

C. 39. d. 61.

*A N*  
Halfe-penny-  
worth of Wit, in  
a Penny-worth of  
Paper.

OR,  
*The Hermites Tale.*  
The third Impression.

LONDON  
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the Assignement of Edw:  
Blount. 1613.



**To the Right Honourable the  
Countesse of Suffex.**

**I**N times of former ages (honourable faire Lady) I haue often heard, that Vsurie, Lying, and Flattery, were worse excommunicate out of Court and Common-wealth, then thred-bare cloakes or greasie bootes out of the Presence. O they were vertuous men in those daies, & would giue the deuill his due, if it were but in wearing deuils breeches. Surely I am growne into such infinite amours of their honest packe-staffe plainenesse, that sincerely and verily, I do meane, as it were, to imitate it. First, for Vsurie, I hate it worse then any empty purse, and you shal haue none of mee, I beseech God to inspire mee but with halfe so many good wordes, as may counternaille the hundreth part of the principal of your gracious fauours towards me. Next for lying, in no line of this Booke shall you find me lyable, (if I be not condēned for too much speaking the troth, I care not) and to make you know, that I am old *Tom-sei-troth* indeed, I will giue you a tast whereby you may iudge of the rest. *Item.* I say I am no Scholler, if that be a lie I referre me to the iudgement of the learned, who if they but pose me in the petigree of a *Nouue* and *Proneune*, I straight crosse and blesse my selfe, & thinke they begin to coniure. Againe, I affirme that thus being no Scholler, but a simple honest Dunce, as I am, that cānot say *B* to a *Battle-dore*



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

dore, it is very presumptuously done of me, to offer to  
 hey-passe and repasse it in Print so, when my Ance-  
 stors scarce euer heard of a Pen & Inke-horne, & much  
 more presumptuously, it being such a course home-  
 spun linsiey wolsey webbe of wit as it is, to shroude it  
 vnder the protection of so high a personage, who are  
 more worthy to patronize the deuine Muse of *Apollo*,  
 or the thundring spirit of *Homer*, then this Countrey  
 dance of the worlds end, or harsh Lancashire Home-  
 pipe. Take me who dare, or who can, that herein my  
 tongue doubles one sillable. Marry some excuse wold  
 do well, for this my Eagle-soaring, and too too fore-  
 ward attempting, and yet I need not neither, for out of  
 your owne super-abounding good nature you would  
 supply it though I let it alone; & yet I will not let it a-  
 lone, but throw some light vaile, of spotlesse preten-  
 ded wel-meaning, ouer it, to huke & mask it from pub-  
 licke shame & obloquy: Faith, no more but this, I see  
 my inferiours in the gifts of learning, wisdom, & vnder-  
 standing, torment the *Print* daily with lighter tri-  
 fles and *Iiggalarums*, then my russet *Hermit* is, which  
 hath made me the bolder to shoulder in amongst the.  
 They clap a paire of French spurres on the heeles of  
 Vice to rowell ope the wombe of that resty Iade Ini-  
 quity, & let all the loath-some guts & garbidge of his  
 panch issue out to putrifie and infect the fresh aire of  
*Pauls Church-yard*; I curbe sin with a double snaffle of  
 reprehensio, & turne & wind him with my smart wand  
 of correctio to what vertuous manage I please. There-  
 fore

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

fore for my good meaning, not Art, am I to bee seene  
 & allowed. For my insolence in presenting this home-  
 ly bundle of Hermits wands to so sacred a Madam, vn-  
 der this couert barron it shall march, that weak houses  
 require the strongest props, and the poore must pay  
 their fines to their Lord or Lady whatsoeuer, be it but  
 in pepper-cornes for single halfe-pence. My Booke I  
 entitle, *A halfe-peny worth of wit in a peny-worth of pa-  
 per*, whereby it drawes somewhat nere to the matter &  
 the purpose. If you accept it well, there is no man that  
 will accept it ill, and except you stray from the worlds  
 ordinary custome (that take Vintners leaden halfe-pe-  
 ny tokens for sound payment) you cannot accept of it  
 amisse. Imagine this one of the, for either it will passe  
 for a half-peny or nothing. But soft I haue let passe my  
 last relique of antiquity, which is there horrible and  
 terrible detestatio of flattery, & my religious cōforma-  
 tion therunto. I haue proued my selfe guiltles of lying  
 & vsury, & if my Book will not saue me frō being hal-  
 tred for flattery, I wold it were treason to write & read,  
 or *Gal, Gum, & Copperis* wherof Inke is made, were held  
 more odious the poiso: all the flattery that I wil vse (if  
 it be flattery to speak truth) shal be to pronounce that  
 you are truly vertuous, faire, wise, & honorable: & so I  
 leaue you, desiring pardon for my boldnes, and pray-  
 ing for your encrease of felicity to your dying day.

Your Honours most zealous  
 deuoted humble Seruant.

*Humphrey King.*





To all his Honourable Friends, or Honest dispersed Wel-wishers wherefo-euer.

**I**T would well become a deuote Hermite to begin with Grace and Peace vnto you, but that I hold frivolous, since if you want Grace, go by Ieronimo, you are no friends for me: and if you be not men of Peace, it is not my Hermites Staffe, and my little bucker-clapdish, that will appease you, wherefore Shokkatorum, that which will bee shall bee. If you will bee quiet and leaue your mocking tongue you may, if not, floute on by leaue, the more sport it breeds you, the gladder I am (as the Scotch-man saies) that I haue it for you. Cunning Lawyers, vpon the false mistaking of a T. or an N. or putting in a dash ouer-plus (if the Debtor bee rich and able roundly to see them) will make a writ of Error of anything: doe not so by mee I beseech you, for I am a very bad writer of Orthography, and can scarce spell my Abcic if it were laid before mee. The Printer may helpe mee to deliuer to you true English, but as I am a true man to God and the King, hee findes it not in my Coppy. I meane well, that I am sure, and if I had better meanes to expresse, I would make you better vnderstand it: in the meane time, what is but meane, take it in as good part, as if it were the highest treble that the cleere Poetical warbling throat could shrill or quauer forth. Dangerous misinterpreting I feare not,

Since

To the Reader.

Since Envy, that blacke venom'd Toad-swolne Elfe,  
Nere slanders a cleere conscience to it selfe.

Onely, if you could a little dispence here and there with a hard Rime or two, (in which yet you shall not say but there is some reason) and my verses that are like Cheaters false Dice of high-men and low-men, one while eights, now tennes, another while foure-teenes, and sometimes sixes, I will number you, (though I keepe no numbers) in the fore-most ranke of my benefactors and fauourers. Me thinks a King by birth as I am, should not debase himselfe to intreate so much. And yet I remember an old schoole-boyes game of King by your leaue (euer since I was a boy my selfe) and so I am afraid you will cry, King by your leaue, we are to haue about with you, beare it off with the head and shoulders how you can. But if you do, vpon all the Canes and quart-pots about London I will be sworne, (all wine-pots from this generall rule excepted, for them I haue for-sworne till Michelmas, vnlasse the new wine of Peru, that is made of no Grape, but a strange fruite in the West-indies, and is more comfortable to the braine and the stomacke, then any restorative or cordiall whatsoeuer) vpon them I say I will abiure and renounce, all claime or interest I haue had in that wicked word of Poetry, and bind my selfe and my heires, neuer more to be publicans and sinners, (or sinners in publique) in that vnforgotten Art of Printing. It hath benetold mee, that those that are slaine with the Indians  
poysoned



To the Reader.

poysoned arrowes, die with their mouthes shut, and how the Butchers in Germany kill their sheep after the selfe-same order, by tying a cord about their mouthes, and so strangling them, that their flesh may be more swolne and puffed up: so would I die, by my good will, if this my labour mis-carry, and haue my mouth closed up from euer speaking or writing hence-forward. Had I had learning enough, I would haue framed an inuective against learning, because; I know, none save the learned will finde fault with me: but seeing I haue it not, I must heere end my Epistle, and desire such as descend to deeply into my shallownesse, no otherwise to esteeme of my writings then of Drummes and Trumpets in warre: which are not used so much to stir up men to fury, as to teach them to march in measure.

Yours, as you conceite me,

HUMPHREY KING.

How



HOW dares the Author passe unto the Presse,  
Where Satyres, Essayes, Epigrams do swarme,  
The Comicke, and the stately Tragicke verse,  
And Caltha metamorphos'd with a charme?  
A strong imagination wrought this thing,  
His name being King, he thinkes himselfe a King.

In discommendation of the Author.

IT is no Tale, the Hermite is belid,  
The Author ouer-aw'd, or much beguild.  
Time past spoke plaine, and did no vices hide,  
Time present must be pleased like a child.  
Christen thy booke anew, then do't thou well,  
And call it Truth, a Tale's an Infidell.

KIng neuer prou'd more King in any thing,  
Then in this plaine-song, freedome of a King:  
Plaine vnaffected stile, yet vices sting;  
why (King) I see yfaith thou'l't needs be King.

Conueniunt rebus nomina saepe suis.

B





**T**O grace the man whom all the Graces fauour,  
Lies not within the compasse of my quill,  
Suffice it his most plausible behauiour,  
Drawes all the happy choise of wits, and skill,  
To loue, admire, affect, and dignifie,  
Himselfe, and these his labours pleasing lines.  
Mongst whom my zeale presumes to signifie  
Some loue to him, in whom such vertue shines.  
*An Hermits Tale, an Hermits Heart* declareth;  
Sincere the one, so spotlesse pure the other,  
That with the vertues euermore it shareth,  
By no meanes suffering ill the good to smother.  
Go then sweet *Hermits Tale*, and tell the wisest,  
Perfection liues not still in the precisest.

*Vincor, non vinco.*



**T**Hat I haue lou'd, and most respected thee,  
True-honest *Humphrey*: I do heere protest,  
And that the world shall witnesse it with me,  
Embrace this signe of loue amongst the rest;  
Wilt thou haue more? my word I will engage:  
Nay further yet: Il'e take a solemne oath,  
By the Red-herring thy true Patronage,  
And famous *Nash*, so deere vnto vs both:  
By all the Bowers that we haue reuel'd in,  
Our merry times, that gallop hence so fast,  
By all the houres we haue together bin,  
By all our vowes of friendship that haue past:  
By these I sweare my loue, and thy worke graced,  
On her rich worth, and honour'd Titles placed.

B 2







**L**ately the Muses from their forked hill  
 Descending downe into our humbler vale,  
 To taste the fruits of Industrie and Skill  
 In makers of this time: Beheld thy Tale,  
 Which, though it did appeare emptie of Art,  
 (As that thy modestie hath still profest)  
 Yet this faire censure they did all impart:  
 Thy lone to Arts therein was well exprest.  
 But when they saw to whom it was design'd,  
 (A Ladie of her graces; so inspir'd  
 With euery hauntie both of forme and mind,  
 As of the Muses selues, she is admir'd)  
 They wou'd, thy worke should line; and with one voyce,  
 Approv'd thy Iudgement in so sweet a choyce.

Suus cuique mos.



**A N**  
 Halfe-peny-worth of Wit, in a  
 Peny-worth of Paper.

ALIAS.

¶ *The Hermites Tale.*

**VV**alking by a Forrest side,  
 An ancient Hermite I espide,  
 White was his head; old was his face,  
 Pale were his lookes, obscure his place,  
 And in his hand I might behold  
 A booke all torne and very old;  
 I willing both to see and know  
 His place, and why he liued so,  
 Went to salute him, as vnknowne,  
 To be a partner of his moane;  
 He being of an humble spirit,  
 As one that heauen would inherite,

B 3

A

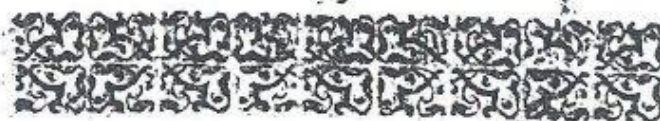




### *The Hermits Tale.*

A friendly welcome to me gaue,  
 And brought me to his homely Cane;  
 VVhere he had liu'd full twenty yeares,  
 And for his sinnes shed many teares;  
 Thinking euery howre to die,  
 Knowing the worlds vnconstancie.  
 Then fate he downe, and to me told:  
 I once was yong, but now am old,  
 And welcome is mine age to mee,  
 That no more changes I may see;  
 For I haue seene from time to time,  
 The highest fall, the lowest clime:  
 Contray to that we expect,  
 To make vs know the worlds defect,  
 How time and death doth still preface  
 The sicklenesse of euery age.  
 Like to the Moone that hath no power,  
 Louing to change, both day and howre:  
 Vnhappy men that liue therein,  
 VVhere nought is found but death and sin.

Then



### *The Hermits Tale.*

Then gentle youth, if you would know  
 Heauens delight, the world forgoe,  
 For wordlings, very seldome can  
 Two Maisters serue, both God and man.  
 For if a man your Maister bee,  
 You then must sinne as well as hee,  
 To smoothe his taste, and please his vaine,  
 How much so ere the sinne containe.  
 If he a Tyrant do professe,  
 Then must his seruant be no lesse;  
 Or if an Athiest hee bee knowne,  
 So must you be, or else be gone:  
 For I haue heard a prouerbe old,  
*Be rul'd by him that hath the gold.*  
 Such are the errorrs of our age,  
 VVhen soules for gold are laid to gage:  
 A substance that wise men besot,  
 A pleasure full of paine, God wot.  
 VVhen I was yong, as you are now,  
 I spent my youth, I know not how,

Rating





### *The Hermites Tale.*

Rating my pleasure at such a price,  
More worth, then Heauens Paradise.  
These worldly pleasures are but toies  
Vnto the high celestiaall ioyes,  
Where God doth sit on Syon hill  
To giue the doome of good and ill,  
Then if you knew how sweete it is  
To meditate on heauens blisse,  
You sure would leaue all worldly strife  
And liue with me, an Hermites life.

### *Answer.*

**F**Ather or friend, what ere you bee,  
A happy man you seeme to mee,  
The happiest man this day on earth,  
Blest in your age, and at your birth;  
Whose heauenly words my heart hath wonne,  
To liue with you, and be your sonne:

Leauing



### *The Hermites Tale*

Leauing the world, too full of woes,  
VWhere sinnes and errors daily flowes,  
And take me to your homely Cell,  
VWhere sweet content doth euer dwell;  
Then if you please to take the paine,  
For Christes sake, a soule to gaine,  
Your counsell graue on me bestow,  
That true religion I may know:  
For all Kings Christned are at warres  
For Conscience, and religious iarres;  
And controuersies now haue made  
One King onother to inuade,  
VWith warre; with death, and famishment,  
Each other still they do torment;  
VWith Christians blood they die the ground,  
Piercing sweet babes with many a wound,  
And aged men with siluer'd haire,  
There groueling lie, in blood and teares;  
VWhat sinne, what death, so-ere befall,  
They make Religion cause of all.

C

A





### *The Hermites Tale.*

A grieuous thing, when they shall come  
 To giue account for all and some  
 Before that God that knowes their thought,  
 If they for true Religion fought:  
 Or whether for ambitious pride  
 They meant Religion to deuide;  
 And so to kindle Gods displeasure  
 For Kingdomes, Crownes, and worldly Treasure;  
 Knowing them all to be illusions,  
 To bring our soules into confusions,  
 And make vs wish, ere we haue done,  
 Such warres had neuer beene begun.  
 Where Christians seeke each others blood,  
 Their meaning seldome can be good,  
 But if our warres were like to them  
 Which were before *Ierusalem*,  
 Against the Turkes, which there abod,  
 Sworne enemies vnto our God,  
 VVhat happy men then had we bin,  
 So to haue dy'd, and cleer'd our sin?

VVhereas



### *The Hermites Tale.*

VVhereas (God wor) we now do goe  
 To seate our Brothers ouerthrow.  
 Alas! if they in warres that die,  
 Did not confesse a Trinitie:  
 Or if that Heathen men they were,  
 VVithout all knowledge, faith or feare  
 Of Christ that dy'd to saue mankind  
 From death and hell, to him assign'd;  
 Then without any offence at all,  
 They might take pleasure in our fall.

### *Hermite.*

**M**Y sonne of warres you haue complain'd,  
 VVhich is a plague for sinne ordain'd;  
 A plague that God himselfe hath chose,  
 His wrath and iustice to disclose:  
 And for my part, I must confesse,  
 Our sinnes (my sonne) deserue no lesse.

C 2

Christ





### *The Hermites Tale.*

Christ knowes we haue deserued more  
 Then euer our fathers did before:  
 And yet we say, they neuer knew  
 VWhere true Religion euer grew.  
 For they were still instructed then  
 By Friers and Monks, old ancient men,  
 Such as did then attribute all  
 Vnto Saint *Peter*, not to *Paul*.  
 Saying that Christ had chose alone,  
 Him for the Rocke, and corner stone,  
 And vnto him the keyes resign'd,  
 To open, shut, to loose and binde.  
 Taking the word as it was spoken,  
 And not the sence it did betoken:  
 And so by *Peters* superioritie,  
 The *Pope* doth challenge his authoritie.  
 But come my sonne, time doth vs call.  
 Wee'l leaue our Christ to iudge of all.  
 And go with me, Il'e teach thee how to spend  
 The Sommer day in solace with thy friend,  
 VWhere



### *The Hermites Tale.*

VWhere thou shalt see the pleasure of this wood,  
 Exceeds all other, were they nere so good.  
 Heere dwels poore men that neuer vse to sweare,  
 But yea and nay, and by the weedes they weare.  
 Farre be it from them to wrong his holy Name  
 That gaue them life, and leaue to vse the same.  
 To him they call; and still for mercy erie,  
 Because they know in iustice all must die,  
 They liue secure, and free from any strife,  
 And thinke *Content* to be the sweetest life.  
 And so it is, to such poore men as these, please.  
 That looke for nought, but how their God re  
 See how they labour all day till they sweate,  
 And take great paines, and all to get them heare.  
 Sauing your Tale, good Father, what be those,  
 That in their lookes decipher many woes,  
 And many times they seeme to make a show  
 As though frō whence they came, they faine wold  
 Impatient of the crosses God hath sent (go,  
 Them for their good, because they should repent.





### The Hermites Tale.

Well said (my sonne) thy iudgement I commend,  
 For Man hath crosses to none other end,  
 And he is happiest that can suffer any  
 For his sake, that for vs hath suffred many.  
 Hast thou not heard a song of *Phillida*,  
 Of *Herpilus*, and eke *Coren*?  
 why these, my sonne, be they.  
 The one is *Coren*, that once tooke  
 delight his Hawkes to lure,  
 Th'other *Herpilus*, (poore man)  
 that all paine did endure  
 For *Phillida*, and that is shee,  
 which oft did flowerstwine,  
 And Garlands make of Violets,  
 to please her *Corens* mind.  
 But he regarded not her loue,  
 nor when she frownd or smild.  
 It mou'd not him, he neuer car'd,  
 for once he was beguild.

And



### The Hermites Tale.

And yet shee was the fairest Maide  
 that euer nature fram'd,  
 And all the Shepheards would reioyce  
 when *Phillida* was nam'd.  
 But Time, the enemy to Youth,  
 sent Sickenesse, Beauties crosse,  
 As messenger, to tell her now  
 shee is not as shee was.  
 Her golden haire, her forehead smoothe,  
 her quicke full speaking eie,  
 Her comely nose, her lips  
 where loue did banquet royally,  
 Haue chang'd their hue, for what can last,  
 or hold that will away?  
 Like *Judas* fatall Elder-tree,  
 so lookes poore *Phillida*.  
 Her haire with Daffadillies dight  
 Ewreth'd with purple-silke,  
 Is now within a night-cap tide,  
 ynkeemb'd, as white as milke.

Her





### *The Hermites Tale.*

Her fore-head all with furrrowes filld,  
 that was so smoth and white,  
 Her eies (the Cabinets of loue)  
 haue lost their wonted sight;  
 Her nose is sharpe, her iawes are falne,  
 her lips that were so red,  
 Now looks like Siluer-ore vntried,  
 and no teeth in her head.  
 Ah sonne, if they in Court that liue  
 did once but thinke of this,  
 They soone would finde amongst themselves  
 how they had done amisse,  
 In pampting vp their filthy flesh  
 which is a slaue to time,  
 An enemy vnto the soule,  
 a masse of filth and slime.  
 But come my son, we'le now go home  
 vnto our homely Caue;  
 And leaue poore *Phillida* so mouing  
 that wisheth for her graue.

For



### *The Hermites Tale.*

For *Herpilus*, and eke *Coren*,  
 of whom the Muses song,  
 They vow'd to die with *Phillida*,  
 because they lou'd so long.

Father, I neuer heard a Tale  
 to moue a man to ruth,  
 And make him thinke of all his sinnes  
 committed in his youth  
 As this which you haue told;  
 A terror vnto those  
 Which in their beauty, wit, or strength,  
 do confidence repose.

It is no terror (sonne) to those  
 which meane not to repent,  
 They neuer thinke of crooked age,  
 nor of their youth mispent;  
 But head-long runne from sin to sin,  
 like sheepe that go astray,

D

Yet



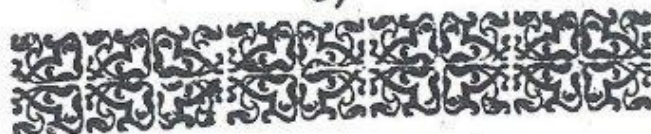


### *The Hermites Tale.*

Yet now and then for fashion sake  
they make a show to pray;  
And come to Church, and knocke and kneele,  
because they may be taken  
For honest, good, and godly men,  
that haue the world forsaken.

'Tis true Sir, I haue heard of those  
that vnder shew of zeale;  
Would hate the time, & curse the state,  
and at the Clergy raile;  
Ill minded men, enuious, and proud,  
discentious, full of wroth,  
Monstrous dissemblers, filld with sin,  
in whom there is no troth;  
These zealous men, meane to erect  
a Church, ere it be long,  
Where Papist neuer set his foote,  
nor neuer Dirge was song;  
Meane while, for feare their faction breake,

they



### *The Hermites Tale.*

they thinke it best behoues them,  
To meete in Barnes, and there to Preach;  
euen as the Spirit moues them,  
And there they pray, before they Preach,  
in heart, with one accord,  
That they may neuer laugh, for feare  
they do offend the Lord;  
Then starterth vp a brother straight  
vpon a wicker Chayre,  
And talkes of sinne, and how it raignes  
amongst vs euery where;  
How euery state is discontent,  
How many sinne, how few repent:  
What May-poles, and what Whitson-ales,  
What ringing, and what old-wiues tales,  
Are now beleeu'd to be the way  
To saue vs all another day.

My son, these men will nere endure the touch,  
They know too little, and they speake too much,  
D 2 Their



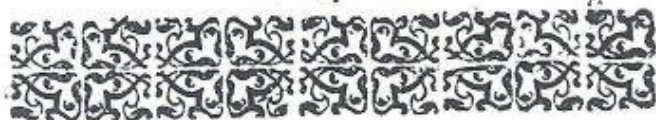


### *The Hermites Tale.*

Their lookes are smoth, like Siluer purifide,  
 They will proue Copper, when they shall be tri'd.  
 I neuer heard of these which seeme so pure,  
 Which for Christs sake wold Martirdom endure,  
 And yet no doubt, as long as peace remaines,  
 Their conscience will endure any paines.  
 But if the God of warre abroad should range,  
 And catch these men that long to see a change,  
 You then should see them all within one day,  
 For very feare of death, to turne Turke-way.  
 But come my sonne, sit downe and let vs eate  
 These homely cates, in steed of better meate,  
 And leaue these men that enuy so the state,  
 To die like dogs, that can do nought but prate.

Ile tell you, Father, of a Tale  
 that is in *Skeltons* rime,  
 A foolish Tale, but yet a Tale  
 to driue away the time;  
 Of a very pleasant lad

my



### *The Hermites Tale.*

my Tale I must beginne,  
 That came into a house, by chaunce,  
 where Sectaries did Inne,  
 And being in their company,  
 not knowing what they were,  
 Hewas as merry as a Pie,  
 still skyping here and there,  
 Till at the last a ciuill Sire  
 came mildly towards him,  
 And like a man of God, rebuk'd  
 this yong-man for his sinne.  
 This merry Lad, mus'd at the man,  
 as one loath to offend,  
 Saying, if he had done amisse,  
 he would be glad to mend.  
 Night drew on, Supper came in,  
 they all with one consent  
 Desir'd this yong-mans company,  
 and he was well content.  
 He sadly sate all Supper while,

D 3

and





### *The Hermites Tale.*

and not a word he said:  
 And as they did, so would he do.  
 They after supper prayed,  
 And Chapters read, and sung a Psalme  
 all to instruct the youth,  
 What great delight he ought to haue  
 in reading of the truth.  
 VVhen that the Lord was serued thus,  
 they cald a reckning presently,  
 And would not let this yong man pay,  
 but thank'd him for his company.  
 This pleasant Lad muz'd at the men,  
 yet being farre from scorning,  
 Intreated them to breake their fast  
 with him the next day morning.  
 They thank'd him all with one consent,  
 but especially Maister *Pomes*,  
 Desired him to bestow no cost,  
 but onely Beefe and Browes.  
 You shall haue nothing else (quoth he)

welcome



### *The Hermites Tale.*

welcome shall be your chiefe,  
 And so good-night, vntill we meete  
 all at a peece of biese,  
 The morning came, & there they met,  
 the boy that knew his time,  
 Set them downe to breakefast straight,  
 and then began his rime.  
 You are welcome heartily, vnto lusty *Humphrey*,  
 VVelcome here must be your chiefe  
 To a friendly peece of Biese,  
 Such as was vs'd in ancient time  
 VVhen house-keeping was in prime;  
 VVhen the Biese and Brewes flourishte,  
 VVhen the silly soules were nourisht,  
 Then 'twas a wonder to the poore  
 To see a Porter keepe the doore,  
 Then were silly harmelesse folkes,  
 Plaine chimneyes then were full of smoakes:  
 Euery table then was spred,  
 And furnisht out with Biese and bread,

Euery





### *The Hermites Tale.*

Euery man then tooke a pleasure  
 In his house to spend his treasure.  
 Who was then the Gentries Guest?  
 The Widdow poore, that's oft opprest,  
 The Souldiers with their wounds and skarres  
 Bleeding for their Countries warres.  
 Then in the Country dwelt true pittie,  
 Now Christmas is but for the Cittie;  
 A Gentleman of small reuenew,  
 Had then the poore for his retinew.  
 Wast not then a merry time  
 When thy neighbour came to mine,  
 Canst thou lend me twenty pound  
 For to buy a peece of ground?  
 Without statute, or a bond  
 Their word as good as any hand.  
 Then men of ancient calling  
 Loued no pride for feare of falling,  
 Country Russet was their wearing,  
 And Kendall greene, for feare of tearing.

The



### *The Hermites Tale*

The Clothier scarce the Mercer knew,  
 Now Silke-wormes make the Sheepe to rue,  
 The Plough-man liu'd, sweete was his paine,  
 The Taylor now sweepes vp his gaine.  
 If any now do take compassion,  
 'Tis to checke the oldest fashions;  
 Yet paying for new fashions gold,  
 In spite of all, the new is old.  
 But what meane I to runne so farre?  
 My foolish words may breed a skarre,  
 Let vs talke of *Robin Hoo*de,  
 And little *John* in merry Shirewood,  
 Of Poet *Skelton* with his pen,  
 And many other merry men,  
 Of May-game Lords, and Sommer Queenes,  
 With Milke-maides, dancing o're the Greenes,  
 Of merry *Tarlton* in our time,  
 Whose conceite was very fine,  
 Whom Death hath wounded with his Dart,  
 That lou'd a May-pole with his heart.

E

His

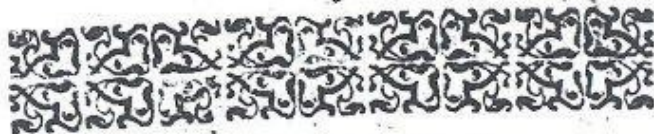




### *The Hermites Tale.*

His humour was to please all them  
 That seeme no Gods, but mortall men,  
 For (saith he) in these our daies,  
 The Cobler now his Last downe laies,  
 And if he can but reade, (God wor)  
 Hee talkes and prates he knowes not what,  
 Of May-poles, and of merriments  
 That haue no spot of ill pretence.  
 But I wonder now and then,  
 To see the wise and learned men,  
 VVith countenance grim, and many a frowne  
 Cries, Maisters, plucke the May-pole downe.  
 To heare this newes, the Milke-maide cries,  
 To see the sight, the Plough-man dies.  
 'Tis a iest to see when they beginne  
 For to plucke downe such wodden sinne.  
 Foolish men, and faith-lesse too,  
 That still professe, and nothing do.  
 The Sectaries were in a rage,  
 and knew not what to say,

They



### *The Hermites Tale.*

They spit, and chafed, and stampt amaine,  
 and would haue gone away.  
 This merry Lad began to laugh,  
 and to them thus replide,  
 You see it stands not with my youth  
 from pleasure to be tide,  
 I loue to sit and laugh,  
 not to offend the wise,  
 I care not for their company  
 that honest mirth despise:  
 Those that be Saints abroad,  
 whose substance shadowes bee,  
 Let them go seeke Precisian-sects,  
 they are no mates for mee.  
 And when you are at home,  
 thinke of this prouerbe told,  
*The Tree is still knowne by his fruite,*  
*if it be nere so old.*  
 The poore men went away,  
 all discontent in minde,

E 2

And



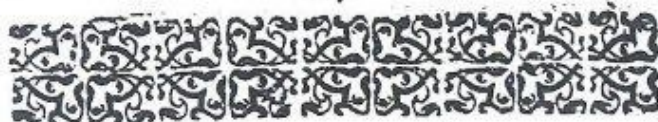


### *The Hermites Tale.*

And had no pleasure to their meate,  
 but left it all behind.  
 Now, Father, be you iudge  
 who plaid the better part,  
 They with their zeale, or else the boy  
 that spoke with all his heart.

In sadnesse my good sonne,  
 I neuer yet did heare,  
 A Tale to that effect,  
 so much to please mine care;  
 My iudgement I will stay,  
 vntill our better leisure,  
 I'll show thee heere a booke my sonne,  
 wherein thou maist take pleasure:  
 Heere shalt thou reade my sonne  
 a volume of dispaire,  
 The death of many a conquering king,  
 their liues, and what they were,  
 The wisdom of this world,

the

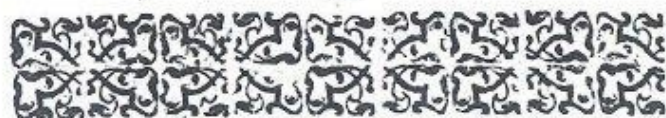


### *The Hermites Tale.*

the frailty of our age,  
 Our present time now acting sinne  
 like Players on a stage.  
 I writ it with this hand  
 that once could guide a pen,  
 And set my Launce into my rest  
 as well as other men.  
 But (oh) those daies are past,  
 and now I wish to haue  
 For all my seruice done,  
 a white sheete and a graue.  
 My Caske of Steele is to a night-cap turn'd,  
 My shining Armour to a gowne of gray,  
 My youthful heart, which once with beauty burn'd  
 Like dreames illusions, vading passe away,  
 Euen as the night doth from the glorious day.  
 My Naples Courser is a banke of earth,  
 Whereon I sit to manage all my finnes,  
 Twixt life and death, which are borne mortall  
 My bridle now must be my Beades, (twinn'es.  
 The

E 3





### *The Hermites Tale.*

The golden bosses bookes,  
 And all my Sonnets must be prayers  
 VWhereon deuotion lookes,  
 My Launce turn'd to a Palmers staffe  
 VWhich once was painted braue,  
 And all my followers be my sinnes,  
 To bring me to my graue.  
 The shield which now my Page  
 Vnto my Prince must giue,  
 Is (time mispent) *An aged man.*  
*that can no longer liue.*  
 Belceue me sonne, I would not liue  
 For to be yong againe,  
 To be great Emperor of the world  
 The world I so disdaine.  
 Iudge you if I say true,  
 Reade this, and know my mind,  
 They that haue eyes, may see the world,  
 Or else they are borne blind:  
 It is a world of care,

The



### *The Hermites Tale.*

The greatest Prince that raignes  
 Hath not halfe pleasure in his Crowne  
 To equall all his paines.  
 And he that liues in Court,  
 And can but fauour win,  
 VWhat ere he was, he may be sure  
 That all will follow him.  
 The surly Vshers then  
 VWill do him any grace,  
 That told him but a weeke before  
 He did not know his place;  
 His fellowes of the Guard,  
 VWhen he comes to the dore,  
 VWill all stand vp and make a legge,  
 That would sit downe before.  
 But if this man be proud,  
 And full of high disdaine,  
 Caring for nothing else at all  
 But for his prinate gaine.  
 Then Enuy mou'd in heart,

A





### *The Hermites Tale.*

A Iury straight doth call,  
 Inditing that vsurping man  
 Conspiring his downe-fall.  
 And straight he doth informe  
 The Iury what he was,  
 That now vsurpes, and hates the poore  
 And doth his betters crosse.  
 The Poet hearing this,  
 Puls forth a booke of Tables,  
 And makes a subtile rime,  
 Much like to *Esops* fables;  
 Then being fore-man, tels a Tale  
 That was not much regarded,  
 How men of vertue and of worth,  
 Did wander vnrewarded:  
 So he that liues in Court,  
 And doth not seeke to haue  
 The loue of euery priuate man,  
 And of the poorest slaue,  
 Let him be sure of this,

If



### *The Hermites Tale.*

If Fortune chance to frowne,  
 Enuy in time will turne the wheele  
 And throw him head-long downe.  
 Who would bee such a man  
 When Time his fortune reade,  
 That he must leaue his Offices,  
 And take him to his beades,  
 And in a shirt of hayre,  
 Repent his time misse,  
 And giue his treasure to the poore,  
 Whom hee hath iniured.  
 This were the way to go  
 In peace vnto his graue,  
 For none without they do repent,  
 Can any mercy haue.  
 But liues there such a man?  
 No sure there can be none,  
 We all are Lambes, no Foxes now,  
 The deuils dead and gone,  
 No sure: if he were dead,

F

The

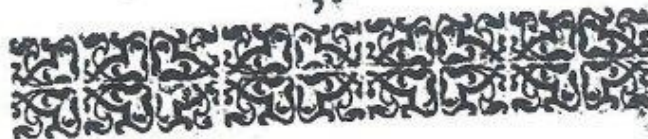




### *The Hermites Tale.*

The Poets then would leaue  
 To write of those that follow him,  
 And all the world deceiue.  
 But fare-well to the world  
 Vnlesse I come by stealth,  
 It neuer cares to grace such men  
 As want both wit and wealth.  
 I cannot kisse my hand  
 Nor lout below the knee,  
 Nor take a feather from your gowne;  
 You know such men there be.  
 In world one vndermines  
 another to no end,  
 And worst they speed,  
 who most in hope do spend;  
 Enuide they are,  
 on whom but Fortune smiles;  
 Though those smiles turne  
 to nothing other-whiles.  
 The mighty, seeking

to



### *The Hermites Tale.*

to enlarge their might,  
 Into contempt oft tumble  
 downe out-right.  
 The Lawyers Clyent  
 crouching on his knees,  
 Preuaileth nought,  
 except he bring large fees.  
 The Cittizen, the Scholler,  
 and the Boore,  
 Without a largesse,  
 are thrust out of doore.  
 Brauery, the gallant nouice  
 thinkes doth all,  
 When it consum'd,  
 his credite is but small.  
 Valour and Wit,  
 proud on their tip-roes stand,  
 And thinke chiefe dignities  
 they may command.  
 When that a foole,

F 2

a Parasite





### *The Hermites Tale.*

a Parasite, a Pander,  
 Betwixt them steps,  
 and they are set to wander.  
 So from the head  
 vnto the foote it fares,  
 Each one supplanteth  
 other vnawares.  
 The wisest builders,  
 against after stormes,  
 Fishing for honour,  
 baite their hookes with wormes;  
 Wormes that do dig  
 and delue for them all day,  
 Yet to all rauinous birds  
 are left a pray.  
 In Common-wealth  
 how many vainely dreame  
 Of Indian Mines,  
 that fish against the streame?  
 How many, that but hauing

one



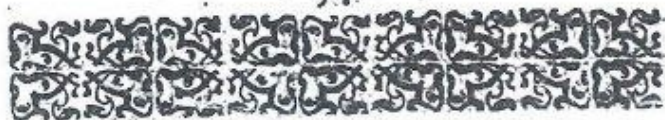
### *The Hermites Tale.*

one good bite,  
 A nodde, or least glaunce  
 from their Mistres sight,  
 Cost vpon cost, clap thicke  
 and three-fold on,  
 And neuer cease,  
 till they be quite vndone.  
 How many that do fish before the Net,  
 VVho offices before they fall do get,  
 And count all fish into their Net doth chaunce,  
 VVhom nought so vile, but serueth to aduance.  
 All these pursuing gaine, not true content,  
 Fish for their bane, their toile is fruitlesse spent.  
 This is the world my sonne,  
 Then now some comfort giue  
 To me poore man, my time is come  
 I can no longer liue  
 Mine age, my blessed age,  
 VVherein I do reioyce,  
 Hath lent me time for to repent,

F 3

And



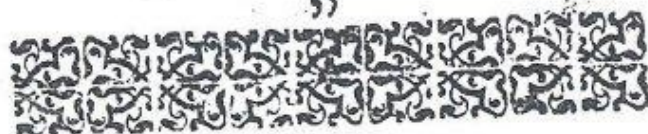


### *The Hermites Tale.*

And sing with Angels voyce,  
Hymnes, Anthems, Laude, and Praise  
Vnto the King of Kings,  
Which out of this wilde wretched world  
Poore soules to heauen brings.

You Poets all and some  
That write of *Esops* fables,  
Conceiting plots to please the world  
Notes from your booke of Tables;  
Me thinkes that *A-xax* should you call,  
To make wast-paper of you all  
That spend your time to please the time,  
With fictions, tales, and idle rime,  
Leauing the marke that should be hit,  
To praise Gods glory, and your wit.  
*Oxford* and *Cambridge* was erected  
For Vertue, not for vice protected.  
Ah, sonne, I faint, mine age and I  
Are striuing now who first should die:

My



### *The Hermites Tale.*

My will is made, I haue no wealth,  
But wishes, prayers, content and health,  
To thee my sonne, and all my friends  
That credite to this vaine world lends.  
My swolne-sicke heart, with death is tost,  
Like to a foote-ball in a frost;  
God blesse thee sonne, now close mine eyes,  
I hope my soule to heauen flies.  
And thus I end my Hermites Tale  
Which is of mickle ruth,  
It proues there is no hope in age,  
Nor certainty in youth.

*As for this homely Tale,  
And hee that made the same,  
Hath neither learning, wealth, nor wit,  
And scarce can write his name.*

FINIS.