

DIVINE SONGS AND MEDITACIONS

by Anne Collins

A collection of spiritually rich verses and hymns for worship and reflection.

16 Chapters

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Divine Songs and Meditations

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

[8][1]A. F. Griffith, *Bibliotheca Anglo-Poetica* (1815), p. 67. Griffith quotes the first two stanzas of "The Preface" as "detailing the cause of the poems being written."

[9][2]Sir Egerton Brydges, ed., *Restituta* (1815), IV, xi. Brydges reprints passages from "The Preface," "To the Reader," "The Discourse," "A Song declaring that a Christian may finde tru Love only where tru Grace is," "A Song shewing the Mercies of God to his people...," "Another Song exciting to spirituall Mirth," "Another Song (II)," and "The Fifth Meditacion," III, 123-127, 180-184.

[10][3]Catalogue of the Splendid, Curious, and Extensive Library of Sir Mark Masterman Sykes (1824), p. 39. Thorpe bought a very large percentage of the books in the Sykes collection.

[11][4]S. Austin Allibone, *A Critical Dictionary of English Literature* (1878), I, 411.

[12][5]I. A. Williams, "Bibliographical Notes and News," *London Mercury*, IX (1924), 529.

[13][6]Her poem on the Civil War suggests that she was not in sympathy with the left wing of the Puritan movement.

[14][7]"The Discourse" relates Miss Collins' interest in "Theological employments," especially as these filled her once empty life. There are 29 stanzas treating of the nature of the Trinity and the Law. In ten more stanzas, she paraphrases each of the ten Commandments. The remaining 34 stanzas summarize the steps to salvation, and the joys of the Christian life. These theological verses follow the initial 26 stanzas, which are repetitious of "The Preface" in their autobiographical matter and pious observations. In addition to "The

Discourse," the following titles have not been reprinted here:

A Song demonstrating The vanities of Earthly things;

A Song manifesting The Saints eternall Happinesse;

A Song exciting to spirituall Alacrity;

A Song composed in time of Civill Warr, when the wicked did much
insult over the godly;

The third Meditacion;

The fourth Meditacion;

The fifth Meditacion;

Verses on the twelvth Chapter of Ecclesiastes.

To the Reader

SONGS

and

MEDITACIONES

Composed

By

An Collins.

LONDON,

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Christian Reader,

I inform you, that by divine Providence, I have been restrained from bodily employments, suting with my disposicion, which enforced me to a retired Course of life; Wherin it pleased God to give me such inlargednesse of mind, and activity of spirit, so that this seeming desolate condicion, proved to me most delightfull: To be breif, I became affected to Poetry, insomuch that I proceeded to practise the same; and though the helps I had therein were small, yet the thing it self appeared unto me so amiable, as that it enflamed my faculties, to put forth themselvs, in a practise so pleasing.

Now the furtherances I had herein, was what I could gather (by the benifit of hearing,) at first from prophane Histories; which gave not that satisfactory contentment, before mencioned; but it was the manifestacion of Divine Truth, or rather the Truth it self, that reduced my mind to a peacefull temper, and spirituall calmnesse, taking up my thoughts for Theologicall employments.

Witnesse hereof, this Discourse, Songs and Meditacions following; which I have set forth (as I trust) for the benifit, and comfort of others,

Cheifly for those Christians who are of disconsolat Spirits, who may perceive herein, the Faithfullnesse Love, & Tender Compassionatnesse of God to his people, in that according to his gracious Promise, He doth not leave nor forsake them. Heb. 13.5. But causeth all things to work for theyr good. Rom. 8.28. This I doubt not, but most Saints in some measure, do experimentally know, therefore I will not seek by argument, to prove a thing so perspicuous. And now (Courteous Reader) I have delivered unto you, what I intended, onely it remains that I tell you, That with my Labours, you have my Prayers to God through Jesus Christ; whose I am, and in him,
Yours, in all Christian affection An Collins.

The Preface.

Being through weakness to the house confin'd,
My mentall powers seeming long to sleep,
were summond up, by want of wakeing mind,
Their wonted course of exercise to keep,
And not to waste themselves in slumber deep;
Though no work can bee so from error kept
But some against it boldly will except:
Yet sith it was my morning exercise
The fruit of intellectuals to vent,
In Songs or counterfets of Poesies,
And haveing therein found no small content,
To keep that course my thoughts are therfore bent,
And rather former workes to vindicate
Than any new conception to relate.
Our glorious God his creatures weaknesse sees,
And therefore deales with them accordingly,
Giveing the meanes of knowledg by degrees,
Vnfoulding more and more the Mystery,
And opening the Seales successively, Rev. 6.
So of his goodnesse gives forth demonstracions,
To his Elect in divers Dispensacions.
In legall wise hee did himself expresse
To be the only Lord Omnipotent
A just avenger of all wickednesse,
A jelous God in power eminent,
Which terror workes, and pale astonishment;

Sith plagues for sin are holden forth thereby,
But with no strength to crush iniquity.
Now with the Law the Gospell oft appeares,
But under vailes, perspicuous unto few
Who were as those which of good tydings heares,
Rejoyceing much at the report or show
Of that the Saints now by possessing know;
Oft spake the Prophets Evangelicall,
Whose words like kindly drops of rain did fall.
But when the plenerie of time was come
The springs of grace their plesant streams out deald
Felicities did evidence on her some
Salvacion and the way thereto reveald,
Who wounded were in spirit, might be heald;
Here God declares the Beauties of his Face,
Great Love, rich Mercy, free Eternall Grace.
This time was when the Sonne of Righteousnesse
His Luster in the world began to spread,
Which more and more to his he doth expresse
In tearms so large that they that run may read,
And to himselfe he doth the weaker lead;
He to his bosom will his Lambs collect,
And gently those that feeble are direct. Isa. 40. 11
And so in them a life of grace instill
Whereby they shall be able to obey
All Gospell precepts suting with his will,
And that without regard of servill pay,
But with free hearts, where Christ alone doth sway
Causing the apprehensions of his love,

To gender love, which still doth active prove.
Where Christ thus ruleth, I suppose remains
No heart that hankers after Novelties
Whose ground is but the Scum of frothy braines
Perhaps extracted from old Heresies,
New formd with Glosses to deceive the eyes
Of those who like to Children, do incline
To every new device that seemes to shine.
I am perswaded they that relish right,
The Dainties of Religion, Food divine,
Have therby such a permanent delight,
And of best Treasures, such a lasting mine,
As that their hearts to change do not incline,
I therefore think theyr tastes of Truth is ill,
Who Truths profession, quickly alter will.
I speak not this to manifest despight
To tru Religions growth or augmentacion,
Nor do I take offence of greater Light
Which brings probatum est, or commendacion
From Truth it selfe, having therto relacion,
But rather with the Saints I doe rejoyce,
When God appeares to his in Gospel-voyce.
Now touching that I hasten to expresse
Concerning these, the ofspring of my mind,
Who though they here appeare in homly dresse
And as they are my works, I do not find
But ranked with others, they may go behind,
Yet for theyr matter, I suppose they bee
Not worthlesse quite, whilst they with Truth agree.

Indeed I grant that sounder judgments may
(Directed by a greater Light) declare
The ground of Truth more in a Gospel-way,
But who time past with present will compare
Shall find more mysteries unfolded are,
So that they may who have right informacion
More plainly shew the path-way to Salvacion.
Yet this cannot prevayl to hinder me
From publishing those Truths I do intend,
As strong perfumes will not concealed be,
And who esteemes the favours of a Freind,
So little, as in silence let them end,
Nor will I therefore only keep in thought,
But tell what God still for my Soule hath wrought.
When Clouds of Melancholy over-cast
My heart, sustaining heavinesse therby,
But long that sad condicion would not last
For soon the Spring of Light would blessedly
Send forth a beam, for helps discovery,
Then dark discomforts would give place to joy,
Which not the World could give or quite destroy.
So sorrow serv'd but as springing raine
To ripen fruits, indowments of the minde,
VVho thereby did abillitie attaine
To send forth flowers, of so rare a kinde,
VVhich wither not by force of Sun or VVinde:
Retaining vertue in their operacions,
VVhich are the matter of those Meditacions.
From whence if evill matter be extracted

Tis only by a spider generacion,
Whose natures are of vennom so compacted,
As that their touch occasions depravacion
Though lighting in the fragrantest plantacion:
Let such conceale the evill hence they pluck
And not disgorg themselves of what they suck.
So shall they not the humble sort offend
Who like the Bee, by natures secret act
Convert to sweetnesse, fit for some good end
That which they from small things of worth extract,
Wisely supplying every place that lackt,
By helping to discover what was meant
Where they perceive there is a good intent.
So trusting that the only Sov'rain Power
Which in this work alwaies assisted mee,
Will still remain its firme defensive Tower,
From spite of enemies the same to free
And make it useful in some sort to bee,
That Rock I trust on whom I doe depend,
Will his and all their works for him defend.

A Song expressing their happiness who have Communion with Christ.

When scorched with distracting care,
My minde finds out a shade
Which fruitlesse Trees, false fear, dispair
And melancoly made,
Where neither bird did sing
Nor fragrant flowers spring,
Nor any plant of use:
No sound of happynesse,
Had there at all ingresse,
Such comforts to produce,
But Sorrow there frequents,
The Nurce of Discontents,
And Murmering her Mayd
Whose harsh unpleasant noise
All mentall fruits destroyes
Whereby delight's convayd.
Whereof my judgment being certifide
My mind from thence did move,
For her conception so to provide,
That it might not abortive prove,
VVhich fruit to signifie
It was conceived by
Most true intelligence
Of this sweet truth divine
Who formed thee is thine, Esay. 54. 5

Whence sprang this inference;
He too, that's Lord of all
Will thee beloved call,
Though all else prove unkind;
Then chearfull may I sing
Sith I enjoy the Spring,
Though Sesterns dry I find.
For in our Vnion with the Lord alone,
Consists our happinesse.
Certainly such who are with Christ at one
He leaves not comfortlesse.
But come to them he will
Their Souls with joy to fill.
And them to Fortifie
Their works to undergo
And beare their Crosse also,
VVith much alacrity:
VVho his assisting grace
Do feelingly imbrace,
VVith confidence may say,
Through Christ that strengthens me
No thing so hard I see Phil. 4. 14
But what perform I may.
But when the Soul no help can see
Through sins interposicion,
Then quite forlorn that while is she,
Bewailling her condicion;
In which deplored case
Now such a Soul hath space,

To think how she delayd
Her Saviour to admit
Who shu'd to her for it,
And to this purpose sayd,
Open to me my Love,
My Sister, and my Dove, Can. 5
My Locks with dew wet are
Yet she remissive grew,
Till he himselfe with-drew
Before she was aware.
But tasting once how sweet he is,
And smelling his perfumes,
Long can she not his presence misse,
But grieffe her strainth consumes:
For when he visits one
He cometh not alone,
But brings abundant grace
True Light, and Holynesse
And Spirit to expresse
Ones wants in every case;
For as he wisdom is,
So is he unto his
VVisdom and Purity, 1 Cor. 1.30
Which when he seemes to hide,
The soul missing her guide,
Must needs confused lie.
Then let them know, that would enjoy
The firme fruition,
Of his Sweet presence, he will stay

With single hearts alone,
Who but their former mate,
Doe quite exterminate:
With all things that defile
They that are Christs, truly,
The Flesh do Crucifie
With its affections vile Gal. 5.
Then grounds of truth are sought
New Principles are wrought
Of grace and holinesse,
Which plantings of the heart
Will spring in every part,
And so it selfe expresse.
Then shall the Soul like morning bright
Vnto her Lord appeare, Can. 6.10
And as the Moone when full of Light
So fayr is she and cleare,
With that inherent grace
Thats darted from the Face
Of Christ, that Sunne divine,
Which hath a purging power
Corruption to devour,
And Conscience to refine;
Perfection thus begun
As pure as the Sonne,
The Soul shall be likewise
With that great Blessednesse,
Imputed Righteousnesse
Which freely Justifies.

They that are thus compleat with Grace
And know that they are so,
For Glory must set Sayle apace
Whilst wind doth fitly blow,
Now is the tide of Love,
Now doth the Angell move;
If that there be defect
That Soul which sin doth wound,
Here now is healing found,
If she no time neglect;
To whom shall be reveald
What erst hath been conceald,
When brought unto that Light,
Which in the Soul doth shine
When he thats most divine,
Declares his presence bright.
Then he will his beloved shew
The reason wherefore she
Is seated in a place so low,
Not from all troubles free;
And wherefore they do thrive
That wicked works contrive;
Christ telleth his also
For who as friends he takes
He of his Councell makes,
And they shall secrets know: Iohn 15.15
Such need not pine with cares
Seeing all things are theirs,
If they are Christs indeed; Cor. 3.21.

Therefore let such confesse
They are not comfortlesse,
Nor left in time of Need.

A Song shewing the Mercies of God to his people, by interlacing cordiall

Comforts with fatherly Chastisements.

As in the time of Winter

The Earth doth fruitlesse and barren lie,

Till the Sun his course doth run

Through Aries, Taurus, Gemini;

Then he repayres what Cold did decay,

Drawing superfluous moistures away,

And by his luster, together with showers,

The Earth becoms fruitful & plesant with flowers

That what in winter seemed dead,

Thereby the Sun is life discovered.

So though that in the Winter

Of sharp Afflictions, fruits seem to dy,

And for that space, the life of Grace

Remayneth in the Root only;

Yet when the Son of Righteousnesse clear

Shall make Summer with us, our spirits to chear,

Warming our hearts with the sense of his favour,

Then must our flowers of piety savour,

And then the fruits of righteousnesse

We to the glory of God must expresse.

And as when Night is parted;

The Sun ascending our Hemisphear,

Ill fumes devouers, and opes the powers

Which in our bodies are, and there

He drawes out the spirits of moving and sence
As from the center, to the circumference;
So that the exterior parts are delighted,
And unto mocion and action excited,
And hence it is that with more delight
We undergo labor by day then by night.
So though a Night of Sorrows
May stay proceedings in piety
Yet shall our light like morning bright
Arise out of obscurity,
Then when the Sun that never declines
Shall open the faculties of our mindes,
Stirring up in them that spirituall mocion
Whereby we make towards God with devocion
When kindled by his influence
Our Sacrifice is as pleasing incense.
Now when we feel Gods favour
And the communion with him we have,
Alone we may admit of joy
As having found what most we crave,
Store must we gather while such gleams do last
Against our tryalls sharp winterly blasts
So dispairacion shall swallow us never,
Who know where God once loves, there he loves ever
Though sence of it oft wanting is
Yet still Gods mercies continue with his.
So soon as we discover
Our souls benumbed in such a case,
We may not stay, without delay

We must approach the Throne of Grace,
First taking words to our selves to declare
How dead to goodnesse by nature we are,
Then seeking by him who for us did merit
To be enliv'd by his quickening Spirit,
Whose flame doth light our spark of Grace,
Whereby we may behold his pleased face.
From whence come beams of comfort,
The chiefest matter of tru Content,
Who tast and see, how sweet they be,
Perceive they are most excellent,
Being a glimce of his presence so bright,
Who dwelleth in unapproachable light:
Whoso hath happily this mercy attayned,
Earnest of blessednesse endlesse hath gayned,
Where happinesse doth not decay
There Spring is eternall, and endlesse is day.

A Song declaring that a Christian may finde tru Love only where tru Grace is.

No Knot of Friendship long can hold
Save that which Grace hath ty'd,
For other causes prove but cold
VVhen their effects are try'd;
For God who loveth unity
Doth cause the onely union,
Which makes them of one Family
Of one mind and communion.
Commocions will be in that place,
VVhere are such contraries,
As is iniquity and grace,
The greatest enimies,
Whom sin doth rule shee doth command
To hold stiff opposicion
Gainst grace and all the faithfull band
Which are in her tuision.
This is the cause of home debates,
And much domestick woes,
That one may find his houshold mates
To be his greatest foes,
That with the Wolfe the Lamb may 'bide
As free from molestacion,
As Saints with sinners, who reside
In the same habitacion.
By reason of the Enmity

Between the womans Seed
And mans infernall enimy,
The Serpent and his breed,
The link of consanguinity
Could hold true friendship never,
Neither hath neare affinity
United freinds for ever.
For scoffing Ishmael will scorn
His onely true born brother:
Rebeckahs sonns together born
Contend with one another,
No bond of nature is so strong
To cause their hearts to tarry
In unity, who do belong
To masters so contrary.
The wicked ordinarily
Gods dearest children hate,
And therefore seek (though groundlesly)
Their credits to abate,
And though their words and works do show
No colour of offences
Yet are their hearts most (they trow)
For all their good pretences.
And those that strongest grace attain,
Whereby sin is vanquished,
By Sathan and his cursed train
Are most contraried;
Because by such the Serpent feeles,
His head to be most bruised,

He turnes and catches at their heeles,
By whom he is so used.
His agents he doth instigate,
To vex, oppose, and fret,
To slander and caluminate,
Those that have scap't his net,
Who servants are so diligent,
That like to Cain their father
They whose works are most excellent
They mischief will the rather.
Yet there are of the gracelesse crew
Who for some private ends
Have sided with professors true
As trusty pious friends,
But to the times of worldly peace
Their friendship was confined.
Which when some crosses caus'd to cease
The thred of league untwined.
Such friends unto the Swallow may
Be fitly likened,
Who all the pleasant Summer stay
But are in Winter fled:
They cannot 'bide their freind to see,
In any kind of trouble,
So pittifull (forsooth) they bee
That have the art to double.
Such will be any thing for one
Who hath of nothing need,
Their freindship stands in word alone,

And none at all in deed,
How open mouth'd so e're they are,
They bee as closely handed,
Who will (they know) their service spare,
They're his to be commanded.
Therefore let no true hearted one
Reliefe at need expect,
From opposits to vertue known,
Who can him not affect:
For his internall ornaments,
Will ever lovely make him
Though all things pleasing outward sence
Should utterly forsake him.
In choise of Freinds let such therefore
Prefer the godly wise,
To whom he may impart the store
That in his bosome lies:
And let him not perniciously
Communicate his favours,
To all alike indifferently,
Which shewes a mind that wavers.
Gods children to each other should
Most open hearted bee;
Who by the same precepts are rul'd,
And in one Faith agree,
Who shall in true felicity,
Where nothing shall offend them
Together dwell eternally,
To which I do commend them.

Another Song exciting to spirituall Mirth.

The Winter being over
In order comes the Spring,
Which doth green Hearbs discover
And cause the Birds to sing;
The Night also expired,
Then comes the Morning bright,
Which is so much desired
By all that love the Light;
This may learn
Them that mourn
To put their Griefe to flight.
The Spring succeedeth Winter,
And Day must follow Night.
He therefore that sustaineth
Affliction or Distresse,
Which ev'ry member paineth,
And findeth no relesse;
Let such therefore despaire not,
But on firm Hope depend
Whose Griefes immortall are not,
And therefore must have end:
They that faint
With complaint
Therefore are too blame,
They ad to their afflictions,
And amplify the same.

For if they could with patience
A while possesse the minde,
By inward Consolacions
They might refreshing finde,
To sweeten all their Crosses
That little time they 'dure;
So might they gain by losses,
And harp would sweet procure;
But if the minde
Be inclinde
To Vnquietnesse
That only may be called
The worst of all Distresse.
He that is melancolly
Detesting all Delight,
His Wits by sottish Folly
Are ruinated quite;
Sad Discontent and Murmors
To him are insident,
Were he posest of Honors,
He could not be content:
Sparks of joy
Fly away,
Floods of Cares arise,
And all delightfull Mocions
In the conception dies.
But those that are contented
However things doe fall,
Much Anguish is prevented,

And they soon freed from all;
They finish all their Labours
With much felicity,
Theyr joy in Troubles savours
Of perfect Piety,
Chearfulnesse
Doth expresse
A settled pious minde
Which is not prone to grudging
From murmoring refinde.
Lascivious joy I prayse not,
Neither do it allow,
For where the same decayes not
No branch of peace can grow;
For why, it is sinister
As is excessive Griefe,
And doth the Heart sequester
From all good: to be briefe,
Vain Delight
Passeth quite
The bounds of modesty,
And makes one apt to nothing
But sensuality.

This song sheweth that God is the strength of his people, whence they have

support and comfort.

My straying thoughts, reduced stay,

And so a while retired,

Such observations to survey

Which memory hath registred,

That were not in oblivion dead.

In which review of mentall store,

One note affordeth comforts best,

Cheifly to be preferred therefore,

As in a Cabinet or Chest

One jewell may exceed the rest.

God is the Rock of his Elect

In whom his grace is incoate,

This note, my soule did most affect,

It doth such power intimate

To comfort and corroborate.

God is a Rock first in respect

He shadows his from hurtfull heat,

Then in regard he doth protect

His servants still from dangers great

And so their enemies defeat.

In some dry desert Lands (they say)

Are mighty Rocks, which shadow make,

Where passengers that go that way,

May rest, and so refreshing take,

Their sweltish Wearinesse to slake.
So in this world such violent
Occasions, find we still to mourn.
That scorching heat of Discontent
VVould all into combustion turn
And soon our soules with anguish burn,
Did not our Rock preserve us still,
Whose Spirit, ours animates,
That wind that bloweth where it will Iohn 3.8
Sweetly our soules refrigerates,
And so destructive heat abates.
From this our Rock proceeds likewise,
Those living streames, which graciously
Releives the soule which scorched lies,
Through sence of Gods displeasure high,
Due to her for iniquity.
So this our Rock refreshing yeelds,
To those that unto him adhere,
Whom likewise mightily he sheilds,
So that they need not faint nor fear
Though all the world against them were.
Because he is their strength and tower,
Whose power none can equalize.
VVhich onely gives the use of power
Which justly he to them denies,
Who would against his servants rise.
Not by selfe power nor by might,
But by Gods spirit certainly, Zach. 4.
Men compasse and attain their right,

For what art thou, O mountain high!
Thou shalt with valleys, evenly.
Happy was Israell, and why,
Jehovah was his Rock alone, Deu. 33.29
The Sword of his Excellency,
His sheild of Glory mighty known,
In saving those that are his own.
Experience of all age shewes,
That such could never be dismayd
Who did by Faith on God repose,
Confessing him their onely ayd,
Such were alone in safty stayd.
One may have freinds, who have a will
To further his felicity,
And yet be wanting to him still,
Because of imbecility,
In power and ability.
But whom the Lord is pleas'd to save,
Such he is able to defend,
His grace and might no limmits have,
And therefore can to all extend
Who doe or shall on him depend.
Nor stands he therefore surely,
Whose Freinds most powerfull appeare,
Because of mutabillity
To which all mortalls subject are,
Whose favours run now here, now there.
But in our Rock and mighty Fort,
Of change no shadow doth remain,

His favours he doth not Transport
As trifles movable and vain,
His Love alone is lasting gain.
Therefore my soule do thou depend,
upon that Rock which will not move,
When all created help shall end
Thy Rock impregnable will prove,
Whom still embrace with ardent Love.

Another Song.

The Winter of my infancy being over-past
Then supposed, suddenly the Spring would hast
Which useth every thing to cheare
With invitation to recreacion
This time of yeare.
The Sun sends forth his radiant beames to warm the ground
The drops distil, between the gleams delights abound,
Vèr brings her utf mate the flowery Queen,
The Groves shee dresses, her Art expresses
On every Green.
But in my Spring it was not so, but contrary,
For no delightfull flowers grew to please the eye,
No hopefull bud, nor fruitfull bough,
No moderat showers which causeth flowers
To spring and grow.
My Aprill was exceeding dry, therfore unkind;
Whence tis that small utility I look to find,
For when that Aprill is so dry,
(As hath been spoken) it doth betoken
Much scarcity.
Thus is my Spring now almost past in heavinesse
The Sky of pleasure's over-cast with sad distresse
For by a comfortlesse Eclips,
Disconsolacion and sore vexacion,
My blossom nips.
Yet as a garden is my mind enclosed fast

Being to safety so confind from storm and blast
Apt to produce a fruit most rare,
That is not common with every woman
That fruitfull are.

A Love of goodnesse is the cheifest plant therin
The second is, (for to be briefe) Dislike to sin.
These grow in spight of misery,
Which Grace doth nourish and cause to flourish
Continually.

But evill mocions, currupt seeds, fall here also
whenc springs prophanesse as do weeds where flowers grow
VWhich must supplanted be with speed
These weeds of Error, Distrust and Terror,
Lest woe succeed

So shall they not molest, the plants before exprest
Which countervails these outward wants, & purchase rest
Which more commodious is for me
Then outward pleasures or earthly treasures
Enjoyd would be.

My little Hopes of worldly Gain I fret not at,
As yet I do this Hope retain; though Spring be lat
Perhaps my Sommer-age may be,
Not prejudiciall, but beneficiall
Enough for me.

Admit the worst it be not so, but stormy too,
He learn my selfe to undergo more then I doe
And still content my self with this
Sweet Meditacion and Contemplacion
Of heavenly blis,

VVhich for the Saints reserved is, who persevere
In Piety and Holynesse, and godly Feare,
The pleasures of which blis divine
Neither Logician nor Rhetorician

Another Song.

Having restrained Discontent,
The onely Foe to Health and Witt,
I sought by all meanes to prevent
The causes which did nourish it,
Knowing that they who are judicious
Have alwaies held it most pernicious.
Looking to outward things, I found
Not that which Sorrow might abate,
But rather cause them to abound
Then any Greife to mitigate
Which made me seek by supplicacion
Internall Peace and Consolacion
Calling to mind their wretchednesse
That seem to be in happy case
Having externall happinesse
But therewithall no inward grace;
Nor are their minds with knowledg pollisht
In such all vertues are abollisht
For where the mind 's obscure and dark
There is no vertu resident,
Of goodnesse there remaines no spark;
Distrustfullnesse doth there frequent
For Ignorance the cause of error
May also be the cause of terror
As doth the Sun-beames beautify
The Sky, which else doth dim appeare

So Knowledg doth exquisitly
The Mind adorn, delight and cleare
Which otherwise is most obscure,
Full of enormities impure.
So that their Soules polluted are
That live in blockish Ignorance.
Which doth their miseries declare
And argues plainly that their wants
More hurtfull are then outward Crosses
Infirmities, Reproach, or Losses.
Where saving Knowledg doth abide,
The peace of Conscience also dwels
And many Vertues more beside
Which all absurdities expels,
And fills the Soule with joy Celestiall
That shee regards not things Terrestiall.
Sith then the Graces of the Mind
Exceeds all outward Happinesse,
What sweet Contentment do they find
Who are admitted to possesse
Such matchlesse Pearles, so may we call them;
For Precious is the least of all them.
VVhich when I well considered
My greife for outward crosses ceast,
Being not much discouraged
Although afflictions still encreast,
Knowing right well that Tribulacion
No token is of Reprobacion.

Another Song

Excessive worldly Greife the Soule devourers
And spoyle the activnesse of all the Powers,
Through indisposing them to exercise
What should demonstrate their abilities,
By practicall improvment of the same
Unto the Glory of the givers name.
Though Envy wait to blast the Blossoms green
Of any Vertu soon as they are seen,
Yet none may therefore just occasion take
To shun what Vertu manifest should make,
For like the Sun shall Vertu be beheld
VVhen Clouds of Envy shall be quite dispeld;
Though there be some of no disart at all
Who no degree in worth can lower fall,
Prefer'd before the Verteous whom they taunt
Onely because of some apparent want,
Which is as if a Weed without defect
Before the Damask Rose should have respect,
Because the Rose a leafe or two hath lost,
And this the Weed of all his parts can boast;
Or elce as if a monstrous Clout should be
Prefer'd before the purest Lawn to see,
Because the Lawn hath spots and this the Clout
Is equally polluted thoroughout
Therefore let such whose vertu favours merits,
Shew their divinly magnanimious spirits

By disregarding such their approbacion
Who have the worthlesse most in estimacion,
For who loves God above all things, not one
Who understands not that in him alone
All causes that may move affection are,
Glimpses wherof his creatures doe declare,
This being so, who can be troubled
When as his gifts are undervalued,
Seeing the giver of all things likewise
For want of knowledg many underprise.
Time past we understood by story
The strength of Sin a Land to waste,
Now God to manifest his Glory.
The truth hereof did let us taste,
For many years, this Land appears
Of usefull things the Nursery,
Refresh't and fenc'd with unity.
But that which crown'd each other Blessing
Was evidence of Truth Divine,
The Word of Grace such Light expressing,
Which in some prudent Hearts did shine,
Whose Flame inclines those noble minds
To stop the Course of Prophanacion
And so make way for Reformation.
But He that watcheth to devour,
This their intent did soon discry,
For which he strait improves his power
This worthy work to nullify
With Sophistry and Tiranny,

His agents he forthwith did fill
Who gladly execute his will.
And first they prove by Elocution
And Hellish Logick to traduce
Those that would put in execucion,
Restraint of every known abuse;
They seperate and 'sturb the State,
And would all Order overthrow,
The better sort were charged so.
Such false Reports did fill all places,
Corrupting some of each degree,
He whom the highest Title graces
From hearing slanders was not free,
Which Scruple bred, and put the Head
With primest members so at bate
Which did the Body dislocate.
A Lying Spirit mis-informed
The common peep, who suppose
If things went on to be reformed
They should their ancient Customs lose,
And be beside to courses ty'd
Which they not yet their Fathers knew,
And so be wrapt in fangles new.
Great multitudes therefore were joyned
To Sathans plyant instruments,
With mallice, ignorance combined,
And both at Truth their fury vents;
First Piety as Enimy
They persecute, oppose, revile,

Then Freind as well as Foe they spoyle.
The beuty of the Land's abollisht,
Such Fabericks by Art contriv'd,
The many of them quite demollisht,
And many of their homes depriv'd
Some mourn for freinds untimely ends,
And some for necessaries faint,
With which they parted by constraint.
But from those storms hath God preserved
A people to record his praise,
Who sith they were therefore reserved
Must to the heigth their Spirits raise
To magnify his lenity
Who safely brought them through the fire
To let them see their hearts desire
Which many faithfull ones deceased
With teares desired to behold,
Which is the Light of Truth professed
Without obscuring shaddowes old,
When spirits free, not tyed shall be
To frozen Forms long since compos'd,
When lesser knowledg was disclos'd.
VWho are preserv'd from foes outragious,
Noteing the Lords unfound-out wayes,
Should strive to leave to after-ages
Some memorandums of his praise;
That others may admiring say
Unsearchable his judgments are,
As do his works alwayes declare.

The first Meditation.

The Morning is at hand, my Soule awake,
Rise from the sleep of dull security;
Now is the time, anon 'twill be to late,
Now hast thou golden opportunity
For to behold thy naturall estate
And to repent and be regenerate.
Delay no longer though the Flesh thee tell,
Tis time enough hereafter to repent,
Strive earnestly such mocions to expell,
Remember this thy courage to augment
The first fruits God requir'd for sacrifice,
The later he esteemed of no price.
First let's behold our natural estate
How dangerous and damnable it is,
And thereupon grow to exceeding hate
With that which is the onely cause of this;
The which is Sin, yea Disobedience
Even that which was our first parents offence.
The reasonable Soule undoubtedly
Created was at first free from offence,
In Wisdom, Holinesse, and Purity,
It did resemble the Divine Essence,
Which being lost, the Soule of man became
Like to the Serpent, causer of the same.
The Understanding, Will, Affections cleare,
Each part of Soule and Body instantly

Losing their purity, corrupted were
Throughout as by a loathsom Leprocy
The rayes of Vertu were extinguisht quite
And Vice usurpeth rule with force and might.
This sudden change from sanctitude to sin
Could but prognosticat a fearfull end,
Immediatly the dollour did begin,
The Curse that was pronounc'd, none might defend,
Which Curse is in this life a part of some,
The fulnesse thereof in the life to come.
The Curse that to the Body common is
The sence of Hunger, Thirst, of Sicknes, Pain:
The Soules Calamities exceedeth this,
A Tast of Hell shee often doth sustain,
Rebukes of Conscience, threatning plagues for sin,
A world of Torments oft shee hath within.
Unlesse the Conscience dead and feared be,
Then runs the soule in errors manifold,
Her danger deep shee can in no wise see,
And therefore unto every sin is bold,
The Conscience sleeps, the Soule is dead in sin,
Nere thinks of Hell untill shee comes therein.
Thus is the Conscience of the Reprobate,
Either accusing unto desperacion,
Or elce benumbed, cannot instigate
Nor put the Soule in mind of reformation;
Both work for ill unto the castaway,
Though here they spent their time in mirth and play.
Yet can they have no sound contentment here,

In midst of laughter oft the heart is sad:
This world is full of woe & hellish feare
And yeelds forth nothing long to make us glad
As they that in the state of nature dy
Passe but from misery to misery.
Consider this my soule, yet not despaire,
To comfort thee again let this suffice,
There is a Well of grace, whereto repaire,
First wash away thy foul enormities
With teares proceeding from a contrite heart,
With thy beloved sins thou must depart.
Inordinate affections, and thy Will,
And carnall wisdom, must thou mortify,
For why, they are corrupt, prophane and ill,
And prone to nothing but impiety,
Yet shalt thou not their nature quite deface,
Their ruines must renewed be by grace.
If that thou canst unfainedly repent,
With hatred therunto thy sins confesse,
And not because thou fearest punishment
But that therby thou didst Gods Laws transgress
Resolving henceforth to be circumspect,
Desiring God to frame thy wayes direct.
Each member of thy body thou dost guide,
Then exercise them in Gods service most
Let every part be throughly sanctifide
As a meet Temple for the Holy Ghost;
Sin must not in our mortall bodies raign
It must expelled be although with pain

Thou must not willingly one sin detain,
For so thou mayst debarred be of blis,
Grace with iniquity will not remain,
Twixt Christ and Belial no communion is,
Therefore be carefull every sin to fly,
And see thou persevere in piety.
So mayst thou be perswaded certainly,
The Curse shall in no wise endanger thee,
Although the body suffer misery
Yet from the second death thou shalt be free;
They that are called here to Holinesse
Are sure elected to eternall blisse.
A Taste of blessednesse here shalt thou say,
Thy Conscience shall be at Tranquility,
And in the Life to com thou shalt enjoy
The sweet fruition of the Trinity,
Society with Saints then shalt thou have,
Which in this life thou didst so often crave.
Let this then stir thee up to purity,
Newnesse of life, and speedy Conversion,
To Holinesse and to integrity,
Make conscience of impure thoughts unknown
Pray in the Spirit with sweet Contemplacion
Be vigilant for to avoid Temptacion.

The Second Meditation.

Amid the Ocean of Adversity,
Neare whelmed in the Waves of sore Vexation,
Tormented with the Floods of Misery,
And almost in the Guise of Despairacion,
Neare destitute of Comfort, full of Woes,
This was her Case that did the same compose:
At length Jehovah by his power divine,
This great tempestious Storm did mitigate.
And cause the Son of Righteousnesse to shine
Upon his Child that seemed desolate,
Who was refreshed, and that immediatly,
And Sings as follows with alacrity.
The storm of Anguish being over-blown,
To praise Gods mercies now I may have space,
For that I was not finally orethrown,
But was supported by his speciall grace;
The Firmament his glory doth declare, Psal. 19. 1
Yet over all his works, his mercies are. Psal. 145. 9
The Contemplacion of his mercies sweet,
Hath ravished my Soule with such delight
Who to lament erst while was onely meet,
Doth now determine to put grieffe to flight,
Being perswaded, hereupon doth rest,
Shee shall not be forsaken though distrest.
Gods Favour toward me is hereby proved,
For that he hath not quite dejected me;

Why then, though crosses be not yet removed
Yet so seasoned with patience they be,
As they excite me unto godlinesse,
The onely way to endlesse happinesse.
Which earthly muckworms can in no wise know
Being of the Holy Spirit destitute,
They savour onely earthly things below;
Who shall with them of saving Grace dispute,
Shall find them capable of nothing lesse
Though Christianity they do professe.
Let Esaus porcion fall onto these men,
The Fatnesse of the Earth let them possesse
No other thing they can desire then,
Having no taste of Heavens happinesse,
They care not for Gods Countenance so bright,
Their Corn and Wine and Oyle is their delight.
To compass this and such like is their care,
But having past the period of their dayes,
Bereft of all but miseries they are,
Their sweet delight with mortall life decayes,
But godlinesse is certainly great gain, 1. Tim. 6. 6
Immortall blisse they have, who it retain.
They that are godly and regenerate,
Endu'd with saving Knowledg, Faith, and Love,
When they a future blisse premeditate,
It doth all bitter passion quite remove;
Though oft they feel the want of outward things
Their heavenly meditations, comfort brings.
They never can be quite disconsolate,

Because they have the onely Comforter
Which doth their minds alway illuminate,
And make them fleshy pleasures much abhorr,
For by their inward light they plainly see
How vain all transitory pleasures bee.
Moreover, if they be not only voyd
Of earthly pleasures and commodities,
But oftentimes be greivously annoyd
With sundry kinds of great Calamities,
Whether it be in Body, Goods, or Name,
With pacience they undergo the same.
And why? because they know and be aware
That all things work together for the best,
To them that love the Lord and called are, Ro. 8.28.
According to his purpose; therefore blest
Doubtlesse they be, his knowledg that obtain,
No Losse may countervail their blessed Gain.
Which makes them neither murmor nor repine
When God is pleasd with Crosses them to try,
who out of darknesse caused light to shine, 2 Cor. 4.6.
Can raise them Comfort out of Misery
They know right well and therefore are content
To beare with patience any Chastisement.
This difference is betwixt the good and bad;
When as for sin the godly scourged are,
And godly Sorrow moves them to be sad,
These speches or the like they will declare:
O will the Lord absent himselfe for ever?
Will he vouchsafe his mercy to me never?

What is the cause I am afflicted so?
The cause is evident I do perceive.
My Sins have drawn upon me all this woe,
The which I must confesse and also leave,
Then shall I mercy find undoubtedly, Pro. 28.13.
And otherwise no true prosperity.
Whilst sin hath rule in me, in vain I pray,
Or if my Soule iniquity affects,
If this be true, at tis, I boldly say,
The prayer of the wicked, God rejects; Pro. 15.8.
If in my heart I wickednesse regard
How can I hope my prayer shall be heard. Psal. 66
If I repent, here may I Comfort gather,
Though in my prayers there be weaknesse much
Christ siteth at the right hand of his Father
To intercede and make request for such, Rom. 8.33
Who have attained to sincerity,
Though something hindered by infirmity.
I will forthwith abandon and repent,
Not onely palpable iniquities,
But also all allowance or consent
To sinful motions or infirmities;
And when my heart and wayes reformed be,
God will with-hold nothing that's good from me. Psal. 84.
So may I with the Psalmist truly say,
Tis good for me that I have been afflicted,
Before I troubled was, I went astray, Psal. 119
But now to godlinesse I am adicted;
If in Gods Lawes I had not took delight,

I in my troubles should have perisht quite.
Such gracious speeches usually proceed
From such a Spirit that is Sanctifide,
Who strives to know his own defects and need
And also seekes to have his wants supplide;
But certainly the wicked do not so
As do their speeches and distempers show.
At every crosse they murmor, vex and fret,
And in their passion often will they say,
How am I with Calamities beset!
I think they will mee utterly destray,
The cause hereof I can in no wise know
But that the Destinies will have it so.
Unfortunate am I and quite forlorn,
Oh what disastrous Chance befalleth me!
Vnder some hurtfull Plannet I was born
That will (I think) my Confusion be,
And there are many wickeder then I
Who never knew the like adversity.
These words do breifly show a carnall mind
Polluted and corrupt with Ignorance,
Where godly Wisdom never yet hath shin'd
For that they talk of Destiny or Chance;
For if Gods Power never can abate,
He can dispose of that he did create.
If God alone the True Almighty be
As we beleive, acknowledg, and confesse,
Then supream Governor likewise is he
Disposing all things, be they more or lesse;

The eyes of God in every place do see
The good and bad, and what their actions bee.
The thought hereof sufficeth to abate
My heaviness in great'st extremity,
When Grace unto my Soul did intimate
That nothing comes by Chance or Destiny,
But that my God and Saviour knowes of all
That either hath or shall to me befall.
Who can his servants from all troubles free
And would I know my Crosses all prevent,
But that he knowes them to be good for me
Therefore I am resolv'd to be content,
For though I meet with many Contradictions
Yet Grace doth alwayes sweeten my Afflictions.

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* Page numbers were omitted: they were unclear or missing on the scans.

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