

We are the earth; and they,  
Like moles within us, heave, and cast about:  
And till they foot and clutch their prey,  
They never cool, much lesse give out.  
No smith can make such locks, but they have keys:  
Closets are halls to them; and hearts, high-ways.

Onely an open breast  
Doth shut them out, so that they cannot enter;  
Or, if they enter, cannot rest,  
But quickly seek some new adventure.  
Smooth open hearts no fasting have; but fiction  
Doth give a hold and handle to affliction.

Wherefore my faults and sinnes,  
Lord, I acknowledge; take thy plagues away:  
For since confession pardon winnes,  
I challenge here the brightest day,  
The clearest diamond: let them do their best,  
They shall be thick and cloudie to my breast.

### Giddinesse

Oh, what a thing is man! how farre from power,  
From settled peace and rest!  
He is some twentie sev'rall men at least  
Each sev'rall houre.

One while he counts of heav'n, as of his treasure:  
But then a thought creeps in,  
And calls him coward, who for fear of sinne  
Will lose a pleasure.

Now he will fight it out, and to the warres;  
Now eat his bread in peace,  
And snudge in quiet: now he scorns increase;  
Now all day spares.

He builds a house, which quickly down must go,  
As if a whirlwinde blew  
And crusht the building: and it's partly true,  
His minde is so.

### Confession

15. *foot*: seize with the talons (of a bird of prey).  
19. *open breast*: i.e. confession.  
30. *to*: compared to.

### Giddinesse

11. *snudge*: remain snug and quiet; also, be stingy [OED].

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O what a sight were Man, if his attires  
Did alter with his minde;  
And like a Dolphins skinne, his clothes combin'd  
With his desires!

Surely if each one saw anothers heart,  
There would be no commerce,  
No sale or bargain passe: all would disperse,  
And live apart.

Lord, mend or rather make us: one creation  
Will not suffice our turn:  
Except thou make us dayly, we shall spurn  
Our own salvation.

### The bunch of grapes

Joy, I did lock thee up: but some bad man  
Hath let thee out again:  
And now, me thinks, I am where I began  
Sev'n yeares ago: one vogue and vein,  
One aire of thoughts usurps my brain.  
I did toward Canaan draw; but now I am  
Brought back to the Red sea, the sea of shame.

For as the Jews of old by Gods command  
Travell'd, and saw no town:  
So now each Christian hath his journeyes spann'd:  
Their storie penes and sets us down.

A single deed is small renown.  
Gods works are wide, and let in future times;  
His ancient justice overflows our crimes.

25 ff. On 'continued creation'—i.e. the world's preservation—see above, p. 17.

*The bunch of grapes*. The narrator enacts in his life the wanderings of the Israelites from *the Red sea* (l. 7) to the Promised Land (*Canaan*, 6). The sojourn, itself replete with 'types' (see above, p. 26), encompasses the prefiguration of Christ 'the true vine' (John 15.1) in both the 'cluster of grapes' at Eshcol (Numbers 13.23) and Noah's vineyard (Genesis 9.20).

4. *vogue*: general course or tendency [OED].

10. *spann'd*: measured out.

13-14. The lines articulate the rationale of typology (*let in* should be read more or less in the sense of 'prefiguring').

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## To all Angels and Saints

Oh glorious spirits, who after all your bands  
See the smooth face of God, without a frown  
Or strict commands;  
Where ev'ry one is king, and hath his crown,  
If not upon his head, yet in his hands:

Not out of envie or maliciousnesse  
Do I forbear to crave your speciall aid:  
I would addressse  
My vows to thee most gladly, blessed Maid,  
And Mother of my God, in my distresse.

Thou art the holy mine, whence came the gold,  
The great restorative for all decay  
In young and old;  
Thou art the cabinet where the jewell lay:  
Chiefly to thee would I my soul unfold:

But now (alas!) I dare not; for our King,  
Whom we do all joyntly adore and praise,  
Bids no such thing:  
And where his pleasure no injunction layes,  
('Tis your own case) ye never move a wing.

All worship is prerogative, and a flower  
Of his rich crown, from whom lyes no appeal  
At the last houre:  
Therefore we dare not from his garland steal,  
To make a posie for inferiour power.

Although then others court you, if ye know  
What's done on earth, we shall not fare the worse,  
Who do not so;  
Since we are ever ready to disburse,  
If any one our Masters hand can show.

## To all Angels and Saints

1. *bands*: ranks; or possibly *bonds*, i.e. 'feters of sin' [FEH].
- 4-5. Cf. the vision of the twenty-four elders whose golden crowns are cast before God's throne (Revelation 4.4 ff.).
12. *restorative*: gold was thought to have medicinal powers.
- 16 ff. A tactful censure of Mariolatry, especially the Roman Catholic tendency to regard the Virgin as co-redemptrix with Christ.

## Employment (II)

He that is weary, let him sit.  
My soul would stirre  
And trade in courtesies and wit,  
Quitting the furre  
To cold complexions needing it.

Man is no starre, but a quick coal  
Of mortall fire:  
Who blows it not, nor doth controll  
A faint desire,  
Lets his own ashes choke his soul.

When th' elements did for place contest  
With him, whose will  
Ordain'd the highest to be best;  
The earth sat still,  
And by the others is opprest.

Life is a busnesse, not good cheer;  
Ever in warres.  
The sunne still shineth there or here,  
Whereas the starres  
Watch an advantage to appeare.

Oh that I were an Orenge-tree,  
That busie plant!  
Then should I ever laden be,  
And never want  
Some fruit for him that dressed me.

But we are still too young or old;  
The man is gone,  
Before we do our wares unfold:  
So we freeze on,  
Untill the grave increase our cold.

## Employment II

5. *complexions*: habits or constitutions, thought to have been determined by the four 'humours' corresponding to the four elements (below, note on 11).
6. *quick coal*: 'live coal' (Isaiah 6.6).
11. *elements*: earth (the least active, l. 14), water, air and fire (*the highest*, l. 13).
22. *busie*: because it bears blossom and fruit at the same time.
27. *man*: 'Man' (*W* and *B*).

I know the wayes of honour, what maintains  
 The quick returns of courtesie and wit:  
 In vies of favours whether partie gains,  
 When glorie swells the heart, and moldeth it  
 To all expressions both of hand and eye,  
 Which on the world a true-love-knot may tie,  
 And bear the bundle, wheresoe'er it goes:  
 How many drammes of spirit there must be  
 To sell my life unto my friends or foes:  
 Yet I love thee.

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I know the wayes of pleasure, the sweet strains,  
 The lullings, and the relishes of it;  
 The propositions of hot bloud and brains;  
 What mirth and musick mean; what love and wit  
 Have done these twentie hundred yeares, and more:  
 I know the projects of unbridled store:  
 My stuffe is flesh, not brasse; my senses live,  
 And grumble oft, that they have more in me  
 Than he that curbs them being but one to five:  
 Yet I love thee.

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I know all these, and have them in my hand:  
 Therefore not sealed, but with open eyes  
 I flie to thee, and fully understand  
 Both the main sale, and the commodities;  
 And at what rate and price I have thy love;  
 With all the circumstances that may move:  
 Yet through the labyrinths, not my groveling wit,  
 But thy silk twist let down from heav'n to me,  
 Did both conduct and teach me, how by it  
 To climbe to thee.

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merchant-man seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one  
 pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it'.  
 On Herbert's parabolic teaching, see above, pp. 10 f.

21-3. *strains, lullings, relishes*: musical terms suggesting tones, melodies,  
 embellishments.

*propositions*: the term *proposita* designates the leading part, or  
 subject, of a fugue [cf. § 284].

32. *silk twist*: symbolic of faith [§ 276]? Cf. the cord by which Ariadne  
 led Theseus out of the Labyrinth; but especially the familiar notion  
 of the *scala coeli* allegorized by its interpreters from Jacob's ladder  
 (Genesis 28.10-15) as much as from Homer's golden chain/rope  
 let down from heav'n by Zeus (*Iliad*, VIII, 19-27). Both ladder and  
 rope were thought 'to set forth Gods providence'. (Andrew Willet,  
*Hexapla in Genesis* [1608], p. 302) but also the Incarnation: 'The  
 Cross of Christ is the Jacobs ladder by which we Ascend into the  
 Highest Heavens' (Traherne, *Centuries*, I, 60). Cf. § 220.

## Affliction (IV)

Broken in pieces all asunder,  
 Lord, hunt me not,  
 A thing forgot,  
 Once a poore creature, now a wonder,  
 A wonder tortur'd in the space  
 Betwixt this world and that of grace.

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My thoughts are all a case of knives,  
 Wounding my heart  
 With scatter'd smart.  
 As watring pots give flowers their lives,  
 Nothing their furie can controll,  
 While they do wound and prick my soul.

10

All my attendants are at strife,  
 Quitting their place  
 Unto my face:  
 Nothing performs the task of life:  
 The elements are let loose to fight,  
 And while I live, trie out their right.

15

Oh help, my God! let not their plot  
 Kill them and me,  
 And also thee,  
 Who art my life: dissolve the knot,  
 As the sunne scatters by his light  
 All the rebellions of the night.

20

Then shall those powers, which work for grief,  
 Enter thy pay,  
 And day by day  
 Labour thy praise, and my relief;  
 With care and courage building me,  
 Till I reach heav'n, and much more thee.

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*Affliction IV*. Original title in *W*: *Tentation* (i.e. *Temptation*).

4. *now a wonder*: cf. Psalm 71.7: 'I am as a wonder unto many; but  
 thou art my strong refuge'.

12. *prick*: 'pink' (*W* and *B*), a fencing term.

17. *elements*: as above, p. 95, note on 11.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song  
 Pleasant and long:  
 Or since all musick is but three parts vied  
 And multiplied;  
 O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,  
 And make up our defects with his sweet art.

15

I got me flowers to straw thy way;  
 I got me boughs off many a tree:  
 But thou wast up by break of day,  
 And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

20

The Sunne arising in the East,  
 Though he give light, & th' East perfume;  
 If they should offer to contest  
 With thy arising, they presume.

25

Can there be any day but this,  
 Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?  
 We count three hundred, but we misse:  
 There is but one, and that one ever.

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13. *consort*: play jointly on several instruments.

*twist*: weave, as in polyphonic music.

15-18. *vied*: 'to increase in number by addition or repetition' [OED].  
 So the Spirit is added to the heart and the lute to complete the  
*three parts* of the common chord.

19-20. So, during Christ's entry into Jerusalem, 'others cut down  
 branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way' (Matthew  
 21.8).

19-30. The 'song' promised in 13. The earlier version in *W*, also entitled  
*Easter*, reads:

I had prepared many a flowre  
 To stow thy way and Victorie,  
 But thou wa'st up before myne houre  
 Bringinge thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunn arising in the East  
 Though hee bring light & th' other sents:  
 Can not make up so brave a feast  
 As thy discoverie presents.

Yet though my flours be lost, they say  
 A hart can never come too late.  
 Teach it to sing thy praise, this day,  
 And then this day, my life shall date.

## Easter wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,  
 Though foolishly he lost the same,  
 Decaying more and more,  
 Till he became  
 Most poore:  
 With thee  
 O let me rise  
 As larks, harmoniously,  
 And sing this day thy victories:  
 Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

5

My tender age in sorrow did beginne:  
 And still with sicknesses and shame  
 Thou didst so punish sinne,  
 That I became  
 Most thinne.  
 With thee  
 Let me combine,  
 And feel this day thy victorie:  
 For, if I imp my wing on thine,  
 Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

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*Easter wings*. On the tradition of 'pattern poetry', see below, p.  
 209 f.

7. The plea to rise, as well as the poem's shape, recall Isaiah 40.31 ('they that wait upon the Lord . . . shall mount up with wings as eagles') and Malachi 4.2 ('unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings' [§ 237]).
10. A reference to the commonplace notion of the 'fortunate' Fall of Man—an happy fault, giving occasion to the redemption of the elect, by Christ' (Thomas Wilson, *Theologica Rules* [1615], II, 28-9). Cf. *Paradise Lost*, XII, 469-78.
10. *imp*: in falconry, to engraft feathers in the damaged wing of a bird so as to restore or improve its powers of flight [OED].