soule is made the
 Spouse of Christ , on whom our Saviour
 begetteth a Sonne , that is , the knowledge
 of his Word , and Will . But when the
 Childe grew to some tenre yeares of age ,
 or some increase in vertue , his Mother
 Christianity died : then vertue departeth
 from youth , and afterward the Christian
 man his Father matcheth himselve with
 another woman , the stepmother of the said
 youth named ignorant Envie , which in no
 wise could affect the Emperours Sonne
 of knowledge , wherefore the caused him
 to be banished into a strange Country ,
 from his Father and her both . It hapned
 that the good Christian man , being ober-
 ruled by his wife , falleth sick , and sendeth
 for his Sonne , knowledge of Gods word
 and will , to cure him as his Physitian ,
 who dutifullly periorzmeth the same . But
 his stepmother falling sick at the sight of
 the Emperours son , though the Christian
 man her husband labours to him to cure
 her as a good Physitian of her Soule , yet

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Shee not liking his good endeavour to winne her from ignorant enble of the Truth, is very hardly healed of her sicknes, but oftentimes dieth in her ignorant enble and wilfull wickednesse, without any hope of health or life unto eternall saluation, so that the Physitian comes thither too late.

The Argument.

Jesus Christ the Sonne of God ought to be cherished and fostered in our hearts by faith and good life: which is taken from us, when wee are not thankfull unto him for his graces. Wherefore the Preachers of Gods Word, as good Physitians, are sent unto us, for to admonish and warne us to persevere in amendment of life, and constant hope in Christs merits, and so to harbour him in our hearts, as hee may thereby bestow on us the promotion of heavenly blisse.

The 25. Historic.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Folenus, who tooke to wife the Kings Daughter of Germanie, a faire Lady and a courteous, which within short time conceived and bare a son. When the Child was bozne, the States of

the Empire came to the Emperour, and every one of them besought the Emperour to have the bringing up of his Sonne. The Emperour answered and said: to morrow shall be a Turney, and there you shall all be, and which of you doth best, and obtaineth the victory, hee shall have the keeping of my sonne: and if he traine him up well, I shall promote him to great dignitie and honour, and if he see the contrary, hee shall die the foulest death that can be thought. When said they? Most reverend Lord, all this pleaseeth us well. On the morrow when every man was come to the tourney the States fought valiantly: but at length came a valiant knight named Iosias, who so courageously bare himselfe there, that hee obtained the victory. And immediately after the Tourney was all done, this Iosias took the Child, and led him home with him. And because the Emperours Sonne should be recheved with state in his Country, hee sent before to his Castle, and commanded his Officers that they should royally provide for him, and that the Childes lodging should be in the midst of the Castle, and also that the seven Sciences should be portrayed about the Childes bed, that when the Child waked out of his sleep, hee might

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Ipe in his Bed and behold the same. The
 Knight had a wholesome Well by the
 Childes Bed-side, wherein he used to bathe
 himselfe, & the Knights Wife bare the Key
 of the Well, and there was a Window
 whereat the Sun might comfortably shine
 upon him. It fortun'd upon a day, that the
 Lady left open the Window through neg-
 ligence, which being done, thither came a
 Beare, and seeing the Window open, went
 to the Well & bathed him therein, of whose
 bathing the Well laboured after, through
 the great heat which was at that time in
 the hunted Beare, whereby whosoever
 dranke of that water, wared leprous with-
 in short time after. So it fortun'd, that the
 Lord and the Lady, with all the household,
 by drinking of the water of that Well be-
 came Lepers, notwithstanding it appeared
 not presently. Not long after it fortun'd
 there came a great Eagle in at the Win-
 dow, where the Emperours son lay, & bare
 the Childe away out of the Cradle. Now
 when the Lord of the Castle heard this he
 wept bitterly & said: Alas, alas, woe is me
 wretched creature, that ever I was borne,
 what shall I doe: now I am the sonne of
 death, for I am become a loathsome Leper,
 and so is my Wife with all my household,
 also

also the Emperours Son is lost and gone.

Now while hee thus mourned, there came to him a Physitian; and said: Sir, if you will doe after my counsell you shall not repent you. First, it becometh you, your Wife, and all your household to be let blood, and after that to be bathed & cleane washed, and then I will apply to you my medicine: and when you are whole, then shall you and your household walke up to the Mountaines, and seeke the Emperours sonne, for the Eagle hath let him fall there in some place. Then the Lord followed the advise and counsell thus given him by the Physitian; and forthwith hee and all his household were let blood, and receiued the medicine, and within a short time after were all whole and sound. When they were thus healed, hee tooke his Horse accompanied with thre men, and rode forth to seeke the Childe, and at last he found him whole and sound, lying in a valley, whereat he greatly rejoyced. And incontinently with great joy and gladnesse, he led the Childe home to the Emperour his Father. Now when the Emperour saw his Sonne in good health, he was right glad, and promoted him to great honour. And so after that he had long time liued there in
noble

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noble estate, he after ended his life in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Carpenter betokeneth the Father of Heaven, his Son betokeneth our Lord Ie sus Christ, to nourish whom many men desire, at such time as they receive the Sacrament of his death and passion. Wee nourisheth him best, that justeth with the debill, and overcommeth him by godly life. This Knight that took this Child with him, betokeneth a good Christian man, that evermore abstaineth truly from doing evil, and laboureth continually to do good to all men. Thersfore doe we as the Knight do, send messengers before to prepare and make cleave the Cattle of our hearts, from all spots of sin, by lively faith, and so shall this Child Iesus rest in the midst of our hearts.

The Well betokeneth mercy, which ought to be next our Lord, for whosoever is without mercy and truth, may not nourish that blessed Child Iesus: but if hapneth oft that the Knights wife, that is, the flesh of man, beareth the key of mercy, and oft leaveth that Well open, and then comes the Beare, that is, the Devil, and leaveth
his

his loathsome filth in the Well of mercie,
 and who so tasteth thereof shall be infected
 with the leprosie of sinne. The Window
 wherein the Sunne shined is the grace of
 the holy Ghost, by whom men are comforted
 ghostly. By this window the Eagle
 cometh in, that is, the flying affections
 of the wicked world, carrying away the
 knowledge of God from us, into the vale of
 ignorance and security, and then man hath
 great cause to wepe, but what shall wee
 doe when the Childe is gone, but send for a
 skilfull Phylitian, that is, a discret Mini-
 ster of the word of God, which shall giue
 him counsell to let him blood, and all his
 households, that is, to put out sinne through
 acknowledging thereof, and reconciling
 himselfe with earnest repentance, unto his
 heavenly Father.

Then must he bathe himselfe with tears
 of contrition and compunction of heart, and
 after that, take the medicine of amend-
 ment of life, and so liue pure and clean from
 all manner of sin, and when hee hath done
 thus, hee must leape on the Palfrey of good
 perseuerance from evill, and ride forth with
 the three men: that is, falling from evill,
 praying unto God, and well deserving to-
 wards man: and then without doubt he shal
 find

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find the Child Iesus in the balley of Humilitie, and not on a hill, that is, pride. And if ye doe this, doubtlesse hee shall haue might and power to nourish that blessed Childe Iesus, for whose nourishing the Father of Heauen shall promote him unto everlasting joy. Unto the which joy hee bring us, that shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Christ the giver of everlasting glory hath proclaimed a like joy and blisse in heaven, as well to the poore as to the rich: But the rich oftentimes coveting all, lose the prerogative which the poore in heart enjoy by the providence of God, yet as he is a righteous God, hee ordaineth both for the rich and poore in such sort, that if they will, they may together joyfully be satisfied with the great plenty of his abundant graces.

The 26. History.

Sometime dwelt in Rome a mightie Emperour named Fulgentius, which governed his people nobly, and loved them so much, that hee made to proclaimethroughout all nations, who ever would
come

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come to him rich or poore at a certaine day, should have their petition whatsoever it were. When the mighty men heard this, they were glad, and came at the day assigned, and every man put forth his petition unto the Emperour, immediately their petitions were granted and fulfilled, insomuch that a great part of the rebenewes of the Empire was distributed among them. Then every man was joyfull and went home againe, and tooke possession of such Lands and Castles as the Emperour had given them.

Straight way after, the poore men in the Emperours Dominions, gathered them together, and said, a common cry was made, that whosoever came to the Emperours Pallace, should have whatsoever hee asked. The rich men have bene there lately, and obtained their petitions: therefore goe wee now, and try if wee may obtaine any good of the Emperour. Now this counsell liked them all, wherefore they went to the Emperours Pallace, and there they put forth their petitions according to the Proclamation.

When the Emperour had heard them, hee said to them: Deare friends, I have heard all your petitions, and it is true that
my

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my Proclamation was, that every man indifferently should come and have their petitions, but the rich and mighty men have beene here before you, to whom I have given all that I had, save only the royalty of my Lordship, and so have I nothing left to give you. Whereto the poore men sadly replied. Most gracious Soberaigne have compassion on us, and let us not goe away emptie, for wee know well that it is our owne default that wee came not rather with these other rich and mighty men: but sith it is so, we crabe your Grace, that we may obtaine somewhat by the which we may live. Then said the Emperour: good friends, though I have given most of my lands, rents, tenements, and Castles to the rich men that came before you, nevertheless, I have kept still in mine owne hands the soberaignty and dominion over them, and that I doe give to you, and so they shall be your servants, and be obedient to you all. And when the poore men heard this, greatly thereat rejoycing, they kneeled downe to the Emperour, and thanked him, saying: Doe though we came late, yet wee be Lords over all these other. And with this they tooke their leave, and went home againe. But when the rich and mighty men
heard

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heard that, they were greatly moved, and ordained a common Parliament among themselves. And thus it was spoken among them: Alas, alas, how may we serve them that sometime were but peasants and our Subjects in all manner things? and now they be made Lords over us. Wherefore goe we all with one assent to the Emperour, and pray him for redresse. When this was said, they forthwith went to the Emperour, and said to him, Reuerend Lord, what may this meane, those that were our servants ere-while, be now our Lords: we beseech your Highnesse that it may not be so.

Then said the Emperour: By good friends, I doe you no wrong, for my proclamation was common, that whatsoever you asked of mee, you should haue your petition, and you asked only of me Lands, and Honours, and all those I haue granted you to your owne desires, in so much that I kept nothing for my selfe, and you were well content at your going hence. Now after that came the simple and poore men, and asked of me some bene, according to my Proclamation, and I had nothing to giue them, but onely the soveraigntie and dominion over you, which I kept in my hands

hands : and when the poore men cried so to me , I gave them the authority over you, yet I see not that you can blame me therefore : for I gave you all the wealth which I had. Then said they : O deere and gracious Lord, wee pray you let us have your helpe and advise in this so dangerous a case. The Emperour answered and said: Sirs, if you will follow my advise, I shall give ye good and profitable counsell. Then they said: wee be ready to fulfill whatsoever you advise us for our profit. Then said the Emperour, My loving friends, you have received of me both Lands and Benements, and also great plenty of honours and preferments, the which by my counsell you shall impart to the poore men that they may grant unto you that sovereignty, and that dominion which they have. When the mighty men heard this, they willingly condescended to impart their goods among the poore men, and they as willingly gave them againe the authority over them, like as they had of the rich men. And thus were they both contented, and the Emperour was greatly commended of the people, because he so well contented both parties.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, by this Emperour is understood our Lord Iesus Christ, which made a Proclamation by his Prophets, Patriarchs, Apostles, and Preachers, that every man both poore and rich, should come and aske euerlasting joy, and without doubt they shall obtaine their petition. But the rich and mighty men aske for no other thing, but worldly honour and transitorie riches, yet this world shall passe, and all the covetousnesse thereof: wherefore hee gave them so much of worldly wealth; that hee had nothing for himselfe, according to the Scripture; The birds of heaven have nests, and the Foxes in the earth have Caves, but the Sonne of man hath nothing in the earth where hee may put his head, Math. 8. 20. The poore men be the meek in heart, of whom the Lord speaketh saying: Blessed be the poore in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven, Math. 5. 3. So it shall come that they have sovereignty in heaven above the mighty men of this world, therefore these rich men ought to impart of their temporall riches with the poore men according to the Scripture, Make you friends with riches of iniquity,

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iquity, that when yee shall want, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Luk. 16. 9. and according to Tob. 4. 9. Give almes of thy substance: if thou hast but a little, be not afraid to give a little almes. And thus yee may attaine unto the Kingdome of heauen. Unto the which I beseech Almighty God to bring us all.

The Argument.

The Emperour of glory, Christ Iesus hath two daughters, the one faire, the other foule, the faire daughter is the world, and the pleasures thereof, the foule is poverty and trouble: The faire daughter is desired of many, the foule of few, for he that loveth the world, regardeth only the vanities thereof, but he that loveth God, will suffer all persecution and trouble for the obtaining of him.

The 27. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a noble Emperour named Domitian, which had two Daughters, the one of them was passing faire, but the other foule and ill-favoured: wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that who so would take his faire Daughter to wife, should have nothing

thing with her, but her beautifull and comely personage. But who so would marry his soule Daughter, should have all his Empire after his decease. Now when this Proclamation was made, there came many Lords that desired to marry his faire Daughter. To whom the Emperour answered thus: Sirs y^e wot not what y^e desire, for if y^e marry her, y^e shall have nothing with her but her beautifull and comely personage: and furthermore, if I give her to one of you rather than to another, you will grutch, therefore if y^e will needs have her, and forsake my soule Daughter, you shall just for her, and hee that winneth her shall marry her.

Then the Nobles and States of the Empire greatly rejoyced, and for the love of that beautifull Damsell they would not only just, but fight also: so they set a day of battell, and many worthy men were slaine on both sides, neverthelesse one obtained the victory, and espoused that faire Lady.

The second Daughter which was soule and ill-faboured, seeing her sister so bestow'd with great solemnity, wept daily, therefore the Emperour her father came to her and said: Deare Daughter, why mournest thou thus? Alas deare Father, quoth she,

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it is no wonder though I mourne, seeing my sister is married with great honour and gladnesse, and every man is joyfull of her, and no man careth for my company, therefore deare Father what I shall doe I know not. Then said the Emperour, O my deare Daughter, all that is mine, is thine, and it is not unknowne to thee that he which married thy sister had nothing with her but her beautifull corps: and therefore I shall proclaine in mine own person through mine Empire, that what man will marry thee, I shall assure him the Empire after my decease by Letters patent. Then this young Lady, though she was soule and ill-faboured, nevertheless they rejoyced greatly in the promise of her Father. Shortly after the Proclamation was thus made, there came a proper and young Knight, which espoused the Lady, and after the death of the Emperour, he seized upon all the Empire, and hee was crowned Emperour, and shee Emperesse: and after that they lived together a long time in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ, which had two Daughters,

Daughters, the one faire, and the other foule. The faire Daughter betokeneth the World, which is full faire and delectable to many men. The foule betokeneth poverty and trouble, whom few men desire to marry with. Nevertheless a Proclamation was made by the holy Scripture, that who so would have his faire Daughter, that is, the World, would have nothing with her but her fairenesse, that is, the worldly vanities, which fade and fall away like as the beauty of man: but who so will marrie the foules Daughter, that is, will voluntarily receive poverty and trouble for Gods love, without doubt hee shall obtaine the Empire of Heaben, according to the Scripture, saying: Yee that have forsaken all things for my love, to follow me, shall have everlasting life.

Many Noble and worthy men have justed for the faire Daughter, that is, have sought and travelled by sea and by land in this world, for covetousnesse of worldly riches, and at length there be manyaine: for there is nothing here but pride of life. Covetousnesse of the eyes, and of the flesh, where through these grievous sinnes all the world is put to great damage and mischief. So hee that married the faire
 33 Daughter,

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Daughter, that is, the **W**orld, is hee, that setteth all his affections and whole desire upon the wretchednesse and vanities of this wicked world, and will not by any meanes forsake this vaine **W**orld, like a wretch. But he that marrieth the foule daughter is the good **C**hristian man, which for the love of the Kingdome of Heaven, and the everlasting joyes thereof, forsaketh all this **W**orld, and not onely doth thus, but also despiseth himselfe, obeying the true and everlasting God in all things. Such a man certainly shall obtayne the joyfull and happy Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

Devotion, Prayer, and Thanksgiving unto God for his gifts, is a sweet sounding Musick, delectable in the eares of God. We are hereby warned after our first offending, not to returne to our vomit, with the Dog, nor after washing, with the Sow to wallow in the mire: no, rather let us bathe our selves in the Well of sorrowfull and hearty repentance, in perseverance in good life, that we may live with Christ in everlasting joy and blisse.

The 29 History.

Sometime in Rome dwelt a mighty Em-
perour named Andromicha, the which
aboue all things lobed Drinck, This Em-
perour had within his Castle a Well of
such vertue, that whosoever were drunke
by drincking the water thereof, should in-
continently become fresh againe, and be
delibered from all kinde of dizinesse. There
was also dwelling in the Emperours Court
a Knight named Ydronic, whom the Em-
perour lobed much, but oftentimes he would
be drunke, which vice the Emperour hated
aboue all things. And when this Knight
perceiued himselfe drunke, then would hee
goe to the Well and drinke of that water,
and so refresh himselfe, so that whatsoever
the Emperour said to him hee would an-
swer him so reasonably, that no drunken-
nesse might be seene in him, and for his
witty answers hee was greatly beloved of
the Emperour. Nevertheless his fellowes
sought to draine the Emperours love from
him.

It fortun'd on a day that this Empe-
rour went to the Forrest where he heard
a Nightingale sing right pleasantly: of-
tentimes after hee would rise early in the
morning,

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mornning, and sometime from his meat and walk into the wood to heare her sweet song : wherefore many of his men said among themselves : our Lord delighteth so much in the Nightingals song, that hee reckoneth nothing our profit, insomuch that through two things his love is withdrawn from us, that is, by Ydronic the Knight, and by the sweet song of the Nightingale. Then said an old Knight that was among them : Sirs, quoth hee, if you will follow my counsell, I shall deliver you of the Knight Ydronic, and of the Nightingale without hurt or death. When they answered and said, whatsoever you advise us to doe, we shall craight way fulfill it with all our hearts. When this Knight heard this, within a while after hee chanced to espie this Knight Ydronic drunk, wherefore hee locked fast the Well, so when this Knight Ydronic came to refresh himselfe, he found the Well fast locked.

Now the Emperour had a great businesse to treat of, wherefore in haste he sent for this Knight, because of his great wisdom to have his counsell. And when he came before the Emperour, hee was so drunk that hee could not move his tongue, neither had wit, reason, nor understanding

to answer the Emperour to his matter.

But when the Emperour saw this, hee was greatly vexed, forasmuch as hee hated that vice: wherfore hee commanded anon that from that day forward hee should no more be seene within his land upon paine of death.

This hearing, his foes they rejoyced, and said unto the old knight: Now we be delivered of this knight Ydrone, there is no more to doe, but that we may finde a way to be delivered also of the Fightingale, in which the Emperour delighted much.

Then said the old knight, your eares shall heare, and your eyes shall see this Fightingale shall be destroyed shortly.

Not long after, this old knight espied that the Fightingale used to sit upon a tree even above the foresaid Well, where, as her Mate came and coupled with her, neverthelesse in the absence of her Mate, shee tooke oftentimes another Mate & coupled with him: When shee had thus done, then would she descend to the Well to bathe her selfe, that when her Mate came hee should feele no savour nor evill sent of that shee had done. When the knight had seene this, on a time hee locked the Well, & when
the

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the Fightingale would have descended to bathe her selfe, after the coupling with the other Mate, shee found the Well closed: wherefore shee flew up into the tree againe and mourned soze in her manner, and left her song. Then came her Mate and saw that she had done against her nature, he returned againe, and in short time brought a great multitude of Fightingals which flew his Mate, and tare her all in pieces.

And thus was the wise Knight put away, and the Fightingale slaine, and the Emperour put from his pleasure, and disappointed of the great comfort hee was wont to have.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour be-
tokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ, which lo-
beth greatly the Song of Devotion, for
when wee pray wee speake unto God, and
when wee reade God speaketh unto us.
The Well that was in the Pallace be-
tokeneth acknowledging of our sins to God.
Therefore if any be drunk with sinne, let
him drinke of the Well of acknowledging
of his sinnes, and without doubt hee shall
be safe. This Ydronic be tokeneth every
man that wilfully returneth again to sinne
after

after his acknowledging sinne, like as the dogge that maketh a vomit, and casteth up the meat that he hath eaten before, and after ward when he is hungry, cometh and eateth it againe. Nevertheless, if a man that hath thus sinned, will drink of the Well of acknowledging his sinne, he shall receive his ghostly strength. The Pigh-tingale that sat on the tree, betokens the soule that sitteth on the tree of holy doctrine. And her song betokeneth the Soule that sitteth on the tree in devout prayers to God. But this Soule doth commit evill as oft as shee consenteth to sinne. Nevertheless, if she runne to the Well of acknowledging of sinne, and bathe her with the water of contrition, God shall love her.

But her foes, that is, the fiends of hell, seeing this, that God is mercifull, they stop the Well of acknowledgement of sin, that is, they would withdraw us from dutifull acknowledgement, and from due reconciliation of our selves betwene us and God, and betwene us and man, without shame and dread of repentance, not to declare our finnes. And thus through the temptations of the Devill our aduersarie, many have bene exiled and put to death everlastingly. And therefore studie
we

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to bathe our soules in this life in the well of acknowledgement of sinnes, with the water of contrition, and then wee shall be sure in the world to come to have joy everlasting. Unto the which God bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of every good Christian man ought to prepare armed vertues for to withstand the assaults of the Deuill. Wee are here put in minde of our deliverance from death by the precious blood-shed of Iesus Christ; which is a terrour to all the Devils in hell, if we continue in faith, and beleefe in him, the bulwark of our salvation.

The 21. Historie.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mightie Emperour named Hermes, which had a mighty strong Citie exceeding strongly walled about, and a Bell hanging in the midst of the said Citie, and whensoever the Emperour went to any battell without the Citie, this Bell was ever rung, but there did no man ring the Bell, but a Virgin. Within short time after it befell, that Dragons, Serpents, and also ma-

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ny other venemous Beasts imprisoned much people , so that the Citie was almost destroyed : wherefore the States of the Citie went with one assent to the Emperour, and said : Lord, what shall we doe ? Loe, our people, our goods, and our Citie is almost destroyed, and you and we be in perill to perish , through these cruell Beasts that consume us, therefore take we good counsell, or else we are undone. Then said the Emperour , what think you is best to be done in this matter , and how may we be best defended ? Then answered one of the wisest, and said : My Lord heare my counsell , and doe thereafter, and you shall not repent it. You have in your Palace a Lyon, and set up a peece of timber for the purpose , and thereunto let the Lyon be nayled and made fast , and when other venemous Beasts see him thus used they will be afraid, and forsake our Citie, and we shall be in safety. Then said the Emperour , it pleaseth me well that he be so used, thereby to save you. Then they tooke the Lyon and used him in like manner as aforesaid , which when the other Beasts saw, they fled away for feare, and never more afterwards durst they come thither.

The

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The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth the Father of Heaben, the Citie well walled, with her Bell in the midst betokeneth the Soule walled about with vertues. The Bell betokeneth a cleane Conscience, that warneth a man to Battell, when he should fight against the Devill, that he might arme himselfe before with vertues. The Virgin that should alwayes ring this Bell is Reason, which as a Virgin inclineth unto all rightfull cleanness. The venemous Dragon that beareth the fire, betokeneth the flesh of man, which beareth the fire of Covetousnesse, which burnt Adam our fore-father, when he eat of the forbidden Apple. The venemous Beast that poisoned the men, betokeneth the fiends of hell, which for the most part have destroyed all mankind. The States of the Citie betoken the Patriarks and Prophets, which besought God of counsell and remedy, that mankind might be saved, and anon it was counselled for the best remedy, that a Lyon (that is) Christ, should be nayled upon the Crosse, according to the Scripture, saying thus, It was requisite that one man should die for the people, lest all
Aesla

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flesh should perish. Then took they Christ, and hung him on the Crosse, for the which the Deuill dreadgeth Christian people, and dares not come nigh them. And thus by the grace of God, Christian men shall come to euerlasting blisse. Unto the which bring us the Lamb of God, which shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Here is signified the thraldome of man unto Sathan by siane, till Christ the Sonne of God descended, with the power of the holy Ghost, to set him at liberty, and put him in possession of the Pallace of everlasting felicity.

The 30. History.

Sometime in Rome dwelt a mighty Emperour and a mercifull, named Menelay, who ordained such a Law, that what nocent person were taken and put in prison, if hee might escape and come to the Emperours Palace, he should be there safe from all manner accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befell that a knight was accused, wherefore he was taken and put in a strong and dark prison

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prison where hee lay long time, and had no light but at a little window, whereat scant light shone in, that lighted him to eat such simple meat as was brought him by his keeper: wherefore he mourned greatly, and made sorow th it hee was thus fast shut up from the sight of men. Nevertheless when the keeper was gone, there came daily a Nightingale in at the window, and sung full sweetly, by whose song this wooll Knight oft times was fed with joy, and when this Bird ceased off her Song, then would shee flie into the Knights bosome, and there this Knight fed her many a day of the victuals that God sent him. It befell after upon a day, that the Knight was greatly desolate of comfort. Nevertheless the Bird that late in his bosome, fed upon kernels of nuts, and thus hee said to the Bird: Sweet Bird, I have sustained thee many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my desolation to comfort me? remember thy selfe well how that thou art the creature of God, and so am I also, and therefore help mee now in this my great neede.

When the Bird heard this, shee flew forth from his bosome, and tarried from him three dayes, but the third day she came
again

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againſe, and brought in her mouth a pretious ſtone, and laid it in the knights boſome. And when ſhe had ſo done, ſhe tooke her flight, and flew from him againe. The Knight marvelled at the ſtone, and at the Bird, and forthwith he took the ſtone in his hand, and touched his gyves and fetters therewith, and preſently they fell off. And then hee aroſe and touched the doores of the priſon, and they opened, and ſo hee eſcaped and ranne faſt to the Emperours Palace. When the keeper of the priſon perceiued this, he blew his horne thrice, and raiſed up all the folk of the Citie, and led them forth, crying with an high voyce: Doe the theefe is gone, follow we him all. And with that he ranne beſore all his fellowes toward the Knight, and when he came nigh him, the Knight bent his bow, and ſhot an arrow, wherewith hee ſmote the keeper in the lungs and flew him, and then ran to the Palace, where he found ſuccour againſt the Law.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour beokeneth our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who ordained a Law, that what innocent, that is, what perſon imprifoned wrongfully, and might eſcape and come to the Palace of his hea-
is
venly

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benly habitation thzough repentance and true amendment of life, should finde perpetuall succour and help. This Knight betokeneth ebery one that is inuolent, and accused by envie or malice unjustly, taking grieve for his present estate. The keeper of this prison betokeneth the Debill, that keepeth such a man hard bound by sinne, and serbeth him with riches and delights of this transitory world, that he should not escape from danger.

The Bird that singeth so sweetly, betokeneth the voyce of Heaben, that saith to the oppressed: Turne againe, now turne againe thou Prisoner, that is, turne againe thou oppressed, and I shall receiue thee to grace. For when mankind was in thraldome to Sathan in the prison of hell, then came there a Bird, that is, the God-head, bearing with him a stone, that betokens our Lord Iesus Christ, according to the holy Scripture, saying: I am a stone.

The saule of Christ descended with the God-head, and brought with him all mankind out of the prison of hell, therefore if any of us be in the prison of worldly oppression, touch we our sinnes with the stone, that is, with the vertue of our Lord Iesus Christ, by acknowledging our sinne in
faith.

faithfull Prayer, and by true contrition, and then without doubt the chaines of our oppression, with the stone, shall be broken, and fall from us, and the doores of heavenly grace shall be opened, and we shall obtaine help and succour in the Pallace of the heavenly habitation.

And if the keeper of the prison, that is, the Devill, (which is the blower of the horn of pride, lechery, or covetousnesse) stir in us any sinnes, then turne wee againe towards him manfully, and shoot at him the arrow of constant faith in Jesus Christ, by true and unfained repentance, and without doubt he shall flie from us: and then by the grace of Almighty God, wee may obtaine the Pallace of heavenly blisse, where wee shall behold the King of all glory. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

The Argument.

A poore man exalted to dignity, is here admonished not to be unthankfull, and to render evill for good: but even to the most simple ones to be gratefull for any benefit, else surely God that gives thee this promotion, will make the brutish creatures of the earth thy enemies, and dispose thee from thy dignitie, and hee

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that hath helped thee, be he never so base, may in the end have better favour with God and man than thy selfe; wherefore be warned of ingratitude by this example, and know thy selfe, thy God, and thy friend.

The 29. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Ebolides, It fortuned on a day that this Emperour, walked into a great Forrest to take his pleasure, where hee met sodainly with a poore man, and so soone as this Emperour saw him, he was greatly moved with mercy, and said: Good friend, whence art thou? My soveraigne Lord, quoth he, I am your subject borne in your Land, and am now in great poverty. Then said the Emperour: If I knew that thou wert true in every thing, I would promote thee to great riches, therefore tell me, what is thy name?

My Lord, quoth he, I am called Lenculus, and I promise you to doe you true service, and if I doe otherwise, I submit my selfe unto all manner of punishment that you can put mee to. When the Emperour heard that, he promoted him incontinently to

to great riches, and shortly after he made him a Knight, and Steward of his Land. And when hee was thus exalted to honour, he waxed very proud, insomuch that he despised both his superiours and inferiours: Not long after this Steward rode by a Forrest, where he met with the Foster, & charged him that hee should make an hundred pits in the ground, & cover them over with greene grasse and small boughes, that if wild Beasts fortun'd to goe to the Forrest that way, they might fall in, and so being taken bee brought to the Emperour. The Foster answered and said: Sir, as you have said it shall be done. Not long after it fortun'd that this Steward rode to this Forrest againe to see if these pits were made, and as he rode, he bethought himselfe how wealthy a man, and how mightie in power hee was made, and how most men in the Empire obeyed him, and were at his command. As he rode thus thinking, he said to himselfe: There is no God save onely I, and with that hee smote his Horse with the spurres, and sodainly he fell into one of the deepe Pits, that hee himselfe had ordained before for the wild beasts, and for the great deepnesse thereof hee could not rise againe by any manner of meanes, wherefore hee

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languished in great perplexity: & straight way after him came a fierce Lyon, and fell into the same pit, & after the Lyon an Ape, and after the Ape a Serpent. When the Steward was thus beset with these beasts, he was exceedingly afraid.

Then was at that time dwelling in that Citie a poore man named Guy, that had no riches save only an Ass, whereon daily he carried Sticks and wood that fell from trees, and such as he could get in the Forrest, and those hee brought to the Market and sold them: and in this wise sustained himselfe and his wife as long as he might.

It fortun'd that this poore Guy went to the Forrest as he was wont, and as he came by a deepe pit, he heard a man cry and say, O deare friend, what art thou? for Gods sake help me, and I shall recompence thee so well, that thou shalt ever after be the better. When this poore Guy heard that it was the voyce of a man, hee marvelled greatly, and stood still on the pits brink, and said: Doe, good friend I am come, why hast thou called me? Then said the Knight, Deare friend, I am Steward of all the Emperours Land, and thus by fortune I am fallen into the pit, and here be with me three Beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape,
and

and an horrible Serpent, which I feare most of all, and I wot not of which of them I shall be deuoured: therefore I pray thee get a long Rope, wherewith thou maist draw mee out of this deepe pit, and I will make thee rich for euer hereafter: for if I haue not help the rather, I shall be deuoured of these cruell Beasts.

Then said this poore Guy, I may full ill at this time intend to help thee. For I haue nothing to liue on, but that I gather wood, and carry it to the Market to sell, wherewith I am sustained. Nevertheless I will leaue my purposed labour, and fulfill thy will, and if thou reward mee not, it will be great hinderance to me, and to my poore wife. Then the Steward made a great oath, and said, I will promote thee and all thine to great wealth. Then said Guy, if you will performe your promise, I shall doe what you command mee. And with that he went againe to the Citie and bought there a long Rope, and came to the Pit againe, and said:

Sir Steward, loe here I let downe a Rope to thee, binde thy selfe about the middle therewith, that I may pull thee up. Then was the Steward glad, and said: Good friend let downe the Rope: and with

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that hee cast the end of the rope downe into the pit. And when the Lyon saw it, hee caught the rope and hold it fast, and Guy drew up the Lyon, warning in himselfe he had drawne up the Steward: and when he had so done, the Lyon thanked him in his manner, and ranne to the wood. The second time that Guy let downe the rope, the Ape leapt to it, and caught it fast, and when hee was drawne up, hee thanked Guy in his manner, and ranne to the wood. The third time he let downe the rope, he drew up the Serpent, which thanked him and went to the wood. Then the Steward cried with an high voyce: O deare friend, now I am delibered of these three ravenous Beasts, let downe the rope to mee that I may come up. When this poore Guy let down the rope, and the Steward bound himselfe fast about the middle, and Guy drew him up. And when he was thus holp out of the pit, he said to Guy as followeth.

Come to me to morrow to the Pallace, and then I will reward thee. Then poore Guy rejoyced thereat, and went home without any reward. Then his wife demanded of him why hee gathered no wood whereby they might live that day. Then told he her of the event as it befell, how the Steward
fell

fell into a pit, (and also the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent) that hee had made in the said Forrest, and how hee had holpen him out with a rope, and saved him from being devoured of the three venomous beasts: and that he should goe to the Steward, and fetch his reward on the morrow. When his wife heard this shee rejoyced greatly, and said: If it shall be so, I pray you rise to morrow at a due houre, and goe to the Pallace, and receiue your reward, that we may be comforted thereby.

So in the morning Guy arose, and went to the Pallace, and knocked at the gate: then came the Porter, and asked the cause of his knocking. I pray thee, quoth this Guy, goe to the Steward, and say to him that here abideth a poore man at the gate that spake with him yesterday in the Forrest. The Porter went and told the Steward as the poore man had said. Then said the Steward, Goe you againe and tell him that hee lyeth, for yesterday spake I with no man in the Forrest, and charge him that he goe away and trouble me no more. The Porter went forth and told poore Guy what the Steward had said, and charged him to goe away. When was this poore Guy sorrowfull, and went home, and when hee was come

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come home, hee told his wife how the Steward answered him. His wife comforted him in all that shee might, and said: Goe you againe and probe him thrice. When on the morrow, this Guy arose and went to the Pallace againe, praying the Porter to doe his errand once againe to the Steward: The Porter answered, and said, gladly would I doe the errand, but I feare me soze it will be to thy hurt; then went hee in and told the Steward that this poore man was againe returned. When the Steward heard that, he went out, and all to beat poore Guy, and left him in perill of death. When his wife heard this, shee came with her Ass and led him home as she might, and all that she had, shee spent on Surgeons and Physicians to help him. And when hee was perfectly whole, hee went to the Forrest as hee was wont for to gather Sticks and small wood for his living. And as hee went in the Forrest, he saw a Lyon driving befoze him ten Asses that were laden with rich Jewels and Marchandise. This Lyon drove forth the Asses befoze Guy, which feared him soze, lest hee should have devoured him, neverthelesse when he beheld the Lyon better, hee knew well that it was the same Lyon that hee drew out of the pit.

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This Lyon left not Guy till all the Asses with the marchandise were entred into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeysance, and ran to the wood.

Then Guy searched the fardels, and found great riches therein, wherefore hee made Proclamation in others Churches, if any man had lost such goods, hee should have them againe, but there was none that challenged them. And when Guy saw this, he sold the goods, and bought therewith House and Land, and so was made rich. Nevertheless hee went to the Forrest, as he did before. And as hee was in the Forrest gathering wood, hee spied the Ape on the top of a tree, breaking boughes busily with her teeth and claws, and throwing them downe, so that in short time Guy had loaded his Ass. And when the Ape had so done, shee went her way, and Guy went home.

Now Guy on the morrow went to the Forrest againe, and as hee saw binding his Faggots, he saw the Serpent that he drew out of the pit, come toward him bearing in her mouth a precious Stone of thre colours, which shee let fall at Guyes feet, and when shee had thus done, shee kissed his foot, and went her way. Then Guy took up the
Stone,

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Stone, and merbailed greatly of what vertue it might be : wherefoze hee rose up, and went to a Jeweller named Peter, and said : Deare Brother, I pray thee tell mee the vertue of this pretious Stone, and I shall reward thee for thy labour. When this Jeweller had well beheld and understood the nature of the Stone, hee said : Good friend, if thou list to sell the Stone, I shall giue thee an hundred Marks for it. When said Guy, I will not sell the Stone till thou tell me truly the vertues therof. When said the Jeweller, without doubt this Stone hath threes vertues: the first vertue is, that whosoever beareth this Stone about him, shall have joy without sorrow, the second vertue is, that hee shall have plenty without want: the third vertue is, hee shall have light without darknesse: and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sell it but for as much as it is worth, and if he doe the contrary, the Stone returneth again to the first owner. When Guy heard this, he was right ioyfull, and said to himselfe, in a good houre I drew these Beasts out of the pit.

Not long after it befell that this Guy by the vertue of this Stone was made passing rich, and bought great possessions and livings,

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livings, wherefoze within a while hee was made knight. It was not long after but the Emperour had knowledge how Sir Guy had a stone of such vertue, wherefoze he sent foꝛ Sir Guy, commanding him to come to him in all haste, and so he did. And when Sir Guy was come to the Emperoz, the Emperour said to him: My friend, I have heard say, that sometime thou wert in great poverty, and now thou art made rich by the vertue of a little stone, therefore I pray thee that thou sell me that stone, Sir Guy answered and said, that may I not doe, foꝛ so long as I have that stone, I am sure of threë things, that is, of joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darknesse. When the Emperour heard this, hee had a greater desire to buy the stone then hee had befoze, and said to him: Sir Guy, of two things thou must chuse one, that is, whether thou wilt forsake this Empire, and all thy kindred, or else sell me the stone. Then said sir Guy, My Lord, if it must needs be thus, be it at your will. Nevertheless, I shall tell you the property of this stone, if you pay not foꝛ it as it is worth, without doubt it will come to me againe. Then the Emperour said, Surely I will give sufficient, foꝛ thou shalt

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shall receiue of mee therefore a thousand pound, and so it was done. Sir Guy receiued the money and went home.

On the morrow early hee opened the coffer, and found the Stone, and then he told to the Lady his wife, how hee had found in his Coffer the Stone which hee sold to the Emperour. Then said his wife, good Sir, haste you unto the Emperour againe, and giue him the Stone, lest he be displeased, and through malice repute some deceit in us.

Then went forth Sir Guy againe to the Emperour, and said to him: My Lord, yesterday I sold you a Stone, which if it please you I would faine see. The Emperour went for the Stone to his Treasury, but found it not, wherefore hee was right sorrowfull, and came againe and told Sir Guy how it was lost. Then said Sir Guy, My Lord grieve you not: for I told you yesterday that I might not sell it except I had the value thereof, and yesterday I receiued a thousand pound of you therefore, and this day I found it in my Coffer againe, and therefore if I had not brought the Stone againe, peradventure you would haue shewed mee your heauie countenance, and with that he shewed forth the Stone, whereat the Emperour meruailed greatly, and
said,

said, Sir Guy, by the faith that thou owest to me, tell mee how thou comest by that Stone. Then said Sir Guy, by the faith that I owe to you, I shall tell you the very truth as touching this Stone. Your Steward that is promoted up of nought, caused many deepe pits to be made in your Forrest, and it fortuned that hee not long after fell into one of them him selfe, and through the deepnesse thereof could not rise againe. It chanced also the same day, that a Lyon, an Ape, and a Serpent fell into the Pit with him, at which time I was a very poore man, and tooke great paines for my living, and as I walked into the Forrest with mine Ass to gather wood, hee cryed to mee that I should help him out of the Pit, and save him from death, for there were in the Pit with him three venomous beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and a foule Serpent, and then hee promised me by his word, to promote mee and all my kindred to great riches. Which when I heard I was right glad, and let downe a rope unto him, supposing to have drawne him up, and haled a Lyon, and after that an Ape, and after a Serpent, and at the last your Steward.

The Lyon gave mee tenne Asses laden with Parchandise, the Ape gave mee as
much

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much wood as mine Asse might beare, and the Serpent gave me this stone that I have sold you, but your Steward beat mee, and wounded me so sore for my good will, that I was bozne home upon mine Asse.

When the Emperour heard this, his heart was moved greatly against the Steward, wherefore hee examined him of that false deed: but hee was dumb, and would not speak, for so much that hee could not denie his ingratitude.

Then said the Emperour: O thou wretched creature, unreasonable beasts, as the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent, rewarded him for his good deed, and thou that art a reasonable man hast almost beaten him to death that saved thee, and took thee out of the pit, therefore for thy falshood and wickednesse I judge thee to be hanged this day on the Gallows, and all thy Goods and Lands I grant to Sir Guy, and also I ordaine that Sir Guy shall occupy thy place, and be my Steward: and so it was done. When Sir Guy was thus rewarded by the Emperour, and made Steward, hee was well beloved of every man as long as hee lived, and at the last ended his life with honour in peace.

The

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven, the poore man betokeneth ebery man that cometh into this World, and at the last is promoted to great riches and woꝛldly honour, as the Psalmist saith: God lifeth the poore man out of the myre. But many such men neither know God noꝛ themselves, but cause deepe pits to be made, that is, unkindnesse and malice, they ordaine against simple men, into the which pit the Devill oft causeth them to fall, according to the Text in Ecclesiasticus: Who maketh a pit for another man, himselfe falleth therein: which Text was well proved by Haman, who caused the Gallies to be set up for Mordochus, but was hanged thereon himselfe. This Guy that went daily to the Forrest with his Ass to gather wood, betokeneth ebery just and godly man, fearing God in the Forrest of this world: his wood that hee gathereth, betokeneth his faith and good works, which hee carrieth upon his Ass, humane endeabour, wherewith his soule may joy and live in the Tabernacle of heaven. And as the Steward, the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent fell into the pit, right so a sinfull man falleth into the pit of sinne:

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But the Lyon of the Tribe of Iuda (that is Iesus Christ) descended with him as oftentimes as the sinner hath will to come to grace. Wherefore saith the Psalmist, I am with him in tribulation. This Guy draweth up the Lyon, that is, mans soule out of the Pit, by the cord of vertues. He drew up the Ape also, that is, contrary will to reason, that hee may obey to reason. For of all manner of Beasts the Ape is most like to man, right as among all the strengths of the soule, discretion ought to be linked with reason, and to obey reason. He drew up also a Serpent, by which is to be understood repentance, for two causes: for as the Serpent beareth in his mouth venome, and in his taile a medicine: right so repentance beareth at the beginning bitterness to the doer, yet it is sweet and medicinable unto the Soule at the end, and therefore every just man should draw to him the Serpent of repentance. Then at the last hee drew up the Steward from the pit of sinne, according unto Christs saying, I am come not only to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Also it is written, that Seneca the Philosopher, taught an Emperour many lawes and vertues of truth,
and

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and at last as this Steward did, hee sought the death of Seneca. Also Christ gave power to Iudas to work miracles, as he did to the other Disciples, yet he betrayed him at last: Right so, now a dayes many children of Beliall delight more to doe harme than good, specially to them that would instruct them perfectly both for the soule and body.

The Lyon gave to the just and godly poore man ten Asses laden with Marchandise: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ gives unto every righteous man ten Commandements charged with vertues, by which hee groweth to the riches of heaben. The Ape also gathereth him wood as oft as the just man worketh the fruits of faith: for wood necessarily is profitable for two uses, that is, to make fire, and to build houses.

Even so Charity rejoyceth God and Angels in heaben, according to the Scripture, More joy is among Angels for one sinner that repenteth, &c. Charity also raiseth the haile of heaben: against the comming of the soule. The Serpent also gave him a stone of thre divers colours, which becometh our Lord Jesus Christ, whom wee seeke by Repentance. Therefore saith Saint Ierome in his second Table thus:

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Wee should repent us after our shipwrack. That Christ is the Stone, may be proved by himselfe, saying: I am a living Stone, Christ hath thre colours, which betoken the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Sonne, and the humility of the holy Ghost: Therefore, who so may get this pretious Stone, shall have the Empire of heauen, joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darknesse. Unto which bring us our Lord Iesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

By the Nativity of Christ proceedeth joyfull gladnesse to the world, and salvation unto mankinde. Yet is man unthankfull unto God, contrary to his promise made in Baptisme. Wee are warned in all wordly tempests, continually to cleave to Christ by Faith and Hope, to continue in well-doing, and to withstand the malice of the Devill: the Preachers of Gods word are sent of God to confound the Devill by sound doctrine, and good life. Life and death is set before men: wee ought then to chuse that life that may be for our everlasting comfort.

The 32. Historie.

Sometime dwelt in Rome a mightie Emperour named Anselme, who had married the Kings daughter of Ierusalem, a faire Lady, and agracious in the sight of every man, but shee was long time with the Emperour ere she bare him any childe, wherefore the Nobles of the Empire were very sorrowfull, because their Lord had no heire of his owne body begotten. Till at last it befell that this Anselme walked after supper in an evening, into his garden, and bethought himselfe how hee had no heire, and how the King of Ampluy warred on him continually, for so much as hee had no sonne to make defence in his absence, therefore hee was sorrowfull, and went to his chamber and slept. Then hee thought hee saw a vision in his sleepe, that the morning was more cleare than it was wont to be, and that the Moone was much paler on the one side than on the other. And after he saw a bird of two colours, and by that bird stood two beasts which fed that little bird with their heat. And after that came many more beasts, and bowing their breasts toward the bird, went their way. Then came there divers birds that sung so sweetly and plea-

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santly that the Emperour awaked. In the morning early this Anselme remembred his vision, & wondred much what it might signifie, wherfore he called to him his Philosophers, and also the States of the Empire, and told them his dreame, charging them to tell him the signification thereof, upon paine of death, and if they told him true interpretation thereof, hee promised them great reward. When said they: deare Lord, tell us your dreame, and we shall declare unto you what it betokens. When the Emperour told them from the beginning to the ending, as it is aforesaid. When the Philosophers heard this, with glad cheare they answered and said: Sir, the vision that you saw betokeneth good, for the Empire shall be clearer than it is.

The Moone that is more pale on the one side than on the other, betokeneth the Emperesse that hath lost part of her colour, through the conception of a Sonne that she hath conceived. The little bird betokeneth the Sonne that she shall beare. The two beasts that feed this bird, betoken the wise and rich men of the Empire, which shall obey the Sonne. These other beasts that bowed their breasts to the Bird, betoken many other Nations that shall doe him homage.

homage. The birds that sang so sweetly to this little bird, betokeneth the Romanes, who shall rejoyce and sing because of his birth. Thus is the very interpretation of your dreame.

When the Emperoz heard this, he was right joyfull. Soone after that, the Emperesse travelled in child-birth, and was delivered of a faire sonne, at whose birth there was great and wonderfull joy made.

When the King of Ampluy heard this, he thought in himselfe thus: Lo, I have warred against the Emperoz all the dayes of my life, and now hee hath a sonne, who when he cometh to full age, will revenge the wrongs I have done against his father, therefore it is better that I send to the Emperour, and beseech him of truce and peace, that his sonne may have nothing against me when he cometh to manhood. When hee had thus said to himselfe, hee wrote to the Emperour, beseeching him to have peace. When the Emperour saw that the King of Ampluy wrote to him more for feare than for love, he wrote againe to him, that if hee would finde good and sufficient sureties to keepe the peace, and bind himselfe all the dayes of his life to doe him service and homage, and to give him yearely a cer-

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tain tribute, he would receive him to peace.

When the King had read the tenor of the Emperours Letter, he called his Council, praying them to give him counsell how hee might best doe as touching this matter. Then said they, It is good that ye obey the Emperours will and commandement in all things. For first, in that hee desired of you surety for the Peace: to this we answer thus: We have but one Daughter, and the Emperour one sonne, wherefore let a marriage be made between them, and that may be a perpetuall Covenant of Peace. Also hee asketh homage and tribute, which it is good to fulfill. When the King sent his messengers to the Emperour, saying, that he would fulfill his desire in all things, if it might please his Highnesse that his sonne and the Kings daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the Emperour, yet he sent again, saying, if his daughter were a clean virgin from her birth unto that day, he would consent to that marriage. Then was the King right glad, for his daughter was a cleane virgin.

Wherefore when the Letters of Covenant and compact were sealed, the King furnished a faire ship wherein he might send his daughter, with many noble Knights, Ladies,

Ladies, and great riches, unto the Empe-
rour for to have his sonne in marriage.

And when they were sayling in the sea
toward Rome, a storme arose so extreemly
and so horribly, that the ship brake against
a Rock, and they were all drowned, save
only the young Lady, which first her hope
and heart so greatly on God, that shee was
saved. And about thre of the clock the tem-
pest ceased, and the Lady drave forth over
the waves in that broken ship which was
cast up againe: but a huge Whale follow-
ed after ready to devour both the ship and
her. Wherefore this young Lady when
night came smote fire with a stone, where-
with the ship was greatly lightned, and
then the Whale durst not adventure to-
ward the ship for feare of the light. At the
Cock crowing, this young Lady was so
weary of the great tempest and trouble of
the Sea, that she slept, and within a little
while after the fire surceased, & the Whale
came and devoured the virgin. And when
she awaked and found her selfe swallowed
up in the Whales belly, she smote fire, and
with a knife wounded the Whale in many
places, and when the Whale felt himselfe
wounded, according to his nature he began
to swim to Land.

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There was dwelling at that time in a Country nere by, a noble Earle, named Pirris, who for his recreation walking on the sea-shore, saw the Whale comming towards the land, wherefore he turned home againe, and gathered a great many of men and women, and came thither againe, and fought with the Whale, and wounded him very sore, and as they smote, the Mayden that was in his belly cryed with an high voyce, and said; O gentle friends, have mercy and compassion on me, for I am a Kings Daughter, and a true virgin from the houre of my birth to this day. When the Earle heard this, hee wondred greatly, and opening the side of the Whale found the young Lady, and tooke her out. And when she was thus delivered, she told him forthwith whose Daughter she was, and how shee had lost all her goods in the Sea, and how she should have been married unto the Emperors sonne. And when the Earle heard this, he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till she was well refreshed. And in the meane time he sent messengers to the Emperour, letting him to know how the Kings daughter was saved.

When was the Emperour right glad of her

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her safety and comming, and had great compassion on her, saying: Ah good mayden for the love of my sonne, thou hast suffered much woe: neberthelesse if thou be woꝝt hy to be his wife, soone shall I prove. And when he had thus said, he caused thre vessels to be brought forth: the first was made of pure gold wel beset with pretious stones without, and within full of dead mens bones, and thereupon was ingraven this Poesy, Who so chooseth me, shall find that he serveth. The second vessell was made of fine silver, filled with earth and wormes, and the superscription was thus: Who so chooseth me, shall finde what his nature desireth. The thirde vessell was made of Lead, full within of pretious stones, and thereupon was insculpt this Poesy: Who so chooseth me, shall find that God hath disposed for him. These thre vessels the Emperour shewed to the Mayden, and said: Loe here daughter, these be rich vessels, if thou chouse one of these wherein is profit to thee and to others, then shalt thou have my son. And if thou chouse that wherein is no profit to thee nor to any other, soothly thou shalt not marry him.

When the Maid heard this, she lift up her hands to God, and said: Thou Lord, that

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that knowest all things, grant mee grace
hi s houre so to choose, that I may receive
the Emperours sonne. And with that shee
beheld the first vessell of gold which was in-
graben royally, & read the superscription :
Who so chooseth mee, &c. saying thus :
Though this vessell be full pretious, and
made of pure gold, neberthelss: I know
not what is within, therefore my deare
Lord, this vessell will I not choose.

And then beheld shee the second vessell,
that was of pure silver, and read the su-
perscription : Who so chooseth mee, shall
finde that his nature desireth, Thinking
thus within her selfe, if I choose this ves-
sell, what is within it I know not, but well
I wot there shall I finde that nature des-
reth, and my nature desireth the lust of the
flesh, and therefore this vessell will I not
choose.

When shee had sene these two vessels,
and had given an answer as touching
them, shee beheld the third vessell of Lead,
and read the superscription. Who so choo-
seth mee, shall finde that God hath dispo-
sed. Thinking within her selfe, this vessell
is not very rich, nor outwardly pretious,
yet the superscription saith, Who so choo-
seth me, shall finde that God hath disposed,

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and without doubt God neuer dispose th any harme, therefore by the leaue of God, this vessell will I choose.

When the Emperoz heard this, he said : O faire Maiden open thy vessell, for it is full of pretious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no : And when this young Lady had opened it, shee found it full of fine gold and pretious stones, as the Emperour had told her before. Then said the Emperour : Daughter, because thou hast wisely chosen, thou shalt marry my sonne. And then hee appointed the wedding day, and they were marryed with great solemnity, and with much honour continued to their liues end.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heauen, who was long time without a naturall Sonne, therefore many men were in danger of perishing in hell. The Emperesse conceived when the Angel Gabriel said : Lo, thou shalt conceive and beare a Childe, And then the firmament began to cleare when this little Child lightned the world with his birth. The Moone began to wax pale when the face of the Virgin Mary was overshadowed by vertue of the
grace

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grace of the holy Ghost, and not onely her face was thus shadowed, but also her bodie, for shee was conceived with Childe as another woman, wherefore Ioseph would have forsaken her privily, and gone away. This little Bird that came from the one side of the Doore, betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who at midnight was borne of the Virgin Mary, wrapped in cloathes, and laid in an Ore stall. The two beasts betoken the Ore and the Ass that Ioseph brought with him, which honoured him in his Birth. These other beasts that came from farre, betoken the Shepheards in the field, to whom the Angell said thus: Loe, I shew you great joy. The birds that sung so sweetly, betoken the Angels of heaben, which sung at his birth this joyfull song: Glory be to God above, and peace to men on earth.

The King of Amphy, which held warre against the Emperoz, betokeneth all mankinde, that were contrary to God as long as they were in the Devils power. But immediately, when our Lord Jesus Christ was borne, he bowed himselfe to God, and besought him of peace when hee received his baptism, for at our baptism wee promised to ozaw only to God, and forsake the

the Devill and all his pomp. The King gave his daughter in marriage to the Emperours son. Right so every one of us ought to give his soule in marriage to Gods son, for hee is alwayes ready to receive our soule as his spouse, according to the Scripturo, saying thus: I will marrie thee to mee. But ere our soule may come to the Pallace of heaven, she must saile by the Sea of the world, in the Ship of good life: but oftentimes there riseth a tempest in the Sea, that is, trouble of this world, the temptations of the flesh, and the suggestion of the Devill ariseth sodainly, and drowneeth the vertues that the Soule received in Baptisme, neverthelesse yet falleth she not out of the Ship of Charity, but keepeth her selfe surely therein by Faith and Hope. For as the Apostle, saith, By Hope wee be saved. For it is impossible to be saved without Hope or Faith. The great Whale that followeth the Mayden, betokeneth the Devill, which by night and by day lyeth in wait to overcome the Soule by Sinne: therefore doe wee as the Mayden did, smite wee fire of Charity and Love out of the Stone, that is, Christ, according to this saying, I am a Stone, and certainly the Devill shall have no power over us. Many
men

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men begin well, as did the Maid, but at the last they be weary of their good works, and so they sleepe in sinne. And anon when the Devill perceiveth this, he devoureth the sinner in his evill thoughts, delights, consent, and works. Therefore if any of us feele our selves in such wise under the power of the Devill, let him doe as the Maiden did, smite the Devill with the knive of bitter repentance, then kindle the fire of Charity, and without doubt he shall cast thee on the land of good life.

The Carle that came with his servants to stay the Whale, betokeneth a discret Preacher, which dwelleth beside the Sea, that is, beside the world, and not in the world, that is, not dravne to worldly delectation, but ever is ready with good words of holy Scripture, to kill the Devill, and to destroy his power. We must all cry with an high voyce, as the Maiden did, knowing our sinnes, and then shall we be delivered from the Devill, and nourished with vertuous exercise.

The Emperour sheweth this Maiden three vessells, that is, God putteth before man, life and death, good & evill, and which of these he chooseth he shall obtaine. Therefore saith Salomon, Death and life is set
before

before man, choose which him list, And yet man is uncertaine whether hee will chooſe life or death.

By the first beſſell of Gold full of dead mens bones, is underſtood mighty worldly rich men, who ſhine like gold outwardly in riches and pomp of the world, nevertheleſſe within they be full of dead mens bones, that is, the works they have done in this world, be dead in the ſight of God through deadly ſinne. Therefore if any man chooſe ſuch a life, he ſhall have that he deſerveth, that is, ſuch men be like unto Tombs that be white, and royally painted and arrayed without, and covered with cloath of gold and ſilk, but within there is nothing but dry bones. By the ſecond beſſell of ſilver, wee ought to underſtand ſome Juſtices, and wiſe men of this world, who ſhine in faire ſpeech, but within they be full of wormes and earth, that is, their faire ſpeech ſhall availe them no more at the day of Judgement, than the wormes of the earth, and peradventure leſſe, for then ſhall they ſuffer everlaſting paine, if they die in deadly ſinne. By the third beſſell of Lead, full of gold and pretious ſtones, we are to underſtand a ſimple and poore life, which the choſen Soules chooſe, that they

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may be married to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ by humilitie and obedience, and such men beare with them pretious stones, that is, Faith and her fruitfull works, pleasing to God: by which at the Iudgement day, they be espoused to our Lord Jesus Christ, and obtained the heritage of heaven. Unto the which bring us our Saviour Jesus Christ that died on the Crosse. Amen.

The Argument.

Man by Baptisme promised to live in the feare of God, and forsake the Devil. Christ sorroweth for our sinnes, hee requireth dutifull service of us at six severall ages, but we are alwayes unready for him, yet the mercy of God is so favourable towards us, that hee spareth us even till the last age of man, vouchsafing if then wee repent us, and call for grace, beleeving in his mercies, to receive us into the Throne of his heavenly grace.

The 33. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Calopodus, who tooke a faire Lady to his wife. They were not long together befoze that this Emperesse con-

conceiued and bare him a Sonne, a goodly childe, and a faire. When hee was of age, hee was set to Schoole, and when hee came to twenty yeares of age, he desired his Fathers heritage, saying: Deare Father you are an old man, and may not geberne your Empire, therefore if it please you to gibe it me, it shall be to your ease. Then answered the Emperour, and said: Deare Son, I dread me sore, that when the Empire is in thy power, thou wilt not fulfill my will nor my desire.

Then answered the Emperesse (for so much as she loved her sonne better than her husband) and said: My Lord, that cannot be, for thou hast but one sonne, therefore as I beleue, he will fulfill thine intent in all things: this Empire may helpe him well, and therefore it is best to grant him the Empire. Then answered the Emperour and said, I will first haue of him a Letter obligatoꝝ, that whensoever he doth any thing against my will, that then I will depose him from the Empire without any contradiction.

The Sonne granted this, and did make the Obligation, and sealed it. And when this was done, this young Emperour waxed so pꝛoud, that he feared neither God

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no2 man, and did very much harme. But
ever his Father suffered it patiently, for he
would be corrected by no man. Now at last
there fell a great dearth in the Empire, so
that many men died for want of food: This
old Emperour was all alone himselve, and
began to have need, wherefore hee went to
his sonne for to have some maintenance,
which his sonne granted, and suffered for a
time. But within short time his Father
began to wax sick, wherefore hee called his
sonne, & prayed him to give him a draught
of must. His sonne answered and said:
that will I not doe, for my must is not good
for your complexion.

Then said the Emperour: I pray thee
Sonne give mee a draught of thy wine.
His sonne answered and said, that he should
have none, for my wine is not yet fined, and
if I touch it, it will trouble, and therefore
I will not broach it till it be cleare & fined.
Then said his Father, give me some of the
third Tun. That I will not doe, quoth he,
for that wine is not good for a sick man.
Then his Father prayed him heartily for
a draught of the fourth Tun. Then answered
he and said, thereof get ye none, for it
is feeble and without any sustentation, and
such wine is not good for you, for it is not

comfortable. Then said his Father: now good sonne giue mee then of the fist Tun: That will I not, quoth hee, for that Tun is full of lyes and dregs, and such is not for men, nor scarcely for hogs. When his Father saw he might get nothing of him, alter he was perfectly well, he went to the King of Jerusalem, and made his complaint of his Sonne, and shewed him the letter obligatory which his sonne had made, whereby his father might put him out of his Empire without any gaine, saying. When the King heard this, he called the Emperours sonne to answer his Father: And when he came, he could not answer to his Father with any reason, wherefore the King put him out of his Empire, and seated his Father therein againe: and so hee continued all the dayes of his life.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ: according to that saying: Is not he thy Father that hath brought thee up, hee hath made thee, &c. Deut. 32. verse 6. The Sonne betokeneth man, to whom hee gave all the Empire of this world according to the Scripture, Heaven hee hath giuen to our Lord, and earth to man. Man

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kind made an Obligation with our Lord Jesus Christ, when he receiued the Sacrament of Baptisme, wherein he promised to serbe him truly, and forsake the Devill, and all his pomp and vaine glozy. This Emperour began to wax sick on a day, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ is troubled as oft as a Christian sinneth and breaketh his Commandements, wherfore he thirsts greatly for the help of our soules, and then he asketh a draught of the first Tun, that is, hee asks of man the first age of childhood to be spent in his service, but incontinently the wicked Child answereth and saith: I may not doe so, for my Childhood is musty, that is, it is so tender and so young, that it may not attempt so soone to serbe God, which is manifestly against the truth, for the childe of one day is not without sinne. For S. Gregory in his Dialogues saith, The children of five yeares of age drive our spirits from the bosoms of their Fathers. Then when God seeth that he cannot have of the must of his childhood, then desireth he the wine of the second tun. Then answereth the wicked youth, & saith, that his Wine is not apt to serbe God. And when God may not have of the second Tunne, then asketh hee of the third Tunne,

Tunne, that is of the third Tunne of his
 youth. Then answereth the wicked young
 man, and saith, The wine is very strong
 and mighty, and therefore his youth ought to
 be spent about manly deeds, in this world,
 and not in good life, which would make him
 feeble and weake. When God seeth that he
 may not haue of this Tun, then asketh hee
 of the fourth Tun. And then answereth the
 wicked man in his manhood, and saith, that
 aged men are feeble, and may not fast, nor
 doe any hard repentance, and if hee did,
 hee should be the cause of his owne death.
 Then asketh our Lord of the fift Tun, that
 is of his old age, when he stoopeth, and may
 not goe without a staffe. But the wicked
 old man excuseth himselfe, and saith, That
 his wine is too feeble to giue such a feeble
 man, for if hee should fast one day, it were
 time on the morrow to make his grave.
 And when our Lord seeth that hee may not
 haue the fift Tunne, then asketh hee of the
 first Tunne, that is, when a man is blinde
 and may goe to sinne no more, yet desir-
 eth he of such a man drinke, that is, help
 of his soule: But the wretched man lying
 in despaire, saith: Alas, alas, woe to me,
 because I serued not Almighty God my
 maker and redeemer here in times past,

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while I was in youth and in prosperity : now there is nothing left but onely the lœs and dregs of wretchednesse, therefore what shall it auaile mee now to turne toward God : But for such men wee should lament.

Nevertheless, God is mercifull, that though hee might haue no serbice of man in all his time, yet hee is content to haue the lœs of his tunne, that is, the good will, though he may not serbe him otherwise, and so shall his good will stand him in stead of patient life. For in what houre the sinner doth repent him of his sinne from the bottom of his heart, he shall be saved, as Ezekiel witnesseth. But there be many that will giue no wine, nor no other thing to him, wherefore God shall complaine unto the King of Ierusalem, that is, to the Godhead at the iudgement day, and then as hee is God and man, shall hee giue a sentence definitive against such men : saying, I haue hungred, and ye gave mee no meat : I haue beene naked, and yee cloathed mee not : I haue thirsted, and yee gave mee no drink. Noe, thus shall he rehearse to thee the fruits of thy faith. And when this is done, then shall such men be put to everlasting paine, and the iust man into everlasting blisse.

Unto

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Unto which, bring us our Lord Iesus
Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being captived by Sathan, the world
refuseth to doe for him, till the God-head
of the heavenly Father bearing an earnest
affection unto him, did espouse him, and
embrace him within the bosome of in-
ward and intire love, adventuring what
he might to set all mankind at liberty, yet
grudgeth the world that wee should al-
wayes serve our God, and forsake her:
but to eschew all such malignity wee are
taught in this History.

The 34. History.

In Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Em-
perour named Anthony, under whose
raigne the robbers of the Sea had taken pri-
soner, a mighty mans sonne of another Re-
gion, and brought him to the Emperours
prison being bound. When this yong man
was thus in prison, hee incontinent wrote
to his father for his ransome, but he would
neither pay his ransome, nor send him any
thing for to comfort him: This when hee
heard, he wept sore, and would not be com-
forted for the unkindnesse of his father.

This

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This Emperour had a faire Daughter, which visited every day the prisoner, and comforted him as much as she might, wishing him to be merry. To whom the prisoner answered and said: How shall I be merry? or how may I joy, thus to lie fast bound in prison from the sight of man? and notwithstanding this, it grieveeth me most that my Father will not pay my ransome. When the Mayden heard this, she was moved with pittie, and said: Deare friend, I am sorry for thee, and therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I shall deliver thee from thy anguish and paine. What thing is that quoth hee? That thou wilt take me for thy wife. Then said the Prisoner, I promise you surely to fulfill your request and desire, and for the more assurance, I plight you my troth. When hee had so done, shortly after the Damosell delivered him out of prison, and fled away with him home to his Fathers house. When his Father saw his son and the Maiden together, he asked the cause why he brought the Maiden with him? Then said his son: Sir, this Damosell delivered me out of Prison, and therefore she shall be my wife. Then said his Father, I will not consent that she shall be thy wife, for two reasonable causes
which

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which I shall forthwith shew thee. The first is this, it is not unknowne to thee that the Emperour her Father might have had for thy deliberance great plenty of riches, and for as much as thee was untrue to her owne Father, and true to thee, it seemeth well that thou shouldest not trust long to her: for being false to her owne Father, it is to be feared thee will not be true to another man. The second reason is this: the cause why thee delibered thee out of prison, was neither for pittie nor for love, but for carnall lust that he had to thee. For at thy deliberance he made covenant with thee to be thy wife, and had of thee thy troth, and hath accompanied with thee: therefore son (saith he) it is no reason that he should be thy wife.

The Maiden answered to these objections, and said: as for the first reason that thou layest against me, that I should be untrue to my Father, that is, false: for my Father hath plenty of riches, and thy sonne is but poore, and therefore I holp him for pittie and for none other cause: and never thelesse thou that art his Father wouldest not pay his rancome, that hee might be delivered out of prison. Doe for this cause I have delivered him, therefore I am kinder to him
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then thou that art his owne father, and hee is moze beholding to me than to thee. Unto the other reason : whereas thou sayest that I delivered him because of carnall lust : I answer and say plainly that it is not truth. For all manner of carnall love is caused of strength or else of beauty, but thy sonne is not strong, for his imprisonment hath taken away his strength : he is not faire, for by the paine hee hath had in prison, hee is brought low, and made unlustie to sport, and therefore pittie onely moved mee to deliver him, and not carnall lust.

Then said the son : Deare father, for as much as I was in perill of death, and wrote unto you to pay my ransome that I might be delivered, and you would not help me, but this gentle Damosell for pittie hath saved me from death, and delivered me out of prison, therefore surely thee shall be my wife. So forthwith he married her with great honour, and with her ended his life.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour besokeneth the Father of heaven. The young man which was taken with the Pyrates of the Sea, besokens all mankind which was taken with the Devill, by the sinne of
cur

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our forefather Adam, and was cast into the prison of hell with great sorrow and paine. His father would not ransom him, that is, the world would doe nothing for him. This faire daughter betokeneth the Godhead, which came downe from Heauen; and tooke manhood of the Virgin Mary, and so made a ghostly marriage betwene him and man. And upon this conditton hee delivered mankind out of the prison of hell, when hee came from heauen, and forsooke the fellowship of Angels for to dwell with us in this wretched vale of teares. But the Father that betokeneth the World grudgeth ever against him, and would not suffer that the soule of man should become the Spouse of Iesus Christ, but that hee should alway serbe him, and should forsake our Lord.

Wherefore if wee followe the world and his vanities, certainly wee shall fall into the snare of the Devill. From the which defend us our blessed Saviour Iesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

It is the ordinance of God, that no man shall labour for worldly promotion by covetousnesse and falshood, nor by deceit or other

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or other evill courses. Man for his first transgression should have been adjudged to perpetuall torment in hell, had not the Sonne of God voluntarily offered himselfe to the death, to save mankind, and destroy Sathan his enemy, so that thereby hee might please him in the habitation of heaven everlastingly.

The 35. Historie.

Sometime in Rome there dwelt a noble Emperour of great libelithood, named Alexander, which above all vertues loved the vertue of Bounty, wherefore hee ordained a Law for great charity, that no man under paine of death should turne a Blaice in his dish at his meat, but only eat the white side, and not the black, and if any man would attempt to doe the contrary, hee should suffer death without any Pardon: but yet ere hee dyed, hee should ask three questions of the Emperour what him list (except his life) which should be granted him.

It befell after upon a day, that there came an Earle and his sonne, of a strange Country, to speak with the Emperour. And when the Earle was set at meat, hee was served with a Blaice, and hee which
was

was hungry, and had an appetite to his meat after he had eaten the white side, hee turned the black side, and began to eate therzof: wherefore straight-way hee was accused to the Emperour, because he had offended against the law. Then said the Emperour: let him die according to the law, without any delay. When the Charles son heard that his Father should die, immediately he fell downe on both his knees before the Emperour & said: O my reverend Lord, I most humbly intreat you that I may die for my Father. Then said the Emperour: it pleaseth me well, so that one die for the offence. Then said the Charles sonne, sith it is so that I must die, I aske the benefit of the Law, that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I die. The Emperour answered, and said: Ask what thou wilt, there shall no man say thæ nay.

When said this young Knight: My Lord, you have but one Daughter, the which I desire of your Highnesse, that shee may lie with me one night before I die. The Emperour granted for fulfilling of the Law, though it were against his will. Neverthelesse this Knight deflowered her not as that night: therefore hee greatly pleased the Emperour.

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The second petition is this. I aske all thy treasure, and immediatly the Emperour granted, because hee would not be called a breaker of the law. And when the Charles sonne had receiued the Emperours treasure, hee imparted it both to poore and rich, by meanes whereof hee obtained their good wills.

My third petition is this: I aske my Lord, that all their eyes may be put out incontinent that saw my father eat the black side of the Blaice. Wherefore the Emperour made inquisition immediatly, who it was that saw the Carle turne the black side of the Blaice. And they that saw him turne the Blaice bethought them, and said within themselves: If we acknowledge that we saw him doe this trespassse, then shall our eyes be put out, and therefore it is better that we hold us still. And so there was none found that would accuse him.

When the Charles sonne saw this, hee said to the Emperour: My Lord, quoth he, ye see there is no man accuseth my Father, therefore giue mee rightfull iudgement. Then said the Emperour: for as much as no man will acknowledge that they saw him turne the Blaice, therefore I will not that thy Father shall die. Doe thus the son
sawed

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saved his Fathers life, and after the decease of the Emperoz married his daughter.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven, which ordained a Law, that no man should turne the black side of a Blaice, that is, there should no man labour for riches and promotion by covetousnesse and falshood. The Earle that came to the Emperour betokeneth Adam, our fore-father, who came out of the land of Eden, and turned up the black side of the Blaice, when hee eat of the Apple of the forbidden tree, wherefore hee should have bene condemned to everlasting death: but his Sonne, that betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, hee tooke the flesh of Adam, and proffered himselfe voluntarily to dye for him: and the Father of heaven granted that he should goe down to die for mankind.

Nevertheless, befoze hee died hee asked three petitions of his Father of Heaven. The first was this, that hee might have by him his Daughter, which betokeneth the soule of man, and bring her with him into the bosome of heaven, according to the words in Osee, saying, I will wed her to my selfe.

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The second petition was this, all the Emperours treasure, which betokeneth the treasure of heaben, according to this Scripture: Like as the Father hath disposed for me, so I dispose for you.

The third petition is this, that all their eyes should be put out, that is, that the Devill, and all false witnesses which accuse us true men, might be put from the light of heavenly grace.

And thus saved he mankind, and led him up with him unto the Pallace of Heaben. Unto the which Pallace bzing us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Father of Heaven of his meere grace, promoteth some poore men, raising them from the dust to sit among Princes, but they extolling themselves without regard of Gods goodnesse, they are againe made abject by him. The Devill worketh deceit in his members against the Godly, Christ came downe from heaven to minister the water of eternall life unto man, and by his death and passion to revive our soules, (which before were dead) unto the firme state of eternall felicity,

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licity, and to purchase our happinesse
with his precious bloud.

The 36. Historie.

IN Rome there dwelt sometime a mighty
Emperour named Leonicius, who on a
day rode to a fforest to disport himselfe,
whereas he met sodainly with a poore man,
to whom hee said thus: Friend what art
thou? and whence comest thou?

My Lord, quoth hee, I am come from
the next Citie, and I am your man. Then
said the Emperour, thou seemest poore, there-
fore if thou be honest and true, I will pro-
mote thee to great riches and honour. Then
answered the poore man, & said: My Lord,
I promise you faithfully to be true to you
so long as I live. The Emperour anon
made him a Knight, and gave him great
riches. When he was thus promoted, hee
waxed so proud, that hee thought himselfe
more able to bee an Emperour than his
Lord: wherefore he made suggestion to di-
vers Lords of that Empire, that hee might
usurpe and take upon him through strength
of them to be Emperour. When the Em-
perour heard this, anon he exiled him, and
all those that were consenting to him, so
that they lived abjects in great wretched-

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nesse and sorrow: and then the Emperour ordained other men in their stead, and gave them all the possessions of those traitors.

And when the banished men heard that strangers had taken possession of their lands & goods, anon they conspired against them, and through treason requested them to a banquet. And they as innocents thinking upon no such treason, came at the day assigned, and were served with fine poisoned messes, whereby as many as tasted of those dishes died incontinent.

When the Emperour heard this, he was greatly moved, and assembled his counsell, to enquire what was best to be done for this treason, and for their death. Then said the Emperours sonne: My Lord, I am your sonne, and you are my Father, and therefore I shall give you good counsell and profitable to all men. Not farre hence is a little Nation, wherein dwelleth a faire Maiden, and a gracious in the sight of every man, which hath an Orchard wherein is a Well, the water whereof is of such vertue, that if it be cast upon a dead man, straightway hee shall live againe and recover his life. Therefore my Lord I shall descend unto that Nation, and seeke that water, whereby they that were slaine at the

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the Banquet, may be restored again to life. And when the Emperour heard this, hee greatly rejoyced, and said thus: Sonne thy counsell is good.

And straight way the Emperours Son went into the said Nation, and fell in contest with the Maiden, in so much that hee entred into the garden, and assailed to taste the water of the Well. And when hee had so done, hee made five deëpt trenches in the ground, in the which the water ranne till it came where the dead men lay buried, here upon when the water touched them, they arose from death to life. Then the Emperours Sonne with great joy led them unto his Father. And when the Emperour saw this, hee was right joyfull, wherefore hee crowned his Sonne with a Laurell crowne, in token of victorie, and so he ended his life in rest and peace.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaben. The poore man that was promoted, betokeneth Lucifer, that was exalted of nought, and enthroned in the Empire of heaben with great joy and clearnesse, but through his pride he thought he might be like unto Almighty

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God. And not onely like him, but more than Almighty God: wherefore the Father of Heaven exiled him, and all them that consented to him, to hell: and in his place man was exalted to great joy and honour. The Devill seeing this, it much grieved him, that man should come to such glory and honour, and bade Adam and Eve to a Banquet, when they ate of the Apple, against Gods commandement, and counselled them thus, saying: In what houre ye eat of the Apple, yee shall be like Gods, knowing good and evill. And at this cursed Banquet they were served with five messes that were poysoned, that is, their five wits were accorded in eating of the Apple, whereof man was infected and died. This hearing the Emperors sonne Christ Jesus, moved with mercy, hee came downe from heaven into this world, and acquainted him so well with the blessed Virgin Mary, that hee found in her the well of man-hood, and conjoyned it to the God-head, according to the Scripture: I am the well of life, who drinketh of it shall not thirst. After that, hee suffered to be made five trenches in the ground, that is, five wounds in his bodie, out of the which ranne both blood and water, whereby all mankind was raised from

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from death to life, and led them up into the Pallace of heaven. Unto the which bring us our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Argument.

The Father of heaven extendeth his goodnesse divers wayes towards fraile man, yet he taketh contrary wayes, living in spirituall fornication, for the which being exiled from the state of felicity, hee is compelled to lead a miserable and painfull life. But being reconciled by the death of his Saviour, hee repossesseth the heritage of heavenly felicity:

The 37. History.

Sometime in Rome there reigned a mighty Emperour named Dunstanus, in whose Empire there dwelt a gentle knight that had two sonnes. One of his sonnes matched himselfe against his fathers will with a common Harlot. The knight hearing this, exiled his sonne from him. And when he was thus exiled, hee begot on this woman a sonne: And soone after that hee waxed sick, and in penurie, wherefore he sent messengers to his father beseeching him of his mercie, this hearing

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his Father, he took compassion and ruth on him, wherefoze he was reclaimed from banishment. And when he was thus brought againe to his Fathers grace, hee gave his child which he had by the common woman to his Father, who kindly received him, and nourished him as his sonne.

When the other sonne heard this, hee said to his Father: Father, quoth he, it seemeth to mee that thou art out of thy right mind, which I will prove by good reason. For hee is out of his right minde that receiveth a false heire, and nourisheth him, whose Father hath endamaged and grieved him befoze. Now my brother which begat this Child, hath done thee great injurie, when he married the common woman, against thy will and commandement, therefore mee thinketh that thou art out of thy right mind.

Then answered the Father and said: because thy brother is reconciled to me, thou art envious, and thou art unkinde to thy owne brother, willing to put him from thy fellowship for evermore, but soothly no unkind man shal have mine heritage except he be reconciled, and yet thou never reconciledst thy selfe to him for thy unkindnesse, for thou mightest have reconciled thy selfe

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Selfe to him, but thou wouldest not, therefore
of my heritage gettest thou no part.

The Morall.

Deare friends, the Father of these two
brethren betokeneth the Father of heaben.
And his two sonnes betoken the nature of
Angels, and the nature of man: For man
was married to a common woman or har-
lot, when hee eat the Apple against the
Commandement of God, wherefore he was
exiled by the Father of heaben, and put
from the joyes of Paradise. The sonne of
the common woman betokeneth mankind.
This Knights sonne, that is, Adam liues
in great misery, for after his sinne hee was
put from joy into this wretched valley of
teares and weeping, according to the
Scripture, In the sweat of thy browes thou
shalt eat thy bread. But after by the passion
of Christ he was reconciled. But the other
sonne that betokeneth the Devill, was ever
unkind, and grudged daily against our re-
conciling, saying, That by reason of our
sinne wee ought not to come unto the heri-
tage of heaben. Unto the which bring us
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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The Argument.

Wee ought in every vocation and calling to behave our selves justly, and to use the poore man with equity: we must not injure the rich men. The mighty men are to be honoured, & not defrauded of their dignity and estate being men of sincere life: they that do contrary to the meaning of dutifull behoofe herein, are worthy of everlasting death.

The 38. Historie.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Donatus, which did make three Images: of the which, one held out his hand straight unto the people, and had on his finger a ring of gold. The second Image had a beard of gold; And the third had a Mantle of Purple. Commanding upon paine of death, that no man should take away from these Images the ring, the beard, nor the mantle.

It befell afterward upon a time, that one Dionise a Tyrant, came into the Temple, and tooke away the ring from the first Image, the beard from the second, and the mantle from the third. And when hee had thus done, hee was forthwith accused unto
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the Emperour, and brought before him, and strictly examined of that trespassse, why hee dispoyled the Images, against the Emperours commandement.

Then answered Dionyse, and said as followeth: My reberend Lord, it is lawfull to answer for my selfe: When I entred in to the Temple, the first Image held forth his hand straight to me, as who would say, I give thee this ring, and therefore I took the ring as the gift of the Image, being loath to refuse so gentle an offer. And when I saw the second Image having a beard, I thought thus with my selfe: I knew sometime the Father of the Image, which had no beard, and now his Sonne hath a beard, which is against reason, the Sonne to have a beard, and the Father none: and therefore I tooke from him his beard, that hee should be like his Father. After that, when I saw the third having a mantle of gold, I thought that the mantle of gold was not behovefull for him in Winter: for gold is naturally cold, which might be cause of his death, and therefore I tooke it from him, because it was too cold in Winter, and too hot in Summer.

When Dionyse had excused him by these reasons, the Emperour answered and said:
Thou

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Thou hast answered wickedly for thy selfe. What should cause thee rather than any other man to dispoile the Images, for as much as I commanded that no man should take any thing away from them, therefore thine owne mouth hath condemned thee. Anone the Emperour called to him one of his Squires, and charged him to smite off his head, and incontinently he took him, and bid unto him as the Emperour had commanded, and so he died a shamefull death.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour be-
keneth Almighty God, the Father of hea-
ven. The three Images betokeneth the
poore men, the rich men, & the mighty men
of this world. The tyrant Dionise betoken-
eth all officers in every estate, lewdly be-
having themselves, which take away from
poore men the ring off their fingers, and say
thus, I may take that is given mee. But
when the poore man hath ought to doe, he
must needs put forth his hand to give whe-
ther he will or no, if he would speed. They
take away the beard from the rich man,
and say thus: This man is richer than his
Father was, therefore take we his libelity
from

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from him, and make him like his foresaier. They take also the mantle of Gold from the mighty men: when they see any man of honour and good living, willing to correct such open misdoers; then say they this man is too cold, for he inclineth nothing to our opinions, and also hee is so hot in power and working against us, therefore goe wee and take from him the mantle of might, and so they accuse him and put him out of his office. But certainly, all such men stand in perill of everlasting death: From the which save us, hee that shed his precious blood for us, Amen.

The Argument.

Man ought to nourish Christ in his heart by faith, and fruits of good life. The reward of such as have care unto the commandments and institutions of God. We must watch lest wee fall into temptation: these things considered, we shall then by Gods gracious good providence attaine unto the reward of this heavenly and everlasting blisse.

The 39 History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Emelius,
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who had a faire young Lady to his Wife, upon whom hee had begotten a faire sonne. When the States of the Empire heard this, they came to the Emperour, and besought him to have the keeping of his sonne. Immediately the Emperour sent a Herauld throughout the Citie, proclaiming that in whose house were first found fire and water, the good man of that house should have his sonne in keeping, and to nourish. And then the Emperour made a Proclamation, that whosoever had his sonne to keepe, should nourish him cleanly, and feede him with wholesome meats and drinks. And when the Childe came to age, then should the keeper be promoted to great honour, wherefore many men made ready fire and water in hope to have the Childe: But in the night when every man was asleepe, there came a Tyrant named Sulapius that quenched the fire, and threw out the water. Nevertheless among all other, there was a man named Ionathas that laboured so diligently, that hee kept both day and night fire and water:

In a morning early the Herauld at the Emperours commandement, went through the Citie, and sought in every house for fire and water, but he could finde
none

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none till he came to Ionathas house, where he found both fire and water ready, wherefore he was brought before the Emperour, who delibered him his sonne according to the Proclamation.

When Ionathas had the Emperours Sonne, hee led him home unto his house. And soone after hee sent for Masons and Carpenters, and did make a strong chamber of lime and stone. And when the chamber was finished, hee sent for Painters to paint on the wall of the Chamber ten Images, with this Verse painted above their heads, Who so defileth these Images, shall die a cruell death. And then caused a payre of gallowes to be drawne on the doore, and figured a man hanging thereupon with this Verse painted above his head: So shall he be served that nourisheth the Emperours Son amisse. Also hee caused a Chaire of gold to be made, and himselfe sitting therein, crowned with a crowne of Gold, with this superscription above the head: Who so nourisheth the Emperours Sonne cleanly, thus shall he be honoured.

When this was done, oftentimes as he was a sleepe, he was greatly tempted to defile these ten excellent Images, but anon hee read the superscriptions above their heads

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heads, and then all the temptation ceased. And when the Emperours Son was eilly kept, then went hee to the gallowes and read that Poey which was written aboue his owne head, and for dread thereof kept the childe better, and was diligent to giue attendance on him.

And when he beheld the chaire, and himselfe sitting therein crowned with a crown of gold, hee was right joyfull, thinking to haue good reward for keeping of the Emperours sonne. When the Emperour heard of this diligent demeanour about his sonne, he sent for him, and thanking him for his well keeping and nourishing of him, hee after promoted him to great honour and dignity.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heauen. The Emperesse betokeneth the blessed Virgin Mary. The Emperours Sonne betokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ. The Herauld that was sent throughout the Citie betokeneth Saint Iohn Baptist, who was sent before our Lord to prepare the way to him, according to the holy Scripture: Lo, I send mine Angell before mee, &c. The States that desired the Emperours

four Sonne to nourish, betoken the Patri-
arks and Prophets, which desired greatly
to nourish our Lord Jesus Christ, and also
to see him, but they might not see him, nor
nourish him, for fire & water which should
have bene cause of their sight, was not
with them perfectly.

The fire betokeneth the holy Ghost
which had not yet appeared to them, for
they were not washed with the water of
Baptisme. Also ye may understand by the
fire, perfect Charity; and by the water, true
Contrition, which doe now a dayes faile in
many men, and therefore they may not have
the little Child Jesus in their hearts.

Ionathas that watched so diligently, be-
tokeneth every good Christian man, which
studieth ever to watch in well-doing, re-
solving to God for finnes the fire of charitable
repentance, and the water of Contrition.
But oftentimes the Tyrant, which beto-
keneth the Devill, putteth out the fire of
charity from out of mens hearts, and cast-
eth out the water of Contrition, so that
they may not nourish the little Child Je-
sus. Therefore let us watch as Ionathas
did, that we enter not into temptation. And
call wee unto us Dauid, that is, discreet
Preachers which can make in our hearts

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a Chamber of Stone, that is, a sure Faith and Hope. Then call we to us Painters, that is, Ministers of Gods word, which can paint in our hearts ten Images, that is, the ten Commandements, which if thou keepe and observe daily, without doubt thou shalt be honoured in heaben.

And if thou keepe well the Emperours Sonne, thou shalt sit in a Chaire of gold, crowned with a crowne of gold. And if that thou nourish him not well, without doubt thou shalt be in danger of torment in hell. From the which preserve us our blessed Saviour Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of man espoused unto Christ, the flesh procureth the same to sin. The Christian Soule by faith withstandeth temptation, the Redemption of mankind from sinne and death. The deceits of unthankfull hearts. The spirits health the defects of the flesh. After a pure repentance followeth perpetuall joy and felicity both of soule and body.

The 40. History.

In Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperour named Menglay, which had wedded

ded the Kings daughter of Hungary, a faire
 Lady and a gracious in all her works, and
 specially shee was mercifull. On a time
 as the Emperour lay in his bed, hee be-
 thought him that hee would goe visit the
 holy Land. And on the morrow he called to
 him the Emperesse his wife, and his owne
 only brother, and thus he said: Deare Lady,
 I may not, nor will not hide from you
 the priuities of my heart, I purpose to visit
 the holy Land, wherefore I ordaine thee
 principally to be Lady and Governesse over
 all my Empire, and all my people. And un-
 der thee I ordain here my brother to be thy
 Steward, for to provide all things that
 may be profitable to my Empire and to
 my people.

Then said the Emperesse: Sith it will
 no otherwise be, but that needs thou wilt
 goe to visit the Citie of Ierusalem, I shall be
 in your absence as true as any Turtle that
 hath lost her Mate, for as I beleue, ye shal
 not escape thence with your life.

The Emperour anon comforted her with
 faire words, and kissed her, and after that
 tooke his leaue of her and of all other, and
 went toward the Citie of Ierusalem.

And anone after the Emperour was
 gone, his brother became so proud, that hee

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oppressed poore men, and robbed rich men, and hee did worse than this, for daily hee stirred the Emperesse to commit sinne with him. But ever she answered againe, as an holy and debout woman, and said: I will (quoth she) never consent to you, nor to any other as long as my Lord liueth. Neuer thelesse this Knight would not leaue with this answer, but ever when hee found her alone, hee made his complaint to her, and stirred her by all the wayes that hee could, to sinne with him.

When this Lady saw that hee would not cease for any answer, nor would not amend himselfe; when she saw her time, she called to her three or foure of the worthiest men of the Empire, and said to them thus: It is not unknowne to you that my Lord the Emperour ordained mee principall Governour of this Empire, and also he ordained his brother to be Steward under me, and that he should do nothing without my counsell; but he doth all the contrary: for he oppresseth greatly poore men, and likewise robbeth the rich men, and yet hee would doe moze than this, if hee might haue his intent, wherefore I command you in my Lords name, that you bind him fast and cast him into prison.

Then

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Then said they, soothly he hath done many evil deeds since our Lord the Emperour went, therefore we be ready to obey your commandement, but in this matter you must answer for us to our Lord the Emperour. Then said she: dread ye not, if my Lord knew what he had done as well as I, he would put him to the foulest death that could be thought: Immediately these men laid hands on him and bound him fast with yron chaines, and put him in prison, whereas he lay long time after, till at the last it fortun'd there came tidings that the Emperour was comming home, and had obtained great renown and victorie. When the brother heard of his comming, he said: Would to God my brother might not find me in prison: for if he doe, he will enquire the cause of my imprisonment of the Emperesse, and she will tell him all the truth, how I moved her to commit sinne, and so for her I shall have no favour of my brother, but lose my life: this know I well, therefore it shall not be so. Then sent he a messenger unto the Emperesse, praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the Prison doore, that he might speak a word or two with her.

The Emperesse came to him and enquired

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red of him what hee would have. He answered and said: O Lady, have mercy upon me, for if the Emperour my brother finde me in prison, then shall I die without any remedy.

Then said the Emperesse: If I might know that thou wouldest be a good man, and leave thy folly, thou shouldest finde grace. Then did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his trespasses. When hee had thus promised, the Emperesse delivered him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily according to his estate: and then she said unto him thus. Now good brother take thy Steed and come with mee, that we may meet my Lord. Hee answered and said: Lady I am ready to fulfill your will and commandement in all things. And then the Emperesse took him with her, and many other knights, and so rode forth to meet with the Emperour: and as they rode together by the way, they saw where a great Hart ranne before them, wherefore every man with such wounds as they had, chased him on horseback, so that with the Emperesse was left no creature save only the Emperours brother, who seeing that no man was there but they two, thus

he

hee said unto the Empresse: Loe, Lady, here is beside a priue Forrest, and long it is agoe that I spake to thee of love, come now and consent unto mee that I may lie with thee.

Then said the Empresse: Ah foole what may this be? Yesterday I delibered thee out of prison upon thy promise, in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly againe, wherefore I say now to thee as I have said before, there shall no man doe such thing with me, save only my Lord the Emperour, which ought of very duty soe to doe. Then said hee, if thou wilt not consent to mee, I shall hang thee here upon a tree in this Forrest, where no man shall find thee, and so shalt thou die an evill death. The Empresse answered meekly, and said: Though thou smite off my head, or put mee to death with all manner of torment, thou shalt never have me consent to such a sinne.

When hee heard this, hee unclothed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by the haire upon the tree, and tyed her sword before her, and so rode forth to his fellows, and told them that a great host of men met him, and tooke the Empresse away from him, and when hee had told them

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this, they made all great sorrow.

It befell on the third day after, there came an Earle to hunt in that forrest, and as hee rode beating the bushes, hee unkennels a For, whom his Hounds followed fast, till they came nere the tree where the Emperesse hanged. And when the dogs smelt the labour of her, they left the for and ranne toward the tree as fast as they could.

The Earle seeing this, wondred greatly, and spurring his Horse, followed them till he came whereas the Emperesse hanged. When the Earle saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, for as much as she was right faire and beautifull to behold, wherefore hee said unto her in this manner wise: O woman who art thou? and of what Country? and wherefore hangedst thou here in this manner?

The Emperesse that was not yet fully dead, but at point ready to die, answered and said: I am, quoth shee, a strange woman, and am come out of a faire Country, but how I came hither God knoweth. When answered the Earle & said: Whose Horse is this that standeth by thee bound to this tree? When answered the Lady and said, that it was hers. When the Earle heard

heard this, he saw well that she was a Gentlewoman and came of noble linage, wherefore he was the rather moved with pittie, and said unto her: O faire Lady, thou seemest of gentle blood, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischief, if thou wilt promise to goe with me, and nourish my faire young daughter, and teach her at home in my Castle, for I have no childe but only her, and if thou keepe her well, thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour. Then said she: as far forth as I can or may I shall fulfill your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he tooke her downe off the tree, and led her home to his Castle, and gave her the keeping of his Daughter that he loved so much, and she was cherished so well, that she lay every night in the Emperors chamber, & his daughter with her: and in the chamber every night there burned a lamp, which hanged betwixen the Emperors bed and the Emperors bed. This Lady behaved her selfe so gently, that she was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the Emperors house, a Steward which much loved this Emperesse, and often spake to her of his love. But she answered him againe & said: Know ye deare friend for a certainty,

that

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that I will never love any man in such manner wise, but only him whom I am greatly bounden to love by Gods Commandement.

Then said the Steward: Thou wilt not then consent unto me. Sir, quoth shee, what need you any more to aske such things? The vow that I have made, I will truly keepe and hold by the grace of God.

And when the Steward heard this, hee went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himselfe, if I may I shall be rebenged on thee.

It befell upon a night within short time after, that the Charles Chamber doore was forgotten and left unshut, which the Steward had anon perceived: And when they were all asleepe, hee went and spyed by the light of the Lamp, where the Emperesse and the young Hayden lay together, and with that hee drew out his knife, and cut the throat of the Charles daughter, and put the bloody knife into the Emperesses hand, she being asleepe, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent that when the Carle awaked he should see the knife in her hand, and that hee should think that shee had cut his Daughters throat, and so shee should be put

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put to a shamefull death for his mischievous deed. And when the Damosell was thus slaine, and the bloudy knife in the Emperesse hand, the Countesse awaked out of her sleepe, and saw by the light of the Lamp, the bloudy knife in the Emperesses hand, wherefore shee was almost out of her wits, and said to the Carle: O my Lord, behold in yonder Ladies hand a wonderfull thing.

Anon the Carle awaked and looked toward the Emperesses bed, and saw the bloudy knife, as the Countesse had said: wherefore hee was greatly moved, and cried to her and said: Awake woman out of thy sleepe, what thing is this that I see in thy hand? Then the Emperesse through his cry awaked out of her sleepe, and in her waking the knife fell out of her hand, and with that shee looked by her, and found the Carles daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with blood, wherefore with an high voyce shee cryed, and said: Alas, alas, and woe is mee, my Lords daughter is slaine.

Then cryed the Countesse unto the Carle with a pitious voice, and said: O my Lord, let this devillish woman be put to the foulest death that can bee thought,
which

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Which thus hath slaine our only childe.

Then when the Countesse had said thus to the Earle, hee said to the Emperesse in this wise. The high God knoweth that thou mischievous woman hast slaine my Daughter with thine owne hands, for I saw the bloody knife in thy hand, and therefore thou shalt die a foule death. Then said the Earle in this wise: O thou woman, were it not I dread God greatly, I should cleave thy body with my sword in two parts, for I delibered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slaine my daughter, nevertheless for mee thou shalt have no harme, therefore goe thy way out of this Citie without any delay, for if I find thee here after this day, thou shalt die a most cruell death.

Then arose this wofull Emperesse and did on her cloathes, and after leapt on her Walfray, and rode toward the Cast alone without any safe conduct. And as shee rode thus mourning by the way, shee espied on the left side of the way, a paire of Gallowes, and seaven Officers leading a man to the Gallowes to be hanged, wherefore shee was moved with great pittie, and smote her Horse with her stick, and rode to them, praying them that shee might redeeme

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déme that misdoer if hee might be sáved from death by any meanes.

Then said they, Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redéme him. Anon the Empreſſe accorded with them, and payed his ransom, and he was delivered.

Then said shee to him : Now my good friend, be true unto me till thou die, although I have delivered thee from death.

On my soule (quoth he) I promise you ever to be true. And when hee had thus said, hee followed the Lady still, till they came nigh a Citie, and then said the Empreſſe to him : Good friend, quoth shee, goe forth thy way afore me into the Citie, and see thou take up for us an honest lodging, for there I purpose to rest a while. Her man went forth as shee commanded, and tooke up for her a good lodging, and an honest, where she abode a long time. When the men of the Citie perceived her beauty, they wondzed greatly, wherefore many of them craved of her unlatowfull love, but all was in vaine, for they might not speed in any wise. It fortunéd after upon a day, that there came a ship full of merchandise, and arrivéd in the Haven of that Citie. When the Lady heard this, shee said unto her servant: Goe to the ship and see if there
be

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be any Cloath for my use. Her servant went forth to the Ship, whereas he found many very fine cloathes: wherefore hee prayed the Master of the Ship that he would come into the Citie and speake with his Lady. The Master granted him, and so the servant came home to his Lady before, and warned her of the coming of the Master of the Ship. Soone after the Master of the Ship came and saluted the Lady courteously: the Lady received him according to his degree, praying him that shee might have for her many such Cloath as might be profitable for her wearing. When he granted that she should have any that liked her, and soone they were agreed, wherefore the servant went immediatly againe with the Master of the Ship for the Cloath. And when they were both within on shipboard, the Master said to the Ladies Servant: My deare friend, to thee I would open my counsell if I might trust to thee, and if thou helpe me, thou shalt have of me a great reward.

Then answered hee and said: I shall (quoth hee) be sworne to thee to keepe thy counsell, and fulfill thy intent as far forth as I can.

Then said the Master of the Ship, I love thee

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thy Lady more than I can tell thee, for her beauty and feature is so excellent, that I would give for the love of her all, the gold that I have: and if I may obtaine the love of her through thy help, I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt desire of me.

Then said the Ladies servant: tell me by what meanes I may best help thee. Then said the Master of the Ship, Goe home to thy Lady againe, and tell her that I will not deliver to thee the Cloath, except she come her selfe: and doe thou but bring her to my Ship, and if the wind be good and fit, then I purpose to leade her away. Thy counsell is good, quoth the Ladies servant, therefore give mee some reward, and I shall fulfill thy desire.

Now when he had received his reward, he went againe to his Lady, and told her, that by no meanes the Master of the Ship would deliver him the Cloath except she came her selfe. The Lady belov'd her servant and went to the Ship. Now when she was within the Shipboard, her servant abode without.

When the Master saw that shee was within the Ship, and the wind was good, he drew up the sayle and sayled forth.

When the Lady perceived this, thus
she

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Shee said to the Master: O Master (quoth
 shee) what reason is this that thou hast
 done to mee? The Master answered, and
 said: Madame, certainly it is so, that I
 must needs lye with thee, and afterward
 espouse thee. O good sir, quoth shee, I have
 made a vow that I shall never commit
 such sinne but with him unto whom I am
 bound by right and by the Law. Soothly
 quoth hee, if ye will not grant mee with
 your good will, I will cast you out into the
 midst of the sea, and there shall ye die an
 evill death: if it be so, quoth shee, that I
 must needs consent or else die; first I pray
 thee to prepare a private place in the end
 of the Ship, whereas I may fulfill thine
 intent ere I die, and also I pray thee
 that I may say my prayers unto the fa-
 ther of heaven, that hee may have mercy
 on me.

The Master belov'd her, wherefore
 hee did ordaine her a Cabbin in the end of
 the Ship. Wherein she kneeled downe on
 both her knees and made her prayers, say-
 ing on this wise: O thou my Lord God,
 thou hast kept me from my peevish in clean-
 nesse, keepe mee now that I be not beset-
 ted, so that I may serve thee ever with
 a cleane heart and mind, and let not this
 wicked

wicked man prevaile with mee, no2 any
 other the like wickednesse come nigh mee.
 When thee had ended her prayers, there
 arose suddenly a great tempest in the Sea,
 so that the Ship all to brast, and all that
 were therein perished save the Lady, and
 she caught a Cable and saved her selfe, and
 the Master caught a boord of the Ship, and
 saved himselfe likewise: neverthelesse the
 knew not of him, no2 hee of her, for they
 were driven to divers coasts. This Lady
 landed in her owne Empire, neare to a rich
 Citie, wherein she was honourably recei-
 ved, and thee lived so holy a life, that God
 gave her grace and power to heale sick
 folk of all manner of diseases, wherefore
 there came much people to her, both crooked,
 blinde, and lame, and every man through
 the grace of God and her good endeavour
 was healed: wherefore her name was
 knowne through divers Regions. Never-
 thelesse thee was not knowne as the Em-
 presse. At the same time the Emperours
 brother (that had hanged her before by the
 haire) was smitten with a foule Leprosie.
 The knight that slew the Carles daugh-
 ter, and put the bloody knife in her hand,
 was blinde, deafe, and had the Palsie. The
 These that betrayed her unto the Master

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of the Ship was lame and full of the cramp,
And the Master of the Ship distraught out
of his wits.

When the Emperour heard that so holy
a woman was in that Citie, hee called his
brother, and said to him thus: Goe wee,
deare brother, unto this holy woman that
is dwelling in this Citie, that shee may
heale thee of thy Leprosie. Would to God,
O noble brother (quoth hee) that I were
healed. Anon the Emperour with his bro-
ther went towards the Citie. Then when
the Citizens heard of his comming, they
receiued him honourably with procession,
and all provision fitting his estate. And
then the Emperour enquired of the Citi-
zens, if any such holy woman were among
the that could heale sick folk of their disease.
The Citizens answered and said, that such
an one there was. Now at the same time
was come to the same Citie the Knight
which slew the Carles daughter, and the
Whore which she saved from the gallows,
and the Master of the Ship, to be healed of
their diseases.

Then was the Empresse called forth,
before the Emperour, but shee muffled her
face as well as shee could, that the Empe-
rour her Husband should not know her,
and

and when shee had so done, shee saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state, and he againe in like manner, saying thus: O good Lady, if thou wilt of thy kinnesse to heale my brother of his Leprosie, ask of me what thou wilt, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward.

When the Emperesse heard this, she looked about her, and saw there the Emperours brother a foule Leper: shee saw there also the Knight that slew the Carles daughter blind and deafe, the Thiefe that shee saved from the Gallows lame, and also the Master of the Ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her for to be healed of their maladies, & knew her not, but though they knew her not, shee knew them well. Then said shee unto the Emperour thus: My reuerend Lord, though you would give mee all your Empire I cannot heale your brother nor none of these other, except they acknowledge openly what great evill they have done.

When the Emperour heard this, hee turned him towards his brother, and said unto him: Brother, acknowledge openly thy sinne before all these men, that thou mayst bee healed of thy sicknesse. When anon hee began to tell how hee had led his

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life, but hee told not how he had hanged the Emperesse in the Forrest by the haire of the head, most dispightfully.

When hee had acknowledged all that him list, the Emperesse replied, and said: Sweetly my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vaine, for hee hath not made a full confession.

The Emperour hearing this, he turned toward his brother, and said in this wise: What evill, sorrow or other unhappy wretchednesse is in thee, seest thou not how that thou art a soule Leper: therfore knowledg thy sin truly, that thou mayest be whole, or else aboid my company for evermore.

Ah my Lord, quoth hee, I may not tell my life, openly, except I be first sure of thy grace. What, hast thou trespassed against me, quoth the Emperour: When answered his brother, and said. Mine offence against thee is grievous, and therefore I ask thee heartily forgiveness. The Emperour thought not on the Emperesse, for as much as hee supposed shee had bene dead many yeares before, therefore hee commanded his brother to tell forth wherein hee had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

When the Emperour had thus forgiven
his

his brother, he began to tell openly how hee had desired the Emperesse to commit adultery with her, and because shee denied, hee had hanged her by the haire in the Forrest on such a day.

When the Emperoz heard this, he was almost beside himselfe, and in his rage hee said thus: O thou wretched creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee, and were it not that I have pardoned thee, thou shouldst die the most shamefull death that could be thought.

Then said the Knight that slew the Charles Daughter: I wot not, quoth hee, what Lady you meane, but I wot that my Lord found on a time such a Lady hanging by the haire in the Forrest, and brought her home to his Castle, and hee tooke her his daughter to keepe, and I provoked her as much as I could to sinne with mee, but she would in no wise consent to me, wherefore I slew the Charles daughter that lay with her, and when I had so done, I put the bloudy knife in the Ladies hand, that the Carle should think shee had slaine his daughter with her own hand, and then was shee exiled thence, but where shee became I wot not.

Then said the Thiefe: I wot not of what

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What Lady y^e meane, but well I wot that seaven Officers were leading mee to the Gallies, and such a Lady came riding by and bought mee of them, and then went I with her, and afterward I betrayed her unto the Master of the Ship.

Such a Lady (quoth the Master of the Ship) receiued I, and when wee were in the midst of the Sea, I would haue laine with her, but she kneeled down to her pray-ers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the Ship all to brast, and all therein were drowned save she and I, but afterward what befell of her I wot not.

Then cryed the Emperesse with a loud voyce, and said, Soothly deare friends, y^e doe now truely confesse and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine, and anon they receiued their healths.

When this Lady the Emperesse had thus done, shee uncovered her face to the Emperour, and he forthwith knew her, and ranne to her and embraced her in his armes, and kissed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly, saying: Blessed be God, now I haue found that I desired. And when hee had thus said, hee led her home to the Palace with great ioy. and after when it pleased

pleased Almighty God, they ended both their liues in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Iesus Christ. The Emperesse betokeneth a holy Soule: This Emperours brother betokeneth the flesh, to whom our Lord hath giben charge of the Empire, but most principally to the Soule: Neuerthelesse, the wretched flesh oft prouoketh the Soule to sinne, but the Soule that loveth God above all things, withstandeth that temptation, calleth to her, her ghosly power, that is, Reason, will, understanding, and conscience, and maketh them to imprison the flesh that is disobedient to the Soule, in the prison of true repentance, unto the time hee obey to reason in all things.

And thus in hope of mercie hee sinneth againe: to whom the holy Writter saith: Cursed be that man that sinneth in hope: And at the last the Soule enclineth to the flesh, and letteth him out of the prison of repentance, and washeth him from the filth of sinne, and arrayeth him with good vertues, and maketh him leape on the Palfray

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fray of charitable humilitie, and so rideeth forth to meete our Lord with the sacrifice of thanks-giving. But alas, full oft the sinner trespasseth against holy Scripture, wherefore the heart, that is, the lust of the flesh ariseth before him, and after runneth great Hounds, that is, evil thoughts, and so long they chase, till the body and the Soule be left alone, and then the flesh stirreth that pure soule, being the spouse of Almighty God: But the pure and undefiled soule that is so well beloved with God, will not forsake our Lord, and consent to sinne: wherefore the wretched flesh full oft dispoyleth her of all her clothing, that is, of all her vertues, and hangeth her up by the haire on an Oake, that is, on lusts and delights, and there shee hangeth till the good Carle cometh, that is, a discret Preacher in the Forrest of this world to preach and teach the word of God: then he taketh her downe and leadeth her forth to the Church, to nourish his Daughter, that is, to nourish conscience with fruitfull Faith. The Carle had in his Chamber a Lamp: right so every discret Preacher should have before him the Lamp of holy Scripture, whereby hee may see both the grievance and profit of
the

the Soule in learning of vertues, and putting away of vice. The Steward that stirreth her to sinne, is nought else but pride of life, which is Steward of this world, by whom many men be deceived. But when the Soule that is so well beloved with Christ, will not consent unto the sinne of pride, then taketh this evill Steward the knife of Cobetise, wherewith hee slayeth the Carles daughter, that is, Conscience, according to Scripture, saying: Gold and silver hath blinded the eyes of Iudges, and hath overthrowne wise men, so that equitie and righteousnesse might not enter, but stood a farre, and turned their backs. This Lady also redeemed a man from death, that is, from everlasting death, which he had deserved by deadly sinne: Therefore doe wee as did this Lady, smite wee our horse, that is, our flesh, with the spurres of repentance, and so ride wee forth in all hast to save our neighbour from the sink of deadly sinne, to help him both bodily and Ghostly, as Solomon saith.

Woe bee to that man lying in deadly sinne, that hath no man to lift him out thereof. Therefore awake thy neighbour and help him. For a brother that is hol-

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pen of another, is like a sure Citie, and if hee give but a cup of cold water in the way of help, he shall not lose his reward. 1

But many now a dayes be very unkind, as was the Thiefe which deceived this Lady, after that she had saved him from hanging. The Master of the Ship betokeneth the World, by whom many men be deceived. But neverthelesse, as oft as a Man taketh on him voluntarily the charge of Charity, and obeyeth unto the commandment of God, and forsaketh the world, then breaketh he the Ship. For it is impossible to please God and man, and the world, all at one time.

When this Lady had escaped the tempest of the Sea, she went to a Citie, that is, the Soule, after the troubles of this world, went to the holy life, and there shee healed all manner of sick folk, that is, every man that is troubled in his soule, that is infected with divers sicknesses, those this Lady healed through holy life.

But they could not be healed till they had first confessed their sinnes unto the Emperesse the Church of God, and then she healeth them by repentance and amendment of life: yet all this while was the Emperesse unknowne to her husband, that
is,

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is, the Church wandzeth in the wilbernesse of this wicked world, untill God by miraculous meanes made her known unto him, and so led her home by victoꝝ and triumph in the truth unto the heavenly habitation of eternall rest and gloꝝ, unto the which, Almighty God bzing us all foꝝ his Donnes sake. Amen.

The Argument.

Every supream Magistrate and other inferiour, is to be honoured and revered. Every true Christian man ought to consider his duty hercin, and every false Christian perverting the wayes of the Godly, the reward of such is layd up in hell. But the just shall inherit the blessed life everlasting.

The 41. Historie.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mightie Emperour named Martin, which foꝝ intire affection kept with him, his brothers Sonne, whom men called Fulgentius. With this Martin dwelt also a Knight that was Steward of the Empire, and Uncle unto the Emperour, which envied this Fulgentius, studying day and night how hee might bzing the Emperour and this

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this youth at debate. Wherefore the Steward on a day went to the Emperour, and said: My Lord, quoth hee, I that am your true servant, am bound in duty to warne your Highnesse, if I heare any thing that toucheth your Honour, wherefore I have such things that I must needs utter it in secret to your Majestie betwæne us two: Then said the Emperour, Good friend, say on what thee list.

My most deare Lord (quoth the Steward) Fulgentius your Cousin, and your nigh kinsman hath defamed you wonderfully and shamefully throughtout all your Empire, saying, that your breath stinketh, and that it is death to him to serve you of your Cup. Then the Emperour was grievously displeased, and almost beside himselfe for anger, and said unto him thus: I pray thee my good friend tell me the very truth, if that my breath stinketh as he saith. My Lord (quoth the Steward) yæ may believe mee, I never perceived a sweeter breath in my dayes than yours is. Then said the Emperour, I pray thee good friend tell me how I may bring this thing to good proofe.

The Steward answered, and said: My Lord (quoth hee) yæ shall right well understand

derstand the truth , for to morrow next
when he serbeth you of your Cup , yee shall
see that hee will turne away his face from
you, because of your breath, and this is the
most certaine pꝛoofe that may bee had of
this thing. Merely, quoth the Emperour,
a truer pꝛoofe cannot be had of this thing.
Wherefore anon when the Steward heard
this, hee went straight to Fulgentius, and
tooke him aside , saying thus : Deare
Friend , thou art neare kinsman, and al-
so Nephew unto my Lord the Emperour,
therefore if thou wilt bee thankfull unto
me, I will tell thee of the vice whereof my
Lord the Emperour complaineth oft, and
thinketh to put thee from him (except it
bee the sooner amended) and that might
bee a greater reproofe to thee. Then said
this Fulgentius , Ah good sir , for his love
that died upon the Crosse, tell mee why my
Lord is so sore moved with mee , for I am
ready to amend my fault in all that I can
or may, and for to be ruled by your discreet
counsaille.

Thy breath (quoth the Steward) stink-
eth so sore , that his drinke doth him no
good , so grievous unto him is the stink-
ing breath of thy mouth. Then said Ful-
gentius unto the Steward : Truly, that
perceived

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perceiued I neuer till now, but what thinke you of my breath, I pray you to tell mee the very truth: Truly (quoth the Steward) it stinketh greatly and foule: And this Fulgentius beleebed all that hee said, and was right sorrowfull in his minde, and prayed the Steward of his counsell, and help in this wofull case. Then said the Steward unto him, if that thou wilt doe my counsell, I shall bring this matter to a good conclusion, therefore doe as I shall tell thee.

I counsell thee for the best, and also warn thee, that when thou serbest my Lord the Emperour of his Cup, that thou turne thy face away from him, so that hee may not feele thy stinking breath, unto the time that thou hast provided thee of some reme- dy therefore.

Then was Fulgentius right glad, and sware to him that hee would doe by his counsaile.

Not long after, it befell that this young man Fulgentius serbed his Lord as hee was wont to doe, and therewith suddainly hee turned his face from his Lord the Emperour as the Steward had taught him.

And when the Emperour perceiued the

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the aboyding of his head, he smote this young Fulgentius on the breast with his foot, and said to him thus: O thou lewd Warlet, now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore goe thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and aboyded the place, and went out of his sight.

And when this was done, the Emperour called unto him his Steward, and said: How may I rid this Warlet from the World, that thus hath defamed me? My most deare Lord, quoth the Steward, right well you shall have your intent.

For here beside, within these three miles ye have Brick-makers, which daily make great fires for to burne Brick, and also they make Lime, therefore my Lord send to them this night, charge them upon paine of death, that whosoever commeth to them first in the Morning, saying to them thus: My Lord commandeth you to fulfill his will, that they take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burne him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he goe early in the morning, to your Work-men, and that hee
aske

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aske them whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not, and then shall they according to your commandement, cast him into the fire, and thus shall he die an evill death.

Surely, quoth the Emperour, the counsaile is good, therefore call to me that varlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the Emperours presence, he said to him thus: I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and goe to the burners of Lime and Brick, and that thou be with them early before the Sonne rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalfe that they fulfill my commandement, or else they shall die a most shamefull death.

Then spake this Fulgentius: My Lord, if G D D send mee my life, I shall fulfill your will, were it that I shall goe to the Worlds end.

When Fulgentius had this charge, hee could not sleepe for thought, that hee must arise early for to fulfill his Lords commandement. The Emperour about midnight sent a messenger on horse-back unto his Brick-makers, commanding them upon paine of death, that whoeuer came to them first in the morning, saying
unto

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unto them, (as before is rehearsed) they should take him, and binde him, and cast him into the fire, and burne him to the bare bones.

The Brick-makers answered, and said, it should be done. Then the messenger returned home againe, and told the Emperour that his commandement should be diligently fulfilled.

Early in the morning following Fulgentius arose, and prepared him towards his way, and as hee went he heard a Bell ring to Service, wherefoze hee went to heare Service, and after the end of Service, hee fell asleepe, and there he slept a long while, so that the Priest nor none other might awake him.

The Steward desiring inwardly to heare of his death, about one of the clock he went unto the Work-men, and said unto them thus: Sirs, quoth he, have ye done the Emperours commandement or no?

The Brick-makers answered him, and said: Nay truly, we have not yet done his commandement, but it shall be done, and with that they laid hands on him. Then cryed the Steward, and said: Good sir save my life, for the Emperour commanded that Fulgentius should be put to death.

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Then

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Then said they, the messenger told us not so, but he bad us that whosoever came first to us in the morning, saying as you have said, that we should take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burne him to ashes: and with that they threwe him into the fire.

And when hee was burnt, Fulgentius came to them, and said: Good sirs, have you done my Lords commandement, yea sothly said they, and therefore goe you againe to the Emperour, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius, for Christs love tell mee that commandement.

What had in commandement, said they, upon paine of death, that whosoever came to us first in the morning, and said like as thou hast said, that we should take him and cast him into the Furnace: But before that, came the Steward, and therefore have we fulfilled on him the Emperours commandement, and now hee is burnt to the bare bones.

When Fulgentius heard this, he thanked God that hee had so preserved him from death, therfore he took his leabe of the workmen, and went againe to the Wallace.

When the Emperour saw him, hee was almost distract of his wits for anger, and thus hee said: Hast thou bene with the
Wick.

Whickmakers and fulfilled my comman-
dement? Soothly my gracious Lord, I
have beene there, but oz I came there, your
commandement was fulfilled. How may
that be true quoth the Emperour?

Fozsooth said Fulgentius, the Steward
came to them afoze mee, and said that I
should have said, so they took him and threw
him into the Furnace, and if I had come
any rather, so would they have done to me,
and therefore I thank God that hath pre-
served me from death.

Then said the Emperour, tell me the
truth of such questions as I shall demand
of thee. Then said Fulgentius to the Em-
perour: you never found in mee any false-
hood, and therefore I greatly wonder why
ye have ordained such a death for me: foz
well yee know that I am your owne Bro-
thers sonne. Then said the Emperour to
Fulgentius: It is no wonder, foz that death
I ordained to thee thzough counsell of the
Steward, because thou didst defame mee
thzoughout all my Empire, saying, that
my breath did stinke so grievously, that it
was death to thee: and in token thereof,
thou turnedst away thy face when thou
serbedst me at my Cuppe, and that I saw
with mine eyes: and foz this cause I oz-

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dained for thee such a death, and yet thou shalt die, except I heare a better excuse.

Then answered Fulgentius, and said, My beare Lord, if it might please your Highnesse for to heare mee, I shall shew you a subtil and deceitfull imagination. Say on quoth the Emperour.

The Steward (quoth Fulgentius) that now is dead, came to me and said, that you told unto him that my breath did stink, and thereupon hee counsailed mee, that when I serbed you of your Cup, I should turn away my face: I take God to witnesse I lie not.

When the Emperour heard this, he beloued him, and said: O my Nephew, now I see through the right wise judgement of God the Steward is burnt, and his owne wickednesse and envie is fallen on himselfe, for hee ordained this malice against thee, and therefore thou art much bound to Almighty God that hath preserved thee from death.

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Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth every supream Magistrate. And Fulgentius his Nephew betokeneth every true Christian man, which should truly serbe them with faithfull loyalty, like as Fulgentius

rius serbed the Emperoz at his Cup, wherefore he shall be greatly lobed of God. This Steward betokeneth ebery false Christian man, as Kain, which oftentimes turneth the heart of right wise men from God, saying that his breath stinketh, that is, that the life of the Magistrate is not acceptable to God or man, which is against the Scripture, which saith, Iudge not, and ye shall not be judged. But oftentimes such malicious people accuse righteous men, wherefore they shall be cast into the everlasting fire of hell, where is wailing, weeping, and miserie without end. But the righteous shall ascend to everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Tyrants and ungodly persons walk without knowledge of the truth, till they come to the Church of God: the wicked persecute the godly, but as they are preserved by the mighty providence of God, so wee ought not to sleepe in sinne. A figurative speech of three severall meanings, *viz.* Take, Yeeld, and Flee, the signification thereof,

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The 42. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Delphinus, which had no childzen save onely a daughter, which was a faire creature, and well beloved of her Father.

As this Emperour rode on a day on hunting in the Forrest, suddenly he rode out of his way, and lost his men, wherefore he was greatly discomforted, for hee wist not whither he rode, nor in what place hee was, till at last when hee had thus ridden all the day alone, in the evening he saw a house, and thither he rode a great pace, and knocked at the gate, immediatly the goodman of the house heard him, and asked the cause of his knocking, and what he would have? Deare friend, quoth the Emperour, loo it is night as ye may see, therefore I desire you of lodging for the love of God.

When hee had thus said, the good man of the house, unware that he was the Emperour, answered and said: Good friend, quoth he, I am the Emperours Foster, and have plenty of Menison, and other victuall for you. When the Emperour heard this he was right glad in his mind, nevertheles
hee

he told him not that he was the Emperour. Then the Foster opened the gate, and received him as kindly as hee could, and set him to supper, and serbed him worthily. And when hee had supped, the Foster brought him to his Chamber, and when time was he went to bed.

In the same night it befell that the Fosters wife did travell with child in another Chamber hard by, and was delivered the same night of a goodly son. And as the Emperour lay in his bed, sleeping, him seemed hee heard a boyce saying to him thrice, these words, Take, take, take. And with that hee awoke, and marvelled greatly what it might be, saying to himselfe thus: a boyce biddeth mee take, take, take, What shall I take? And immediatly hee fell a sleep againe.

And the second time he heard a boyce, saying unto him these words, Yeeld, yeeld, yeeld. And with that he awaked againe, and wondred greatly, saying unto himselfe: What may this signifie? First I heard a boyce that said, Take, take, take, and nothing I received: And right now I heard another boyce that said, Yeeld, yeeld, yeeld: What should I yeeld?

And as he lay thus thinking to him-

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selfe, hee tell a flæpe againe. And then hee heard the third voyce, saying these words thrice: Flee, flee, flee, for this night is a childe borne, that after thy decease shall be Emperor. When the Emperour heard this, he wakened, and wondered greatly what it might be.

In the morning following, the Emperour called to him the Foster, and said; Deare friend, I pray thee tell mee if any Childe be borne hereabout this night to thy knowledge. My wife, quoth the Foster, this night is delivered of a Sonne. I pray thee, said the Emperour, shew mee thy Sonne. When the Emperour had seene the Child, he saw a mark in the Childs visage, where by hee might know him another time, and then he said to the Foster thus:

Deare friend, knowest thou who I am? Nay soothly, quoth the Foster, for I neuer saw you befoze this time, as farre as I can remember, neverthelesse it seemeth that you be a Gentleman. Then answered the Emperour, and said, I am the Emperour your Lord, whom you have lodged this night: wherefore I give thee hearty thanks, This hearing the Foster, he fell downe upon both his knees at his feet, and besought him mercie, if that hee had of-
fended

ferred his Highnesse in any thing. Then answered the Emperour, and said, be thou nothing afraid, for I thank thee heartily for thy good cheare, and thy Sonne that was borne to night, I will have to bring up in my Court, and shortly I will send for him.

O my gracious Lord, quoth the Foster, it is not fit that such a noble Emperour should nourish the Child of his subject and servant, nevertheless your will be fulfilled, and when your messengers come, I shall deliver them my Sonne.

Then the Emperour took his leave and rode home to his Pallace. And shortly after he was come home, he called unto him such servants as he trusted best, and said to them thus: Goe ye, quoth he, unto my Foster, with whom I was lodged such a night in the Forrest, and receive of him his Sonne of which his wife was delivered that night, and upon paine of death, I command you that you slay him by the way, and cast his flesh to the dogs, but bring with you the heart to mee; and except ye fulfill my commandement, ye shall die the most foulest death that can be thought. Anon his servants went to the Forrest, and received the Fosters sonne, and brought him with them, and when they were come nere
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unto the Pallace, one of them said: How shall we do, that we may fulfill our Lords commandement in slaying of this Child? Some answered, and said, that the Child should be slaine, and some would have his life saved, and while they were thus striding among themselves, one of them, that was most mercifull, said unto the rest: O my good loving friends, heare my counsell, I beseech you, and ye shall not repent you thereof. If you murder this innocent Child, wee shall greatly offend Almighty God: and behold hereby are young Pigges, kill wee one of them, and then may we take with us his heart, and present it unto the Emperour, saying that it is the heart of the young Child. Then said they, thy counsell is good: but what shall wee do with the Child? Good friends, (quoth he) let us wrap him in some cloths, and lay him in some hallow tree, for peradventure God will help him, and save his life. When he had thus said, they did after his counsell in all things, and killed a Pigge, and went their way and carried home with them the Pigges heart to the Emperour, saying unto him thus, Loe, gracious Lord, wee have destroyed the Child as ye commanded us, and with that they

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they shewed him the Pigs heart. The Emperour supposing it had beene the Childs heart, took it and cast it into the fire, despightfully saying: Loe, there is the heart of him which should have bene Emperour after mee, Los what it is to beleeve in dreames, which bee but fantasies and vaine things.

The same day after the Child was put into the hollow tree, there came an Earle to hunt in the Forrest, and as his Hounds chased an Hart, they came to the hollow tree where the child lay, and when they felt the savour of the child they would go no further. The Earle seeing this, marvelled why the Hounds abode there, and smote his Horse with his sparrowes, hee rode a great pace till hee came into them, And when hee came to the tree wherein the Child was laid, he looked in at a hole, and saw there the child lying, and then hee was right glad, and tooke the Child up in his armes full lovingly, and bare it home unto his Castle, saying unto the Countesse his wife: Loe my deare Wife, this day by fortune I have found a very faire child in an hollow tree as I hunted in the Forrest, whereof I am right glad: And because thou never yet concei-

bedde

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Wedd a childe, therefore I exhorte thee that thou wilt saue thy selfe to travell with childe, and say that thou hast borne this childe. The Countesse fulfilled gladly the Carles desire, and said: My most beare Lord, your willing this thing shall be done.

Not long after this, news went throughout all the Country, that the Countesse was delivered of a faire Son, wherefore every man rejoyced much.

The Childe began to grow, and was well beloved of every man, and especially of the Carle and the Countesse. It befell when the childe was sixtene yeares of age, the Emperour made a solemne feast unto all the Lords of his Empire, unto the which feast this Carle was called, who at the day assigned, came and brought this Sonne with him, which was at that time a faire young Squire, and hee carbed at the boord before the Carle. The Emperour stedfastly beheld him, and espied the token in his forehead which hee had sene before in the fosters house, wherewith hee was greatly moved within himselfe, and said unto the Carle in this manner. Whose Sonne is this? Certes said the Carle, hee is my Sonne. Then said the Emperour. By the faith that thou owest
to

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to mee , tell mee the truth.

The Earle seeing that hee might not excuse himselfe , but that needs hee must tell him the truth , told how hee found him in a hollow Tree. This hearing, the Emperour hee was almost distract of his wits for anger , and called to him his servants, which hee had sent before to destroy the Child. And when they came before him, hee made them to sweare, that they should tell him the truth, what they had done with the Child.

Gracious Lord, said they, wee yeld us unto your grace and goodnesse , for pittie so moved us , that wee might not destroy him , but wee put him in a hollow Tree : what befell of him afterward , certainly wee know not, and in his stead wee killed a Pigge, and brought the heart thereof unto you.

When the Emperour had heard the truth of the matter, he said unto the Earle. This young man (quoth he) shall abide with me: the Earle immediatly granted , though it was greatly against his will.

When the Feast was ended, every man tooke his leade of the Emperour , and went whereas they list. And at that time it fortun'd , that the Emperesse and her
daughter

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daughter sojourned in another Countrey farre from thence, by the commandement of the Emperour. It befell not long after the Emperour said unto his young Squire, it behoveth thee to ride unto the Emperesse my wife with my Letters. I am ready at your commandement my Lord, said he, to fulfill your desire. Immediately the Emperour wrote Letters, the intent whereof was this. That the Emperesse should take the bearer of these Letters, and let him bee drawne at the horse taile, and after that shee should let him bee hanged till hee were dead, and that on paine of death. When the Letters were all sealed the Emperour took them unto the young Squire, commanding him to speede him on his journey. And straight way the young Squire put them close into a booke, and rode forth on his journey. When hee had ridden three or foure dayes on his journey, in an evening hee came to a Castle where dwelt a knight and gently desired of him a nights lodging.

The knight beholding the sweet favour of the young Squire, made him good chære, and afterward brought him into his chamber and when he was there, he went to bed: and immediatly fell asleep, for hee was full

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fall weary of his journey, and forgot his box with the Letters lying openly in his chamber.

When the Knight saw the box, hee opened it, and found the Letters sealed with the Emperours signe manuell, and was greatly tempted to open them, and at the last hee opened them neatly, and then read how the Empresse upon pain of death should put the bearer of them to death, and then hee was right sorrowfull, and said within himselfe: Alas (quoth he) it is great pittie to lay so faire & proper a man, and immediatly after the Knight raced out that writing, and wrote in the same place these words following. Upon paine of death I command thee, that thou take this young Squire, bearer of these Letters, and let him be wedded without delay unto my Daughter and yours, with all the honour and solemnity that can bee thought, and when they be married that ye make as much account of him, as if hee were your owne son, and that he supply my roome till I come unto you my selfe.

When the Knight had thus written, he closed the Letters neatly, and put them into the box againe. Early in the morning the young knight arose, and very hastily

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hastily made him ready, and took his leave of the Knight, and rode forth on his journey, and the third day after hee came unto the Emperesse, and saluted her dutifully in the Emperours behalfe, and gave her the Letters. When the Emperesse had read them, anon shee sent forth her messengers through the Countrey, commanding the States and Gentlemen to come unto her Daughters wedding at a day assigned.

When the day was come, thither came many great Lords and Ladies, and anon the young Squire espoused the Emperours daughter, with great honour, according to the tenour of the Letters, and was much honoured among the people.

Not long after it befell, that the Emperour came into that Country, and when the Emperesse heard of his comming, shee tooke with her her Sonne in law, with much other people, and went to welcome the Emperour. When the Emperour saw this young Squire leading the Lady his wife, hee was greatly moved within himselfe, and said: O thou cursed woman, because thou hast not fulfilled my commandment, thou shalt die an evill death.

O my deare Lord (quoth shee) all that you commanded me to doe I have fulfilled.

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That cursed woman said the Emperour, it is not so, For I wrote to thee that thou shouldst put him to death, & yet he is alive. My Lord, quoth the Emperesse, you wrote to me that I should give him your daughter to wife, and that on paine of death, in witness whereof loe here your Letters sealed with your owne seale manuell.

When the Emperour saw this, he wondered greatly and said. As he then espoused to my daughter? Yes surely said the Emperesse long ago, with great solemnity, and as I perceiue your daughter is with child. Then said the Emperour: O Lord Iesu, it is great folly to strive against thine ordinance, therefore sith it is so, thy will must needs bee fulfilled. And with that hee took his sonne in law in his armes, and kissed him, which after his death was Emperour, and ended his life in rest and peace.

The Morall.

This Emperour may betoken Herod, who would haue slaine the child Iesu, wherefore he sent messengers to seeke him, according to the Scripture, shewing how he commanded thre Kings to seeke him, and bring him tidings againe where hee was, that he might come and worship him also,

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The Foster betokeneth Ioseph, our Ladies husband, which kept him: but when the three Kings came they knew him not, but worshipped him on their knees, and left him in the hollow tree of his Godhead. The Carle that found this child, betokeneth the holy Ghost which warned Ioseph by the Angell in his sleep, that he should take our Lady and her Sonne and flee into Egypt.

By the first take, may be understood the great benefit that he gave thee when hee gave thee a Soule made to his owne similitude. By the second take, is understood the sonne of God, which was borne of the blessed Virgin Mary. By the third take, is understood the same sonne of God which dyed upon the Crosse.

By the first yeeld, is understood that we ought to yeeld our soule unto Almighty God, as cleane as he gave it us after our regeneration in Baptisme. By the second yeeld, that we ought to yeeld honour, worship, and love unto Almighty God, and man. By the third yeeld, that we ought to yeeld to God true confession of faith, contrition of heart, and amendment of life. The first Aec, betokeneth sinne, which we should flee. The second Aec,

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flee, betokeneth the world, which we should flee, for the great temptations that are therein. The third flee, betokeneth euerlasting paine, the which we ought to flee, through Faith, by the which we may come to euerlasting blisse: unto the which bzing us our Lord Iesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of man being ravished by the tyranny of sinne, shee complaineth unto Christ, which heareth her. The Tyrant is overcome by Christ, who espouseth her unto him, preparing a place of perpetuall joy for her. Christ receiveth the patient sinner to his mercy by his death and passion.

The 43. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Sanctianus; which ordained a law, that whoe ver ravished a Virgin should die, and if she were rescued, then he that rescued her should have her to wife, if him list, and if he would not marry her, then she should be espoused by his appointment. It befell on a day that a Tyrant named Poncianus, led a Virgin into a Forrest and defouled her of her

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Mayden-head. And when hee had so done hee would have slaine her, and as he was disposing her of her cloaths, there came riding by the Forrest a gentle Knight, which heard the lamenting of the Damsell, wherefore hee rode a great pace into the Forrest to see what it might be. Now when hee came hee saw a woman standing all naked, save onely her smock, to whom the Knight spake: Art thou shee (said he) that cryed so lamentably? When answered the Damsell, Yea certainly, for this man that standeth here hath ravished mee, and deflowred me of my maydenhead, and now he would slay me, and therefore he hath disposed me of my cloaths: for the love of God, gentle Knight, help mee now. Then said the Tyrant, He lyeth, for shee is my wife, and I have found her in adultery with another man, therefore I will slay her. When said the Knight, I beleeve better the woman than thee, for loe, the tokens appeare openly in her visage, that thou hast ravished her, therefore will I fight with thee for her deliverance. And immediatly they buckled both together, and fought eagerly till they were both sore wounded. Nevertheless the Knight obtained the victory, & put the tyrant to flight.

Then

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Then said the knight unto the woman
Loe, I have suffered for thy love many
soze wounds, and have saved thee from
death, wilt thou therefore promise to bee
my wife? Thereto I assent quoth she, with
all my heart, and thereupon I plight thee
my troth. When they were thus ensured,
then said the knight as followeth.

Here beside is my Castle, go thither,
and abide there till I have provided all
things needfull for our wedding, for I
purpose to make a great feast thereat. My
Lord, quoth she, I am ready to fulfill your
will. When went she unto his Castle,
whereas she was worthily received: and
the knight went unto his friends, for to
bid them to the marriage. In the meane
while came Poncianus the Tyrant to the
knights Castle, and prayed her that hee
might speak with her. When came she
down from the Castle to him, and this Ty-
rant subtilly flattered her, and said: Gentle
Lobe, if it please you to consent to mee,
I shall give you both silver and gold and
great riches, and I shall be your servant,
and yee my soveraigne. When the wo-
man heard this, full lightly shee was decei-
ved through his flattering language, and
soone granted him to be his wife, and took
him

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him to her in the Castle.

Not long after the Knight came home and found the Castle gate shut, & knocked thereat, but long it was ere he might have answer. At the last the woman came and demanded why hee knocked at the gate. Then said hee to her : O sweet Lady why hast thou so soone changed thy love : let me come in. Nay surely, said shee, thou shalt not come here, for I have here with me my Love which I loved befoze. Remember quoth the Knight thou gavest mee thy troth to be my wife, and how I saved thee from death, and if thou ponder not thy faith, behold my wounds, which I have suffered in my body for thy love. And so he unclothed himselfe naked all save his hosen, that he might shew his wounds openly. But she would not see them nor speak moze with him, but shut fast the gate, & went her way. Now when the Knight saw this, hee went to the Justice and made his complaint to him, praying him to give right wise judgement on the Tyrant and the woman.

Then the Judge called them both before him, and when they were come, the Knight said thus : My Lord, quoth hee, I aske the benefit of the Law, which is this : If a man rescue a woman from ravishing

wishing, the rescuer shall marry her if him list, and this woman I delivered from the hands of the Tyrant, therefore I ought to have her to my wife : and furthermore she gave me her faith and troth to marry with me, and thereupon she went to my Castle, and I have bene at great cost against our wedding, and therefore as it seemeth mee, she is my wife by the Law. When said the Judge to the Tyrant, thou knowest well that this Knight delivered her from thy hand, and for her love hath suffered grievous wounds, and therefore will thou wotest that she is his wife by the Law, if that him list. But after her deliberance with flattering speech thou hast deceived her, therefore I iudge thee to be hanged.

When said the Judge to the Woman likewise : O woman, thou knowest how this Knight saved thee from death, and thereupon thou betrodest him thy faith and troth to bee his wife, therefore by two reasons thou art his wife : first, by the Law, and after by faith and troth. This notwithstanding, thou consentedst afterward to the Tyrant, and broughtest him into the Knights Castle, and shuttest the gate against the Knight, and wouldest not see his wounds which he suffered for thy love,

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and therefore I judge thee to be hanged also. And so it was done, both the ravisher and shee that was ravished, were condemned to death, wherefore every man prayled the Judge for his wise judgement.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven, which ordained a law that if the Soule of man were ravished from God, by sinne, the savor of the soule should espouse her, if him list. The woman that was ravished betokeneth the soule of man, which was ravished by the sinne of our fore-Father Adam, and let out of Paradise into the Forrest of this wretched World, by the Tyrant Poncianus, which betokeneth the Devil, and hee not onely defiled her, by lasing the heritage of heaven, but also hee would slay her with everlasting paine. But the soule cryeth with an high voyce, whose cry our Lord Jesus Christ heard. This cry was made when Adam cryed after the oyle of Mercy: and the Patriarkes and Prophets cryed for remedy, saying these words: O thou the highest in the East, vilit thou us, &c. The Knight betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which came from Heaven, and fought with the Tyrant,

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Tyrant, that is the Diuell, and both they were sore wounded. For our Lord Jesus Christ was wounded in the flesh, and the Diuell maimed in his Kingdome, wherefore the Woman, that is, the Soule, gave her faith and Troth unto Christ Jesus, when he became a Christian, saying these words: I forsake the Diuell and all his pride; and beleve in God the Father Almighty. Then ordained our Lord Jesus Christ a marriage betweene him and her, with the two speciall Sacraments of Baptisme and the Lords Supper, whereof may be made a strong Castle against the Diuel. Also our Lord commanded the soule to keep her still in the Castle of vertue, till hee went to provide that was needfull: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven to prepare for her a dwelling place of euerlasting joy, whereas we should dwell after the day of Iudgement with our Lord God in honour and glory.

But alas, in the meane time came the Diuell and beguiled the wretched soule by a deadly sinne, and so hee entred into the Castle of our heart, which should bee the Castle of God. The Knight Iesu knocked at the gate of our heart, according to the Scripture, Loe, I stand at the doore and knock,

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knock, if any man will open, that I may enter. But where the Diuell is, God doth not enter, except the sinner will receive him by repentance which seeing our Lord hanging on the Crosse, that we may see his bloody wounds which hee suffered for us, we sinners should be the rather mindfull of his love. For, from the crown of his head unto the sole of his feet, was left no whole place. Therefore saith the Prophet Esay, behold and see, if any sorrow be like to my sorrow. Therefore hee is a wretched man that will not bee converted unto his Lord God, but lieth still in deadly sinne, wherefore when hee is called before the high Judge, hee shall bee condemned to everlasting death. Therefore study wee to open the doores of our hearts by fruitfull faith in Almighty God, and then without doubt we shall obtaine everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Iesu Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

The Body and Soule of a man being made (by Gods grace) the Temple of the holy Ghost, do give themselves to serve and please God in this life, and to love God and their Neighbours according to his lawes : and though the body by death

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death suffer Mortall affliction for a time,
yet by Faith, Hope and Charity in Iesus
Christ, both body and soule shall inherit
life and joy everlasting.

The 44. History.

IT is read of a certaine Roman Empe-
rour, which erecting for himselfe a good-
ly monument or Tomb, as the Labou-
rers digged in the ground of his Pallace,
they found a Coffin of gold bound about
with thre hoopes, and upon the hoopes
was ingraven these words, I have spent,
I have given, I have kept, I have had,
I now have, I have lost, I am punished.
That which I spent I had, That which
I gave I have. When the Emperour
saw this, he called together his Nobles
and States, and said unto them: My
Lords, goe and consider among your
selues, what this Inscription meaneth:
Unto whom the Nobles shortly after
returned this answer saying, the meaning
of this Inscription is no other wise but
this: There was a certaine Emperour
your predecessor, which desired to leaue
behinde him an example to others, that
they might follow him in good life, and con-
uersation, viz, I have spent my life in iudg-
ing

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ing others righteously, and governing my selfe according to the rule of reason. I have given, to my Souldiers things necessary: unto the poore maintenance and libing: and to ebery one as to my selfe, according to their deserts. I have kept, in all my works, righteousnesse, mercy to them that need it, and to workmen their worthy wages. I have had, a liberall and a constant heart to ebery one which serbed mee, I have given riches in their necessity, and loving favour at all times, I have had, a hand to tame and subdue enemies, to protect and defend friends, and to punish offenders. I have lost, foolishnesse, the friendship of enemies, and lust or lasciviousnesse of the flesh. I am punished now by death, because I beleebed not as I ought to have done, in one God eternall. I am punished I say, alas, because I cannot redeeme my selfe but by the merits of Christ Iesus the Saviour of the world. When the Emperour aforesaid heard the meaning of the inscriptions wisely interpreted on this manner, and how long that deceased Emperour had lived, he thereby governed himselfe and his subjects more providently, and ended his life in Gods peace, with much honour.

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The Morall.

Deare friends, this Empeour may bee called every good Christian man or woman, which ought and is bound to erect and re-edifie a Tomb, that is, his heart prepared unto God, that he may perforce his will above all things, and so diggeth in the ground of his heart by contrition and sorrowfull repentance for his sinnes, and so shall he finde a golden Coffin, that is, a body dead to sinne, but his soule garnished with vertues, by Gods grace so granting the same, and bound about with three golden hoopes, viz. with Faith, Hope, and Charity. What then was ingraven in the same three hoopes? First, I have spent: where it may be asked, what hast thou spent? The good Christian answereth, my body and soule in the service of God: if any of you bestow his temporall life so, hee shall be assured of a great reward, even of life everlasting. The second inscription, is, I have kept. What hast thou kept? the good Christian answereth, a contrite & humble heart, and prepared unto God, to do whatsoeuer his good pleasure was. The third inscription, is, I have given, what hast thou given?

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giben? The good Christian answereth: Love unto God with all my heart, with all my soule, and with all my mind, and love unto my neighbour, according to the commandement of God. The fourth inscription is, I have had, what hast thou had? The good Christian answereth and saith, surely a wretched life: because I was conceived in sinne and borne in iniquity, and also was formed of vile and base matter. Fifthly, what is that inscription I have? The good Christian answereth, my Baptisme, and thereby am made the souldier of Christ, by vertues which God gave me in my Baptisme, where before I was the bond-slave of Satan. Sixtly, what is that inscription, I have lost? To this answereth the good Christian, surely the favour of God, by mine owne deserts, not all the sinnes which I have committed against God, I have by repentance corrected and amended: because repentance is one meane, but Christs merits chiefly & especially cleanse us from all sinne. Seavently, what is that inscription, I am punished? The good Christian answereth and saith, because I am afflicted by death for the offences and sins in my life. Eightly, what is that inscription

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tion, I have spent that which I had? To
this answereth the good Christian, saying
I have bestowed my life time here in the
works of mercy, by the grace which I
received of my Lord Jesus Christ. Finally,
what is that inscription, That which I
gave, I have? Surely in all my temporall
life I gave all my counsell, whole assent,
and will which I had, to bee the servant
of God, and now it is in the good will and
pleasure of God, that I shall remaine
with him in the joyes of everlasting
life in Heaven, unto the which
Jesus Christ our Saviour
bring us all:
Amen.

FINIS.



