

A facsimile copy of

Joseph Swetnam

‘The Schoole of Defence’ 1617

PART 1

Scanned from a copy of the original provided by Patri Pugliese.

Purists would like to know that I have made some corrections to the original page numbering where it was incorrect and I have made a very slight change to the ‘type setting’ of page 187.

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Stuart Huntley, May 2000

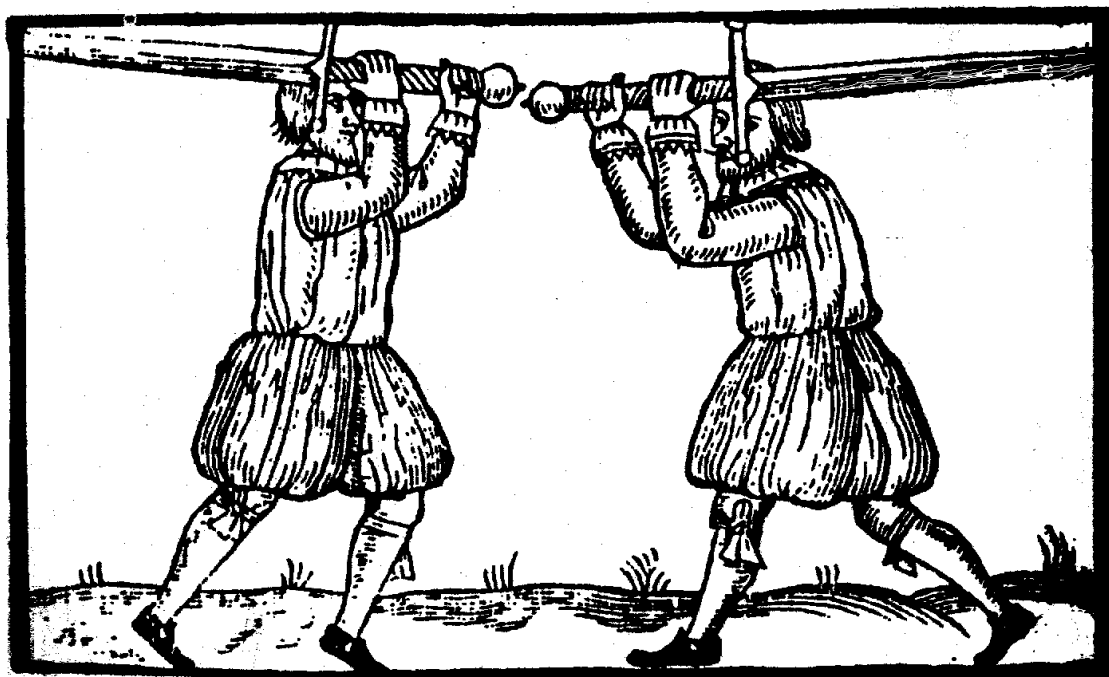
THE SCHOOLE OF THE NOBLE and Worthy Science of Defence.

Being the first of any English-mans inuention, which professed the sayd
Science; So plainly described, that any man may quickly
*come to the true knowledge of their weapons, with
small paines and little practise.*

Then reade it aduisedly, and vse the benefit thereof when occasion shal serue, so shal
thou be a good Common-wealth man, liue happy to thy selfe,
and comfortable to thy friend.

*Also many other good and profitable Precepts and Counsels for the managing of Quarrels
and ordering thy selfe in many other matters.*

Written by IOSEPH SVETNAM.



LONDON,
Printed by NICHOLAS ORES. 1617.



TO THE HIGH AND
MIGHTIE PRINCE CHARLES,
PRINCE OF WALES, DVKE OF CORNE-
wale, Yorke, Albany and Rothesay, Marques of Or-
mount, Earle of Rosse, and Baron of Armanoch, high
Seneschal of Scotland, Lord of the Isles,
and Knight of the most Noble order
of the Garter.

Most Gracious and No-
ble Prince, the many
great and kinde fauours
which I receiued from the
hands of your late Bro-
ther deceased, vnto whom I was tutor in
the skill of weapons, to my no little credit,
which makes me now turne backe to shew
my loue in a small measure vnto your
Princely selfe, and yet it is as much as I
am able, a bunch of grapes is but a small
present, and yet King Philip of Mace-
don

The Epistle Dedicatory.

who being asked whether he loved his father or his mother best, stood mate as doubting how to answer for feare of displeasing the one of them: euen so in this place will I. Now the second cause of this my Dedication unto your Excellency is, in respect of my vehement loue wherto in duty I am bound unto your Princely selfe: and thirdly, that it may passe vnder your Highnesse protection, the better to shroud it selfe from backe-biters and fault-finders, least amongst such it be taken vp like a friendlesse vagarant: Oh therefore let it find fauour, I humbly intreate your Highnesse, althougħ it can little pleasure your Princely selfe, yet it may stead many others, and so doubting least I haue troubled your Highnesse ouer long. I will therefore heere drawe the Curtaines, and commit your Highnesse to the Protection of the Almighty, who euer blesse,
A 3 preserve,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

*preserve and keepe your Highnesse with
long life, and prosperous health, and hap-
pinesse to the worlds end.*

By your Highnesse to be

commanded so long as

I live.

Joseph Swetnam,



An Epistle vnto the common Reader.



N setting out of a booke, friendly Reader, thus I know, that there is no better a thing to be obserued then order, for except there be an order in all things, all runneth to confusion, but what doe I meane to talke of orders, which am no Scholler, nor haue no learning; but only a little experience, which God and nature hath bestowed vpon me. As it is vnpossible to build a Church without lyme or stone, no more can a workman worke without tooles, yet to auoide idlenesse, something I will make of it, although I cannot make it sound to so good a tune as I would, for want of learning, for I was neuer at *Oxford* but while I baited my horse; nor at *Cambridge* but while one *Starbridge* faire lasted: wherefore if you doe examine mee concerning learning, I shall answer you as the fellow did the gentleman, who asking him the way to *London*, a poke full of plumbes sir said he; or as he which came from a Sermon was asked what he heard there; he said it was a good Sermon, and the Preacher spake well, but he could not tell one word what hee said, no more can I answer one word scholler-like or according to learning; yet both at *Oxford* and *Cambridge* I looked vpon the Schollers, and they looked vpon me, and so I became a little the older, but neuer the wiser; wherefore if I should continue tempering this booke so long till I had put it in order, I should resemble those, which doe make their apparell so long of the newest fashion, vntill they are quite out of fashion, or like as the fiddlers doe their strings, who wrest them and temper them so long, vntill they bring them out of all time, tune, and reason, least I should doe so I will let it goe with this draffe as it is: but gentle Reader looke not heere to gather grapes of thornes, nor figs of thistles: nor of a wild and a barren tree, nothing else but
wilde

The Epistle to the Reader.

~~willow and burch~~ Fruit, yet amongst ~~doft~~; sometimes there are pearles found, and in hard rockes gold and stones of great price. I haue heere as it were mixed wheat and rye, barlye and oates, Beanes and Pease altogether, now take a little paines to separate that graine which thou likest best for thine owne benefit. I giue thee here a friendly caueat, to prepare thy selfe in a readines, for although thou art at quiet now, yet dost thou not know how soone thou shalt be vrged to take weapons in hand, as my selfe and many others haue beene, when I least thought vpon it, therefore to haue iudgement and skill in weapons is good, although thou neuer haue occasion to vse it. The Prouerbe saith cunning is no burthen, the same mouth which at one time saith, I will liue quietly, for I will make no brawles with any, yet at another time he again will say, oh that I had skill, for then wold I bee reuenged on such a one that hath iniuriously wronged me. Therefore for such a cause be prepared before hand, for if the King were sure that he should neuer haue wars, what neede had he then to prouide armour and weapons, but in the time of peace hee prouideth himselfe; the wise Mariner prouides in a calme for a storme, for things doubtfull are to be dreadfull. It is better to liue in feare then in security, and to this purpose *Tully* hath a pretty saying which goeth thus; *hee which desireth peace let him prouide for wars*, but I feare mee that the tyde will be spent, before I can double this point, and therefore here I will cast anchor, and will ride in this rode something longer then I wold, for feare least I cast my barke away on a lee shore, for want of water; these words of warinesse doe I vse because there are many which no sooner out of the shell, but are cast away like an addle egge.

Therefore I wold not haue yong sprigs spoiled in the blossom, I meane I wold not haue yong branches or young enterers into the world imbarke themselves in the ship of fooles, for feare least they cast themselves away in a manner, before they haue had any beginning, for I haue knowen many blasted in the budding in a manner, before they came to know cheese from chalke: onely for want of instruction, and likewise some againe haue perished, and yet not for want of instruction, but they haue knowen what was good for them, and yet would not seek
it,

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it, but haue delaid the meanes, as many delay their repentance, till the latter day, or till it be too late, not much vnlke a sluggard, which rowling himselfe, and looking abroad in the morning, he seeth that it is high time to rise, yet sluggishly he lyeth downe againe to sleepe, and so forgetteth himselfe; euen so many perish, some for want of good counsell, and some for lacke of forecasting a mischiefe before it doe light vpon them. It is said that we must not tempt God, *Math. 4.* but I hold it a tempting of God to presume wholly vpon him for all occasions whatsoever, without seeking other meanes which is commonly known, and by God prepared for vs: as if we were sicke men we ought to take the Phylitians counsell, and if wounded we must seeke for helpe of a Chyrurgian, if our house be on fire we must powre on water, and if we fall in a ditch, we must not lye still without vsing other meanes besides, saying God helpe vs, but for this and all other things God hath appointed meanes, we must seek and then no doubt God will giue his blessing with it, but wee must not presume how carelesly soeuer we liue, or how desperately soeuer we dye, nothing can hinder vs of our saluation, but so far decciued I feare me are such, that there is a thunderbolt of mischiefe prepared for their ignorāce herein. Our Sauior Christ would not presume so much of the mercy of God the Father, as when he was vpon the pinacle to cast himselfe downe, but hee came downe by other meanes, for the stayres were made for the purpose; God the father might otherwise haue saued *Noah* without any Arke if it had pleased him, but *Noah* had warning that such a thing should be, whereupon he sought a meanes to saue himselfe by making the Arke, therefore he that will not be prepared before hand with oyle in his Lampe, or with skill in his weapons, when there is meanes to be found, he may be shut out of heauen as the five foolish virgins were if hee chance to bee slaine suddenly, as many a man hath been, by dying without repentance.

Indeed if there were no meanes then if we did with humbleness come vnto God, no doubt then I say but God would miraculously defend his seruants, as hee did the children of Israel when their enemies were behind them, and the red sea before them, then there was no meanes nor helpe left them, but only in

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the Lord, but then the Lord stopped not his eares nor shortned not his armes, but gaue them passage with his outstretched arm thorow the red sea, and then againe they being in the wilderness, there was neither meate nor drinke, and then and there againe the Lord sent them foode from heauen, and he also made the hard rockes gush forth riuers of water. The Mariner in distresse throweth ouer boord the Marchants goods which are in ship, and yet then finding small hope of life he cutteth down the matts of the ship, and so he throweth them and the sayles ouerboord, which should be the onely meane to bring them to land, but then these Mariners being bereft of al hope, they rely wholly vpon God, which neuer leaue th in distresse those which trust in him, but then he miraculously doth defend them, and bring them into a safe harbor contrary vnto mans expectation.

So not onely here in this place, but as I goe on I will shew some examples out of the booke of God and from the Philosophers and other Schoole men, and the application to be applied vnto our selues, for there is nothing written but hath beene written for our learning, and of those we are to learne counsell of which haue runne through the brambles, briers, and the mischief of the world.

Then be not wise in thine owne conceit, for *S. Iohn* and *Paul* saith that the wise are caught in their owne craftinesse. *Iohn 9. 13.* *1 Cor. 3. 19.* If the wise are caught what then will become of the ignorant and foolish, not onely of this profession, but of all others; for there are many of all trades which doe thinke their owne wit best, and hating to bee reformed, but I wish such to take heede of ignorance pitfall, least they fall into the springle with the woodcocke; for who is so bold as blind bayard. But as some men of all trades with small skill doe goe on and liue by their trades and yet in a manner but botchers, euen so I haue often hard many a man say, that with a little skill they haue saued their liues being put vnto tryall, for those which are in danger of drowning will catch at a straw to saue their liues, but for the most part it so falleth out, that if the father or the master be a coward, or vnskilfull in his weapons, then the sonnes of that Father or the seruants of that Master, seldome prooue good soldiers, not much vnlike that saying of the Prophet when the mo-
thers

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ther is an Hittite, and the Father an Ammorite, the child seldome
prooues an Israelite. *Ezekiel 145.* Then we must not follow or
goe on being led on blindfoldly, by a cowardly sort of people,
which will say that a good eye or a good heart is all that be-
longs vnto the defence of a mans body, these are they which
professing themselves to be wise, are become fooles. *Rom. 1. 22.*
Or they may be compared vnto those which talke of *Robin hood*
and yet neuer shot in his bow, so this trumpe haue I cast in your
way, for loath I am to leaue you any starting holes to wind out
at, but that you may keepe the high beaten way, least in seeking
by-ways you wander quite out of the way, yet mistake me not
in thinking that hereby I seeme to hale thee on for thy owne
good, like a beast, for I doe but lead thee with the cords of loue,
and wish thee to taste of this my opinion which I haue new
broached. And I make no doubt but in tryall it will be no whit
distasting vnto thee, for by experience I speake it that aboue all,
skill is the key of the worke, as the eye to the body, or as the
Captaine to the souldiers, or the Pilot to the ship; if the eye bee
darke in walking, the body falleth, if the Captaine be ignorant,
then doe the Souldiers march disorderly, or if the Pilot bee vn-
skilfull, the ship sailes in danger, but as I was about to tell you
of a sort of logger-headed asses which further more will per-
swade their familiar friends, by telling them that skill will doe
them no good, for when they haue learned skill and afterwards
when they shall haue occasion to vse their weapons, then such
dunces will say that skill will be forgotten & little thought vpon.
Also they say that a man with a sword will cut off thy rapier
at one blow, but I say this is a most cowardly kind of ignorance,
for if a skilfull man doe hold the rapier, it is not a hundred blows
with a sword can doe a rapier any harme, no although they light
vpon him. Therefore those which will perswade any from lear-
ning skill with weapons, for the defence of their bodies, may
fitly be compared vnto the false Prophets amongst the Iewes,
which perswaded them that they should not feare nothing, but
peace, peace, peace, when the Assyrians were in a readinesse to
cut their throats as in the 6 of *Jeremy* the 14, there you may read
it, therefore a prouident care ought to bee had, as *Iehosaphat* did
when he feared the Moabits to come vpon him, *2 Chron. 20. 3.*

Then shew
not thy selfe
worse then a
beast, for beast
haue wit to
find out reme-
dies to couer
their griefe.

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David liued securely in *Ierusalem*, and without feare, which made him forget God, as in the 2. *Sam.* 11. the whole Chapter is worth the reading; doth not the wisest man that euer wrote say, that there is a time of war and a time of peace, *Eccle.* 3. 8. If a man did know what howre the theefe would come, he would surely watch, wherefore he aduised to deale wisely, but not like vnto *Pharaoh* for he said, let vs deale wisely when he dealt most foolishly, *Exodus* 1. 10. and so we will goe on.

In reading ouer diuers Hystories I thereby vnderstanding the noble acts, and also noting the manly mind of these who liued many hundred yeeres agoe, whose fame shall neuer dye, whereas cowardly dastards which neuer bent their studies in marshall exploits, such I say at their death their fame dyeth with them, and so they are quickly raked vp in the ashes of forgetfulness, and buried in the valley of obliuion. So that if a man wold goe search for the pedigree of their gentility, they shall finde it laid vp in a beggars box, or as the Charter of a City written in dust, whereas on the other side the valiant and gallant minded men, although they dye, yet in their life time their manly acts and valiant deedes which they worthily performed, some in the warres and some at single combat, and some at other honorable and laudable exercises, whereby they merited to themselves immortall fame for euer, for to some no exercise nor weapon came amisse as in stead of many examples these two out of the book of God shall be sufficient, *David* with his sling, (as *Hercules* with his Club) and *Sampson* with his Iaw-bone or any other weapon which came next to his hand, but loth I am to trouble you with so long an Epistle or Preface, yet for an Introduction to the rest something I must say and most of that which I haue and will say is so necessary as the rest, although it be longer then I would, but we will now to the matter.

Then thus, by reason of diuers errors which are in sundry mens teaching of this noble arte of defence, I therefore being pricked forward by the earnest request of some of my friends, to describe the rules of weapons, which I by my study haue inuented, and by practise brought to perfection, and likewise for my countries benefit, I meane to better the vnskilfull in knowledge, I haue thought it good to open plainly the best grounds,
which.

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which belongeth to our English weapons, that are now in vse, so far as my simple inuention by great practice hath attained vnto. Another reason which moued me hereunto was where some doe find out many hidden secrets which they bury in the earth againe with their bodies, or else if they make it known, it shall bee to such a faithfull friend as they loue and affect dearly, all writers that euer wrote did write either for profit or pleasure: some to profit others, and some to pleasure themselves; and some haue wrote common and necessary things for their owne posterity after them; I write but of common things, yet not so common as necessary, and therefore my meaning is to make my secret study known so plainly as I can vnto all the world, for the benefit of many thousand yet vnborne, for every man hath or should haue skill in his weapons, the reasons shall follow, as occasion shall serue hereafter more at large; but as yet I know the greatest number are blinded in an ignorant conceit, I meane such as doe thinke to ouercome their enemies if occasion doe serue by quicknesse of the eye, or by a kind of valorous resolution, which for the auoiding of this and such like abuses, I haue here and there put downe sundry reasons in this booke, although they be not in order, yet take a little paines to seeke them out, for I wrote this booke at such leasurable fits as time would permit me; now for affection sake some will say it is well done, and others againe will say it is reasonable and indifferent, and so I pray you let it passe, for if I should perceiue it should goe for starke nought, then should I account my time and labor very ill bestowed; but yet this I know, if it were ten times worle then it is, yet would it be welcom to a number of my old friends and familiar acquaintance, such as were the cause of this my idle time spending, who were earnest with me for the setting forth of this worke. Lo this is the anchor whereon my hope dependeth, but yet I make a doubt least that my booke may light into the hands of some enuious mates, who neuer knew me, yet will not sticke to say vpon the very first sight, oh this is such a mans worke, I know well enough what hee could doe, and yet will not fully giue vp their verdit, but onely shake the head, with a wry mouth and a smiling countenance, throwing it from them, and so seeming by their silence that they could further

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disgrace mee, but will not. Indeed it is a more easie matter for such to find fault with a part of my booke then to amend the whole, but I could wish such learne before they take vpon them to controule, but those which are wise and kind, will accept of my good will, for I haue giuen out this but as a theame; let a wiser then I rime vpon it, and although it seeme but as it were a glimpse of the noble Art of defence, in regard of the substance, yet some will perceiue day at a little hole; wherefore trauell further in it, till you find out the substance, like a good Surgion search the wound to the bottome before thou lay a plaster, I meane reade it ouer before thou giue iudgement; and then play the wise mans part which is to speake little, although he thinke much; indeed I must confesse a vanity in my selfe and that I haue deserued blame, because so bluntly I haue set foorth such an vnperfect peece of worke, but my reasons in the latter end of the booke may a little excuse me, but in the mean while let it be neuer the worse welcome vnto thee, for that it hath my poore name vnto it, I speake this because I know there are some will speake they care not what, to disgrace they know not whom, without rendring any reason at all, but onely out of a dogged humor, or an idle braine, some finding fault with the gards, and some because I haue written of things which belongeth not to the matter or ground of this worke, and some because *it is a booke of pictures*, accounting a booke of pictures fit for children and foole; to answer such I say when a child or a foole doth looke in a glasse, he doth thinke there is a baby on the other side, but when men of discretion looke in a glasse, they do not thinke so; therefore as by the Heathen we may learne many good lessons, euen so a man of vnderstanding may learne wisdom, and gaine experience of a foole; I wrote not this altogether to pleasure those that are skilfull already, for this booke can steed them but little, for the whole and sound need not a Physition, but the ignorant and vnskilfull may profit by this booke as much if with discretion they take regard in their practise according to my direction, as if my selfe were in person to teach them, but both the skilfull, and vnskilfull, the wise and the foolish may here learne one lesson or other, which they neuer learned before; yet I know not how euery one will take this my presumption, in aduenturing
to

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to set out a booke having no learning, yet I pray you reade it over first, and then iudge, but yet be slow in condemning mee, for I haue done my good will, now he which can make a simple thing better, he ought so to handle the matter, that although he get credit himselfe, yet condemne not me for shewing the best I could: therefore so iudge of mee behind my backe as you would haue others iudge of you, but if you iudge well and like well of it, then shall you haue the second part with six weapons more, but I will first see what will become of this first part, let it commend or condemne it selfe, for great braggers cannot better it, nor dissembling speeches impaire it, neither will I maintaine for well done, all that I haue done, but if you accept it then I haue all my desire, if otherwise good will shall beare the blame for my presumption: but why doe I make a dought of any euill speeches, which deserue no blame, againe this I know that there is none which standeth in so much need of good words as those which goe about to couer dishonest deeds, wherefore I may say as that great Captaine *Marius* who hauing occasion to vse a speech before the people of Rome, in his conclusion hee said, although my words are not well set in order I waigh not so much so that my deeds be good.

I haue made this of bricke and stones, as *Augustus* said of *Rome* at the first, but now Rome is built with marble: euen so I wold wish that some expert and learned person or other would pull downe this rude begun worke of mine and build it vp with marble, for the worke it selfe if it were workmanlike handled, deserueth to be written in letters of gold, and to remain for euer, but first it must be twice or thrice distilled as they doe their *Rosafolis*, for first it is *Aquavitæ*, & then in the second and third distillation, there is bestowed greater charge and more excellent matter ariseth of it.

I haue but roued at skill in weapons, yet I am sure that I haue shot so neere the marke that some will account me for a good Archer, otherwist they would neuer haue beene so important with me to haue me put my directions in writing, and when it was in writing so many desired Copies, that amongst so many friends I knew not which to pleasure first, but especially and aboue all the late high and mighty Prince *Henry* whom I well hoped

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hoped that he should haue liued to haue beene the ninth *Henry* and the tenth worthy of the world, for what did any of the other nine worthies doe, but this good Prince was as likely, if he had liued to haue performed as much as any of them ; for what hath bene done but may be done againe. But as I was about to say, this good Prince had the perusing of this book and earnestly perswaded me to print it, but I had not leisure to finish it before death vntimely tooke him away to my griefe and many more, for all the whole kingdome was nothing but mourning. Death were kind if he tooke none, but those which offended, but oh most vnkind death, for thou in taking away that good yong Prince, hast taken away him which neuer offended, for there was neuer the like scene in one so yong, for his wisdom, learning, and kind curesie, to all which came to see his Princely selfe, talking so mildly and familiarly to euery one which did so reioyce and glad the hearts of all true and loving subiects, and also caused him in his fame to be spoken of, for Kings and Princes are talked of at poore mens tables, and good words he deserued, as euer any earthly creature did. For besides his skill in Musicke, hee was able by his learning to discourse with any forraine Prince whatsoeuer, also his admirable and well riding of a great horse, and his excellent running at tilt or ring; likewise his cunning in weapons, for the fight on horsebacke or on foote, and for tossing the pike neuer so many feates scene in any Prince, insomuch that it made strangers stand amazed to behold him; at a word hee had experience in all artes or sciences, thereby seeming as it were desirous to trust more to his owne valour, if occasion serued, then to the goodnesse of his horse. And so to make an end least of the ignorant I get the name of a claw-blacke, and also another doubt I haue, least vnder-taking so difficult a taske, and being not able to discharge it according vnto the dignity and worthinesse thereof, the which I cannot doe, and therefore I will not wade so far in so dangerous a river, but that I may easily escape out, wherefore like the finger of a diall I will point, it must be the clocke which telleth you the iust time of the day, I haue drawne his Highnesse in bare colours, and so I leaue the oily colours vnto those which are learned, you may see by a tast what wine is in the butte, and so
to

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to our matter againe. Now he which will practise after my direction, thou maist a little the rather attaine vnto that perfect knowledge in the Art or skill with thy weapons hauing an able body by agility to preferue that skill which I haue here in this booke laid open vnto thee, for I did vnderstand many things which my body was not able to performe; now because many at the first will waxe weary in their practise, yet such wearinesse is ouercome by often exercise, and that new skill once obtained will be such a pleasure to thee, that it putteth all wearinesse out of thy remembrance, now vntill thou hast skill thou must not thinke it a toyle, but strue continually to overcome wearinesse: resolve this with thy selfe, that the paine will be nothing so wearisome as the gaine of skill will be delightfull and comfortable vnto thee, and commendable amongst others: I haue made it as plaine and laid it as open as I can expresse by words, because I would haue euery man expert in weapons, considering that skill in weapons is so honourable and so precious a thing, that in my mind it may be preferred next vnto diuinity, for as diuinity preserveth the soules of those which follow it, from hell and the diuell, so doth this noble and worthy art of defence defend the body from hurts and skars of those which learne it, but those which neither follow the one nor learne the other, the first sort for ought I know may goe throw fire brands in hell, and the second sort may sit in an alchouse, and there shew how many hurts, and likewise tell how many wounds he hath about his body; for I haue known wany brag of their hurts, and in my conceit they take a pride in that they haue stood so neere the point of a weapon, whereby to receiue wounds, therefore they are willing that the world should know how venturous they haue been, but now in my minde if they had skill they need not bee hurt: wherefore skill is not onely auailable to preferue and keepe the body without hurts and wounds, but also the vse and practise with weapons, doth drue away all aches, griefes, and diseases, it remooueth congealed blood, and breaketh impostumes, it maketh the body nimble, and plyant, it sharpneth the wit, it increaseth the sight, and procureth strength, and expelleth melancholy and cholericknes, and many other euil conceits, it keepeth a man in breath, in perfect

Give not over
practise nor
reiect not skill
because thou
canst not be a
master of art,
or a doctor at
the first day,
for time must
work and
bring all things
to passe, for
that is well
done which is
done by lei-
sure, for hast
many times
makes wast.

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fect health, it makes him to be of longe life which vseth it, it is vnto him which hath the perfect skil in weapons, a most friendly, & comfortable companiō, when he is alone, hauing but only his weapons about him, it putteth him out of all feare, and in the wars and places of most danger it maketh a man bold, hardy valiant, and venturous. wherefore they that are once experienced in the skill of weapons will afterwards to the end of their liues enconrage the vnskiltull to learne still, considering how necessary a thing skill in weapons is, insomuch that God and nature tollerates the practise of this skil in weapons, which is here ment for the defence of mans body, it also preserueth many from murder, also in the wars it may likewise stead a King, gentleman, or any other private souldier; for if in the wars a single combat is desired, as that of *Goliath*, there started out of the army a *David* who with a godly valour stood in the gap, for the good and preservation of many mens liues, which no doubt else had perished in that great and dangerous battell. Therefore it behooueth Kings being challenged by their equalls for the safeguard and good of their subiects and country, to aduenture and hazard their owne liues in hope of a conquest, so that thereby the wars may cease.

Some there are which take delight to talke of the arte of defence, and yet haue no insight nor iudgement therein, the pro-uerbe is verified in such which goeth thus, there are some which talke of *Robin-hood* which neuer shot in his bowe, I speake this because a gentleman on a time came to my Schoole and would not play by no meanes, yet he was busie with his tongue in teaching others, and in discoursing of seuerall weapons, and seuerall guards, but by his words he bewraied his small iudgement, for his speech sounded to no sence nor reason, and so I being weary with hearing him talke so long, and far from the marke which he aimed at, so at length I rounded him in the eare, thus, hold your peace, or else speake softly, for my vsner laughs you to skorne. But we will to our matter againe, and draw to a conclusion of this Epistle, for the necessary vse of weapons. In *Luke* the twelue there the Lord as it seemeth did thinke them to be more better then a coate vpon a mans backe, he therefore bade his Disciples generally, god said he, sell your coates and buy you
swords,

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swords, he spake not this to one of them alone, but vnto them all.

Now the Kingly Prophet *Dauid* teacheth you where to weare your swords, saying gird thy sword on thy thigh, hee doth not bid thee weare it about thy necke in a string, euen so as the Lord in many places of the Bible is said to be of many professions, for he is called a shepheard, a husband-man, a Physician, and *Dauid* in his 144. Psalm, in a manner calleth him a sencer, for there he saith that the Lord did teach his hands to war, and his fingers to fight: He also saith in another of his Psalmes, I am a worme and no man, and yet I feare not what man can doe vnto me. Other examples bending to this purpose hereafter shall follow more at large, some in one Chapter, and some in another, as they come in my mind, and although it hath been my study and practise this twenty yeeres, yet now I haue vnfolded euery place, and shewed euery wrinkle of these few weapons, so far as my inuention hath attained vnto, and I haue set them downe so large and made them so plaine, as by words I could any way expresse them, so that thou maist learne them in twenty dayes and lesse, if not all, yet enough for the sure defence of thy body, and the rest shall follow in a second booke hereafter, if thou dost friendly accept of this.

In the meane time arme thy mind to these weapons here following, for they are sufficient for thy defence at single combat, also here thou shalt find other lessons no lesse profitable then delightfull, if thou with content peruse them, and so I will hinder thee no longer from that which ensueth, and therefore ending my Epistle with these words of the Frier, who often in his Sermon said the best is behind, so he that readeth but the beginning of a booke, can giue no iudgement of that which enueth; then read it ouer, and thou shalt not be deluded with the best is behind.

I hope I may cal this booke a booke without any offence, for the collier he calleth his horse a horse, and the Spanish Iennet is but a horse. Now as this art is called a Noble arte, and not so named vnfittingly, being rightly vnderstood, for there is no art nor science more to bee preferred before this, for that there is none that iumpeth in equality, nor that matcheth in singularity

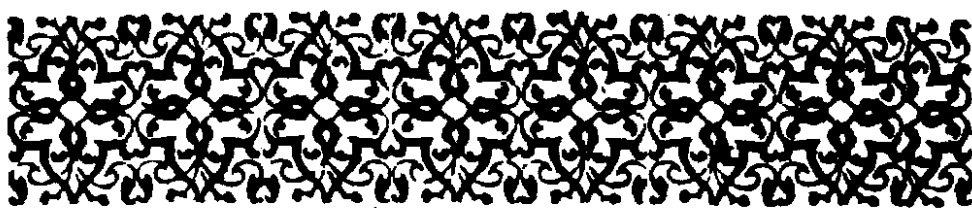
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or that hath so many sundry subtile devices and ingenious inventions, as this noble art of defence hath. Now hee that doth but read of this art, yea although he read neuer so much, yet without practise and by experience in triall, it will be vnperfect, for how can perfection be attained but by practise, and therefore it also behooueth thee to vse practise with sundry men, and so to make vse of the diuersity of each mans skill, and then for thy benefit, like the wise physition who of many simples maketh one compound, or as the bee which by her serious industry gathereth vertue from sundry sorts of hearbs and flowers, & thereof maketh her hony, she is not therefore to be condemned of enuy, but rather to be commended of all.

Neither doe I write this booke altogether to profit those in learning that which they before wanted, but only to set them and other willing minds a work which by arte and learning can better swim through such a deepe river then I can, it should haue been better if my learning had been answerable to my wil, yet hoping that the wise will rather winke at small faults, then rashly reprove that which may profit the simple, for all haue not skill and cunning alike, I am perswaded that some will the rather passe it ouer with patience, although it be but only for affection to the arte, and so hoping that this my worke may bee profitable to all, for so it can no way be hurtfull to none, but if you chance to meete with this booke after he hath serued out the apprenticeship of seauen yeeres, if God grant me life so long you shall see him in double apparell, and then you shall haue iust cause to say that his master hath fulfilled his couenants, for I wish all men well, and euery one an increase of skill in all laudable and profitable arts or sciences, and so with this long entry into a little parlor, I leaue you to him whose seate is in heauen, and whose foot-stoole is the earth. And rest,

Thine in the Lord,

Ioseph Swetnam.



¶ Vnto all Professors of the Noble and
worthie Art of Defence I
send greeting.



Oft noble brethren by profession, and brethren in Christ by Religion, wishing all health and happines to all them of the noble Art or Science of Defence; and as your profession is noble, so in brotherly love, I doe earnestly request you all to vse it in that noble fashion, as the name or title requires, the rather, for because you are men, not onely noted and talked of, but often looked on and more pointed at, then any other ordinary men are, of what profession soeuer. Also it is the worlds wonder, to see a man of ciuill gouernement vsing this profession, therefore I pray you consider with m: a little, that we are as a Beacon set on a hill, or like a candle in a candlestick; then let not your candle be made with a great wike, and no tallow, but let him be so mixt with both, that your light may so shine before men, that they seeing your discreet gouernement and good behauiour may (by your good examples) reforme many ill infirmities which they see in themselues. Alas, I pray you consider and remember, that as the tree groweth, so he falleth; we are not borne for our selues, but for our Countrie: and if we doe no good, though wee doe no harme, then better it were that wee had neuer beene borne. The figge tree in the Gospell, is said to trouble the ground, because he bare no fruite, and therefore better an addle Egge then an ill Bird; for a good and a godly life, hath a good and a godly end, and an ungodly life hath an ungodly end: and therefore most happie dieth that man, of whom the world doubteth not of his saluation, although the world is giuen to speake well and charitably of the wicked when they are dead, and yet it may be they thinke in their

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minde: they are gone to hell; then call to minde, and wisely consider of this, and also of your end, and in what great jeopardy your lives stand; for he that to day is well, lustie, and strong, may the next day, nay, the next houre, haue his life taken sodainely from him as vnawares, when he least thinketh on it, for many of this profession doe not liue out halfe their daies, for there is many waies to bring a man to his end, some by quarrelling when they haue no cause, and so are stabbed sodainely, and some by drunkennesse, as you shall heare more; for I could write of many which came to their ends, and yet died not all in their beddes, nor all in the warres, nor all at the gallows, and yet many of them haue gone these waies: for there are wicked and euill angells which are the wayters, and doe attend vpon an vngodly life, for Death respecteth no manner of person, for he doth assault the skilfull so well as the ignorant, the wise so well as the foolish, and therefore it is good for euery man to bee prepared and in a readinesse, and then hee neede not so feare to say, Come Lord Iesus, come quickly; to day or to morrow, or when thou wilt, and with what manner of death soeuer, so it come by thine appointment.

And now (for examples sake) I thinke it not amisse to renew your remembrance with the death of some few of the Noble Science, because I haue knowne their ends; and first, to beginne with that one of maister Turner, which should be the last, he did not so speedily kill Iohn Dun, with a thrust in the eie, but he was as soone murdered afterwards, with a shotte of a Pistoll; for neither of them, after they had their deaths wound, spake one word; loe, by this you may see, that some hawkes are but a flight, and some horses are killed with a iourne, and a man is but a shotte; but now, by reason that Maister Turner, by his unlucke hand, thrust out two or three eies, and because none others are knowne to doe the like, it hath therefore bred an admiration in the ignorant and vulgare sort, insomuch, that generally they doe applaud him with this commendation, saying that hee hath not left the like be-
hinde him, nor neuer will be the like againe: But this is a great error in thinking so, and farre deceived are they; for I well know Maister Turner by familiar acquaintance, and therefore (to speake the right) he was a worthy fellow and deserued well, but yet I know many which can goe so neare the eie as euer he could doe, if they solisted, as in this booke you shall see many false thrusts at severall weapons, which may
endanger

of the Noble Science of Defence.

endanger any mans eies, if those which learne them doe carry envious mindes, or if they were desirous to worke a man such a mischief, but God forbid that any man should be so ill minded. I will not say, but that by chance such a thing may be done, and so it may bee that Maister Turner did it more by chance, without any intention; for so some do iudge of it: but if a man choppe a thrust at the face, yet, by chance, he may hit the eye: for no man is certaine, that with the first thrust he will hit the eye, but with proffering many, by chance he may: now the use which we ought to make of this, is, to aduise all men to take heed that they beare not a killing heart, for then we shall haue no killing hand, as that example more of Henry Adlington for killing his Maister Iohn Deuell, was hanged: Furlong he drunke a pint of Aqua vite at one draught, and he fell downe and died presently: Wellcoat, for some unkindnesse receiued of his owne daughter, he went into a wood neare Perrine in Cornewall, and there hanged himselfe: Richard Carn, hee died most miserably of the French disease in an olde house neare Plim-mouth, although he had a new suite of clothes from toppe to toe, yet hee was so loathsome a creature, that no bodie would let him harbour in his house, for part of his body was rotten and stuncke above ground: also old Carter of Worcestre lay a long time sicke of a lingering disease, and being worne away to nothing but skinne and bones, hee died in his bed: and so of many more I could write, but it is not my intention to write a Chronicle, and therefore these few shall serue for this time, I wrote it but onely to put you in minde, that you may so leade your liues daily and hourly, as if Death were euen at your heeles, and so to liue as though you should liue for euer, alwayes keeping something for a rainie day, as saith the Proverbe, that is to say, for sicknesse, if God doe send it, and for olde age when your aking bones doe refuse to performe that labour which the heart is willing to set them to.

Therefore I would wish every one, in his youth, to provide and get himselfe a homely home, and to settle in one good towne or other, for a rowling stone gathereth no Mosse; the Grashopper cannot liue but in the grasse, and the Salamander dieth if hee goe out of the fire: therefore, spend not thy time in tranoll from place to place, but keepe thy homely home, and there beginne thy spending as thou maiest continue, cutting thy coate according to thy cloth, and not spending all at one time, and haue nothing as an other to serue thy turne, as many of all Professions do.

Where-

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Wherefore, you yong branches of this noble Art of Defence, of you I meane to speake, and unto you I doe make this earnest request, that you will bestow all your idle time, which too too many spend in idle companie, and in drunkennesse, such ill spent time, I could wish, that it were either bestowed in reading of good bookes, or in giuing good counsell unto such yong men as doe frequent your company, teaching them besides skill with weapons, how to manage their weapons, and how, and when to appoint the field, but not upon euery drunken quarrell, and chiefly of all, charging them from profaning the Sabbath day, drunkennesse, and all other vices belonging therunto, which makes their white soules so blacke as incke, stinking before God as it were the smoake of sulphure and brimstone: and thus doing will purchase you, not onely the loue of God, but likewise of all the world, and your good report will be in euery mans mouth, yea it will goe before you in your trauells, like as with an Herauld of Armes, or else like a speedy Poste, ouertake you wheresoener you goe, whereas on the contrary side, those which doe spend their dayes in drunkennesse, and leading their lines lasciuiously one misfortune or other happeneth vnto them, eyther by the losse of a limbe, or by the losse of an eie, or by the losse of their liues.

For I haue knowne many very skilfull men not only of this Profession, but likewise of others, which delight in ungodlinesse, drunkennesse, and being put to triall in their Art or Profession, they haue receined disgrace and lost the day, and they afterwards haue thought that they made a good excuse, in saying that they were in drinke when they went about their businesse, and yet it may be it was not so, but admit it was so, then is it meere madnes, that any man should be so foolish in taking too much drinke when before hand hee knoweth this is the day, wherein I am to stand upon my credite; now because I know, that many will reade this besides those unto whom it is dedicated: therefore I wish all men, of what Profession soener, to make this reckoning (as aforesaid) euery day, and not to be forgetfull of that which hee should chiefly remember; for euery day one time of the day or other thou mayst be put so to thy shifts, and thereby haue an occasion to summon up all thy wittes, and drinen to vse thy best skill, and yet all little enough to serue thy turne.

Wherefore unto you which this any way may concerne, I wish you to apply your selues unto your Profession, and still to be studying and practising the true and perfect rules belonging both to the true and false play,

of the Noble Science of Defence.

play, especially unto such weapons as you are not growne unto the full perfection before hand, if they may serue eyther for the warres or for single combate.

Be not wise in thine owne conceit, in thinking that thou hast learned all the skill which is possible to be learned already, farre deceiued art thou if thou thinke so, for if thou liue till thou art olde, yet thou mayest learne still, for one guard crosseth another, and the false play crosseth the true play; there are many secret slippes and guards to be inuented, and one guard or one tricke may more steade thee, and more preuaile against some men then another; for when with plaine play, thou canst not endanger thy enemy, yet with false play thou mayest hit him, for although thy enemy doe know the defence of some manner of false play, yet it may be he is not acquainted, neither with the defence nor offence of thine, for there is more wayes to the wood then one, and hee which knoweth many wayes, may goe the nearest.

Euen so, he that knoweth many guards, and the true skill at many weapons may be the better able to answere any stowe bragging forreiner or stranger when they come with their challenges into our country, let them be of what nation soener, and at what weapons they will, and upon what termes they dare, as hitherto they haue bene sufficiently answered during my time, by Maister Mathews, Maister Turner, Maister Bradshaw, and Maister Yates; for these chiefly stood to stake against all comers, and yet I can not chuse but remember Maister Church, and Maister Brentley, who of this latter time haue deserved to be well reported of, and for aught that I could euer heare or see anio get at any of their hands, they haue small cause to bragge of their winning, for they alwayes went away with shrewd shrubs and knockes, I meane with blacke eyes, broken shinnes, or cracked pates; but of my selfe I will say little, because the world is sufficiently satisfied of more then at this time I meane to write of now, although the ignorant can not answer them for want of skill and iudgement, yet they will reioyce and clap their hands to see them answered by sufficient and able men of valour and iudgement.

Now if any should aske my reason, why some should haue such good fortune, and other some disgraced, and yet by the worlds iudgement their skill equall; because you shall not muse long about it, I will quickly tell you my opinion, good gouernement and good carriage is the maine point

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thereof,

The Preface to the Professors

thereof, yet me thinkes amongst the vulgar sort I heare some say, because two or three famous fellows are dead, that there will neuer be the like againe: but farre deceived are they which thinke so, for there hath not beene so good, but there may come so good againe: for as yet I neuer knew any man but he hath mette with his match, and therefore I wish euery one not to presume one steppe the higher, for any gift that God bestoweth on thee, neither to thinke thy selfe better then any man, though there are some which, for want of discretion, will disable others, onely to magnifie themselves, and thinking thereby to make the world belceue there is none so good as they. Loe, this is the cause of many quarrells, and sometimes murders: Therefore speake not euill behinde the backe of anie man, nor dispraise no mans play nor workemanship, be it neuer so simple, doe not like other Tradesmen, which cannot liue one by another, but with a kinde of grudging hatred, as the Hatter against the Hatter, the Shoemaker against the Shoemaker, and the Tailor would euen hang the Tailor by his good will, and so of all Trades the like: but I would gladly wish it otherwise of all Trades, but especially of this Profession, to be louing and kinde one to another, meeting together in their trauels, and like Birds of a feather holde together, and in brotherly loue embrace one another, and let it not be from the teeth outward, but from the heart inward, for you shall haue many others which will undermine you, and creepe into your secrets, and so runne betwixt one another with tattling tales, onelie to set you together by the eares, and then laugh at you when they haue done: Loe, thus an euill tongue is the cause of many a mans death: wherefore leaue and forsake all euill vices, though you feare not man in respect of your manhoode, yet feare to offend God for doubt of his iudgements, which undoubtedly lighteth upon all those that carelesly forget him.

For, as the greatest honour that euer came to man, was through skill in weapons, and the greatest downe-fall that euer came to man, was through pride of his manhoode: and in neglecting his duety towards God: wherefore, as you worthily carrie the stile or title of Maisters of Defence by your Profession, then be the same you seems to be, I meane, neuer leaue studying and practising till you come to the ground, and untill you haue sounded into the depth of your Art, for there are many other principall points belonging to the warres, besides, march, troupe, charge, and stand; euen so unto a Maister of Defence belongeth the
skill

of the Noble Science of Defence.

skill of many other weapons, besides backe-sword, sword and dagger, rapier and dagger, and the staffe: for, if hee bee not provided with the skill of many other weapons, hee may be to seeke of his defence; if hee should be challenged unto some other weapons which hee is vnacquainted withall.

Then hee is not worthie to be called a Maister of Defence, which cannot defend himselfe at all weapons, especially against euery ordinarie man not professing the Art of Defence, nor except hee can play with a Lyon, as well as with a Lambe, and sometimes againe to play the Lambe so well as the Lyon; for hee that can not tell when to spare, and when to strike; and hee which cannot defend himselfe, cannot teach others to defend themselves, nor is hee not worthy to be called a Maister of Defence, but he that can doe it is worthie of that title; and therefore greatly wronged of them which will call such a one a Fencer, for the difference betwixt a Maister of Defence, and a Fencer, is as much as betwixt a Musitian and a Fidler; or betwixt a Merchant and a Pedler; it will not well please a Merchant to be called Pedler, yet the Merchant selleth the like wares as the Pedler doth: Is therefore a Merchant and a Pedler all one? No more is euery Fencer a Maister of Defence; nor euery Fidler hath not skill in Pricke-song, and therefore no Musitian; if a man haue but tenne shillings worth of Pomes, Points, and Inckle, hee may then be called a Pedler, but hee that hath a hundred sortes of wares, shall scarce get the name to be called a Merchant, no more can hee which hath gotten a little more skill at three or foure weapons then euery common man, yet hee may be to seeke of the true skill of many other weapons which belong unto a Maister of Defence.

Yet one thing more, which I had almost forgotten; vnto Schollers and vnto Vshers of Schooles of this Profession, proffer no wrong to your Maisters neither in word nor deed, nor deny not your Tutors, but beare a heartie loue unto him which hath brought you from nothing to something, from a shadow unto a substance; Let not the Priest forget that hee was a Clarke. I haue knowne many Schollers so good as their Maister, and (it may be) better, according to the Proverbe, A man may make his owne dogge bite him; but in my minde, such a dogge is worthy of a rope: make the application as you see occasion. For I haue knowne many an vgratefull knave escape the gallows, by the meanes of an honest minded man; yet such a knave (upon small or no cause)

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hath afterwards gone about to hang such a friend if he could, euen so, some young lustie Schollers, when they haue gotten perfect skill, for lacke of witte, would offer to wrong their aged Maister, if they could: It is not strange to finde one scabbed sheepe in a whole flocke; nor is it no newes amongst many honest men, to finde a treacherous varlet, voyde of all honestie, feare, and witte. Now hauing no warrant to force you to follow my counsell, but onely in brotherly loue, I thought good to request you, and euerie of you, to amend one; and God amend vs all, he I meane, whose Seate is in Heauen, and whose Footstoolle is the Earth.

Your well-willing friend,

Ioseph Swetnam.



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3 This first Chapter sheweth what
wepons are chiefly to be learned, with many other prin-
 cipall notes worthy obseruation.

BECAUSE old weapons lyeth
 rusty in a corner, and euery man
 is desirous of the newest fashion
 of weapons, especially if they
 seeme to be of more daunger to
 the enemy then the old, therefore
 it is my intent & purpose at this
 time to expresse. and set downe
 both the true and false play principally of the rapier
 and dagger, and staffe, for I hold that the skill of these
 two weapons are chiefly and necessary of euery man
 to be learned, for to haue the vse of a rapier to ride
 with, and a staffe to walke a foote withall, for those
 which haue the skill of these two weapons may safely
 encounter against any man hauing any other weapon
 whatsoeuer as hereafter you shall be sufficiently satis-
 fied.

But first a word by the way in commendations of
 those two weapons, this I can say and by good expe-
 rience I speake it, that he which hath a rapier and a
 close hilted dagger, and skill withall to vse him hath
 great ods against the sword and dagger, or sword and
 buckler,

buckler, and the like I doe affirme of a staffe against all long weapons; my reasons shall follow anon; but first I will speake more in commendations of the rapier and dagger, note it well, for it is the finest & the comeliest weapō that euer was vsed in *England*, for so much cunning to this weapon becomgeth as to no weapon the like: wherefore I would wish all gentlemen and others, not onely to learne the true and perfect skill thereof, but also to practise it often. For there is no exercise in the world so healthfull to the body, and the skill of it a sure defence for the same, likewise it also becometh euery man to be well instructed in this weapon, therather, and for because it is a weapon which for the most part all out-landish men doe vse; wherefore being vnprepared thou maist be the better able to answer them at their owne weapon either in single combat or otherwise, but if thou delay thy practise till thou hast need, then I say at the very time of need it will be too late, and little auailable to thee, for being learned in such haste it is soone forgotten, and he which neuer learned, but doth trust to his own cunning may soone lose his life, for there is but two wayes for the doing of euery thing; that is to say either a good or a bad, and commonly by nature euery man hath the worst way; both at this exercise and so at all others the like, but the best way being learned, by a little practise keepeth it so perfect, that it is neuer forgotten againe.

A Physitian is but little regarded, but in the time of sicknesse, euen so the practising of skill is not remembered vntill a man hath need to vse it. *Plato* was a Diuine, yet he so highly esteemed the art or skill in weapons, insomuch that he commandeth that children

dren should learne so soone as they are able, and Cyrus saith that skill in weapons was as necessary as husbandry ; but now when you haue the true and perfect skill, be not ouer rash nor take not exceptions at euery light occasion, but onely by good aduise to vse it, in cases of necessity ; reuenge not euery small wrong , npr quarrell not vpon euery light occasion, for the strongest and the richest man that is, must pocket vp an iniury at sometimes, then be not hasty in thy wrath, but pause although thy weapon be drawne, for the thrust being giuen, and the blow once fallen, it will be too late then to repent ; wherefore be valiant, but yet not too venturous, so fight as thou maist fight againe, for the hasty man neuer wanteth woe, and he which will quarrell for a small matter trusting vnto his owne manhood, yet for all his skill and courage, may oftentimes meete with his match, and so carry away the blowes with dishonor.

He that to
wrath and an-
gers is thrall,
ouer his wits
hath no power
at all.

For a small or a bad quarrell hath many times ill successe, therefore let thy quarrell be grounded vpon a good foundation, for then it halfe defendeth it selfe, but if it be vpon drinke or in defence of a lewd woman, such quarrells are naught, and haue ill successe ; againe haue this care, neuer be proud of thy skill, but goe as if thou hadst it not, except occasion serue : but be not lifted vp with a proud minde one step the higher, for curtesie wins fauour with all men ; wherefore all way so frame your speech and answers, that there neuer grow any quarrell vpon a foolish word or a forward answer.

A quarrell is
oftentimes
begun without
discretion.

And furthermore, haue this skill in thy memory, so rule thy tongue as neuer to speake ill, whether it bee true or false behind the backe of any man, for if the

E

party

party spoken of be not in presence, yet he may heare of it, and thou maist be called in question for the same when thou thinkest least vpon it, yea although thou suppose that thou speakest it to thy friend, for I haue knowen many which to magnifie themselves would boast and brag of their owne manhood, and disable others, which were far better men then themselves; thinking neuer to heare of it againe; but this one folly hath been the cause of many quarrells, and thereof springeth deadly hatred, and sometimes murthers. Yet I doe aduise all men if vndiscreet words doe passe from the mouth of the simple for lacke of wit (but I will not say for lacke of drinke) but whether it be drink or meer foolishnesse, reuenge not euery wrong, but first consider the worth and quality of the party which hath wronged thee, for if hee be a desperate person, or one which hath nothing to loose, nor wife nor children to care for, some such there are that are desperat, and care not if they were out of the world, as our pro- uerbe saith, hab or nab, fall backe fall edge, they care not whose house is on fire, for they haue nothing to loose, now although thou hast the perfect skill with thy weapons, yet fight not with such raskalls, nor with none vpon euery sinall wrong; for so thou maist be accounted carelesse and bloody minded, as though *Mars* the God of battaile were thy Father, or thinking thy selfe to bee more mighty then *Hercules*, or as one altogether forgetting that which so oft hath been seen, that a little wretch of stature by skill, iudgement, and reason, hath subdued and ouercome a far more mightier man of person than himselfe.

Be valiant but
not to ventu-
rous.

As that of Da-
uid he ouer-
came great
Goliath.

For he that is well instructed in the perfect skill with his weapon although but small of stature, and
weake

The Schoole of Defence.

5

weake of strength, may with a little moouing of his foote or a suddaine turning of his hand, or with the quicke agility of his body kil and bring to the ground the tall and strongest man that is.

Now before thou goe into the field to fight, first of all put God before, and vse thy deuotion to him priuately, and commit thy selfe wholly to his mercy, because hee redeemed thee, and the victory lieth in him, if thy skill and cunning were neuer so good; for if thou goe with a sure hope and trust in God, and thy quarrell good, and some skill withall, then fight and feare not, and although at the first it will be fearefull to most men, being but once experienced therein, it will encourage and make a man bold, yet take this by the way, and note it well, for skill makes some men towards, for if thou learneest the best skill thou canst, and in a fence schoole meetest with one that is so good, and cunning as thy selfe, such a one will hit thee sometimes in spite of thy teeth, the which hit makes some thinke with themselves, I did now lye in as sure a gard as I could for my life, and yet if I had been in the field this hit might haue killed me.

Forget not
this lesson.

Feare not if
thou hast skill
to answer a
good quarrell
for its better
dy like a horse
in batteil then
liue like a hog
in a stile.

But I say there is great ods betwixt fighting in the field and playing in a fence-schoole, for in the field being both sober, I meane if it be in a morning vpon cold blood, then euery man will as much feare to kill as to be killed, againe a man shall see to defend either blow or thrust in the field then in a fence-schoole, for a man will be more bold with a foile or a cudgell, because there is small danger in either of them.

But when they come to tell their tale at the point of a rapier, they will stand off for their owne safety; go not into the field in the afternoone, partly for the

auoiding of the common speeche of those which will say it is a drunken match, neither goe not presently vpon the suddain falling out; for choller ouercometh the wits of many a man, for in a mad fury skill is little thought vpon, and therefore very dangerous to both; for although thy memory serue thee well, and so thou being carefull and not bearing any mind to kill, yet thy enemy if he be but a ranke coward, vpon drink or fury, or vpon hot blood, will be to desperate, that if you fauor him he will endanger thee.

There is seldome or neuer any quarrell begun but in an afternoone, for then commonly the drinke is in and the wit is out, although thou knowest thy selfe in good case, and not to haue receiued more drinke then to suffice thy want, yet dost thou not know how little drinke will overcome the wits of another man; and this I know, and by good experience I speake it, there is no ods during the time betwixt a madde man and a drunkard.

Neuer iest with edge tooles, nor play not the foole with thy weapons, but keepe them to defend thy selfe when occasion shall require thee, or at such time as thou shalt be oppressed, for many hurts and much mischief hath been done by ouer-much folly in iesting with weapons, when at the beginning there was no harme meant.

Euer refer the quarrell to be tryed in the morning, for then thy aduersary so wel as thy selfe being in cold blood, skill auaieth, and he which the night before would seeme to fight with the diuell, will in the morning be as cold as a clocke; for then it is the nature of euery man as well to feare to kill, as to be killed, and so thou by skill maist fight long without danger, and
fight

fight with many, and haue no hurt.

When thou goest into the field, note the Sunne, for if it doe thine, it may annoy thee; but get thy backe toward the Sunne, and so traueise the ground, that thine enemy get not about thee, so shalt thou alwayes keep his face in the Sunne, which will so annoy him, that hee can not make play to endanger thee. But if there be no Sunne to trouble thee, then make choice of the lowest ground, for he which hath the lowest ground, hath the greatest aduantage. Also take heede that thou strike not with thy rapier, for so thou mayest breake it, and bring thy selfe to thine enemies mercy, and it may be he will take the aduantage of thee: If thy rapier fall out of thy hand, take thy dagger by the point, and make an offer to throw it, for that will so dare thine enemy, that hee will stand vntill thou hast taken vp thy weapon againe.

But if thou recouer thine enemies weapons, (as I haue knowne many let fall their weapons in fight) giue it not to him againe; if thou meane to fight with him any more for that time; for, to vnarme thy enemy, is more credite to thee, then to kill him. Neuer lend a weapon to fight against thy selfe, for these two follies haue beene the end of many good mens liues: if thine enemy fall, hurt him, if he will not yeelde vp his weapon, but kill him not, though his life do lie in thine hands, but if thou spare him, fight with him no more for that time; for I haue knowne many that might first haue killed, but by sparing their enemies, haue beene killed themselues; if thine enemies weapon breake, then there is fauour to be shewed: but these two last points are to be conditioned vpon. When any two Gentlemen, or other, whatsoeuer,

Of dangers the least is to be chosen, and the greatest to be avoided: stand not one place, & leaue the rest of the body vnguarded.

Take heede of ignorance put in, to reuellest you fall in. to the springle with the wood cocke.

shall haue occasion to fight, yet it is not amisse, at their meeting in the field, for the one of them to say before they beginne, Shew mee that fauour which thou wouldest haue thy selfe, that is, if I fall, or my weapon breake, stay thy hands, and I will doe the like. Haue alwayes as great care to saue the life of thy enemy as of thine owne, fearing more the Iudgements of God, then the Lawes of the Realme. Likewise, neuer be too earnest in perswading a coward to go with thee into the field to fight; for I haue knowne a Gull that would abuse a man in words behinde his backe, but when he hath beene called to account for it, by the partie griued, hee durst not answere him in the field, yet by earnest prouoking, hath gone and put a farre better man then himselfe to the worst.

Therefore I hold it very vnfortunate to perswade any man too too earnestly, to goe into the field to fight against his will; neither goe into the field with euery rascall, for thou dost hazard thy selfe, and gettest no credite, wherefore, if such a one do challenge thee, if thou canst conueniently, breake his pate, for he is worthy of somewhat for his forwardnes, but to answer him otherwise, let this excuse priuilege thee; say thou scornest to doe him that credite. Let thy rapier be of a reasonable length, rather too long then too short, foure foote at the least, except thine enemy doe giue or send thee the length of his weapon; then it is a point of manhooe to match him as neare as thou canst: alwayes let thine enemy tell his tale at the point of thy weapon; but trust him not to whisper with thee, lest hee shall stabbe thee, or else by strength recouer thy owne weapon, and so doe thee a mischiese before thou be aware; keepe cleane thy rapier;

rapier; remember that of *Alexander*, how he cassied a Souldier out of his Army, because he was making cleane of his Armor, euen then when he should haue vsed it. Likewise there is a Prouerbe, A worke-man is knowne by his tooles: Then if thou hast skill to vse thy weapons, let it appeare by the cleanly keeping of them, then leaue not thy rapier in a wet scabbard, when thou comest to thy iournies end.

Yet once more I doe aduise all men to take heede how they ieast or shew their trickes in trauell in their Chambers with their weapons, no though the scabbard be on; for by such foolish ieasting I haue known much mischief done, and sometimes murder, when there was no hurt meant at all; therefore I do wish the wiser to rule the other, so that a mischief may be preuented before it be done, for else repentance may come too late. Also in playing with sticks, without buttons, many (for want of skill) may loose an eie, as many haue done heeretofore. Many a man will say, That skill in weapons is good, and one of the principallest things that belongeth to a man, yet themselues altogether vnskilfull; in their youth they thinke it too soone to learne, and in age too late, yet when they are wronged, they would giue any thing, that they were able to answere their enemy without feare or hurt, as hee which is skilfull in his weapon may doe.

Goe not into the field with one that is knowne to be a common drunkard, no though thou take him neuer so sober, for if thou chance to hurt him, the vulgar sort will deeme that he was drunke, so thou dost hazard thy life, and get no credite, then take no exceptions at a Drunkards words, for what he speaketh

For it happens
in an houre
which happeneth
not in
seuen yeares.

is

is not regarded amongst men of discretion, yet many times it so falleth out, that a drunken madde-braine meetes with a prodigall vnwise fellow, and they do quickly vpon a word, nay vpon a looke, make a so-daine brawle, to the disturbance of the rest of the company; for hee that will match a crooked dagger with a crooked sheathe, in seeking may finde one; euen so he that is giuen to swaggering and quarrelling, doth meet with his match sometimes, nay very often it so falleth out.

Also he is vnwise which will beginne a quarrell in a Schoole of Defence, vpon the taking of a knocke, as many do; for a man playeth, either to giue a knock, or to take a knocke: but with skill a man may play a long time, and doe neither of them, except their fury doe ouercome their wittes; but hee which cannot arme himselfe with patience, by considering with himselfe the danger of his rashnes; let him spend all his idle time in practising in weapons, with one that is skillfull; for by vse of play, many a man commeth to know the danger of rashnesse, and so with a due consideration, doe thereby come to mitigate their furious affection, whereas an other sort of hare-braines (vpon very small occasion) will be alwayes ready, not onelie to breede, but also to maintaine any idle quarrell, whether it be right or wrong, in Faire or Market, Fence schoole or Fauerne, as many witleffe drunkards doe; for skill without discretion makes some more forward and desperate in maintaining idle quarrells, then otherwise they would be, whereas a man of discretion and gouernement will be no whit the prouder of skill, but goe as if he had it not, and amongst wise men he is accounted most
valiant

valiant which brags least, and is maister of himselfe, in conquering his affections, and alwayes fore-casting the worst, before a mischiefe doth happen; for a common quarreller is like a common hackny, which is neuer without a galled backe; euen so a quarreller is seldome without hurts: let thy hands be slower then thy tongue, yet let not thy sword rust for want of vse, nor yet surfet with bloud, but after many threats in place conuenient vntheathe thy sword, but yet do it with an vnwilling kind of willingnes, as not being too prodigall of thy bloud in mis-spending it idly, and yet grudge it not when occasion shall serue, either for thy King and Countrie, or in defence of thine owne reputation, but not in euery rashly brawle, nor in a great assembly, where manie times a foolish mad-braine, will draw his weapon vpon an idle quarrell; in such a place I haue knowne, that after one hath drawne, many haue likewise drawen their weapons for company, according to the olde Prouerbe, One foole makes many: But howsoeuer, in such a case I haue knowne much mischiefe quickly done, although many of them haue not knowne the cause, nor whom to strike, vntill it hath beene too late; but then when all is done, these great fighters, when it is too late, they would make enquire how the quarrell beganne, and vpon what occasion; but men of discretion and wisdom would examine the cause first, before they do vntheathe their weapon: for in my minde, hee that vndertaketh such quarrells, sheweth neither manhoode, wit, nor valour, and contrary vnto all the Lawes of Armes; yet I will not say, but, where much people are, a man that meaneth no harme, may be wronged; but there

is no wisedome to right himselfe in a multitude : for feare of a mutiny , I meane in setting many together by the eares , but in a place conuenient thou maiest call him in question which wronged thee before , examining the cause of the quarrell , when the heate is past ; and then if you finde it but a pelting quarrell , being wisely considered vpon , and that it hath beene no great scandall vnto thy good name and credite , partly , because the match was made , and the field was appointed in a drunken humour , in such a case I say , it were a verie wise part , for the one of them to make a friend acquainted , which by wisedome may end the quarrell , before a further mischief be done : Nay more , I haue knowne as good a man as euer did draw sword , vpon an idle quarrell , hath himselfe gone the next morning to the house of his aduersarie , not making any friend at all acquainted with the busines , and hee hath thus said ; I am come to answere what the last night I promised , but yet withall , to tell thee , that our quarrell is but small , and beganne vpon idlenesse , yea so small , that I am loath to haue it come into the eares of wise men , lest they should account vs both fooles : now , for the auoyding of this and other daungers , it is not amisse for the wiser to offer this reasonable composition , though wee doe thinke him too weake for thee , for then thy credite will be the lesse in fighting with him , and yet if thou doe kill him , the danger is as great towards thee , as if thou diddest kill the best man in the world : now on the other side , say he is a man noted and knowne to be as sufficient a man as euer drew sword ; then I say , if an honest end can be made , without fighting , that is the best way . For if two men of warre meete

at Sea, they will not fight willingly one with the other, for they will consider before hand, that there is little else then blowes to be gotten one of the other: wherefore, if you be perswaded to end it with a boll of Wine, be not froward but yeeld vnto reason, if no friends know of the quarrell, then (as I said before) the wiser of the two may say vnto the other; Come, let vs goe and drinke our selues friends, let vs take a haire of the same dogge, which the last night did bite vs, and made vs madde, shall now cure vs and make vs whole; and so let vs smother vp this pelting quarrell.

But now, if the other be froward, and will not accept of thy reasonable motion, but will needs end it with weapons, then, rather then shew thy backe to thy spitefull enemy, let him see thy heart bloud: I meane, if he can get it, but there is no such danger in fight, except Skill and Discretion be wanting: wherefore rowze vp thy spirit, and what thou vnder-takeest, doe it without rashnesse, and yet performe it without feare alwaies; in a good quarrell, if thou be ouercome, let thy heart yeelde last of all; and if thine enemy be not too rash vpon thee, it is a sufficient conquest, that when thou mightest hurt or kill, yet do it not, but stil weare Patience to the hard back, for by such victory thou workest thine owne peace; and he that thus doth, getteth himselfe credite.

As ther are many men, so they are of many minds, for some will be satisfied with words, and some must needes be answered with weapons, and some are neuer well full nor fasting; therefore I would haue euery man fitly armed for his defence, what companie soeuer he keep, let him be armed with patience, still a

If the peace-makers are said to be blessed, then the quarrellers & make-bates are accursed.

We must not
seeke reuenge
one of an o-
ther, because
the Lord saith
Reuenge is
mine.

faire tongue, and a good weapon : so that if one will not serue, another must, rough or smoothe, as occasion serueth : for some are like vnto nettles, which if thou handle tenderly, it will sting thee, but if thou gripe it hard, thou shalt haue no harme : euen so, if thou giue vnto some men neuer so milde and gentle words, yet will they not be perswaded, but they will the rather decime that thou fearest them, and so domineere the more vpon thee : but yet for all that, they are the children of God which desire peace, for the Prophet *Dauid* saith, *I seeke peace, but when I speake thereof, they are bent to warre, Psal. 120. 7.* Againe, there are many reasons to perswade one Christian not to fight with another. First, the King and Councill, haue, and still doe make strait Lawes, for the keeping of peace and for preuenting of murders; but aboue all, God expressly commaunds to the contrary, and if thou wilt not obey man, yet feare the displeasure of Almighty God aboue all.

Consider then and meditate thus with thy selfe before thou passe thy word to meete any man in the field; why should I go into the field, for when thou comdest there thou must not kill, for if thou doest, thou must looke to answer it before that great and fearfull Iudge which is the Iudge of all Iudges : howsoever thou by friendship or by pittie dost escape the hands of the Iudge in this life : Besides, thou doest loose thy goodes, which thy wife and thy children should possesse. Againe, when thou comdest into the field, and there calling to minde these dangers before spoken of, and so forbearing as being loath to kill : Then thy enemy, by sparing him, may kill thee, and so thou perish in thy sinnes, hauing small or no
time

time of repentance, and so thy death will be doubtfull, except thou diddest leade a very vpright life before, which may very well be doubted: for if thou diddest serue God aright, or fearest his iudgements, then thou wouldest not for any cause fight with thy brother.

Concerning this there is an excellent example of Patience shewed by King *Dauid*, in the second of *Samuel* 16.6.10. *Dauid* being in the midst of his Army, there came a fellow with cursing and rayling speeches, saying vnto him, *Come out thou murderer*, and withall, threw stones and dust at him: and one of the seruants of *Dauid* saide vnto his Master, *Shall I goe and take off the head of this Rayler?* But *Dauid* very wisely and mildely answered his Seruant thus, *It may bee that the Lord hath sent him, and therefore let him alone*: but now we haue a saying, That flesh and blood cannot endure such iniuries as licere you see *Dauid* did. But I say, those that will go to Heauen, must not looke to be carried thither in a feather-bed, but by enduring iniuries, crossings, vexations, and tribulations: O then thinke on Heauen, and yet forget not Hell; presume not, nor yet despaire not; liue to die, and yet die to liue: Oh then leade thy life in true humilitie, for so shalt thou vndoubtedly escape Hels damnation, and enioy Heauens euerlasting saluation; which place the God of gods vouchsafe vs all.

CHAP. II.

*Declarating the difference of sundry mens teaching, with
a direction for the entrance into the practise
with thy weapons.*



AS men of all arts trades and sciences, differ in arte and workmanship, (as for example) all Physitions doe not vse one kind of purgation, nor all Surgions one manner of salue, nor al writers write not alike, but to make a rehearfall of all artes it were too long, my meaning is so many men so many mindes, euen so in this art of defence as the number which are experienced in it is infinite, euen so senerall fashions doe exceede the number of infinite, if it were possible; for euery man holdeth his opinion to be best in that fashion which he hath been most vsed vnto; although a man shew them many errours by good iudgement, yet it is as hard to withdraw them from their owne wil as it is to compell a Papist from his religion, which he hath been alwayes trained vp vnto.

But the true skil of weapons once perfectly learned is neuer forgotten againe, for if any man were to fight for his life, as by a familiar example I will tell you of those which haue been vnskilfull, yet haue had a suddaine occasion to vse their weapons, and euen then suddenly summoning vp their wits, what defence they should vse for the safegard of their liues, being so suddenly charged, doth not hee then as I said remember himselfe of the best defence, or the best rick, that euer was shewed him, for then is the time to stand him in
stead,

stead, and then will vse it, although he neuer plaid nor neuer practised in seauen yeeres before.

Nay further, he which neuer learned one tricke but what nature bestowed, nor neuer had any other experience vse nor practise at one weapon nor other, but onely what he hath scene of others, by chance, where hee hath hapned to come : yet such a one vpon a present occasion being vrged thereunto, will instantly call to minde that such a time and such a time, I did see such a man fight or play, and he was accounted a very good player, or a very tall man of his hands, and thus he lay or thus he defended himselfe ; Loe thus imitating for their defence that which they haue scene others doe before, another example which by experience I can speake of, and that is of some which neuer did nor neuer could swim in all their liues, yet such at sometimes haue been in danger of drowning, by châce falling ouer board into the sea, or into other deepe Riuers, where there was no hope of life but onely by swimming, such I say being put to their shifts, haue remembered themselves in the water, and so by laboring themselves I meane with their hands and their feet, so haue escaped and saued their liues. Now I say if euery man before hand were grounded in skill with his weapons, & in the art of swimming when they were yong, then would either of them be the lesse fearefull, for what is bred in the bone, will neuer out of the flesh.

Yet here one example more; take a yong plant, and set him, and come againe within a month, and you may pull him vp with ease, but let him grow a yeere or two and he will be so deepe rooted in the ground, so that you cannot pull him vp for your heart, except you vse other meanes : euen so of youth, if they giue their
minds

minds to good and laudable exercises when they are yong, it were great pitty that they shold want encouragement, whereby it might take roote ; but if their minds be giuen to any idle or bad exercises, it were good then that it were pulled vp in time, before it haue taken any deep root. And so I will here leaue off, because I shall haue occasion hereafter to speake concerning those matters.

CHAP. III.

*Fearefull examples of murther, with aduise
to auoid murther.*

GENERALLY three sorts of men are hated for the most part, and very much abhorred; that is to say, the proud minded man, a coward, and a murtherer, but especially a murtherer, howsoeuer it be done : therefore most vnhappy is he which killeth a man cowardly, in a desperate humour, but if he doe it in his owne defence, or in a morning vpon a iust quarrell in the field, and both being equally matched, then it may be the better tollerated both before God and man, yet I doe not well to say so; for *Romans* the 9. it is said, *what art thou which doest dispute with God*, then why goe I about to make my toleration in murther, when God hath giuen vs an expresse commandement to the contrary, saying; *thou shalt not kill. Exodus 20.* According to this saying, he which striketh with the sword, shall perish with the sword; and likewise *S. Paul* giueth vs a good lesson saying; *doe nothing without foresight and iudgement.* Because I touch diuinity in many places of my booke, no doubt some will say what should fencers meddle with diuinity ; but to answer
you

In no case
commit not
murther.

you againe, euery Christian ought to know the word, (indeed the sword is good) but much the better when they goe both together. But to our matter againe: those which feare God, and by chance happen into the company of a murtherer, there haire will stare, and their blood will rise, that they will inwardly wish they were out of his company againe, for many simple men doe feare a murtherer euer after they haue once known him to commit a murther, yet diuers honest men doe by chance happen into a murtherers company, when they would bee glad to shuff themselves from him againe; or as it were to spee him out of their presence; in regard of his euill qualities, which is quarrelling, and taking exceptions vpon any little occasion. If any man also doe seeme to contrary a murtherer, or a little crosse him in his swaggering, he will forthwith breake out into these or such like ragodly speeches, saying; I haue killed a far better man than thy selfe; such like words will he say with a brazen face, and a stony heart, lifted up with the pride of his manhood: for he that is a murtherer doth thinke that he is the best man in the world, especially if he escape the gallowes so long, vntill he hath killed two or three men: I haue been my selfe in company with many of them, but I did neuer see any fruit of repentance in them; for when they haue past the hands of the pittifull Iudge, then they thinke that they are cleered for euer, as well in this world as in the world to come; and then will they say if they did offend, they had the Law for it; but I know not how so many of them escape the gallowes: there is a Prouerbe saith, *foolish pittie ouerthroweth towne and Citty*. I thinke and am verily perswaded, that a murtherer is accurst and hated both of God and man, yea I

Oh remember
how the curse
of God fell
vpon Cain
for murder.

am also perswaded that the house is accurst wherein they dwell, and the ship wherein they saile at sea, mark their end, and you shall see that although they passe the hands of men, yet God persues them with the hue and crye of his vengeance, which followeth them, and apprehendeth them, and bringeth some of them to one kind of death, and some to another; as these few examples following shal declare, and thou maist consider of them to thy benefit.

First Sir *John Fitz*: how wickedly and how cowardly did he with two or three of his men pursue and overtake Master *Stannell*, as he was riding from *Testok* in *Devonshire*, towards his owne house, this Master *Stannell* was beloued both of rich and poore, hee was a good and bountifull house-keeper, and his vntimely death was lamented of thousands, the occasion of the quarrell, was as I haue heard because Master *Stannell* called Sir *John Fitz* Tenant, for that sir *John Fitz* his father had vsed to pay him a matter of two shillings a yeere: this was no great cause of quarrel if it had been weighed in the ballance of discretion, considering the great loue and familiarity which had continued long time betwixt them, the which also was the reason that Master *Stannell* had not of long time demanded the rent, nor did make any reckoning or account of it. But then both hauing appointed to meet at a merry making in *Testok* onely to be merry, and there this vnforgotten word tenant proceeded out of Master *Stannell's* mouth, which sir *John* tooke in vety great choller, Master *Stannell* perceiuing that hee had moued him betooke himselfe presently to his horse, and riding homewards hauing but only his footman with him, before he had rode two miles, sir *John Fitz* with

two or three of his men, being well horst ouer-tooke Master *Stannell* and there compassing him about som before him and some behind him, most cowardly and desperately murthered him; and vpon that sir *John* fled into *France*, but before one yeere was past his friends procured a pardon for him, insomuch that he came home againe, and to euery mans seeming was at quiet, but the hue and cry of Gods vengeance was in his conscience, and three or fowre yeeres after vpon *London* way there apprehended him, as you shall heare; for then and there most cruelly and diuelishly he killed his hoste, which was a very honest man, and afterwards most desperately with his owne hands tooke his rapier and murthered himselfe; yet thus much I can say of sir *John Fitz* he was a proper man, and for the space of thirty yeeres he liued orderly, to the gesse of the world, for he was well beloued in his country, and if he had so continued to the end, it had been well, but what should I say, a man may be an honest man thirty yeers, yea forty yeers, and yet be a knaue at the last.

Another example was that of one *Hocket* of *Plimouth*, who looking out at a window, and espying one Captaine *Robinson* comming downe the street, and he hauing an old quarrell to the said *Robinson* which began at sea, this *Hocket* stept to his dore with his rapier ready drawn, and standing within his owne house vntill Captaine *Robinson* was come iust against his door, he there without speaking one word ran him through with his rapier, and afterwards was cleered by the Iudge of this world, but after his comming out of the gayle, he went to sea, Master in a man of war, and within ten dayes after he was gone from *Plimoth* to sea, the

first ship they met withall shot but one shot, and yet killed this *Hocket*, and no man in the ship killed nor hurt but only this murtherer.

Likewise in *Plimoth* one Captaine *Treberne* and Captaine *Egles* fell out about nothing in a manner, the cause was for that one of them was denied lodging, where the other did lie by the good wife of the house, for it may bee she affected the one better then the other, and two dogs and one bone commonly can neuer agree well together, but they fell out about such a trifling matter, and at the doore in the streete they fought, and in the first bout, *Treberne* was downe in the gutter, and *Egles* there in presence of many might haue killed him, but staied his hand, and suffered him to rise againe, but then *Treberne* assaulted Captaine *Egles* most furiously, and it so chanced that with a blow *Egles* rapier brake, and then running into a house to saue himselfe, *Treberne* run him into the backe and killed him, and afterwards he receiued his tryall for it, but by the mercy of the Iudge he was discharged of that matter. After his coming out of the gayle, he presently got a crue of twenty eight persons, and a ship, and went a rouing vpon the coast of *France*, where they were all taken, and euery man of them hanged in *France*, now I doe verily perswade my selfe that many of them might haue been liuing at this day, if they had not hapned into this murtherers company.

Also, one *Bartlet*, who appointed the field with an other, after one bout, his enemy requested him to holde his hands, that he might breathe, which hee consented vnto; but as they both stode still, this *Bartlet* sodainly charged his weapon vpon the other, and

and ranne him through, that he died presently, and then *Bartlet* fled and escaped away for the space of seven yeares, but the huy and crie of Gods vengeance followed him, insomuch, that hee came againe to Plimouth of his owne accord, thinking that all was well, and forgotten; but there he was apprehended, and after the law had had his course vpon him, Gods vengeance left him not, but broght him to Plimouth againe, and shortly after, another did challenge this *Bartlet*, they both mette in the field, and there was *Bartlet* killed, not farre from the place where he had killed the other before, and he that killed him, fled away, and is not taken as yet.

Now, to end these examples with the lamentablest historie that ever penne did write, for a more cruell murther was neuer committed, of king *Richard* the third, in the *Chronicles*, there may you reade it more at large, that after hee had committed his brothers two children to the Tower, hee was not contented, but would haue the liues of these poore Infants, the doers of this hellish and cruell murder, were sir *James Tirrell*, *Miles Forrest*, and *John Dighton*, these three laying their heads together, what manner of execution were best to be vsed in that Tragedie, they concluded in the end, to stifle them in their beds in the dead time of the night, and so with the cloathes and pillowes which were about them, these three murderers pressing them downe vnder the cloaths (as aforesaid) bereaued them quickly of their liues; now, after this, what a hellish horrour had this King in his conscience, yea it so vexed and tormented his spirits, that he was neuer well nor at quiet sleeping nor waking; for in the night hee would sodainely start out

Remember
this example.

If this make
not your eares
tingle, yet it
may make
your hearts
tremble.

Fearfull visi-
ons do haunt
a murderer.

of his bed, and goe vp and downe the Chamber like a madde man; likewise in the day he neuer thought himselfe sure, but alwayes feared treasons, his eies rowling continually about him, and oftentimes hee would clappe his hand vpon his dagger, when there was no need, and afterwards he was vanquished with his enemies; and on the other three God shewed his vengeance somewhat in this world. For Sir *James Tyrrell* was beheaded afterwards at the Tower for treason, but not for that matter; and *Miles Forrest* had a consuming and a lingring life, for his flesh did rotte away by peece-meale, and so miserably died; *John Dighton* liued in great hatred, and was abhorred and pointed at of all that knew him, and at the last died in great pouerty and misery. But I referre you vnto the Chronicle, as aforesaid, which declares it more at large: and so I will goe on a little further to the same effect.

Though the Law doe spare and not cut off a murderer so soone as hee hath deserued death; yet I say the horreur of his murdering conscience will so bee gnawing at his bloody heart, vntill it hath eaten and consumed him to nothing; also the horrible paines of hell will by visions shew, and so plainly appeare vnto him, still sounding in his eares such a peale, that hee many times will thinke that the diuell is come from hell; for so long as hee liueth, his spirits will be so distempered and affrighted, that in the night, many times seuerall visions will appeare, sometimes spirits with vgly shapes, and sometimes a multitude of weaponed Officers ruffling in to apprehend him, and sometimes the ghost of him which was murdered, insomuch that many times hee will sweate for
 feare,

fear, with running, labouring, and striving to keepe himselfe out of their gripe, and in a word, afraide he will be (in a maner) of every grasse; and whereas before he was accounted for a merrie companion, is now overcome with wilde lookes and melancholie thoughts, taking no ioy, in wealth, wife, and children. Loe, this is a life, but it is as wearisome as hell vntill death doth catch him, for death waiteth vpon a murtherer as a halter doth vpon the stealer; as for example of sir *John Gilbert* euer after the killing of sir *John Burrowes*, of which the world saith it was an honourable quarrell, and yet in the night his friends reported, that he would sodainely start out of his bed, being sore affrighted, he knew not at what, he liued not many yeares after, but yet died in his bedde; so likewise master *Hey* killed captaine *Foscar* vpon a sodaine quarrell, meeting in the streete in Plimmouth, yet, by the course of the Lawe, was acquitted for it; but afterwards, so long as hee liued, hee liued a discontented life, and was neuer well in his conscience vntill death tooke him. Now all these were but yong men, and in the midst of their yeares, to the eye of the world, either of them might haue liued many yeares longer, and yet not haue beene accounted for olde men.

I could spend much paper and time with a number of examples touching this matter, but I will here conclude, and leave the rest to thy daily experience, which thine eares may heare, and thine eyes daily see (almost in euery place) farre more fearfull examples, concerning this former matter, the more is the pittie; but what becommeth of them after this life is ended may seeme doubtfull, but I leave that to the secret
wise-

wisedome and power of Almighty God; but there is no question to be made of those which leade a wicked and vngodly life, but they shall haue a wicked and an vngodly end; as on the contrary side, those that leade a godly and an vpright life, shall make a good and godly end: for if a man doe well, he shall haue well, but if he doe ill, he shall haue ill. More concerning this matter you may reade towards the end of the eight chapter following.

But I thinke it not amisse, heere in this place, to shew you a litle concerning murthers done in secret; for as the Proverb goeth, Murther will not be hidde; albeit for a time God doth suffer a murtherer to liue and reigne without apprehension, yet in the end he makes the diuell bring forth his seruant, to receiue his wages with shame enough, a murther can not be kept still close: for the Lord sometimes doth bring a murther to light that hath beene done in secret, by the birds of the aire, by water, by fire, by dogges, as in briebe by these examples shal plainly be demon-
strated.

It hath beene knowne that a murdered carkasse hath beene throwne into the Sea when it was flowed to the full, thereby thinking, that with the ebbe he would haue beene carried away, but the water being gone, the murdered carkasse was found where it was first throwne in.

Also, I knew a woman that was arraigned and condemned, for murdering her childe, and well she deserved the same; for shee cutte the childe into small peeces, and then she tooke and threw them vnder a hote furnace where she was a brewing: but when she had done brewing, and the fire out, there was found
the

the peeces of the childe in the ashes, so fresh (in a manner) as it was throwne in.

Likewise, in Worcestershire were two brothers, the one a very honest man, and by his honest means and good industry, had gotten to himselfe a pretty house, and crownes in his purse. But his brother being a carelesse vnthrift, and enuying at his brothers prosperous estate, yet kept he it to himselfe, vntill finding opportunitie, one night (but they two being in the house together;) this gracelesse vnthrift forthwith knockt his brother on the head, which when hee had done, hee cutte off his legges, and buried him vnder the harth in the chimney, and layd the stones againe very artificially, hoping therin that all the goodes were his owne; and when the neighbors enquired of him for his brother, he tolde them that hee was gone a journey farre off, to visite some of his friends. But (a short tale to make) this murtherer made a feast, and inuited his neighbours and his friends; and when they were all assembled together within the house, as they sate by the fire side, they perceiued the stones in the chimney to rise, and the fire tumbled downe out of the chimney, for the heat of the fire made the dead carkasse swell: and then search being made, the carkasse was found, and the murtherer taken and executed. God I beseech him blesse euery good man from murther, and from being murdered.

I haue knowne many times, that some (through ignorance) haue committed murther, in parting of a fray, I meane such as are not experimented in the Lawe, nor haue no reason in such a case; for many times they which should keep the peace, com-

H

mit

mit murther ignorantly, I meane, in comming in, either with club or halberd, or such like weapon, and comming behind one of the two that are in fight, striketh him on the head, when hee little expecteth any hurt of any other, but from him which hee is now in hand withall, when indeed in such a case, they ought to strike downe the weapons of those which are fighting or breaking them, but not strike them. Whose mindes are occupied with fury one against the other, and little expecting a mischiefe to come from one which they neuer offended. Againe some in parting of a fray will run in betwixt them, and hold his familiar friend, and leaue the other at liberty, and by this meanes he which hath been at liberty hath killed him which is so holden, when many times it had not so fallen out, if they had been both let alone to shift for themselves, therefore men ought to haue experience and to vse discretion in the parting of a fray, for fools do neuer fore-cast of a mischiefe before hand, but wise men preuent it before it falls.

Wherefore I would with whatsoeuer thou bee, which readeest this lesson, to remember it, and regard the life of a man, although many are at some times very vnruely, yet let no abuse cause thee to commit murther, neither in thy owne quarrell, nor in parting of any other : for I haue heard and knowne many times that a small stroke hath been giuen with no intention of murther, yet it hath fallen out to the contrary, yea and contrary vnto all mens expectation, which haue seen that a man with his fist or with a riding rodde, or with a penny loafer, and other things of lesse danger, and yet some haue dyed being stricken therewithal.

CHAP. III.

*which sheweth unto whom skill belongeth, with
the fruits of drunkennesse.*

MAny will say that skill in weapons is a good thing, and fit to be learned of euery man, yet all men will say it is pittie that a man without gouernment should know the secret skill in weapons, for indeede

He which can gouern himselfe is wise, but that must proceed from God.

skil doth most chiefly of all belong to a man that hath wit and discretion to gouern it, that when he hath skill knoweth how to vse it as it ought to bee vsed, for a good thing learned and abused were better refused and neuer learned : for some when they haue a little more skill then euery common man, then will they thinke by brauing euery man which commeth in their company, by swaggering it with proud brags and high lookes, yet I haue known such swaggering companions which haue had more haire then wit, meete with their match and carry away the blowes with disgrace, and yet themselues beginners of the quarrell when they might haue liued quiet if they would.

Therefore he which weareth the greatest whistle is not the best Mariner, nor he the best man that makerh the greatest brags, for some will braue a better man then themselues, and swagger it out, and yet so little in themselues that they will scarce hold the touching when they come to the stone to bee tryed, yet euery subiect ought if occasion serue to fight for his King and country, if it be for the Gospells sake, and sometimes in defence of their owne reputation and credit.

Now although this art of defence is so fit and necessary a thing for all men to be learned, yet withall I doe exhort and earnestly intreat all such as haue skill, to vse it in that fashion as it ought to be vsed, for if a man had twenty good qualities & yet if he be a drunkard, that one ill quality overthroweth all the rest, like as when a Cow giueth a good sope of milke, and then afterwards striketh it downe with her foote: she is as much to bee blamed for the losse, as commended for the gift, euen so a man without gouernment groweth out of fauour both with God & man, for many a man without discretion and iudgement many times doth fall out with his familiar friend, and so dare one another into the field, presently vpon the suddaine falling out. Now if wit be in neither of them, then a thousand to one but murther is committed, for a man with skill may better fight with a hundred in the morning one after another, then with three in an afternoone, vpon drinke or hot blood; for if you forbear to kill thou maist be killed thy selfe, if thou take thy opportunity thou maist easily kill a drunkard in his owne comming in, for he will come in without feare or wit: for drinke maketh a very coward challenge the best man liuing, for in drinke I haue knowen many passe their words to meeete in the field vpon small occasion, if with discretion the quartell were rightly considered vpon; but their owne selues in the morning when they haue their right wits about them, then do they many times repent, and wish the match were to make, and that their words were vnspoken which they spake the night before. Yet neuerthelesse when a man hath passed his word howsoeuer things fall out, hee must and will answer.

swer the challenge, yea though he loose his life by it. Loe these are the fruits of drunkennesse, al other vices may be left, but no bridle will rule a drunkard, nor no counsell will make him forgoe his drunken and swinish life, drunkennesse is the mother of all vices, for drunkennesse doth beget and breede all manner of deadly sins, for by inordinate drinking thy soule is endangered, thy body is infected, thy vnderstanding banished, thy manhood distasted, thy substance wasted, and beastlynesse resembled, and thy businesse neglected, therefore leaue that one vice, and all other will flie away with it: for as I said before it is the only breeder and maintainer of quarrelling and fighting, by fighting God is displeased, and the Kings Lawes broken; againe if murther be committed, thou loosest thy goods, and endangerest thy life; if thou loose it not, yet thou shalt liue despised, & hard of all honest minds that knowes thee, so that thy life will be more loathsome then death, therefore not to fight at all is best, except thou be charged vpon contrary to thy expectation, then defend thy selfe, and yet feare as much to kill as to be killed.

CHAP. V.

The cause of quarrells, and what preparation you ought to be prepared with to answer a challenge.

Dissention, quarrells, and murther growes many times vpon small occasions, yea so small, that when it commeth to the eares and to bee disputed vpon amongst the the wise, when they haue skand it ouer yeelds vp their verdict, saying such and such are fallen

Be wel aduised
before thou do
passe thy word,
for a man will
be as good as
his word, if it
do cost him his
life: for it is a
cowards trick
to crie *peccau*,
or least in fight
the next mor-
ning.

out for the value of a rush, and such and such haue killed one another for iust nothing, is not heere more madnesse? yet I will not say but at one time or another a mans reputation may be so neerly touched, that it cannot stand with his credit to pocket it vp, although it be made vpon drinke, for indeed the pot is the chief cause almost of all quarrells, yet being wronged, it can not stand with a mans credite, to keepe his weapon in his sheathe; neyther doe I counsell all men to pocket vp all iniuries which some will proffer them, but to answer a good quarrell, not onely with words but with deeds, as followeth; for the further instruction. Whoso is honourably challenged vnto single combate, the challenged may make choice of his weapon, and likewise of the time when, and of the place where.

Likewise, the challenged may choose to fight on foote or on horse backe, which for his best aduantage hee shall thinke fittest: now also the challenged is to consider well the qualitie of the Challenger, that thereby hee may make the better prouision of such furniture as may serue for his owne defence, and likewise to terrifie and hurt the challenger.

Now, if the challenger be chollericke and hastie, then charge thy poynt directly vpon him, that if hee prease vpon thee, he may come vpon his own death: but before thou goest into the field, discharge thy duty and conscience towards God, aswell as in weapons, for thy best aduantage, otherwise it can not choose but be to thy body dangerous, and vnto thy soule doubtfull, and a most principall note is this to be obserued, for thou art not sure whether euer thou shalt retorne againe or neuer.

Remember

Remember your skill, when you are at play, or in fight, for I haue knowne many, when their fight and play is ended, they doe remember, that with this tricke, or with that tricke they might haue defended themselves, and either hurt or disgraced their enemy, but many (through madnesse and fury) remember it not till it be too late.

If you be both skilfull in the false play, then I hold it good for both to play vpon the true play, for it booteth but little to vse false play to one that knowes how to proffer it, and how to defend it; for it is ill halting before a Cripple, yet I will not say but the best of all may be deceiued by false play, but especially false play may stand thee in great stead, vpon those which are not come vnto the full perfection of knowledge: Againe, one may haue skil in one kind of false play, but not in all.

Now whether thy enemy be skilfull or not, it is a very easie matter to know so soone as hee beginneth to charge his weapon, if thou haddest no former knowledge before hand. If two crafty knaues meete at dice, if either of them shift in false dice, the other will perceiue it presently, and so they will know each other to be gamesters, but they will giue ouer the sooner, with small losse each to other, referring themselves to their better fortunes, and hoping to meete with easier gamesters; euen so I wish all men, if they perceiue themselves to be hardly matched, the wiser of them to yeelde vpon composition, after reasonable triall made each one of the other, before any great hurt be done; for the best man that euer breathed, hath, and may meete with his equall: and when two good men meete, the conquest will be hardly
and

and dangerously ended on the one side, except Discretion be a mediator to take vp the matter, before it come to the worst, if by friends it be not ended before hand; but if thou canst hurt thy enemy, yes, although it be but a little, or vnarme him of his weapon, which thou mayest very easily doe, if thou doe fight with good discretion. And eyther of these are accounted for a victorie; also, take this for a generall rule alwayes, keepe thy bodie within compasse of true Defence, considering otherwise, that the danger is great in that part of the bodie which lieth most discouered, and is nearest vnto thine enemy.

Now when thy enemy doth assault thee, and is lifting vp his weapon to discharge at thee, be not then to prepare thy Defence, but be ready before hand to defend euery part of thy bodie, according to my directions, as when you come to it you shall see more plainly. For thou dost not know before hand where the blow will light: As shrinking vp of shoulders is no payment of debts, no more will winking or blinking defend thy carkasse, as those which haue no skill will winke: therefore, againe, and againe, I say, bee prepared with skill before hand. Most sure it is the blow must haue his fall: but at euery weapon I haue shewed how to defend it, therefore the Defender must bee well experienced before hand with his defence, at such a weapon as he meaneth vsually to carrie, that when the blow doth light, thou mayest bee in thy defence, not to defend thine enemies blowe onely; but also to answer him againe in the time of aduantage, for a quicke answer sheweth good cunning. Nor to know the true place for the holding of of thy weapon, that is not all, but alwayes so long
as

as thou art within thy enemies danger continue them in their place, except it be at the very instant time when thou goest about to offend thine enemy, and that must be done with a very good discretion, and thy weapon must bee recouered vp againe into his place nimbly. Now if thy enemy doe discouer some part of his body, that, to thy seeming, lieth very open, yet be not too hastie in offering play, though the baite be neuer so faire, bite not at it too rashly or vnadvisedly, lest like the foolish Fish you be taken with the hooke which lieth couered with the baite; for if your enemy finde your weapon or weapons out of the place of true defence, yea if it be but an inch too high, or too lowe, too wide, or too narrow, it is asmuch as concerneth thy life: if thou be matched with one that is skilfull, neuer ouerlay thy selfe with a heauy weapon, for nimblenesse of bodie, and nimblenesse of weapon are two chiefe helps for thy advantage in play. Againe, and againe I say, strike not one blow in fight, at what weapon soeuer thou fightest withall, except it be a wrist blowe, and that you may aswell doe with a rapier, as with a sword, for a wrist blow consumeth but a little time, yet better vse no blowe at all, but continually, thrust after thrust: for (in my minde) hee is a man ignorant and very vnskilfull that will bee hurt with a blow, and if thou make an assault vpon thy enemy doe not tarry by it, to maintaine it, for in making the assault distance is broken, wherefore recover backe into your guard and distance againe so soone as you can, and alwayes let your ees be on your enemies face, and not altogether on the point, then you may be deceiued, by the swift motion of the hand, for the motion of the hand is swif-

ter then the eye or foot, many will set their eyes vpon their enemies point, or vpon his hand for the auoiding of this error, the best remedy is daily exercise and practise one with another, and to play with more then one, otherwise thou wilt neuer come vnto true defence for it is good to be acquainted with euery mans fashion, for that trick which will hit one will not hit another, and therefore be well experienced not onely in the true play but in the false; I meane for the defence and offence of both, that if thou canst not preuaile with the one then vse the other: yet take heed of hasty aduenturing in, least thou with the foolish bird which flyeth into the lime bush, and being in, the more she strineth, the faster she is; then make no more hast then good speed, least thou be taken in thy owne folly, for many times haste maketh waste: if thou shootest at a marke if the marke be neuer so faire, yet if thou shoot hastily without discretion, thou maist oftner misse then hit; also I doe aduise thee not to determine to answer euery thrust or blow home which thy enemy doth assault thee with; but to answer it something short vntill thou perceiue whether he haue any false play or not, otherwise if thou make thy answer home, he may deceiue thee by false play: now if both be experienced in the true play and false then you might continue in fight a whole day, if it were possible to endure so long and haue no hurt: if thou haue a close hilted dagger and a rapier, I hold them more sure then a sword and dagger, but with the skilfull there is no danger in either of them; againe in fight a man need not vse halfe the skil which he may learne, the second point of hawking is to holde fast, and the second and chiefeest point in this exercise is to learne to defend thy selfe, and to vse

vse it when thou hast occasion, then remember where about thou art.

And let no illusions cause thee to looke about thee when thou art within thy enemies distance, least hee take the aduantage when thou dost not see him, or before thou be aware, as many doe : for after when thou hast the wound, it is but a folly for thee to say, I had thought he would not haue stricken me so cowardly : I remember a tale as I heard out of *Germany*, thus it was, the Master and vther of a school had vpon occasion appointed the field, and their weapon was each of them a two handed sword, and meeting at the place appointed, said the Master thou art not so good as thy word, the Vther asked him why ; marry said he thou promisest to bring no body with thee, and yet looke yonder what a number of people are comming towards thee, the vther no sooner looked about, but the Master smote off his head, and afterwards meeting with some of his friends said, I haue taught my man a new tricke this morning said he, which he neuer learned before. Loe thus he killed him by policy, but it was no manly tricke, neither doe I commend this manner of murther : in my mind the Master had been better that he had denied to goe into the field with his man, then to haue such a clog of murther vpon his conscience by killing of him, by what meanes or policy soeuer; for euery one ought to remember that he must not take vengeance, when and where he may, so oft as an injury is profered him, concerning this there is a good example to bee imitated by strong beasts which neuer turne againe when little curs runne barking after them, for the mighty or skilfull ought to vse their power moderately, for so they may the better vse

continually, for although fighting be the triall of cunning and skill in weapons, and many men thereby prooue their force, and yet afterwards become great frinds, for fighting is nothing dangerous being both wary and skilfull: but now in my mind much deceiued are those which thinke that a quarrell begunne with words cannot be ended but with weapons, but my opinion is that so long as no blowes passe but ouely words, yet words are the cause of many quarrells, for words will sting worse then a nettle, and pricke deeper then a thorne, and cut more keener then a sword, yet for all that let wisdome and reason guide thy hand and after you haue crossed one another with two or three crosse words, then fall into a ciuill kind of reasoning the matter, and not in fury suffering it to grow into any further quarrell, for a little sparke at the first is easily quenched, euen so vpon the drinking of a cup of wine or a pipe of Tobacco, or vpon such a light matter of no importance many a quarrell is begun; now in such a case I would wish the wiser of the two in his good discretion, to yeeld first, and so to end it without further grudging, for reasonable speeches may be a full satisfaction where a small offence is committed.

But now if one of the parties in a stubborne forwardnesse will not yeeld but rather goe into the field with a desire to kill the other, now if there be neuer a one of them wise, murder is committed and at leisure repented: but he which first beginneth the quarrell, or giueth the first box on the eare, rashly or vnadvisedly, vpon a small matter as aforesaid, is worthy and well deserueth to be answered againe with three, or else with the bastinado. And to match with this I will tell you

you a tale of a Frier, who in his sermon said if one giue thee a blow on the one eare, turne the other and take another, and a lusty seruingman hearing him, after the sermon was ended, hee came vnto the Frier and said, sir you made a good Sermon, but yet in my mind there was small reason in one lesson that you gaue vs, what was that said the Frier, marry quoth the seruing-man that if one giue me a blow on the eare, I should turne the other, and take another : why saith the frier the Scripture commaundeth vs so to doe, but quoth the seruing man will you follow the scripture herein, yes marry that I will said the Frier, with that the seruing-man vp with his fist and gaue him a good boxe on the eare; the frier turned the other, and tooke another, but now saith the Scripture (quoth the Frier) looke what you would haue others do to you, doe the like to them; looke what measure you meate, the like measure shall be measured to you againe, with heape and thrust, and running ouer, and with that the Frier rooke a good crab-tree cudgell and beat the seruing-man well fauouredly, and so to our former matter againe. Doth euery blow that is giuen deserue the answering in the field, I say not but first requite the blow againe, as before said, for I haue valued the rate of the first beginner so low as may be, for he is worthy to be requited, not in the same manner, but in a more open fashion, requite the boxe againe, and then being equalled of the first wrong; let him which beganne the game reckon of his penny-worths, and if in casting vp his reckoning hee finde himselfe a looser, let him sit downe by his losse, and learne to make a wiser bargain an other time; but if it cannot be so ended, then it must be answered otherwise as occasion shall serue.

Therefore doe
not that to day
which may bee
repented of to
morrow.

Now If the lie be giuen before you grow into chol-
ler with a rash foolish fellow ; first , consider in what
case the party is , which giueth the lie , before thou
strike ; for in drinke or in furie I haue seene one giue
the lie , which would not haue done it at an other
time , I meane when hee had his right wittes about
him . Well, but say a man, at such time, and in such a
case, doe giue the lie , some mad heads will say, that
it deserueth the stabbe presently ; but I neuer knew a-
ny man stabbe or kill another , vpon what occasion
soeuer, but he was sorie for it afterwards : That ma-
riner is not to be commended which getteth his cun-
ning by many ship-wreckes ; nor that man is not to
be praised for his gouernement which getteth it by
his punishment, which he hath for the killing of two
or three men.

Now , vpon the receiuing the lie , if the stabbe be
not giuen , some giddie headed kill-calues will say,
that such a man tooke the lie , and did not answere it
with a stabbe, wherefore hee is a coward ; but now I
say, and this is my opinion, he sheweth the best wit,
and most valour , which seeing a man out of the way,
(as we terme it) will giue a milde and a quiet answere
vnto a froward question : also the wiser sort will com-
mend the patience of him that can beare with one
that is past reason ; for all men know, that hee which
committeth murther, will afterwards wish with bitter
teares , that hee had conquered his affections , and
stayed his handes , I meane , if there be any sparke of
grace at all in him ; and the first which striketh, many
times looseth his life , therefore though thou cannot
rule thy tongue, yet haue a care to rule thy hands be-
fore a mischiefe be done , for hee which committeth
mur-

murther, when hee commeth to examination, it is but a simple excuse to say, The other gaue mee the lie, and called me knaue, and I could not brooke it. There is a perty example, and worth the noting concerning such a matter (as I haue heard it) and thus it was. A Iudge sitting in iudgement against a murderer, who answered for himselfe saying, and it please you my Lord, hee gaue mee the lie, and called mee knaue. Why said the Iudge, wilt thou kill a man for that? call me knaue, and giue me the lie: the Iudge being importunate, in the end, the murthurer said, You are a knaue, and you do lie; then the Iudge tooke the skirt of his coate and thooke it, and said, Lord, now what am I the worse? but euerie man can not be so patient: although some will keepe company seauen yeares, and yet neuer giue any cause of quarrell: yet some againe will vpon alittle drinke, or vpon a small occasion quarrell, swagger and fight almost in euerie company they come into; there is a Prouerbe goeth, He which hath an ill name, is halfe hanged: Before he commeth to the Barre, another Prouerbe touching our former matter saith, Hee which is accounted for an earely riser, may lie a bed till eleuon of the clocke: euen so hee which hath tried his man-hoode, afterwards the world will iudge and say, that he is a man of his hands, and that he dare fight vpon a good occasion; but if he make a common occupation of fighting, hee will then bee accounted for a common quarreller, and his friends will refuse his company many times for doubt of his quarrelling, and yet hee shall neuer be accounted, more then a man againe. Hee which is quarrellsome shall oftentimes meete with his match; but if a tried fellow doe

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at sometimes forbear when hee is wronged or challenged, the wiser sort will neuer account the worse manhoode in him; therefore except it be vpon a most open and great abuse, let Patience be thy buckler, and a faire tongue thy sword, and alwayes haue a care in the beginning what wilbe the end; for a mischiefe sometimes happeneth in an houre which happeneth not in seauen yeares againe, but Oh thrice happie were that man, which towards the latter end of his dayes, can without a paire of lying lips say, I thanke my God, I neuer bare malice, nor I neuer iniurioufly wronged any man, in thought, word, or deed in all my life.

CHAP. VI.

*Diuerse reasons or introductions to bring thee
the better vnto the knowledge of
thy weapon.*

IF thou doest meane to practise after my direction, then put thy weapons in their right place, looking not onely to the picture, but to the words going before and after, likewise, frame your head, bodie, foote, and hand, according to my direction (as it followeth) after the first picture; for if either your weapons, or any part of your bodie be out of their place: yea, though it be but an inch too high, an inch too lowe, too wide, or too narrow, it is as much as your life is worth; If your enemy be very skilfull and willing withall: therefore, when thou goest to practise, reade it aduisedly, with vnderstanding, for I could
haue

haue made a great Volume, in describing many sorts of guards at euerie weapon, but it would haue beene an intricate peece of worke, and needelesse for euerie common man to know.

For as some Scriueners can write twentie kinds of hands, yet one or two will serue the tyme; but the more sortes being well written, are the more to bee commended, but to haue an entrance into many, and not to doe one well, is not worth commendations: euen so one guard perfectly learned at euerie weapon, may serue thee for thy true defence whilest thou liuest, against all other guards.

It is but little auailable to thee, if thou see a good Scriuener write, except thou take the penne and practise to write, as hee doth; euen so, it booteth thee but little, that wouldest be skilfull of thy weapon, if thou dost see two skilfull men play except thou take weapons and practise to do as they haue done before thee.

Againe, it is not enough for him that would write well, to write his copie but once ouer, and so leaue, no more must thou, if thou wilt haue skill in thy weapons, thou must not giue ouer with playing of one bowt, but thou must exercise it many times, and practise it often.

And if a man write well, and exercise it neuer so much, yet hee can neuer exceed, well written; euen so in skill of weapons a man may be perfect, and play well; but when thou hast learned the true and perfect skill with thy weapons, thou maist exercise for thine health and recreation, but thou shalt neuer passe that word, well plaid.

Also, he which writeth much, and doth not regard

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his

his coppie, but writeth after his owne will, I thinke it were strange for such a Scholler to write well, but he will alwaies write a ragged hand: euen so hee that getteth him hilts and cudgells, and goeth about to learne of his owne head without direction of one that is skillfull, it were better that he had neuer played, if afterwards he goe to learne; for he must first vnlearne that which he hath learned, which will bee very hard to be done without great paines taking.

Now he which writeth a good Secretarie hand, and then afterwards he goeth to learne Roman hand, or Court hand, or any other the like, hee doth not thereby loose his Secretary; but if hee can write all kinde of hands, then may he vse most, that which hee liketh best, or thinketh fittest: euen so, he which hath (by his practise) gotten good skill, and yet being of an other mans teaching, it is of another manner of teaching, and I will not say but that it may be so good or better then mine: yet hee which learneth my rules or followeth my directions, it can not hinder him any whit at all, but if hee haue once gotten them by good and perfect practise, if hee like them not, may goe to his olde fashion againe, or learne of any other afterwards.

Yet againe, as the obseruing of a true distance in a Scriuener betweene euery line, is commendable in his writing, so it be done without ruling of it, which commeth by much practise; euen so in true skill in fight, distance is a most excellent thing, and the principallest thing of all, next vnto the guard to be obserued and kept, and it must be gotten by great practise.

Again, when you learne to write at the first, you
write

write leasurely, but with much practise your hand cometh to be swifter; euen so, with often vse of thy weapon, thy hand will come to defend either blow, or thrust more readily or more speedily then at the first beginning of thy practise, albeit thou be shewen how to defend; and though thou haue the reason perfectly in thy head, and knowest when an other doeth it well, yet without practise thou canst neuer be skillfull in defence of thy selfe.

Also, hee which writeth, and with his penne doth sputter his paper with incke, a Scholler will thinke, if it be not a great blot, it is a small matter, but a Scriuener will say, it is a great fault; euen so, if thy weapon or any part of thy body be out of the right place, yea, though it be but a little, yet it will seeme to him that hath skill, as much as a great blotte doth to a Scriuener in a coppie Booke.

Moreouer, he which learneth to write, must continually looke to his coppie, and must write according to it; for one letter, or one line well written, is better then a great deale of incke and paper spoiled, and not one letter well made: euen so, one blow, or one thrust performed orderly, I meane, in his due time, and likewise to the right place, is better then an hundred vnorderly done.

Furthermore, if in writing an Obligation, a Scriuener doe write one letter of Roman hand, and another of Secretary, another of Court hand, it will not be seemely, nor commendable, but with what hand you beginne with, to end with the same; euen so you may frame your selfe, sometimes into one guard, and sometimes into an other, taking heed alwayes, that you obserue the same defence which belongeth

to the guard; for if you are in one guard, and you vse the defence of another, so you may deceiue your selfe (for euerie guard differeth in defence and offence) and betwixt euerie blow, and euery thrust, and euerie guard which I haue heere described in this Booke: there is as great oddes as is betwixt Secretarie hand, Court hand, and Roman hand: nay the seuerall difference of guards are more in number then there are seuerall kindes of hands in writing, yea many more then any Fidler can play lessons vpon his instrument, and the nature of the guards do differ as much as one lesson from another; wherefore those that thinke one defence serueth for defence of all guards, are asmuch deceiued, as they that thinke there is but one kinde of lesson to be played vpon all instruments: for that seuerall kindes of lessons are to be played vpon all instruments are infinite; euen so, the seuerall guards for defence and offence are not to be numbred; for, betweene the true skill in weapons, and the false, are an hundred of each at the least, and the contrariest and the most vnseemely, euery man hath by nature, but the best and surest way is to be learned by Art of them that are skilfull; wherefore see euery mans iudgement. For as thou mayest heare at one Sermon that which thou shalt neuer heare againe, euen so thou maiest learne of one teacher, that thou canst not learne of another: for euerie one that practiseth naturall play without direction of one that is skilfull, such a one in his practise, will haue one foolish trick or other: which when they haue by common practise long vsed, will hardly be withdrawne from it: as for example, some will be setting their foote vpon their weapons, as if it were to stretch him when hee was
right

right before, but they do it of a foolish custome that they learne of themselves : likewise, some will puffe and blow like a broken winded horse when they are at play, and some will daunce and keepe a trampling with their feete, and some will flourish and wauer with their weapons, some will whistle, and some will be blabbring of spittle in their mouthes, and putting out their tongues, and some againe will runne about as though they could stand on no ground, and it is as hard to wrest or driue them from such vnseemely customes, as it is to driue a dogge from a peece of bread.

Yet many doe not see it in themselves, but vnto the skillfull, which beholde them, it will seeme very vnseemely, and by nature, euerie one hath the woorst way; as for example, there are but two wayes for the bowing of the head, either to the right hand, or to the left, and by nature, euery one doth bow him towards the left side, rather then to the right side; and there is very great oddes betwixt the right and the wrong in true defence, as I haue described in my reasons more at large, both in the place of Sword and Dagger, and Rapier and Dagger, for it is great advantage to leane thy head towards the right shoulder a little; and at the beginning of your practise it is very easie to frame your selfe to my fashion, with standing both with feete and bodie, for the vse of the foote commeth not by nature, but by practise. Againe, many yoong men will be growne with slouthfulnessse, and be so lazie, that they must be haled (as it were) with cartropes to any good exercise, accounting him their greatest enemy which giueth them the best counsell, but to all folly they are prone and apt

of themselves, but perswade them to any goodnesse, and you shall see them hang arse-ward like a dogge in a string.

Most youth, for example, are willing to goe to Schoole at the first, but within a weeke or lesse, away must the booke be laid, for feare lest much learning make them madde, as *Festus* said to *Paul*, for they will waxe dull and weary with a little paines taking.

And next, they must to the Fence Schoole, but there I am perswaded they neede not learne offence, and I thinke a little defence is enough for them, for many will be wearie of well doing quickly, saying as the Porters of *Bristow*, a new Maister, a new, and hang vp the old; euen so, from the Fence schoole they must goe to the Dauncing schoole, thinking that to be the onely exercise in the world, but with a little practise they waxe weary of dancing likewise: then they say, Oh that heere were one to teach Musicke! that exercise they should neuer be wearie of, but within a little while that will be too tedious a matter to comprehend: so you may perceiue yong men (by their wills) will take paines at nothing, I meane, not one in twentie, but what they are forced vnto.

Now I doe not put downe those vanities, heere before in this Chapter expressed, thereby that thou shouldest waxe the worse, by the reading of it, but I doe wish thee to marke others, and likewise examine thy selfe, that if thou see in others, or find in thy selfe such foolishnesse, refraine while thou art yong.

Although many there be that do vse foolish tricks, and perceiue them not in themselves to be vnseemely, but suppose they become them well, as he that wauereth his weapon, or runneth about, wearieth him selfe:

selfe : besides, he that so runneth is in daunger of falling, for a little shrub, bush, briar, stone, or moule-hill, may soone overthrow him which doth not tra-uerse his ground leasurely and orderly ; for he which hath true defence must bee steadie in his guard with his foote and hand in their right place, whereas hee which wauereth his weapon is at no certaine guard for his defence ; therefore, to keep steadie your weapons in their right place, is the best way : for, one blow, or one thrust, orderly done, is better then an hundred without skill or out of order ; for cunning in weapons may be compared to trickes at Cardes, for if one thew a tricke at Cardes, it will seeme strange to him that neuer saw it before ; but to him that can doe it, it is nothing troublesome ; euen so, as that tricke at Cardes is nothing when the secret is knowne, but very easie to be done : euen so, the best way at weapons, is as easie to bee followed (being knowne) as the worst.

Farre deceiued are those which imagine they cannot attaine vnto the perfe& skill of Defence with Rapier and Dagger, without such antique fashions of learning, which many of late yeares haue deuised, some wreathing their bodies like vnto a coakes, and some, as though they were going to daunce the Antique, which maketh many that haue no experience at this weapon thinke it vnpossible euer to frame their bodies, as they see these doe, which I speake of : but now these fantatticall fellowes will perswade a man, that it is not possible to play well at Rapier and Dagger, except a man can frame his body as they do ; but I say, the best and surest way is the easiest to be attained vnto ; for a boy of fiftene yeares of age, may (by
small

(small practise) defend himselfe against any man, with his rapier & dagger; for a thrust with a rapier is more fearefull then with a sword, and a man may see the thrust better of a sword then with a rapier, because there is oddes in the breadth and bignesse each of the other. Againe, a man shall thrust further with a rapier then with a sword, for the hilt of a sword will shorten your reach, by reason of the closenesse of the hilt, though they be both of one length.

Yet many are of this opinion, and will say, it is better to fight with a Sword and Dagger, then with Rapier and Dagger, the reason is (say they) with my Sword I may both strike and thrust.

But I say, and by good experience I speake it, that hee which striketh in fight, giueth his enemy a great aduantage; besides, a Sword may either bow or breake, and so by that meanes hee that striketh may fall into his enemies mercy. Besides that, a boy of fifteene yeares of age may safely defend the strongest mans blow that is, according to my direction following in the first Picture; for a weake man, or a boy, may defend more with both his hands, then a strong man can charge him with one; for many can not forbear striking, being moued thereunto by anger, except they haue beene grounded in the disaduantage of it by much practise; hee that doth defend a blow double, and make a quicke answer with a thrust, by turning of his knockes inward, may hit any man that striketh, and yet defend himselfe without losse of time.

For the defence of a blow double, is sure, and yet you may answer your enemy so soone, and with as much danger to him as if you did defend it single, for

it may be all done with one motion, both the defence and offence.

Furthermore, I would counsell all Clothiers or Chapmen, which carrie many times more money then they are woorth; for their defence against false knaues, to carry a Staffe in their iournies, whether it be on horse backe or on foote; for a good weapon doth not onely serue to keepe the peace, but also a mans purse from a thiefe, and likewise to be experienced in the skill thereof, if they should be driuen to encounter vpon a sodaine at the like weapon. But a staffe may easily encounter against a Sword and dagger, although but small experience be in the Staffeman; but a little skill is a great help at a time of need, which if thou hast not obtained in thy youth, then be not ashamed to learne when thou art olde; for as in a schoole of learning, there are some in Grammer, and some in the Crosse-row; so the greatest Iudge in the land was in the Crosse-row first: euen so into a schole of Defence there commeth, as well badde players, as good, and hee which is the good player ought not, nor it is not a thing vsuall to mocke or skoffe at him which is the badde player: and what of all this? Nothing, but to shew, that it is better to learne late then neuer, I meane especially any good exercise or qualitie, which is, or may be profitable for a Commonwealth, healthy to the bodie, and commendable to the world, for we are not borne altogether for our selues, but our Parents, Friends, and Country haue interest in our birth.

Now although some will talke of this and that, and say, that they haue fought with foure or sixe men at once, yet I can conceiue no reason, how anie man

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should defend two men, especially if they bee both willing to spoile, or kill; for when thine eie is directly vpon one of them; the other, in the meane while, may kill thee, if he be disposed; for the motion of the eie is slower then the motion of the hand; for a man cannot cast his eie about so quicke, but that he which is behinde thee, or on the one side of thee, may kill thee, if they be both willing (as I haue said before :) But indeede if one skilfull man haue two or three vpon him, and be in a narrow place, that they can not get about him, then may hee defend himselfe a long time without hurt.

A left hand skilfull hath oddes against a right handed man, one reason is, that a left handed man is continually vsed to a right hand, but a right hand doth seldome meete with a left handed man; an other reason is, a right handed man, when he doth open his right side of his head, by offering play, although hee beare his Dagger to the right eare, yet it doth not defend that side, so sure, nor so strong as it doth the left side. But indeede, so long as the right handed man lieth in his guard of defence vpon his Backe-sword, for the Backe-sword is the chiefeſt poynt of defence against a left handed man; therefore when you encounter against a left handed man, you must be careful and heedie, if you do offer play, to recouer your guard againe presently, and be in the defence of your Backe-sword guard: But of this I will speake more at large heereafter.

CHAP. VII.

*That Feare and Fury are both enemies to
true valour.*

I Haue taken vpon me a very hard question to decide : for I can not well set out the office of the one , but with disgrace of the other; the one is so cleane contrarie to the other : First, that Feare is an enemy vnto valour , I neede not to make any long discourse, for euery one will say , that the fearefull man will neuer attempt any thing worthy the name of Valour , but alwayes beare a load of iniuries vpon his broade shoulders , excusing all the wrongs which are done him, saying, that they were done with no intent of wrong, and so himself first crauing pardon of those which offend him , but yet bearing an iniurie in his minde, vntill he can reuenge it, by vertue of an office, or one way or another ; also, he is a raiser of mutinies, and loueth to see other together by the eares, and yet keep himselfe out of danger, but some I haue known, which haue bin timeresome and cowardly, shew great valour , but indeede it was when there was no remedie but that they must needs fight. Againe, I haue knowne many simple cowardly men, who being well experienced with skill , and being practized therein, doe waxe bolde and valorous ; for when (by often trial) they see that they can saue and defend themselves, what neede haue they to feare, for there is a certainty of defence , and hee which hath it, may bee as sure without making any doubt or question, as it is for Arithmetitian to cast vp seuerall summes iust to a penny : euen so certaine may a skilfull man be in his de-

fence: and it is as easie to make a fearefull or cowardly man, perfect in knowledge, and so by knowledge to bring him to be valorous; yea more easie it is then to make a hastie man, of valour and stomacke, to forbear his former resolution; for as no perswasions will make a drunkard forsake his drunkenness, but onely pouertie or death: euen so there is almost no meanes to perswade the furious and hastie man from this sodaine quarrelling and stabbing, but onely many dangerous wounds, imprisonment, or death: Yet if such a one doe runne through many brawles, and so continue, vntill his owne rod hath beaten him, by crosses and troubles: if all these can not make him liue ciuill, and in sober fashion, as he ought to doe, yet olde age will bring experience, and will make him as tame as a sheepe; for when hee is olde, then hee will say, that a man should not aduenture further then skill being tempered with discretion, doth allow: for obserue I pray you, if you chance to see two skilfull men play or fight; and if these two fall into choller and furie, so that like two wilde Bulles they goe to it pell mell, then it is chance noddie to hitte or misse; for where fury hath the vpper hand it is not worth the sight to the beholders, for they can shew no true Art, except they obserue distance, for distance being broken, they cut or hurt one another which is a great disgrace vnto true Art, and a discouragement to many which would learne skill, but that they see by such hastie fooles, that skill auaieth not, and indeede it doth little auaille such as cannot bridle their hastie affections; but yet many will say it is true, yet they cannot beware of the diuell, vntill they are plagued with his daume. For after a skilfull man hath
receiued

receiued hurt he presently condemneth his owne folly, for receiuing that which he might haue auoided if his mind had been on his businesse; now as I would haue no man turn coward but to answer a good quarrell, so likewise I would most earnestly wish all men to forbear and not maintain such light and idle braules which either spring from lewd women, as that are pot frayes, for drunkenness is the cause of the most quarrells that be, yet still I doe allow and commend any man to answer his enemy vpon a good quarrell, and to stand against him, if he doe assault thee: for that wil make others to feare to doe thee wrong or thy friend wrong, thinking that thou wilt rite it. Now he which is valorous by nature, and hath no skill, and yet hath a good strength, courage, and stomacke, many times doth aduenture rashly without feare or wit, not much vnlike a foolish gamester which vrgeth and neuer counteth vpon his fellowes game, but many times it were better hold then vie, for as som loose their mony by their rash vying at the one, so many loose their liues by a foolish bold hardinesse at the other: for many in their very first attempt, or as it were their entering into hope to get the praise of the world to bee accounted valorous loose their liues, which is for want of mixing discretion with stomacke.

Many examples to this effect might bee showne which hapned in the wars of *France, Flanders* and *Ireland*, for in all these places as good men for valor as euer the Sun did shine vpon, lost their liues vpon the very first attempt, onely by rashnesse, and so their honor is written in a Chronicle of dust, for it euen dyed with them.

I hold it a greater credit to retreat for thine owne safety being in danger, rather then still to charge one

and so be slaine or sore wounded, yet mistake me not, for I doe not here commend running away neither, but vse a meane and policy in retreating, for running away is a cowards defence. A good man may giue backe for his aduantage, and no disgrace at all, if men of iudgement doe see it, and doe iudge with discretion. For the valiantest Captaine that euer did breath, for his aduantage would retreat without any dishonor at all, therefore he which will be accounted valorous, and runne through many dangers and bryars of mischiese, quarrells and troubles of this world, he must many times be patient vpon a great wrong profered him, but afterwards with discretion examin thy force and thy skill together, how thou maist without hazard of thy life reuenge the wrong offered, and that thou maist so fight as thou maist fight againe, without loosing thy life vpon the first assault as many doe. but he is a foole which will aduenture all his goods in one ship, especially if it be in a dangerous voyage, or all his mony at one throw at dice although hee know the runne of the dice neuer so well, for he that doth so may hap to loose all. For there are many dangers at sea and many chances at dice, but a good quarrell doth halfe defend himselfe, and also a good quarrell many times maketh a coward fight : againe, it is a great discredit to bee counted a run away, the vnskilfull must doe for his owne defence at somtimes and yet stomacke enough.

Therefore whether it be in single combat or other wise, vse thy weapon with discretion, without choller or hastinesse, looking vnto thy businesse which thou hast in hand, soberly & mildly, and let wisdom guide the bridle, for so maist thou go through many a quarrell

rell and run through many skirmishes often without hurt, although not without danger.

There is no exercise learned but by often practise, for so it is made perfect: valor, and stomacke cometh by nature, but skill neuer cometh by nature, and he which is grounded in skill by arte and practise will not feare the proud brags of any man. But now if such a one fight he vseth his skill and dependeth chiefly vpon it, but the hasty and furious man thinketh that he is neuer neere enough, and so many of them neuer fight but once, for they are slaine in their owne hastinesse, the very first time of aduenturing; for haste oftentimes maketh wast.

I doe remember a prety iest of King *Henry* the eight as I haue heard it, that when he went to *Bulloigne* hee sent out his Presse-masters, commaunding them to bring all the lustiest hackers in the country, and they brought and presented him with many that in fight had receiued many wounds, the skarres whereof remained, and the King beholding them saw that some of them had beene cut in the face in one place, and some in another, and some on the head, and some had lost some of their fingers; then said the King vnto the Presse-masters, I like these men well; but yet goe fetch me them which did cut those fellowes, whereby he meant that those which had the most hurts were not the best men.

CHAP. VIII.

*How the vse of weapons came, also the number of weapons
used from time to time, with other good instructions.*

MAN was first created naked, without any weapons naturally, sauing onely hands and feete, which are able to make but a weake resistance against any great violence, onely this the hands to thrust away that which may annoy vs, and the feete to run from that which may hurt vs. Now al other creatures except man are naturally armed with such weapons as doth oftentimes kill and destroy any other beast which doth offend them.

As for example, God in his creation furnished the Lyon, the Beare, the Dog, and the Wolfe, and other suchlike beasts, which long and sharpe teeth and claws, and they are with them able to teare in peeces and deuour any man or beast, which they oppose themselues against, now other beasts there are whose strength consisteth in other parts, and they doe avenge themselues in other manner; as the Vnicorne and the Bull, with their hornes, and the force of their heads, so that there is no other beast or creature is able to abide the violence and force thereof.

Also note the force of fowls of the ayre as the fawcon, and the Eagle, what a dangerous weapon is the beake of them vnto such fowles or beasts as they oppose themselues against.

Likewise for venemous beasts, as the Serpent, the Viper, the Scorpion, and such like, are so armed with poisoned and venemous stings, which not onely terrifieth but hurteth and destroyeth those men or beasts
which

commeth neare them.

Likewise God in his creation made all creatures to severall purposes, but most of all for the vse of man, for some he made to feed vs, some to cloath vs, some to sport vs, and some to carry vs, and some to destroy vs.

Loe thus much by the way of argument, as a preamble to that which I intend to speak of concerning weapons as followeth.

In old time amongst men the strongest cary away the victory, I meane at that time when there was little or no other weapon vsed, but only tooth & naile, hands and feet : now in those dayes many men did thinke that they made a good hand when they saued themselves by flight, or any other meanes, from those which were to strong for them, and so the world continued a long time, the strongest still carryng away the victory.

For what weapons had they I pray you in the time of *Sampson*, did not hee for want of other weapons with a law bone kill and destroy a thousand Philistims in a small time without any hurt to himselfe?

Now at this time if there had been any weapons of more danger put the case this. Although *Sampson* was charged vpon such a suddaine wherby he had no leisure to arme himselfe, yet you must vnderstand and know, that his enemies came purposely to be reuenged vpon him, because he had burned vp their corne: wherefore if there had been weapons they wold haue been so armed without all doubt or question, and so provided for him, that either they would haue wounded or killed him, before he should haue made such hanocke or slaughter amongst them.

M

Againe,

Againe, what weapons had they when *Saingar* slue six hundred Philistines with an oxe goade, as in the third of Iudges there you may read it in the last verse.

But after this as the number of people begun to multiply, and the malice, rage, and fury of man began to increase, first they began to reuenge themselves with clubs, stauces, slings, and darts. And afterward they studied and inuented other weapons and armor for wars, as at the first beginning of wars they made Iron chariots, and then they armed Elephants, and horses, afterwards they found out the forging of swords, speares, Bills, Halberts, Lauelins and Partizans, Crosse-bowes and long bowes, and such like; and euery kind of weapon for more aduantage and danger one then another, still changing onely to make triall of the best, for their aduantage, and such they keepe in vse that were of greater force not only to terrifie, but to hurt and destroy their enemies. But of late yeers they haue changed all weapons for muskets, Harquebush, and Crosse-bowes, Calieuers, Pikes, Swords, and Rapiers, and such like manly weapons of great danger, especially vnto the ignorant and vnskillfull.

Now therefore as we are provided of sundry kind of dangerous weapons, I could wish euery man to spend a little time in practising to learne skill and cunning at such weapons, as with skill are most safe to defend, and yet most dangerous and hurtfull to thy enemy, considering this that the skilfull and cunning man fighteth without feare; for not only those which vse the making of armes and weapons are well accepted of, wherein many are accounted famous, & thereby making a good liuing for their continuall maintenance,

nance, but yet more accepted are they which can vse weapons well both for defence and offence: for many thereby haue gotten such credit through out all the world, insomuch that Kings and Princes doe adorne them which are excellent therein with the names of Knights, and some with greater titles of honor: wherefore it is a great shame for any carrying the shape or personage of a man, but that he should be so cunning and so furnished with skill and with continuall practise, so to vse it, as not only to defend thy selfe, but also to speake and to discourse of weapons and armes in what company soeuer thou come into fitting such a matter.

The Romans soone after the inuention of swords generally they grew so expert and cunning, that they were able and did set forth whole armies of sword-players, such as are now called Fencers.

It is a wofull sight vnto the skilfull to see so many yong gentlemen, which being once blindfolded with ignorance and for want of skill many times lose their liues in fight, without reason or iudgement, and yet some such there are which will aduenture; onely they doe it vpon an aspiring mind, thinking thereby to get the praise of the world, which is to be accounted valorous, and tall men at armes, for to be accounted wise and valiant is euery mans desire.

Wherefore as amongst the wise and ancient writers that euer wrote, wee find the wise to provide in summer for winter, in time of peace for wars; for ther is nothing so sure but as that after peace there will come wars, there is no man liuing that although he carry himselfe neuer so vprightly yet at one time or other he may bee so wronged that he must needs

fight : therefore he that is wise will be armed before hand, not onely with weapons, but skill ; thereby to prevent a mischiefe if occasion serue, as you shal hear more at large in the next Chapter.

CHAP. IX.

Sheweth what an excellent thing skill is, with perswasion to all men to forbear the maintaining of idle quarrels.

SO shew you what skill is it will be a hard question to decide, and a matter too deepe for me to handle, for we see daily many principall and cunning men euen at their wits end in studying and deuising skill and cunning in all arts and sciencie, and yet to the end of their liues they find themselves ignorant in many things, and are still to learne, yea euen in that which they haue alwayes bin trained vp vnto.

Wherefore I think the ground of art and cunning is not to be found out, no although a man doe trauell more larger ground then the whole earth, or if hee should flye aboue the clouds, or diue deeper then the sea, all which is vnpossible : wherefore seeing it is so large that I cannot compas it, so high I cannot reach it, and so deepe a hidden secret, that I cannot found the bottom of it; for I cannot trauaile so far, climbe so high, nor wade so deepe, yet so farre haue I trauelled and so high haue I climbed, and so deepe haue I waded, that I see art & skill so preuaile with those which bendeth their minds thereunto, they become more famous the any other ordinary men are, for skill is such an excellent thing, that it abateth the choller and
courage

courage of the hasty and furious man, so that hee be tempered with discretion; euen as yron being tempered with Steele, maketh a blade; whereas if it be all Steele, it will be too brittle and soone broken; or all yron, then it will be too blunt: euen so, he which is furious and hasty will be soone killed. Againe, skill, vse and exercise therein doth ouercome many ill humours, which without it, are neuer to be left, as you shall heare.

For, skill maketh those hardy at their weapons, which are so timersome, as they will wincke at euery blow; yea, and if he were as fearefull and as cowardly as a Hare by nature, yet such a one (by skill) becometh bold, hardy, and valorous; also (by vse and practise) it maketh a man to vse both his hands alike: wherefore I would haue no man that carrieth the personage or shape of a man, but hee should learne as much skill in his weapons as possible hee can; and likewise learne as many guards at each weapon as thou mayest, that thereby thou mayest be the better able to answer any man vpon a good quarrell, if his skill and cunning were neuer so good, but he which hath skill but at one weapon, and is acquainted but with one guard, and hath but one kinde of blow, or but one kinde of thrust; I doe not see how such a man should bee able to defend himselfe from one that is skilfull and cunning in many other guards, and many blowes and thrusts; for one guard, one blow, or one thrust will quickly be worne threed-bare; it is supposed, that if a horse did know his owne strength, a man could not rule him; euen so, for want of such manly knowledge, as euery one ought to be experienced in, doe neuer come to the knowledge of their strength,

nor dare not attempt any thing worth the commendations of manhoode, onely for want of experience and practise; for little doth any man know what good fortune is allotted out for him, and sure the greatest credite and honour that euer came to any man, was through skill in weapons: such an excellent armour is Skill, that it maketh a man fight without feare: and he which hath it, will fight with such warinesse, that he will hurt, and not be hurt himselfe, except it bee by great oddes of weapons, or more then one weapon at once.

Hee which is a man of his hands will haue many tales brought him, but before thou giue any credite vnto a Tale-bearer, consider well the condition of the messenger, before thou put any confidence in his speeches, whether he be a drunkard, a coward, or a foole; for any of these three sorts of men, there is no credite nor trust to be giuen vnto their speech. Againe, a Gentleman, or a man of any good fashion, ought not to carry tales: but if such a one doe heare his friend wronged behinde his backe, he ought with discretion to answer him, in his friends behalfe, with reasonable words, and not to report vnto his friend, the worst that he heareth an idle fellow speake, except it be a matter which concerneth his life, then it is not amisse to warne thy friend, to the end he may be provided against such a mischiefe; but the carrying of euery idle tale betwixt man and man, doth much hurt, and setteth whole households together by the eares. Againe, he which is a carrier of tales, can not truly deliuer a mans speech, without adding or diminishing: and either of these two doe alter the whole property of the speech which was first deliuered, and it
so

so falleth out many times , that the Tale-bearer bringeth himselfe into many quarrells , and to be enuied on both sides:therefore, he which can heare, and see, and say little, will finde most quietnesse, for little said is soone answered : but he that talketh much , can neuer place all his words well , nor please euery mans humour : and surely Tale-bearers are the breeders of great mischief.

For many times vpon others words some do beare malice one to another, without cause of desert, and yet occasion is taken, and perhappes none giuen neither ; the one party doth not know of the malice the other beareth him of a long time, and this is not well, for if thou be grieued, reueale thy minde, and make a bolt or a shaft of it quickly, either to end it with weapons or with words or by the perswasions of friends, as occasion shall serue, when it cometh in question, and then afterwards be friends , but at no hand , let no enuious hatred remaine in thy heart against anie person, of what condition soeuer ; but rather go vnto him which spake ill words against thee , and aske him in curteous meanes , but not in outrage and anger, vntill thou heare his tale ; for the Tale-bearer it may be, is in the fault, in telling a tale to make a quarrell, when there is none meant.

Meddle not with great men which are aboue thy calling , for though they wrong thee , and that thou hast a good quarrell , yet thou canst get little by maintaining such a quarrell ; for might (oftentimes) ouercommeth right, and the weakest goeth commonly to the walles : then is it better to beare the burthen of the mighty, and indure their malice with patience. and let such quarrells slippe, rather then stirre further

in them, lest it be thy ouerthrow : and, he carrieth the most honourable minde, which in talking of his enemy, can so bridle his affections, as to vse no railing, nor vndecent speeches behind his enemies backe, for he that doth so, dishonesteth himselfe : besides, those which heare him, will iudge that hee had rather fight with his tongue then with his sword.

Againe, a man of great power and authoritie ought not to offer wrong vnto any man of meaner sort : for it hath beene often scene, that a worme being troden vpon, will turne againe ; and many poore men will rather loose their liues, if so twere they durst aduventure to challenge the rich for feare of the Lawe, I do meane when they are oppressed, wronged, and disgraced by the rich and mighty men; for the Lawe is a quirke to restraîne or to checke poore mens wills, for it doth hamper and temper, and bring them into subiection : and as the olde Prouerbe goeth, The rich men haue the Lawe in their owne hands.

Euen as the ignorant and vnskilfull do many times feare to displease a swaggerer or a common quarreller ; euen so poore men are afraide to offend the rich.

Now concerning a rich man, I remember a prettie example or a tale, and as I heard it, you shall heare it, There was a Gentleman which built a gallant faire house, whom I will leaue namelesse, but he had many ploughs and carriages for timber, lime, and stones; some seruing his present need, for loue, some for money, and some for feare (as you shall heare) for at night, (when the carriage was ended) the Gentleman called them one after an other, and vnto the first hee said; What haue you earned? Sir (said he) I came for loue, and not for money. I thanke you (said the Gentleman.)

man.) So then he asked another, saying Sirra, what came you for? Sir(said he) I am but a poore man, and I came for mony. And so the Gentleman payed him his wages: Then he called an other, and asked him wherefore he came, or what he had deserued? Sir(said he) I came not to you for loue, nor for money, but onely for feare of your displeasure. Said the Gentleman, why art thou afraid of me which neuer did thee hurt in all my life? Yea, but sir(said he) I haue seene many poore men enuyed, wronged, and imprisoned many times for ill will by the rich, when they haue but little deserued it; thereby shewing, that some rich men will beare such malice vnto a poore man, if hee shall deny him such carriage, or if hee doe not helpe him in the haruest, or if hee shall denie him the selling of a horse, ground, or cattell, that the Gentleman hath a minde vnto; for many of them thinke that a poor man shold denie them nothing, but if they doe, a grudging hatred continueth vntill they haue reuenged it; but if in a long time they cannot finde a hole in his coate, whereby to reuenge their malice: yet when a presse commeth, then they put him forth for a Souldier, although there be twentie others in the same Parish, which would willingly serue, and likewise that might be farre better spared, and a great deale more fitte, for an vnwilling seruant seldome doth his maister good seruice.

THE first reason which I will set downe, whereby you may know a coward, is, by the lading of himselfe with weapons; for I haue knowne a very fearefull man to see to, and yet a coward, carry a Welch hooke vpon his backe, a close hilted Sword and Dagger, yet (mistake me not) for I doe not call euery man that is so weaponed, a coward, but stand still a little, and you shall know who I meane.

When a man (vpon a good quarrell) doth challenge a coward into the field, it may be it commeth to this point; Where shall we meete saith the one? In such a place or such a place saith the other; but in the end, they make a secret conclusion, and choice of a place is agreed vpon; but then, if the coward goe into the field at all, hee will be sure to goe where hee will not meete with his enemy, but to one of the afore-named places, and there hee will stay a while, and if any company come by, hee will tell them, that he stayeth to fight with such a man, because they shall note him for a tall man of his hands: and then at his coming backe againe, amongst his companions, he will bragge and boast that he hath beene in the field, to meete with such a man, and he came not; when the other all the while was at the place where they concluded to haue met.

Againe, some cowards will so dare and bragge out a man in company, with such swaggering words, whereby the hearers should thinke there were not a better man to be found: and if it be in a Faire or Market,

ket, then he will draw his weapons, because he knoweth that he shall be soone parted, for the people will say, that such a one and such a one made a great fray to day, but I account this but pot-valour, or a Cowards fray to fight in the streete, for a man can giue no due commendations of manhood vnto such fighters, for there is no valour in it.

Againe, I haue knowne a Coward cunningly challenge a very sufficient man, and they haue met in the field, but at their meeting, the Coward will say thus vnto him, Now I see thou art a man, and I will take thy part against all men, but I will neuer drawe my Sword against thee, that which I did was but to trie thee.

Also a cunning Coward, when hee hath wronged or mis-vs'd a man, the party grieued doth challenge the field of him, then hee will beare it out with great bragges and high lookes, enough to feare any man, that will be feared with words, shewing himselfe outwardly as though hee would fight indeede; for the Coward will say vnto the challenger, Thou wilt not meete mee, if I should appoint thee a place, for thou dar'st not answer me: for be it knowne vnto thee, if I vs sheathe my Sword, I will not draw him in vaine; but now if he see these bragges can not dismay nor aswage the furie of the other, but that hee will needes fight, then hee assayeth other wayes, if it be one of his acquaintance, hee will say, The world shall not speake of it, that wee two should fall out: or, if it be to an inferiour, then he will stand vpon his gentility, saying that he will not doe him that credite, for thou art a base fellow, a fellow of no fashion, to compare with me. I haue knowne in a strange place, that a scur-

uy base fellow will stand so much vpon his gentilitie, and thinke to make the world belecue he is a great man in his owne Countrey. Also, in a Tauerne or such like place, if there be company ready to holde him, then he will draw his Dagger vpon very smal occasion, shewing himselfe resolute, as though hee would fight with the diuell; and then the company (with a litle per(wasion) brings them friends, which I discommend not, but I discommend the falling out about a pipe of Tobacco, or a cuppe of Wine or Beere. But of this I haue spoken something before, and shall haue occasion to speake more at large of it heereafter; But first, to end this I haue in hand, many a Coward may say, when he hath liued so long in the world vntill the world is weary of his company, I may be the best man in the world, for I was neuer yet tried, nor neuer drew my Sword in earnest in all my life hitherto: againe, it is good sleeping in a whole skinne.

And a wise or a valorous man may euen say so as well as a Coward: for I say a man may very well answer a good quarrell, if occasion be offered, yet sleep in a whole skinne; why shall wee feare to goe to our beddes, because some die in their beddes; some die at Sea, and therefore shall we feare to crosse the Sea; some fall by chance, shal we neuer therefore rise for feare of falling? And what is all this? Nothing, but to shew, that there is lesse danger in fighting a good quarrell with skill and discretion, vpon colde bloud: but of this I haue spoken sufficiently already, if words would serue. But if I should write a whole Volume of one matter, yet it would serue to small purpose to some; and so where we left there we will beginne,
for

for what I haue said before, it is but as it were a deaw, but this last shower shall wet them to the skinne; a Coward will haue a Sword or a Rapier, for length (in a maner) like a halfe Pike: but since the vse of short Swords came, you cannot know them by that marke, as you might before, for many of them are got into the fashion, and it is the fittest weapon that euer came for their purpose; for short swords are worne both of one and other, more for the fashion then for any other purpose: but because men of good woorth doe weare them, therefore I will not call it the fooles fashion, but let euerie man alone with his humour. Againe, a Coward will haue as good and as gallant a weapon as may bee gotten for money; but I doe not commend the man by the largenesse nor goodnesse of his weapons, neyther hee that hath many hurts and scarres about his bodie. There is no due commendations to bee giuen of a Iudge, by his skarlet Gowne; neyther can a man commend the skilfulnes of the Marriner by his wearing of a great whistle: golde is not certainly knowne to be golde, before it is tried, euery thing is not as it seemeth to bee for many a man carrieth the shape and personage of a man: but when they come to the touch like golde to be tried, prooue but shadowes, as that which is like golde many times doth prooue worse then Copper: euen so, there is no certaine true report can be giuen of a man touching manhoode vpon the first sight, without some triall. You shall seldome see a Coward vse his weapon, except it be vpon a drunken humour, or else, when he is driuen to it by extremity, and that he seeth no remedy, but that hee must needes fight, but he wil many times be drawing in some Ale-house

or Tauerne, and there hee will be fencing with him, and shewing his trickes, thinking to make the company belecue, that hee is an excellent fellow of his hands: and there many will be hewing of bed-postes, or table-boords, or many such like trickes he will vse: then some Cowards will (by casting abroad of libels) and by night-walking, doe many mischieuous trickes, onely to reuenge a mallice which they beare in mind, because they can not reuenge it manfully, and yet a Coward will grieue and fret if iustly hee heare any other to be commended of any man for his manhoode and valour, for hee would haue no man better then himselfe. And if such a one beare office in Cittie or Towne, hee will at no hand abide to heare, that a master of Defence should inhabite in the place where he gouerneth.

Also if any other commend a man that is a man indeed, a coward will discommend him saying, he is no body; or he is not the man you take him for; with such like disabling speeches, for if a coward cannot disgrace a man with deeds to his face, then he will depriue him with words behind his backe.

Also a coward delighteth to breed quarrells betwixt man and man, and to set such as are named to bee men of their hands, together by the eares by false reports, and by carrying of tales, and by making of molehills mountaines, of halfe a word a long tale, to the hurt of others, and no good to themselues: and what is the chiefe cause of all cowardly mindes but onely ignorance, and want of skill: but to conclude, neuer trust a coward in his fury, nor suffer him not to come n eerer then the point of thy rapier, and there let him tell his tale, but let him haue no aduanrage
vpon

vpon thee by no kind of illusions, especially if he be thy professed enemy.

That he is a coward which pra&iseth the throwing of a dagger or the darting of a rapier, I will not say, but he which putteth it in practise vpon a man, is a coward, for if he kill a man with such a tricke, in my mind it is pitty but he should die for it: and so I will end with that example of a cowardly murtherer of one *Cosbe*, whose murthering hands by a coufening deuice bereaued the Lord of *Burke* of his life, and as I heard it, thus it was: a quarrell grew between them, and the field was appointed, where they both met, and being ready to charge each other, *Cosbe* said my Lord you haue spurs which may annoy you: therefore if you please put them off, and euen as he was vn buckling of his spurs, this cowardly and murthering minded *Cosbe* ran him through with a mortall wound, whereof he died presently.

Now to my owne knowledge, my Lord *Burke* was very skilfull in his weapons, and sufficient to haue answered any man beeing equally weaponed, or vpon equall termes, therefore hard was his hap to meet with such a cowardly murtherer, for his death is lamented of many, and *Cosby* was hanged for it.

Yet touching this matter, here followeth another example, as I heard it I will declare it: thus, there was a murtherer who escaping the pittifully hands of the mercifull Iudge, after he had killed two men, being taken and apprehended for the third murther, and being arraigned before the same Iudge which had before shewed pitty, began now to condemne this murtherer, and giue the sentence of death, and so began to declare to this murtherer that had small grace, which

which could not beware being twice warned, but must now kill the third man : therefore thou (saith the Iudge) well deseruest death, & death thou shalt haue: when the murtherer saw that he must die, he said thus vnto the Iudge: My Lord you doe me wrong to condemne me for the killing of three men, for it was you that killed two of them : yea said the Iudge, how can that be? marry thus: if you had hanged me for the first I had not killed the other two : therefore it is pittie in my mind, that a man-slayer should liue to kill two men, but to be hanged for the first if it be not in his owne defence, or vpon a very good quarrell, and so I will strike saile for a while.

CHAP. XI.

*Questions and Answers.**Scholler.*

Hauē harkened all this while vnto your discourse, the which I like very well of, but now I am desirous if it please you to be instructed with some of your skill.

Master. At what weapon are you desirous to learn.

Scholler. Such as you thinke fit for my defence.

Master. Then I hold it necessary for thee to learne the perfect vse of sixe kinds of weapons, not that thou shouldest still bee armed with so many weapons, but with the skill of them, for that will not burthen thee nothing at all : for thou maist in trauell by chance meet at sundry times, with sundry men, which are armed with sundry kind of weapons, now if thou bee prouided before hand with skill at such a weapon, as by chance thou maist meet withall, knowing the dan-

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ger thou wilt the better prevent the mischiefe.

Scholler. What be the fixe weapons which you would haue me to learne.

Master. The first and two principall weapons are the rapier and dagger, and the staffe, the other fowre are the back sword, the single Rapier, the long sword and dagger, and the short sword and dagger, but with the two former weapons thou maist encounter by skill with any man in the world, the rapier and dagger against any weapon of the same length, at single hand and with a staffe against any two handed weapon, as against the welch hooke, two hand sword, the Halberd, Partisan, and gloue, or any other weapon of the like aduantage : but prouided alwayes thou must be sure armed with skill at those two especially : and with all the rest if thou canst, for then maist thou bee the bolder to encounter with any man at any of the other, if thy enemy charge thee vpon the suddaine with a contrary weapon, thou wilt presently know what thy enemy can doe with his weapon, which if thou hast no skill in, it will seeme the more fearefull vnto thee.

For if *Goliath* had been experienced in the cunning of a sling, hee would not haue condemned *David* so rashly, nor made so light account of him as he did : but if thou haue skill with such a weapon, as thou art to encounter against, it will be nothing troublesome vnto thee, for there is no way to hit, but there is a way to defend, as thou shalt here more at large, but first tell me what thou art, and thy bringing vp.

Scholler. I was a yeomans sonne, and always brought vp idle vnder my father, but now my father is dead, and that little which he left mee for the most part I

haue consumed and spent, wherefore I pray you direct me my course, by some of your good counsell, for I haue little to trust to, but only my hands, therefore I am willing to learne any thing which may gain me a good report, and something beneficiall for my maintenance.

Master. Indeed meanes to liue and a good name withall, is more then gold, and because thou shewest thy selfe willing to be instructed, thou shalt heare briefly what I would doe if my selfe were in thy case, for if I should enter into large discourses I might thereby well make thee weary with the hearing of it, but perhaps neuer the wiser, and so thereby thou mightest well giue me occasion to account the time very ill spent in writing of it. Neuerthelesse I will reckon little of my labour, for I am in hope to doe thee good, for thou must or shouldest know not only how to vse and gouerne thy weapon, but also thy selfe, in all companies, and in all places, where thou shalt happen to come; for kinde and curteous behauiour winneth fauour and loue wheresoeuer thou goest, but much the better if it be tempered with manhood and skill of weapons. Now some will say that skill in weapons is good most chiefly for gentlemen, but I say it should be in all men, for I haue known and seen many poore mens sonnes come to great honor and credit, and chiefly it was because they had skill in weapons, wherefore in my mind it is the most excellent quality of all both for high and low, rich and poore. But when thou art experienced at thy weapon, I would wish thee to make choice of one of those three exercises for thy continuall expences and maintenance so long as thou liuest, and not liue like a drone vpon
other

other mens labours , for least in time if thou wert neuer so good a man, yet euery one would waxe weary of thy company.

Scholler. I pray you , what be the three Exercises which you would counsell me to take my choice of?

Master. Marry, thy selfe being of reasonable good yeares , and hauing neither lands , nor but alittle liuing left thee , choose whether thou wilt goe learne some trade or occupation , or else goe into the wars, or be a seruing man; for when thou hast skill in thy weapon , thou must haue some meanes to maintaine thine expences ; for idle hands will make a hungrie bellie , and a hungrie bellie must needes haue meate, and meate will not be bought in the market for honestie without money.

Scholler. Which of these Exercises would you aduise me to follow?

Master. I commend them all, but yet an occupation is a more certaine stay vnto a man , both in his youth and in his age , then any of the other two are; and as thou art in yeares, so oughtest thou to bee the more witty, if it be not so, it should be so, and a man of reason will the sooner be his craft-master . A man is neuer too olde to learne , especially any thing that may be to the good and profit of the commonwealth; and it is better to learne late then neuer : and he that hath a trade , let him looke vnto it , and hee which will not labour, let him not eate, saith Saint *Paul*.

Schol. What trade would you haue me to learne?

Master. Such a trade or occupation, as thy minde bendeth most vnto , and then to apply thy selfe to it, and follow it, and strue by honest meanes and painefull labour to be rich, for thou mayest be poore when

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thou wilt, but there is no trade good to him which will not to follow it, for he that hath neuer so many trades, and yet giueth his mind to drunkenness, and louth to leade an idle and loytering life: such a one will neuer thrive, but sit in an Ale-house, and complaine, that the world is hard, and that worke is very scant; indeede, so it is with such a one, for a man can feldome finde them in their owne houses, whereby to put worke into their hands, but those that doe looke for worke, and attend it, need neuer to want worke, but will alwayes be in other mens worke, or else they will be able (by their good husbandry) to set themselves aworke, and it is a very bad commoditie, that will not yeelde mony at one time or other.

Do you vnderstand me? if not, I will make it more plaine, hearken to that which followeth, then aboue all, giue not thy minde to ranging or running from Towne to Towne, or from Countrey to Countrey, for a rolling stone will neuer gather mosse, the Grasshopper will rather die then goe out of the grasse; and thou (with good behauiour) mayest better liue with a groat in thine owne Countrey, then with a pound in a strange place, for in a strange place, although thou be of good behauiour, yet many will feare thee, and be loath to giue thee credite, and will thinke, if thou wert of good behauiour, thou shouldest haue had no neede to come out of thine owne Countrey: Againe, thy flying away will be a great discredite vnto thee, if thou thinke to come home againe; for euery man almost will be loath to put credite, or anie thing of valew into the hands of a ranger, because that they are not resolu'd that thy minde is settled to stay in thine owne Country, when thou dost turne
from

from thy race againe. Many men there are that consume their time in ranging abroad, and at the last, seeing the vanity of the world, they recall themselves, and repent of the time which they haue consumed in trauell: but then they haue experience although no money; now Experience is no coiner, nor a tradesman woorth a pinne without his tooles; for what auaileth it to be a cunning Gold-smith, and haue neyther gold nor siluer: few there are that will trust a traueller any further then they can see him, especially, if hee haue beene one that hath serued as a Souldier in a forreine Countrey: therefore, although home be homely, induer thy selfe to liue by honest and good meanes, and be contented with thine homely home; but beware, spend not Michaelmasse rent in Midsummer quarter abroad, as many bad husbands vse to doe.

Now if a trade be too tedious for thee to learne, or too painefull for thee to follow, then goe thou vnto the warres, and serue eyther by Sea or Land, as thy affections shall best leade thee vnto: but in seeking by the warres to get wealth, if thou loofest thy life while thou art yoong, thou needest not to care for olde age; yet by the warres (if fortune serue) but to speake more Christian-like (if God will) thou maiest get that in one houre, which (with good discretion and gouernement) thou mayest be the better for, so long as thou liuest: the goods which do come by the warres, are neyther light come by, nor godlily gotten (in my minde;) yet many thinke that wealth gotten by the warres, is easily gotten; for so it appeareth by the prodigall and vaine spending of it: wherefore I would haue thee furnish thy selfe with Discretion

The warres are not like throwing of snowe balles: farre deceived are they that so thinke.

and Knowledge before-hand, that thereby thou maist the better vse wealth when thou hast it; but then thou must not abuse it, as many other Souldiers haue done heretofore: for I haue knowne many get both goods and money by the warres, but haue made no other reckoning, but as one would say, lightly come lightly goe; and so suffering it to melt away like butter in the Sunne: therefore if thou happen, by the warres, vpon that may doe thee good, keepe it warily, and spend it wisely: for it is said, a dog shall haue a day, and a man shall haue his time; but if he let Time slip, she is bauld behinde, and therefore no holde to be taken of her after her backe is once turned; for I haue knowne many by the wars, get at one voyage, enough to liue by all their liues long, if with discretion it had bin gouerned; but they haue consumed it in so short a time, that a man would thinke it impossible; and then to the warres againe they go in hope of the like fortune, but they haue not in seauen yeares, nay all their life time got so much, as they spent in one day, when they had crownes.

Goods gotten
by the warres
are like a liue
Bird in the
hand, which,
the hand no
sooner opened
but she strait
flieth away.

Then consider with thy selfe, that if thou doe light vpon wealth, that thou comest not light by it, if thou get it by the warres, though indeede it is gotten in an houre, yet it is gotten with great hazard of thy life, and no doubt it is displeasing to God, for goods gotten by the warres serue but for spending mony for the time present; those which doe saue them, and hoord them vp, they are consumed before two generations doe passe, yea though it were abundance, it cometh to nothing, as in my farewell to *Plimmoth* more at large appeareth.

Now (in my minde) the third and the worst choise

I haue left till the last, and that is a seruing-mans life, yet it is as it happeneth, for some happen into good seruice, and some againe spend seauen yeeres, yea all their life time, and so they grow the older, little the wiser, nor neuer a whit the richer; and some of them neuer care so they haue from hand to mouth, nor neuer thinke vpon a rainy day vntill it come, and gentlemen are wise for they will not keepe a dog and barke themselves, neither will they keepe a cat except shee will catch mice; therefore if thou wilt be a seruing-man thou must take great paines; otherwise thou wilt haue smal gaines at the end of thy seruice; yea though thou be neuer so painfull and dutifull, yet when thou lookest to receiue thy reward, there may be such great fault found in thy seruice, that all the golden words and faire promises which thou hast been deluded and haled forward withall, they may all come to nothing except thy bare wages, there may be a bill of caueling put in for the rest, saying if thou hadst been an honest man, thou shouldest haue had this or that, if thou liue neuer so vprightly, yet there may be faults found, for it is a very easie matter to find a staffe to beat a dogge withall, but because I cannot well display the life of a seruingman, but either I shall displease the Master or the man, or both; therefore I will here conclude, and leaue the rest to thy daily experience, and so for a while harken vnto the skill of weapons.

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CHAP. XII.

Sheweth of seauen principall rules whereon true defence is grounded.

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|---|---|-----------------------------|---|---|-----------------|
| { | 1 | A good gard. | { | 5 | To keepe space. |
| | 2 | True obseruing of distance. | | 6 | Patience. |
| | 3 | To know the place. | | 7 | Often practise. |
| | 4 | To take time. | | | |

THe first is to learne a good and a sure gard for the defence of thy body, as when you come to the vse of weapons, as heere presently after shall follow, and when thou hast thy gard it is not enough to know it, but to keep it so long as thou art within reach or danger of thy enemy.

To obserue distance, by which is meant that thou shouldest stand so far off from thine enemy, as thou canst, but reach him when thou dost step foorth with thy blow or thrust, and thy foremost foote and hand must goe together, the which distance may be twelue foot with a rapier, or with a sword fowre foote long, and yet thy best foot which should be the hindermost foot of a right handed man, should bee moored fast and keepe his standing without moouing an inch, for then he will be the readier to draw backe thy fore foot and body into the right place of distance againe for that thou must doe vpon euery charge, whether thou hit thy enemy or not; whereas if in stepping foorth with thy fore-foot, when thou dost charge thy enemy either with blow or thrust, thou suffer thy hinder foot to dregge in after the other, then thou breakest thy distance, and thereby endangerest thy body. There is no way better to get the true obseruation of distance,

distance, but by often practise either with thy friend, or else priuately in a chamber against a wall, standing twelue foot off with thy hindermost foote, and thy weapon fowre foot long or there about, for a good gard and distance are the maine and principal points of all.

To know the place, this may be taken three wayes, as this, the place of thy weapons, the place of defence and the place of offence: the place for the holding of thy weapons, thou shalt know when thou comcest to it as I said before, but it is chiefly meant heere the place of offence; thou must marke which is the neere part of thine enemy towards thee, and which lyeth most vnregarded, whether it be his dagger hand, his knee, or his leg, or where thou maist best hurt him at a large distance without danger to thy selfe, or without killing of thine enemy.

To take time, that is to say when opportunity is profered thee, either by his lying vnregarded or vpon thy enemies profer, then make a quicke answer, I meane it must be done vpon the very motion of his profer, thou must defend and seeke to offend all at once, for thou must not suffer thy enemy to recouer his gard, for if thou doe thou loosest thy aduantage. But thou must answer him more quicker then I can speake it, for if thou loose thy answer, and charge thy enemy when he is garded, thou giuest thy enemy that aduantage which thou mightest haue had thy selfe, for he which maketh the first assault doth endanger himselfe most, if he be not very expert and cunning in his businesse, otherwise a man of reasonable skill may hurt him by making a quicke answer.

To keepe space this may be conceiued two wayes;
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the one in the space between thy enemy & thy selfe, this I call distance, and I haue already spoken of it; but the space which in this place I will speake of, is to aduise thee to keepe a certaine space betwixt euery assault, I meane if thou charge thy enemy either with blow or thrust, recouer thy weapons into their place, and draw thy selfe into thy gard againe, and so preparing thy selfe for to defend, and likewise to make a fresh assault with discretion, but not charging thy enemy rashly or furiously, for hastinesse is foolishnes: for if fury haue the vpper hand, and so you both strike and thrust, without reason and iudgement, I say in such a case the skilfullest man that is, may be so well hit as he hit another.

The next is patience, and that is one of the greatest vertues that can be in a man: the Wise man saith, he is a foole which cannot gouerne himselfe, and he very vnfit to rule which cannot rule himselfe; therefore, though thou be hastie or cholericke by nature, and by crossing thou art moued vnto anger; yet I say, let the bridle of Reason and Iudgement so gouerne and ouer-rule thy hastie affections, that in no case Anger get the vpper hand; But of this there is more at large spoken in the eight chapter. Now the last thing that I will note heere, is often practise, for without practise the Prouerbe sayes, a man may forget his *Pater noster*: for practise (with moderation) is, not onelie the healthiest thing in the world for the bodie: but it is likewise as defensue for the same. For skill to euery reasonable man is a friend, so that with moderation it be vsed, and so long as it remaines in those of good temper; for vnto such, skill bringeth no more presumption nor furie then as if they had it not: for
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in the field, those which I mean will vse it as if they were in a Schoole, by which meanes such haue great aduantage of the ignorant and vnskilfull; for those which are vnskilfull, are neither certaine of their defence nor offence; but what they doe is vpon a kinde of foolish bolde hardinesse, or as I may say by hazzard or chance noddie: and therefore (gentle Reader) resolute vpon skill and knowledge which follows heere immediately.

*The true guard for the defence, either of blowe,
or thrust, with Rapier and Dagger,
or Sword and Dagger.*

Keepe thy rapier hand so low as the pocket of thy hose at the armes end, without bowing the elbow ioynt, and keepe the hilt of thy dagger right with thy left cheeke, and the poynt something stooping toward the right shoulder, and beare him out stiffe at the armes end, without bowing thine elbow ioynt likewise, and the poynt of thy Rapier two inches within the point of thy dagger, neyther higher, nor lower; but if the point of thy rapier be two or three inches short of touching thy dagger, it is no matter, but if they ioyne it is good; likewise, keepe both your points so high as you may see your enemy cleerely with both your eies, betwixt your rapier and dagger, and bowing your head something toward the right shoulder, and your body bowing forwards, and both thy shoulders, the one so neere thine enemy as the other, and the thombe of thy rapier hand, not vpon thy rapier, according vnto the vsuall fashion of the vulgar sort, but vpon the naile of thy fore-finger, which will locke thine hand the stronger about the

handle of thy rapier, and the heele of thy right foote should ioyne close to the middle ioynt of the great toe of thy left foote, according to this Picture, yet regard chiefly the words rather then the Picture.



Carrie the edge of thy rapier vpward, and downward, for then thou shalt defend a blow vpon the edge of thy rapier, by bearing thy rapier after the rule of the Backe-sword, for this is the strongest and the surest carriage of him.

But now it is but a vaine thing to goe about to practise after my direction, except thou vnderstand my meaning, and follow my counsell, as by words so plaine as I can, I haue set downe, both before and after: for if thou obserue one thing, and not an other, it will profit thee but little, as thus: if thou place thy weapons

weapons in order; and then, if thy hand, foote, or body be out of order, then it will be to small purpose to proceed in thy practise: againe, if thou frame thy bodie right, and thy weapons, and thy hand, and thy foote; yet if thou do not obserue a true distance withall, then thy practise will be little auailable to thee: wherefore at the first beginning of thy practise, take a good aduisement, and be perfect by often reading of this Booke, so to beginne well; for if thou hast beene vsed to set thy feete abroad in thy former practise, as most men doe, then it will be hard for thee to leaue thy old wont.

Now, if thou wilt breake thy selfe of that fashion and practise after my rules, then will I shew thee by and by; for when thou hast my fashion, thou mayest goe to thine owne againe when thou wilt, if in triall thou finde it better.

The best way to bring thy feete to a sure standing, both for defence and offence, is when thou dost practise with thy friend or companion; at the first get thy backe to the wall, and let him that playeth with thee stand about twelue foote distance, and set thy left heele close to the wall, and thy right foote heele to the great ioynt of the left foote great toe, and when thou intendest to offend thy enemy, either with blow or thrust, then steppe forth with thy right foote, and hand together, but keepe thy left foote fast moored like an anchor, to plucke home thy body and thy right foote into his place and distance againe; vse this fashion but three or foure times, and it will bring thee to a true standing with thy foote, and it will be as easie to thee as any other way; whereas if thou practise in a large roome without any stoppe to set thy foot a-

gainst, then will thy left foote be alwayes creeping away, so that although thou wouldst refraine the setting abroad of thy feet, yet thou canst not, especially if thou hast been vsed to set them abroad heretofore.

Now your bodie and weapons being thus placed as aforesaid, if your enemy strike a blow at you, either with sword or rapier, beare your rapier against the blow, so well as your dagger according vnto the rule of the Backe-sword, for in taking the blow double you shall the more surely defend your head, if the blow doe chaunce to light neare the point of your dagger, for if you trust to your dagger onelie, the blow may hap to glance ouer the point of your dagger, and endanger your head, and hauing defended the blow double (as aforesaid) presently turne downe the point of your rapier towards your enemies thigh, or anie part of your enemies bodie, as you list your selfe; and with your thrust steppe forth also with your foote and hand together, and so making a quicke answer, you may endanger your enemy in what place you will your selfe, before hee recouer his guard and distance againe, and alwaies set your rapier foot right before the other, and so neare the one to the other as you can; and if thou be right handed then thy right foote must bee formost, if left handed, then thy left foote, and standing thus in thy guard, looke for thy aduantage, I meane where thine enemy lieth most vngarded; but first thou must be perfect in the knowledge of the true and perfect guard thy selfe, so shalt thou know the better where thine enemy lieth open, then thou must steppe forth with thy fore foot, and hand together, to offend thine enemy in such a place as thou findest vngarded; but so soone as thou hast presen-

presented thy thrust, whether thou hit or misse, fall backe againe to recouer thy guard and distance so soone as thou canst, but stand alwayes fast on thine hindermost foote, I meane whether thou strike or thrust, and then shalt thou recouer thy guard; and hauing recovered thy weapons in their right place, then thou must also trauerse thy ground so leisurably, that thou mayest be sure to haue one foote firme on good ground before thou pluckest vp the other; for else, going fast about, thou mayest quickly be downe if the ground be not even. Also haue a speciall care that thou be not too busie in making of play, though choller or sto macke prouoke thee thereunto. Furthermore, in standing in thy guard, thou must keepe thy thighes close together, and the knee of thy fore legge bowing back-ward rather then forward, but thy bodie bowing forward; for the more thou hollowest thy bodie, the better, and with lesse danger shalt thou breake thine enemies thrust, before it cometh neare to endanger thy bodie; and when thou breakest a thrust, thou must but let fall the point of thy dagger, but not thy dagger arme, for some will throw their dagger arme backe behinde them when they breake a thrust; he that so doth cannot defend a second thrust if his enemy should charge him againe sodainely.

The reasons of this guard.

First, the points of your weapons being closed, your enemy cannot offend you with a wrist blow, which otherwise may be stricke to your face betwixt your points: likewise, there is a falling thrust that may hit any man which lies open with his points by following it into his face or breast, and thrusting
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it home withall: also, if you carrie your rapier point vnder your dagger, your own rapier may hinder you, for by turning downe of your dagger point, to defend the bodie from your enemies point, according vnto the first of the foure defensible waies, as hereafter followeth: then your owne dagger may hit your owne rapier, and so your rapier will be as it were a stumbling blocke, so that you cannot discharge your enemies thrust cleane from your bodie; and also by striking your dagger vpon your rapier wilbe a hindrance vnto you, that you cannot make a quicke answer, by chopping out your point presently vpon your defence: for if you haue anie hindrance at all, then your chiefe time of offence is spent, for before you can recover your rapier, your enemy will haue recovered his guard, and he being in his guard your proffer of offence is in vaine: for if you will hit your enemy, your offence and defence must be done all with one motion, whereas if you continue a space betwixt your defence and your offence, then is your best time of offence spent, for when your enemy chargeth you, either with blow or thrust, at that verie instant time, his face, his rapier, arme, shoulder, knee, and legge are all discouered, and lie open, except the oppressour be verie cunning in recovering his guard hastily againe, or he may defend himselfe with his dagger, if he beare him stiffely out at the armes end, for in your offence the dagger hand should be borne out so farre as the rapier hand goeth, which must be done by practise and great carefulnesse; for many when they doe make their assault, they will put out their rapier, and plucke in their dagger, thereby endangering themselves greatly: for except that the dagger arme bee kept

kept straight, and borne out stiffe, it is hard to defend either blow or thrust.

A thrust may be defended foure waies.

THe first is with the dagger, onelie by turning of the point downe, and turning thy hand-wrist about withall, without bowing the elbow ioynt of thy dagger arme, but onelie turning thy dagger round, making as it were a round circle, and so presently bring vp the point of thy dagger in his place againe.

Now the second defence is with the dagger likewise, but then you must beare the hilt of your dagger so lowe as your girdle-steel, and the point more vpright then is described in the first picture, and in your defence of a thrust, you must beare your dagger hand stiffe ouer your bodie, without letting fall the point but still keeping him vpright.

The third waie to breake a thrust, is, with the single rapier; this defence will defend all thy bodie from a thrust against a rapier and a dagger; and likewise it is a sure defence for thine hand, if thou haue not a close hilted dagger, when thy enemy doth proffer a thrust, plucke in thy dagger hand, and put out thy rapier arme, and beare him ouer thy bodie, the point bowing toward thy left side, breaking the thrust with the edge of thy rapier, keeping thy point vpright: but when I come to the single rapier, then you shall see it more at large.

The fourth way is to defend a thrust with both your weapons together, and that you may doe three manner of waies, either with the points of both your weapons

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pons vpwards, or both downeward, vpward you may frame your selfe into two gards, the first is according as I haue described afore, the points being close according to the picture, so carrie them both away together against your enemies thrust breaking towards your left side; the other high guard is to put your rapier on the out-side of your dagger, and with your dagger make a crosse, as it were, by ioyning him in the middest of your rapier, so high as your breast, and your dagger hilt in his vsuall place, and to defend your thrust, turne downe the point of your rapier sodainely, and force him downe with your dagger, by letting them fall both together: this way you may defend a thrust before it come within three foot of your bodie; and this way defendeth the thrust of a staffe, hauing but onelie a rapier and dagger, as you shall heare more when I come to the staffe: for it is good to be provided with the best way, if a sodaine occasion be offered: and for the blow of a staffe, you may verie easily defend with a Rapier and Dagger, by bearing him double; and so hauing defended the blow, goe in hastily vpon him, for there is no standing out long against a staffe, and so likewise vpon defence of a thrust you must be verie nimble in your going in within the point of his staffe, I mean so soone as your enemies thrust is passed vnder your Rapier arme, for that way the thrust of the staffe should goe.

Three manner of waies for the holding of a Rapier.

THese are three waies for the holding of a Rapier, the one with the thumb forward or vpon the Rapier blade, and that I call the naturall fashion, there
is

is another way, and that is with the whole hand within the pummell of thy Rapier, and the thumbe locking in of the fore-finger, or else they must both ioyne at the least: this is a good holding at single Rapier.

Then the third is but to haue onelie the fore-finger and thy thumbe within the pummell of thy Rapier, and thy other three fingers about thy pummell; and beare the button of thy pummell against the in-side of thy little finger; this is called the Stokata fashion, and these two last are the surest and strongest waies: after a little practise thou maiest vse them all three in thy practise, and then repose thy selfe vpon that which thou findest best, but at some times, and for some purpose all these kindes of holding thy Rapier may stead thee, for a man may performe some manner of slips and thrusts, with one of these three sortes of holding thy weapon; and thou canst not doe the same with neither of the other: as thus, thou maiest put in a thrust with more celeritie, holding him by the pummell, and reach further then thou canst doe, if thou holde him on either of the two other fashions.

Againe, thou maiest turne in a flippe, or an over-hand thrust, if thou put thy thumbe vpon thy Rapier according as I haue set it downe, calling it the naturall fashion, and is the first of the three waies for holding of thy Rapier; and this fashion will bee a great strength to thee, to giue a wrist blowe, the which blow a man may strike with his Rapier, because it is of small force, and consumes little time, and neither of the other two fashions of holding wil not perform neither of those three things; for if thou holde thy rapier either of the two second waies, thou canst not turne in a flippe, nor an over-hand thrust, nor giue a

wrist blow so speedily, nor so strong : wherefore it is good to make a change of the holding of thy weapon for thine owne benefite , as thou shalt see occasion : and likewise to make a change of thy guard , according as thou seest thy best aduantage; I meane if thou be hardly matched , then betake thee vnto thy surest guard, but if thou be matched with an vnskilful man, then with skill thou maiest defend thy selfe, although thou lie at randome.

The reason that your points should be so high , as you may see your enemy plainely and cleerely vnder them , is for a sure defence of a blowe , if your enemy should charge you therewith to either side the head , then beare them both double together , and hauing defended the blowe , presently turne downe the point of your Rapier toward your enemies thigh, and with turning your knuckles inward , steppe forth with foote and hand together , whether you hitte or misse, retire nimble into your guard and distance againe.

And although I doe aduise you to keepe the point of your Rapier so high, yet withall I doe warne you, that you maie haue a speciall care to fall your point, and withall thrust him out, if your enemy doe overreach or presse in vpon you , whether it bee vpon choller, or vpon stomake , or vpon a kinde of foolish bold hardinesse, or if hee make a passage vpon you, or if hee doe breake distance by anie of those waies, although hee doe it neuer so aduicelie, yet may you defend your selfe with your Dagger and either offend your enemy by a suddaine falling the point, and with the same motion chop in with a thrust to that part which lieth most discovered as you may quickly

ly perceiue when you see his lying.

The cunningest man that is, and if hee meete with one skilfull, with whom hee is to encounter withall, cannot before hand say in such a place I will fure hit thee; no more, then a gamester when he goeth to play can say before he beginne, that hee will fure win, for if he doe, he may be prooued a liew if his cunning were neuer so good.

So that before hand you cannot determin where to hit your enemy, but when you see your enemies gard, then it is easie to iudge where it is open, if thou knowest a close gard thy selfe, for hee which cannot write himselfe, can giue but small iudgement whether another write well or ill, and if thine enemy doe inroach within thy distance, then bee doing with him betimes in the verie instant of his motion whether it be motion of his body, or the motion of his weapon, or in the motion of both together: put out thy point, but not to farre, but as thou maiest haue thy rapier vnder command for thy owne defence, and also to prouide him ready againe to make a full thrust home vpon a greater aduantage, for if thou answer a full thrust home, in the instant of thy enemies assault, thou maiest endanger thy selfe if thy enemy doe falsifie his thrust, and therefore make your thrust short at the first, or if your enemy doe beare his points anie thing abroad, then you may fall in betwixt them, either to his face or breast, or if his fore foote stand two foote distant or lesse from the other if hee stand not close, then you may hurt him in the knee or legge, either with thrust or blow as hee standeth in his guard without anie danger to your selfe, and that is no killing place.

Likewise it is said before looke vnder both your weapons, if with on eye you looke ouer either of weapons, you may bee hit one the same side, either face, head, or shoulder, either with thrust or blow before you can put vp either of your weapons in his place to defend it, and this know and remember it well, it is the nature of an Englishman to strike with what weapon soeuer hee fighteth with all, and not one in twenty but in furie and anger will strike vnto no other place but onely to the head, therefore alwaies if you fight with rapier and dagger, yet expect a blow so well as a thrust, and alwaies defend the blow double as aforesaid, but if your rapier point be downe vnder your dagger, you cannot put him vp time enough to defend a blow, but must take it single on the dagger, or on the pate, for if your skill were neuer so good trusting to the dagger onely you may bee deceiued by reason of the sharpnesse of your dagger, if the blow light neere the point it may glance ouer, and so hit you on the head, and also by reason of the shortnesse of your dagger which are now most commonly worne of all men, for I haue knowne men of good skill deceiued by trusting to the point, or dagger onely for the defence of a blow, the dagger is not sure to defend it.

For looke how
much you
step wide you
loose so much
ground for-
wards.

But when you make anie plaie to your enemy whether it be offer, or an answer, stop, right as a line forwards from your left foote, for if you stop halfe a foote wide with the forefoote of the streight arme as it were by rule, then you loose halfe a foote of your space betwixt you and your enemy, and if you step likewise a foote wide, then you loose likewise a foote of
of

of aduantage. For your instruction herein, when you practise in a chamber, looke what boord you stand vpon, you should in deliuering either of blow or thrust, alwaies steps foorth with your right foote vpon the same boord which the left foote standeth on, for looke how much you left your fore foote wide of the straight line towards your enemye, you loose so much in your reach forward, as in your practise you maie see the triall and vsed often in practise in some Chambers with your friend vntill you are perfect, and in your practise, keepe your left foote fast moored, that as an Anchor pulleth home the ship, so the left foote must pluck home the right foote and bodie into the right place of distance againe, or as the helme guideth the ship, even so the left foote must guide the bodie, alwaies bearing thy full belly towards thy enemye, I meane the one shoulder so neere as the other, for if thou wreath thy bodie in turning the one side neare to thy enemye then the other, thou dost not stand in thy strength, nor so readie to performe an answer, as when thy whole bodie lieth towards thy enemye.

The manners of a passage.

A Passage is to bee made aduisedlie with a nimble actiuitie and celerity of the bodie, for hee which wil goe in with a passage & escape, or go cleere awaie with all, the which is verie hardly to bee done if thy enemye be skillfull, and therefore in the performance thereof, thou must haue great skill, much practise and good iudgement, especially in obseruing the point of thy enemies weapon, and likewise

wise thou must not consume one iote of time in thy performance, for so soone as thou seest thy enemy beare his point steadie in anie garde, whether it bee high or low, as if hee doe beare his point aloft, then step in with thy left foote with a sudden iumpe, and clap thy Dagger vnder his Rapier crosse-waies, and so bearing vp his point ouer thy head, and at the verie same instant that thou ioynest with his Rapier, then chop in with thy Rapier point withall to offend him, but thou must consume no time in staying anie space betwixt thy Defence and Offence, for thou must not make two times of that which may be done at one time, and againe, it is thy greater aduantage to doe it quickly, if thy enemy doe lie in a steadie guard, but if hee keepe the point of his Rapier variable, then it is not to bee done but with the greatest danger of all.

The second opportunitie to passe vpon your enemy you haue, if your enemy doe carrie the point of his Rapier so low as your girdle stead, or thereabouts, then you must step in with your left foote, and with your dagger strike awaie the point of his Rapier, and with the same let your Rapier passe vnto his bodie, as before said, I meane both at one time.

The third aduantage is if your enemy doe laie the point of his Rapier neere, or vpon the ground, then step in with thy hindermost foote and crosse your Dagger ouerthwart his Rapier, keeping his Rapier downe, so that hee cannot raise his point before that you haue hit him, and are recouered to your distance againe.

The fourth waie is you being both in your guard
 accor-

according to the first picture, or anis other guard according to your practise, and then faine a thrust downe to his knee, but presentlie raise your point againe with a iumpe foure foote side-waies towards the left side of your enemye, and mount vp your Rapier hand withall, and put in your thrust ouer your enemies Dagger, into his Dagger shoulder, and so with all possible speede recover your guard and distance againe, by springing or iumping towards the left hand of your enemye, and so you fall away from danger of his point: but in falling backe againe, your Dagger must be prepared to defend a second, or a parting thrust, if your enemy should charge you therewithall immediatly.

Yet there is another kinde of passage, and that is an answer vpon your enemies proffer, if your enemye do offer a thrust at you, defend it with turning downward the point of your Dagger, and at the very same instant slippe in with your left foote, and put in your thrust into his bodie, for by stepping in with the left foote it goeth in so strongly, that it is hardly to be preuented.

Some that are ignorant will say that it is not possible to defend a passage, but I say there is no deuise to hit a man neither with thrust nor blow, but there is a true defence to be shewne by one that is skilfull, but yet not euery one that professeth himselfe to be a Fencer cannot teach true defence, but it must be such as haue beene grounded in the true art of Defence by great practise, such a one it must be to teach defence.

*The danger of a passage is to be prevented
three waies.*

THe first is by an active and nimble shift of the body by falling back with the right foote, & the danger being past to charge hastily vpon your enemy againe, but the best way is in lying in your guard according to the first picture, as your enemy commeth in with his passe suddenly vpon the first motion, fall your point, and in the very same time put him out withall, and with your Dagger onely defend his passage, if it bee charged at your body, by turning the point downward, but if hee put it into your Dagger shoulder in manner of an Imbrokata, then you must not let fall your Dagger, except you leaue your Rapier to be a watchman for the defence of your sholder or with bearing them both together it may be defence.

Another defence of a passage.

THe single Rapier alone, being carried according vnto the rule of the single Rapier, as hereafter shall be described when I come to that weapon, now if your enemy doe take the point of your Rapier, the which hee may very well doe by reason of the high carriage of him, if you bee not carefull to fall your point when you see him comming in, well if hee doe make seizure of your point, yet hee cannot stay your Rapier hand, but that you shall haue two foote of your Rapier and the hilts at your command for the defence of your bodie, which by swearing or beating him ouer your bodie, towards your left side, and a little turning your bodie by falling backe
with

with your fermest foote, this is a good defence for a passage: but indeed a man must haue practise, and bee as wee call them a good scholler, that is such as bee skilfull; for a passage cometh with such celerity, that one which is not vsed to it, cannot deserue the comming of it, for there is no thrust so swift, nor so dangerous as the passage, but yet there is no thrust, nor blow nor passage, but by skill and cunning it is to bee defended and auoided, for a man shall deserue the comming of a passage so plaine as a Hawke, when shee intendeth to flie at Check, sitting vpon the Perch, a man may verie easily perceiue by the setting of her selfe to flie, indeed it is dangerous and deadly, except your minde bee vpon your businesse, for when you are at your play, you must expect a passage and false play aswell as true play, or plaine thrusts, for the hurt of the passage is most dangerous of all and most mortall, for with a passage a man cannot say I will hurt my enemy but a little, as you may with any other thrust, being put in at the length, I meane obseruing a true distance, for hee that otherwise breaketh distance may be as soone hit himselfe, as hee hit another; therefore the passage is seldome or neuer vsed in fight, although they bee both neuer so skilfull in putting forth a passage, or if one can passe, and the other cannot, but hee that can passe wil be doubtfull lest, the other wil intrap him in his owne assault, for why may not thy enemy bee as skilfull as thy selfe, once if he meete thee in the field, hee sheweth himselfe valorous therein, and if it be thy fortune to hurt him by want of skill in a manner amongst men, hee is reported to be as good a man as thy selfe, in regard

he aduentured himselfe with that small skill hee had, and then in respect of an honest minde, oughtest o shew him some fauor, if he be not too forward, whereby hee is like to endanger thee, but yet rather hurt, then be hurt, and rather kill, then be killed, if there be no remedie.

False play at Rapier and Dagger.

YOU must proffer, or faine a thrust a foote aboue your enemies head, but presently plucke backe your hand againe, and put home your thrust which you meane to hurt your enemy withall vnder his Dagger arme, either vnto his body or thigh, as you will your selfe, but step not forth with your foote when you faine a thrust, but with the second thrust which you meane to speed your enemy withall, let then your foote and hand goe together, for in faining it ouer his head, it will seeme to him that you meane to hit him in the face, so that sodainely hee will lift vp his Dagger, thinking to saue his face, but he cannot put him downe so quickly againe but that you may hit him as aforesaid: againe if you proffer or faine a thrust to your enemies knee, I meane more quicke then I can speake it, thrust it into his Dagger sholder, or to his face whether you list, for you shall finde them both vngarded, for when hee putteth downe his Dagger to defend the fained thrust, hee cannot lift him vp againe before you haue hit him as before said, if his Dagger arme were neuer so strong, nor neuer so ready, hee must put downe his Dagger and so hee will, or else you may hit him in the breast, for no man can tell whether the fained thrust will
come

come home or not, but hee which doth thrust it, if the defence were neuer so skilfull, but now the onely way to defend a false thrust, is with the single Rapier, for when that the Dagger falleth to cleare the fained thrust from the body, then the Rapier must saue the vpper part, I meane the face and shoulder, by bearing him ouer your bodie as you doe at the single Rapier, and so by that meanes the Rapier will defend all the bodie so low as your knee. By false play a Rapier and Dagger may encounter against a Sword and Buckler, so that the Rapier man be prouident and carefull of making of his assault, that hee thrust not his Rapier into the others Buckler: but the false play to deceiue the Buckler, is by offering a fained thrust at the face of him that hath the Buckler, and then presently put it home to his knee or thigh, as you see occasion; for he will put vp his Buckler to saue his face, but can not put him downe againe before you haue hit him, as aforesaid.

Likewise you may proffer or faine a thrust to the knee of the Buckler man, and put it home to his buckler shoulder, or face; for if hee let fall his Buckler to saue below, hee can not put him vp time enough to defend the vpper parts of his body with his Buckler, but must trust for his defence, to his single Sword: wherefore it behooueth euerie man to be skilfull in the Backe-sword. The best way to make a false thrust, is to strike it downe by the out-side of your enemies Rapier hand, but not to thrust it home, and so presently bring vp the point of your Rapier, and thrust it home to his left shoulder; for if you thrust the fained thrust within the compasse of his Dagger, then it may be he will hit the point of your Rapier, in offer-

ring to breake the fained thrust; and if he doe but touch your Rapier in your first proffer, then you cannot recover your point to put home your second thrust, before hee hath recovered his guard, and so will preuent you: therefore, if you doe make a false thrust, present it without the circle or compasse of his Dagger, that in his defence he may misse the hitting of your point, then hath hee but the single Rapier to defend your second thrust, and he must make his preparation first before hand with his Rapier, if such an occasion be offered, otherwise it cannot be defended.

Now there be diuers other guards to be vsed at the Rapier and Dagger, but most of them wil aske a great deale more practise, to be perfect in, then this first guard, and yet not anie one of them more seuerer for defence both of blow and thrust then this first garde is, and therefore I doe account it the master guard of all other, yet in a Schoole, to make change of your play, then the more guard the more commendable, so they be performed with discretion and iudgement: therefore I haue described those which I thinke necessary, although not so at large, as heereafter you shall haue them in a second booke; for at some times, and for some purposes, one guard may better serue then another: for change of guards may crosse some mens play, whereas if you vse but one guard, may in often play be worne threed-bare, therefore learne as many fashions of lying with thy weapons as thou canst, and then in thy often practise make triall which thou dost fit best withall, and that repose thy selfe vpon at thy most neede: for I haue knowne many that could well defend themselves at one gard better then

at

at another, although hee be a cunning teacher, yet he cannot make all his Schollers frame themselves vnto true defence, all vsing one guard, wherefore there must bee triall made; for if the Scholler be dull of conceit in one guard, yet it may be he will fight better vnto another, so those which I haue found by my triall and practise, to be guards of defence, I put them downe briefly as followeth, but I thinke it were as good left them vndone, as begunne and not end them, yet thou shalt haue a taste, for by a taste men shall see what wine is in the Butte.

The crosse guard.

Carry the point of your Dagger vpright, and the hilt so low as your girdle-stead, without putting your thumbe against the blade of your Dagger, but griping him fast in your hand, and the point of your Rapier vnder your Dagger hand according to the picture.

Lying thus in your guard, your bellie or breast will seeme to be open or vnguarded, so that he will make no doubt but to speede you in his first assault; but he charging you with a thrust, for your defence, if it be aboue the girdle-stead, then carry your Dagger steady ouer your bodie, keeping the point vpright and beare him towards your right side, but in your defence, doe not turne the point of your Dagger downwards, but presently bring him into his right place againe, and then vpon his offer or making of play, if he charge you aboue the girdle-stead, then defend it with the Dagger, and presently steppet in with your left foote, and thrust withall vnto what
part

part of his bodie you list; but if he charge you vnder the gerdle-stead, then defend it with your Rapier, striking it downeward; now you must make your selfe ready to take your time of aduantage in your answering: I meane in the very motion of your enemies assault, defend and offend both with one time: if you both lie vpon this guard, looking who shall make play first, then make you a short thrust, but presently clap into your guard againe, and so you shall draw him to make play, and yet be firme and ready in your guard to take your greater aduantage, which must be done vpon your enemies charge; for when he hath charged you with his thrust, and you defended your selfe, as before-saide, then steppe in with your left foote to answer his assault, presently vpon your defence. Now if your enemy lying in this guard, and wil not make play, then the best aduantage which you haue of your enemy, is charging him (in a manner) as it were with a wrist or a dropping blow to his face, breast, or knee, putting it in slope wise, by turning your knuckles inward, and when it is lighted on the place which you determine to hit; then thrust it home withall, and this thrust being put in slope wise, is the best thrust to hit him which lieth in the crosse guard, and the defender must be ready and nimble with his Dagger for his defence; or otherwise to be preuented: but for a stroake, or a fore-right plaine thrust, it is with more ease defended by him which hath the perfectnesse of this guard, then it is by lying in anie other guard.

Now if your enemy doe lie on this crosse guard, you may proffer a fained thrust at his breast, and presently put it into his Dagger shoulder on the out-side
of

of his dagger arme : this false thrust may be defended with a quicke bringing backe of the Dagger againe : but then the defender must not ouer-carry his dagger to defend the false thrust, yet hee must carry him against euery offer.

Another defence belonging to this guard is lying in this crosse guard, if your enemy charge you vnder the gerdle-stead with a thrust, strike it by with your Rapier, by letting fall your Rapiér point towards the ground; but if it come aboue, then defend it with your Dagger, as before, but do not carry your Dagger aboue halfe a foote; for if you ouer-carry your Dagger, you may be endangered by the false play. Again, if you make the first proffer, and your enemy lying in this guard, then, so soone as you haue made your thrust at him, presently let fall the point of your Rapier to the ground-ward, lifting vp your Rapier hand, and defend his answere with your Rapier, by striking it outward, I meane towards your right hand, so that his thrust may goe cleare on your right side, for your Dagger will not defend your enemies answere so well as your Rapier, especially vpon this guard.

Many haue had a good opinion of the stokata gard, but (in my minde) it is more wearisome vnto the bodie, and not so defensiu for the body, as the first gard following the first Picture; my reasons are these, the hilt and rapier hand being borne so farre back behind the bodie, it cannot defend a blow, for the blow will light before you can beare out your rapier to beare the blow backesword-way, as it should be done, neither can the Rapier defend a false thrust, and a false thrust must be defended with the Rapier onelie : Also

the point of the Rapier being borne so lowe as this guard restraineth them, the face and breast lieth open, or else vnto a single defence which is not sure; therefore keepe two strings to thy bowe, it is safe riding at two anchors a head, but if a man were put to an extremitie, then it were better to haue halfe a loafe then no bread, better to defend it single, then to take it on the skinne, and so I will with words describe this guard, and some other.

The Stokata guard.

You must (if you will frame your selfe into this guard) keepe the Dagger point out-right, and so hie as your cheeke, and your Rapier hand so farre backe, and something low as you can, and your feete three foote distance at the least, and this guard many Professours doe reach as the chiefe and maister guard of all other; Now the reasons which they shew to draw men into this guard, is first say they, the head bowing backe, then the face is furthest from danger of a thrust or blow: now to answer this againe, I say, that although the face be something further from the enemye, yet the bottome of the bellie, and the fore leg is in such danger, that it cannot be defended from one that is skilfull; and to bee hurt in the bellie is more dangerous then the face, whereas if thou frame thy guard according vnto my direction following the first Picture, then shalt thou finde that thy bellie is two foote (at the least) further from danger of a thrust, and so is the foote likewise, and the leg safe and out of danger both of blow and thrust: and now thy face will seeme to be, and is the neereſt part to-
wards

wards thine enemy, but then thou hast thy dagger being in his right place, nearest vnto thy face, readie to defend him: againe, hee which standeth abroad with his feete, will alwayes be in ialousie of his foreleg, the which must be defended by plucking him vp nimble at euery blowe and thrust, and yet that will not surely defend him from a thrust, but admit you do defend the leg by plucking him vp, then doe you loose your time of answering your enemy, which should bee done in the same time which you plucke vp your leg, and before you can come in againe with your answer, your enemy will haue recovered his guard and distance againe: There are many other guards, some of them I will touch a little, and some of them I will leaue vntill an other time: there are three high guardes, one of them I will speake next of, because it is a great enemy, not onelie vnto the Stokata garde, but it likewise crosseth all other guards, and it followeth in this maner.

Keepe your thumbe long wayes vpon the blade of your Rapier, according vnto the naturall Arte; the common holding of the vulgar sort, and your feete so close together, as you can, and the hilt of your Rapier so hie as your cheeke, bowing the elbowe ioynt of your Rapier arme, and your Dagger hilt so lowe as your gerdle steade, and beare the point of your Dagger vpright, and the Rapier point on the in-side of your Dagger, both close together, looking vnder your Rapier, and beare out your Dagger at the armes end, without bowing your elbow ioynt; and if your enemy charge you with a thrust, carrie the thrust with your Dagger toward the right side, keeping the point of your Dagger vpright, not tur-

ning him in your defence this way nor that way, but beare him steady ouer your body, and so you may defend any manner of thrust: for if you beare your dagger (as aforesaide) your enemies point will passe cleere vnder your Rapier arme, but hauing once defended, in the very same motion you must lift vp the hilt of your Rapier, and turning your knuckle vppward, and withall, turne your point downe into your enemies rapier shoulder, stepping foorth with the right foote and hand together, your defence and offence must be all done with one motion. Now if your enemy charge you with a blow, you are as ready to defend it double on this guard as in anie other: but if thou charge thine enemy, or make the first assault, prepare thy defence for the Rapier shoulder, by carrying thy Dagger ouer thy bodie, keeping the point of thy Dagger vpright. This defence is good to be vsed against a left handed man likewise.

Now he which is well experimented in this guard hee will finde it verie dangerous for offence to thine enemy, and defensiuie for thy selfe, aboue all other guardes, especially if thou haue discretion to lie at watch discretely, and to take thine opportunitie and aduantage, when thine enemy proffereth anie kinde of play vpon thee.

The carelesse or the lazie guard.

LAy the point of your Rapier vpon the ground a foote wide of your left side ouerthwart your bodie, and let the hilt of your rapier rest vpon your
right

right thigh, and your dagger vnder your rapier about a foot forward of the hilt, and so leauing your whole belly or brest, will seeme a verie faire baitè for your enemy to thrust at, but when hee chargeth you with a thrust, your defence must bee by the lifting vp of your Rapier point, with your Dagger, throwing him ouer towards your right side, but lift not vp your Rapier hand in the time of your defence in any case, for so it may endanger the face, but so soone as you haue turned it cleere ouer your bodie with both your weapons as aforesaid (it may bee done with one of them, but not so well because not so sure as with both together) then vpon your defence recover your point hastily againe and chop him in with an ouer-hand thrust, turning your knuckles vpwards into his right shoulder where you may easily hit him if you bee quicke in taking your time before hee recover his distance, or get out of your reach. This is no painefull guard, but verie easie and quickly learned, and it is a verie sure guard to defend any manner of thrust, now vpon this guard if your enemy doe falsifie a thrust vpon you by offering it at breast or face, whereby to make you lift vp your weapons, thinking to hit you beneath with a second thrust by reason of your lifting them vp to saue the other parts the which you must doe, but fayling of it aboue, bring downe your Dagger quickly againe to defend below the second thrust.