

A Treatyse (vnfynny)

(shed) vppon these wordes of holye Scrypture,

Memorare nouissima, & in eternum non peccabis. Remember the last thynges, and thou shalt neuer synne.

Made about the yere of our lorde, 1522, by sir Thomas More than knyghte, and one of the pryuyse counsaile of kynge Henry theight, and also vnder treasorer of Englande.

Eccle. 7.

If there were anye questyon amonge menne, whyther the woordes of holye scrypture, or the doctrine of anye secular authour, were of greater force and effecte to the weale and profyte of mannes soules, (thoughe we hold let passe so many thozt & weighty woordes, spoken by the mouth of our saintout Ch:ist himself, to whose heauyly wisdom, the wit of none earthly creature can be comparable) yet this onely tert wrytten by the wise mā in the tenth chapter of Ecclesiasticus is such, that it conteyneth moze fruttfull aduise and counsaile, to the fo:myng and framing of mannes maners in vertue, and auoyding of sinne, then many whole & great volumes of the best of old philosophers, or anye other, that euer wrote in secular litterature.

Long would it be to take the beste of they: woordes and compare it with these woordes of holye writ: Let vs consider the frute and profyte of this in it selfe: which thyng wel aduised and pondered, shall wel declare, that of none whole volume of secular litterature, shall aryse so very fruttfull doctrine. For what would a mā geue for a sure medicin, or for of such strength, & it should al his life kepe hym fro sicknes: namely if he mighte by thauoyding of sicknes be sure to contynue his life one hundred yere: So is it now by these woordes geueth vs al a sure medicine (yf we for slouth not the receiuyng) by which we shall kepe from sicknes, not the body, which none health may longe kepe fro death (for dye we muste in fewe yeres lue we neuer so long) but y soul, whiche here p:serued fro the sicknes of sin, shall after this eternally lue in ioy, and be p:serued from the deadly lyfe of euerlastyng payne.

Dye we must

The phisicion sendeth his bill to the potticary, & therein wryteth sommetyme a costlye receite of many strauinge herbes and rootes, set out of far countreis, long fallen & dugges, al the strength worn out, & some none such to be gotten. But thys phisicion sendeth his bil to thy selfe, no strange thing therin, nothing costly to be, nothing farre to fet, but to be gathered al times of the yere in the garden of thyne owne soule.

Let vs heare than what wholesome receit this is. Remember (saith this byll) thy last thynges, and thou shalt neuer sin in this world. Here is first a thozt medicine, conteynyng onely foure herbes, comen and well knowe, y is to wit, death, dome, paine, and ioy.

Eccle. 7.

Death, dome, paine and ioy.

This thozt medicine is of a marueylous force, able to kepe vs al our life fro sin. The phisicion canne not geue no one medicine to euery man to kepe hym from sicknes, but to diuers men diuers, by reason of the diuersity of diuers complexions. This medicine serueth euery man. The phisicion dothe but gesse & conjecture y his receit shall do good: but thys medicine is vndoubtedly sure.

How happeth it than thou wilt happily say, that so few be p:serued from sin, if euery man haue so sure a medicine, so ready at hand: For folk fare commonly as he doth that goeth for: thfasting among sick folk for slouth, rather than he wyl take a litle tryacle before.

Thou wilt saye par aduerture y some parte of thys medicine is verye bytter and paynfull to receyue. Surely there canne bee noshpyng so bitter, but wylsome would brooke it for so gret a profyte. But yet this medicyne thoughe thou make a sowe face at it, is not so bytter as thou makeste for. For well thou wottest, he byddeth thee not take neyther death, nor dome, nor payne, but onely to remember them, and yet the ioy of heauen therewith to temper them

Them with all. Howe yf a manne bee so payntye stomaked, that goyng where contagion is, he woulde grudge to take a lyttle tryacle, yet were he very nyce ly wanton, if he might not at the lest wylle take a lyttle bynegre and rose water in his handkercher.

Remembraunce
of death.

Yet wote I well that manye one wylle saye, that the bare remembraunce of death alone, yf a man consider it and aduise it wel, were able to bereue a man of al the pleasure of his lyfe. Howe muche more than shoulde his lyfe be painful and greuous, yf to the remembraunce and consideration of death, a manne shoulde adde and set to, the depe ymaginacion of the

Purgatory.

dredeful dome of god, and bytter paines of purgatory or hell, of which enery one passeth & exceedeth many deatnes. Thys is the sage sawes of suche as make thys world their heauen, and they lust they? God.

How see the blindnes of vs worldlye folk, how precisely we presume to thowt our solish bolte, in those matters most, in whiche we least can skill. For I lytle doubt, but that among foure thousande take out at aduventure, we shal not fynd fourescore, but they shal boldly affirme it for a thyng to painefull, but lytle to remember these sowe last thynges. And yet durst I lay a wageour, that of those foure thousande, ye shal not fynd fourtene, that hath depelye thought on them foure tymes in all they? dayes.

If men would vouchelafe to putte in pprose and experience thoperacion and working of this medicine, the remembraunce of these foure last thynges, they shoulde fynd therein, not the pleasure of their life losse, but so greate a pleasure grow therby, that they neuer felt y lyke before, nor woulde haue supposed that euer they shoulde haue felt any such. For it is to be knowen, y like as we be made of two far diuers and vnlike substāces, the body and the soule, so we be apt and hable to receiue two diuers and vnlike pleasures, the one carnall and fleshy, y tother ghostly and spiritual. And like as the soule excelleth the bodye, so dothe the swetnes of spiritual pleasure, farre passe & excel y grosse and filthy pleasure of al fleshy delyte: whiche is of trouthe no very true pleasure, but a false counterfayte ymage of pleasure. And the cause why manne bee so madde theron, is onelye for ygnorauce and lacke of knowledge of the tother. As those that lacke inspygh of precious stones, holde

Of two substances.

Spiritual pleasure.
ie. by delyte

thymselfe as well contente and satisfyed, with a byzall or Christ all wel counterfayted, as with a ryght natural Diamond. But he that by good vble and experyence, hathe in his eye the ryghte marke and very trewe lustre of the Diamond, reiecteth anone, and lysteth not to looke vppon the counterfayte, be it neuer so well handeled, neuer so craftely pollyshed. And truste it well, that in liketyse yf manne woulde well accomsonie thymselfe in the taste of spiritual pleasure, and of that swete felynge that vertuous people haue of the good hope of heauen, they shoulde thortelye sette at nought and at length abhorre, the soule delite and filthye lykynge that ryseth of sensuall and fleshy pleasure, whych is neuer so pleasantly spiced with delyte & lykynge, but that it byngeth therewith such a grudge and grief of conscience, that it maketh the stomak wamble, and fare as it woulde vomit. And y notwithstanding standing such is our blynd custom, that we perseuer therein without care or cure of the better: as a sow contente to drasse durt and mire, careth neither for better meate nor better bedde.

Grudge of conscience.

Think not that euery thyng is plestat y men for madnes laughe at. For thou shalt in Bedleem se one laugh at y knocking of his own hed against a post, & yet there is litle pleasure therein. But ye think paradieture this ensaple as mad as the mad man, & as litle to y purpose. I am content ye so think. But what wil ye say if ye see me that are taken and reputed wise, laugh much more madde lyke than he? Shal ye not see suche laugde at their own craft, whan they haue as they think, willyly done their neybour wrong. How whoso seeth not, that his laughtee is more madde than the laughtee of the mad man, I hold him madder than they both. For the mad man laughed whan he had done hymselfe but litle hurte, by a knocke of his head to the poste. Thys other sage foole laugheth at the castynge of his own soule into the fyre of hel. For whych he hath cause to wepe at his life. And it canne not be but the grudge and feare therof soloiweth his laughtee, and secrete sorow marreth all suche owtward myght. For the heart of a wicked wretch is like a stormy sea y cannot rest: except a manne be fallen down into the dongeon of wretchednes, and the dooze hit ouer his hed. For whan a synner is once fallē down into the depth, he wretchedly a desperat wretchedly and setteth al at nought

Eccl. 5.7.
A wicked heart

g thought, and he is in the worst kind of all, and farthest from all recovery. For like as in the body his sickness is most incurable, that is sick and feleth it not, but weneth hymself whole, (for he that is in that case is commonly madde) so he that by a mischievous custome of sinne perceiueth no fault in his euill dede, nor hath no remorse thereof, hath lost the natural light of reason, and the spirituall light of faith: which .ii. lightes of knowledge and vnderstanding quethed, what remaineth in him more, than the bodily senses and sensuall wittes commune to man and brute beastes.

Worldly and spiritual pleasure.

Howbeit so that the fleshely and worldly pleasure is of truth not pleasant but bitter, and the spirituall pleasure is of truth so sweete, that it sweetens thereof many times darkereth and minisheth the feeling of bodily payne, by reason whereof good vertuous folk fele more pleasure in the sorrow of their synnes & affliction of their penance, than wretches fele in the fullfilling of their soule delite, and credible is it that thynwarde spirituall pleasure and comfort whiche many of thold holy martirs had in the hope of heuen, deked and inmaner ouerwhelmed the bodily paines of their torment, yet

Uninfected
tail.

Chis notwithstanding, like as a sick man feleth no sweetenes in sugar, & some women with child haue such fond lust that they had leuer eate terre than tryacle, & rather pitch than marmelade, and some whole people loue talow better than butter, & Ireland loneth no butter till it be long barreled, so we grosse carnal people haue our tail infected, by the sickness of sin & filthy custome of fleshly lust, synd so gret liking in the vile & stinking delectacion of fleshly delite, that we list not once proue, what manner of sweetenes good and vertuous folke fele & perceiue in spirituall pleasure. And the cause is why, because we can not perceiue the taste, but if we forbear the taste. For

An instrument
to pul out the
weedes of the
soule.

Howbeit as the ground that is all foregrowen with nettles byzets, and other euill weedes, canne byring forth no corne till they be weeded out, so can oure soule haue no place for the good corne of spirituall pleasure, as long as it is ouergrowen with the barreyne weedes of carnall delectacion. For the pullyng owte of whych weedes by the roote, there is not a more mete instrument, than the remembrance of the foure last thinges, whiche as they shall pull owte these weedes of fleshely voluptuousnes, so that they not fayle to

plant in their places, not onely whole seruices, but also marvellous gyfftyue pleasure and spirituall gladnes, whiche in euery good soule riseth of the loue of god, and hope of heauen, and intwaisting that the godly spirit taketh in diligent laboꝝ of good and vertuous busynes.

whereof godly
pleasure riseth

Iwould not so long tary in this point, nor make so many wordes, of the pleasure that men may finde by the receypte of this medicine, were it not that I wol perceiue, the world be so sette vpon the seeking of pleasure, that they sette by pleasure much more than by profite. And therefore to thentente that ye maye perceiue, that it is not a fantasie sownen of myne own head, that the abandoning and refusing of carnall pleasure, and the syping of labour, traualle, penance and bodily paine, shall byring therewith to a christen man, not onely in the world that is commyng, but also in this present life, very sweetenes, comfort, pleasure, and gladnes. What proueth it to be true by theyr testimony and witness, whose authoritie speaking of theyr own experience, there wyl I wene none honest man mistrust.

Lo the holy doctoꝝ sainte Austine, & S. Iuliane, hortynge penitentes and repentant synners to sorrow for theyr offences, sayeth vnto them. Sorrowe (saith this holy man) and be glad of thy sorrow. In vain thold he bid him be glad of his sorrow, if man in sorrow could not be glad. But this holy father sheweth by this counsel, not onely that a man may be toyfull and glad for all his sorrow, but also that he maye and hath cause to be glad because of his sorrowe.

Gladnes in
sorrow.

Long wer it to reherse the places that proue this point among the holy doctoꝝ of Christes church. But we wil in stede of the al, allege you the wordes of him who is doctoꝝ of the al, our sauioꝝ Iesu christ. He saith that the way to heauen is strait & aspre or painful. And therfore he sayth that few folk find it out or walke therein. And yet sayth he for all that, my yoke is easy & my burden light. Howe coulde these .ii. sayinges stand together, wer it not y as the laboꝝ trauel & affliction of the body, is painful & sharp to the flesh, so the confort & gladnes of the soule receiue the of, rising into the loue of oure lord & hope of his gloꝝy to coe, so tempereth & ouermasteth the bitternes of the grief, y it maketh the very laboꝝ easy, & lowernes very swete, & the very payne pleasant.

Mat. 7
Mat. 11

Wyll

A Will ye see the sample? Looke vppon his holy apostles, whan they were taken and scourged with whippes for chrystes sake, did it grieue them thinke ye? Imagine your self in the same case, & I thinke ye wil thinke yea. Now see than for all y paine of their flesh, what toy and pleasure they conceiued in their soule. The holy scripture saith, that they reioyced & loyed that god had accounted the woorthy for Chrystes sake, not onely to be scourged, but also which wold be far greater grief, to an honest man than the payne it selfe, to bee scourged with dispite and shame, so that the more they payn was, the more was their toy. For as the holy doctour saint Chrysostome saith, though the pain be grieuous for the nature of y affliction, yet is it pleasaunte by the alacrity and quick mind of them that willingly suffer it. And therefore though y nature of the tormentes make gret grief and payne, yet the prompt and willing mynde of them that were scourged, passed and overcame the nature of y thing, that is to wit, masteryng the outward fleshly payne with inward spiritual pleasure. And surely this is so trewe, y it may stande for a very certaine token, that a penitent beginneth to profite and grow in grace and fauour of god. Whan he feleth a pleasure and quicknes in his labor and pain, taken in prayer, almes dede, pilgrimage, fastig, discipline, tribulacion, affliction, and such other spiritual exercise, by which the soule willingly woorketh with the bodye by theyr own punishment, to purge and rub out the rusty cankered spots, that sinne hath defiled them with, in the sight of God, and to leaue the fever to be burned out in the fire of purgatory. And when so euer as I say y a man feleth in this pain a pleasure, he hath a token of gret grace and that his penance is pleasant to god. For as the holy scripture saith, our lord loveth a glad geuer. And on the tother syde wher as one doth such spiritual busines with a dulnes of spirite & wretchednes of minde, he doth twyse as much & thereby taketh fouretimes as much payne, sith his bodily paine is releued with no spiritual resoyce nor comfozt. I wil not say that his labour is lost, but I dare be bold to say, that he profiteth much lesse with much more payne. For certaine it is, y the best soules, and they that haue best traauiled in spiritual busines, find most comfozt therein. And therefore y they most pleased god, that in the bodily

paine of their penance toke lesse spyrtyuall pleasure, it should therof folow, that the farther a manne proceeded in the perfeccion of spiritual exercise, in y woorthy case he were. Which can in no wise bee so, sythe that wee see the holy apostles & other holy men and women, the better y they were, the more pleasure they perceiued in their fleshly afflictions, eyther put vnto them by god, or taken by them selfe for goddes sake.

Therefore let every manne by y labour of his minde and helpe of praiser, enforce himself in all tribulacion and affliction labour paine and traualle, without spot of pride or ascribing any praise to himself to conceiue a delite and pleasure in such spiritual exercise, and thereby to ryle in the loue of our lord, with an hope of heauen, contempt of the woold, and loging to be with god. To thattaining of which mynde, by the puttingt awaye of the malicious pleasures of the deuill, the filthy pleasures of the flesh, and the vaine pleasures of the woold, whiche once excluded, there is place made and cleane purged, to receiue the very swete and pure pleasure of the spirite, there is not anye one thyng lightly as I haue sayd, more accommodated nor more effectually, than this thing that I haue begon with, and taken in hand to entreate, that is to wit the remembrance of the soure last thinges, which is as the scripture saythe so effectual, that yf a man remember it wel, he shall neuer synne.

Thou wilt happely say, that it is not ynough that a man do none euyl, but he must also do good. This is verie truth that ye say. But first if ther be but these two steppes to heauen, he y getteth hym on the one is halfe vp. And ouer y, who so doth none euil, it wil be very hard but he must nedes do good, syth mans mind is neuer ydle, but occupied commonly either with good or euil.

And therefore whan folke haue fewe wordes & vse much musyng, likewise as among many wordes al be not alwaye well and wisely set, so whan the tongue lyeth still, if the mynde be not occupied well, it were lesse euil saue for wooldlye rebuke, to blabber on trifles somewhat sortly, than whyle they seeme sage, in keepyng silence, secretlye paradenure the meane whyle to fantasie with them self, fylthy sinful deuises, whereof they tonges if they wer set on babling, could not so shame bitter and speake the lyke.

Actes. 5.

Chrysostom.

Pleasant pain

Token of gods fauour.

Pilgrimage.

Purgatory.

2. Cor. 9.

Comfozt.

Treasure in spiritual exercise.

C

Two steppes to heauen.

The mynde is neuer ydle.

Musyng.

I

Babylng.
Pro. 10.

Silence.

A I say not this, for that I woulde haue folk fall to babling, well woting that as the scripture saith, in many wordes lacketh not sinne, but that I woulde haue folke in their silence take good heede, yther mides be occupied w god thoughts: for vnoccupped be they neuer. For yf euer the mind wer emptye, it woulde bee empty whan the bodye slepeth. But yf it wer than al empty, we shoulde haue no dreames. Than if the fantasies leue vs not sleping, it is not likely that euer they leaue vs waking. Wherfoze as I saue, let vs kepe oure mindes occupped w good thoughtes, or els the deuil will fill them wth euill.

Eccle. 3.

B And surely eery thig hath his mene. Ther is as scripture saith, time to speke & time to kepe thy tong. Whansoeuer y communicacion is nought and vngodly, it is better to holde thy tong & thinke on some better thing the while, than to geue care therto & vnder pinne the tale. And yet better were it then holdynge of thy tong, properly to speake, & wth som good grace and pleasat fashon, to break into some better matter: by whiche thy speache and talking, thou shalt not onely profite thy selfe as thou shouldest haue done by thy well minded silence, but also amende the whole audience, which is

when to kepe
silence.

C a thynge farre better and of muche moze merite. How best if thou can find no proper meane to bzeake the tale, than excepte thy bare authozitie suffice to commaunde silence, it were par aduenteure good, rather to keepe a good silence thy self, than blunt forth rudely, and pryete them to anger, which shall happely thertoze not let to talke on, but speake much the moze, lest they should seme to leue at thy commandement. And better were it for y while to let one wanton woode passe vnccontrolled, than geue occalyon of swain. But if the communicacion be

D good, than is it better, not onely to geue care therto, but also firste well and prudently to deaffe w thy self vpon y same: & than moderately & in good maner yf thou find oughte to the purpose, speake therto & say thy minde therein. So shall it appere to the presene, y pour mynd was wel occupped the while, & pour thought nor wandring forty mile thence whyle pour body was ther. As it ofte happeth, y the very face sheweth y mind walkig a pilgrimage, in such wise y not woute som note & reproch of suche vagarante mind, other folk sodainly say to them: a peny for pour thought. Whiche maner

A bagarant
mynde.

of wandring mind in copany, may parcase be y moze excusable sometime by soe chargeable busines of y party: but surely it is neuer taken for wisdom nor good maner.

But now to retourne to my purpose sith y remembrance of these.iiii. last thinges is of such force & efficacy, y it is able alway to kepe vs fro sin, & sith we canne neuer be long void of both, it must therof, ensue, y we shall consequently do good: & therof must it nedes folow, y this only lesson wel learned & busily putte in bre, must nedes leade vs to heauen.

Yet will ye par aduenteure saue, that ye know these.iiii. thinges wel inough: if y knowlege therof had so gret effect as y scripture speaketh of: there should not be so mani nought as ther be. For what chrysten ma is he y hath wit & discrecion, but he hath heard, and hauing any faith beleueth, these.iiii. last thinges: of which y first y is to say death, we hede no faith to beleue, we know it by dailye prooffe & experiance.

I say not nay, but that we know the either by faith or experiance. And yet not so very thozowly as we might par aduenteure, & herafter vndoutedly shall. Which if we knewe once thozowly, and so feelyngly perceyued as we myght percase and nameli as we surely shall, ther wold be litle dout, but the least of al the soure, woulde well keepe vs fro synne. y or as for yet though we haue heard of y dome yet were we neuer at it. Though we haue heard of hel, yet came we neuer in it. Though we haue heard of heauen, yet came we neuer to it. And though we dailye se men dye, and therby knowe the death, yet our selfe neuer felte it. For yf we knewe these thinges thozowly, the least of al soure, were as I sayd inough to keepe vs from synne.

How be it the foresaid woords of scripture, byddeth thee not knowe the soure last thinges, but remember thy.iiii. last thinges, and then he sayth thou shalt neuer synne.

Many thinges knowe we that we sel dome think on. And in the thinges of the soule, the knowlege without the remembrance lytle profiteth. What auaileth it to knowe that there is a God, whiche thou not only beleuest by faith, but also knowest by reaso, what auaileth y thou knowest hi if thou thik litle of him: The busi minding of thy.iiii. last thinges, & y depe consideracion therof, is y thing y shall kepe thee fro synne. And yf thou putte it

knowlege
without re-
membrance
lytle profiteth

All in a safe and make a pꝛoofe, thou shalt well fynde, by that thou shalt haue no luste to sinne, for the tyme that thou depelpe thinkest on them, that of our frailtye coulde endure neuer to remitte or slake in the depe deuising of them, we shoulde neuer haue delite or pꝛeasure in any sinful thing.

For the pꝛoofe wherof, let vs firste begynne at the remembraunce of þe first of these foure last, whiche is vndoubtedly farre the least of the fower, and thereby shall we make a pꝛoofe, what marvellous effect may grow by the diligent remembraunce of all fower, towarde the vinding of all þe traires, vartes, sleightes entisinges, and assaultes, of the thre moztall enemies, the deuill, the woꝛlde, and our owne fleshe.

The enemies.

The remembraunce of death.

Death.



Philosophy

What pꝛofite and commoditie cometh vnto mans soule by the meditacion of death, is not onely marked of the chosen people of god, but also of such as wer the best. soꝛte among gentiles & painims. For some of the olde famous philosophers, whan thei wer demaunded what facultie philosophy was, answered þe it was the meditacion or exercise of death. For like as death maketh a seuerance of the body & the soul, whā thei by course of nature must nedes depart a sinder, so (said thei) dothe the study of philosophy, laboꝛ to seuer the soule fro þe loue & affections of the body while thei be together. Now if this be the whole study & labour of philosophy, as the beste philosopher said that it is, than may we with in thozte time be well learned in philosophy. For nothyng is there that maye moꝛe effectuallye withdraue the soule fro the wretched affections of the body, than may the remembraunce of death, yf we do not remember it hourelly, as one heareth a woꝛde, and let it passe by his eare, without any receiuing of the sentence into his heart. But if we not onely here this woꝛde death, but also let sink into our heartes, the very fantasie and depe imaginacion therof, we shall perceiue thereby, that we wer neuer so greatly moued by the beholding of the daunces of death pictured in boules, as we shall fele our self altered and altered, by the feeling of that imaginacion in our hartes. And no maruell. For those pictures expresse only þe lothely figure of our dead

The daunce of boules.

bony bodies bitten away þe fleshe. Whiche though it be ongly to behold, yet neither the sight therof, noꝛ the sight of al ydead heades in þe charuel houle, noꝛ the apparicion of a very ghoꝛt, is halfe so grisely as the depe conceiued fantasie of death in his nature, by the lively imaginacion on grauen in thyne owne heart. For there seest thou, not one plain grisuous sight of the bare bones hanging by the staves, but thou seest (yf thou fantasie thyne own death, for so art thou by this counsell aduised) thou seest I saye thy selfe yf thou dye no woꝛse death, yet at the leastwise lying in thy bedde, thy hed shooting, thy backe akynge, thy baynes beating, thine heart panting, thy throte ratelinge, thy fleshe trebling, thy mouth gaping, thy nose sharping, thy legges coling, thy fingers simbling, thy heart shooting, all thy strength fainting, thy lyfe vanishing, and thy death drawing on.

Why paines of death.

If thou couldeste now call to thy remembraunce, some of those sickness that haue most grieued thee & toꝛmented thee in thy dayes, as eueri man hath felt soe, & than findest thou that some one disease in some one part of thy body, as parcase þe stone or the strangurye, haue put thee to thine own minde to no lesse toꝛment, than thou shouldest haue felt if one had put by a knife into the same place, and wouldest as thee than semed, haue bene content with such a chaunge think what it wilbe than, whā thou shalt fele so many such paines in euery part of thy body breaking thy baynes & thy life stringes, wlike pain & grief, as though as manye knives as thy body might receiue. Hold euer it where enter & mete in the middes.

A stroke of a staffe, acut of a knife, the fleshe senged with fire, the pain of sundry sickness, many me haue assaid in the self. And thei that haue not yet, soe what haue heard by them that felte it. But what maner doloꝛ & payne, what maner of grisuous panges, what intollerable toꝛment, the seip creature feeleth in the dissolution and seuerance of the soule fro the body, neuer was there body, that yet could tel the tale.

Some coniecture and token of thys poynt we haue, of the bitter passion and pitieus departyng of our sauour Iesu Christ, of whom we nothyng rebe, that euer he cryed for any payne, neyther for the whyppes and rodde beating his blessed bodye, or the sharp thornes prickyng his holy head. or the greates longes

naples

Christ crucif.
Mat. 27.
Mar. 15.
Luce. 23.

nailes percynghis precious hādes and fete. But whan the poynt approched in which his sacred soule shold depart out of his blessed bodye, at y pointe he cryed loudc once or twise to his father in heuē into whose mighty & mercifull handes, at y extreme point, w a gret lowde crye he gaue bp the gost. Now if y death was so painful and ragious to our sauoure Christ, whose soy, & cōfort of his godhed if he would haue suffered it, moughte in such wise haue rebounded into his soul, & so furth into his body, y it should not onely haue supped bp al his pain, but also haue transformed his holy body into a glozious forme and made it impassyble, what intollerable tormēt wil death bee than to vs miserable wretches, of which y more part among y panges of our passage, shal haue yet so painful twiches of our owne conscience, y the feare of hell, the dread of the deuil, and sorow at our heart at the sighte of our synnes, shal passe and excede the deadly paynes of our body.

Other thinges are there, whiche wyll paradventure seme no greate matter to the y sele the not. But vnto hym y shall lye in that case, they shalbe tedious oute of all measure.

Troubles in death:

Haue ye not ere this in a soze sicknes felt it very grievous to haue folk babble to you, and namely suche thynges as ye shold make aunswere to, whan it was a pain to speake? Thinke ye not now that it wilbe a gentle pleasure, whan we lye dyng, al our body in pain, al our mind in trouble, our soul in sorow, our hearte al in drede, while our lifewalketh alward, while our death draweth toward while y deuil is busy about vs, while we lack stomak & strength to beare any one of lo manifold heynous troubles, wil it not be as I was about to say, a pleasant thing, to see befoze thine eyes, & heare at thine eare, a rable of fleshy frendes, or rather of flesh flies, skippyng about thy

Fleshe flies.

bed & thy sicke body, like rauenys aboute thy cozps now almost carteyn, cryng to thee on every side, what shall I haue what shall I haue? Than shal come thy child, & crye for thy partes. Thā shal come thy swete wyfe, & where in thyne heale happelye shee spake thee not one swete woode in fyve wekes, now shal she call thee swete husband & wepe w much woode (and aske the what shal she haue. Than shall thyne executours aske for the hapes, and aske what money is owyng thee, aske what substance thou hast

Children.
wyfe.

Executours

and aske where thy money lyeth. And C whyle thou lvest in y case, their woordes shalbe so tedious, that thou wilt wyshe all that they aske for, vpon a red fyze, so thou mightest lye one halfe howze in rest.

Nowe is there one thyng which a lytle I touched befoze, I wote not whither more paineful or more perilous, y merueilous intentife busines and sollicitacion of our ghostly enemy y deuil, not onely in one fashyon present, but surely ne-

The deuil.

uer absent from him y draweth toward death. For sith that of his pestilente enuy conceiued fro the beginning of mā's creation, by which he lay in awayte to take our first mother Eue in a trayne, & therby drawing our former father Adā into the breach of gods behesse, founde the meanes not without the grieuous increase of his owne dānacion, to depriue vs of paradise, & bereue vs our immortallite, making vs into subieccō, not onely of tempoꝝal death but also of his eternall tormentry, wer we not by the great bounty of god and Christes painful passion, restozed to the possibilitie of euer-

Psal. 2.
1. Peter. 5.

lasting life, he neuer ceased since, to run about like a ramping lion, lokyng who he mought deuoure, if ca be no dout, but he most busily trauaileth in that behalf, at the time y he perceiureth vs aboute to depart hence. For wel he knoweth y thā he either winteth a man for euer, or for euer lefeth him. For haue he hym neuer so fast afoze, yet if he breake fro him thā, he can after his death neuer geat hym a gain. Wel he maye paradventure haue him as his gailour in his prison of purgatory, for the time of his punicion tempoꝝal. But as he wold haue him for his perpetual slaue, shal he neuer haue him after, how sure so euer he hadde hym afoze, yf he geate from him at the tyme of his death. For so loth he sodaynelye the these, that honge off the ryghte hande of Christe.

Purgatory.

And on the tother syde yf he cathe a manne faste at the tyme of hys death, he is sure to keepe hym for euer. For as the Scripture sayeth, wheresoever the stone falleth there shal it abyde. And Eccl. 11. sythe he knoweth thys for very certeyn, and is of malice so benemous and enuious, that he shal leude double his othyr payn, than suffer vs to scape from pain, hee whan wee drawe to deathe, dooeth hys bittermoste deuoyse to byngge vs to damnacion: neuer ceasinge to mynyster by subtylle and incogrytable meanes,

Eccl. 11.

**De denis
temptacionis
in the tyme of
deat.**

A meanes, firste vnlawefull longyng to lye, hozour to goe glably to god at his calling.

Than geneth he some false glade of escappng that sickenes; and thereby putteth in our minde, a loue yet & cleauyng to the woꝝld, keping of our goodes, loth somnes of thysste, slouth towarde good woꝝkes. And if we be so farre gone, that we see we cannot recouer, than he casteth in our myndes, pꝛesumpcion and securitie of saluacion, as a thing well wonne by our owne woꝝkes: of whiche if we haue any done well, he casteth the into our mindes with ouer great liking and thereby withdꝛaweth vs fro y haste of doyng any moze, as a thing that eyther nedeth not oꝝ may bee done by oure executours. And in steepe of soꝝowe foꝝ our synnes and care of heauen; he putteth vs in minde of pꝛouision foꝝ somme honozable buryng, so many toꝝches, so many tapers, so many black gownes, so many mery mourners laughyng vnder black hodes, and a gay hers, wth the delite of goodly and honozable funeralles: in which the solly sicke man is somer tyme occupied, as though he thought that he shold stand in a window, and see how woꝝthypfull ye he shall bee bzoughte to church.

Surpyng.

And thus enueigleth he them that eyther be good, oꝝ but metely badde.

But as foꝝ those that he hath knowe foꝝ special wꝛetches, whose whole lyfe hath in effect bene al bestowd in his ser uice, whō he hath bzought into gret & ho rible sinnes, by the hozour wherof he hath kept the fro cōfession, these folke at their end he hādleth on a nother fashio.

**Checked sin
ners.**

foꝝ into their mindes he bzyngeth their shameful sinnes by hepe, & by the abomi nable sight therof, dꝛaweth the into des peracio. foꝝ thagreuyng wherof, oure lord after their deseruyng, suffreth hym to thew himself to the foꝝ their moze dis cōfort, in some feareful figure & terrible likenes: by the beholding wherof thei cō ceine sōrtme dispaire of saluacio, & yeld the self as captiues quicke, beginnig their hel in this woꝝld, as hath appeared by y woꝝdes & wꝛetched behaueoꝝ of many, y of a shameful sinful life, haue died & de parted wth heuy desperate death. foꝝ we death being such as I haue described, oꝝ rather much moze horrible the any mā cā describe, it is not to be doubted, but if we besily remēbred y terroꝝ & grief ther of, it must nedes be so bitter to y fleshye mind, y it could not faile to take away y

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vain delite of al woꝝldly vanities. But y thing y letteth vs to consider dech in his kind, & to take great pꝛofit y wold arise of the remembꝛance therof, is that foꝝ by the hope of long life, we looke vppon death, either so far of that we se him not at al, oꝝ but a sleight & vncertain sight, as a man maye see a thing so far of, that he woteth not whither it be a bushe oꝝ a beast. And surely so fare we by death, lo king there at a far of, thꝛough a gret lōg space of as manye yeares as we hope to liue. And those we imagine manye, and perillously and solly beguile oure selfe.

**Let from the
constracion
of death.**

foꝝ likewise as wiues wold their hus bandes shoulde wene by the example of Sara, that there wer no woman so olde but she might haue a childe, so is there none olde man so olde, but that as Tully saith he trusteth to liue one yere yet. And as foꝝ yong folk, they loke not how many be dead in theyꝝ owne dayes yonger than themselue, but who is y oldest manne in the towne, & vpon his yeares thei make their reckening. Where the wiser way wer to rechen, that a yonge man may die soone, and an olde manne cannot liue lōg, but within a litle while die the tone may, the tother muste. And with this reckening shal thei loke vpon death muche nerer hande, & better par ceiue him in his owne likenes, & therby take the moze fruite, of the remembꝛance and make themself the moze ready ther to.

S. Sara.

Tully.

**An olde man
cānot liue lōg**

Thou woldest somewhat remember death y moze effectually, and loke vpon him somewhat the moze nerely, yf thou knewest thy self sick, & specially of anye perillous sicknes y wold make an end of thee, though thou feltest yet litle payne.

**Remembꝛance
of death by
sicknes.**

foꝝ comonly whē we be sick, the begin we to know our self, thā paine bzingeth vs home, thā we think how meri a thing it wer to be pꝛaying in health, which we cannot now do foꝝ grief. Than care we litle foꝝ our gay gere, than desire we no delicate deinties. And as foꝝ lady Leche ry thā abhoꝝre we to think on. And thā we think in our self, that if euer we reco uer & mēd in body, we wil amēd in soul, leaue al vices & be vertuouslye occupied the remenaunt of our life. In so much y very true we fynde the woꝝdes of the pꝛif le, that the wel learned man Plinius Secundus after his sicknes wꝛote vnto his frende, wheriu after the description of mens fatalties in their disease, he clo seth by his letter in this wyse, loke (saith he) all the good counsell and pꝛeceptes y

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**Plinius sect
us.**

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