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The Schoole of Abuse

Stephen Gosson

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THE
Schoole of Abuse,
Conteining a plesaunt in-
uective against Poets, Pipers,
Plaiers, Iesters and such like
Caterpillers of a commonwealth;
Setting vp the Flagge of Defiance to their
mischieuous exercise, and ouerthrow-
ing their Bulwarkes, by Prophane
Writers, Naturall reason, and
common experience:

A discourse as plesaunt for
Gentlemen that fauour lear-
ning, as profitable for all that wyll
follow vertue.

By Stephen Gosson. Stud. Oxon.

Tuscul. I.

Mandare literis cogitationes, nec delectatione aliqua allicere Lectorem, hominis est intemperanter abutentis, et otio, et literis.

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¶ To the right noble

Gentleman, Master Philip Sidney
Esquier, Stephen Gosson wisheth health
of body, wealth of minde, rewarde
of vertue, aduancement of honour,
and good successe in godly
affairs.



Aligula lying in Fraunce with a greate armie of fighting menne, brought all his force, on a sudden to the Sea side, as though hee intended to cutte ouer, and inuade Englade: when he came to the shore, his Souldiers were presently set in araye, him selfe shipped in a small barke, weyed Ancors, and lanced out; he had not played long in the sea, vvafting too and fro, at his pleasure, but he returned agayne, stroke sayle, gaue allarme to his souldiers in token of battaile, and charged euerie man too gather

cockles. I knowe not (right worshipfull) whether my selfe be as frantike as Caligula in my proceedings, because that after I haue set out the flag of defiance to some abuses, I may seeme well ynough too strike vp the drumme, and bring all my power to a vaine skirmishe. The title of my book doth promise much, the volume you see is very little: and sithens I can not beare out my follie by authoritie, like an Emperour; I will craue pardon for my Phrenzie, by submission, as your woorshippes too commaunde. The Schoole which I builde, is narrowe, and at the first blushe appeareth but a doggehole; yet small Cloudes carie water; slender threedes sowe sure stiches; little heares haue their shadowes; blunt stones whette kniues; from hard rockes, flow soft springes; the whole worlde is drawn in a mappe; Homers Iliades in a nutte shell; a Kings picture in a pennie; Little Chestes may holde greate Treasure; a fewe Cyphers contayne the substance of a rich Merchant; The shortest Pamphlette may shrowde matter; The hardest heade may giue light; and the harshest penne maye sette downe somewhat woorth the reading.

Hee that hath bin shooke with a fierce ague, giueth good counsell to his friends when he is wel: When Ouid had roaued long on the Seas of wantonnesse, hee became a good Pilot to all that followed, and printed a carde of euerie daunger: and I perswade my selfe, that seeing the abuses which I reueale, trying them thorowly to my hurt, and bearing the stench of them yet in my owne nose; I may best make the frame, found the schoole, and reade the first lecture of all my selfe, too warne euery man to auoyde the perill. Wherein I am contrary to Simonides, for hee was euer slowe to utter, and swift to conceale, beeing more sorrowfull, that he had spoken, then that hee had held his peace. But I accuse my selfe of discourtesie too my friendes, in keeping these abuses so long secret, and nowe thinke my duetie

discharged in layinge them open.

A good Phisition when the disease cannot be cured within, thrusteth the corruption out in the face, and deliuereth his Patient to the Chirurgion: Though my skill in Physicke bee small, I haue some experience in these maladyes, which I thrust out with my penne too euery mans viewe, yeelding the ranke fleshe to the Chirugions knife, and so ridde my handes of the cure, for it passeth my cunning too heale them priuily.

If your Worshippe vouchsafe to enter the Schoole doore, and walke an hower or twaine within for your pleasure, you shall see what I teach, which presente my Schoole, my cunning, and my selfe to your worthy Patronage. Beseeching you, though I bidde you to Dinner, not to looke for a feaste fit for the curious taste of a perfect Courtier: but too imitate Philip of Macedon, who beeing inuited to a Farmers house, when hee came from Hunting, brought a greater trayne than the poore man looked for: When they were sette, the good Philip perceiuing his Hoste sorowfull, for want of meate to satisfie so many, exhorted his friends to keepe their stomackes for the seconde course: whereupon euery man fedde modestly on that whiche stode before him, and lefte meate inough at the taking vppe of the table. And I trust if your Worshippe feede sparingly on this, (too comforte your poore Hoste) in hope of a better course heereafter, though the Dishes be fewe, that I set before you, they shall for this time suffice your selfe and a great many moe.

*Your worshippes to
commaund. Stephan Gosson.*

To the Reader.



Entlemen, and others, you may wel thinke that I sell my corne, and eate Chaffe; barter my wine, and drinke Water; sith I take vpon mee to driue you from Playes, when mine owne woorkes are dayly to be seene vpon stages, as sufficient witnesses of mine owne folly, and seuer Iudges againste my selfe. But if you sawe how many teares of sorrowe mine eyes shed, when I beholde them; or how many drops of blood my heart sweates, when I remember them; you would not so much blame me for missespending my time, when I knew not what I did; as commend mee at the laste, for recouering my steppes, with grauer counsell. After-wittes are euer best, burnt Children dread the fire. I haue seene that which you behold, and I shun that which you frequent. And that I might the easier pull your mindes from such studyes, drawe your feete from such places; I haue sente you a Schoole of those abuses, which I haue gathered by obseruation.

Theodorus the Atheist complayned, that his schollers were woont, how plaine soeuer he spake, to misconster him; howe right soeuer he wrote, to wrest him: And I looke for some such Auditors in my Schoole, as of rancour will hit me, how soeuer I warde; or of stomacke assaile mee, howe soeuer I bee garded; making black of white, Chalk of Cheese, the full Moone of a messe of Cruddes. These are such as with curst Curses barke at euery man but their owne friendes: these snatch vp bones in open streetes, and byte them with madnesse in secrete corners: these with sharpe windes, pearce subtiler in narrowe lanes then in large fieldes. And sith there is neither authoritie in me to bridle their tongues, nor reason in

them to rule their owne talke; I am contented to suffer them their taunts; requesting you which are Gentlemen, of curtesie to beare with me, and because you are learned amende the faultes freendly, which escape the Presse: The ignoraunt I knowe will swallow them downe, and digest them with ease. Farewel.

Yours Stephan
Gosson.

¶ The Schoole of Abuse.



HE *Syracusans* vsed such varietie of dishes in theyr banquets, that when they were sette, and their boordes furnished, they were many times in doubt, which they shoulde touth first, or taste last. And in my opinion the world giueth euery writer so large a field to walke in, that before he set penne to the booke, he shall find him selfe feasted at *Syracusa*, vncertaine where to begin, or when to end. This caused *Pindarus* too question with his Muse, whether he were better with his art to discifer the life of y^e Nimp[h]e *Melia*, or *Cadmus* encounter with the *Dragon*, or the warres of *Hercules*, at the walles of *Thebes*, or *Bacchus* cuppes, or *Venus* iugling. Hee sawe so many turninges layde open to his feete, that hee knewe not which way to bende his pace.

Therefore as I cannot but commende his wisdom, which in banqueting feedes most vpon that, that doth nourish best; so must I dispraise his methode in writing, which following the course of amorous Poets, dwelleth longest in those pointes, that profite least; and like a wanton whelp, leaueth the game, to runne riot. The *Scarabe* flies ouer many a sweete flower, and lightes in a cowshard: It is the custome of the flye to leaue the sound places of the Horse, and suck at the Botch: The nature of *Colloquintida*, to draw the worst humours too it selfe: The maner of swine, to forsake the fayre fieldes, and wallow in the myre: And the whole practise of Poets, eyther with fables to shew theyr abuses, or with plaine tearmes to vnfolde theyr mischiefe, discouer theyr shame, discredit them selues, and disperse their poyson through all the worlde. *Virgill* sweates in describyng his Gnat: *Ouid* bestirreth him to paint out his Flea: the one shewes his art in the lust of *Dido*, the other his cunning in the inceste of *Myrrha*, and that trumpet of Baudrie, the Craft of loue.

I must confesse that Poets are the whetstones of wit, notwithstanding that wit is dearly bought: where hony and gall are mixed, it will be hard to seuer the one from the other[.] The deceitfull Phisition giueth sweete Syropes to make his poyson goe downe the smoother: The Iuggler casteth a myst to worke the closer: The *Syrens* song is the Saylers wrack: The Fowlers whistle, the birdes death: The wholesome bayte, the fishes bane: The Harpies haue Virgins faces, and vultures Talentes: *Hyena* speakes like a friend, and deuoures like a Foe: The calmest Seas hide dangerous Rockes: the Woolf iettes in Weathers felles: Many good sentences are spoken by *Danus*, to shadowe his knauery: and written by Poets, as ornaments to beautifye their woorkes, and sette theyr trumperie too sale without suspect.

But if you looke well too *Epæus* horse, you shall finde in his bowels the destruction of *Troy*: open the sepulchre of *Semyramis*, whose Title promiseth suche wealth to the Kinges of *Persia*, you shall see nothing but deade bones: Rippe vp the golden Ball, that *Nero* consecrated to *Iupiter Capitollinus*, you shall haue it stuffed with the shauinges of his Beard: pul off the visard that Poets maske in, you shall

disclose their reproch, bewray their vanitie, loth their wantonnesse, lament their follie, and perceiue their sharpe sayings to be placed as Pearles in Dunghils, fresh pictures on rotten walles, chaste Matrons apparel on common Curtesans. These are the Cuppes of *Circes*, that turne reasonable creatures into brute Beastes, the balles of *Hippomenes*, that hinder the course of *Atalanta*; and the blocks of the Diuel that are cast in our wayes, to cut off the rase of toward wittes. No marueyle though *Plato* shut them out of his schoole, and banished them quite from his common wealth, as effeminate writers, vnprofitable members, and vtter enimies to vertue.

The *Romans* were verie desirous to imitate the *Greekes*, and yet verie loth to receiue their Poets: insomuch that *Cato* layth it in the dishe of *Marcus* the noble as a foule reproche, that in the time of his Consulshippe, hee brought *Ennius* the Poet into his prouince. *Tullie* accustomed to read them with great diligence in his youth, but when hee waxed grauer in studie, elder in yeares, riper in iudgement, hee accompted them the fathers of lyes, Pipes of vanitie, and Schooles of Abuse.

Maximus Tyrius taketh vppon him to defend the discipline of these Doctors vnder the name of *Homer*, wresting the rashnes of *Ajax*, to valour; the cowardice of *Vlisses*, to Policie; the dotage of *Nestor*, to graue counsell, and the battaile of *Troy*, too the woonderfull conflict of the foure Elementes: where *Iuno* which is counted the ayre, settes in her foote to take vp the strife, and steps boldly betwixt them to part the fray. It is a Pageant woorth the sight, to beholde how he labors with Mountaines to bring forth Mise; much like to some of those Players, that come to the scaffold with Drum and Trumpet to profer skirmishe, and when they haue sounded Allarme, off go the peeces to encounter a shadow, or conquer a Paper monster. You will smile I am sure if you read it, to see how this morall Philosopher toyles too draw the Lyons skin vpon *Æsops* Asse.

Tusc. 1.2.

A desperate conflict.

Hercules shoes on a childe's feete, amplifying that which the more it is stirred, the more it stinkes; the lesse it is talked of, the better it is liked; and as waywarde children, the more they bee flattered, the worse they are; or as curst sores with often touching waxe angry, and run the longer without healing. He attributeth the beginning of vertue to *Minerva*, of friendship to *Venus*, and the roote of all handy crafts to *Vulcan*; but if he had broke his arme aswel as his legge, when he fel out of heauen into *Lemnos*, either *Apollo* must haue played the Bonesetter, or euery occupation beene laide a water. *Plato* when he sawe the doctrine of these Teachers, neither for profite, necessary, nor to be wished for pleasure, gaue them all Drummes entertainment, not suffering them once to shew their faces in a reformed common wealth. And the *Tyrius* that layes such a foundation for Poets, in the name of *Homer*, ouerthrows his whole building in the person of *Mithecus*, which was an excellent Cooke among the *Greekes*, and asmuch honored for his confections, as *Phidias* for his caruing. But when he came to *Sparta*, thinking there for his cunning to be accounted a God, the good lawes of *Licurgus*, and custom of the country were to hot for his diet. The gouernours banished him and his art, and al the inhabitants folowing the steppes of their Predecessors, vsed not with dainties to prouoke appetite, but with labour and trauell too whette their stomackes to their meate.

Poets banished by *Plato*.

I may well liken *Homer* to *Mithecus*, and Poetes to Cookes the pleasures of the one winnes the body from labor, and conquereth the sense; the allurement of the other draws the mind from vertue, and confoundeth wit. As in euery perfect common wealth

Poetes and Cookes compared together.

there ought to be good lawes established, right maintained, wrong repressed, vertue rewarded, vice punished, and all maner of abuses thoroughly purged: So ought there such schooles for the furtherance of the same to be aduanced, that young men may bee taught that in greene yeeres, that becomes them to practise in gray haire.

Anacharsis beeing demaunded of a *Greeke*, whether they

had not instrumentes of Musicke, or Schooles of Poetrie in *Scythia*, answered, yes, and that without vice, as though it were either impossible, or incredible, that no abuse should be learned where such lessons are taught, and such schooles maintained.

Poetrie in
Scythia
without vice,
as the
Phoenix in
Arabia,
without a
fellow.

Salust in describing the nurture of *Sempronia*, commendeth her witte in that shee coulde frame her selfe to all companies, too talke discretely with wyse men, and vaynely with wantons, taking a quip ere it came too grounde, and returning it back without a faulte. She was taught (saith he) both Greek and Latine, she could versifie, sing, and daunce, better then became an honest woman. *Sappho* was skilfull in Poetrie and sung wel, but she was whorish. I set not this downe too condemne the giftes of versifying, daunsing or singyng in women, so they bee vsed with meane, and exercised in due tyme. But to shew you that as by *Anacharsis* report the *Scythians* did it without offence: so one Swalowe bringes not Sommer; nor one particular example sufficient prooffe for a generall precept. Whyte siluer, drawes a blacke lyne; Fyre is as hurtfull, as healthie; water as daungerous, as it is commodious; and these qualities as harde to bee wel vsed when we haue them, as they are to be learned before wee get them. Hee that goes to Sea, must smel of the Ship; and that sayles into Poets wil sauour of Pitch.

Qualities
allowed in
women.

C. Marius in the assembly of the whole Senate at *Rome*, in a somlemne oration, giueth an account of his bringing vp: he sheweth that he hath beene taught to lye on the ground, to suffer all weathers, to leade men, to strike his foe, to feare nothing but an euill name: and chalengeth praise vnto him selfe, in that hee neuer learned the Greeke tongue, neither ment to be instructed in it heerafter, either that he thought it too farre a iourney to fetch learning beyonde the fielde, or because he doubted the abuses of those Schooles, where Poets were euer the head Maisters.

Tiberius the Emperour sawe somewhat, when he iudged *Scaurus* to death for writing a Tragidie: *Augustus*, banished *Ouid*: And *Nero* when he charged *Lucan*, to put vp his pipes, to stay his penne and write no more. *Burrus* and *Seneca* the schoolemaisters of *Nero* are flowted and hated of the people, for teaching their Scholer the song of *Attis*. For *Dion* saith, that the hearing thereof wroonge laughter and teares from most of those that were then about him. Wherby I iudge that they scorned the folly of the teachers, and lamented the frenzie of the Scholer, who beeing Emperour of *Rome*, and bearing the weight of the whole common wealth vppon his shoulders, was easier to bee drawn to vanitie by wanton Poets, then to good gouernment by the fatherly counsell of graue Senators. They were condemned to dye by the lawes of the Heathens, which inchaunted the graine in other mens grounds: and are not they accursed thinke you by the mouth of God, which hauing the gouernment of young Princes, with Poeticall fantasies draw them to the schooles of their owne abuses, bewitching the graine in the green blade, that was sowed for the sustenance of many thousands, and poisoning the spring with their amorous layes, whence the whole common wealth should fetch water? But to leaue the scepter to *Iupiter*, and instructing of Princes to *Plutarch* and *Xenophon*, I will beare a lowe sayle, and rowe neere the shore, least I chaunce to bee carried beyonde

Poets chiefe
Maisters in
Greece.

Poets
banished from
Rome.

*Dion in vita
Neronis*.

my reache, or runne a grounde in those Coasts which I neuer knewe. My onely endeouour shalbe to show you that in a rough cast, which I see in a cloude, loking through my fingers.

And because I haue bene matriculated my selfe in the schoole where so many abuses flourish, I wil imitate y^e dogs of Ægypt, which comming to the bancks of *Nylus* too quenche their thirste, syp and away, drinke running, lest they bee snapt short for a pray too Crocodiles. I shoulde tel tales out of the Schoole, and bee Ferruled for my faulte, or hyssed at for a blab, yf I layde al the orders open before your eyes. You are no sooner entred, but libertie looseth the reynes, and geues you head, placing you with Poetrie in the lowest forme: when his skill is showne too make his Scholer as good as euer twangde, hee preferres you too Pyping, from Pyping to playing, from play to pleasure, from pleasure to slouth, from slouth to sleepe, from sleepe to sinne, from sinne to death, from death to the deuill, if you take your learning apace, and passe through euery forme without reuolting. Looke not too haue mee discourse these at large, the Crocodile watcheth to take me tardie, which soeuer of them I touche, is a vyle: Trype and goe, for I dare not tarry.

Heraclides accounteth *Amphyon* the ringleader of poets and Pypers: *Delphus Philammones* penned the birth of *Latona*, *Diana* and *Apollo* in verse; and taught the people to Pype and Daunce rounde about the temple of *Delphos*. *Hesiodus* was as cunning in Pyping, as in Poetrie: so was *Terpandrus*, and after him *Clonas*. *Apollo* which is honoured of Poets as the God of their Art, had at the one side of his Idol in *Delos* a bowe, and at the other, the three Graces with three sundrie instruments, of which one was a pype, and some writers affirme that he pyped himselfe now and than.

Poetrie and pyping, haue allwaies bene so vnited together, that til the time of *Melanippides*, Pipers were Poets hyerlings. But marke I pray you, how they are now both abused.

The right vse of auncient Poetrie was too haue the notable employtes of woorthy Captaines, the holesome counsels of good fathers, and vertuous liues of predecessors set downe in numbers, and song to the Instrument at solemne feastes, that the sound of the one might draw the hearers from kissing the cupp too often; the sense of the other put them in minde of things past, and chaulk out the way to do the like. After this manner were the *Boeotians* trained from rudenesse to ciuilitie, The *Lacedemonians* instructed by *Terteæus* verse, The *Argiues* by the melody of *Telesilla*, And the *Lesbians* by *Alcæus* Odes.

Plutarch.

Olde Poets.

To this end are instruments vsed in battaile, not to tickle the eare, but too teach euery souldier when to strike and when to stay, when to flye, and when to followe.

Chiron by singing to his instrument, quencheth *Achiles* furye; *Terpandrus* with his notes, layeth the tempest, and pacifies the tumult at *Lacedæmon*: *Homer* with his Musicke cured the sick Souldiers in the *Grecians* campe, and purged euery mans Tent of the Plague. Thinke you that those miracles coulde be wrought with playing of Daunces, Dumpes, Pauins, Galiardes, Measures Fancies, or new streynes? They neuer came wher this grewe, nor knew what it ment.

Homer.

Pythagoras bequeathes them a Clokebagge, and condemnes them for fooles, that iudge Musicke by sounde and eare. If you will bee good Scholars, and profite well in the Arte of Musicke, shutte your Fidels in their cases, and looke vp to heauen: the order of the Spheres, the vnfallible motion of the Planets, the iuste course of the yeere, and varietie of seasons, the concorde of the Elementes and their qualyties, Fyre, Water, Ayre, Earth, Heate, Colde, Moysture and Drought concurring together to the constitution of earthly bodies and sustenance of euery creature.

The politike Lawes in well gouerned common wealthes, that treade downe the prowde, and vpholde the meeke, the loue of the King and his subiectes, the Father and his childe, the Lord and his Slaue, the Maister and his Man, The *Trophees* and *Triumphes* of our auncestours, which pursued vertue at the harde heeles, and shunned vyce as a rocke for feare of shipwracke, are excellent maisters too shewe you that this is right Musicke, this perfecte harmony. *Chiron* when hee appeased the wrath of *Achilles*, tolde him the duetie of a good souldier, repeated the vertues of his father *Peleus*, and sung the famous enterprises of noble men. *Terpandrus* when he ended the brabbles at *Lacedaemon*, neyther pyped *Rogero* nor *Turkeloy*, but reckoning vp the commodities of friendship, and fruites of debate, putting them in mind of *Lycurgus* lawes, taught them too treade a better measure. When *Homers* Musicke droue the pestilence from the *Grecians* camp, there was no such vertue in his penne, nor in his pipe, but if I might bee vmpier, in the sweet harmony of diuerse natures and wonderful concord of sundry medicines. For *Appolloes* cunning extendeth it self aswel to Phisick, as musick or Poetrie. And *Plutarch* reporteth that as *Chiron* was a wise man, a learned Poet, a skilful Musition, so was hee also a teacher of iustice, by shewing what Princes ought to doe, and a Reader of Phisicke, by opening the natures of many simples. If you enquire howe manie such Poetes and Pipers wee haue in our Age, I am perswaded that euerie one of them may creepe through a ring, or daunce the wilde Morice in a Needles eye. We haue infinite Poets, and Pipers, and suche peeuish cattel among vs in Englande, that liue by merrie begging, mainteyned by almes, and priuily encroch vpon euerie mans purse. But if they that are in authoritie, and haue the sworde in their handes to cut off abuses, shoulde call an accompt to see how many *Chirons*, *Terpandri*, and *Homers* are heere, they might cast the summe without pen, or counters, and sit downe with *Racha*, to weepe for her Children, because they were not. He that compareth our instruments, with those that were vsed in ancient times, shall see them agree like Dogges and Cattes, and meete as iump as Germans lippes. *Terpandrus* and *Olimpus* vsed instruments of 7. strings. And *Plutarch* is of an opinion that the instruments of 3. strings, which were vsed before their time, passed al that haue followed since. It was an old law and long kept that no man should according to his owne humor, adde or diminish, in matters concerning that Art, but walk in the pathes of their predecessors. But when newfangled *Phrynus* becam a fiddler, being somewhat curious in carping, and searching for moats with a pair of blearde eies, thought to amend his maisters, and marred al. *Timotheus* a bird of the same broode, and a right hound of the same Hare, toke the 7. stringed harp, that was altogether vsed in *Terpandrus* time, and increaced the number of the strings at his owne pleasure. The *Argiues* appointed by their lawes great punishments for such as placed aboue 7. strings vpon any instrument. *Pythagoras* commaunded that no Musition should go beyond his *Diapason*. Were the *Argiues* and *Pythagoras* nowe aliue, and saw how many frets, how many stringes, how many stops, how many keyes, how many cliffes, how many moodes, how many flats, how many sharps, how many rules, how many spaces, how many noates, how many restes, how many querks, how many corners, what chopping, what changing, what tossing, what turning, what wresting and wringing is among our Musitions, I beleue verily, that they would cry out with the countryman: Heu *quòd tam pingui macer est mihi taurus in aruo*. Alas here is fat feeding, and leane beasts: or as one said at the shearing of hogs, great cry and litle wool, much adoe, and smal help. To shew y^e abuses of these vnthrifty scholers that despise y^e good rules of their ancient masters and run to the shop of their owne deuises, defacing olde stampes, forging newe Printes, and coining strange precepts, *Phoerocrates* a Comicall Poet, bringeth in Musicke and Iustice vpon the stage: Musicke with her clothes tottered, her fleshe torne, her face deformed, her whole bodie mangled and dismembred: Iustice, viewing her well, and pitying her case,

True Musicke.

questioneth with her howe shee came in that plight: to whom Musick replyes, that *Melanippides*, *Phrynus*, *Timotheus*, and such fantastick heades, haue so disfigured her lookes, defaced her beautie, so hacked her,

and hewed her, and with manye stringes, geuen her so many woundes, that she is stricken to death, in daunger to peryshe, and present in place the least part of her selfe. When the *Sicilians*, and *Dores* forsooke the playnsong that they had learned of their auncestours in the Mountaynes, and practiced long among theyr heardes, they founde out such descant in *Sybaris* instrumentes, that by dauncing and skipping the fel into lewdnesse of life. Neither staid these abuses in the compasse of that countrey : but like vnto yll weedes in time spread so far, that they choked the good grayne in euery place.

Musicke sore
wounded.

For as Poetrie and Piping are Cosen germans: so piping, and playing are of great affinity, and all three chayned in linkes of abuse.

Plutarch complaineth, that ignorant men, not knowing the maiestie of auncient musick, abuse both the eares of the people, and the Arte it selfe: with bringing sweete comfortes into Theaters, which rather effeminate the minde, as pricks vnto vice, then procure amendement of manners, as spurres to vertue. *Ouid* the high martial of *Venus* fielde planteth his maine battell in publique assemblies, sendeth out his scoutes too Theaters to descry the enimie, and in steede of vaunte Curriers, with instruments of musicke, playing, singing, and dauncing, geues the first charge. *Maximus Tyrius* holdeth it for a Maxime that the bringing of instruments to Theaters and plaies, was the first cup that poisoned the commen wealth. They that are borne in *Seriphos*, and cockered continually in those Islandes, where they see nothing but Foxes and Hares, wil neuer be persuaded that there are huger beastes: They that neuer went out of the champions in *Brabant*, will hardly conceiue what rockes are in Germany. And they that neuer goe out of their houses, for regard of thier credit, nor steppe from the vniuersitye for loue of knowledge, seeing but slender offences and small abuses within their owne walles, wil neuer beleue y^t such rockes are abrode, nor such horrible monsters in playing places. But as (I speake the one to my comforte, the other to my shame, and remember both with a sorrowfull hart) I was first instructed in the vniuersity, after drawne like a nouice to these abuses: so will I shew you what I see, and informe you what I reade of such affaires. *Ouid* sayth, that *Romulus* builte his Theater as a horse faire for hores, made Triumphes, and set out playes to gather the fayre women together, that euery one of his souldiers might take where he liked, a snatch of his share: wherevpon the Amorous Scholemaister bursteth out in these words:

*Romule, militibus solus dare præmia nosti:
Hæc mihi si dederis commoda, miles ero.*

Thou *Romulus* alone knowest how thy souldiers to rewarde:
Graunt me the like, my selfe will be attendant on thy garde.

It should seeme that the abuse of such places was so great, that for any chaste liuer to haunt them was a black swan, and a white crowe. *Dion* so straightly forbiddeth the auncient families of Rome and gentlewomen that tender their name and honor, to come to Theaters, and rebuks them so sharply, when he takes them napping, that if they be but once seene there, hee iudgeth it sufficient cause to speake il of them and thinke worse. The shadowe of a knaue hurts an honest man: the sent of the stewes a sober

matron: and the shew of Theaters a simple gaser. *Clitomachus* the wrestler geuen altogether to manly exercise, if hee had hearde any talke of loue, in what company soeuer he had bin, would forsake his seat, and bid them adue.

Lacon when he sawe the *Atheniens* studie so muche to set out Playes, sayde they were madde. If men for good exercise, and women for theyr credite, be shut from Theaters, whom shall we suffer to goe thither? Litle children? *Plutarch* with a caueat keepeth them out, not so much as admitting the litle crackhalter that carrieth his maisters pantouffles, to set foote within those doores: And alledgeth this reason, that those wanton spectacles of lyght huswiues, drawing gods from the heauens, and young men from them selues to shipwracke of honestie, will hurte them more, then if at the Epicures table, they had nigh burnt their guts with ouer feeding. For if the body bee ouercharged, it may be holpe; but

the surfitte of the soule is hardly cured. Here I doubtte not but some Archplayer or other that hath read a litle, or stumbled by chance vpon *Plautus* comedies, will cast me a bone or ii. to pick, y^t whatsoeuer these ancient writers haue spoken against playes is to bee applied too the abuses on olde Comedies, where Gods are broughte in, as Prisoners to beautie, rauishers of Virgins, and seruantes by loue, too earthly creatures. But the Comedies that are exercised in oure dais are better sifted. They shewe no such branne: The first smelte of *Plautus*, these tast of *Menander*; the lewdeness of Gods, is altered and chaunged to the loue of young men; force, to friendship; rapes, too mariage; wooing allowed by assurance of wedding; priuie meetinges of bachelours and maidens on the stage, not as murderers that deuour the good name ech of other in their mindes, but as those that desire to bee made one in hearte. Nowe are the abuses of the worlde reuealed, euery man in a play may see his owne faultes, and learne by this glasse, to amende his manners. *Curculio* may chatte til his heart ake, ere any be offended with his gyrdes. Deformities are checked in ieast, and mated in earnerst. The sweetenesse of musicke, and pleasure of sportes, temper the bitternesse of rebukes, and mitigate the tartenesse of euery taunt according to this

Obiection.

Omne vafer vitium redenti Flaccus amico
Narrat, et admissus circum precordia ludit.

Flaccus among his friends, with fanning Muse
Doth nip him neere, that fostreth foule abuse.

Therefore they are either so blinde, that they cannot, or so blunt, that they

will not see why this exercise should not be suffered as a profitable recreation. For my parte I am neither so fonde a Phisition, nor so bad a Cooke, but I can allowe my patient a cup of wine to meales, although it be hotte; and pleasaunt sauces to driue downe his meate, if his stomake bee queasie. Notwithstanding, if people will be instructed, (God be thanked) wee haue Diuines enough to discharge that, and moe by a great many, then are well hearkened to: yet sith these abuses are growne too head, and sinne so rype, the number is lesse then I would it were.

Answered.

Euripides holdes not him onely a foole, that beeing well at home, wil gad abrode, that hath a Conduite within doore, and fetcheth water without: but all suche beside, as haue sufficient in them selues, to make

them selues merry with pleasaunte talke, tending too good, and mixed with *ἐυτραπελία* the *Grecians* glee, yet will they seeke when they neede not, to be sported abrode at playes and Pageauntes. *Plutarch* likeneth the recreation that is gotte by conference, too a pleasaunt banquet; the sweet pappe of the one sustaineth the body, the sauery doctrine of the other doth nourish the minde: and as in banquetting, the wayter standes ready too fill the Cuppe: So in all our recreations we should haue an instructor at our elbowes to feede the soule. If wee gather Grapes among thistles, or seeke for this foode at Theaters, wee shall haue a harde pyttaunce, and come to shorte commons. I cannot thinke that Cittie to be safe, that strikes downe her *Percollices*, rammes vp her gates, and suffereth the enimie to enter the posterne. Neyther will I be perswaded, that he is in any way likely to conquer affection, which breaketh his instrumentes, burneth all his Poets, abandons his haunt, mufleth his eyes as he passeth the streate, and resortes too Theaters too bee assaulted. Cookes did neuer shewe mor crafte in their iunckets to vanquish the taste, nor Painters in shadowes to allure the eye, then Poets in Theaters to wounde the conscience.

There set they abroche straunge consortes of melody, to tickle the eare, costly apparel, to flatter the sight; effeminate gesture, to rauish the sence; and wanton speache, to whet desire too inordinate lust. Therefore of both barrelles, I iudge Cookes and Painters the better hearing, for the one extendeth his arte no farther then to the tongue, palate, and nose, the other to the eye; and both are ended in outwarde sense, which is common too vs with brute beasts. But these by the priuie entries of the eare, slip downe into the hart, and with gunshotte of affection gaule the minde, where reason and vertue should rule the roste. These people in *Rome* were as pleasant as *Nectar* at the first beginning, and cast out for lees, when their abuses were knowen. They whome *Cæsar* vpheld, were driuen out by *Octavian*: whom *Caligula* reclaimed, were cast of by *Nero*: whom *Nerua* exalted, were throwne downe by *Traian*: whom *Anthony* admitted, were expelled againe, pestred in Gallies and sent into *Hellespont* by *Marcus Aurelius*. But when the whole rabble of Poets, Pipers, Players, Iugglers, Iesters, and dauncers were receiued againe, *Rome* was reported to bee fuller of fooles then of wise men. *Domitian* suffered playing and dauncing so long in Theaters, that

Paris led the shaking of sheetes with *Domitia* and *Mnester* the Trenchmour with *Messalina*. *Caligula* made so much of Players and Dauncers, that hee suffered them openly to kysse his lippes, when the Senators might scarce haue a lick at his feete: He gaue Dauncers great stipends for selling their hopps: and placed *Apelles* the player by his own sweete side: Besides that you may see what excellent graue men were euer about him, he loued *Prasinus* the Cochman so wel, that for good wil to the master, he bid his horse to supper, gaue him wine to drink in cups of estate, set barly graines of golde before him to eate, and swore by no bugs, that hee would make him a Consul: which thing (saith *Dion*) had bin performed, had he not bin preuented by suddain death.

Domitia was the first wife of *Domitian*, and *Messalina*, the second.

Dion.

For as his life was abhominable, so was his end miserable: Comming from dancing and playing, he was slaine by *Chærea*, a iust rewarde, and a fit Catastrophe. I haue heard some Players vaunt of the credit they had in *Rome*, but they are as foolish in that, as *Vibius Rufus* which bosted himself to be an Emperor because hee had sit in *Cæsars* chaire, and a perfect Orator, because he was married to *Tullies* widowe. Better might they say them selues to be murderers, because they haue represented the persons of *Thyestes* and *Atreus*, *Achilles* and *Hector*: or perfect Limme lifters, for teaching the trickes of euery Strumpet. Such are the abuses that I reade of in *Rome*: such are the Caterpillers that haue deuoured and blasted the fruite of *Ægypt*: Such are the Dragons that are hurtful in *Affricke*: Such are the Adders that sting with pleasure, and kil with paine: and such are the *Basiliskes* of the world, that poyson, as well with

the beame of their sighte, as with the breath of their mouth.

Consider with thy selfe (gentle Reader) the olde discipline of Englande, mark what we were before, and what we are now: Leaue *Rome* a while, and cast thine eye backe to thy Predecessors, and tell mee howe wonderfully wee haue beene chaunged, since wee were schooled with these abuses. *Dion* sayth, that english men could suffer watching and labor, hunger and thirst, and beare of al stormes with hed and shoulders, they vsed slender weapons, went naked, and were good soldiours, they fed vppon rootes and barks of trees, they would stand vp to the chin many dayes in marishes without victualles: and they had a kind of sustenance in time of neede, of which if they had taken but the quantitie of a beane, or the weight of a pease, they did neyther gape after meate, nor long for the cuppe, a great while after. The men in valure not yeelding to *Scithia*, the women in courage passing the *Amazons*. The exercise of both was shootyng and darting, running and wrestling, and trying such maisteries, as eyther consisted in swiftnesse of feete, agilitie of body, strength of armes, or Martiall discipline. But the exercise that is nowe among vs, is banqueting, playing, pipyng, and dauncing, and all suche delightes as may win vs to pleasure, or rocke vs a sleepe.

Maners of
England in
olde time,

Olde exercise
of England.

New England

Oh what a woonderfull change is this? Our wrestling at armes, is turned to wallowyng in Ladies laps, our courage to cowardice, our running to ryot, our Bowes into Bolles, and our Dartes to Dishes. We haue robbed *Greece* of Gluttonie, *Italy* of wantonnesse, *Spaine* of pride, *Fraunce* of deceite, and *Dutchland* of quaffing. Compare *London* to *Rome*, and *England* to *Italy*, you shall finde the Theaters of the one, the abuses of the other, to be rife among vs. *Experto crede*, I haue seene somewhat, and therefore I thinke may say the more. In *Rome* when Plaies or Pageants are showne: *Ouid* chargeth his Pilgrims to crepe close to the Saintes, whom they serue, and shew their double diligence to lifte the Gentlewomens roabes from the grounde, for soyling in the duste; to sweepe Moates from their Kirtles, to keepe their fingers in vre; to lay their hands at their backes for an easie stay; to look vppon those, whome they beholde; too prayse that, whiche they commende; too lyke euerye thing that pleaseth them; to presente them Pomegranates, to picke as they syt; and when all is done, to waite on them mannerly to their houses. In our assemblies at playes in *London*, you shall see suche heauing, and shoouing, suche ytching and shouldring, too sitte by women; Suche care for their garments, that they bee not trode on: Such eyes to their lappes, that no chippes light in them: Such pillowes to ther backes, that they take no hurte: Such masking in their eares, I knowe not what: Such giuing the Pippins to passe the time: Suche playing at foot Saunt without Cardes: Such ticking, such toying, such smiling, such winking, and such manning them home, when the sportes are ended, that it is a right Comedie, to marke their behauiour, to wathe their conceites, as the Catte for the Mouse, and as good as a course at the game it selfe, to dogge them a little, or followe aloofe by the print of their feete, and so discover by slotte where the Deare taketh soyle. If this were as well noted, as ill seene: or as openly punished, as secretly practiced: I haue no doubt but the cause would be feared to dry vp the effect, and these prettie Rabbets very cunningly ferretted from their borrowes. For they that lack Customers al the weeke, either because their haunte in vnknownen, or the Constables and Officers of their Parishes, watch them so narrowly, that they dare not queatche; To celebrate the Sabboth, flock to Theaters, and there keepe a generall Market of Bawdrie: Not that any filthynesse in deede, is committed within the compasse of that grounde, as was doone in *Rome*, but that euery wanton and his Parmour, euery man and his Mistresse, euery John and his Joan, euery knaue and his queane, are there first acquainted and cheapen the Merchandise in that place, which they

pay for elsewhere as they can agree. These wormes when they dare not nestle in the Pescod at home, finde refuge abroad and are hidde in the eares of other mens Corne. Euery Vawter in one blinde Tauerne or other, is Tenant at will, to which shee tolleth reforme, and playes the stale to vtter their victuall, and helpe them to emptie their mustie caskes. There is she so intreated with wordes, and receiued with curtesie, that euery back roome in the house is at her commaundement. Some that haue neither land to maintaine them, nor good occupation to get their breade, desirous to strowt it with the beste, yet disdayning too liue by the seate of their browes, haue found out this cast of Ledgerdemayne, to play fast and loose among their neighbours. If any parte of Musick haue suffred shipwrack, and ariued by fortune at their fingers endes, with shew of gentilitie they take vp faire houses, receiue lusty lasses at a price for boorders, an pipe from morning to euening for wood and coale. By the brothers, cosens, vncles, great grandsires and such like acquaintance of their ghestes, they drink of the best, they sit rent free, they haue their owne Table spreade to their handes, without wearing the strings of their pursse, or any thing else, but housholde and honestie. When resorte so increaseth that they growe in suspition, and the pottes which are sent so often too the Tauerne, gette such a knock before they come home, that they returne their Mayster a crack to his credite: Though hee bee called in question of his life, hee hath shifte inoughe to auoyde the blanke. If their houses bee searched, some instrumente of Musick is layde in sighte to dazell the eyes of euery Officer, and all that are lodged in the house by night, or frequente it by day, come thither as pupilles to be well schoolde. Other ther are which beeing so knowen that they are the bywoorde of euery mans mouth, and pointed at commonly as they passe the streetes, either couch them selues in Allyes, or blind Lanes, or take sanctuary in fryeries, or liue a mile from the Cittie like Venus nunnes in a Cloyster as *Newington, Ratliffe, Islington, Hogsdon* or some such place, where like penitents, they deny the worlde, and spende theyr dayes in double deuotion. And when they are weery of contemplation to comfort themselues, and renew their acquaintance, they visit Theaters, where they make full account of a pray before they departe. *Solon* made no lawe for Parricides, because he feared that hee shoulde rather put men in minde to commit such offences, then by any straunge, punishment, giue them a bitte to keepe them vnder. And I intend not to shewe you al that I see, nor halfe that I heare of these abuses, lest you iudge me more wilfull to teach them, then willing to forbid them.

I looke still when Players shoulde cast me their Gauntlets, and challenge a combate for entring so far into their possessions, as though I made them Lords of this misrule, or the very scholmaisters of these abuses: though the best Clarkes bee of that opinion, they heare not me say so. There are more houses then Parische Churches, more maydes the Maulkin, more wayes to the woode then one, and more causes in nature then Efficients. The Carpenter rayseth not his frame without tooles, nor the Deuill his woork without instrumentes: were not Players the meane, to make these assemblyes, such multitudes wold hardly be drawne in so narrow roome. They seek not to hurte, but desire to please: they haue purged their Comedyes of wanton speaches, yet the Corne which they sell, is full of Cockle: and the drinke that they draw, ouercharged with dregges. There is more in them then we perceiue, the Deuill standes at our elbowe when we see not, speaks when we heare him not, strikes when wee feele not, and woundeth sore when he raseth no skinne, nor rentes the fleshe. In those thinges, that we least mistrust, the greatest daunger dooth often lurke. The Countryeman is more affrayde of the Serpente that is hid in the grasse, then the wilde beaste that openly feeds vpon the mountains: The Marriner is more indaungered by Priuie shelues, then knowen Rockes; The Souldier is sooner killed with a little Bullet, then a longe Swoorde; There is more perill in close Fistoloes, then outwarde sores; in secret ambushe, then maine battels; in vndermining, then playne assaulting; in ciuill discorde, then forraine warres. Small are the abuses, and slight are the faultes, that nowe in Theaters escape the Poets pen: But tal Cedars, from little graynes

shoote hight: great Okes, from slender rootes spread wide: Large streames, from narrowe springes runne farre: One little sparke, fyers a whole Citie: One dramme of *Eleborus* ransackes euery vaine: The Fish *Remora* hath a small body, and great force too staye shippes against winde and tide: *Ichneumon* a little worme, ouercomes the Elephant: The Viper flayes the Bul: The Weefell the Cockatrice: And the weakest Waspe, stingeth the stoutest manne of warre. The height of Heauen, is taken by the staffe: The bottome of the Sea, sounded with lead: The farthest coast, discovered by Compasse: the secretes of nature, searched by witte: the Anatomy of man, set out by experience: But the abuses of plaies cannot be shoven, because they passe the degrees of the instrument, reach of the Plummet, sight of the minde, and for trial are neuer brought to the touchstone. Therefore he that will auoyde the open shame of pryuy sinne, the common plague of priuate offences, the greate wracks of little Rocks: the sure disease of vncertaine causes: must set hande to the sterne, and eye to his steppes, to shunne the occasion as neere as he can: neither running to bushes for renting his clothes, nor rent his clothes for impairing his thrift, nor walke vpon Yse, for taking a fall, nor take a fall for brusing him selfe, nor goe too Theaters for beeing allured, nor once bee allured for feare of abuse.

Bunducia a notable woman and a Queene of *Englande*, that time that *Nero* was Emperour of *Rome*, hauing some of the *Romans* in garrison heere against her, in an Oration which she made to her subiects, seemed vtterly to contemne their force, and laugh at their folly. For she accounted them vnwoorthy the name of men, or title of Souldiers, because they were smoothly appareled, soft lodged. daintely feasted, bathed in warme waters, rubbed with sweet oyntments, strewd with fine poulders, wine swillers, singers, Dauncers, and Players. God hath now blessed *England* with a Queene, in vertue excellent, in power mightie, in glorie renowned, in gouernment politike, in possession rich, breaking her foes with the bent of her brow, ruling her subiects with shaking her hand, remouing debate by diligent foresight, filling her chests with the fruites of peace, ministring iustice by order of law, reforming abuses with great regarde: and bearing her sword so euen, that neither the poore are trod vnder foote, nor the rich suffred to loke too hye, nor *Rome*, nor *France*, nor Tyrant, nor Turke, dare for their liues too enter the List. But wee vnworthy seruants of so mild a Mistresse, vnnatural children of so good a mother, vnthankful subiects of so louing a prince, wound her royall hart with abusing her lenitie, and stir *Iupiter* to anger to send vs a Stroke that shal deuoure vs. How often hath her Maiestie with the graue aduise of her honorable Councill, sette downe the limits of apparell to euery degree, and how soone againe hath the pride of our harts ouerflowen the chanel? How many times hath accesse to Theaters beene restrayned, and how boldly againe haue we re-entred?

The Queenes
Maiestie.

Ouerlashing in apparel is so common a fault, that the very hyerlings of some of our Players, which stand at reuersion of vi.s. by the weeke, iet vnder Gentlemens noses in sutes of silke, exercising themselues too prating on the stage, and common scoffing when they come abrode, where they look askance ouer the shoulder at euery man, of whom the sunday before they begged an almes. I speake not this, as though euerye one that professeth the qualitie so abused him selfe, for it is well knowen, that some of them are sober, discreete, properly learned honest householders and Citizens well thought on amonge their neighbours at home, though the pryde of their shadowes (I meane those hangebyes whome they soccour with stipend) cause them to bee somewhat il talked of abroad.

Players men.

And as some of the Players are farre from abuse: so some of their Playes are without rebuke: which are as easily remembered as quickly reckoned. The twoo prose Bookes plaied at the Belsauage, where you shall finde neuer a woorde without wit, neuer a line without pith, neuer a letter placed in vaine. The *Iew* and *Ptolome*, showne at the Bull, the one representing the greedinesse of worldly chusers, and bloody

mindes of Usurers: The other very liuely discribing howe seditious estates, with their owne deuises, false friendes, with thir owne swoordes, and rebellious commons in their owne snares are ouerthrowne: neither with Amorous gesture wounding the eye: nor with slouenly talke hurting the eares of the chast hearers. The *Blacke Smiths daughter*, and *Catilins Conspiracies* vsually brought in to Theater: The first contayning the trechery of *Turkes*, the honourable bountye of a noble minde, and the shining of vertue in distresse : The last, because it is knowen too be a Pig of myne owne Sowe, I will speake the lesse of it; onely giuing you to vnderstand, that the whole marke which I shot at in that woorke, was too showe the rewarde of traytors in *Catilin*, and the necessary gouernment of learned men, in the person of *Cicero*, which forsees euery danger that is likely to happen, and forstalles it continually ere it take effect. Therefore I giue these Playes the commendation, that Maximus Tyrius gaue too Homers works:

Καλὰ μὲν γὰρ τὰ Ὀμήρου ἔπη, καὶ ἔπων τὰ
κάλλιστα, καὶ φανώτατα καὶ ἄδεσθαι μουσαῖς πρέποντα
ἄλλα οὐ πᾶσι καλά, οὐδὲ ἀεὶ καλά.

Some Players
modest, if I
bee not
deceiued.

Some Playes
tollerable at
some time.

These Playes are good playes and sweete playes, and of al playes the best playes and most to be liked, woorthy to be soung of the Muses, or set out with the cunning of *Roscius* himself, yet are they not fit for euery mans dyet: neither ought they commonly

to be shewen. Now if any man aske me why my selfe haue penned Comedyes in time paste, and inueigh so egerly against them here, let him knowe that *Semel insaninimus omnes*: I have sinned, and am sorry for my fault: hee runnes farre that neuer turnes, better late than neuer. I gaue my self to that exercise in hope to thriue but I burnt one candle to seek another, and lost bothe my time and my trauell, when I had doone.

Playes are not
to be made
common.

Thus sith I haue in my voyage suffred wrack with *Vlisses*, and wringing-wet scrambled with life to the shore, stand from mee *Nausicaä* with all thy traine, till I wipe the blot from my forehead, and with sweet springs wash away the salt froath that cleaues too my soule.

Meane time if Players bee called to accounte for the abuses that growe by their assemblyes. I would not haue them answeare, as Pilades did for the Theaters of Rome, when they were complayned on, and *Augustus* waxed angry: *This resort O Cæsar is good for thee, for heere we keepe thousandes of idle heads occupied, which else peraduenture would brue some mischiefe.* A fit Cloude to couer their abuse, and not vnlike to the starting hole that Lucinius found, who like a greedy serueiour, beeing sente into Fraunce to gouerne the Countrie, robbed them and spoyled them of al their Treasure with vnreasonable taskes: at the last when his crueltie was so loudly cryed out on, that euery man hearde it; and all his packing did sauour so strong, that *Augustus* smelt it; he brought the good Emperour into his house, flapped him in the mouth with a smoth lye, and tolde him that for his sake and the safetie of *Rome*, hee gathered those riches, the better to impouerish the Countrie for rying in Armes, and so holde the poore Frenchmennes Noses to the Grindstone for euer after.

*Dion in vitâ
Augusti.*

A bad excuse is better, they say then none at all. Hee, because the Frenchmen paid tribute euery moneth, into xiiii. Moneths deuided the yeere: These because they are allowed to play euery Sunday, make iiiii. or v. Sundayes at least euery weeke, and all

Players
compared to
Lucinius.

that is doone is good for *Augustus*, to busy the wittes of his people, for running a woolgathering, and emptie their purses for thriuing to fast. Though *Lucinius* had the cast to playster vppe his credite with the losse of his money: I trust that they which haue the swoorde in their hands among vs to pare away this putryfied flesh, are sharper sighted, and will not so easily be deluded.

Marcus Aurelius sayth,

That players falling from iuste labour to vniuste idlenesse, doe make more trewandes, and ill husbands, then if open Schooles of vnthrifits and Vagabounds were kept. Who soeuer readeth his Epistle too *Lambert* the gouernor of *Hellespont*, when Players were banished, shall find more against them in plainer tearmes, then I will vtter.

Epist. 12. ad Lambertum.

This haue I set downe of the abuses of Poets, Pypers, and Players which bringe vs too pleasure, slouth, sleepe, sinne, and without repentaunce to death and the Deuill: which I haue not confirmed by authoritie of the Scriptures, because they are not able to stand vppe in the sighte of God: and sithens they dare not abide in the field, where the word of God dooth bidde them battayle, but runne to Antiquities (though nothing be more ancient

then holy Scripture) I haue giuen them a volley of prophane writers to beginne the Skirmishe, and doone my indeuour to beate them from their holdes with their owne weapons. The Patient that will be cured, of his owne accorde, must seek the meane: if euery man desire to saue one, and drawe his owne feete from Theaters, it shall preuayle as much against these abuses, as *Homers Moly* against Witchcraft, or *Plynies Peristerion* against the byting of Dogges.

Scriptures to hoate for Players.

God hath armed euery creature agaynst his enemie: the Lyon with pawes, the bul with hornes, the Bore with tuskes, the Vulture with tallents, Hartes, Hindes, Hares, and such like, with swiftnes of feete, because they are fearefull, euery one of them putting his gift in practice; But man which is Lord of the whole earth, for whose seruice herbes, trees, roote, plants, fish, foule and beasts of the field were first made, is far worse then the brute beasts: for they endewed but with sence, doe *Appetere salutaria, et declinare noxia*, seek that which helps them, and forsake that which hurtes them.

Man is enriched with reason and knowledge: with knowledge, to serue his maker and gouerne himselfe; with reason to distinguish good and il, and chose the best, neither referring the one to the glory of God, nor vsing the other to his owne profite. Fire and Ayre mount vpwards, Earth and Water sinke downe, and

euery insensible body else, neuer rests, til it bring it self to his owne home. But we which haue both sense, reason, wit, and vnderstanding, are euer ouerlashing, passing our boundes, going beyonde our limites, neuer keeping our selues within compasse, nor once looking after the place from whence we came, and whither we muste in spighte of our hartes.

Corpora naturalia ad locum momentur, et in suis sedibus acquiescunt.

Aristotle thinketh that in greate windes, the Bees carry little stones in their mouthes to peyse their bodies, least they be carryed away, or kepte from their Hiues, vnto which they desire to returne with the fruites of their labour. The Crane is said to rest vpon one leg, and holding vp the other, keepe a Pebble in her clawe, which as sone as the senses are bound by approche of sleepe, falles to the ground, and with the noise of the knock against the Earth, makes her awake, whereby shee is euer redy to preuent her enemies. Geese are foolish birdes, yet when they flye ouer the mount *Taurus*, they shew greate wisdom in their own defence: for they stop their pipes full of grauel to auoide gagling, and so by silence escape the Eagles. Woodcocks, though they lack witte to saue them

Man unmindful of his ende.

Hi. Animal.

selues, yet they want not will to auoyde hurte, when they thrust theyr heads in a Bushe, and thinke their bodyes out of daunger. But wee which are so brittle, that we breake with euery fillop, so weake, that we are drawne with euery threade; so light, that wee are blowen away with euery blaste; so vnsteady, that we slip in euery ground; neither peyse our bodyes against the winde, nor stand vppon one legge, for sleeping too muche: nor close vppe our lippes for betraying our selues, nor vse any witte, to garde our owne persons, nor shewe our selues willing too shunne our owne harmes, running most greedily to those places, where we are soonest ouerthrowne.

I cannot lyken our affection better than to an Arrowe, which getting lybertie, with winges is carryed beyonde our reach ; kepte in the Quiuer, it is still at commaundement : Or to a Dogge, let him slippe, he is straight out of sight, holde him in the Lease, hee neuer stirres : Or to a Colte, giue him the bridle, he flinges aboute ; raine him hard, and you may rule him: Or to a ship, hoyst the sayles it runnes on head ; let fall the Ancour, all is well : Or to *Pandoraes* boxe, lift vppe the lidde, out flyes the Deuill; shut it vp fast, it cannot hurt vs.

Let vs but shut vppe our eares to Poets, Pypers and Players, pull our feete back from resort to Theaters, and turne away our eyes from beholding of vanitie, the greatest storme of abuse will be ouerblowen, and a fayre path troden to amendment of life. Were not we so foolish to taste euery drugge, and buy euery trifle, Players would shut in their shoppes, and carry their trashe to some other Countrie.

Themistocles in setting a peece of his ground to sale, among all the commodityes whiche were reckoned vppe, straightly charged the Cryer to proclaime this, that hee which bought it, should haue a good neighbour. If Players can promise in woordes, and performe it in deedes, procla[i]me it in their Billes, and make it good in Theaters ; that there is nothing there noysome too the body, nor hurtfull to the soule: and that euerye one which comes to buye their Iestes, shall haue an honest neighbour, tagge and ragge, cutte and longe tayle, goe thither and spare not, otherwise I aduise you to keepe you thence, my selfe will beginne too leade the daunce.

I make iuste reckoning to bee helde for a *Stoike*, in dealing so hardely with these people: but all the Keyes hang not at one mans girdle, neither doe these open the lockes to all abuses. There are other which haue a share with them in their Schooles, therefore ought they to daunce the same Rounde: and bee partakers together of the same rebuke : Fencers, Dycers, Dauncers, Tumble[r]s, Carders, and Bowlers.

Dauncers and Tumblers, because they are dumbe Players, and I haue glaunced at them by the way, shall bee let passe with this clause, that they gather no assemblyes, and goe not beyond the precincts whiche *Peter Martyr* in his commentaryes vppon the Iudges hath set them downe: That is, if they will exercise those qualyties, to doe it priuilye, for the health and agilitie of the body, referring all to the glorye of God.

Dauncers and
Tumblers.

Dicers and Carders because their abuses are as commonly cryed out on, as vsually shewen, haue no neede of a needesse discourse, for euery manne seeth them, and they stinke almoste in euery mans nose. Common Bowling Allyes, are priuy Mothes, that eate vppe the credite of many idle Citizens: whose gaynes at home, are not able to weighe downe theyr losses abroade, whose Shoppes are so farre from maintaining their play, that their Wiues and Children cry out for bread, and go to bedde supperlesse ofte in the yeere.

Dicers and
carders.

Bowling
Alleys.

I would reade you a Lecture of these abuses, but my Schoole so increaseth, that I cannot touch all, nor stand to amplifie euery poynte: one worde of Fencing, and so a *Conge* to all kinde of Playes. The knowledge in weapons may bee gathered to be necessary in a common wealth, by the Senators of *Rome*,

who in time of *Catilins* conspiracies, caused Schooles of Defence to be erected in *Capua*, that teaching the people howe to warde, and how to locke, how to thrust, and how to strike, they might the more falselye coape with their enemies. As the Arte of Logique was first sette downe for a rule, by which wee might *Confirmare nostra, et refutare aliena*, confime our owne reasons, and confute the allegations of our aduersaryes, the end beeing trueth, which once fished out by the harde encounter of eithers Argumentes, like fyer by the knocking of Flintes together, both partes shoulde be satisfied and striue no more. And I iudge that the crafte of Defence was firste deuised to saue our selues harmelesse, and holde our enemies at aduantage, the ende beeing right, which once throughly tryed out, at handye stroakes, neither hee that offered inurie should haue his will, nor hee that was threatened, take any hurte, but bothe be contented and shake handes. Those dayes are now chaunged, the skil of Logicians, is exercysed in caueling, the cunning of Fencers applied to quarrelling: they, thinke themselues no Scholers, if they bee not able to finde out a knotte in euery rushe; these, no men, if for stirring of a strawe, they prooue not their valure vpon some bodyes fleshe. Euery Duns will be a Carper, euery Dick Swash a common Cutter. But as they bake, many times so they brue: Selfe doe, selfe haue, they whette their Swords against themselues, pull the house on their owne heds, returne home by weeping Crosse, and fewe of them come to an honest ende. For the same water that driues the Mill, decayeth it. The woode is eaten by the worme, that breeds within it: The goodnesse of a knife cuts the owners finger, The Adders death, is her own broode, the Fencers scath, his own knowledg. Whether their harts be hardened, which vse that exercise, or God giue them ouer I know not well: I haue reade of none good that practiced it muche. *Commodus* the Emperour, so delighted in it, that oftentimes hee slewe one or other at home to keepe his fingers in ure. And one day hee gathered all the sicke, lame, and impotent people of Rome into one place, where hee hampred their feete with straunge deuises, gaue them softe sponges in their hands, to throw at him for stones, and with a great clubbe knatched them all on the hed, as they had been Giauntes. *Epaminondas* a famous Captaine, sore hurte in a battaile, and carryed out of the field, halfe deade; When tydinges was broughte him that his Souldiers gotte the day, asked presently, what became of his Buckler : whereby it appeareth, that hee loued his weapons, but I finde it not sayd that he was a Fencer. Therefore I may liken them which woulde not haue men to war til they are taught fencing, to those superstitious wisemen, whiche would not take vpon them to burye the bodyes of their friends, before they had beene cast out vnto wilde beastes. Fencing is growne to such abuse, that I may wel compare the Scholers of this Schoole to them that prouide Staues for their owne shoulders; that foster Snakes in their owne bosoms, that trust Wolues, to garde theyr Sheepe; And to the men of *Hyrkania*, that keepe Mastiffes, to woorrye them selues. Though I speake this too the shame of common Fencers, I goe not aboute the bushe with Souldiers. *Homer* calleth them the Sonnes of *Iupiter*, the Images of GOD, and the very sheepeheards of the people : beeing the Sonnes of *Iupiter*, they are bountifull too the meeke, and thunder out plagues to the proude in heart : beeing the images of GOD, they are the Welspringes of Iustice which giueth to euery man his owne; beeing accoumpted the shepeheards of the people, they fight with the Wolfe for the safetie of their flock and keepe of the enemye for the wealth of their Countrie. How full are Poets works of Bucklers, Battails, Lances, Dartes, Bowes, Quiuers, Speares, Iauelins, Swoordes, slaughters, Runners, Wrestlers, Chariots, Horse, and men at

Fencers.

Salust.

Commodus a Fencer and exercised in murder.

Epaminondas minde on his Buckler.

Souldiers

armes? *Agamemnon* beyonde the name of a King hath this title, that he was a Souldier. *Menelaus*, because he loued his Kercher better then a Burgonet, a softe bed then a hard fielde, the sounde of Instrumentes then neighing of Steedes, a fayre stable then a foule way, is let slippe without prayse. If *Lycurgus* before hee makes lawes too *Sparta*, take counsel of *Apollo*, whether it were good for him to teach the people thrift and husbandry, he shalbe charged to leaue those precepts to the white liuered *Hylotes*. The Spartans are all steele, fashioned out of tougher mettall, free in minde, valiaunt in hart, seruile to none, accustoming their flesh to stripes, their bodyes to labour, their feete to hunting, their handes to fighting. In *Crete*, *Scythia*, *Persia*, *Thracia*, all the Lawes tended to the maintenance of Martiall discipline. Among the Scythians no man was permitted to drink of their festiuall Cuppe, which had not manfully killed an enemie in fight. I could wishe it in England, that there were greater preferment for the valiant Spartanes, then the sottishe *Hylotes*: That our Lawes were directed to rewarding of those, whose liues are the firste, that must be hazarded to mayntaine the lybertie of the Lawes. The gentlemen of *Carthage*, were not allowed too weare, any moe linkes in theyr chaynes, then they had seene battayles. If our Gallantes of Englande might carry no more linkes in their Chaynes nor the ringes on their fingers, then they haue fought feeldes, their necks should not bee very often wreathed in Golde, nor their handes embrodered with pretious stones. If none but they might be suffered to drinke out of plate, that haue in skirmish slain one of her maiesties enemyes, many thousands shoude bring earthen pots to the table. Let vs learne by other mens harmes too looke to our selues, When the *Egyptians* were most busy in their husbandry, the *Scythians* ouerran them: When the *Assyrians* were looking to their thrift, the *Persians* wer in armes and ouercam them: when the *Troians* thought themselues safest, the *Greekes* were nearest: when *Rome* was a sleepe, the French men gaue a sharp assaulte too the *Capitoll*: when the *Iewes* were idle, their walles were rased, and the *Romans* entred: when the *Chaldees* were sporting, *Babylon* was sacked: when the senators were quiet, no garisons in *Italy*, and *Pompey* from home, wicked *Catiline* began his mischeuous enterprise. We are like those vnthankfull people, which puffed vp with prosperity forget the good turnes they receiued in aduersitie. The patient feeds his Phisition with gold in time of sicknesse, and when he is wel, scarcely affoords him a cup of water. Some there are that make gods of soldiers in open warrs, and trusse them vp like dogs in time of peace. Take heed of the foxefurd nightcap, I meene those schoolemen, that cry out vpon Mars calling him the bloody God, the angry God, the furious god, the mad God, *πολύδακρυς* the *tearethirsty* God. These are but castes of their office and wordes of course. That is a vain brag and a false alarme, that Tullie giues to soldiers.

Cedant arma togæ concedat laurea linguæ

Let gunns to gouns, and bucklers yeeld to bookes.

If the enemy beseege vs, cut off our victuals, preuent forrain aide, girt in the city, and bring the Ramme to y^e walles, it is not *Ciceroes* tongue that can peerce their armour to wound the body, nor *Archimedes* prickes, and lines, and circles, and triangles, and *Rhombus*, and rifferaffe, that hath any force to driue them backe. Whilst the one chats, his throate is cut; whilst the other syttes drawing the Mathematicall fictions, the enemie standes with a sworde at his breast. He that talketh much, and doeth little, is like vnto him that failes with a side winde, and is borne with the tide to a wrong shore. If they meane to doe any good indeed, bid them follow *Demosthenes*, and ioyne with *Phocion* when they haue giuen vs good counsell in wordes, make much of Souldiers, that are redy to execute y^e same with

swords. Bee not carelesse, Plough with weapons by your sides, studye with a booke in one hande, a darte in the other: enioy peace, with provision for war: when you haue lefte the sandes behinde you, looke wel to the rocks that lye before you : Let not the ouercomming one Tempest make you secure, but haue an eye to the cloude that comes from the South, and threateneth raine; the least ouersight in dangerous Seas may cast you away, the least discontinuance of Martiall exercise giue you the foyle. When *Achilles* loytered in his tent, giuing eare to Musick, his souldiers were bidde to a hot breakefast. *Hannibals* power receiued more hurte in one dayes ease at *Capua*, then in al the conflicts they had at *Cannas*. It were not good for vs too flatter oure selues with these golden dayes : highe floodes haue lowe Ebbes : hotte Feuers, coulde Crampes : Long dayes short nightes; Drie Summers moyst Winters: There was neuer fort so strong, but it might be battered, neuer ground so fruitful, but it might be barren : neuer countrie so populous, but it might be wast : neuer Monarch so mighty, but he might be weakened: neuer Realme so large, but it might be lessened: neuer kingdom so flourishing, but it might bee decayed. *Scipio* before hee leuiued his force too the walles of *Car[t]hage*, gaue his souldiers the print of the Citie in a cake to be deuoured: our enimies with *Scipio*, haue already eaten vs with bread, and licked vp our blood in a cup of wine. They do but tarry the tide : watch opportunitie, and wayte for the reckoning, that with the shot of our liues, shoulde paye for all. But that GOD that neither slumbreth nor sleepeth, for the loue of *Israel*, that stretcheth out his armes from morning to euening to couer his children, (as the Hen doth her chicken with the shadow of her wings) with the breath of his mouth shall ouerthrow them, with their own snares shall ouertake them, and hang them vp by the haire of their owne deuises. Notwithstanding it behooueth vs in the meane season, not to stick in the myre, and gape for succour, without vsing some ordinary way our selues : or to lye wallowing like Lubbers in the Ship of the common wealth, crying Lord, Lord, when wee see the vessel toyle, but iontly laye our handes and heades and helpes together, to auoyd the danger, and saue that, which must be the suretie of vs

Labourers.

all. For as to the body, there are many members, seruing to seuerall vses, the eye to see, the eare to heare, the nose to smell, the tongue to taste, the hande to touch, the feete to beare the whole burden of the rest, and euery one dischargeth his duetie without grudging ; so shoulde the whole body of the common wealth consist of fellow laborers, all generally seruing one head, and particularly following their trade, without repining. From the head to the foote, from the top to the toe, there should nothing be vaine, no body idle. *Iupiter* himself shall stand for example, who is euer in woork, still moouing and turning about the heauens, if he shuld pull his hand from the frame, it were impossible for the world to indure. All would be day, or al night ; All spring or all Autume; all Summer, or all winter ; All heate or all colde ; all moysture, or al drought ; No time to til, no time to sow, no time to plant, no time to reape, the earth barren, the riuers stopt, the Seas stayde, the seasons chaunged, and the whole course of nature ouerthrowen. The meane must labor to serue the mightie, the mightie must studye to defende the meane. The subiects must sweat in obedience to their Prince ; the Prince must haue a care ouer his poore vassals. If it be the dutie of euery man in a common wealth, one way or other to bestirre his stumpes, I cannot but blame those lither contemplators very much,

which sit concluding of Sillogismes in a corner, which in a close study in the Vniuersity, coope themselues vp fortie yeres together studying all thinges, and professe nothing. The Bell is knowen by his sounde, the byrde by her voyce, the Lyon by his rore, the Tree by the fruite, a man by his woorkes. To continue so long without moouing, to reade so much without teaching, what differeth it from a dumbe Picture, or a deade body? No man is born to seeke priuate profite : parte for his countrie, parte for his friendes, parte for himselfe. The foole that comes into a fayre Garden, likes the beawtie of flowers, and stickes them in his Cap: the Phisition considereth their nature,

Loyterers.

and puttes them in the pottle: in the one they wither without profite ; in the other they serue to the health of the bodie : He that readeth good writers, and pickes out their flowers for his owne nose, is lyke a foole ; hee that preferreth their vertue before their sweet smel is a good Phisition. When *Anacharsis* traueled ouer all *Greece*, to seeke out wise men, hee founde none in *Athens*, though no doubt, there were many good scholers there. But comming to *Chenas* a blind village, in comparison of *Athens* a Paltockes Inne; he found one *Miso*,

well gouerning his house, looking to his groundes, instructing his children, teaching his family, making of marriages among his acquayntance, exhorting his neighbours to loue, and friendship, and preaching in life, whom, the Philosopher for his scarcitie of woordes, plenty of workes, accompted the onely wise man that euer he saw. I speak not this to prefer *Botley* before *Oxford*, a cottage of clownes, before a Colledge of Muses; *Pans* pipe, before *Apollos* harp. But to shew you that poore *Miso* can reade you such a lecture of Philosophie, as *Aristotle* neuer dreamed on. You must not thrust your heades in a tubbe, and say, *Benè vixit, qui benè latuit*: He hath liued well, that hath loitred well : standing streames geather filth ; flowing riuers, are euer sweet. Come forth with your sic[k]les, the Haruest is greate, the laborers few; pul vp the sluces, let out your springs, geue vs drink of your water, light of your torches, and season us a little with the Salt of your knowledge. Let *Phoenix* and *Achilles*, *Demosthenes* and *Phocion*, *Pericles* and *Cimon*, *Laelius* and *Scipio*, *Nigidius* and *Cicero*, the word and the sword be knit together. Set your talents a worke, lay not vp your tresure for taking rust, teach earely and late, in time and out of time, sing with the swan, to the last houre. Folowe the dauncing *Chaplens* of *Gradius Mars*, which chaunt the praises of their god with voyces, and treade out the time with their feete. Play the good captaines, exhort your souldiers with your tonges to fight, and bring the first ladder to the wall your selues. Sound like bells, and shine like Lanternes. Thunder in words, and glister in works ; so shall you please God, profite your country, honor your prince, discharge your duetie, giue vp a good account of your stewardship, and leaue no sinne vntouched, no abuse vnrebuked, no fault vnpunished.

Right
Philosophie.

Sundry are the abuses aswel of Vniuersityes[,] as of other places, but they are such as neither become me to touch, nor euery idle hed to vnderstand. The *Thurines* made a Lawe that no common finde-fault should meddle with any abuse but Adulterie.

Pythagoras bounde all his Schollers to fiue yeeres silence, that assonne as euer they crept from the shel, they might not aspire to the house top. It is not good for euery man to trauell to *Corinth*, nor lawfull for all to talke what they liste, or write what they please, least their tongues run before their wites, or their pennes make hauock of their Paper. And so wading too farre in other mens manners, whilst they fill their Bookes with other mens faultes, they make their volumes no better than an Apothecaries Shop, of pestilent Drugges; a quack-saluers Budget of filthy receites; and a huge *Chaos* of foule disorder. Cookes did neuer long more for great markets, nor Fishers for large Pondes, nor greedy Dogges for store of game, nor soaring hawkes for plentie of fowle, then Carpers doe for cotype of abuses, that they might euer be snarling, and haue some Flyes or other in the way to snatch at. As I woulde that offences should not be hid, for going vnpunished, nor escape without scourge for ill example. So I wish that euery rebuker shoulde place a hatch before the doore ; keep his quil within compas. He that holds not him self contented with the light of the Sun but liftes vp his eyes to measure the bignesse, is made blinde; he that bites euery weed to search out his nature, may light vpon poyson, and so kill himselfe: he that loues to be sifting of euery cloude, may be strooke with a thunderbolte, if it chaunce to rent; and he that taketh vpon him to shew men their faults, may wound his owne credite, if he goe too farre. We are not angry with the Clarke of the market, if he

Exposition of
Pithagoras.

come to our stall, and reprocue our ballance when they are faultie, or forfaitie our weights, when they are false: neuerthesse, if he presume to enter our house, and rig euey corner, searching more then belongs to his office : we lay holde on his locks, turne him away with his backe full of stripes, and his hands loden with his owne amendes. Therefore I will content my selfe to shew you no more abuses in my Schoole, then my selfe haue seene, nor so many by hundreds, as I haue heard off. Lyons folde vp their nailes, when they are in their dennes for wearing them in the earth and neede not: Eagles draw in their tallants as they sit in their nestes, for blunting them there amonge there drosse: And I will caste Ancor in these abuses, rest my Barke in the simple roade, for grating my wits vpon needelesse shelues. And because I accuse other for treading awry, which since I was borne neuer went right ; because I finde so many faultes abroad[,) which haue at home more spots in my body then the Leopard, more staines on my coat then the wicked *Nessus* ; more holes in my life the on the open siue ; more sinnes in my soule than heares on my hed : If I haue beene tedious in my Lecuture, or your selues be weary of you lesson, harken no longer for the Clock, shut vp the Schoole, and get you home.

FINIS.

