

# ESSAYES

## I

### OF TRUTH

*WHAT is Truth?* said jesting Pilate<sup>1</sup>; And would not stay for an Answer. Certainly there be that delight in Giddinesse<sup>2</sup>, And count it a Bondage to fix a Beleeefe; Affecting<sup>3</sup> Freewill in Thinking, as well as in Acting. And though the Sects of Philosophers of that Kinde be gone, 5 yet there remaine certaine discoursing Wits<sup>4</sup>, which are of the same veines, though there be not so much Bloud in them as was in those of the Ancients<sup>5</sup>. But it is not onely the Difficultie and Labour which Men take in finding out of Truth; Nor againe that, when it is found, it imposeth<sup>6</sup> 10 upon men's Thoughts, that doth bring Lies in<sup>7</sup> favour; But a naturall though corrupt Love of the Lie it selfe. One of the later Schoole of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand<sup>8</sup> to thinke what should be in it<sup>9</sup>, that men should love Lies; Where neither they make for Pleasure, 15 as with Poets; Nor for Advantage, as with the Merchant; but for the Lie's sake. But I cannot tell<sup>10</sup>: This same

<sup>1</sup> said Pilate in derision

<sup>2</sup> fickleness

<sup>3</sup> aiming at

<sup>4</sup> discursive minds

<sup>5</sup> whose disposition is the same as that of the ancients, though their

abilities are less

<sup>6</sup> *i.e.* imposes restraint

<sup>7</sup> into

<sup>8</sup> at a loss

<sup>9</sup> why it is

<sup>10</sup> But somehow or other

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## OF TRUTH

[ESSAY I

Truth is a Naked and Open day light, that doth not shew the Masques, and Mummeries, and Triumphs of the world<sup>1</sup>,  
 20 halfe so stately and daintily as Candlelights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a Pearle, that sheweth best by day; But it will not rise to the price of a Diamond, or Carbuncle, that sheweth best in varied lights. A mixture of a Lie doth ever adde Pleasure. Doth any man doubt  
 25 that, if there were taken out of Men's Mindes Vaine Opinions, Flattering Hopes, False valuations, Imaginations as one would<sup>2</sup>, and the like, but it would leave the Mindes of a Number of Men poore shrunken Things, full of Melancholy and Indisposition<sup>3</sup>, and unpleasing to them-  
 30 selves? One of the Fathers, in great Severity, called Poesie, *Vinum Dæmonum*<sup>4</sup>, because it filleth the Imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a Lie. But it is not the Lie that passeth through the Minde, but the Lie that sinketh in and setleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as<sup>5</sup>  
 35 we spake of before. But howsoever<sup>6</sup> these things are thus in men's depraved Iudgements and Affections, yet Truth, which onely doth iudge it selfe, teacheth that the Inquire of Truth, which is the Love-making, or Wooing of it; The knowledge of Truth, which is the Presence of it; and the  
 40 Beleefe of Truth, which is the Enjoying of it; is the Sovereigne Good of humane<sup>7</sup> Nature. The first Creature<sup>8</sup> of God, in the workes of the Dayes, was the Light of the Sense; The last, was the Light of Reason; And his Sabbath Worke, ever since, is the Illumination of his Spirit<sup>9</sup>.  
 45 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<sup>10</sup> the Sect that was otherwise inferiour to the rest, saith yet excellently well:  
 50 *It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tost*

<sup>1</sup> does not make the world's dramatic spectacles and farcical shows and public pageants appear

<sup>2</sup> at pleasure

<sup>3</sup> languor

<sup>4</sup> the wine of devils

<sup>5</sup> *i.e.* such a lie as

<sup>6</sup> whatever the true cause may be why

<sup>7</sup> human

<sup>8</sup> created thing

<sup>9</sup> *i.e.* of men's minds by the Holy Spirit

<sup>10</sup> adorned

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## ESSAY I]

## OF TRUTH

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*upon the Sea: A pleasure to stand in the window of a Castle, and to see a Battaille, and the Adventures<sup>1</sup> thereof, below: But no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth, (A hill not to be commanded<sup>2</sup>, and where the Ayre is alwaies cleare and serene,) And to* 55  
*see the Errours, and Wandrings, and Mists, and Tempests, in the vale below: So alwaies, that<sup>3</sup> this prospect be with Pitty, and not with Swelling or Pride. Certainly, it is Heaven upon Earth, to have a Man's Minde Move in Charitie, Rest in Providence, and Turne upon the Poles* 60  
*of Truth.*

To passe from Theologicall and Philosophicall Truth to the Truth of civill Businesse<sup>4</sup>; It will be acknowledged, even by those that practize it not, that cleare and Round<sup>5</sup> dealing is the Honour of Man's Nature; And that Mixture 65 of Falshood is like Allay in Coyne of Gold and Silver, which may make the Metall worke the better, but it embaseth<sup>6</sup> 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<sup>7</sup> that doth so cover a 70 Man with Shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Mountaigny saith prettily, when he enquired 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* 75  
*that he is brave towards God and a Coward towards Men.* For a Lie faces God, and shrinkes from Man. Surely the Wickednesse of Falshood and Breach of Faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last Peale<sup>8</sup> to call the Iudgements of God upon the Genera- 80  
 tions of Men; It being foretold that, when Christ commeth, *He shall not finde Faith upon the Earth.*

<sup>1</sup> chances<sup>2</sup> not to be overlooked, or, perhaps, inaccessible to others<sup>3</sup> provided that<sup>4</sup> the habit of truthfulness in

social intercourse

<sup>5</sup> plain and straightforward<sup>6</sup> debases<sup>7</sup> i.e. no other vice<sup>8</sup> summons

## II

## OF DEATH

MEN feare Death, as Children feare to goe in the darke: And as that Natural Feare in Children is increased with Tales, so is the other. Certainly, the Contemplation of Death, as the *wages of sinne*, and Passage to another world, is Holy and Religious; But the Feare of it, as a Tribute due unto Nature, is weake. Yet in Religious Meditations, there is sometimes Mixture of Vanitie and of Superstition. You shal reade, in some of the Friars' Books of Mortification, that a man should thinke with himselfe, what the Paine is, if he have but his Finger's end Pressed or Tortured, And thereby imagine, what the Paines of Death are, when the whole Body is corrupted and dissolved; when<sup>1</sup> many times Death passeth with lesse paine then the Torture of a Limme: For the most vitall parts are not the quickest of Sense. And by him, that spake onely as a Philosopher and Naturall<sup>2</sup> Man, it was well said, *Pompa Mortis magis terret quàm Mors ipsa*<sup>3</sup>. Groanes and Convulsions, and a discoloured Face, and Friends weeping, and Blackes<sup>4</sup>, and Obsequies, and the like, shew Death<sup>5</sup> Terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the minde of man so weake, but it Mates<sup>6</sup> and Masters the Feare of Death: And therefore Death is no such terrible Enemie, when a man hath so many Attendants about him that can winne the combat of him<sup>7</sup>. Revenge triumphs over Death; Love slights it; Honour aspireth to it; Griefe flieth to it; Feare pre-occupateth<sup>8</sup> it; Nay, we reade, after Otho the Emperour had slaine himselfe, Pitty (which is the tenderest<sup>9</sup> of Affections) provoked<sup>10</sup> many to die, out of meere compassion to their Soveraigne, and as the truest sort of Followers. Nay,

<sup>1</sup> whereas<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* without the guidance of revelation<sup>3</sup> The trappings of death are more terrifying than death itself.<sup>4</sup> mourning garb<sup>5</sup> make death appear<sup>6</sup> overpowers<sup>7</sup> *i.e.* from death<sup>8</sup> anticipates (*viz.* by suicide)<sup>9</sup> frailest<sup>10</sup> moved

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## ESSAY II.]

## OF DEATH

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Seneca addes Nicenesse<sup>1</sup> and Satiety<sup>2</sup>; *Cogita quam diu eadem feceris; Mori velle, non tantum Fortis, aut Miser, sed etiam Fastidiosus potest*<sup>3</sup>. A man would die, though he were neither valiant nor miserable, onely upon a wearinesse to doe the same thing so oft over and over. It is no lesse 35 worthy to observe, how little Alteration, in good Spirits<sup>4</sup>, the Approaches of Death make; For they appeare to be the same Men, till the last Instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a Complement; *Livia, Coniugij nostri memor, vive et vale*<sup>5</sup>. Tiberius in dissimulation; As Tacitus saith of him; 40 *Iam Tiberium Vires et Corpus, non Dissimulatio, deserebant*<sup>6</sup>. Vespasian in a Iest, Sitting upon the Stoole, *Ut puto Deus fio*<sup>7</sup>. Galba with a Sentence; *Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani*<sup>8</sup>; Holding forth his Necke. Septimius Severus in dispatch; *Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum*<sup>9</sup>. And the 45 like. Certainly, the Stoikes bestowed too much cost upon Death, and by their great preparations made it appeare more fearefull. Better saith he, *Qui Finem Vitæ extremum inter Munera ponat Naturæ*<sup>10</sup>. It is as Naturall to die as to be borne; And to a little Infant, perhaps, the one is as 50 painfull as the other. He that dies in an earnest Pursuit is like one that is wounded in hot Bloud; who, for the time, scarce feesles the Hurt; And therefore a Minde, fixt and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the Dolors<sup>11</sup> of Death: But above all, beleeve it, the sweetest Canticle is 55 *Nunc dimittis*<sup>12</sup>, when a Man hath obtained worthy Ends and Expectations. Death hath this also, That it openeth the Gate to good Fame, and extinguisheth Envie.

— *Extinctus amabitur idem*<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> fastidiousness

<sup>2</sup> satiety

<sup>3</sup> Consider how long you have been doing the same things! It is not only the brave man or the wretched man that may wish to die, but also the man who is consumed with ennui.

<sup>4</sup> in noble characters

<sup>5</sup> Goodbye, Livia! remember our married life while you live.

<sup>6</sup> Tiberius's vigour and vitality were failing him, but not his

duplicity.

<sup>7</sup> I suppose I am just turning into a god.

<sup>8</sup> Strike, if it be for the good of the Roman people!

<sup>9</sup> Be ready, if there is anything remaining that I must do.

<sup>10</sup> Who reckons the close of his life among the boons of nature.

<sup>11</sup> pains

<sup>12</sup> Now lettest Thou.

<sup>13</sup> When his light is quenched his memory will be loved.

6 *OF UNITY IN RELIGION* [ESSAY III]

III

OF UNITY IN RELIGION

RELIGION being the chiefe Band<sup>1</sup> of humane<sup>2</sup> Society, it is a happy thing when it selfe is well contained within the true Band<sup>1</sup> of Unity. The Quarrels and Divisions about Religion were Evils unknowne to the Heathen. The  
 5 Reason was, because the Religion of the Heathen consisted rather in Rites and Ceremonies then in any constant Beleeffe. For you may imagine what kinde of Faith theirs was, when the chiefe Doctors<sup>3</sup> and Fathers of their Church were the Poets. But the true God hath this Attribute,  
 10 That he is a *Jealous God*; And therefore, his worship and Religion will endure no Mixture, nor Partner. We shall therefore speake a few words concerning the Unity of the Church; What are the Fruits thereof; what the Bounds; And what the Meanes?

15 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<sup>4</sup> the Former; It is certaine that Heresies and Schismes are of all others the greatest Scandals; yea  
 20 more then<sup>5</sup> Corruption of Manners. For as, in the Naturall Body, a Wound or Solution of Continuity<sup>6</sup> is worse then a Corrupt Humor, So in the Spirituall. So that nothing doth so much keepe Men out of the Church, and drive Men out of the Church, as Breach of Unity: And therefore, when-  
 25 soever it commeth to that passe that one saith, *Ecce in Deserto*<sup>7</sup>, Another saith, *Ecce in penetralibus*<sup>8</sup>; That is, when some Men seeke Christ in the Conventicles of Heretikes, and others in an Outward Face of a Church, that voice had need continually to sound in Men's Eares, *Nolite*  
 30 *exire*,—*Goe not out*. The Doctor<sup>9</sup> of the Gentiles (the

<sup>1</sup> bond

<sup>2</sup> human

<sup>3</sup> teachers

<sup>4</sup> As for

<sup>5</sup> than *passim*

<sup>6</sup> laceration

<sup>7</sup> Behold, he is in the desert:

<sup>8</sup> Behold, he is in the secret chambers.

<sup>9</sup> teacher

## ESSAY III] OF UNITY IN RELIGION

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Propriety<sup>1</sup> of whose Vocation drew him to have a special care of those without) saith, *If an Heathen come in, and heare you speake with severall Tongues, Will he not say that you are mad?* And certainly, it is little better, when Atheists and prophane Persons do heare of so many Discordant and 35 Contrary Opinions in Religion. It doth avert<sup>2</sup> them from the Church, and maketh them *To sit downe in the chaire of the Scorners*. It is but a light Thing to be Vouched<sup>3</sup> in so Serious a Matter, but yet it expresseth well the Deformity. There is a Master of Scoffing, that in his Catalogue of 40 Books of a faigned Library sets Downe this Title of a Booke, *The morris daunce of Heretikes*. For indeed every Sect of them hath a Divers<sup>4</sup> Posture or Cringe<sup>5</sup> by themselves, which cannot but Move Derision in Worldlings and Depraved Politickes<sup>6</sup>, who are apt to contemne Holy 45 Things.

As for the Fruit towards those that are within, It is Peace, which containeth infinite Blessings: It<sup>7</sup> establisheth Faith; It kindleth Charity; The outward Peace of the Church Distilleth into Peace of Conscience; And it turneth 50 the Labours of Writing and Reading of Controversies into Treaties<sup>8</sup> of Mortification and Devotion.

Concerning the Bounds of Unity; The true Placing of them importeth exceedingly<sup>9</sup>. There appeare to be two extremes. For to certaine Zelants<sup>10</sup> all Speech of Pacification is odious. *Is it peace, Iehu? What hast thou to doe with peace? turne thee behinde me.* Peace is not the Matter<sup>11</sup>, but Following and Party. Contrariwise, certaine Laodiceans and Luke-warme Persons thinke they may accommodate<sup>12</sup> Points of Religion by Middle Waies, and 60 taking part of both, And witty<sup>13</sup> Reconcilements, As if they would make an Arbitrement betweene God and Man. Both these Extremes are to be avoyded; which will be

<sup>1</sup> distinguishing property<sup>2</sup> repel<sup>3</sup> cited<sup>4</sup> different<sup>5</sup> extravagant gesture<sup>6</sup> politicians<sup>7</sup> i.e. Peace<sup>8</sup> treatises<sup>9</sup> is exceedingly important<sup>10</sup> zealots<sup>11</sup> sc. in which they are interested<sup>12</sup> compromise<sup>13</sup> ingenious

8 *OF UNITY IN RELIGION* [ESSAY III]

done, if the League of Christians, penned by our Saviour  
 65 himselfe, were in the two crosse<sup>1</sup> Clauses thereof soundly  
 and plainly expounded; *He that is not with us is against*  
*us*: And againe, *He that is not against us is with us*: That  
 is, if the Points Fundamentall and of Substance in Religion  
 were truly discerned and distinguished from Points not  
 70 meere<sup>2</sup> of Faith, but of Opinion, Order, or good Intention.  
 This is a Thing may seeme to many a Matter triviall, and  
 done already; But if it were done lesse partially<sup>3</sup>, it would  
 be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give onely this Advice, according to my  
 75 small Modell<sup>4</sup>. Men ought to take heede 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 onely by  
 Contradiction. For, as it is noted by one of the Fathers,  
 80 *Christ's Coat, indeed, had no seame, But the Church's Vesture*  
*was of divers colours*; whereupon he saith, *In veste varietas*  
*sit, scissura non sit*<sup>5</sup>; 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  
 85 Subtily and Obscurity; So that it becommeth a Thing  
 rather Ingenious then Substantiall. A man that is of  
 Iudgement and understanding shall sometimes heare Igno-  
 rant Men differ, and know well within himselfe that those  
 which so differ meane one thing<sup>6</sup>, and yet they themselves  
 90 would never agree. And if it come so to passe, in that  
 distance of Iudgement<sup>7</sup> which is betweene Man and Man,  
 Shall wee not thinke that God above, that knowes the  
 Heart, doth not<sup>8</sup> discern that fraile Men, in some of their  
 Contradictions, intend the same thing, and accepteth<sup>9</sup> of  
 95 both? The Nature of such Controversies is excellently  
 expressed by St. Paul, in the Warning and Precept that  
 he giveth concerning the same, *Devita profanas vocum*

<sup>1</sup> contradictory

<sup>2</sup> not entirely

<sup>3</sup> with less of party spirit

<sup>4</sup> limited design

<sup>5</sup> In the garment there may be  
 divers colours, but let there be no

rent.

<sup>6</sup> the same thing

<sup>7</sup> difference in intellectual ca-  
 pacity

<sup>8</sup> omit the redundant not

<sup>9</sup> approves



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ESSAY III] *OF UNITY IN RELIGION*

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*Novitates, et Oppositiones falsi Nominis Scientiæ*<sup>1</sup>. Men create  
 Oppositions which are not<sup>2</sup>, And put them into new termes,  
 so fixed as<sup>3</sup>, whereas the Meaning ought to governe the 100  
 Terme, the Terme in effect governeth the Meaning. There  
 be also two false Peaces, or Unities; The one, when the  
 Peace is grounded but upon an implicate<sup>4</sup> ignorance; For  
 all Colours will agree in the Darke: The other, when it is  
 peeced<sup>5</sup> up, upon a direct Admission of Contraries in 105  
 Fundamentall Points. For Truth and Falshood, in such  
 things, are like the Iron and Clay in the toes of Nabu-  
 cadnezar's Image; They may Cleave, but they will not  
 Incorporate.

Concerning the Meanes of procuring Unity; Men must 110  
 beware that, in the Procuring or Muniting<sup>6</sup> of Religious  
 Unity, they doe not Dissolve and Deface the Lawes of  
 Charity and of humane<sup>7</sup> Society. There be two Swords  
 amongst Christians, the Spirituall and Temporall; And  
 both have their due Office and place in the maintenance 115  
 of Religion. But we may not take up the Third sword,  
 which is Mahomet's Sword, or like unto it; That is, to  
 propagate<sup>8</sup> Religion by Warrs, or by Sanguinary Persecutions  
 to force Consciences; except it be in cases of Overt Scan-  
 dall, Blasphemy, or Intermixture of Practize<sup>9</sup> against the 120  
 State; Much lesse 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 125  
 so to consider Men as Christians, as<sup>10</sup> we forget that they  
 are Men. Lucretius the Poet, when he beheld the Act of  
 Agamemnon, that could endure the Sacrificing of his owne  
 Daughter, exclaimed—

*Tantum Relligio potuit suadere malorum*<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Avoid profane and vain bab-  
 blings and oppositions of science  
 falsely so called.

<sup>2</sup> which have no existence

<sup>3</sup> that

<sup>4</sup> inherent

<sup>5</sup> patched

<sup>6</sup> fortifying

<sup>7</sup> human

<sup>8</sup> the propagation of

<sup>9</sup> plotting

<sup>10</sup> that

<sup>11</sup> So great were the evils to  
 which religion could prompt.

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What would he have said, if he had knowne of the Mas-  
 sacre in France, or the Powder Treason of England? He  
 would have beene Seven times more Epicure<sup>1</sup> and Atheist  
 then he was. For as the temporall Sword is to bee drawne  
 135 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 bee left unto the Anabaptists and other  
 Furies. It was great Blasphemy, when the Devill said, *I*  
 140 *will ascend and be like the Highest*; But it is greater Blas-  
 phemy to personate<sup>2</sup> God, and bring him in<sup>3</sup> saying, *I will*  
*descend and be like the Prince of Darknesse*; And what<sup>4</sup> is  
 it better, to make the cause of Religion to descend to the  
 cruell and execrable Actions of Murthering Princes, But-  
 chery of People, and Subversion of States and Govern-  
 145 ments? Surely, this is to bring Downe the Holy Ghost, in  
 stead of the Liknesse of a Dove, in the Shape of a Vulture  
 or Raven; And to set, out of the Barke of a Christian  
 Church, a Flagge of a Barque of Pirats and Assassins.  
 Therefore it is most necessary, that the Church by Doctrine  
 150 and Decree; Princes by their Sword; And all Learnings,  
 both Christian and Morall, as by their Mercury Rod; Doe  
 Damne and send to Hell for ever those Facts<sup>5</sup> and Opinions  
 tending to the Support of the same; As hath beene already  
 in good part done. Surely in Counsels Concerning Religion,  
 155 that Counsel of the Apostle would be<sup>6</sup> prefixed, *Ira hominis*  
*non implet Iusticiam Dei*<sup>7</sup>. And it was a notable Observa-  
 tion of a wise Father, And no lesse ingenuously confessed,  
*That those, which held and perswaded<sup>8</sup> pressure of Consciences,*  
*were commonly interested<sup>9</sup> therin themselves for their owne*  
 160 *ends.*

<sup>1</sup> Epicurean<sup>2</sup> assign a part in the drama to<sup>3</sup> on the stage<sup>4</sup> how<sup>5</sup> deeds<sup>6</sup> needs to be<sup>7</sup> The wrath of man worketh  
not the righteousness of God.<sup>8</sup> inculcated<sup>9</sup> interested