



PNU University

Simple Prose Texts

(For English literature Students)

Sajjad Gheytsi

امروزه کتاب‌خوانی و علم‌آموزی، نه تنها یک وظیفه‌ی ملی، که یک واجب دینی است.

مقام معظم رهبری

در عصر حاضر یکی از شاخصه‌های ارزیابی رشد، توسعه و پیشرفت فرهنگی هر کشوری میزان تولید کتاب، مطالعه و کتاب‌خوانی مردم آن مرز و بوم است. ایران اسلامی نیز از دیرباز تاکنون با داشتن تمدنی چندهزارساله و مراکز متعدد علمی، فرهنگی، کتابخانه‌های معتبر، علما و دانشمندان بزرگ با آثار ارزشمند تاریخی، سرآمد دولت‌ها و ملت‌های دیگر بوده و در عرصه‌ی فرهنگ و تمدن جهانی به‌سان خورشیدی تابناک همچنان می‌درخشد و با فرزندان نیک‌نهاد خویش هنرنمایی می‌کند. چه کسی است که در دنیا با دانشمندان فرزانه و نام‌آور ایرانی همچون ابوعلی سینا، ابوریحان بیرونی، فارابی، خوارزمی و ... همچنین شاعران برجسته‌ای نظیر فردوسی، سعدی، مولوی، حافظ و ... آشنا نباشد و در مقابل عظمت آنها سر تعظیم فرود نیاورد. تمامی این افتخارات ارزشمند، برگرفته از میزان عشق و علاقه فراوان ملت ما به فراگیری علم و دانش از طریق خواندن و مطالعه منابع و کتاب‌های گوناگون است. به شکرانه‌ی الهی، تاریخ و گذشته ما، همیشه درخشان و پربار است. ولی اکنون در این زمینه در چه جایگاهی قرار داریم؟ آمار و ارقام ارائه‌شده از سوی مجامع و سازمان‌های فرهنگی در مورد سرانه‌ی مطالعه‌ی هر ایرانی، برایمان چندان امیدوارکننده نمی‌باشد و رهبر معظم انقلاب اسلامی نیز از این وضعیت بارها اظهار گله و ناخشنودی نموده‌اند.

کتاب، دروازه‌ای به سوی گستره‌ی دانش و معرفت است و کتاب خوب، یکی از بهترین ابزارهای کمال بشری است. همه‌ی دستاوردهای بشر در سراسر عمر جهان تا آنجا که قابل کتابت بوده است، در میان دست‌نوشته‌هایی است که انسان‌ها پدید آورده و می‌آورند. در این مجموعه‌ی بی‌نظیر، تعالیم الهی، درس‌های پیامبران به بشر، و همچنین علوم مختلفی است که سعادت بشر بدون آگاهی از آنها امکان‌پذیر نیست. کسی که با دنیای زیبا و زندگی‌بخش کتاب ارتباط ندارد بی‌شک از مهم‌ترین دستاوردهای انسانی و نیز از بیشترین معارف الهی و بشری محروم است. با این دیدگاه، به‌روشنی می‌توان ارزش و مفهوم رمزی عمیق در این حقیقت تاریخی را دریافت که اولین خطاب خداوند متعال به پیامبر گرامی اسلام (ص) این است که «بخوان!» و در اولین

سوره‌ای که بر آن فرستاده‌ی عظیم‌الشان خداوند، فرود آمده، نام «قلم» به تجلیل یاد شده‌است: «إِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ» در اهمیت عنصر کتاب برای تکامل جامعه‌ی انسانی، همین بس که تمامی ادیان آسمانی و رجال بزرگ تاریخ بشری، از طریق کتاب جاودانه مانده‌اند.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور با گستره‌ی جغرافیایی ایران‌شمول خود با هدف آموزش برای همه، همه‌جا و همه‌وقت، به‌عنوان دانشگاهی کتاب‌محور در نظام آموزش عالی کشورمان، افتخار دارد جایگاه اندیشه‌سازی و خردورزی بخش عظیمی از جوانان جویای علم این مرز و بوم باشد. تلاش فراوانی در ایام طولانی فعالیت این دانشگاه انجام پذیرفته تا با بهره‌گیری از تجربه‌های گرانقدر استادان و صاحب‌نظران برجسته کشورمان، کتاب‌ها و منابع آموزشی درسی شاخص و خودآموز تولید شود. در آینده هم، این مهم با هدف ارتقای سطح علمی، روزآمدی و توجه بیشتر به نیازهای مخاطبان دانشگاه پیام‌نور با جدیت ادامه خواهد داشت. به‌طور قطع استفاده از نظرات استادان، صاحب‌نظران و دانشجویان محترم، ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی مهم و خطیر یاری‌رسان خواهد بود. پیشاپیش از تمامی عزیزانی که با نقد، تصحیح و پیشنهادهای خود ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی خطیر یاری می‌رسانند، سپاسگزاری می‌نماییم. لازم است از تمامی اندیشمندانی که تاکنون دانشگاه پیام‌نور را منزلگاه اندیشه‌سازی خود دانسته و ما را در تولید کتاب و محتوای آموزشی درسی یاری نموده‌اند، صمیمانه قدردانی گردد. موفقیت و بهروزی تمامی دانشجویان و دانش‌پژوهان عزیز آرزوی همیشگی ما است.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور

Contents

Preface	VII
Chapter 1. Renaissance prose	1
1.1 Renaissance Prose	1
1.1.1 Sir Philip Sidney's <i>The Defense of Poesy</i>	4
1.1.2 Francis Bacon's <i>Essays</i>	10
Chapter 2. Neoclassical Prose	23
2.1 Neoclassical literary theory	23
2.2 The Restoration and the 18 th Century Prose	24
2.2.1 Samuel Johnson's <i>Rambler No.4</i>	26
2.3 The Beginning of Novel	32
2.3.1 Defoe's <i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	33
2.4 Epistolary Novel	45
2.4.1 Samuel Richardson's <i>Pamela or, Virtue Rewarded</i>	46
Chapter 3. The Prose of Romantic Age	55
3.1 Romanticism; its background and theoretical assumptions	55
3.2 The Romantic Prose Style	56
3.2.1 <i>Emma</i> by Jane Austen	58
3.2.2 Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> ; A Gothic Novel	67
3.3 William Wordsworth	79
3.3.1 William Wordsworth's Preface to <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> (1802)	79
3.4 The Familiar Essay	97
3.4.1 Thomas De Quincy's <i>Pope and Didactic Poetry</i>	98

Chapter 4. Victorian Prose	109
4.1 Socio-political and Economical Background	109
4.2 The Victorian Novel	111
4.3 Some of the Main Texts of the Period	112
4.4 Victorian Nonfiction Prose	113
4.5 Samples from Victorian Prose Texts	113
4.5.1 Charles Dickens' <i>Oliver Twist</i>	117
4.5.2 Charlotte Bronte's <i>Jane Eyre</i>	120
4.5.3 Samuel Butler's <i>The Way of All Flesh</i>	133
4.5.4 Matthew Arnold's <i>Culture and Anarchy</i>	142
 Chapter 5. The Twentieth Century prose	 153
5.1 Modern Period and Its Literary Fluctuations	153
5.2 The Twentieth Century Fiction	154
5.2.1 Virginia Woolf's <i>The Mark on the Wall</i>	157
5.2.2 George Orwell's <i>Animal Farm</i>	165
5.2.3 Joseph Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i>	172
5.2.4 T. S. Eliot's Tradition and Individual Talent	181
 Glossary	 193
Answer Key	203
Bibliography	205

Preface

By entering the university, students will become involved in a kind of triangle; teacher, materials, and the students themselves. On the behalf of the materials, choosing and selecting the appropriate materials would be of great significance. Nowadays, the problem has become more and more complicated and involving because there exists a countless number of books that makes the students more and more puzzled.

The mentioned problem of materials/resources becomes even more complicated when it is about the students of English literature. Because of the vastness of texts available to the students, it is so important to create a body of texts from mainstream writers – or as M. Arnold has called it making a ‘touchstone’ – in order to know and judge the criteria of literariness of different texts.

The aim of this book is to present different kinds of prose texts chronologically; from the Neoclassical period up to the 20th century, so that students would be able to see how the English language and literature has evolved and developed, different prose styles in each period, the effect of the spirit of the age on the mainstream writers, the difference between prose and other literary forms, etc..

Each extract has been carefully chosen from the existing body of English literary canon. For each section there is an introduction and the writers of the original texts being represented. Readers are also presented with interpretations, definitions, explanations of that

particular era and writer. At the end of the book students will be able to read and understand English prose works more easily and with less difficulty, and they will also be familiarized with English prose variations in each period.

General objectives

Representing and collecting mainstream writers and their texts is regarded as the main aim of the book. Accordingly, students of English literature will be familiarized with different fluctuations of prose style in different eras. Moreover, their understanding on the variety of different texts will be tested.

Behavioral objectives

After reading the book, students will gain good knowledge about the beginning of the novel, will read and make sense of the prose works of the different periods in England's history, and will also be familiarized with the mainstream authors of each period.

Chapter 1

Renaissance Prose

1.1 Renaissance Prose

Prose can simply be defined as a no metrical piece of writing which does not follow the standards of poetry. Considering history as a line of progress, prose form assumed significant importance in the early modern period (1500-1650) after the advent of printing press. From this time on, prose became the most widespread and straightforward mode of writing.

It was during the 15th century that a new mode of cultural and intellectual way of living and thinking flourished in Italy. The movement which was known as Renaissance involved the rebirth of letters and all forms of arts from classical antiquity. Renaissance can also be viewed as the application of reason to all forms of received authority. Moreover, it was not until the accession of Henry VIII (1509) that it began to flower in England.

The Renaissance was a kind of rebirth of texts and artifacts of classical antiquity. "To Renaissance intellectuals and artists, the achievements of the pagan philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome came to seem more compelling than the subtle distinctions drawn by medieval Christian theologians", moreover, "the submission of the human spirit to penitential discipline gave way to unleashed curiosity, individual self-assertion, and a powerful conviction that man was the

2 Simple Prose Texts

measure of all things" (Greenblatt, et al, 488). This emphasis on human being and human experience came to be known as humanism. More's Utopia (1516) can be viewed as a good example as a general humanist interest in education.

It can be stated that the prose of the early Renaissance was predominantly concerned with translations. Writers of early Renaissance prose were mainly reformers, humanists, and educationists of whom one can name Sir Thomas More who wrote Utopia, Roger Ascham who tried his hand at writing The School of Shooting and also The School of Master. We have also Sir Francis Bacon who attended to write various essays and also some philosophical, historical and speculative writings.

There are some other writers who tried to write religious prose: Sir John Tyndale and Richard Hooker. Another major force came from writers of prose romances which were mainly about tales of adventures as well as romance. Some writers of this category include John Lyly, Sir Philip Sidney, Thomas Nash, Robert Burton and Thomas Deloney.

It was not until the Romantic period and especially with the help of S. T. Coleridge that we witness a rediscovery of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries prose writings. Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, writes that English Renaissance prose was rooted in a sort of national soil (Coleridge, 1983, 50-52). What is significant about the English Renaissance prose is its sense of Englishness which is quite evident when we look at the scope of materials being published in this period. Most significantly are the final English translation of the Bible in this period and the writings of Francis Bacon. Rhodes (1997) states that:

English prose of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has no "Casebook" or "Critical Heritage," and there is no general account of the critical reception of the subject. But if the term Renaissance remains serviceable as a description of a literary period, then Sidney's

Arcadia, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, the writings of Bacon, Milton, and Browne, and above all the development of the English Bible, are clearly part of that cultural phenomenon (P. 1).

Renaissance literature can be viewed as an offshoot of a rhetorical culture which is rich in the arts of persuasion. In England, during Renaissance, certain schemes or patterns of words were constructed and therefore circulated in order to express beauty and intensify expressive power. Therefore, in Elizabethan period we have a significant crave for elaborate ornament in language. The same taste is in clothing, jewelry, and furniture.

As it was already mentioned, writers and scholars desired to multiply figures or certain 'syntactic forms of words'. This multiplication which is a clear sign of existence of that rhetorical culture, according to Greenblatt et al (2006), was "used to extraordinary effect"(485).according to the same author, "in poetry and in music, as in gardens, architecture, and dance, Elizabethans had a taste for elaborate, intricate but perfectly regular design. They admired form, valued artist's control of medium and took pleasure in the highly patterned surface of things"(P. 491). Moreover, most Elizabethan writers and poets, including Sir Philip Sidney, appeared to assign a sort of didactic function for poetry and works of art in general.

The period is governed by a kind of rhetoric culture and at the same time we have the emergence of a discourse filled with debates about the nature of rhetoric. Towards the end of the period, plain style gained prominent status among writers of the day and in the Restoration it was the dominant mode. The sixteenth century gave a wholeheartedly privileged status to rhetoric and, specifically, "to the pursuit of copia in discourse. Renaissance readers were trained to equate copia with eloquence" (Ibid, 15). In other words, the emergence of plain style prose challenged the dominance of the Renaissance crave for the "legitimacy of amplification"(Ibid).

4 Simple Prose Texts

Latimer produced protestant sermons with a kind of plain style in which he preferred colloquial and anecdotal. Rhetoric was viewed as an instrument in the service of dominant culture for institutional oppression. Thus, plain style can be found in the puritan writings of 1640-50. Moreover, the principles of rhetoric in Renaissance were under direct threat from another dimension: the scientific discourse of Bacon had a significant impact on the reorientation of rhetoric in favor of a 'mathematical plainness'. Bacon's scientific discourse was used as a "stimulus of scientific enquiry and progress" (Ibid, 17). In this sense, Bacon challenged the authority of humanist values and sided with empiricist scientific principles.

1.1.1 Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defense of Poesy*

[THE POET, POETRY]

Since the authors of most of our sciences [branches of knowledge] were the Romans, and before them the Greeks, let us a little stand upon their authorities, but even so far as to see what names they have given unto this now scorned skill [i.e., poetry]. Among the Romans a poet was called vates, which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or prophet, as by his conjoined words vaticinium and vaticinari["Vates"; poet-prophet, "Vaticinium"; a prophecy] is manifest: so heavenly a title did that excellent people bestow upon this heart-ravishing knowledge. And so far were they carried into the admiration there of, that they thought in the chance-able hitting upon any such verses great foretokens of their following fortunes were placed. Whereupon grew the word of Sortes Virgilianae [Casting of lots out of Virgil; i.e., accepting as prophecy a line of Virgil chosen by random opening of the Aeneid], when by sudden opening Virgil's book they lighted upon any verse of his making, whereof the histories of the emperors' lives are full: as of Albinus [Roman governor of Britain, declared emperor by his troops in 193 C. E. but defeated four years later], the governor of our island, who in his childhood met with this verse "Arma amenscapione nec sat rationis in armis" [Frantic, I take up arms, yet there

is little purpose in arms (Aeneid 2.314), and in his age performed it. Which, although it were a very vain and godless superstition, as also it was to think spirits were commanded by such verses—whereupon this word charms, derived of carmina [Songs, poems], cometh—so yet serveth it to show the great reverence those wits were held in; and altogether not without ground, since both the oracles of Delphos and Sibylla's prophecies were wholly delivered in verses. For that same exquisite observing of number and measure in the words, and that high flying liberty of conceit [Imaginative conception] proper to the poet, did seem to have some divine force in it...

[THREE KINDS OF POETS]

Of this have been three general kinds. The chief, both in antiquity and excellency, were they that did imitate the unconceivable excellencies of God. Such were David in his Psalms; Solomon in his Song of Songs, in his Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs; Moses and Deborah in their Hymns; and the writer of Job: which, beside other, the learned Emanuel Tremellius and Franciscus Junius [Two scholars who published a Protestant Latin translation of the Bible in 1579. "Moses and Deborah in their Hymns"] do entitle the poetical part of the Scripture. Against these none will speak that hath the Holy Ghost in due holy reverence. (In this kind, though in a full wrong divinity, were Orpheus, Amphion, Homer in his Hymns, and many other, both Greeks and Romans.) And this poesy must be used by who so ever will follow St. James's counsel in singing psalms when they are merry, and I know is used with the fruit of comfort by some, when, in sorrowful pangs of their death-bringing sins, they find the consolation of the never-leaving goodness.

The second kind is of them that deal with matters philosophical, either moral, as Tyrtaeus, Phocylides, Cato, or natural, as Lucretius and Virgil's Georgics; or astronomical, as Manilius and Pontanus; or historical, as Lucan: which who mis-like, the fault is in their judgment

6 Simple Prose Texts

quite out of taste, and not in the sweet food of sweetly uttered knowledge.

But because this second sort is wrapped within the fold of the proposed subject, and takes not the course of his own invention, whether they properly be poets or no let grammarians dispute, and go to the third, indeed right poets, of whom chiefly this question ariseth: betwixt whom and these second is such a kind of difference as betwixt the meaner [Lower] sort of painters, who counterfeit only such faces as are set before them, and the more excellent, who having no law but wit, bestow that in colors upon you which is fittest for the eye to see: as the constant though lamenting look of Lucretia, when she punished in herself another's fault, wherein he painteth not Lucretia whom he never saw, but painteth the outward beauty of such a virtue. For these third [I.e., the right poets] be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be; but range, only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be and should be. These be they that, as the first and most noble sort may justly be termed vates, so these are waited on in the excellentest languages and best understandings with the fore-described name of poets. For these indeed do merely make to imitate, and imitate both to delight and teach; and delight, to move men to take that goodness in hand, which without delight they would fly as from a stranger; and teach, to make them know that goodness whereunto they are moved—which being the noblest scope to which ever any learning was directed, yet want there not idle tongues to bark at them.

These be subdivided into sundry more special denominations. The most notable be the heroic, lyric, tragic, comic, satiric, iambic, elegiac, pastoral, and others, some of these being termed according to the matter they deal with, some by the sorts of verses they liked best to write in; for indeed the greatest part of poets have appareled their poetical inventions in that numerous kind of writing which is called verse—indeed but appareled, verse being but an ornament and no

cause to poetry, since there have been many most excellent poets that never versified, and now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of poets. For Xenophon, who did imitate so excellently as to give us *effigiemjustiimperii*, the portraiture of a just empire, under the name of Cyrus (as Cicero saith of him), made therein an absolute heroical poem. So did Heliodorus in his sugared invention of that picture of love in Theagenes and Chariclea; and yet both these wrote in prose: which I speak to show that it is not rhyming and versing that maketh a poet—no more than along gown maketh an advocate [Lawyer], who though he pleaded in armor should be an advocate and no soldier. But it is that feigning notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by; although indeed the senate of poets hath chosen verse as their fittest raiment, meaning, as in matter they passed all in all, so in manner to go beyond them: not speaking (table-talk fashion or like men in a dream) words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peizing [Weighing] each syllable of each word by just proportion according to the dignity of the subject.

[POETRY, PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY]

Now therefore it shall not be amiss first to weigh this latter sort of poetry by his works, and then by his parts; and if in neither of these anatomies he be condemnable, I hope we shall obtain a more favorable sentence.

This purifying of wit—this enriching of memory, enabling of judgment, and enlarging of conceit [Conceptual power. "Wit": intellect] —which commonly we call learning, under what name so ever it come forth, or to what immediate end so ever it be directed, the final end is to lead and draw us to as high a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clayey lodgings, can be capable of.

This, according to the inclination of the man, bred many-formed impressions. For some that thought this felicity principally to be

8 Simple Prose Texts

gotten by knowledge, and no knowledge to be so high or heavenly as acquaintance with the stars, gave themselves to astronomy; others, persuading themselves to be demigods if they knew the causes of things, became natural and supernatural philosophers; some an admirable delight drew to music; and some the certainty of demonstration to the mathematics. But all, one and other, having this scope: to know, and by knowledge to lift up the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying his own divine essence.

But when by the balance of experience it was found that the astronomer, looking to the stars, might fall in a ditch, that the inquiring philosopher might be blind in himself, and the mathematician might draw forth a straight line with a crooked heart, then lo, did proof, the over-ruler of opinions, make manifest that all these are but serving sciences, which, as they have each a private end in themselves, so yet are they all directed to the highest end of the mistress-knowledge, by the Greeks called architectonike, which stands (as I think) in the knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing and not of well-knowing only—even as the saddler's next end is to make a good saddle, but his further end to serve a nobler faculty, which is horsemanship, so the horseman's to soldiery, and the soldier not only to have the skill, but to perform the practice of a soldier. So that, the ending end of all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that have a most just title to be princes over all the rest.

Wherein, if we can, show we the poet's nobleness, by setting him before his other competitors. Among whom as principal challengers step forth the moral philosophers, whom, me thinketh, I see coming towards me with a sullen gravity, though they could not abide vice by daylight, rudely clothed for to witness outwardly their contempt of outward things, with books in their hands against glory, whereto they set their names, sophistically speaking against subtlety, and angry with any man in whom they see the foul fault of anger. These men casting largess as they go, of definitions, divisions, and distinctions,

with a scornful interrogative do soberly ask whether it be possible to find any path so ready to lead a man to virtue as that which teacheth what virtue is; and teach it not only by delivering forth his very being, his causes and effects, but also by making known his enemy, vice, which must be destroyed, and his cumbersome servant, passion, which must be mastered; by showing the generalities that containeth it, and the specialities that are derived from it; lastly, by plain setting down how it extendeth itself out of the limits of a man's own little world to the government of families and maintaining of public societies.

The historian scarcely giveth leisure to the moralist to say so much, but that he, laden with old mouse-eaten records, authorizing himself (for the most part) upon other histories, whose greatest authorities are built upon the notable foundation of hearsay; having much ado to accord differing writers and to pick truth out of their partiality; better acquainted with a thousand years ago than with the present age, and yet better knowing how this world goeth than how his own wit runneth; curious for antiquities and inquisitive of novelties; a wonder to young folks and a tyrant in table talk, denieth, in a great chafe, that any man for teaching of virtue, and virtuous actions, is comparable to him. "*I am testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntiavetustatis*." ["I am the witness of times, the light of truth, the life of memory, the teacher of life, the messenger of antiquity"] (Cicero, *De oratore* 2.9.36). "The philosopher," saith he, "teacheth a disputative virtue, but I do an active. His virtue is excellent in the dangerless Academy of Plato, but mine showeth forth her honorable face in the battles of Marathon, Pharsalia, Poitiers, and Agincourt. He teacheth virtue by certain abstract considerations, but I only bid you follow the footing of them that have gone before you. Old aged experience goeth beyond the fine-witted philosopher, but I give the experience of many ages. Lastly, if he make the songbook, I put the learner's hand to the lute; and if he be the guide, I am the light." Then would he allege you innumerable examples, confirming story by stories, how much the

10 Simple Prose Texts

wisest senators and princes have been directed by the credit of history, as Brutus, Alphonsus of Aragon, and who not, if need be? At length the long line of their disputation maketh a point in this, that the one giveth the precept, and the other the example.

1.1.2 Francis Bacon's *Essays*

[An Excerpt]

Of Truth

WHAT is truth? said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be, that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them, as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor, which men take in finding out of truth, nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural, though corrupt love, of the lie itself. One of the later schools of the Grecians, examineth the matter, and is at a stand, to think what should be in it, that men should love lies; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell; this same truth, is a naked, and open day-light, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs, of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond, or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds, vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds, of a number of men, poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?

One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy *vinumdaemonum*, because it fireth the imagination; and yet, it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt; such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments, and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last, was the light of reason; and his sabbath work ever since, is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light, upon the face of the matter or chaos; then he breathed light, into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light, into the face of his chosen. The poet, that beautified the sect, that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: It is a pleasure, to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure, to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below; so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling, or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological, and philosophical truth, to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear, and round dealing, is the honor of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehoods, is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding, and crooked courses, are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame, as to be found false and

12 Simple Prose Texts

perfidious. And therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason, why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge? Saith he, if it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much to say, as that he is brave towards God, and a coward towards men. For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood, and breach of faith, cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal, to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold, that when Christ cometh, he shall not find faith upon the earth.

Of Death

MEN fear death, as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children, is increased with tales, so is the other? Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations, there is sometimes mixture of vanity, and of superstition. You shall read, in some of the friars' books of mortification, that a man should think with himself, what the pain is, if he have but his finger's end pressed, or tortured, and thereby imagine, what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted, and dissolved; when many times death passeth, with less pain than the torture of a limb; for the most vital parts, are not the quickest of sense. And by him that spake only as a philosopher, and natural man, it was well said, *Pompamortismagisterret, quam mors ipsa*. Groans, and convulsions, and a discolored face, and friends weeping, and blacks, and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man, so weak, but it mates, and masters, the fear of death; and therefore, death is no such terrible enemy, when a man hath so many attendants about him, that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear preoccupateth it; nay, we read, after Otho the emperor had slain himself, pity (which

is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die, out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay, Seneca adds niceness and satiety: *Cogitaquamdiueademfeceris; morivelle, non tantumfortisaut miser, sedetiamfastidiosuspotest*. A man would die, though he were neither valiant, nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft, over and over. It is no less worthy, to observe, how little alteration in good spirits, the approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men, till the last instant...

Of Unity in Religion

RELIGION being the chief band of human society, it is a happy thing, when itself is well contained within the true band of unity. The quarrels, and divisions about religion, were evils unknown to the heathen. The reason was, because the religion of the heathen, consisted rather in rites and ceremonies, than in any constant belief. For you may imagine, what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors, and fathers of their church, were the poets. But the true God hath this attribute, that he is a jealous God; and therefore, his worship and religion, will endure no mixture, nor partner. We shall therefore speak a few words, concerning the unity of the church; what are the fruits thereof; what the bounds; and what the means.

The fruits of unity (next unto the well pleasing of God, which is all in all) are two: the one, towards those that are without the church, the other, towards those that are within. For the former; it is certain, that heresies, and schisms, are of all others the greatest scandals; yea, more than corruption of manners. For as in the natural body, a wound, or solution of continuity, is worse than a corrupt humor; so in the spiritual. So that nothing, doth so much keep men out of the church, and drive men out of the church, as breach of unity. And therefore, when so ever it cometh to that pass, that one saith, *Ecce in deserto*, another saith, *Ecce in penetralibus*; that is, when some men seek Christ, in the conventicles of heretics, and others, in an outward face

14 Simple Prose Texts

of a church, that voice had need continually to sound in men's ears, Nolite exire,—Go not out. The doctor of the Gentiles (the propriety of whose vocation, drew him to have a special care of those without) saith, if an heathen come in, and hear you speak with several tongues, will he not say that you are mad? And certainly it is little better, when atheists, and profane persons, do hear of so many discordant, and contrary opinions in religion; it doth avert them from the church, and maketh them, to sit down in the chair of the scorers. It is but a light thing, to be vouched in so serious a matter, but yet it expresseth well the deformity. There is a master of scoffing, that in his catalogue of books of a feigned library, sets down this title of a book, The Morris-Dance of Heretics. For indeed, every sect of them, hath a diverse posture, or cringe by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings, and depraved politics, who are apt to condemn holy things.

As for the fruit towards those that are within; it is peace; which containeth infinite blessings. It establisheth faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the church, distilleth into peace of conscience; and it turneth the labors of writing, and reading of controversies, into treaties of mortification and devotion.

Concerning the bounds of unity; the true placing of them, importeth exceedingly. There appear to be two extremes. For to certain zealants, all speech of pacification is odious. Is it peace, Jehu? What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. Peace is not the matter, but following, and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans, and lukewarm persons, think they may accommodate points of religion, by middle way, and taking part of both, and witty reconcilements; as if they would make an arbitrament between God and man. Both these extremes are to be avoided; which will be done, if the league of Christians, penned by our Savior himself, were in two cross clauses thereof, soundly and plainly expounded: He that is not with us, is against us; and again, He that is not against us, is with us; that is, if the points fundamental and of substance in religion, were truly discerned and distinguished, from points not merely of faith, but

of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trivial, and done already. But if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed, of rending God's church, by two kinds of controversies. The one is, when the matter of the point controverted, is too small and light, not worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contradiction. For, as it is noted, by one of the fathers, Christ's coat indeed had no seam, but the church's vesture was of divers colors; whereupon he saith, *In vestevarietas sit, scissura non sit*; they be two things, unity and uniformity. The other is, when the matter of the point controverted, is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty, and obscurity; so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious, than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding, shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself, that those which so differ, mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree. And if it come so to pass, in that distance of judgment, which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men, in some of their contradictions, intend the same thing; and accepteth of both? ... Men create oppositions, which are not; and put them into new terms, so fixed, as whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the meaning. There be also two false peaces, or unities: the one, when the peace is grounded, but upon an implicit ignorance; for all colors will agree in the dark: the other, when it is pieced up, upon a direct admission of contraries, in fundamental points. For truth and falsehood, in such things, are like the iron and clay, in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image; they may cleave, but they will not incorporate.

Concerning the means of procuring unity; men must beware, that in the procuring, or reuniting, of religious unity, they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity, and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and temporal; and both have

their due office and place, in the maintenance of religion. But we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet's sword, or like unto it; that is, to propagate religion by wars, or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences; except it be in cases of overt scandal, blasphemy, or intermixture of practice against the state; much less to nourish seditions; to authorize conspiracies and rebellions; to put the sword into the people's hands; and the like; tending to the subversion of all government, which is the ordinance of God. For this is but to dash the first table against the second; and so to consider men as Christians, as we forget that they are men. Lucretius the poet, when he beheld the act of Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed: *TantumReligiopotuitsuaderemalorum*.

What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France, or the powder treason of England? He would have been seven times more Epicure, and atheist, than he was. For as the temporal sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion; so it is a thing monstrous to put it into the hands of the common people. Let that be left unto the Anabaptists, and other furies. It was great blasphemy, when the devil said, I will ascend, and be like the highest; but it is greater blasphemy, to personate God, and bring him in saying, I will descend, and be like the prince of darkness; and what is it better, to make the cause of religion to descend, to the cruel and execrable actions of murdering princes, butchery of people, and subversion of states and governments? Surely this is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven; and set, out of the bark of a Christian church, a flag of a bark of pirates, and assassins. Therefore it is most necessary, that the church, by doctrine and decree, princes by their sword, and all learnings, both Christian and moral, as by their Mercury rod, do damn and send to hell for ever, those facts and opinions tending to the support of the same; as hath been already in good part done. Surely in counsels concerning religion, that counsel of the apostle would be prefixed, *Ira hominis non impletjustitiam Dei*. And it was a notable observation of a

wise father, and no less ingenuously confessed; that those which held and persuaded pressure of consciences, were commonly interested therein, themselves, for their own ends.

Of Revenge

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong, putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Solomon, I am sure, saith, It is the glory of a man, to pass by an offence. That which is past is gone, and irrevocable; and wise men have enough to do, with things present and to come; therefore they do but trifle with themselves, that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong, for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore why should I be angry with a man, for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong, merely out of ill-nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch, because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge, is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy; but then let a man take heed, the revenge be such as there is no law to punish; else a man's enemy is still before hand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous, the party should know, whence it cometh. This is the more generous. For the delight seemeth to be, not so much in doing the hurt, as in making the party repent. But base and crafty cowards, are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable; You shall read (saith he) that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read, that we are commanded to forgive our friends. But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune: Shall we (saith he) take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also? And so of friends in a proportion. This is