OF THE NATURE AND USE OF LOTS;

A TREATISE HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL;

By THOMAS GATAKER B. of D.

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LONDON Printed by EDWARD GRIFFIN and are to be sold by WILLIAM BLADEN at the sign of the Bible at the great north door of Saint Paul’s. 1619.

Note: The original was scanned (as described above) and is available on-line from Early English Books Online (requires Athens password). I have ’modernised’ the text by replacing v’s with u’s where appropriate, for example replacing Vse with Use. I have also changed the spelling of words to modern British English usage, plus a few other slight amendments, like adding apostrophes. There still remains much of the archaic language, but the whole text is nevertheless remarkably readable, and interesting, if somewhat longwinded! Gataker was writing, I believe, a fact-based treatise, in English (all his other main work was in Latin), and hoped to communicate his ideas. Therefore, withal, I avow ’tis no trespass to update Gataker’s language. This despite that he was Pastor in Rotherhithe, but a quarter league from the renowned Globe Theatre whereat the great William Shakespeare was at the selfsame time staging his plays. And as a reverend man of God during reign of King James, must indeed be familiar with they who established that most fine translation of the Bible which was forever after named for the said sovereign: The King James Bible. But Gataker’s work is not intended to be a work of great literature, so I feel would be his wish to communicate in an accessible contemporary form.

I have not tried too hard to find out the more usual spellings of the many biblical and classical references used by Gataker—he had a remarkable wealth of knowledge of both. Nor have I tried to discover who are the authors from whom he draws his references, and with whom he often disagrees. Perchance, a later editor might find it worthwhile to fill these lacunae.

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There is a wealth of biographical information about Thomas Gataker on Wikipedia and other on-line sources.
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INTRODUCTION: To the Judicious and ingenious Reader:

How backward I have ever heretofore been (best knowing my own weakness) to publish anything by the Press, they best know, who having oft pressed me thereunto, have never hitherto therein prevailed. Now a twofold necessity is imposed upon me of doing somewhat in this kind, partly by the importunity of diverse Christian friends, religious and judicious, who having either heard, being partakers of my public Ministry, or heard of by report of others, or upon request seen some part of this weak work, have not ceased to solicit the further publishing of it. As also partly, (and more specially) by the iniquity of some others, who being of contrary judgment in some particulars therein disputed, have been more forward than was fit by unchristian slanders and uncharitable censures to tax and traduce both me and it. From whose unjust and undeserved aspersions no way seemed better and readier to clear either, than by offering to open view of all, what I had before delivered in an obscure auditory (to speak of) among but a few. And this thou hast here (good Reader) for effect and substance the same that was then and there delivered, enlarged only with such matter of History and Humanity as was not so fit to pester the Pulpit or encumber that Auditory withal. For the occasion of entering first into this discourse, and motives of wading so far in it, I refer thee to that part of it where I render an account thereof, unwilling to stay thee longer, than needs must be, in the entry. If any shall surmise that writings in this kind may occasion too much liberty, (a thing that little needed in this over-licentious age), I answer briefly: First that it is unequal that for the looseness of some dissolute, the consciences of those that be godly disposed should be entangled and ensnared; and Secondly, that whosoever shall take no more liberty than by me is here given, shall be sure to keep within the bounds of Piety, of Sobriety, of Equity, and of Charity: than which, I know not what can be more required. For no sinister end (I protest before God’s face and in his fear) undertook I this task; neither have I averted or defended anything therein, but what I am verily persuaded to be agreeable to God’s word. If any man can better inform me in anything, I shall be right ready to hearken unto him: neither have I neglected any means in this kind, (by writing & conference with others, besides mine own private labours) that might further me therein. Defects in it (I know) there can not but be many: what, or whose work is free from them? mine of many, much more: too many myself see; and many more (I well wot) a curious eye may soon espy. Let them in friendly and loving manner be shown me by any; (as some have already been by some, whom I rest beholden to for it) and I shall count it a special kindness. Where defects shall appear, let it yet be considered, whether they be vital and fundamental or no, such as touch the very heart and life of the main matter, or such as notwithstanding them the frame (or foundation at least) may stand firm: And withal let it be remembered that I deal in an Argument that has hitherto been handled very confusedly by the most, and not very soundly by the best; as to any indifferent eye upon due view of this present discourse may very evidently appear. Of thee (whosoever thou art) I desire but to find an impartial Reader, a judicious discusser, and a charitable censurer; that what I hold be not condemned out of prejudice unheard; what I prove be not rejected because it is not conceived; and what I proffer with the right hand be not taken with the left, but that Charity may continue with diversity of judgment, if thou shall in anything remain yet unsatisfied; a course too much wanting in this uncharitable age. And this favourable acceptance of these my sorry first-fruits shall find, it may encourage a weak beginner to attempt somewhat further hereafter, that may be of better use. Them and thee I commend both to him, who is the Author of all Truth, the clearing whereof has been in this work my main aim: He vouchsafe a blessing; and through his blessing the labour (I hope) shall prove not unfruitful.
CHAPTER 1. What a Lot is; and Of Lotteries in general.

§ 1. The use of lots and the lottery is very ancient, and has been in all ages no less frequent among men of all sorts. When considering that those things that are most in use, they are by means of man’s corruption most subject to abuse. It ought not to seem strange that the like has, among the rest, befallen Lots. Having been so much in use, they have not been free from abuse. Having been used by so many, they have been abused by most. For what creature of God, or what ordinance, civil or sacred, though good and holy in itself, is so happy, but that it receives, if not a deep tincture, yet at least some slight from the foul hands or defiled fingers of most that deal with it. So the lawful use of this Ordinance should be wisely discerned and warily severed from the abuse of it so that neither the use of it be wholly banished and abandoned in regard of the abuse. This is like when a Friend and Flatterer are both indiscreetly thrust out together at one door: neither giving way to the abuse of it, nor while the right use is admitted. This is like when the door is unheededly set open to flattery while men hope to entertain friendship. This is the main matter that in this whole Treatise is aimed at. So that it may be the better and the more orderly performed, it will not be amiss that we endeavour to consider and conceive aright, in the first place what the nature of a Lot is in general; and next to that, what the several sorts thereof are; whereby the warrantable and unwarrantable use of them may the more plainly appear.

§ 2. A Lot therefore may be well thus either defined or described, that it is a casuality or casual event purposely applied to the deciding of some doubt.

In the definition or description so conceived, (as in all other), there are two things principally to be considered, the genus, as they term it, that contained the matter; and the form or specific difference of the thing defined.

The Genus, or the matter of a Lot is said to be a casuality, or some casual event, because however it is that some kind of Lot gives a guess, even so the event is mainly casual, and it is the casuality of it. It is principally respected and necessarily required in it as the constitution of a Lot. Those therefore reach a little too far who define a Lot as the doing of anything whatever whereby some hidden thing may be discovered. There are many things which are and may be done for the discovery of hidden and unknown truths, which do not come within the nature and compass of a Lot. For example: A man suspecting his servant to be light-fingered, lays money as a bait in his way to tempt him, and thereby to try his honesty which he has in some doubt. This is no kind of Lot.

To omit many other courses used ordinarily by those that are in place of authority and judicature for the finding out of malefactors and the discovery of crimes, in which yet there is no kind of Lottery, no more than of casualty.

Actually, using a Lot is always some ‘casual’ event: For example, if a man tries to see if his servant is a thief or not, puts a scroll with his name in it, together with others rolled up severally into water, to see which will unfold first, and thereby to determine and judge of the party suspected whether he be guilty or guiltless of that crime. To which purpose tend those sayings of good Authors, that To use Lottery is to put a thing from skill and counsel to temerity and casuality; that A Lot is the child of chance; that The issue of Lots is not in man’s power, but is such as accident casts on us; that In Lottery there is no certainty; that Lots are not carried by reason and judgement, nor by counsel and advice; but Chance and accident strike the chief stroke in them, if we respect secondary causes.

It was no Lot therefore, but a mere mockery of a Lot, that Verres sometimes used, when a Priest was to be chosen by Lot at Syracuse. He caused the tickets or tokens that were cast into the Lot-pot to be all signed with one and the same man’s name: It was, I say, no Lottery, because there could be no accident or uncertainty in the drawing of the tickets so signed. But of Chance or accident we will speak more at large in the next Chapter.

§ 3. The form or specific difference is that a Lot is taken from the use and intent or purpose of the user, or that whatever this accident or
accidental event is applied to. This could be said to be the deciding or determining of some doubt, whether it be the defining of some act to be done, which is hanging yet in suspense, or the discovery of some hidden and unknown truth in things done or suspected to be done already. And this is that which distinguishes a Lot from all other casual events and accidents, and that makes the casual event so used, to be so justly accounted and called a Lot. Every Lot therefore is casual, and there can be no Lottery where there is not casualty. But every accidental event is not consequently a Lot, for many things fall out casually, and do befall men so continually in the whole course of their lives, which yet come not the most of them within compass of a Lot. An example is the chance meeting of those by the way that they never minded or once dreamed of; or of lighting on someone in the street or at the market, whom they desired to speak with, while they are going about other business; or of finding something while they look for another, or while they are looking for nothing but going on in their way. These things and the like are casual, but are not lots; there is no lottery at all in them. These things may befall a man willy-nilly, and often will many times whether he notices them or not. The Lot, or the other hand, depends upon the will and purpose of the user, who by applying it to such ends and purposes, makes a Lot of that which otherwise in its own nature there was none. But for a man to apply such an accidental thing or the accidental occurrence of any such thing to the discovering, defining, deciding, determining or directing of any truth unknown, event uncertain, or course unresolved, is to use it as a Lot, and to make a Lot of it. This is what gives the very essence of a Lot to it. This agrees with the definition of a Lot and Lottery given by some others, who say: A Lot is an accidental event which determines our purposes: (though that may be somewhat too scant, and comprehend but one kind). Or, A Lottery (whereof more anon) is the determining of some doubt or uncertainty by the variable event or disposition of some sensible thing that we propound to ourselves. The latter definition, though it does not so exactly point out the precise matter of a Lot, as we shall afterward show, does fully comprehend the proper use of a Lot, and that which justly makes the casual event to be so termed and esteemed.

§ 4. From what has been said of the nature of a Lot, there may be raised, as I take it, a somewhat a better definition, or at least description of Lottery, to wit, that it is the deciding or determining of a doubt by some accidental event. So the Lottery is not where there is some question or controversy of some sort or other, or a doubt of something to be done or not done, or by whom, or in what manner done, or some deliberation concerning somewhat to be done or not done, or to be done either in this way or that. Whether this is to be decided and determined by Lot is a matter out of question, not denied of any, but agreed upon by all. Now whereas many and sundry, yea infinite in a manner are the means whereby questions and controversies are determined, in all of these it is only when some accident or chance event is made the choice for the determining of the doubt, that which we can properly term Lottery. There are those who wander far from the right path in this point:

They confound the suffrages or voices which anciently were used for the election of Magistrates and Officers: Or in matter of judicature for the acquitting or convicting the party on trial by casting of beans white or black, or of beads and stones, or bones or shells whole or holed into a pitcher or other vessel prepared to that purpose. (whereunto Alcibiades 1 alluded sometimes when he said, He would not trust his own Mother with the trial of his life when he could avoid it, for fear lest she should unwittingly cast in a black bean for a white:) Lotteries have similarly been used for the disposing of some offices and places of employment also in the State, as if they were of the same nature, whereas indeed they are not. Others seem to shoot no less wide in this business, and draw within the compass of Lottery the proof of Aaron’s right to the Priesthood by that miraculous budding and fruit-bearing of his Almond-tree rod, the trials of quarrels in question of right by duels and combats, canonical purgations, by taking of the Host or the Eucharist, and also by fire and water anciently used even in these parts, divination by men’s names as foretelling their fortunes, and who should prevail against another, and the like. The means in these cases whereby the doubt or controversy is determined being not merely casual chance, and the decision of the doubt thereby is therefore improperly so termed (as a Lot).

1 brilliant but unscrupulous Athenian politician and military commander who provoked the sharp political antagonisms at Athens that were the main causes of Athens’ defeat by Sparta in the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC (ENC Brit))

2 Aaron, the first priest of the Israelites. Aaron was known by God to be able to speak well. Aaron was 123 years old when he died (Wiki)
§ 5. Let me add one thing further: It is not only necessary in the matter of Lottery that the thing be casual which is applied to the deciding of a doubt, but that it be thereto applied in so far as it is casual. (I speak in regard of the creature both using and used) So it should not either in its own nature, or in the conceit or counsel of those that make such use of it, have any special relation to the business thereby to be decided. An instance or two will help to clear my meaning here. If a man is requested to ride abroad on a rainy day with his friend, and says “I will ride, if I am held up by no-one, if I am, I will not stir abroad”: Or for a man being crossed casually by a hare on his way, to decide whether to journey or not, and to determine thereupon whether to proceed or to stay. There is in either of these cases a doubt decided by a chance event, but that is not considered as a casualty, because it has a peculiar relation to the business intended, and the convenience or inconveniency of it is effected by it in the one and presaged by it in the other. It is therefore not a Lottery. In which point also some of the former Authors seem to fail when they bring in divination by the flight of Fowls, and by their eating or refusing their food under this head. But for a man pressed in that manner to accompany his friend, to say, we will draw cuts whether we shall stay or go, or whether I shall go with you or you stay with me, and put off your journey to some other time: or being upon the way together, and disagreeing in opinion concerning the shaping of their course, to refer the question and controversy between them to be decided by the flight of the next Fowl, or the footing of some Beast that has gone before them on the way: This is matter of chance which can be regarded as it is merely casual. In this respect when applied to decide the present doubt no man therefore, I suppose, will deny it to be Lottery indeed. And thus we see what both a Lot and Lottery is in general, to wit, A Lot some casualty or event merely casual, purposely applied to the deciding of some doubt: and Lottery the deciding or determining of some question or controversy by such casual events considered as they are such.

CHAPTER 2. Of Chance or Casualty, and of casual Events.

§ 1. Now because Chance or Casualty bears much sway in Lottery, Casual Events being the subject matter of Lots, the due consideration thereof will help not a little to the clearing of the nature of Lots and Lottery, and those Questions that are moved concerning the same. Concerning Chance therefore or Casualty we will consider four things.

1. The name of it.
2. The nature of the thing so named.
3. Two distinct Acts concurring in it.
4. And lastly, certain conclusions or aphorisms concerning it.

First for the name or term of Chance or Casualty: Although it is utterly condemned by some, and held to be foolish and heathenish, it is a term according to the just analogy and proportion of Tongues and Languages, used by the Holy Ghost himself in God’s book, both in the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament, by the pen of Solomon, the wisest (of a mere man) that ever was since Adam, where he said, that Time and Chance befall all men, or all things. As also oft elsewhere in that book. In the New Testament by the mouth of one infinitely greater and wiser than Solomon, the very power and wisdom of God, our Saviour Christ himself, in the parable of the Jew who, journeying to Jericho fell among thieves, who as he lay wounded, half alive and half dead, a Priest is said to have come by Chance that way. Where the Evangelist Luke expresses in Greek what our Saviour spoke in Syrià, he used a word precisely answering another used by Solomon, and springing (as may be probably surmised) from the same root. I might add that in many other places this term is used elsewhere in holy writ, but these two shall suffice: Augustine therefore, though he repented himself in his Retractions that he named Chance or Fortune rather often in his writings; and it liked him not so well in regard of the abuse of that name among the Heathen, who held Fortune for a blind
Goddess, and ascribed unto her what they should have given unto God. He explained himself that he meant nothing thereby but the casual event of things; in which sense he acknowledged that it may be well used, and granted that Religion condemned not, nor inhibited such kind of speeches, as to say, Peradventure such a thing shall be, or, Perchance it may be, or, Such a thing came to pass by chance or casualty.

§ 2. Secondly for the nature of the thing so named, although some say that it is nothing, as the same is said of sin, and therefore deserved no name, save that Nothing itself must have some name, to express not so much what it is, as what it is not. Yet Chance and Casualty are indeed something, and may be defined a Contingency or uncertainty separate from forecast and foresight. Contingency or uncertainty I term it, to exclude it from necessity and certainty. For where there is necessity or certainty there can be no Casualty with Casualty and Certainty always excluding the others. I would add, severed from forecast and foresight, to distinguish casualty from such contingency, as is accompanied with either of these twain, either directed by forecast, or determined by foresight, which either of them both jointly and severally exclude casualty. Chance or casualty thus conceived are an affection or adjunct both of efficients and of effects. In regard of the former, the ancient Philosophers marshalled commonly among the causes in the rank of Efficients, though some later ones going more exactly to work, acknowledge it to be rather an Affection of an Efficient, or an Adjunct manner of Efficiency than an efficient cause of or in itself. In regard of the latter, Chance or Casualty is by a Trope (figure of speech) ordinarily used to signify the Effect itself so affected. That is how I take it here, and consider in the matter of a Lot, as the use of Authors well warranted it, and as Christian Writers in these Questions most usually understand it, as a Casual Event, that is, an Event contingent, not directed or determined by any fore-cast or fore-sight. A Contingent, I say, that is, an uncertain or variable Event, as all grant it to be. And that again it is so uncertain that the uncertainty of it is not directed or determined by the skill, counsel, or fore-cast of him to whom it is casual; nor that it is not effected and produced by known natural causes, but that neither his skill or counsel has any hand in the directing of those causes in producing of that effect, nor his forecast can determine what the effect will be in particular but by mere conjecture only.

To better understand it, all Events may be referred to under three heads: They are: Necessary, Contingent but not Casual, or Contingent and Casual.

Necessary are such things that fall out naturally always alike in a certain and constant course, and cannot do otherwise, unless some supernatural power countermand and over-rule them, and the causes producing them. Such kind of events are the motion of the Heavens, the course of the Sun, that a fire burns combustible matter cast into it, and the like.

Contingent and not casual are such as are so done one way, as they may or might have been done some other way, but that uncertainty is determined by the knowledge, art, fore-cast, and skill, or by the advice, counsel, deliberation, or free election of those whom they concern or befall. An example is a man on his way to go on or stand still, to go forward or backward, it being in his power and determinable by his own will and advice to do the one or the other. Contingent and casual are such things that might fall out diversely, and are not determined by any art or forecast, counsel or skill in regard of the person to whom they are casual, or whom they casually befall. Thus for a man travelling on the way, without a forecast of anything of that kind, to espay the Eclipse of the Sun falling out at the same instant as he is in the river wherein he rides to water his horse. The Eclipse of the Sun here is natural and necessary, his seeing or not seeing it is contingent or voluntary, his espaying it in that place going in for no such end is merely casual and accidentary. Another example would be the slaying of Achab by casualty, where it is said that someone drew his bow in simplicity, intending, it seemed, nothing less than that his arrow should hit wherever it did, being shot out at all adventure by him, the uncertain motion not directed or determined by the will or skill of the shooter to the mark that it hit. So the slaughter of the person that is casually slain, is said to be done suddenly, inconsiderately, not out of enmity, not of set purpose or by a train, the party that did it not eying or seeing him, nor seeking his hurt whom he slew. All these terms and phrases were used by the Spirit of God in that case. They tend not only to express the uncertainty of the event, but to remove also all knowledge and counsel, all foresight and forecast, whereby that uncertainty might be determined by the party that was agent in that act.

§ 3. Now in these casual events there are two things concurring, as generally in all acts and
events whatever. The one is an act of the creature that is either reasonable or unreasonable. Of the reasonable, they are either led merely by guess and conjecture, as in drawing of cuts, or rousing at all adventure, as in taking out of tickets shuffled and so blended together, that there is no place at all left for guess. Of the unreasonable it is either deciding by naturally but uncertain events in regard of particular circumstances, as in divination by the flight of Fowls, and by their feeding or refusing their food, or moved by some other at all adventure, (for so far forth as any art or skill is used, so far forth it is not casual). These events may take many courses, or light diversely, if it is one, as when a blind man or one blindfolded shot a shaft at random; or when boys play at cross and pile. They must of necessity fall diversely though uncertainly how, if they be many or more than one, as where many dice or pawns are cast out of the same box or hand, or sundry balls or bowls out of the same lap or arm. The other is an act of the Creator, a providence or assistance either in general or special. For the most part general and mediate in ordinary casualties, sometimes special and immediate in extraordinary events. A general providence, I say, ordinarily, as in all other things: For the prescience and providence, or, if you will, rather the will, all other things: For the prescience and providence, who is therefore said to offer the maintaining of my Lot. is the portion of my part and of my cup; and properly, as the former words show, (Though that be spoken metaphorically not in all, but rather in all casual events also: and as in all things, so in casual events ordinarily, and no otherwise. If a Sparrow fall not without God’s permission, much less is any man slain without God’s providence, who is therefore said to offer the man that is casually slain, unto the hand of him by whom he is slain. In this regard well said Augustine, that That which is commonly called Chance, is yet by a certain course secretly guided: and that Even in those things that we say come by chance or by adventure, respect ought to be had to a divine disposition. Yea in regard of this providence by casualties oft checking men’s counsels, is it said by Solomon, that The race goes not always with the swiftest, nor the battle with the strongest, nor bread to the wisest, nor wealth to the most skilful, nor grace to the most cunning; but Time and Chance befall them all. That is what the Heathen man maybe saw when he said, that Men ought not to rely overmuch on their counsel or forecast; for that fortune, as said he, or God’s providence by fortune. A much expression in almost the precise terms from Solomon who said, strikes a great stroke, and oft carried things across to that we expect. This is so in other casual events, and in Lots among others. Of these Solomon said therefore that The Lot is cast into the lap, but each disposition of it is of God. In the word of God spoken by Solomon, as many Divines of great and of good note expound him, has implied thus much, that though nothing seems to be, or indeed is more casual than a Lot, where it is carried out as it ought, there is a divine providence in the disposition of it. This is the same also in all other events, of whatever nature and quality they be. And therefore look what is said by Solomon of a Lot in that place, the selfsame is said elsewhere of all men’s thoughts, and ways, and words, and works, and counsels, and courses, that they are disposed by God, and are not absolutely in our power to issue them as we will. As St. Augustine said: Those things that fall to us by Lot are given us from God. According to the Psalmist: The lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, and I have a fair heritage: I praise the Lord for it. (Though that be spoken metaphorically not properly, as the former words show, The Lord is the portion of my part and of my cup; and the maintainer of my Lot.) But whatever the manner of acquiring wealth, be it left by decease of friends, or got by travail and industry, or attained otherwise, or rest or sleep, and a good wife, and children which are said to be God’s gifts, and to come all from him, who gives all things to all, and worked all things for all, and in all.

But sometimes there is a more special and immediate providence in extraordinary cases and upon extraordinary occasions in these casual events: As in the casting of the man suddenly for fear of the enemy into the sepulchre of Elisha, who by God’s admirable work to grace the blessed memory of his faithful servant deceased, revived thereupon; As in the Lot whereby Jonah was sometimes discovered, done, as Hierome well said, not by virtue of the Lot itself, much less of a Lot used by Heathen and Infidels, but by his will and providence that ruled, or rather over-ruled the uncertainty of it. And in this case where Bernard said: That which seems Chance to us, is as a word of God acquainting us with his will. Which is true indeed in general, if we consider God’s decreeing of whatever comes to pass, for we know that it was God’s will it should be so, when we see it once fallen out so, and his will is manifested by his work,
either for the doing of the thing itself, or for the permitting of it to be done. Otherwise, to further understand the manifestation of God’s will concerning somewhat to be done or left undone of us, it is not true in general. For what the word of God is showing is his will in this kind and this sense: That when a hare started out before a man in the way, or a fowl flew beside him, or he treaded in some unclean thing unawares, and the like, more than in any other act whatever? Unless we give way to superstitious and frivolous conceits, that make such accidents ominous. How is it that extraordinary Lots cast by special instinct or express appointment of God, it is most true? And of such may well be understood those speeches of other of the Ancients, who call Lottery a divine trial, and a divine sentence: and say that a Lot discovered to men God’s hidden will; and makes it known openly what God judges secretly: as also that A Lot is a matter in man’s doubting manifesting God’s will. Which sayings all, if they are to be understood as God’s will in what he would have done or not done of us, must of necessity be restrained to such Lots alone as God himself shall by some special means appoint to be used to that purpose.

§ 4. From what has been said, and already laid down, certain conclusions may be deduced concerning casual Events:

The first conclusion: It is idle in matter of Casualty, and so of Lottery, to confound the act of the Creator with the work of the creature. They are two different things, distinct in themselves, which ought not therefore to be confounded in casual events more than in any other whatever. Yet many seem to do, and those men of some note, when they say, that Fortune or Chance is the same with God’s providence, and that they differ only in respect: as also, that Providence, Fate or Destiny, and Fortune or Casualty are in truth the same; yet so to be distinguished, that the first includes the two latter: For that Providence is the cause of all things that are done; which Providence in respect of things done necessarily is called Fate or Destiny, in respect of things done casually is called Fortune or Casualty. And therefore That (say they) which to the wise and godly is God’s singular Providence, to the foolish and profane is Fortune or Chance. This is like what was said by Lactaentius of nature, (as before him Seneca,) which he confounded also with God. Folly and error and blindness, said he, and, as Cicero confessed, the ignorance of causes brought in the names of Nature and Fortune. And again, This overthrow of piety brought in Nature’s name: For when men knew not by whom the world was made, or would persuade men that nothing was made by the Deity; they said that Nature was the mother of all things, as if they should say that all things had sprung up naturally of themselves: which word while they use, they confess their own folly: Since Nature, severed from the divine power and providence, is just nothing. And a similar error is committed by those who define Fortune a certain Goddess which by sundry casualties sported herself with defeating of men’s purposes, because they understand not from whom those good or evil things come that befall them. It is true indeed, (as a worthy man said answering that objection of Atheists and Epicures, what will become of Fortune if there be a divine Providence in all things?) that if we speak of Fortune, as the Poets paint her, blind, standing on a globe, turned about like a weathercock with every puff of wind. This is either a poetical figment, that may as easily be done out by us as it is drawn by them, or else at best a symbolical emblem deciphering the great uncertainty of casual events, of which we shall say more anon. Again the same Author has said that if by Fortune with Proclus, we understand a divine power coupling causes together which would of time otherwise, that they may work to one and the same end; then are we to acknowledge such a power and providence not in casual things and such as are uncertain alone, but in all other whatever, even those that be most certain. For Fortune is no other than but God nicknamed. But what if we consider the term of Nature, and so of Fortune or Chance, as the Holy Ghost used them? As Nature is a power or faculty in the creature distinct from God’s providence guiding and ruling, often over-rules the same to such ends as he sees good, so is Fortune or Chance also an affection or action of the creature distinct from the same providence whereby God likewise guided and disposed the same at his pleasure. In natural effects therefore, there is the work of the creature, which might be even though there were no providence disposing it. But if the creature for matter of direction were left wholly to itself, then there are also casual events, which as they do now fall out, and yet are ordered, as all other things, by God’s providence either general or special. So would no doubt fall out the same oft-times that now they do, were there no providence at all, but the creature left to it own work and will. As the Schoolman not unfairly said, that there might be some use of some kind of Lot, although there were no providence at all to guide it, for the decision of
the matter in question is referred wholly, as we shall see after, to the casual motion of the creature, without any special providence of the Creator required. In a word, if in casual events we consider anything apart from the nature and the uncertain motion thereof, (uncertain (I say) to us, because not determinable by us, though determined ordinarily by some natural cause or other:) there is nothing guiding them but God’s providence. These two things, the act of the creature, and God’s providence accompanying it, though never sundered or severed, yet are to be distinguished and distinctly considered, and not to be confounded the one with the other.

§ 5. A second conclusion: The casualty of an event does not simply of itself make it a work of God’s special or immediate providence. It is apparent, for there is oft-times a more special providence in many things that are not casual but contingent only, than in the most things that are casual. How many casual events daily befall us, even as many almost as we meet with men, or tread steps on our way, when every cast of our eye ministered new variety of casualty, and every unexpected object brings a casual event with it? Yet no man will be so senseless as to account so many several works of special or immediate providence. And yet one contingent event among many other merely casual may be so, even when they are not. For example; for a man on his way to be crossed oft by a hare, to meet with many unknown, find a piece of old iron, spy a covey of partridges, have his hat blown off his head, and the like, may well befall a man and be all merely casual. But for a man’s friend out of suspicion of danger and forecast of distress that his friend may incur, to enforce his company upon him, whereas otherwise he should travail alone and is desirous to do so, and being in company with him to be a means of saving his life by recovery upon a fall, or by rescue upon assault, were an event contingent rather than casual. And yet who would not acknowledge a more special providence of God in the latter case that is less casual, or rather not casual at all but contingent only, deliberately and voluntary, undertaken upon mature counsel and forecast, than in the former, that are or may be merely casual, and fall out beyond all expectation, without any forecast at all?

It is true indeed that God’s providence is more manifested in things casually befalling us for good or evil, than in things that befall us contingently by means of men and their forecast and affection to us, or their hatred and malice. As more in things that fall out contingently, than in things that are necessary. Howbeit the providence of God ordinarily extended itself to all of them alike, and is more special sometimes in some things not casual than in others that are such? Yet in the same event either casual or other may a more special providence of God be justly deemed to be at some time than at other in regard of circumstances concurring: As for example a man travelling over Salisbury plain finds a pitcher of water left occasionally there, having no need of it or use for it, no man, I suppose, would expound as a special providence of God. But for a man exceedingly vexed with thirst, extremely distressed, as Sampson was, and ready to die for want of water to drink, to light on the like booty casually, as Hagar was directed by God’s angel to a well, he would have just cause to esteem it to have a special providence of God in it, and might well term the place where he should so find it, as she did another place where God’s angel found her, “Beer lachai rói”, or the Well of the living God that looked after me when I was nearly lost. No man not fondly superstitious would account so of the one; and no man not grossly impious but would judge so of the other. Yet both equally casual; the casualty of events therefore does not in itself simply judge them to either.

§ 6. A third conclusion: What may be casual to one may not be casual to another. Where there is forecast and foreknowledge and counsel foreseeing or directing and disposing it in the one, and not in the other, despite it seeming so, which indeed it is not. To better conceive this consider that in casual events two things do concur: Ignorance or want of foreknowledge foreseeing them, and inconsiderateness, or want of fore-cast directing them. These are the things that make the event of them uncertain to us, and uncertainty breeds casualty. Yet is not that untrue to say that Ignorance of causes forged the term of Chance or Fortune: and that Chance is nothing but that, the cause whereof, or means whereby it is effected, is hid from us. For many things we know not the cause, yet we ascribe them not to chance, nor are they casual. Some of them are necessary, as that the Loadstone should attract iron and steel, and direct the needle touching with it Northward. No known cause or certain reason can be rendered of either, and yet are they necessary and natural, not casual events. Some are only contingent, as when the return of ague fits in an ordinary course: That is not casual, to speak properly, but contingent only at the most, even to such a one as out of ignorance of the true
cause and ground of its recourse in that manner, suspected it is some kind of spirit. Again there are many things that come to pass daily, which we know the causes of, and yet are they casual to us, because they were not foreseen by us: as when a hare started by hounds crosses a man trailing on some other occasion. Though he be neither ignorant of the cause of his own journey that way, nor of the cause of the hare’s crossing that way at that instant, yet may it is casual to him that a hare then and there should cross him. If a man knew before-hand what would fall out or befall him on the way, nothing that did betide him would be casual unto him. Thus then may the same thing be casual to one, but not to another, because it was foreseen and fore-known by the one and not by the other. As Saul’s meeting them that Samuel had foretold him of before, was casual to them he met, not casual to Samuel and Saul himself, the one that foresaw it by revelation from God, the other that fore-knew by relation from him.

Again, all counsel and forecast is excluded from casual events. Nothing that is done by advice, counsel or forecast, is done casually in regard to him that does it. *What is done casually is done unadvisedly,* said Augustine. And Temerity swayed in casualty, not reason or advice, as we have formerly showed. In which regard we used to say of those that speak inconsiderately and deal unadvisedly and inconstantly, that they deal as if they dealt by casualty, or went by Lottery; that they speak as if they drew cuts as to what they should say. And thus again it may be that casual to one is not so to another, because it is beside the intent and purpose of the one and not of the other. Thus was Ahab’s meeting Elias casual to Ahab, but not casual to Elias, who went of purpose to meet Ahab: Thus was Jephta’s meeting his daughter and she him, casual to him who expected her not, not casual to her whose purpose was to meet him.

So many things seem casual when indeed they are not; being thought to come by adventure, when they are done by art and advice. As Plato counselled the rulers of his imaginary state to couple persons together by a slight and semblance of lottery, that they might seem to light either on the other by lot or by chance, when indeed it was done by their cunning and slight. Thus Darius had his horses neighing after the mare which he had been with lately before in that place. This seemed casual to his competitors, who before had agreed to settle the Empire on him whose horse should first neigh at their next meeting in that place. But neither was so indeed, nor seemed so to himself, or at least to his groom who had laid the train before for it. So a man who sent his servant on an errand through a lane where he knew that he shall meet his mistress coming from market laden with meat: They meet accordingly, the one not expecting the other, and suppose they meet casually, when indeed it is no casualty, but the good man’s care in forecasting it for the ease of his wife. Thus the servant lighted on money that his master had laid on purpose as a bait to try his honesty, whether he will restore it or retain it. The servant thought it came there casually, whereas it was purposely placed. And of this kind, in a word, is all cozen (cheating) and a cunning conveyance used in Lots to make that seem casual when indeed is not, but is carried by slight. This is a thing so common in such courses, that among the Dutch it is reported to be grown to a by-word, *In Lottery is Bowery,* that is, knavery or cozenage. Now however in such cases the ignorance of causes makes those things seem casual that indeed are not so, yet to speak properly, it is rather the ignorance of events, as in the former cases, that makes things indeed casual unto many. By the means whereof it comes oft to pass, the same events are casual to some that foresaw them not, and yet not casual to others that foresaw them before. And so it is true, that *Casualty depended upon our ignorance;* which therefore the more we know, the less we are subject unto.

§ 7. And hence follows the fourth and last Conclusion: That there is no casualty with God, because there is no ignorance in God. There is nothing, I say, casual unto Him; nothing comes contingently, but all things are necessarily in regard of Him and His decree. If we respect indeed the creature, and its manner of working, some things come to pass necessarily, some contingently, some casually. But if we respect God’s will and purpose, his prescience and providence, nothing falls out contingently or casually, but all things come to pass necessarily. Nothing contingently, for in contingency is uncertainty: but all things are certain with him, *who has done already what he will do or will have done;* and with whom whatever ever shall be, is as sure as if it were done already. For *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against God. He disannulled the devices of Nations,* and *defeated peoples’ purposes: But his counsel shall ever stand, and his purposes shall always take place.* Nothing casually, because He sees all, and knows all; yea He foresees and foreknows all that ever shall be. For from the
beginning of the world, yea from all eternity, God knew all his works; his foreknowledge and prescience being coeternal with himself and his own essence, and all the thoughts, and words, and works of all his creatures are as well known to him as are his own. For There is not a word in my tongue, but thou, Lord, wholly knows it, said David, and thou understands my thoughts long before. And Thou alone knows all men’s hearts, said Solomon. And again, All things are naked and broken up to him with whom we have to do. Yea as He foresees and foreknows all things ere they are, so he sees and knows all things past, present and future at once. We are as men on the way, who see those who go before them or with them, but see not who come behind them. God is as one standing aloft on a sentinel, that sees all both before and behind under one view at one instant. That which the Psalmist seemed to allude to when he said, that God looked down from heaven and saw all Adam’s sons; from his place of abode he views all the inhabitants of the world: and as He framed and fashioned the hearts of each of them, so He takes notice of all their works. God therefore, foreseeing all things ere any of them are, means that none of them fall out casually in regard of His Majesty. But needs must he foresee all things even ere they are, when there is nothing that he never sees: and there is nothing but he ever sees it, that sees all things at once.

Again, in regard of God, nothing can come casually, because by His providence and eternal counsel all things are guided and governed and ordered by him to such ends as He sees best Himself. So that even those things that seem most disorderly in themselves, yet they are ordered by him. For not only the best things are all effected and wrought by Him: Even the worst and the wickedest are all so ordered and disposed by his eternal counsel and unsearchable wisdom, that even by those that do what He willed not but forbade, he fulfilled what he willed. Nothing therefore comes to pass but what God foresaw, what God fore decreed, what he has foreknown, and what he has fore ordained. There is nothing that comes casually in regard of God, casualty necessarily excluding all fore knowledge and forecast. That is what the Heathen man of old foresaw when he said, that Nothing was casual with God, though many things were with man. In this sense we should take Augustine, when he reasoned thus against casualty; whatever is done by casualty, is done unadvisedly: whatever is done unadvisedly, is done without forecast or foresight: if anything therefore in the world comes to pass casually, the whole world is not administered by forecast or foresight. Which argument or ground of his simply considered might exclude as well all contingency in regard of uncertainty, as all casualty in events, but must of necessity be understood of the events of things only as they regard God; with whom, because He foresees all things before they fall out, and fore determines all things how they shall fall out, none of those events are casual, that are most casual unto us, none contingent of those many that are contingent unto us.

CHAPTER 3. Of the several Sorts or Kinds of Lots.

§ 1. So far we have spoken about the definition of a Lot, and of Casual Events, of which a Lot is one, in general. We will now proceed to consider of the several Sorts and Kinds of Lots.

In the definition of Lots I find much diversity among Writers, some describing them under two heads, some to three, some to four, some to more, uncertain how many.

Lyra make but two sorts of Lots, divisory, used for the dividing of something between divers; and consultory, for the determining of somewhat to be done. The former (divisory), said he, is lawful and free from offence, if without greedy desire of gain the event be committed to the chance or the casual motion of the creature. The latter (consultory) is unlawful, if the event (result?) of it is expected from any created power beside the casual act of the creature, as from the motion of Planets, or the operation of evil Spirits. It is not unlawful if it be expected from God or good Angels, and done in case of necessity, with due reverence, and out of Ecclesiastical Elections. Lavater and Schlinder make two sorts, but in different terms: Divisory and divinatory.
Divisory, is used (as before) for division of possessions, legacies, spoils, offices, exercises, employments, and the like, and these are lawful and commendable. Divinatory are used for the finding out of hidden and unknown truths, and the foretelling of future events, and are unlawful and damnable. The consultory Lot they think is to be included in the two former, though not the same simply with either.

Serarius⁴ again make two classifications in another way: Consultory, and Divinatory: For that, he said, which by a Lot is sought out, is either the bare knowledge of things past, present or future, or it is beside the knowledge of something, any action whatever that may come within the compass of deliberation and counsel; that is done by a divinatory, this by a consultory Lot. The divisory Lot may be referred, he thinks, to this latter.

§ 2. Thomas Aquinas make three sorts: Divisory. Consultory and Divinatory. Divisory: determines what each one shall have; Consultory, inquiring into what were best to be done; and Divinatory, searching what shall happen hereafter. If the result, said he, is expected from the stars that is false and vain. If from chance alone, as in the divisory, then it is not wholly free from some vanity. But if there is some spiritual cause directing it, and that either the Devil, and that wicked spirits, or God, then that in itself is not evil. Yet it may become sinful if Lots are used with no necessity, or without due reverence, or with abuse of divine oracles, or in Ecclesiastical offices. Otherwise in the case of necessity it would be lawful, with due reverence, to implore a divine sentence by Lot. Most of your Popish Writers follow Aquinas, apart from Caietan, and Tolet who restrain these cautions to the consultory Lot only. And some of them (Malderus, and Delrio) who condemn utterly both consultory and divinatory Lots, except in case of special either command or instinct. They allow divisory lots when used without wrong or injury to any. And, Peter Martyr, (a protestant writer) sets down the same sorts of Lots, and passes the same censure upon them: That to expect the event (result) from them using Chance or Fortune is frivolous, using evil spirits is superstitious, using the planets is ridiculous. It is, from God alone that the only religious and only lawful use comes, which can be used in case of necessity, reverently and religiously, without superstition, without fraud or collusion, and without abuse of divine oracles. Peucer and Krakevitz make three sorts also, but in another way: Lots divine, guided and governed immediately by God, which godly men use upon God’s special command, not warranted now to us. Civil or politick Lots used for the ending of strife and lawsuits, or the parting of goods, gifts, and legacies, or the collation of some honours and offices. These may lawfully be used with mutual consent, and without coven (conspiracy) and fraud. And Divinatory or superstitious Lots, where men presume upon idle grounds, neither warranted by God’s word, nor founded on natural reason, to find out hidden truths, and guess at future events. This is a Satanical course, and is expressly forbidden in Scripture.

Perkins again makes three sorts with a new alteration: Civil or politick, which are used for the dividing of bargains et cetera, to end strife: Sporting, used commonly for the setting up of bankrupts: And Divining, used for the foretelling of future events. The first is warrantable when used in cases of weight and necessity, and with the invocation of God’s name. The two latter notable abuses, have no warrant in God’s word.

§ 3. Easty is alone in making four sorts of Lot: Divine, appointed and commended to be used by God; Diabolical, for divination, condemned of all; Political, for choice of Magistrates in cases of war, tolerated by many; Luxurious, for sport and pastime, questioned by most: and by himself disallowed.

Lastly Serarius, besides his former categories has another one of Serious and Lusorious. This is akin to what others have, of permitted and prohibited, of lawful and unlawful, of religious and profane. There are many others too insignificant to bother with, drawn from the great variety and diversity of workers about them, instruments used in them, matters disposed by them, the manner how, the places where, the times wherein they were used, and the like.

§ 4. But leaving these many and disagreeing divisions to their several Authors, we will attempt to give somewhat a fuller, and more exact classification, fitter and more commodious for the business here intended, than most of them have done.

Lots therefore may be all well referred to two heads, and sorted into two ranks, either of Ordinary, which are commonly termed Divisory; or of Extraordinary, such as the

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¹ Serarius: of Lorraine (died 1609);
Consultory and Divinatory. The Ordinary may be subdivided into Serious and Lusorious:

CHAPTER 4. Of Ordinary Lots

§ 1. To begin then with the former sort: Ordinary Lots I call those whose full work may be effected by the ordinary or natural power of the creature using them and used in them: or wherein no extraordinary power or providence is required for the direction of the action to that end whereunto it is applied.

Of this kind are all those Lots that are merely Divisory, wherein the matter in question and controversy can be decided by the casual motion or event of the creature, being committed thereunto by those in whose power it is to dispose of it, without any special providence or extraordinary means required for the directing of the action in this or that manner. These kind of Lots may also be termed Civil or profane Lots, taking the word profane, as it is opposed to Sacred, in its better sense. So where comes the definition of a Lot, as a Lot is a kind of consulting with God of rare use, yet lawful to be used in situations where neither reason nor human advice can conveniently be had? This is nothing less than any consulting with God in such Lots as we now speak of, there being no cause, nor reason, nor ground, nor occasion so to do. Seeing there is neither any question concerning will, what he would have done or not done, nor any thing to be done that in regard of the difficulty of doing it, requires any special aid and assistance or divine presence or providence, more than any other ordinary act and affair of this life. For there is nothing expected or required in these Ordinary, Civil, Divisory Lots, but what is in the natural power of the creature therein used, the will and consent of the creature making use of it concurring, as easily to effect, just as a man who has limbs to walk, or has sight to see. This will become evident by a diligent view of the several examples that follow.

§ 2. Again: Ordinary Lots are of two sorts, either Serious or Lusorius (Gaming). Serious I call those that are used in serious business, be it great or small, weighty or light, not a matter of mere sport or delight alone. This is the Lot that some of the former Authors term the Divisory Lot, because of its frequent use in the division of lands, goods, chattels, bargains, exercises, offices, employments, and the like. One example: Solomon said that The Lot stinted strives, and make partition among the mighty.

There area great variety of Examples of the Lot in Holy Writ and in ‘profane’ Writers. We may observe that Lots have been used for distribution of matters of Office and Charge, for the division of possessions and lands, of goods and chattels, or the like.

Matters of Office or Service and Charge distributed by Lot have been either Sacred or Civil.

For the former: Firstly, we should ignore the bold fancy of Origin, which he gathered from a place of Moses from a mistranslation by the Septuagints, which he himself misexpounded, that the Angels in heaven have their charges assigned them by Lot, to decide who shall rule this or that Province, who tends this or that person, who governs this or that Church. He writhed and wrested many places of Scripture for the proof of this frivolous assertion. And it was also put out in apparent error by Ambrose, so that many in former times, as well as later days also, and those of good note, followed him. They deceive by a misunderstanding in a place in the Gospel, where it was said that the High Priest in the Old Testament was elected by Lot. It is apparent by evident proof to the contrary, that the high priesthood among the Jews was selected legally and usually by descent, although sometimes indeed corruptly by force, favour or purchase. It was never that we read of, save once only a little before the last utter ruin of that both Church and State, that a Lot was used. And lastly, not to insist on that groundless conceit of the counterfeit Prochorus, whom many agreed with that the Apostles of Christ parted among themselves by Lot the whole world for to preach and plant the Gospel in. Again, the Seventy two Disciples who should accompany and attend on each
Apostle, as the Levites did on the Priests: that John’s Lot light for Asia, and Prochorus his for John.

To pass, I say, from these fond figments to the truth of story. Sacred Offices, for the reader manner of performance and more orderly execution of them were in the Jewish Church divided by Lot.

§ 3. The divisions of Sacred Offices made among them by Lot were either General or Special.

In General, the whole body of the Tribe of Levi was by Lot sorted out into ranks.

For first, the Priests were all divided into twenty four companies according to their families, which took their courses by turns, every week after week in order; the order of their courses being determined by Lot, to take away all murmuring, that none might complain, as being less regarded and cast behind others.

And again, the Levites that were not Priests were likewise divided into 24 companies, appointed to attend the former companies of Priests; who, which, and when, was decided likewise by Lot; all great and small submitting themselves alike to that sentence, that there might be no contention nor emulation amongst them. In particular for the Priests that were of each company, and were to serve at the same time, there were Lots cast by them likewise for the sharing of Offices among themselves (partly to avoid confusion and contention; for God is a God of order and peace; and partly the better to settle the service; since no man commonly regarded that that is every man’s charge) who should tend the Altar of Incense, who the Table of holy bread, who the dressing of the Lamps, who the Altar of Burnt offerings, who should feed the Fire, who should carry out the Ashes &c., as by the books of the Jewish Liturgies is reported plainly to appear. And thus is that place of the Evangelist Luke to be understood, where it is said of Zachary, that being of the Court of Abia, and serving in his Court, he went by Lot in to burn Incense: A place for want of this observation misunderstood by many of the Ancients, who (to let pass here the repetition of Ambrose’s error, which it seems he drew hence) supposing Zacharie to have been High Priest (which it is apparent he was not; for the High Priest was of no particular course, nor lived from Jerusalem, but had his employment constant, and his abode continual about the Temple:) and to have gone in then to burn incense for the solemn Fast of Atonement, at which time only the High Priest entered not with incense alone, but with blood also, and that but once in the year, into the innermost Sanctuary, (whereas Zacharie by Lot was assigned to do what he did) did thereupon ground their groundless and uncertain conceit, (though in a matter of no great moment) which has yet continued to these times, concerning the time of our Saviour Christ’s conception and birth, referring thereupon the one to the Spring toward the end of our March, and the other to Midwinter about the latter end of December, or the beginning of January: whereas the most ancient referred his birth-time to our Spring, their Harvest, about April or May; and other later ones of great note, upon grounds as uncertain, would reduce it to September or October in Autumn.

But to return to our Task: As the Priests shared the services among themselves by Lot: so the Levites likewise, as well those that were Singers, as those that were Porters, decided by Lot, what order of course should be observed in their musical and ministerial employment by the one, and which gates of the Temple should be waited at and attended by the other. Among whom also those that were to wait in the same place, being many in number, are reported likewise to have taken their turns by Lot, as well for the nightly watch, as for the daily ward. The Offices themselves were, it seemed, distributed, who should be Singers, who Porters, &c. by David, Nathan, and God, with other principal persons assisting them, having warrant so to do from God: only the order and course of their employment in those offices was divided unto them, or decided and determined among themselves upon joint consent and general agreement, by Lot.

And hence arises the phrase used by Simon Peter to Simon Magus, Thou hast neither share, nor Lot in this business, Which speech yet no more proved what that bastard Prochorus broached, that the Apostles shared among themselves by Lot: no more than commanding Elias to anoint Elizeus as Prophet in his own place, (which was done, as the story showed, not by pouring oil on his head, but by casting a mantle on his back) proved that Prophets were either ordinarily, or at all anointed in the time of the Old Testament; (an opinion without sufficient ground generally received;) or that anointing of Kings was ever usual in Persia, because Cyrus is termed the Lord’s anointed; or that material oil was poured upon our Saviour to that purpose, because he is called Christ and Messiah, and is
said to have been anointed by God. But, as to anoint is there put for solemnly to set apart and appoint, where yet there is no material anointing at all, because into some sacred Offices men were sometimes by that Ceremony installed: so is a Lot here used for right or interest to deal in that holy business, which yet was not, save in Matthias his case, disposed of by Lot, because sacred Offices or employments had sometimes been thereby distributed.

Thus Augustine would have it determined by Lot among the Pastors of people, where many are in one City, in time of public persecution: who of them should stay by it, and who should retire and reserve themselves for better times; that so neither those that stayed might be taxed of presumption, nor those that retired themselves be condemned of cowardice. As also it is reported by some to be the practise to this day in the Church of Geneva, that by Lots cast among their Ministers, some of them are assigned to visit the infected at the Pest house in times of general infection by epidemical diseases.

§ 4. Now as in assignment of sacred Offices, so in distribution of civil Services and matter of charge, have Lots among people been ordinarily used. Two Examples especially are found of it in Scripture.

The first is in a Military matter: where in the Levites’ quarrel, one had his Concubine ravished, so that she died of it at Gibea in Benjamin: the other Tribes of Israel resolved to go up against the Benjamites by Lot. So it was to be conceived, that the Lot should determine which Tribe of the eleven should first go up against them: (for they are said to have asked of the Lord at Shiloh, and of the Priest that stood before him there, which Tribe should give the justice.). The meaning of this is, as two worthy Interpreters rightly observe, a Lot to decide who of each Tribe should be warriors, and who should be purveyors, who should go forth to fight, and who should be employed to bring in provisions to those that were abroad in the fields. The State there was then popular, as one of them well noted: and therefore it seemed best to decide that by Lot, which without much tumult in an Anarchy could not easily have been determined otherwise.

The latter Example is in a City business: There were some people who had returned from the Babylonian deportation, who cast Lots amongst themselves by Ezra’s direction, to decide who should undergo the burden for the bearing of the charge & expense, or employing their pains in fetching and bringing in of wood, who should spend their days in God’s service on the Altar of burnt offerings; the times being then dangerous, and the work of some difficulty in regard of their enemies that lay in wait for them on every side.

§ 5. Neither was this use of Lots less frequent among other nations than among God’s own people; most common in Democracies or popular Estates, because they seemed justly to carry the greatest equality and indifference with them, as they do questionless (though such indifference indeed be not always allowable, nor such equality, stand ever with equity) but no strangers in any kind of state or form of government whatever: yea much used in the most flourishing and best ordered Estates, nor rejected, but admitted and approved by such state-masters or state-wrights (if I may so term them) that so plotted and moulded states, as if they brought them out of wax, as they deemed would be for the best, and like longest to continue.

Thus Plato in his imaginary model of such an Estate as he supposed would be most exact and absolute in all points, would have the most part of his Magistrates (some few excepted, as the Chief Justice, and the General for war with other military places) to be designed yearly by lot, for the preventing of, and meeting with the peevishness and waywardness of the multitude. To which purpose he willed that 360 be chosen yearly by most voices of the whole Community out of the four ranks of his Citizens, (£4, £3, £2, and £1 men, as they reckoned, or much about £12, £9, £6, and £3 men, according to our accounting), 90 out of each rank, for Senators and Aldermen; and the one half of them by Lot assigned to govern the City for that year: as also 60 Sheriffs, five out of every twelfth part of the City, to govern the Territory thereunto appertaining, divided likewise into 12 parts; it being by Lot determined yearly, which part of the City should send Rulers into this or that part of the Country. Besides these, he requires of six elected by most voices out of the first Rank, three by Lot to be set apart for Surveyors of houses, edifices, highways and watercourses in and about the City: and often so elected out of the first and second Ranks, five to be Clarks of the market: Again, one of 12 chosen out of the whole company of Competitors for Master of the Reveals; and three of 12 that have most voices, for Triers and Disposers of prizes in solemn games, Courts to be settled in each ward of the City; and for private causes
Judges, as occasion should be, appointed by Lot for the prevention of corruption; as for public by special choice. The election of Priests and such as have charge of holy things to be left to God himself, for him by Lot to dispose, as he pleased.

§ 6. But to leave his frame to those that list to make trial of it; in this particular many famous Estates have much concurred with him. For first among the Greeks, and more specially at Athens; to let Sparta pass, where I find little done in this kind by Lot, save that the Competitors for any Office were in order by Lot admitted sometimes to pass the Suffrages of the Assembly, in whose power it was to choose or refuse: At Athens, I say, were many of their offices and employments, as well Civil as Sacred disposed of by lot.

The Offices there were either wholly elective, as the Areopagites, or Judges that sat at Mars his hill upon matters of greatest consequence, as wilful murder and the like, chosen out of those that had unblameably before borne office elsewhere, who continued in that authority so long as they lived: or in part casual, yearly designated by Lot, as their sacred Senators or Legates that they sent year by year to the common Council at Delphos; and their ordinary Senators, or their Council of five hundred, taken out of their Commoners for the government and judiciary of other ordinary affairs. These were chosen, as it seemed, by putting together the names of all those of each ward that were capable of that dignity noted upon little tables or tokens of Brass into one vessel, and as many Beans black and white, all but 50 black, into another, and so each man’s token being drawn out of the one, and a bean withal out of the other, either he passed to further trial, and held if he were approved, or he was for that year rejected, as his bean proved white or black. And thus fifty a piece being extracted out of each of the ten Wards (for Tribes they cannot well be termed, a Tribe being, as the word imported, but a third part of the whole number) which next, and so on to the tenth part of their year) which next, and so on to the year’s end. This decided by Lot, all the Princes (for so now they were styled all of that Ward that had the white bean) of the principality that then took place, drew by Lot again ten Presidents that might rule for the seven first days, and then ten more for the seven next, and so on till the 35. days were expired, the full time of their whole principality. Out of which ten again there was by Lot likewise drawn out a Commander or a Provost, whose government in that kind lasted but one day of the seven, neither might any one of the ten have it more than once or above one day at once, because the keys of the Castle at Athens were in his keeping: and so seven of them having it in course as the white bean favoured them, three of them of necessity were debarred of it.

When causes were to be heard and tried, the Masters of the Ordinances accompanied with a Register, called those that had power of judicature together into one place; and, whereas there were ten Courts, that held plea of several kind of suits, marked with several letters, set in several colours (as it seemed) over the several Court gates; by Lot they assigned a competent number of persons according to the quality of the suits to be heard, for each Court, as they drew beans or acorns, (for those also are reported to have been used in this business) with the letters upon them that belonged to those Courts: each of which persons so allotted having received first a Rod from the Crier with the name of the Court written on it, or of the same colour that the letter was over the Court gate, he went with that and his bean or acorn unto that Court that had the letter on the one of the same colour with the other, and was there admitted for a Judge.

Besides these ordinary Judges were there certain Arbitrators also or Umpires (other from such as were chosen by mutual consent of both sides) by Lot assigned for the hearing and ending of lighter matters, divided likewise among them by Lot; which they did, assisted by certain Clerks of the pleas designed also by Lot: from whose sentence such as liked it not, might appeal to the Judges.

Now in this designation as well of their Senators, as of their nine Regents, it was constantly observed that some were ever by a second Lottery added after a just number drawn, that if any of them drawn formerly, either were rejected upon trial, or deceased within the time of his Regime, the other might
immediately supply his place. And there was a
great penalty for any one that should intrude
himself into Court or Council, not being by
Lot assigned so to do.

I find further among the Offices carried at
Athens by Lot; Ten Treasurers taken out of
those of the best rank: Ten Controllers or
Auditors, to whom most of the other Officers
within certain days after their time expired
were to give account of their government, free
liberty granted any man that would stand forth
to accuse them of, or charge them with ought,
carried otherwise by them then ought to have
been, while they were in Office; Ten
Surveyors or Scavengers: Ten Wardens of the
Ports: Ten Clarks of the Market: as also the
Office of the Eleven; whereof Ten were as
Sheriffs or Bailiffs, and had charge of the
common Gaol, and of Executions and Arrests,
each within his own Ward; the Eleventh was a
Scribe or Register adjoined unto them, for the
making of Writs and entering of Actions: as
the Officers also of each Principality before
mentioned had one the like chosen likewise by
Lot to attend them for the keeping of their
Writs and Decrees, and for the entering of their
Orders.

Now these Officers thus elected by Lot, had
some of them as well Sacred as Civil
employment. For not only the King or the
Master of the Mysteries and holy Rites, dealt
most in such matters; but the Mayor for the
year, and the Marshall too, had their several
employments in that kind for several their
superstitious services. And besides them had
they by Lot designed Sacrists, ten in number,
for the procuring of prodigies, and the
performance of certain Superstitions used
every fifth year; as also Priests for their several
Gods, as Jove, Vulcan, &c. wherein many
others also concurred with them both in other
parts of Greece, and elsewhere; as at Syracuse
in Sicily, where, of three chosen by voices out
of three Families, was one Priest for Jove
yearly designed by Lot.

§. 7. To pass over from Greece to Italy, from
Athens the Eye of the one, to Rome the Head
of the other, yea of a great part sometimes of
the whole known world: At Rome, albeit it be
reported of Romulus, that he would by no
means have Priests appointed by Lot, but by
Election: yet by Lot were the Vestal Virgins
there in succeeding ages designed, as the place
became void by decease or default, one taken
of twenty picked out formerly by the chief
Priest. And for Civil Offices among the
Romans (who are herein said to have imitated
the Athenians, but in truth took not their
course) not so much the Offices themselves
ordinarily, which went most by election and
voices, as the employments in the Offices were
divided by Lot.

For first after the making away of Romulus,
the two hundred of the Gentry, divided into
tens, cast Lots for the ruling of the State in
course among themselves, each ten their fifty
days, and each of the ten his five; and so the
next ten after, till they had all taken their turns.
But that course they soon grew weary of, and
at Numaes election it expired.

Again after the ejection of the Tarquins and the
end of kings, the two Consuls or Mayors by
Brutus his means then settled, where some
extraordinary business fell out, that was to be
done by them, and could not conveniently be
done but by one, (as the Dedication of a
Temple, the Nomination of a Dictator or
Sovereign General, the keeping of Courts for
Creation of some new Officers, or the like,) used by Lot to decide whether he should have
the honour of it. But most ordinary and usual
was this their manner of decision, when either
one to stay at home, and the other to go
abroad, or both to go abroad for the waging of
war in several places, or the governing of
several Provinces, it was by this means
decided whether should go, whether stay,
whether have this or that charge: As also when
they were both together in the same service
with equal authority, they did sometimes in the
execution thereof by Lot daily take their turns:
and by it likewise decided whether should stay
by it, and whether return for a time, when
some state business required the presence of
one of them at home. The Praetors likewise or
Presidents, one at first only ordained for Civil
Jurisdiction at home, because the Consuls were
by occasion of war often called abroad; then
two, as suits grew by access of foreigners to
the City; and after a greater number as the
Provinces increased; first parted by Lot
between two of them the City Jurisdiction, the
one to be for the Causes between Citizen and
Citizen, the other for those between Citizens
and Foreigners; and after they and the rest, as
also the Vice-consuls and vice-praetors with
them (such as by special commission
continued in authority after their year expired,
or by special favour under the Emperors had
continued in authority after their year expired,
or by special favour under the Emperors had
continued in authority after their year expired,
extraordinary business fell out, that was to be
done but by one, (as the Dedication of a
Temple, the Nomination of a Dictator or
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two, as suits grew by access of foreigners to
the City; and after a greater number as the
Provinces increased; first parted by Lot
between two of them the City Jurisdiction, the
one to be for the Causes between Citizen and
Citizen, the other for those between Citizens
and Foreigners; and after they and the rest, as
also the Vice-consuls and vice-praetors with
them (such as by special commission
continued in authority after their year expired,
or by special favour under the Emperors had
such authority conferred upon them) cast Lots
in common, as well for the two
several Jurisdictions at home, as for the sundry
Provinces abroad.

To these in future times, as the State spread,
were Questors or Treasurers adjoined, who had
likewise their charge assigned them by Lot.
And of such as had been Treasurers, were Tribunes by Lot sometimes designed, when none offered themselves to stand for the office.

The Aediles also or Surveyors were by Lot designed whether should hold, where many Competitors had an equal number of voices, and it was uncertain therefore which of them were chosen. And in their solemn Assemblies for election of Officers, it was by Lot decided which Companies or Hundreds should be first demanded their Suffrages, and so give a leading voice, as it were, to the rest.

For warlike employment, both Consuls and Praetors had their Legions and Armies now and then by this course also allotted them: and such Tribes sometimes were assigned as should afford soldiers for service: As also such persons of each Tribe as should serve: In which kind not unworthy the remembering is M. Curius his act, who when a sudden muster was to be made in the time of his Consulship, and none of the younger sort made appearance, he cast Lots upon all the Tribes, and of that Tribe that came next to hand having cited him that was first drawn, because he appeared not, both confiscated his goods, and sold him for a slave.

For Civil Jurisdiction, at first more sparingly, but in latter times ordinarily, were the several pleas parted among them by Lot, some to have and try Causes of Treason, some of Murder, some of Extortion, and the like. And these, when any of them were to sit, by Lot used to extract out of the whole company of those that had power of Judicature in such cases, such a number as the Law required to assist them in judgement. That which ancient writers call the Sorting of Suits, not, as some have thought, the ordering of Causes, but the assigning of Judges by Lot (to prevent corruption and packing) for the hearing of each Cause. In which case it was lawful as well for Defendant as Plaintiff, upon just ground to challenge any of the Judges allotted him; and some other than was by Lot likewise to be drawn in his room. As also sometimes by Lot there was Counsel assigned the parties contending at the appointment of the Court.

Beside these by Lot Augustus is reported to have set apart a certain number of Senators to consult with at set times about matters to be moved in open Court afterward, or rather to dispatch businesses by without the Court, yet so as by them the whole Court might seem to have some hand in them: by Lot likewise he assigned others to attend the Court, and make up a just number on Court-days during the vintage-time, giving the rest liberty of absence: by Lot having parted the City into certain Regions or Wards, he appointed the yearly Officers to share those Wards, and to undertake the charge of them; which continued so for a long time after: by Lot he enjoined two of those that had formerly been Praetors to be chosen yearly for the custody of the common Treasury; which through the evil success of it lasted not long: by Lot he essayed to reform the whole body of the Senate, choosing first himself a certain number, and after an oath administered to them, giving them power to name five-a-piece that they thought fittest for government, so that none of their own kindred, of each which five he drew one: but that device of his likewise took no great good effect, in regard whereof he soon gave it over again.

In Tiberius his reign were by Lot certain assigned to clear the Laws in some cases then questionable. And in Vespasian’s time either Mucianus, or Vespasian himself; or both of them, as some suppose, severally and at several times, by Lot assigned some to see restitution made of wrongs done during the civil war that then lately had been; and to help extraordinarily to rid the Courts of the multitude of suits, that intermission of Justice had now clogged them withal.

Lastly we find Legates or Lieutenants (for some of them had special power withal) though but rarely, designed by Lot: In which case when the use of Lottery was in that kind sometimes questioned, though by some it was opposed, yet the greater part went with it, and would needs have it still retained, as a sovereign preservative against ambition and corruption, and a singular remedy for the preventing both of enmity and envy: In which regard they esteemed it as a kind of divine Ordinance, where it was carried without fraud and covine (conspiracy), as it ought.

§ 8. Neither is this practise of Civil Lottery in matter of Office and Employment unusual in Italy even at this day; and that in some of those Estates that for wisdom and policy are of special note and general renown. Among others the State of Venice which many make the very Mirror of policy, and some suppose to be a model of Plato’s old platform, is very frequent in this kind. For whereas among them the whole body of their Gentry are of course admitted into their General Council at 25. years of age, and not ordinarily earlier; yet at 20. they may make suit for it, and if the Lot favour them, then obtain it. To this purpose they meet once a year on the fourth of December: at which time those that seek it,
having formerly made proof of their Gentry, have their names cast all into one pot, and brought in to the Duke (Doge) before whom stands another pot with as many balls in it, whereof a fifth part is gilt, and the rest all silver only. He draws each man’s name out of the one, and withal a ball out of the other, which if it prove a golden one, he is thereupon admitted, if a silver one only, he stayed at least a year longer. Again in the choice of their Officers, not so much the main Offices, as the Electorships are in part disposed by Lot, somewhat after the manner that Augustus sometimes used, as not long before we showed. For first in the designation of their Duke their principal Magistrate there is Lottery upon Lottery, lotting and voicing in a prolix and intricate manner interchangeably mixed the one with the other. When the place is void either by deposition, or (as most usually) by decease, all their Gentry of 30. years of age or upward (for none under are then admitted) are assembled together, and come in order of place as they sit (Lots first cast which side of them shall come first) to the Lopot, having as many balls in it as there be of them in all, whereof 30. only are gilt: there a child draws for each of them, till for 30. of them those 30. gilt ones be drawn. For which 30. the childe draws again the second time out of another pot that has 9. only gilt ones. The nine so drawn withdraw themselves into a conclave, where among themselves they name 40. such as have each of them 6. voices at least. Out of the 40. so named are 12. again selected by Lot: which 12. among themselves choose 25. each at least by 8. voices. Of these 25. are 9. again by Lot set apart: which 9. nominate further 45. as before: and those 45. being by Lot again reduced to eleven; these eleven choose out 41. of the chief Senators, which last have power to elect a Duke. These 41. then after an oath by them severally taken to choose whom they judge worthiest, and some other solemnities performed, write each of them in a scroll whom he thinks good. The scrolls are mingled together, and then drawn as they come: and the fitness of the person first drawn is discussed: who if he have 25. voices with him, had wont ancietly to carry it without further ado. But of latter-times they go on, and he that has most voices above that number, come he first or last to hand, has the place. If none of them have voices enough, they begin again, and continue till some one be nominated that has.

Again in their yearly assemblies for the choice of other Officers, all their Gentry that have voice in Council (none of them excluded) draw first for 60. gilt balls out of two pots by one Lottery, the one half out of the one, and the other half out of the other: and then those 60. for 36. other gilt ones out of another pot by a second Lottery. And the 36. that have thus drawn and lighted on golden balls twice, have power to nominate to such Offices as are then to be chosen: which they do in this manner. They go apart into certain conclaves by nine and nine in four companies. Where all those of each company in order of years draw out of a Lot-pot balls with marks upon them for the several Offices; and according to the ball that each of them has drawn, he nominated what Citizen he will for that Office, who if he have 6. voices of those 9. the party yet holds; if not, another must be nominated by him, till some one be so approved. By this means among those four Companies are there four Competitors nominated for each of their Offices, whereof one is chosen by most voices of the whole Assembly, the Electors and the whole kindred of the parties nominated being only first excluded. Somewhat after the same manner are they reported to choose, not their Electors, but their Offices in the Tuscan Estate. For dividing those that are capable of Office into three ranks, and accordingly casting them into three boxes: Out of the first they draw the Magistrates of highest place; the middle sort out of the second; and the lowest out of the third. And having thus drawn five several ones for each Office, he carried it, that has of the five the most voices in the Council: But their election stands as it pleased the Duke to confirm it, and no further.

§ 9. Generally in all places among all sorts of people employments of all sorts have thus oft been shared. In war much was thus managed. For in garrisons, sieges, fight fields and set camps, those that served together, had their times, and places, and courses oft assigned them by Lot, as for watch and ward, so for assault and defence, or such employment as the place that by Lot befell them should require. In which kind it is no vulgar commendation, that is given the Emperor Theodosius, that though then a great COMMANDER yet he was content as a common Soldier in such military services to take his turn by Lot among the rest. In single Combats a Champion was sometimes singled out by Lot: and by Lot it was determined (if a Poet’s word may go for good) whether of the twain should give the onset. In jeopardous exploits, or where multitude might cause confusion, and hinder rather than help, a Lot was called in, to order and marshal the matter. Thus by Lot it is said to have been decided who should be enclosed in the wooden Horse’s

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womb at the taking of Troy. Thus Timoleon being to pass a river with his army in the face of the enemy, took the rings of the several Leaders by drawing them to decide in what order they should pass; and when the ring of one of them that had a Trophy engraved on it, came first to hand, they left all further lotting, and with great alacrity made each of them with all speed they could over, and so discomfited those forces, that stood on the other side to inhibit their passage. And thus Pericles, when he could hardly restrain his people inconsiderately over-eager on sight, he divided them into two parts, and by Lot assigned them, some to skirmish, and some to rest and make merry the whilst, to wit, that part of them that lighted on the white bean: whence it grew, said mine Author, to be a by-word applied to those that live at ease that they have a placage: yea and oft times of Rewards too, as well pains and penalties, as Honours and Dignities. In a word, so frequent was the use of a Lot in this kind, that some Grammarians have thought (though indeed it seem not to be so) that a Lot among the Grecians from hence had its name, because by it men were usually called unto this or that work. But sure it is that in this regard in speech ordinary, though figurative, men are commonly said to have this or that Office allotted them, though it come not by Lot to them, but by election or otherwise: as our Saviour is said truly to have been anointed a Prince, a Priest, and a Prophet, though neither any Prophets ever used to be anointed, nor any such material oil ever came on his head. The not observing whereof has made some suppose Lottery there, where indeed there is no lot at all.

§. 10. Thus have we seen how frequent the use of Lots has been among all sorts, for distribution of Offices and Services Civil and Sacred: Now they were no less frequent also in the division of Inheritances, of Lands and possessions, of Goods and Chattels, and the like: yea and oft times of Rewards too, as well pains and penalties, as Honours and Dignities.

Of Lands and possessions by Lot assigned to be held and inhabited we have sundry examples in Scripture.

For first at the first entrance of God’s people upon the Land of promise, the whole Land in general was divided by Lot, and that by own appointment, among the 12. Tribes. Concerning which partition there is some scruple among the learned arising from the words of God’s Edict concerning it thus recorded by Moses: Unto these (that is, the 12 Tribes, though Levi be left out, because Joseph in Manasses and Ephraim make twain) shall the Land be divided to inherit according to the number of their names, (that is, of their persons, as the word, Name, is also elsewhere used.) To many shall thou give a large inheritance, & to fewer a less: to each one shall inheritance be given according to his number. Notwithstanding the Land shall be divided by Lot: according to the names of the Tribes of their Fathers shall they inherit. According to the Lot shall the Possession of it
be divided between many and few. Where the Question is how the greater number should have a larger portion, and the fewer a less, when each part was to have its portion assigned it by Lot. For the solution hereof some say, that it was so to fall out, by God’s special providence miraculously directing the Lots, that the greater compass of ground should fall to the greater number of men, and the less to the fewer. But that is not likely: for had it been so meant, God would rather have said; To many I will give a larger portion, and to fewer a less. Divide thou as equally and exactly as thou art able to do by Lot: and I will cause it to fall out so, that the more men shall have more Land, and fewer men less: or, Do thou divide it into unequal parts; and I will make it fall equally to fit every Tribes turn. So that the casting of the Lots should be Joshua’s work only; but the fitting of more and fewer with larger or scantier possessions and portions God’s own immediate disposition. Yea the event itself controlled this idle conceit. For we find that some of them were scanted in those portions that by Lot befell them, whereof also they complained: and others again had more befell them, then they were able well to people; and therefore are willing to admit others with them as Inmates.

Others think that the twelve men assigned to that Office of dividing the Land by Lot, had a power by virtue of that Edict conferred upon them, after the Lottery performed according to the partition made by others employed thereunto by them, to enlarge or straighten the bounds of each several portion, as they should see good; by virtue of which power they were to fit each part to the number of the people that were of that Tribe, which the same by Lot was fallen unto. This indeed has more show of probability than the former; and we find some alteration and change in this kind after the several possessions were determined by Lot.

But yet that seemed to be soundest that some others have conceived, that in that Edict there is mention of a two-fold partition, and either of them, necessarily required. The former a general division of the whole Land (taking in that on this side Jordan, held by the Reubenites, Gadites, and half the Tribe of Manasses) into 12. Shires or Cantons equally divided, to be distributed by Lot: the latter a particular Subdivision of each Canton or Shire unequally parted among those of that Tribe whom the same by Lot had befallen, as their Families or kindred were more populous or more penurious of people.

Now as God enjoined, so Joshua accordingly did: For he divided the whole Land among them by Lot. He began the work so soon as the Land was at any rest, and afterward went on with it till he had made an end of it; assisted therein according to God’s own appointment by Eleazar the High-priest and the 12. Heads of the twelve Tribes. Their several Lots in what course they came the holy Ghost has left upon record. For at the first Session or solemn meeting for the performance of that business, the first Lot fell to Judas, and the second to Joseph in Ephraim & Manasses. At the second Assembly had the other seven Tribes, to wit, Benjamin, Simeon, Zabulon, Issachar, Asher, Naphtalim, and Dan, (for thus by course their Lots came out) their portions allotted them; the rest of the Land, not before assigned, being divided into seven parts, not by ten men, as Josephus, but by 36. rather, or 21. at the least, (three apiece out of each Tribe, either of the whole Twelve, or of those seven whose turns then were to be served) employed specially to that purpose.

Concerning the manner of Lottery used in that action there is some diversity of opinion. Some think that the Lots of the Land were put into one pot, and the Tribes names into another, and that one choice person, to wit Eleazar, drew for all. Others imagine that there was only one pot of Tickets containing the names of the portions, out of which one of each Tribe drew for the Tribe he was of.

Others lastly suppose that the Tribes names only were put into the Lot-pot, and that each Tribe, as it was drawn, had his choice of which part he would yet indisposed when he drew. The first opinion seemed most probable, both because once drawing so might well end all, which would not be in the second, where question might be who should draw first, which would ask a new Lottery; and again because it is not said in the story, that such a Tribe drew or was drawn first or second simply, but that the Lot came out first or second for such a Tribe, which agreed not with the third.

There was indeed a special hand of God in this Lottery, (as there is oft in others) as it was done by special appointment from him; in regard whereof it may seem to some worthy to be ranked rather among extraordinary Lots; considering especially how fitly the event of it sorted with Jacob’s prophetical prediction in his last will and Testament. But yet I take this rather to be the proper place of it: because however there were a special providence of God in it, thereby to fulfil that holy Patriarch’s
prophecy, yet the main matter that it was applied unto and that was aimed at in it by those that were agents therein, is like to have been no other than an ordinary partition of such possessions as by conquest and God’s gift were cast upon them, without expectation of any special direction of them, and the Tribes they were drawn for, to such certain parts and seats.

Now as the whole Land in general was thus divided by Lot, so in particular were the Cities assigned to the Levites divided among them by Lot likewise according to their Families. For whereas God had commanded that 48. Cities in all should be assigned them, more from those that had more, and fewer from those that had less; again, whereas the Levites were divided into three Families according to Levi’s three sons, Kebath, Gershon, and Merari; and the Kebathites were subdivided again into two ranks, to wit, the Aaronites or the issue of Aaron, Kebath’s nephew by his son Amram, which alone had the Priesthood, and the rest of that house which came not of Aaron; there were Lots cast by them for these their several Families in what Tribes there should Cities be assigned unto each. So that the Princes set down how many Cities each Tribe should afford according to the quantity of their possessions and the number of their Cities; as also which Cities in each Tribe should be given them as most convenient for their abode, who were to be disperse into all parts of God’s people. Which being first by them determined, the four Families drew Lots then, which of them should have the Cities set apart in each Tribe; and so the Aaronites had 13. in Juda, Simeon, and Benjamin; the other Kebathites 10. in Ephraim, Dan, and the one half of Manasses; the Gershonites 13. in Issachar, Asher, Nephthali, and the other half of Manasses; and the Merarites 12. in Reuben, Gad, and Zebudon [...] the whole 48. in all.

And as at their first coming into the Land of promise, the possession of it was in this manner divided by Lot; so at their return again unto it from the Chaldean Captivity, was a Colony by Lot drawn for the peopling of Jerusalem, one taken of each ten, and so a tenth of the whole company for the storing of the City, beside such as voluntarily offered themselves thereunto, the remnant being left to replenish other places, and to possess the residue of the Country round about. Yea the whole City itself (if we might believe the counterfeit Ben-Gorion, or at least his abrider, for the true Josephus said otherwise) was by Lot shared in three parts by the three seditious Commanders in the time of the Roman siege.

§ 11. Now moreover Lots were used for Partition, as of Lands, so of Moveable Goods and Chattels, and the like.

As namely first in some cases for the setting out of Tithe. Every tenth one, said God, of the Bullocks, or oxen, and of thy flocks, or lesser cattle, goats and sheep, as they pass under the rod, shall be holy to the Lord: there shall no regard be had of good or bad, nor any exchange be made of it. For whereas the very tenth indeed, or that which fell in the tenth place precisely was in strict right the Priest’s due, but which that should be could not easily be known where great herds of oxen or flocks of sheep were, this seemed the most equal course, and is enjoined therefore by God, that every tenth one of them should be touched and taken, as they came out of the stall or the fold, by the Tithing-man’s rod, and so set apart for the Priest. That which God alluded unto where he tells his people by the Prophet, that he would cause them to pass under the rod, and bring them into the Bond of his Covenant: that is, by a Metaphor taken from Shepherds that count their sheep with a rod or a sheep-hooks he would search his people, and sort them, as the Shepherd doth his sheep, to take the better sort of them, rejecting and excluding the rest, into his fold, to be in league with him and under his charge.

Again in division of Booty, of prey and spoils taken in war. So are Lots said to have been cast upon Jerusalem when it was sacked by the Chaldees, and her people by Lot shared among the Conquerors for Slaves: As also the Nobles were of Nineveh in the sacking of that City, whether by the Medians, or by the Scythians, by whom it was at several times surprised. And of Goods otherwise gotten, as by pillage or stealth. As where David complained of his enemies that they had parted his garments among them, and cast Lots upon his vesture. Which thing is by good writers justly supposed to have been first practised upon David, what time constrained to flee for fear of his life, his house was rifled by his foes, and his goods to his very garments seized on, and by Lot, it is likely, shared among them: but was questionless, (the holy Ghost testified it) fulfilled in our Saviour, when the Soldiers that executed him, parted his garments among them, and to save it from quartering, cast Lots apart upon one of them, to wit, the Coat without seam (the rather, say some, because garments commonly so woven or wrought, are wont to ravel much away if they be rent,) but
Goats, (for it was merely divisory, not evidently was the Lot that was cast on the two distinction or difference; though some of late but should all utterly be destroyed without no Lot on it: piece of it out of the pot Prophet understand God's speech, where he bids the it another way. Yea so most Interpreters coward to be saved alive: though the most turn two cowards to be destroyed, and with one full of be saved or to be slain. So some expound that To this Head may we further refer the lawful traffick together in joint stock. with them in whatever they get: as those are with them life) as promising him, that adventured lightly on their part but limb and part with them, (for there is nothing to be thievish Companions not so much inviting him this But to leave these uncertainties, such a Lot as herein, being esteemed one but of the lower rank of them. But to leave these uncertainties, such a Lot as this Solomon alluded unto, where he brings in thievish Companions not so much inviting him whom they would persuade to adventure his part with them, (for there is nothing to be adventured lightly on their part but limb and life) as promising him, that he shall cast Lot with them, that is, shall have an equal share with them in whatever they get: as those are wont to do and to have that deal by way of lawful traffick together in joint stock. To this Head may we further refer the designing or picking out of persons by Lot to be saved or to be slain. So some expound that of David's measuring out the Moabites with two cowards to be destroyed, and with one full coward to be saved alive: though the most turn it another way. Yea so most Interpreters understand God’s speech, where he bids the Prophet pull the flesh piece by piece, every piece of it out of the pot or caldron, and cast no Lot on it: thereby signifying that the people should not be some destroyed and some saved, but should all utterly be destroyed without distinction or difference; though some of late understand this also otherwise. But of this use evidently was the Lot that was cast on the two Goats, (for it was merely divisory, not divinatory to tell whether was fitter for the service, both being alike fit for it) whereby the one was taken for the Scape-goat to be saved and sent out alive, the other left to be slain and to make a Sin-sacrifice to God in the behalf of his people. And these be all Examples that I find of this Use of Lots in holy writ.

§ 12. Among profane Writers there is nothing as rife than the use of Lots in this kind. Inheritances among Co-heirs were by Lot oft divided. For so; to pass by the Poet’s fiction of Saturn’s three sons that should so part among them Heaven, Sea, and Hell; as also the Grammarians groundless conceit of Claros, Lacedaemon, and many other places that from hence should have their names: thus, I say, we find Peloponnesus after the right of possession by joint conquest recovered, parted between Crespontes, Temenus, and the Sons of Aristodemus; though there were some slight therein used, as we shall hereafter show: Thus Lotharius his four sons, Charibert, Gunthram, Chilperis and Sigebert parted the Realm of France between them after their Fathers decease. Thus Frederick the second King of Denmark, and Adolph Duke of Holst divided between them the Territory of the elder John of Holst deceased without issue. And thus, said the Orator, should Oedipus his two sons rather have done (and yet in part too it is said they did, taking either of them their year by turns, as the Lot at first ordered it) and not by mutual war and strife (as at length they did) work either others overthrow.

The Civil Law willed that the goods and chattels of every Courtier deceased, where a fourth part is to come to the Court, be parted by the heir or Executor into four parts, and then Lots cast whether he shall choose his three, or the Court her fourth. Where many good reasons also of this course are rendered: for that It is commonly neglected, that is held in common: Men think they have nothing at all, if they have it not apart: and out of an envious disposition (like the wronged Mother in Scripture) they suffer things oft to be spoiled rather than another should have good of them. The like is willed to be done where the choice of some Chattel is bequeathed to divers; or that one that it was bequeathed to dying leaves many Executors; if they cannot otherwise agree. And our Common-law likewise, among other courses of partition of Land between partners or female Co-heirs, allowed this for one, by dividing the Land into parts as equal as may be, and then wrapping up scrolls of each part in as many waxen balls, to be drawn by
the Partners, in order of years, out of the bonnet of some other indifferent party.

In Cities new built, and at the first settling or altering of estates, as also upon the enfranchising of some that were foreigners or not free before, had each one oft his house, or portion of land, or tribe he should belong to, assigned him by Lot: a thing expected that at Solon’s hand in the alteration of the Athenian estate: but indeed executed by Lycurgus, though not without much ado, in the Spartan Commonwealth as also by Romulus in the first founding of the Roman estate. And in Egypt it is reported that they were wont yearly by Lot to assign each man or each kindred what land they should till.

After conquest of some country it was usual both with the Greeks, Romans and others, to divide by Lot the land conquered either among those that had done service, or among others also of their own people. Not to omit that sometimes they were too forward in this kind (like the hunter that sold the courier the bearskin ere he had killed or caught her) dividing more among themselves than either they had presently in possession, or indeed ever attained unto. When a country was surcharged with multitude of people, or not able to maintain her natives by occasion of long famine; a common course it was by Lot to assign each man or each kindred which way, or to whom they should go. If in war they had told them that He should reign that gave his mother the first kiss: wherein Brutus their cousin is reported to have gone beyond them both by kissing his grand-mother the ground: But others say that they agreed both to kiss her at once. By it Paris and Helen are likewise said to have decided the controversy between them about the naming of a daughter that he had by her, whether it should bear his name or hers.

Where it is uncertain in certain cases at the civil law whether party is plaintiff and whether defendant, both commencing suit; as they may, at once, either against other, not the main business or suit itself, as some mistake it, but that doubt only is put to the decision of a Lot. And so is likewise by the same civil law the custody of Cautioners or Evidences among those that are equally Co-heirs. At the election of a Pope the Cardinals in the conclave have their cells assigned them by Lot.

At their solemn feasts, sacred or public especially, in ancient times had each one his mess of meat by Lot assigned him. Where observe we withal that as among the Hebrews God’s people, part in the title of their cattle was by Lot set apart; and among the Heathen likewise, where by some solemn vow a tenth of the increase either of the fruits of the earth, or of their cattle had been before made over to their idols: as also the Arabians are reported in olden times to have consecrated yearly a third part of their cinnamon, which the lot lighted on, to the Sun, and that the Sun, as they fable, should fire that part of himself. So among those Heathen in that their festival lottery, the mess first drawn was held holy and accounted some God’s share, Mercury’s most usually, whom they deemed President of Lottery: That which I take rather therefore to be termed Mercury’s lot, then that which others say of an olive leaf, without any good ground: And in the division of lands before mentioned at the settling of new colonies or estates, some part was usually by Lot set apart for sacred uses in the first place.

In their markets they used oft, when buyer and seller could not agree, as with us to draw cuts, or cast cross and pile, so by another kind of Lottery, that mication or shifting of fingers
formerly spoken of, to decide, whether should come to others price: which custom yet for some considerations was sometimes in some cases inhibited.

§ 13. In pecuniary penalties was this kind of Lot sometimes employed, where the Offenders were too many to be all of them amerced (punished). For so Augustus of such as frequented not the Senate as they should, enforced each fifth man that the Lot lighted on, to pay his fine for his absence, which was remitted to the rest. But in case of life & death was a very principal use of it. Where to pass by that Fable, fondly fathered upon Athanasius, of Melchi Melchisedeck’s Father, who having a purpose to sacrifice one of his sons, should cast lots first with his wife, whether he or she should choose one of them to be exempt from that hazard, and after that upon the rest of them (she having chosen Melchisedeck by that means preserved) for one to be slain for a sacrifice: as also to let pass the Messenian Virgin that the Oracle demanded for the murder of Tists; the Trojan King’s daughter Hesione, whom the Poets faine the lot lighted on to be exposed to the sea monster: the 7. young-men, and as many Maidens that Minos required from Athens yearly for the death of Androges: and the children that the Spartans used to sacrifice to Diana, till Lycurgus at length altered that inhuman practise. Nor to stay upon the Persian Kings tithing out his Magicians (reported in our Ecclesiastical stories) upon discovery of their frauds: or the misery of Cambises his army in his Ethiopian expedition, who for want of victuals by Lot sequestered a tenth part of his army in, who sometimes also to seem mild (which in truth he was far from) would draw out one of a hundred only (as some other sometimes did twenty a piecely out of each Legion that had fled, and three of each hundred of those that had given way to the enemy) for execution in that kind. Neither is this manner of Military discipline altogether unusual with martial men among us even to this day; with whom Soldiers taken tardy sundry of them together are permitted now and then to cast the dice for their lives upon the Drum-head, some of them to be executed, and some to be saved.

§ 14. From this use of a Lot in general springs those figurative speeches and phrases, whereby not that alone that by Lot is allotted any one, but whatever a man has or holds, however he comes by it, by gift, purchase, descent, or otherwise, is yet termed his Lot. Among the Greeks more specially an Inheritance is most usually and universally so termed. In way of reference whereunto, as God is said to be the portion of those that serve him, and they are said to be his Inheritance; so their right to glory and life eternal is said to be their Lot, not so much, as some of the ancients have thought, in regard of free choice, as having respect to the general nature of a Lot, which neither regarded ought in the party whom it favourably befell, nor is directed or determined at all in its motion by him; but because it comes to them as by way of Inheritance, an eye had to the particular use of it before specified in the settling of such estates. Hence it is also that in holy writ to cast a Lot is put for to inherit: and that God is said to have cast the Lot upon some places for wild beasts, and to have divided Lands and Countries out unto them by line; alluding to the courses used in dividing of Land by Lot and line among such as were appointed to people and to possess it. And in a word whatever betides men, be it good, or be it evil, is said to be their Lot and their allowance, in way of allusion to this divisory Lot, whereby Lands and Goods, either of inheritance, purchase, or prey, and parts or portions of diet, and rewards good and bad, have from time to time been usually parted among many.
CHAPTER 5. Of the Lawfulness of such Lots: with Cautions to be observed in the use of them.

§ 1. Now that Lots of this kind are lawful being used with due Caution, most Divines acknowledge, however the arguments that some of them bring, are not as sound many of them as were to be wished; and their Cautions the most of them are either unsound or superfluous, as upon the view and survey of some of them shall appear.

In the arguments alleged for them, the general error of most Authors is (that which has also caused much mistaking otherwise) that they confound Ordinary and Extraordinary Lots the one with the other, and so reason without reason from the one to the other: As if a man should reason from Ehud’s slaying of Eglon to the Jesuits and Romanists murdering of Princes at this present, supposing them to be Heretics and Enemies to God’s Church; or from Phineas his killing of Zimrie and Cozbi, to the like execution done upon delinquents taken in the like act by some private person in these times; or from the Hebrews surprising of the Land of Canaan and rooting out of the Canaanites by God’s special appointment, to the Spaniards dispeopling of the West Indies, as they term them, in such places as they seized on; or to justify our seizing upon any other part of the world, and seeking in like manner to subdue or destroy the Inhabitants thereof.

Let the Arguments of one that has heaped up most serve for the rest, to show how confusedly men have formerly dealt in this argument.

First, therefore said he, Lots are guided and governed by God to a good end.

True: but so too are men’s sins guided to good ends by God drawing light out of darkness, and turning evil to good, and using man’s evil will to the working and effecting of his own holy will. For he disposed and ordered all things, even the wickedest and the worst things, who being infinitely good, would not suffer any evil, but that he knows how to do good even with evil.

Secondly, Lots have their original from God, who commanded Lots to be cast upon the two goats; and enjoined a division of the Land of Canaan by Lot.

But these examples and the like simply considered, warrant no use of Lots further than in the particulars there mentioned: no more than the Commandment given Moses to make the brazen Serpent which was a Type of the Messiah, will warrant the ordinary making of Images for religious use otherwise.

Thirdly, God approved the Lots practised by Joshua and Samuel; for the discovery of Achan, and the election of Saul.

True it is; God approved whatever he commanded. But God’s approbation of what he commanded, gives no warrant for what he doth not likewise command. That which this Author himself also well saw where he said, that The examples of the Saints are not easily to be imitated. And again, that what Joshua did, he did enjoined it by God, which no man may therefore take pattern to do the like by, unless he have the like commandment from God so to do. And what he said of Joshua, may be said also of Samuel.

Fourthly, In other cases have godly men likewise laudably used Lots. As in the ministry of Zachariah; in the choice of Matthias; in the discovery of Jonathan: nor are the Lots disallowed that the Seamen cast upon Jonah.

These examples some of them, as that of Matthias his and the former, were extraordinary actions, done by special warrant: others of them, as those of Saul and the Seamen upon Jonah and Jonathan though not expressly condemned, yet are not allowed, neither can well be justified; and others lastly of them, as that of Zachariah, are of the point in question, and must by some other ground be proved warrantable.

Fifthly, They make for God’s glory; recourse being had in them to God’s judgement.

So they may make for God’s glory; and yet is not therefore allowable. Yea the very offering to have recourse to God’s immediate judgement without special warrant is unwarrantable.
Sixthly, *They end great strife and inexplicable suits.*

The Use of them then is profitable and commendable, if allowable and warrantable. But that is the point to be proved. Otherwise *Evil may not be done that good may come of it.* Yea the least moral evil that is may not be admitted for the preventing or avoiding of the greatest natural evil, or for the achieving of the greatest politick good.

§ 2. And of this nature are the arguments that are usually brought for the confirmation of the truth in this point. Which in regard therefore of the invalidity and insufficiency of them leaving to their several Authors to make good as they may, we will assay to give some sounder grounds: And for the present we will press only the testimony of Solomon, where speaking of such kind of Lots as these are, he said, that *The Lot stayed or stinted contentions* or suits, and makes partition among the mighty. In which words the holy Ghost manifestly not allowed only and approved the use of Lots in such cases, but commended it unto us as a wise and discrete course for the taking away of controversies and questions in this kind, and the preventing of law-suits or other quarrels that thence otherwise might arise. The place is pregnant, and the proof express, considering whom it is spoken by. Neither shall I need to spend many words for the present either for the further urging and enforcing of it, or the seconding of it with other arguments: partly because most Divines generally concurred in the approbation of them, though their proofs be most of them impertinent; and one evident argument may well suffice in a matter not much controversy; and partly also because the point will receive further strength from the arguments that shall hereafter be produced for the next sort of Lots, which are more questionable than these. Whither referring the Reader for fuller satisfaction, we will proceed in the next place to consider of the Cautions necessarily to be observed in the use of such Lots.

§ 3. When therefore it is said that such Lots are lawful, it is not so to be conceived, as if the meaning were to justify every particular instance in that kind that either was formerly produced or ever has bin practised; particular circumstances many times alter the nature of actions, and make those things oft unlawful, that otherwise are not evil; but to approve only the use of them in those cases, where by such circumstances it is not corrupted and changed. In regard whereof it is not without just cause, that those that deal in this argument, and allow the use of such Lots, are wont to annex certain Cautions or rules to direct and limit the use of them: yet herein failing not a little, in that, as their proofs the most of them are insufficient or impertinent; so their Cautions are many of them either unsound or superfluous, to wit, such as sort not either with the nature of these Lots, or with the ordinary use of them. We will first briefly consider of them, and then set down some other, more apt at least, in the room of them.

The first Caution then given usually is that *men use Lots as Law, or Arms, only in case of necessity, when they have tried all other courses, and where all others fail, when nothing else will serve to effect what we would have. Otherwise to use Lots were a tempting of God.* But it is not necessary to require any such necessity, since the thing that is thus put to Lot ought to be a matter of mere indifference, as hereafter shall appear; and the course itself also is no other. Which therefore even where many ways or courses may be to end a controversy by, may choice be made of among the rest, being as fit and equal as any of the rest. The suits mentioned by Solomon in the place before alleged as determinable by Lot, are such as may by other courses also, (as by arbitration and compromise, or by condescension the one yielding the choice to the other,) be composed: and therefore it is not necessity simply, that either enforced or warranted the use of a Lot in them. Neither is there in such case any tempting of God, where there is, as no need, so no expectance of any extraordinary work of God. Yea on the other side where the same is either required or expected, there God is tempted, be the necessity enforcing the Lot never so great.

The second Caution is that *They be reverently and religiously undertaken, with solemn prayer unto God formerly conceived, as was sometimes done in the choice of Matthias.* It is true indeed that nothing ought to be done irreligiously or irreverently. But yet there is great difference in the religious and reverent usage of things, to be meted out and limited by the weight of the work. In regard whereof there may be no want of due reverence in some actions, wherein yet such solemnities are not observed.

Again it is no less true, that we are to pray continually: and that all our actions (even the least and lightest of them, even our sports and pastimes, much more all our serious, though
civil, affairs) are to be sanctified by prayer: But how? or in what manner? Not that a man is bound at each several act, as upon every bargain he makes, or every penny-worth of ware that he sells, to fall down on his knees and conceive a set prayer; no more than to say a new grace for each several course that is brought to the board, or each several dish that is carved at the board, or upon every other bit of meat that he put into his mouth. The prayer conceived at the beginning of the meal served sufficiently for all: and the Morning sacrifice sanctified the whole ordinary days work, though ejaculations, as they term them, may be seasonably used, as occasion shall require. So here usually is no other sanctification required than is common to other civil affairs:

It is true indeed generally of all actions, that holy things are not to be applied to profane uses. But the abuse here touched is in divinatory Lots, simply unlawful, whether such sacred things be used in them or no.

A seventh Caution is, that They be not used in Ecclesiastical elections: for in temporal dignities or offices they may.

And why not in those as well as in these, where the people or persons that have power to choose are divided in their choice, and the Competitors generally held equally fit for the place? that which others also of good note grant, and many Popish ones too, save for the Pope’s prohibition.

The eighth and last Caution is that No covine or crafty connivance be used in them: like that which Temo the Priest used in deciding a controversy between Cresphontes and Aristodemus his issue.

For the story here touched, it is diversely reported by Authors, and in some particulars mistaken by him that alleged it. We shall have occasion hereafter more particularly to relate it. Meanwhile this may suffice, that, however that which is here touched and the like guileful courses are unjust and consequently unlawful, especially where both parties have an interest in that that is to be shared: For I dare not condemn Caesar’s slight who in punishing of his mutinous troops, where it was in his own power to slay or save whom he would, carried the matter so cunningly, that the Lot lighted on those that had been faultiest and forwardest in that business. Howsoever, I say, such injurious and cozening conveyances are unwarrantable: Yet this Caution seemed needless, because the very nature of a Lot excluded all such courses: and therefore to give such a Caution concerning a Lot, is as if a man should say that A Lot must be a Lot, or else it cannot be a lawful Lot. For where the event is determined by such counsels or courses, there is there no casualty, and so consequently no Lottery. Whereas the Question is here how a man may lawfully use a Lot, not whether he may not use some other course instead of a Lot, when he pretended to use it.

§ 4. These are most of the Cautions most commonly given; instead whereof, because the most of them are not so material, it shall not be amiss to propound some other that may more precisely limit the use of this kind of Lots, and meet with the abuses most usual in such.
Now these Cautions may be referred to two heads; they concern either the matter wherein they are used, or the manner of using them.

Concerning the matter or businesses wherein Lots may lawfully be used, the rule of Caution in general is this: that Lots are to be used in things indifferent only. Which Caution that it may be the better conceived, a word or two will do well for the explication of the word Indifferent used in it. The rather for that some there be that suppose that there is no Act at all Indifferent; and so according to their judgement, if Lots may be used in things indifferent only, they may not be used at all. True it is that in the Schools there are two received Axioms that may seem the one to cross the other, to wit, that Every action is indifferent; and that No action is indifferent: which seeming contradiction they yet salve with a distinction of naked and clothed, that every naked or bare action simply conceived is indifferent, but no action clad with his particular circumstances is indifferent. For example, say they, to strike is indifferent, but to strike an Innocent, or to strike without authority, or to strike in this or that case, this or that Person, is not so. But to come nearer home to that we have now in hand: The word indifferent may be taken two ways, either as it opposed to Good and Evil, and more specially to such actions of virtue and vice as deserve more special either praise or reproof; or as it is opposed to necessary good duties, such things as must needs be done, and so consequently also to Evils simply forbidden, which in that regard may in no wise be done. In the former sense is that said to be indifferent, that is neither good nor bad, neither lawful nor unlawful. In this sense albeit many natural actions not proceeding from reason, and therefore coming not within compass of the Moral law, as for a man to talk or walk in his sleep and the like, are in that regard merely indifferent, no Law being given of them that may be observed or transgressed in them: As also however many actions in general are said to be indifferent, because they are not either so simply good, but that by some particular circumstances they may be so tainted and corrupted as they may become evil, nor yet so absolutely evil but that in some cases and with some circumstances qualified they may not only become good, but prove even necessary duties: Yet nevertheless most true it is, that no particular moral action, or no action of the reasonable Creature proceeding from reason, can possibly be so indifferent, but it must of necessity be either conformable to the rules of God’s holy word or disconformable thereunto.

In common speech indeed the word Indifferent according to this acceptation is taken in some latitude of signification, when it is attributed to such actions as though good and warrantable, yea or necessary, yet are not greatly praiseworthy, because there is no special matter of goodness in them, as for a man to eat when he is hungry, to drink when he is athirst, to provide carefully for his own Family, to love those that love him, and the like, which yet in strictness of truth according to this acceptation are not absolutely indifferent.

In the latter sense that is said to be indifferent that is good and lawful to be done, but is no necessary duty, that may either be committed or omitted, done or left undone without sin. And thus are many particular actions indifferent. The ground whereof is this; because the Law of God though it bind the Creature guided by reason to do nothing but what is good, and to do good at all times, yet it binds him not to do all good at once or at all times; so that many good things there are that may at sometimes be done, whereof a man may make choice whether of them he will do, being not necessarily tied unto or enjoined any one of them: As for a student having many books about him in his study it is indifferent to choose one this or that, refusing the rest, for present employment, there being no special occasion to urge the use of one more than of another: Or for a man that carried a pair of knives about him, it is indifferent to draw and use either when occasion required. And of this nature in this Caution is the thing required to be, that is put to a Lot, to wit, such as a man may lawfully either choose or refuse either do or leave undone.

§ 5. Now this Caution divides itself into two distinct branches according to the diverse quality of those things that are opposed to, or sworn from this indifference.

The former is that Lots may not be used in anything evidently unlawful or in itself evil, either in the omission of some necessary good duty, or in the yielding to anything simply wicked, ungodly, or unjust, and so consequently where at the present it is evidently apparent upon other grounds what a man ought to choose or to refuse. For a Lot, as we have seen, is casual: and to put a necessary act to a casual event, cannot be without sin, since it makes that casual and contingent which God’s law makes necessary. In such cases therefore a man is to follow the grounds and to be led by the rules of religion and reason; and not to put that to hazard whether he shall do it or not, for which he sees and
knows already good grounds why he should do it or not do it. What a man sees evident grounds against, that he may not do: and look what he may not lawfully do, that he may not put to hazard whether he shall do or no. And on the other side what a man sees necessary ground for, that he is necessarily bound to do: what he is necessarily bound unto, he may not refuse or forbear to do: and what he may not refuse, he may not put to the hazard of refusing.

To illustrate this by some instances. Where many stand for an office either in Church or Commonwealth, whereof some are fit, some are altogether unfit for it, or some fitter, some less fit with very manifest difference, in this case for those persons in whose power it is to call and admit thereunto, to put it to Lot amongst them all, which of them shall have it, were utterly unlawful: For it were to hazard the binding of themselves to do that which they ought not to do, as it may fall out, to accept of one either wholly unfit, as it fell out when the High-priesthood was once so put to Lot, the Lot lighting on a silly rude Clown, that for simplicity scarce knew what the High-priesthood meant, and became therefore a scorn to all sorts; or not so fit as were fit where better choice may be had; as in some offices at Rome it came sometimes to pass. Since the Lot makes no difference of good or bad, nor takes any notice of the fitness or unfitness, of the worth or unworthiness of those that be put together upon it. In which regard though many worthyly condemn such promiscuous Lotteries, and prefer for the most part, and that justly, other courses of election before that by Lot: and it is generally accounted a greater credit for a man to be elected then to be allotted to any place of employment: yet where many Competitors are judged alike fit, or are all fit in some good competency though with some small inequality, so that however the Lot fall, it cannot light amiss, that as he said sometime, though a man should cast blindfold at them, he could not miss but hit a good man, there, were it not unlawful to dispose a place or office, were it civil or sacred, by Lot among such; especially when there shall be much labouring and contending for many by sundry persons on either side engaged, who may all by that means be quieted, and someone picked out and pitched upon without disgrace to any of his Competitors, or discontentment to their friends. And to this purpose in most estates, where offices were disposed by Lot, as there went an election before the Lottery, that the Lottery might go only among such as were of some sufficiency, so again after the Lottery there was a public trial of them, and an inquiry made into the courses and abilities of such as the Lot had lighted on, that if they were found insufficient or faulty they might be rejected, and others taken in in their stead. Besides that those places that required some special kind of skill, military, musical or the like, either were exempted wholly from Lottery, or the Lot went among such only, as upon due trial were found to be expert in that particular. Neither was there great diligence used without just cause in this kind: for if men would be loath by Lot to take a Physician when they are sick, or a Pilot when they are to go to sea, of whose skill they have not had some good trial before, or assurance otherwise: much less were it fit by Lot, without further enquiry, to commit the helm of the estate and the life of many hundreds into the hands of anyone hand-over-head that the Lot might light upon. Again for private men in some danger and distress weary of their lives to cast Lots, as they sometimes did, who shall slay either other, were unlawful: because a plain breach of God’s precept: or where two Malefactors are condemned to death, but the one is to be spared upon some special occasion, as with the Jews where some offender was given them to grace their feast, (I stand now to discuss the lawfulness of that course, but taking it to be granted that someone is upon good ground to be spared) here if the parties be unlike, the one a debauched Rogue that has been before oft in the like villainies, the other but a Novice newly fallen to the trade, and the present his first known offence; or the one an obstinate and desperate wretch, the other penitent and not unlikely to prove an honest man afterward; for the public Magistrate it were unfit here to put it to hazard whether to spare or to punish: whereas in war, as before, when a whole band has offended, where the cutting off of all would be too great a maim to the whole, and again passing by all would be too great a maim to the whole, and again passing by all would be a matter of evil example, here time being not afforded to consider of particulars, who may best be spared, or who are worthiest to be punished, all alike deserving death, and being in the power of the General to put all to death, it is lawful for him to tithe them, as we said they did sometime, and by Lot to decide who shall be saved, who slain.

In matter of alms and liberality, for a man to make Beggars usually as he met them, draw cuts for his money, were to play and make sport with his alms and his prodigality (for that term would best fit it,) as the mad Antiochus sometimes did, and as Bernard said the Pope did with his; and so was but to abuse a Lot for
the inconsiderate casting away of that, that ought to be disposed of by advice: Or again where two Persons in want crave that relief of a man which but one of them can have, it being apparent that the one has far more need than the other, and is nearer to the party in whose power it is to dispose of, for him to make them draw cuts for it in this case were not warrantable, because he may evidently see here whether is rather to be relieved, and may not therefore hazard the defeating of him. But for those that be in office to avoid the clamour of many much alike poor suing for some pension, to cast Lots among them which shall have it for the present, and which expect it hereafter; or for a man that has a tool of some trade which two poor men of that trade are Suitors to him for, there being no ground for him to pleasure the one rather than the other, here likewise by Lot to determine whether of the twain shall have the tool, were neither unlawful nor unfit.

§ 6. And thus was the former branch of this Caution that Lots are not to be used either in necessary duties or things in themselves evil, such as may evidently at the present appear to be such.

The latter branch is that Lots may not be used in such things, though not otherwise in themselves evil, where by consequence the use of them may in likelihood prove Inconvenient or Inexpedient.

The reason is apparent; because things indifferent and such as are good and lawful in themselves, become unlawful unto us when they grow Inconvenient or Inexpedient in the use of them. In matters therefore of indifference that of themselves are not evil, yet are such as by some circumstance they may easily become evil, great regard ought to be had of the convenience and expediency of them. Where under the head of inconveniency I comprehend all such things as may tend to any outward evil: unto the head of Inexpediency I refer all such things as may bring a man within danger of some spiritual evil. For the former point of Convenience and Inconvenience the rule is that because things in themselves otherwise lawful and warrantable may seem Convenient in some respects, and Inconvenient in others, that therefore where the Conveniences and the Inconveniences shall be laid in an even balance of equal and indifferent judgement, either against other the action is to be deemed either Convenient or Inconvenient, as the one side shall appear to weigh down the other: that is to say, The Conveniences being more or weightier make the thing questioned Convenient, the Inconveniences being more and weightier make it justly deemed Inconvenient.

To apply this to the present: In the Use of a Lot about a matter of itself otherwise not evil, if the Conveniences shall be so many and so weighty on the one side, that they may well weigh down whatever Inconveniences may be produced on the other side, there the action is Convenient, and a Lot therefore lawful: but contrariwise where the Inconveniences that shall necessarily or in good probability appear to accompany the thing questioned or ensue upon the doing of it shall be such and so great, as the Conveniences that stand on the other side shall not be able to countervail, there the action is worthily disallowed as Inconvenient, and a Lot consequently unlawful.

Thus in public affairs for the giving of some few private men contentment to admit a Lot where the admission of it may in likelihood prove prejudicial to the public, were an unwise course and an unwarrantable, because the public weighing down the private makes the action inconvenient. Where it is worth the observing that albeit among the Romans the ordinary employments of their Officers, and many other affairs were ordered oft-times by Lot, yet when any extraordinary accident fell out, or any business to be dispatched of more special weight, they either left wholly then their Lottery, or limited the course of it (which yet after when things were quieted and settled they returned again unto) and though those in office themselves desired, yea urged it and instantly called for it, that they might not seem condemned, as being balked and rejected, and others in the State-service preferred before them; yet the regard of the common good prevailed so far with them that they would not hearken unto them to put that to the hazard of a Lot, where the event might prove much inconvenient, which otherwise ordinarily they did.

That is not true therefore that one of our Writers said, that Rome directed the main course of her government by the Fortune of this mock-destiny. For neither were the Officers themselves ordinarily chosen by Lot, neither did they retain the use of it in matters of special weight or difficulty: the only constant use of it was in dividing the Provinces and Jurisdictions, as if the Judges with us should cast Lots for their Circuits; and the two in each Circuit whether should sit upon private suits, and whether upon public pleas. Which course also as they brake, where the
employsments were of more special importance; so, if in using the Lot, it fell not out so, as seemed profitable for the State, they made bold, as they might well do, to control the Lottery, and to dispose of things otherwise.

Thus again however it were not unlawful simply for many to join together in a Lottery (as well as in a free contribution, which Job's friends sometimes did) for the raising again of an honest man by crosses and casualties fallen behind hand: yet for a State to give way to public courses in that kind for the raising and enriching of someone decayed Bankrupt by the probable damage, yea and impoverishing of many others, that out of hope to gain great matters may wring and wrong both themselves and their whole families thereby, may well seem scanty warrantable, considering the hindrance of many therein procured for the helping of someone.

Thus lastly however in goods bought in common, because men may be many times contentiously minded, and ready to take discontent even in the equallest courses; yea because men commonly in these cases are wont to think that better, that goes from them, though indeed it be not so; and that less that comes to them, though it be the better part; when division has been made with as much equality as may be, or with such inequality as they shall both agree upon, it is a course not lawful and convenient only, but even laudable and commendable, for mutual satisfaction, by Lot to assign each one his share: yea however in this, or in the like case; when a man's goods are so mixed with another's in whose hands they both are; it were not unlawful for a man to put his whole right to them to the hazard of a Lot, for the procuring and purchasing of his piece, which cannot otherwise be had, with one whom he would not by any means, if it lay in his power, be at odds with the thing itself being no other than he may well forgo; yet for a man in such a case to put that to the hazard of a Lot, when he may otherwise recover it, which his estate will not bear, or may be otherwise more prejudicial both to him and his, were not lawful, because the damage that thereby might accrue, would be greater, then could free such an action from imputation of evident inconvenience.

§ 7. For the latter point of Expediency and Inexpediency the general rule is that that which is no necessary duty, but a thing indifferent only otherwise, may not be done, where there is strong presumption upon good ground, that it shall spiritually endanger a man's self, or others, by giving occasion of sin unto the one or the other.

I except necessary duties; because such are not to be omitted, though they may be occasion of sin unto others, or though we ourselves cannot do them without some sin. Not for the sin of others; for there is no duty so holy but that many may and will take occasion of evil by: even the ministry of the word turned to the evil of not a few, which yet is not in that regard to be neglected or omitted, because man's corruption cannot free any from the employment that God enjoined him.

Nay, nor for ourselves and our own sins are such duties to be forborne. For then should no good work at all be done of us; because we can do none so, but that some sin will stick to us in the doing of it. As a diseased Person therefore ought not to forbear his food, and by fasting to starve himself (as Pomponius Atticus and Corelius Rufus, absurdly sometimes did,) because in feeding his body he shall withal feed his disease; nor a melancholy man is to pine himself to death, because where he is, he can come by none but melancholic food, such as is not so convenient for a man of his constitution; but is to use such as he can get for the preserving of life where no other can be had: so in this case men are not to give over hearing the word, praying, participating in holy things and the like, because they cannot hear attentively, pray so devoutly, receive so reverently, and religiously as they would and should; but endeavour to do all such good duties as God required of them so well as they can, leaving the issue and event of the work to the good providence of God in regard of others, to his gracious acceptance in regard of themselves.

But in things indifferent, and such as are no necessary duties, for a man to do that which in great likelihood may spiritually endanger another, is to make himself guilty of soul murder; to do that which may spiritually endanger himself, is to make himself guilty of self-murder. And surely, if it be unlawful and a tempting of God for a man needlessly to plunge himself into danger of death in regard of his body; it is no less unlawful, yea a far greater sin rather, for a man to do the same in regard of his soul. Besides that God's commandments not only forbid sin, but even whatever may be a means and an occasion of sin, though it be not sinful of itself.

Needless therefore and unnecessary Lotteries though in things otherwise not unlawful, where they are likely to cause, or by experience are
found to occasion much sin, are so far forth unwarrantable, because in that regard inexpedient. In respect whereof however it were no unwarrantable course, in a matter of common or public benefit, as the repair of a bridge, re-edifying of an Hospital, erecting of a school or the like, for many men of good ability to agree among themselves to put it to hazard what sums each of them shall disburse or dispense toward the discharge or support thereof, the sums being no greater than the estate of any of them may well bear, when they cannot readily agree upon a rate otherwise; as also for the better encouragement of either other in that kind, in common equally to contribute toward the price of a jewel, or some one of them to convert his part into some such commodity, to be conferred upon some one of them so contributing, whom by Lot it shall light to, their minds and states probably known either to other, I see here no reason why it should be unlawful. But for a man in this kind to put that to hazard which he knows or probably suspected that he shall be unable well, or unwilling on such terms to part with; the loss whereof in that regard may either disable him to the doing of other necessary duties, or distemper him and so make him guilty of sin in God’s sight; or to join with others needlessly in such an act, much more to draw them in and incite them thereunto, whom he knows not upon good presumptions to be both able and willing; by means whereof they may be occasioned to sin in the same sort; especially in such an action as he cannot but see to be so carried that many abuses are committed in it, and occasion given by it of much evil; I cannot see how a man should be free from sin in so doing; neither can I conceive with what comfort of conscience a man can receive or retain what a Lot in such a case shall cast upon him, coming in all likelihood in part out of the purses of those, as either are altogether unable to part well with such sums, but have strained themselves thereunto out of a greedy desire and hope of lucre and gain; or being unwilling to loose and to part with what they put in, in that regard wretchedly curse and blaspheme God’s name for the loss of it. Which occasions of evil being seen or foreseen, cannot but make such Lotteries unlawful to all those that partake in them, in regard of the inconveniency, and inexpedience that is in them. The more able therefore and willing a man may be to sustain such loss as by Lot may befall him, the lawfuller the Lot is. And the better known they are to be such whom a man dealt with in matter of Lot, especially where the occasion is rather voluntary than necessary, the more warrantable is the Lot.

To conclude briefly the grounds of this twofold caution: the event of Lot is casual: but the doing of God’s will in the avoiding of things evil either in themselves or by consequence is necessary: and therefore no fit matter to be put to the casual event of a Lot. Again the use of a Lot is to determine some question or doubt: but no question ought to be made or doubt to be moved, of the committing of any moral evil, or the omitting of any necessary good duty, of the doing what God forbade, or the not doing what he enjoined: no Lot therefore may lawfully be used about such. Lastly what a man may not do though a Lot should determine it, that it is in vain to put to the determination of a Lot: but for an oath, to observe it, a man may not do evil; much less for a Lot: such things therefore may not be put thereunto.

Whereas therefore all moral actions are of three kinds in relation to God’s law, some simply enjoined, as are all necessary duties, some simply inhibited as are all moral evils, some freely permitted and left to our choice, as are all actions indifferent: the rule here is that a Lot has his lawful use in indifferent things only, such as may without either offence or inconvenience be done or left undone. In regard whereof the greater the indifference is in the event of it which way so ever it fall out, the more lawful the Lot is: and so (contrary to that which is commonly delivered and almost generally received,) the less weighty the matter is wherein a Lot is used, the lawfuller the Lot is.

§ 8. Now these Cautions were concerning the matter wherein Lots are used: there follow two other concerning the manner how they are to be used in such matters.

Where the former Caveat or Caution is that a man be willing to forgo and part with what he put to the hazard of a Lot: as before for the matter itself, that it be such as he may be willing to part withal: (for that a man may be willing sometimes to part with, what he may not lawfully part with) so now for the disposition of the party in such an action, that he be willing, if it shall so fall out, to sustain some loss, and so much loss, as may befall him by the Lot. The reason is evident: because otherwise a man does that unadvisedly that may afterward discontent him, and be an occasion of sin to him. Again that which is put to the hazard of a Lot is in a manner forgone, so far forth, as it is put thereunto. A man ought
undoubtedly superstitious.

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to this end, thereby to try whether God will in

I mean, to put anything to the hazard of a Lot

such fault) to make trial of it is to tempt God;

I answer: As a man is bound not absolutely but conditionally to depart with his right, when a greater evil may ensue upon the recovery of it by such means as he has only to recover the same by, though he may lawfully otherwise desire to obtain it: so in this case where a man is willing rather to loose it, then to seek it by other courses, and as willing to put it to the hazard of a Lot as to loose it, (for else were it a folly for him to put it thereunto) he ought to be no less willing, having yielded so far, to part with it, when it shall be so past; however he might otherwise not unlawfully desire, what he might lawfully retain, if with convenience it might be had.

The rule then here is that no man put that to the hazard of a Lot, which he could not not be willing to forgo upon the like terms without it.

§ 9. The last Caution is that no special or immediate decision, no extraordinary work be expected from God for the directing of the Lots in a certain course: nor ought concluded to that purpose out of the event of them. For to expect any such thing is to presume of more than God has promised: seeing that he has nowhere promised any special providence in such cases, to do men right by such means, to justify their quarrels, to direct the Lot as the equity of the cause shall require, or to interpose himself and his providence in such courses otherwise than in any other of our actions, be they casual, contingent or necessary. And therefore to put anything to hazard with expectation of such an act of God’s providence is to presume of that which God has not promised: (that wherein many of the Heathen’s Lotteries were not free from some fault) to make trial of it is to tempt God; I mean, to put anything to the hazard of a Lot to this end, thereby to try whether God will in such special manner interpose himself for our benefit, the recovery of our right, or the clearing of our cause; that is in effect, whether he will extraordinarily work for us at our will. Which therefore as to presume or expect beforehand without good ground is hardly religious; so to conclude ought to that purpose afterward from the issue and event of it, is undoubtedly superstitious.

In Lots therefore of this nature, the thing hazarded must be put wholly to the casual or uncertain event of the Lot in regard of the act of the Creature, though not excluding the providence of God from the action, no more than from other civil affairs managed by counsel and advice; (which he may also, if the thing be weighty, be entreated by prayer to interpose, but so far forth only as he shall see fit) yet not expecting any extraordinary or immediate hand of God for the carriage of it so as in right it ought to go, or as is best that it should go: because neither do we know how far forth God sees it fit to interpose his providence therein, neither has he left us any promise in his word general or special, that he will immediately at any time or upon any occasion interpose it in that manner. In division therefore of Lands made as equal as may be with convenience, yet so as there is still some apparent inequality, in regard that the things cannot well otherwise be parted, for a man because in equity he has right to the best part, as the eldest in an inheritance that goes equally among all, to expect an extraordinary hand of God for the disposing of it according to the right as in equity it ought to go, is unwarrantable.

As also to conclude, when two stand for a place, that the one is fitter and more sufficient for it than the other, because the question between them being put to Lot, the Lot lighted on him, as if God by that event had given sentence on his side, is no less unwarrantable.

§ 10. The rules then here are first, that Lots determine no right: and that Lots consequently are to be used in these cases not for matter of right, but for matter of fact only, and that not of fact past, but of fact future alone; not to decide who has best right to the better part, or who is fittest for the place, but to determine which of them shall have it and enjoy it, or shall go away with it. Else we make it not an ordinary but an extraordinary, not a mere divisory but a divinatory Lot, a Lot for divination, not a Lot only for division, which, as we shall show afterward, is utterly unlawful.

And whereas in terms the civil Lawyers seem to say the contrary, where they say that Lots are to be used not in question of Fact, but in question of Right: yet in sense they accord with that which we here say, the Lawyers meaning being this alone, that Lots are not to be used in question of Fact past, where the question is whether a thing be done or not done; for that no ordinary Lot is able to decide; but where some question is who has a right to a thing, in which case notwithstanding the Lot
is not used to determine who in truth has a right to it, but who for peace and quietness sake shall enjoy it, where the right cannot be determined, or who shall have possession of it, till the right be determined.

Secondly, that no censure of right or wrong be grounded upon Lots: as that no extraordinary power or providence be expected, so nothing to that purpose upon the event of it be concluded, as if it ought to have been or gone so, or it was God’s approving will that it should be so, because so it has fallen out.

But doth not the work itself, may some say, manifest God’s will? I answer; there is a twofold will of God, a disposing will, and a directing will; a will informing and a will overruling: a will prescribing what should be, and a will preordaining what shall be. When anything therefore is fallen out be it good or bad, it is apparent indeed that it was God’s will either to perform it or to permit it. For nothing can possibly come to pass either without or against his will. But that it ought in right to have been so, cannot thence be concluded. Else we might conclude that the Jews ought to have crucified Christ, because God suffered them so to do, yea he preordained the doing of it. In this case therefore where the matter is put to a Lot by those in whose power it is so to dispose of it, it may be truly said, that it was God’s will, to wit, his disposing will, that the Lot should go as it has gone: But it is no consequent therefore, that according to God’s directing or informing will, it ought in regard of right so to have gone as it hath.

CHAPTER 6. Of ordinary Lots Lusorious; and of the lawfulness of them.

§ 1. Hitherto we have considered of the former sort of Ordinary Lots, which we termed Serious because applied to the determining of more serious affairs. We are now to proceed unto the latter sort of them, which some term Sporting, some Ludicrous, some Lusorious Lots; and are such as be used in game, sport or pastime, for recreation and delight. Within which compass I shall make bold to draw in those solemn games, if we may so term them, though indeed rather exercises of valour, strength and activity, or trials of art and skill and dexterity in some faculty, which were so famous and frequent of ancient times both in Greece and Italy, but especially among the Greeks.

In or about Game therefore is a Lot said to be used, when either the joining and beginning, or the issue and event of it is put to some casualty either in whole or in part.

So that the kinds and courses here used are divers. For sometimes the joining or beginning of a game or sport only is put to a Lot: As when by it is determined who shall play and who stay out, or who shall join on a side: which in shooting is done usually by shuffling of arrows together behind some one man’s back, and then casting them aside the one half one way and the other half another way: in bowling by casting a certain number of bowls belonging to several men out of one man’s arms at once, and those mating whose bowls meet nearest together: Or of the two sides whether shall lead and begin; which at Tables is decided commonly by the casting of most points; in Chess-play by turning a pawn on the board according to the colour of the square or quarter that it stayed or rested upon, or by the ones guessing at two pawns hidden in the others two hands. Thus as there, so elsewhere also at Chariot-driving and Horse-races, as also at running or rowing for wagers and the like, the Contenders had their stations or standings assigned them likewise by Lot: yea and, as some guess, the Combatants also their weapons. Beside that in shooting and singing or playing and the like, where two at once could not show their skill, they had their turns and courses determined by Lot. And the Masters of the Revels at Athens had the Minstrels of the City by Lot shared among them. And if in any of these exercises it were ambiguous who had done best, or who indeed had won the wager, two, it may be, at once coming home to the goal, or the like, it was (it seemed) in the power of the Tryers either to part it between them or to put it to Lot whether of the two should have the prize due to the Victor.
Again in lesser yet and lighter matters, when in private they were disposed to be merry together, they drew Lots sometimes who should tell his tale first, or who should first read the riddle or assailed some question propounded with a reward for him that could read it aright, or who oppose either other in some school-question, or the like.

And lastly as in their merry meetings they drew Lots commonly for some one of the Company to be Master or Moderator of their mirth: not altogether unlike the custom of choosing King and Queen used in many Countries at some special times, save that they did it usually with dice or the like, these with a bean and a pea, the former whereof they used in choice of their Magistrates: So the younger sort had a sport of choosing them a King by Lot, who was to enjoined the rest what he would, and they to do what he enjoined them; in which kind as Cyrus his carriage though a child and in a childish sport, yet discovered in him a kingly spirit and courage, so Athanasius his acting of a Bishop among Boys like himself in the like, is reported to have given a grave Bishop that beheld it good hope, that he would indeed prove that, which afterward he did, succeeding him in his See.

§ 2. Now in these cases a Lot is used though about game, yet rather out of it than in it, only to make a beginning and entrance into it: But other whiles it is used for the directing of the game itself and the issue of it either in part or in whole.

In part only, as in those games, wherein beside the Lot, art and industry is required for the further managing of that which has thereby been allotted: as in many games at Cards and Tables, wherein a Lot is indeed used for the distributing of the Cards amongst the Gamesters, and in assigning each of them his chance, thereby ministering unto them matter further to work on; but there is art and skill beside that to be employed by them for the managing of their game, and for the working upon that which casualty has cast on them. Which kind of game that it was not either unknown unto, or unusual among the ancients, beside other evidences, hereby appeared, in that they many times compare men’s life to such games, wherein a man cannot make choice of his own chance, but yet by art and skill is to make the best use he can of that which casually befalls him.

In whole, where the Lot absolutely determined the issue, as not only in many games both at dice and cards wherein nothing is further looked after but the fall of the dice, either who throws most or whose chance comes first, and the goodness or the fitness, as it is accounted, of the chance, or of the cards; but in sundry other sports also, not unknown wholly to the ancient, as, beside that Mication or Shifting of fingers which we spoke of before, used much still in Italy as well in sport as otherwise, in many other childish pastimes as Cockle, Even and Odd, Heades and Points, Crosse and Pile, and the like, the most whereof we find either wholly the same or very near the same to have been anciently used.

To which kind of Lot-sports or Lot-games (which shall be the last, and so I leave them) may their Banquet-lotteries be added, which we find two sorts of, some free, some set to sale, and both containing either matter of free gift, or matter of charge and expense, or mixed matter of either. For so we read that Augustus used on some Festivals and at other times by Lot to distribute certain gifts among his guests, some of worth and value, as gold, silver, and garments, and coins of all sorts foreign, ancient, and others; and some again mere toys and trifles, as heir-clothes, and sponges, and pincers, or scissors and the like, with merry Poiesies upon them of doubtful and double sense, seeming to glance at and nip them to whose Lot they were fallen. So likewise that monster of men Heliogabalus, a second Nero, used to propound to whom he pleased, both in public and private, certain mixed Lots, some matter of gift, some matter of charge, of such extreme inequality, that some were neither mended nor impaired at all, but mocked only, some were made, as we say, and some utterly undone by them: for some according to that they drew were to pay in and lay down, either a pound of beef, or a dead dog, or ten flies, or ten fleas, or ten bears, or ten camels, or so many pounds of lead, or as many of silver, or gold, &c. And others again were to receive the like, as their Lot came: which made many rich that were poor before, and others as poor that were rich before: the monster delighting in nothing more than in the mischief and miseries of many. And these Lots were sometimes either written or painted on their spoons, as we have commonly on fruit-platters painted emblems and poiesies, that sometimes we used to make sport withal somewhat after that manner.

Again sometimes were such Lots as these in mirth set to sale: for so used Augustus to do sometimes with his Lots; as also with pictures showing the backside of them only; in merriment propounding them to those that
were at board with him, that none might come in but upon a price to draw in the one, and he that would at adventure bid most, should have the other. Not altogether unlike to our riflings and Lotteries, wherein a certain number or so many as will venture their money are admitted to cast dice or to draw Lots for some prize or prizes propounded; concerning which kind of Lotteries the Civil Lawyers and others are divided in judgement; some referring them to the head of serious divisory Lots, as containing a twofold virtual contract, the one of bargain and sale between all the adventurers jointly and the owner or owners of the prize or prizes that they are to draw for, as making sale thereof unto them for such a sum as all their adventures put together amount unto; and another of society or fellowship between the Adventurers among themselves, agreeing to draw Lots or cast dice for that which in common they have so bought: Or, as in running, as they term them, and unlimited Lotteries, a single contract only of bargain and sale between the Owner and the Adventurers, not unlike altogether that wherein a Fisherman’s draught or a Fowler’s fortune, or a Merchant’s adventure at sea is bought or the like, wherein men buy bare hope alone rather than actually anything else: others bringing them within compass of unlawful games, as indeed, for anything I see, the most of them are little better, used mostly to help and relieve either base Spend-thrifts or beggarly Bankrupts. And thus have we seen in what many manner Lots have been or may be used in or about game.

§ 3. Now concerning these games of hazard, as they are termed, wherein a Lot is thus used, and there is therefore a kind of Lottery in them, there is much question and disputation among the learned: and many reverend and religious pass a peremptory sentence upon them as altogether unlawful and unbecoming good Christians.

Yet among those also that impugn and oppose them there is diversity of opinion. For some of them allow those games that are carried partly by casualty and partly by skill, which they suppose not to come within compass of Lots, condemning those only that depend wholly upon casualty. Others of them utterly and absolutely reject all that have any spice of Lottery or casualty at all in them. This of those that deal more distinctly in the point: For many others there be that so glance at them in general, that it is somewhat uncertain which part they concurred with; or rather of some of them whether they concurred at all with either, or do not rather upon other grounds many from theirs, disallow upon some of these games, not all of them, or not all manner use of them, as of some other hereafter shall plainly appear.

But to return to the two former sorts, it is well observed by one of the latter rank of them, that some of the reasons produced by the former for the disallowing of the one kind, if the grounds be admitted, cannot chose but condemn both kinds. For if the one be evil and not allowable because they depend upon Lot and Chance, than the other must likewise be evil and unwarrantable so far forth as in part also they depend thereupon. And on the other side if those former Authors will avow and justify the one, they cannot but secretly withal give sentence also for the other, since they stand both on the same ground, and are built both on one bottom.

For as for that which some say distinguishing the nature of these games, that the one is Lottery but not the other, or that there is a Lot in the one, but not in the other. It is true indeed, that if we define a Lot so, as many of them do, to be a kind of consulting with God, and a seeking to be informed and directed by him; there is no Lot at all either in the one or in the other. But if we understand a Lot as it was formerly defined according to the proper, and ordinary signification of it, so there is a Lot as much and as well in the one as in the other, the only difference is that there is a mere Lot in the one, a mixed Lot in the other, but a true Lot in either.

For the argument that a reverend Writer of ours brings to prove the contrary, because in a Lot there are two things required; first a casual act, and secondly an applying of that casual act to the determination of some particular and uncertain event; whereas the dealing of the Cards is a casual act indeed, but the determination of the uncertain victory is not in mixed games merely from it, but much or most from the wit and skill or the will of the player: and therefore the dealing of the cards is no more a Lot than the dealing of alms is, when the Prince’s Almoner put his hand into his pocket, and gives one man six pence, another 12. pence, another two pence, what comes forth without further advice. This argument, I say, is not sound, because it reasoned from a particular to a general; The dealing of the Cards is not applied to the determining of this uncertain event, to wit, the main issue of the game or the victory: therefore it is not applied to the determining of any uncertain event at
Porter in God’s house, (though it seem to be
at; I say not, that it was a mean matter to be a
truth, as
if weak and unsound, it may fall before the
and sound, the frame built on them may stand,
from some others of religion and learning,
unlawful. In which assertion if I shall dissent
or in a word, that a Lot used in game is not
simply or in that regard evil or unwarrantable:
Lots, and Games consisting of such are not
For the thing itself I hold that these Lusorious
drawing of rushes or cuts, which go commonly
such a course, as well as if it were done by
determining of this uncertain event, what cards
dealing of the cards is applied to the
consequent is untrue. For it is manifest that the
all. Which consequence is unsound; as also the
consequent is untrue. For it is manifest that the
dealing of the cards is applied to the
determining of this uncertain event, what cards
or casts each one shall have to exercise his
skill with: and is therefore even by his own
description a Lot: as is also the dealing of alms
in that sort, if it be done for that end, to try
what will casually fall to each ones share by
such a course, as well as if it were done by
drawing of rushes or cuts, which go commonly
for Lots.

For the thing itself I hold that these Lusorious
Lots, and Games consisting of such are not
simply or in that regard evil or unwarrantable:
or in a word, that a Lot used in game is not
unlawful. In which assertion if I shall dissent
from some others of religion and learning,
whom otherwise I worthily respect and
embrace, I desire but to have my grounds duly
viewed and examined, that if they prove firm
and sound, the frame built on them may stand,
if weak and unsound, it may fall before the
truth, as Dagon did before God’s Ark, myself
promising to lend a hand with the first to the
overturning and razing of what I now rear, if it
shall be showed me to be other than is
warrantable by God’s word.

§ 4. The former grounds therefore laid
concerning the nature of Lots in general, the
reasons that induce me to allow Lots of this
kind as not evil in themselves among others
are these.

First, that which may be ordinarily used in
other civil affairs, be they more weighty or of
less weight, that may also be used for matter of
recreation and delight. But a Lot may be
ordinarily used in other civil affairs, as, by the
express authority of God’s spirit speaking by
Solomon, for the ending of contentions, and
matters in suit or strife, be they weightier or of
less weight: For the words in the text are
indefinite, neither is there ought to restrain the
ordinary use of them in that kind either there
or else-where. The word used there, though in
its original propriety signifies Law-suits, yet in
the ordinary use of it, it extended itself to
contentions of all kinds. And the practise of
God’s people recorded in Scripture showed
that even mean matters have been decided and
determined usually by Lot: as in matter of
Tithe, though it were not much material, which
Lamb the Levite had, so that he had one of ten,
two of twenty, &c. yet was it decided by Lot.
It was a matter of no great weight what gate of
the Temple such or such Levites should wait at;
I say not, that it was a mean matter to be a
Porter in God’s house, (though it seem to be
mentioned as one of the meanest places of
employment there;) but whether company
should wait at this gate, and whether at that
other gate, (as who should stand at the North
door of the Church, and who at the South, to
receive people’s benevolence, upon occasion of
some collection) was no matter of great
moment, and yet was that also decided by Lot.
Neither was it greatly material which of the
Priests offered incense, or which dressed the
Lamps, &c. so it was done by some one of
them, yet that also went by Lot. Since that Lots
therefore may lawfully be used in other
ordinary affairs, God’s word indefinitely
warranting it, the same else-where not
restraining it, and the practise of the godly
carrying it even to mean matters (for the
offices themselves were not put by them to
Lot, but the distribution of particular duties or
stations among those of the same office) I see
not what should banish them out of our
disports, more than out of other our (though
serious, yet) civil affairs.

§ 5. Secondly, if we consider aright the nature
of a Lot, and the great uncertainty of it, we
shall find it fittest for such matters as are of
least moment, and not fit to be used in any
weighty affairs. In regard whereof, as those
that make use of it in serious matters, are wont,
with all the Caution they can, so to dispose of
things before-hand, that it may not be material
which way the Lot lights, or that as little, as
may be, be left unto it: save where it may be
material and of some consequence whether it
go the one way or the other, (I say not now
what the iniquity of others may enforce a man
unto; a less inconvenience is allowable for the
avoiding of a greater;) there will no wise man
willingly put such a matter of weight to the
uncertain hazard of a Lot. That therefore that
best sort with the nature of a Lot, may a Lot
most lawfully be used unto: but the lightest
matters best sort with the nature of a Lot: and
therefore about things of that nature may a Lot
most lawfully be used. Or more particularly for
the present business: A matter of mere
indifference, that is, such as a man may
lawfully either do or not do, and it is not
material whether he do or omit, such may a
man lawfully put either to the will of another,
or to the hazard of the uncertain motion of any
creature whether he shall do it or not do it. But
the using of a Lot in game (or the using of it in
any business, be it serious or lusorious,
qualified and cautioned as before) is but the
putting of a matter of mere indifference to the
hazard of an uncertain event, to wit, who shall
join or stand out, who shall lead or follow,
who shall overcome or yield to the other side

&c. which are matters merely indifferent, such as may without sin be either done or forborne, either done the one way or the other. The Use therefore of a Lot in such cases, and the putting of such matters to the hazard of a Lot is not evil simply in itself.

§ 6. Thirdly, if the Use of Lots in games be of itself evil, than must it needs be a sin either against Piety in the first Table, or against Charity in the second. For every moral evil must needs be a breach of God’s Law, the whole sum and substance whereof being comprised in those ten Edicts of those two Tables, every breach thereof must of necessity be brought within compass of the one of those twain, and so consequently convinced to be a branch either of Impiety against the one, or of Iniquity against the other.

But the Use of Lots in game is not in itself, or of itself a sin either against Piety, or against Charity.

To spend time and words in proving that the use of a Lot in a game as it is a Lot, is not against Charity, as that it is no breach of Charity for men to draw Cuts or cast Arrows, who shall bowl or shoot first, were both superfluous and ridiculous; superfluous, because it were to prove what no man denies; ridiculous, because it were to confute what no wise man will avow. And yet to charge a lusorious Lot with Impiety, has as little ground as the other.

For the manifesting here this much be considered, that all Impiety may be referred to these two heads, either the profaning of hallowed things, or the hallowing of things profane: since it cannot be imagined how any impiety should be committed but either by denying holy things their due respect, or by giving the same where it is not due. But lusorious Lots are not of themselves guilty in either of these kinds. In the latter kind even their greatest adversaries will clear them, there being no colour to charge them with the hallowing of ought that is not otherwise holy. And in the former kind they may be cleared also by the grounds of God’s Law, to wit, from the profaning of anything that is holy. For the thing used in them is a Lot: and nothing can be profaned by them but what is used in them: (by Lots, I mean simply as they are Lots, for to make Lots of holy things, as of parcels of Scripture, or of the Elements consecrated in the Sacrament, &c. is not anything concerning the nature of a Lot, but an abuse cleaving to it in some particular men’s practise of it, and such as is to be severed therefore in this our discourse from it.) But a Lot is no holy thing, either of itself and in it own nature, or by virtue of any divine institution. For of these two sorts are all holy things whatever, either they are holy of themselves and in their own nature, as God himself, and His titles and attributes are, or else they come to be such, whereas in their own nature they are not, by means of some special divine institution sanctifying and severing them to some holy use, as the Ark, the Tabernacle, the Temple, the 7th day of the world before Christ, and the first day of the week since Christ. Now in neither of these respects can a Lot be said to be holy, not of itself, or in it own nature, for it is nothing else but any casual event applied to the determining or deciding of some doubt: Where the matter of it, a mere casualty, as it is a casualty having no holiness at all in it of itself (for then should all casualties in like manner be such) can much less gain or procure any holiness to itself by any man’s application of it to any end whatever, much less by the applying of it to a profane or common end, be it more or less weighty.

Neither is a Lot holy by any divine institution; since every such institution must have warrant from some word; and there cannot be produced any word of institution whereby Lots are specially sanctified and set apart to such uses as may bring them within the compass of things holy and sacred. If any particular Lots have at sometimes been so used, that can no more impart holiness to all Lots in general, than the religious use of water in Baptism, yea in the Baptism of our SAVIOUR, and the sacred use of bread and wine in the Lord’s supper can make all water or all bread and wine in general to be holy, and so consequently debarred men of the ordinary and common use of those creatures either for the necessity of nature or for lawful delight.

Those therefore are amiss that allow Lots in game, and yet add for a Caution, that great reverence and religiousness be used in the action; in regard that Holy things must be done in holy manner. For if Lots in general even civil as well as sacred be holy things, they may in no case with no Caution be made matter of sport and pastime, or of gamesome recreation; nor can the light use of them be so corrected and qualified, but that it will have deadly poison even in the heart and pith of it, not adhering or cleaving unto the bark or outside of it only. But civil Lots are not such; and therefore the lusorious use of them is not the profaning of any holy thing. And if neither the unhallowing of anything hallowed, nor the
hallowing of anything unhallowed, then can it not be brought within compass of impiety or sin against the first Table. And if it be cleared from all sin against the first Table, and be not charged by any with any sin against the second Table, it must needs rest discharged of all sin in general, and consequently be justified as agreeable to God’s word.

§ 7. A fourth argument may be taken from the benefit of Christian liberty, by virtue whereof every Christian man has a free use of all God’s good creatures to employ them unto such purposes as by any natural power they are enabled unto, within the bounds above mentioned. But in these ordinary civil and disjovisive Lots be they serious or lusorious, the creature is used to no other end or use, but what it has a natural power unto, and such as by the mutual consent and agreement of those that use it, it may be enabled to effect. For it is in the natural power of the creature used to move or to be moved diversely, and uncertainly in regard of those that make use of it: and it is further in the power of it by their mutual agreement to determine such matters as are ordinarily wont to be determined thereby. Which therefore so long as the use of it is kept otherwise free from superstition and impiety, or from injustice and dishonesty, ought no more to be exiled from a Christian man’s recreations, than any other creature or ordinance whatever that has any natural power to delight and give contentment in that kind.

§ 8. A fifth argument may be drawn from the grounds and Grants even of those that oppose in this point; and may be framed on this wise. Anything indifferent is a lawful matter of recreation: But Lottery is a thing indifferent: Lottery therefore may be made a lawful matter of disport. The proposition is confirmed by their definition of recreation, to wit, Christian recreation is the exercise of something indifferent for the necessary refreshing of body or mind.

The assumption, namely, that Lottery is a thing in it own nature indifferent, is thus proved likewise by their definition of things in nature indifferent. Indifferent in nature is that which is left free, so as we are not simply commanded or forbidden to use it, but as we shall find it in Christian wisdom beneficial or hurtful unto us. But such is Lottery, or the use of Lots; not simply commanded, (for that of Solomon before alleged is rather a permission than a precept, or not so much a commandment as an advice and counsel, commending that to us as a wise and prudent course, not enjoining or imposing it as a duty necessary to be done, seeing by other courses beside it such controversies may without sin be composed as are there mentioned, and that effected oft by other means without a Lot, for which a Lot by Solomon is there allowed) nor again anywhere forbidden or condemned as evil in itself: by the former definition therefore consequently in different, and so lawful matter of Christian recreation and delight.

§ 9. Sixthly and lastly, that the Use of Lots in games is not against God’s word, but has sufficient warrant from it, may appear by this argument. Where the wisdom of God in his word has not determined the matter, and the manner, or the other circumstances of a thing lawful in itself, there they are least to man’s discretion and wisdom. Else should we hang ever in perpetual suspense, having no rule at all to direct us by in them. And where they are left thus to man’s discretion and wisdom, there is warrant sufficient for any circumstance that man shall make choice of (the Magistrate publicly to enjoined, or private persons to practise) that shall not be against the general rules of God’s word concerning the same.

For the better conceiving of this point it is to be considered, that for the doing of every act, and the doing of it in this or that manner, if natural reason will not of itself afford sufficient direction, there must be warrant had out of God’s word: and a man must know that he has warrant thence, because Whoseover is not of faith, is in sin. I say, where natural reason does not of itself afford sufficient direction; for the word is given us in moral matters to supply the defects of it caused by our first Parents their fall; neither does it abridge us of the help and use of it for direction in such actions, but add a further and fuller help thereunto.

First then for the act itself in general; that is of itself good and lawful and allowable by God’s Law, for the doing whereof there is either precept or permission in God’s word, and that either direct and express, or collected by just consequence: if a precept, it is necessary and must be done; if permission only, it is indifferent and may be done or not done, as shall seem good to the party whom it concerned.

Secondly for the subject matter, the manner of it and other such circumstances, where they are by God’s word determined, there such only are lawful as the word of God has enjoined.

Where they are not determined, there all such are lawful as the same word does not forbid. In
the former that rule holds, *He that is not with me, is against me:* in the latter that other, *He that is not against me, is with me.* Thus for sacrifice and the place of it, before it was determined, it was lawful in any place, because no certain place was designated: but after it was once determined, it was lawful in no place but that alone, that God had expressly thereunto assigned. So for the Passover and other offerings, and the time and season of either, the ordinary sacrifices (I mean the voluntary or freewill offerings) might be offered at any time, because for them was no time determined: but the Passover might be celebrated only at one time, because the time of it was determined.

This would the rather be observed for the reader answering of some frivolous objections made by some Separatists; *What warrant, say they, have you to use this or that form of prayer, or to pray upon a book?* I answer; It is warrant sufficient that we are enjoined to use prayer, and such kind of prayer, confession of sin, and supplication for pardon, &c. no set form thereof determined; therefore any fit form warrantable; this form that we use not unfit otherwise; this form therefore allowable. And let a man demand of one of them when he prayed, what warrant he has to use that form that he then uses, he can answer no otherwise; or if in effect otherwise, he shall answer otherwise than well. So for a book; the means of help are not determined; and this one among others; this therefore not unwarrantable. And if one of them should be asked, how he proves it warrantable to use a printed book to read on in the Church; he shall not be able to make other answer than as before: for neither precept nor practise can be found in the word for the use of a thing that was not known in those times wherein the word of God was written.

Secondly, for the matter and manner of it, or the things wherewith we may recreate ourselves, there is nothing determined; any means therefore of recreation that are not against the general Rules of comeliness and decency, of convenience and expedience, of religion and piety, and the like, are by the word of God allowed, and have from thence sufficient warrant. For example; If question be whether Bowls or Chess be lawful or no: what can there be said in justification of them more than this, that recreation in general is by God’s word allowed; the matter of it in particular not determined: these games not prohibited; therefore lawful and allowable. Now the very same may be said of Lots and Lottery. Game in general is allowed; no particular matter or manner of it prescribed: any therefore lawful that is not against the general rules of God’s word; this of Lottery such; and therefore allowable.

If any shall say, that the particular matter or manner of recreation is determined, he must show where. Or if any shall say, that this particular Lot is against the general rules of God’s word otherwise, he must show which and how. Otherwise there is no civil action almost that shall be justifiable, as going in doublet and hose, wearing band and cuffs, carrying a man’s purse in his pocket, sitting on a stool at the Table, crossing the water in a Boat when one may go about by the Bridge, eating of pork, blooding or anything strangled, and the like, if it shall be deemed enough to make an action unwarrantable, either because there is no particular precept or precedent for it in Scripture, or because it is questioned or condemned by some without any reason or sufficient cause rendered why it should be questioned and condemned in that sort.

And so I conclude and leave this sixth and last reason taken from the common grounds of other ordinary recreations not questioned, which must all with this either stand or fall, the selfsame grounds supporting either, that this particular is not prohibited, nor is against the general rules of God’s word otherwise; which as in the former, so in this case must stand good, till the contrary can be proved.
CHAPTER 7. Answer to the principal Objections made against lusorious Lots.

§ 1. But here will some of the former Authors object and say, we can show how this kind of disport or recreation by Lots and the use of a Lot in such cases is against the general rules of God’s word. And so I come to examine the several objections that are by several men brought against this kind of disport. Wherein I will deal as ingenuously, and as indifferently as I am able to do; propound their arguments as I find them, and as many as I find of them, not picking out the weakest and passing by the pithiest, or setting down some part or piece of them and concealing the residue; but as near as I can, gather all I can find in such Writers as I can understand to have dealt in this argument, and enforcing them as far as themselves do to their best strength.

But in every Lot is an especial and immediate providence of God.

No Lot therefore is lightly or vainly to be used.

The Proposition of this Syllogism (such as it is) is further confirmed by an Argument taken from the tenor of the third Commandment.

God’s name is not lightly or vainly to be used.

God’s Providence is God’s name.

God’s Providence therefore is not lightly or vainly to be used.

The Assumption is confirmed by two testimonies: the one divine, a sentence of Solomon, The Lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposition of it is of the Lord: So that the nature of a Lot lies wholly in this that although the things be of us, yet the disposition is wholly of God: that is, he used not here our means of cunning, practise, strength, steadiness of hand or such like, but takes it wholly to himself. The other human, a saying of Hieromus: A Lot is a hidden and incomprehensible predestination, ruled by God: who dare play with this then?

First the principal Syllogism itself is not sound, there are four Terms, as they say, in it. I show it by the like Paralogism built of the same frame and set upon the same ground.

God’s immediate or especial providence is not to be vainly or lightly used.
For the discovery hereof let two grounds formerly laid be remembered. The former, that the act of the Creator and the act of the Creature are in these cases to be distinguished. The casual event in regard of the Creature is one thing, and God’s providence directing and ruling or over-ruling it, as all other actions, is another thing. A man may play therefore with the one, and yet not with the other: as we do in those things that are not casual, but are carried and managed by man’s Art and industry, and yet are accompanied also with God’s providence.

The latter, that it is not the casualty of an Event that makes it a work of God’s immediate Providence. For many things are casual, which yet are not works of God’s immediate providence, nor imply his special presence. Whereas if a Lot in regard of the casualty of it were a work of God’s immediate providence, and did in that regard imply his special and extraordinary presence, then all casual events should be such. For that which agrees to a thing as it is such or such, agrees necessarily to all things that are such. But for a fowl to fly before a man on his way, or for a dog to cross a man’s bowl in play, and that it may be, where there is no likelihood of doing well otherwise, implied not any special or immediate Providence: no more therefore does a Lot.

§ 3. But let us examine the proofs brought to strengthen this part. First for the sentence of Solomon, there want not good Authors that expound it of singular, extraordinary, and miraculous Lots only: such, to use the words of one of our Adversaries, as are used immediately to find out God’s will. whereas these that we now dispute of are no such; neither is it now lawful to use any Lot at all to that end. But the words seem to be more general, and are word for word thus in the original, *The Lot, it is cast into the lap, but every judgement or disposition of it (for there is no article there answering our English The) is of God*. As he said else-where, *Many seek the Ruler’s face or favour; but each man’s judgement is from God. And, The Horse is prepared for the day of fight: but salutation is of God, or belonged to God, is God’s*. Which words so read import only thus much, that there is a providence of God in all things, even in the least, in the most casual things, and among the rest by name in a Lot: And so is there no more said of Lots there, than is spoken else-where not of Lots alone or things casual only; but of all men’s thoughts and purposes, and words and works, and counsels and courses; as we have formerly shown; and as beside the Authors there alleged, some of those that urge this place for the proof of this point confess else-where against themselves when they say, that *The disposing of the Chance is secret that it may be Chance indeed and wholly of God, who directed all things.*

Yea take the words as they are usually read, *The Lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposition, or the whole disposing thereof, is of the Lord;* It may as truly be said with good warrant from many other places of Scripture beside those by the Adverse party produced; that the whole issue or event and disposing of all things great and weighty, or less and lighter is of the Lord: Which yet excludes not the means, that God worked by or with, in the most of them, nor implied an immediate providence universally in them: but is therefore so said, and may truly be said, to show, that it is wholly in God’s hands to dispose of the event and issue of all things, and to cross or give way to them, as he shall see good. So that a man may as well, and upon as good ground out of the places concerning all other men’s speeches and actions alleged by themselves, (together with those other, which are some of them yet more general and of larger extent) exclude all things else whatever from game, as they may Lots, in regard of ought that concerning them can be picked out of this place.

§ 4. If it be objected, that there is an immediate providence of God ever in the one but not usually in the other. I answer, that indeed is presumed, that in every Lot there is an immediate providence of God: but it is not yet proved: yea (though that be more than my task requires: he that said it should make it good) it may thus be disproved. First if in every Lot there be necessarily an immediate work and providence of God, then is it in the natural power of man to make God work immediately at his pleasure: for it is in man’s power naturally to cast Lots at his pleasure. But to say that it is in man’s power naturally to set God on working immediately at his pleasure, is absurd. There is not therefore an immediate work and providence necessarily in every Lot. Again who sees it not that the lighting of Lots in this or that manner ordinarily comes immediately from the act of the Creature? For example: In the blending of scrolls or tickets together, the motion of the vessel wherein they are blended (no regard had to the end for which it is done) causes some to lie this way and some to lie that way, (every new shaking thereof causing a new sorting) and so some to
lie higher and nearer at hand, if a man will draw of the next, some lower and further of, not likely to be drawn so soon, unless he dive deeper. Neither can any man say certainly that there is ordinarily any special hand of God, in the shuffling and sorting of them, crossing the course of nature, or the natural motion of the creature, and so causing those to lie higher and so nearer at hand, that would otherwise have lain lower, and those to lie lower and so further from hand that would otherwise have lain higher. So in the shuffling of Cards, the hand of him that shuffled them is it that disposed them, and that diversely as he listed either to stay or to continue that act of his. In the casting of dice the violence of the Caster causes the Creature cast to move, till either that force failing, or some opposite body hindering it, it cease to move further, and so determine the chance. Yea suppose two agree to decide a doubt by the cards, as they come where they lie (left by those that last used them) without further ado; the position of them now in that sort that they find them, is caused by him that so left them, either at all adventures, or (as it may well be) on some special occasion otherwise, and yet is it casual and a Lot to them.

Or lastly to instance in one other sort of Lots more commonly used by children in game; when they play at Even and odd, or at Heads and points, either there is no such immediate providence, as these men dream of; or if there be, it must be exercised not in disposing of any corporal motion of the insensible Creature (for the Lots are already disposed, be they stones or pins, by him that holds them) nor in directing the other’s hand in choosing, or in placing of his pin (for his own will lead by guess and conjecture doth that) but in inclining the will of the child, or guiding his conjecture; which how senseless it is to say, let any reasonable man judge. And the like may be said of those serious Lots, wherein a child is employed to choose and take up what he listed and best likes, and by his choice is the controversy or question decided: As also wherein the parties themselves choose each one for himself of the Lots openly exhibited, but distinguished by some difference to them secret and unseen. Yea but Hieromus said that a Lot is divine predestination: and who dare dally then with it?

Where Hieromus said so, I find not. I find only where he said (cited before) that there was a secret hand of God directing the Lot that lighted on Jonah: but he added withal, that no general rule can be gathered for ordinary Lots from it. But Augustine yet said Zanchie, said that Predestination may be termed a Lot. True it is that Augustine indeed said somewhat to that effect formerly likewise alleged, to wit, that God’s saving Grace is called a Lot; because in the same there is no choice but God’s will alone, and so our salutation depended on God’s free-favour and good pleasure only, not on man’s merit. But that is but a topical or metaphorical speech, comparing the freeness of God’s choice to the indifference of a Lot, that has no respect to any matter of men’s worth or desert: and so no way concerned the present business, neither is it of force to prove a Lot to be that that is figuratively compared thereunto.

Again it may be granted that a Lot cast by God’s special appointment for this end to discover what person God has assigned to some place, may in some sense (though very improperly) be termed God’s predestination, because it is a sign of it, or a means to discover it, as God’s will is put not unusually for the Signs of his will. But that also was nothing to the Lots that we now entreat of: since there is no sound reasoning from extraordinary to ordinary actions. And so much for the first form.

§ 5. Secondly, from the same grounds they reason on this wise, Whatsoever directly, or of itself, or in a special manner tended to the advancing of God’s name is to be used religiously, and not to be used in sport; as we may not pray or swear in sport: But the use of Lots directly, or of itself and in special manner tended to the advancing of the name of God in attributing to his special Providence in the whole and immediate disposing of the Lot, and expecting the event. Therefore the Use of Lots is not to be in sports.

I answer: The assumption is not true if it be understood universally: it concludes nothing to the Question if it be taken particularly. The proof annexed to it scarce carries good sense: the Printer, it may be, is in fault. But if the meaning of the Author be, as I conceive it, (for I must in part go by guess) that the disposition of every Lot is wholly attributed to, and the event wholly expected from the special and immediate Providence of God, I deny it, neither do the places produced prove it. The former of them, concerning ordinary Lots or Lots in general, was examined and answered sufficiently before. The latter is an example of an extraordinary Lot, wherein there was indeed an immediate and special providence. But extraordinary examples make no general rules.
Neither is it a good course of arguing to reason from the special, or a singular to the general and universal; much less from one extraordinary act or event to all ordinary courses of the same kind. Herein is the difference between the one and the other, between the extraordinary Lot, wherein there is an immediate hand of God for special purpose, and the ordinary Lot, wherein there is not; that the one could not but fall certainly, were it never so oft cast, as in the Lots used for the discovery of Achan and Jonah, and in the election of Saul and Matthias, and the like: whereas the other cast oft in the same case, as for partition of goods and chattels descending by inheritance upon, or bought in common by many would not constantly and certainly fall out still the same. And thus much for the two first forms; which in effect are the same.

§ 6. Thus then they reasoned against a Lot in games as an abusing of God’s name and a playing with a work of his immediate providence: Now farther they charge it as a tempting of God in requiring of a special work and immediate sentence from God for the deciding of vain doubts: And first they argue on this manner:

We are not to tempt the almighty by a vain desire of manifestation of his power and special providence. But by using Lots in sport we do so: therefore we may not use Lots in sport. The assumption they seem to prove on this wise. To call God to sit in judgement where there is no necessity so to do, or for the determining of trifles, is to tempt, nay to mock God: But by the use of Lots in sport God is called to sit in judgement where there is no necessity so to do, or for the determining of trifles: And first they argue on this manner:

The Proposition is confirmed à simili, by the King and Council, by whose government though we all live, yet were it a dishonour to them to be called upon by children to determine their sports. The Assumption is proved à pari, by comparing together a Lot and an Oath: A Lot in the nature thereof doth as necessarily suppose the providence and determining presence of God, as an Oath in the nature thereof doth suppose the testifying presence of God. Yea so, that as in an Oath, so in a Lot, Prayers is expressed or to be understood. In which regard also as an Oath, so a Lot is an act of religion, in which we refer unto God the determining of such weighty things as can no other ways be determined; and therefore in the use of it is ever infolded, and sometimes also expressed, both a

confession that God is a sovereign Judge to determine such things, and a supplication to him that by the Lot, when it is cast, he will be pleased so to do. A Lot, therefore, as an Oath, is not to be used but in case of necessity and extremity: and being a solemn act of religion may not be applied to sporting: We may as well jest with the Word, and Sacraments, and Oaths, as with Lots.

There might be many several arguments framed out of these allegations; but because they build all on one ground, and stand upon one bottom, I have thought best to put them in this manner together that the same common answer might serve them all.

§ 7. First therefore the using of Lots either in matters sage and serious, or of sport and delight is not of itself any desire of the manifestation of God’s special power and providence by an immediate disposition, unless men offend against the caution before given in doing it to this end, to try thereby whether God will vouchsafe to work immediately and extraordinarily or no; which being not of the nature of the thing itself, is not necessarily implied in the ordinary use of it. Neither is there any such calling in of God to decide doubts in game, but the matter in question is put to the casual disposition of the Creature; no more than there was any solemn calling of God in, or calling upon him to determine the tithe, in the example before alleged out of the Law. And therefore consequently no such tempting of God, as is here charged, in the use of a Lot, be it used either in case of necessity or otherwise.

Yea rather if a Lot be such as here they say, it is not to be used in any business at all upon any occasion whatever. For, It is not lawful to tempt God in any case whatever: But to use Lots in any case whatever is to tempt God: It is not lawful therefore to use Lots in any case whatever. The assumption is thus proved evidently by the former grounds and grants: To require a work of God’s immediate power and providence in this or that kind, is to stint, and so to tempt God: But to use a Lot in any case, is to require a work of God’s immediate power and providence: (for every Lot, say they, is such:) Therefore to use a Lot in any case whatever is unlawful.

But this Conclusion is untrue: for a Lot in some cases may lawfully be used: the former ground therefore is false. It is indeed unlawful and a tempting of God to use a Lot so as they would have it used only, to wit, requiring & expecting an extraordinary work of God in it,
in any case or upon any occasion whatever, without God’s express appointment of it, though all means should fail otherwise. For to have recourse to extraordinary means when ordinary fail, is to tempt God by refusing to depend and wait upon God, as our Saviour implied, when at the Devils motion he refused to speak to his Father to have stones turn into bread, lest by so doing he should tempt God, though it were in case of extremity: that which was the sin of the Israelites sometimes in the Wilderness. No such Lot therefore at all as they allow of is allowable. And to speak as the truth is, by the course and force of this their discourse, the only lawful use of a Lot is disallowed and condemned, and an unlawful and unwarrantable use of it is allowed in the room of it.

§ 8. Secondly, an Oath and a Lot are not alike: the comparison therefore laid between them will not hold. For neither is the right of ought in an ordinary Lot put to the special providence or immediate and extraordinary work of God; as the truth of the thing testified is in an oath put to his testimony: neither is there in every Lot any such solemn invocation of God, as there is in an Oath ever either expressed or implied, by which God is called to witness with us the truth of that we avow, or the truth of our purpose to perform what we promise: as may hereby appear.

The definition of each thing contained the whole nature or the thing defined. Now a Lot may be defined without this: but so cannot an Oath. Yea so some of the adverse party define Lottery out of Lyra, To use Lots is by a variable event of some sensible thing to determine some doubtful or uncertain matter. Which definition of Lottery contained no such matter as is here supposed to be of the very nature and essence of a Lot, as it is of the essence of an Oath; which cannot be defined therefore without it.

Neither do the places produced prove it. They prove only that Prayer was sometimes used (but a faithless prayer the one of them without word or warrant) before an extraordinary Lot for an extraordinary power and providence to direct the event of it; the thing intended being such as the Lot by no natural power, either of the Creature using it, or used in it was able to effect: which kind of prayer has no place, nor is lawful in ordinary or mere divisory Lots. For example: In assigning and setting out tithe, it was not lawful, much less necessary, to pray God so to give a right Lot, that every Lamb or Kid that were indeed in course of time the tenth, might certainly or constantly so come to hand. But they prove not that prayer is part of a Lot or is in the Lot, as it is part of an oath, and is included in the Oath, as by the usual definitions of an Oath may appear. In election of offices sacred or civil prayer is used or at least ought to be used: yet it followed not therefore that prayer is a part of the choice, or that therefore the election in the nature of it doth necessarily suppose a special providence and determining presence of God. Yea prayer may be used both before games and in games, as both before and at meat, and yet is not therefore of the nature of game, nor supposed therefore a special providence of God and a determining presence in it.

Lastly, a Lot is no religious act, nor holy thing of itself, as before has been shown: there is much difference therefore between Lots, and the word of God, Sacraments and Oaths. For these things are holy of themselves and in their own nature, as the very definitions of them will soon show: and therefore cannot but be holy. Whereas a Lot is not in the nature and the definition of it holy, and therefore is not always and necessarily sacred. Yea those things are now holy, as ever, in our ordinary use; whereas no Lot is holy that we can use nowadays; nor indeed was ever any so, save extraordinarily. But God’s taking of any thing sometimes extraordinarily or from ordinary use to apply it to some holy and extraordinary use, does not exempt the kind in general, but the thing only itself so used in special from civil or light and ordinary usage; and that also so long only as it is so set apart: As the use of water in Baptism hindered not but that a man may play with water, yea and with that very water in Baptism hindered not but that a man may afterward be a Sacrament in Baptism, or that has so been, but is not now. In like manner when a Lot shall be extraordinarily used for a special sign of God’s immediate election and choice, whosoever shall then condemn or set light by that Lot, he shall abuse an holy thing and God’s name in so doing; but not whosoever shall use otherwise any Lot to disport, yea though it were that Lot that had been used in such a business before; there remaining no more holiness in it after that use is over, then in the bush that burnt but wasted not, when God manifested himself to Moses in it, after that manifestation was once ended.

§ 9. Again they argue hence on this wise:

God’s Oracles (being his name) may not be used for recreation:

But Lots are God’s Oracles. Lots therefore may not be used for recreation or in disport.
The assumption is thus proved: In that Solomon called a Lot judgement, where he said; The judgement of it is of God: he showed that God himself sits in judgement by it, and that the Lot is as God’s Deputy who is Judge of the world, whereby he himself determined of things doubtful, and such as no arte or wit of man is able to discover.

Yea not only the Scripture makes a Lot so the sentence of God, as in the most weighty matters of God and man, of life and death, it is the very oracle and determination of God’s will, wherein a man must rest without any contradiction or motion to the contrary: but even the very Gentiles themselves also knew it to be God’s Oracle.

These proofs of the Assumption are unsound and insufficient. For first for the testimony of Solomon; though the word therein used in his native sense and original signify properly judgement, and is therefore one of the necessary attendants of a lawful Oath, as the learned well observe. Yet neither is a Lot there termed Judgement; though the word that naturally so signified be applied there unto it, and might be properly used of some special kind of it: Neither doth the word in the necessary sense and original signify properly natural or Idiot, as well as by a Lot, if it should please the parties contending to refer themselves thereunto?

§ 10. Secondly for the instances alleged: To reason on this manner, Lots were once God’s Oracles in these and these cases: therefore they are so in all: or, Lots were sometimes extraordinarily God’s Oracles in some cases whereunto they were by God then specially for that purpose assigned: therefore they are so always: both the consequence is unsound, and the consequent untrue. For first it followed not; If sometimes extraordinarily, than ever. The noise that David heard over his head in the mulberry-trees was God’s Oracle to him: shall the like rustling, that we may chance to hear in trees over our heads, be therefore a divine Oracle to us? The Philistines speech to Jonathan and his Armour-bearer was as an Oracle of God to them: shall the like answer therefore be the same now to us? or must it needs therefore be ever such?

Again that Lots are not always, nay not at all now God’s Oracles or any such divine sentence, it is evident.

For first God’s Oracles and sentences are certain and constant: for his word and sentence is yea and amen as himself. And so were those Lots whereby God sometimes gave sentence, as that which Achan was discovered by, which had it therefore either been oft cast, or cast by many persons at God’s appointment at once, would still constantly have lighted on no Tribe but Judas, no kindred but the Zarchites, no household but Zabdiel, no person but Achan. But then an ordinary Lot there is nothing more uncertain, ready upon every new shaking of the Lot pot to give out a new sentence. For suppose we that some one Minister of a whole hundred in our head City should by Lot be selected to visit the Pest house, would the Lot drawn in this case four or five times together with never so great solemnity light certainly and constantly ever on the same man? Or suppose four or five several Companies in several places should, after the business solemnly by prayer commended to God, cast Lots upon the self-same employment among the same parties, were it certain, yea or probable that they should all light upon the same person? Or were it not frivolous, if not impious, therefore to say, that upon every second shaking or drawing GOD alters his sentence, and so to accuse him of inconstancy; or that to several Companies he gives a several sentence, and so to charge him with contradiction and contrariety?

Secondly God’s oracles are ever according to justice and equity: but the sentence of a Lot is not certainly such. For suppose a matter of right, wherein he that ought to yield will not
yield, by mutual consent therefore of necessity put to a Lot; dare any man say certainly that it shall go with him that has right? Or in war, suppose a whole troupe put to cast Lots for their lines, among whom there are many that are no way at all faulty, dare any say that the Death-lot shall light on no one of these, but upon those alone that indeed have deserved to die? as in Acham’s case a man might well confidently say, that it should surely light on him that was the delinquent and on no other, whom by such means God had then given warrant to search for. No: a Lot regarded no more right than wrong, no more guiltless than guilty, ready to go indifferently for or against either. It is none therefore of God’s sentence.

Thirdly, if a Lot were God’s sentence, what need men be so curious in examining and trying the fitness or unfitness of those that they admit to a Lot for the bearing of any Office either in Church or Commonwealth? (For I spare to ask of the Popish sort, why they therefore forbear to elect Ecclesiastical Officers by Lot, if a Lot be God’s sentence; because such things, say they, must be done by the inspiration of God’s spirit; as if God’s spirit and his sentence were not sure to concur.) For is not God as well able to judge of their fitness or unfitness as man is? Or do they distrust God, and fear that he will be partial in his sentence, whose constant commendation is, that he is no respecter of persons? The general care therefore in this kind of all those that use Lots in any such weighty affair, showed evidently, that they do not esteem the Lot’s verdict God’s Oracle, but a sentence so uncertain, so inconsiderate, so heedless, that it might well run with them into a whirl-pool drawing Church and State after it, if by human inquisition, consultation, consideration, under danger of sin and disobedience, without men were ever bound to rest in and abide by, under danger of sin and disobedience, without further inquisition, consultation, consideration, or forecasting ought for the worse or the better. Man’s sentence is sometimes held such: God’s ever much more. Yea so it was in those Lots, wherein God extraordinarily gave sentence, as in Saul’s and Matthias his: whereas in ordinary Lots it is far otherwise.

For first in private affairs no man is bound to stand to the event of a Lot which he never gave consent unto. In private affairs I say, because in some cases the Law enables the Magistrate to compel the parties contending, willy-nilly they, to abide by it; which yet he is not permitted to do in more cases, then in the letter of the Law are expressed. It were an idle thing, for a young man to tell his Parents that of two Maidens motioned to him for marriage such a one of the twain which they like not of, yet they ought to give their consent with (it is a learned man’s instance, and that approved by him, of a Nobleman’s son) because having cast Lots for direction after invocation of God’s name in that business, the Lot had light upon her. Much more idle yet were it for him to bear one down, that she ought in conscience to have him and no other but him, and that without guilt of sin and disobedience she might not refuse him, because God in a Lot cast by him had given such a sentence. And yet were a Lot God’s oracle, it should necessarily bind, not expecting man’s privity or consent thereunto: yea where it was God’s oracle, it did necessarily so bind, as in Saul’s case nothing willing at the first, but enforced in some sort to condescend unto that which the Lot imposed upon him.

Secondly by mutual consent it is no question but that men may alter and change their Lots either with other, as Levinus and Marcellus sometimes did at the request of the Senate upon suit made by the Sicilians whom Marcellus, one they sorely feared, was else to have had. But may any by mutual agreement after God’s sentence, as the wife to leave her head and break the covenant of her God, because her Husband is content to agree thereunto? Or to hold to a Lot where it was a divine Oracle, might Saul so elected have surrendered his right to another, though the people should have been willing also to have yielded thereunto? Or might Matthias have resigned his place to Barsabas, and Barsabas by joint consent have taken it of him? Yet if in choice of a Minister for the Pest-house, should the Lot light on one that (as Prochorus the Counterfeit fables of John when he saw that by Lot he was to go over sea into Asia) should for fear presently sink down in a swoon, and some other more hardy than he offer himself voluntarily to that office, were it not lawful to accept of him? or were it wisdom to refuse him, and press the other to it so unfit for it?

Yea lastly in some cases it were a sin for a man to retain that which by Lot is befallen him. For may a man with a good conscience keep his brothers right from him, which the iniquity of a Lot, for quietness sake yielded to by the other, has against justice cast upon him, and say it is God’s sentence? yea may not the
wronged party lawfully endeavour, by convincing him in conscience of the wrong that he has done him, to recover his right, if he can? Or as Matthias should have sinned in renouncing his Apostleship; so did not Phanнийas that sly Idiot as well sin in accepting of the High-priestship, though assigned him by Lot? And yet by these men’s positions should that Lot also be God’s sentence, and his choice thereby God’s immediate call to that office. A senseless conceit to suppose that any man should sin by following God’s call, by doing after God’s sentence.

§ 12. Where it is to be observed, that however it is here pretended that the very Heathen held their Lotteries ever to be most religious and inviolable; yet in truth it is not so? They esteemed it indeed a very prudent and politick ordinance for the preventing of many inconveniences; yea in some sort too religious, as in their public affairs it was ordered, in regard of some superstitious rites used about it, as about all other their solemn, yet civil employments either public or private: And in that regard held they it a heinous offence for any private man to alter the course of any business which the state thereby had established.

But yet they reputed not the Lot to be so sacred and peremptory a sentence, but that they might reject those that it had lighted upon, if they either already knew them, or upon further trial found them to be unfit: Yea and but that otherwise they might and did usually go from it, sometimes in case of necessity, when by accident the party was disabled to do that which by Lot he ought to have done; sometimes in case of religion, the party being thereby restrained from going whither the Lot had assigned him; sometimes at the suit of the parties themselves; sometimes at the earnest entreaty of some others; sometimes upon one consideration, and sometimes upon another, when after the Lots cast, upon better advice, they misdoubted that it might prove any way prejudicial to the public, if the course were not altered.

In which kind they are, as deservedly to be approved and commended; so to be preferred before the superstitious Jews, who rather than they would break the order of the Priestly employment in set courses at first settled by Lot, suffered the service of God for some space of time in the siege of their City to be wholly neglected, because all the Priests of that course then present there were utterly destroyed, that ought at that time to have done the service. True it is indeed that in the Civil Law all Appeal is denied ordinarily from the sentence of a Lot: But that is, not (as some of them fondly say) because the sentence of a Lot is the sentence of Fortune, or of God, who has no superior in this world but rather, as others, with better colour of reason; because this course is taken for more speedy dispatch; because by flying from it in many cases they shall but hinder either other from ever coming to any issue; because a Lot is the most equal and indifferent course that can be and no corruption or partiality can be charged upon it: and lastly because commonly it is by mutual consent that matters are put thereunto, in which case their own act justly concludes either side: Agreeable whereunto is that of Plato, who in his State inhibited all appeal from those Judges that the parties themselves have made choice of by mutual consent; As also in the Athenian Estate, though they might appeal to the principle Judges, from such Arbiters or Umpires as by Lot were assigned them; yet from such as by mutual agreement they had referred themselves unto, it is apparent that they could have no appeal.

Let me add one thing further that in some cases at the civil Law, though no remedy ordinarily be granted in a division by Lot made with some inequality, because the hazard of lighting upon the less part and so of sustaining the loss was alike unto either; yet it is the opinion of good Lawyers, that if the inequality be over-great, the Magistrate may lawfully interpose his authority for the redressing of the wrong.

To draw all to an head then and so to end with this argument, let any man endued with ordinary reason judge how a Lot can be said to be a sacred Oracle, and a divine sentence, that neither absolutely ties any man for matter of fact, nor doth certainly determine ought in question of right, that never spoke certainly, and would oft speak unadvisedly, if by human caution it were not limited before what it should say.

§ 13. Now these were the arguments taken from the nature of Lots. The next argument is drawn from the proper use and end of them. And herein they reason sometimes from the affirmative, sometimes from the negative.

From the affirmative thus:

Whatsoever God has sanctified to a proper end, is not to be perverted to a worse end.

But God has sanctified Lots to a proper end; viz. to end controversies.
Therefore man is not to pervert them to a worse; viz. to play, and by playing to get away another man’s money, which without controversy is his own.

This argument thus conceived is faulty two ways. For first it goes from the question, which is not whether any Creature or ordinance of God may be perverted, or perversely used; but whether the use of Lots questioned be a perverting of them or no; whereas in the conclusion it is taken for granted that it is. Neither again is the question whether men may use Lots playing for money (a thing incident to other games as well as these; which whether it be lawful or no, I shall not need now to discuss,) much less, whether they may be used in game to that end, to get another man’s money from him, or no; (which is no general use of them, nor has any place at all there, where either there is no wagering at all, or where the Lot is used only at the beginning of the game, to decide who shall join, who lead, or the like;) but whether Lots may in any wise be used in sport.

Secondly there is more inferred in the conclusion than was in the premises, and that which followed not from ought in them. For the use of a Lot in play is ever to decide some question or controversy, though a light one it is like, yet a question or controversy truly so termed; otherwise it were no Lot.

For the mending of these faults the argument may better be conceived on this manner:

That which God has sanctified to some proper use, is not to be applied to any other, especially a worse use.

But God has sanctified Lots to this proper use, to wit, the deciding of controversies in matters of weight.

A Lot therefore may not be applied to any other use, much less to a worse.

The Proposition is proved by an instance of the Temple, set apart for prayer, which the Jews therefore are reproved for applying to market and merchandise.

The Assumption is confirmed principally by that saying of Solomon, The Lot stinted strife, and makes partition among the mighty. For the other place is but an instance that a Lot once was by God’s own appointment so used. It is amplified à simili, by the like use of an Oath: concerning which there is a farther speech of the Apostle brought to prove that Solomon’s purpose in those words before alleged is to show the only lawful use of a Lot; (viz. to end controversies which otherwise conveniently cannot, when each Contender without the Lot is too mighty to yield;) thus: As when the Apostle said, An Oath for confirmation among men is an end of all strife, his purpose is not so much to teach us, that men use an Oath to end controversies; (which every man know,) but that God has dedicated and made an Oath holy and sure only for that use of necessary deciding of doubts of importance among men: so the like words used of a Lot must be understood in the same sense: not so much to teach us that a Lot ended such controversies among men, which all know, but that God has ordained it only for that use.

§ 14. For the fuller answer to this argument and the proofs of it, many distinctions, of some good use, would be observed.

First therefore the word, sanctify, is diversely taken. For, to omit all other acceptations; it is taken sometimes in a larger sense; and so to sanctify signified to assign a creature to any special or singular use whatever, either sacred or civil: thus are the Medians said by God to be sanctified for the subduing and sacking of Babel: and so are meats said to be sanctified by God’s word for man’s food; and the unbelieving Mate sanctified to the married believer.

Sometimes again it is taken in a stricter sense; and so to sanctify signified to assign a creature to any sacred and spiritual employment: as where it is said, that God sanctified the seventh day of the world; and where men are commanded to sanctify the same: he by precept enjoining that employment of it; they by practise employing it according to his precept.

Now in both these kinds may the Lord well be said sometimes to sanctify but not to appropriate; when by his ordinance he either enjoined or granted the use of a Creature so in some kind, as yet he restrained not, nor inhibited the use of it in any other kind. Thus are the fruits of the earth so sanctified for man’s food, as they are not yet restrained from physic: yea thus was the water that miraculously gushed out of the rock so sanctified to a spiritual employment, as yet it was not denied unto civil and profane uses, even to the watering of brute beasts: sometimes to sanctify and to appropriate, when God sequesters and severed the Creature
so sanctified unto some one special or proper use from all other uses else whatever.

And thus he sanctified and appropriated either the whole kind of the Creature; as that curious composition of precious and holy ointment expressly inhibited to all other uses; or some particular only of that kind; as the spices andodours ingredients of that holy ointment; as the Tabernacle, the Temple, and the appurtenances of either: and as those Elements of water, bread and wine that in the Sacraments are sanctified to be signs and pledges of spiritual grace: and that again, either so to continue during the date of that law, as in the unguent before spoken of; or during the time only of the special use to those ends, as in the Elements last mentioned.

To apply these distinctions then to the present argument: If they take the word sanctify in the stricter sense, the Proposition is true, but the Assumption is unsound: for Lots are not set apart, or said so to be in either of the places produced to any holy or spiritual, but to a civil use only.

If in the larger and more general sense, then either they speak of things sanctified only but not appropriated, or of things both sanctified and appropriated too, and that either the whole kind in general, or some of the kind only.

If of things sanctified only but not appropriated, the Proposition is not true; For bread and wine are sanctified to be seals of God’s covenant, and yet doth not that hinder the lawful use of them otherwise: so was oil sometimes sanctified to anoint Kings and Priests, and yet did not that then restrain the civil use of it for food, physic, necessity or lawful delight. Or to use a more familiar instance and nearer the present purpose, the fruits of trees are sanctified to be man’s food; yet doth not that let but that children, as of old time they did, may lawfully play and make themselves pastime as well with nuts or almonds, as with cherry-stones, or with check-stones and the like.

If of things sanctified and appropriated; as it was in that holy ointment inhibited to all other uses; and as it is in the Sacraments sequestered and set apart to certain spiritual purposes only, the Assumption is unsound.

If of the sanctification and appropriation not of the whole kind, but of some particulars of the kind, the premises might be granted, and yet nothing concluded against the use of Lots in general.

If of the whole kind, the Proposition is true, though the proof be not so pertinent; but the Assumption is not sound.

For the proof of it out of Solomon: that place showed only how a Lot may well and wisely be used; but neither enjoined that use of it, nor restrained it thereunto. It approved only the use as good and commendable in that kind: But it is one thing for a Lot to be used well and wisely to that end; and another thing to have that the proper or only end of it.

§ 15. But the Apostle’s speech of an Oath showed that Solomon meant so, when he used the like speech of a Lot. It doth nothing less. For neither is it true that the Apostles scope was to show that this is the only end of an Oath, to stint strife and controversy, neither is it so indeed. His purpose is not to show it: for it is only to show how sacred, firm and inviolable an Oath is among men from man to man; (which he proves by that which all men know and acknowledge) and how much more than from God to man, when he swore to us by whom we swear: like the Argument used by the Apostle else-where, A man’s covenant or testament once ratified no man annulled; much less can any annul or abrogate God’s.

Neither is that the only lawful end of an Oath. For there be other ends of it; as, to give assurance of the performance of covenants and promises. For what controversy was there between Jonathan and David to be ended by Oath, when they swore either to other? or what controversy was there between GOD and Abraham, or David and GOD; when God swore to Abraham, and David to God?: or what controversy is there to be ended by those Oaths, that men usually take at entrance into office both in Church and Common-wealth?

The like may be said of that other place of Solomon. The scope of the place is not to stint or restrain the use of a Lot to the ending of strife, much less to the ending of great quarrels only; or among men of might alone, though Solomon expressly name such: For he speaks of contentions in general: And why may not a mean inheritance be divided by Lot among mean men as well as a rich one among mighty men? or do not contentions arise among mighty men many times about mean matters? But the scope of it is rather to persuade all sorts of men to compose their controversies, be they great or small, rather by such a course so easy and so equal, then to plunge themselves by eager pursuit of Law suits into further inconveniences; and to induce men of mean condition the rather so to do, when even men...
of might are content oft to submit themselves thereunto.

Not to add, that Lots have been used oft to other ends (for it is but one use among many that is there mentioned) as both has been in part, and shall further hereafter be showed, and as some of them that in this point oppose us, confess.

§ 16. Thus they reasoned affirmatively from the proper use and end of Lots: now further they argue thus negatively concerning the same.

That which there is neither precept for, nor practise of in God’s word, general or special, express or implied, that there is no warrant for in the word.

But such is the use of Lots in game: for we read not in Scripture that Lots were used but in serious matters only both by Jews and Gentiles: neither is there any warrant in the Word for the ludicrous use of them by precept, or practise, general or special, express or implied.

There is no warrant therefore for lusory Lots in God’s word: & so consequently they are unwarrantable. This is like Ambrose’s argument against merry jests; We read nothing of them in Scripture: therefore they are not to be allowed. Which yet is no good kind of reasoning. The consequence of his Enthymen, and the Proposition likewise of their Syllogism is unsound.

For first an Argument holds indeed from the negative in matter of Faith, but not in matter of Fact: as to say, such a thing is not expressed or revealed in the word, therefore it is no matter of Faith, nor such as a man is necessarily bound to believe: but not to say, such a thing is not mentioned or related in Scripture, therefore it was not done, or it never was: as for example, Cain had but one son mentioned by Moses, therefore he had no more sons or children but him. Much less may a man reason from matter of Fact to matter of Right, as to say, such or such a thing we never read in the word to have been done, and therefore it may not be done. For how many things are there whereof there is no example in God’s word, and yet the use of them is generally allowed as lawful and good? Many things there are whereof no precedent of the use of them but in some one kind only, which yet may be used also unto others. No use of butter recorded in the word but for food only: may it not therefore be used also for physie? Yea many things there are of ordinary use, whereof there is no mention at all in God’s word, which yet all generally allow: as sugar for sweetening, printing of books, shooting in guns, and the like, which all by this argument are utterly condemned; or if they be justified, then the grounds of it fail.

Secondly an Action may have warrant sufficient by permission without precept or practise. For where God has not limited the use of any Creature or ordinance, there he has left the use of it free. Where he has not determined the circumstances of any action, there what he has not prohibited, that has he permitted, and that is warrant sufficient for it. Where therefore circumstances are determined, the argument holds from the negative to make that unwarrantable, that is not either expressly or by good consequence enjoined. But where they are not determined, the argument is strong enough from the negative to prove that warrantable that is not either expressly or by just consequence prohibited.

For this cause in the point of God’s worship the argument holds from the negative for the substance of it, because God has determined it. But in civil affairs it will not hold from the negative to disallow ought; because God has not so determined them. Else what warrant is there for bowls, for tennis, for foot-ball, for chess &c. which yet no man disallowed? Let one example serve for all to show the weakness of this kind of arguing. There is neither precept, nor practise (at least allowed or allowable) of eating Blood in Scripture: therefore a man may not eat a black pudding. In which conclusion I assure my self these Authors will not accord with the Familists and new Sectaries. And yet may they say more against the one, then these can any of them against the other. For the one is found expressly forbidden both in the old and new Testament both before the Law, under the Law, and after the Law, (to omit what sundry of the Ancients have held of it) but the other no where in neither. And if Christian liberty notwithstanding bought with the blood of Christ, give God’s children a free use of the one, how much more then of the other. If it lose them there, where they were bound before; sure it binds them not there, where they were free before.

§ 17. There is yet one appendix behind to this argument, that would be met with ere we leave it.

Scripture noted wicked men to have used Lots in sport: Sporting Lots therefore are not
allowable. Both the antecedent is untrue, and the consequence unsound. The antecedent untrue, for it was rather a serious divisory than a lusory Lot, that either Saul’s servants used about David’s apparel, or that the soldiers cast on Christ’s garments: not used by them, as some have supposed, superstitiously, out of a conceit of some virtue that they hoped to find in Christ’s clothes, his seamless shirt especially, to cure diseases withal, as had sometimes been done, nor yet, as others say, in despite of him done to his garments alone, but, as their usual custom was to divide among themselves the raiment of such as were executed by them, (which was, it seemed, as among us also it is, part of their fees;) so did they then our Saviour’s, and that in this manner, partly to save that that might else have been spoiled, and partly to prevent all contention and strife. Neither was that act of theirs in that regard evil or unlawful, for anything I see, or can be said, had it been a booty that by some lawful course had come to them, and could not otherwise have conveniently been parted among them, each of them having an equal interest therein. For in such case even those that condemn ludicrous Lots, yet admit them for partition of prey and spoils taken in fight. And some good Writers rather commend than condemn these Heathen soldiers their modest and equal carriage in that case.

The consequence also is unsound. It is like the argument one uses to condemn birth-day feasts, because we find them not used in Scripture but by two only, and both bad ones, Pharaoh a Heathen the one, and Herod, no better, if not worse than a Heathen, the other. Which argument yet will not hold; no more than to reason on this manner; Wicked men plant and build, and marry and make marriages; therefore planting and building and marrying and making marriages are evil. Or, wicked men have sometimes kissed their friends at parting: therefore it is not lawful for good Christians to do so. Or, to come fuller home; We read not in the word of Marts or Fairs used but among Heathen, and therefore they are not now lawful or allowable among Christians. Or we read not of any but profane Princes that kept Butlers or Bakers: therefore Christian Princes ought not to have such Officers. Or, Music at civil feasts is not found used in Scripture but by wicked and ungodly ones: therefore the use of it at such times is not allowable. Neither therefore is that that is alleged, true; neither did it prove ought to the present purpose, if it were true.

§ 18. Thus have we gone through the main and most forcible Arguments that are produced against lusorous Lots. For these arguments only that are drawn from the nature of Lots, or the proper end and use of them, are those that fight against the general use of Lots in disport: they concern the use of them but in some sorts of game; and therefore though they were all granted, yet were nothing concluded against the main point propounded, to wit, that the use of a Lot in disport or pastime is not simply evil in itself. Yet it shall not be amiss to hear what the rest say.

The next argument therefore, and of the principle the last and the least is taken from the other Term in the point questioned, to wit, recreation or game, and the right use and end of it.

The argument thus stands: That is no lawful matter of sport and pastime, wherein the end and scope of sport is not or cannot be had. But in games of Lottery the end and scope of pastime cannot be had. Lottery therefore is no lawful matter of sport and pastime. The Assumption is thus strengthened: The end and scope of play is thereby to exercise either the ability of the body or the industry of the mind.

But in games of Lottery is neither of these exercised: not the mind; because there is no use of Art or skill, but all is put to hazard: Not the body; for men sit at them without stirring anything save fingers and hands only. In games of Lottery therefore the end and scope of game is not had.

In this Argument there are two things to be chiefly observed; and two Axioms that the answer is principally to be applied unto.

First, that it touched and concerned only such games as consist of and depend upon mere casualty only: (not those that are mixed of chance and art, wherein much skill and industry of mind may be used) which the Author indeed of this argument only condemned, approving the other: and therefore the Assumption of the latter Syllogism is not true of all games wherein a Lot is used, neither is it the Author’s mind that it should extend unto all.

Secondly, that the end and scope of recreation is not rightly assigned: which is principally, as the very name of it implied, to recreate and refresh the mind, or body, or both by delight. Recreation therefore and Exercise are two distinct things; And however a man may recreate himself by some exercise, as he may
also by some kind of study: yet no more is exercise therefore recreation, then recreation is study. Yea the same exercise may be recreation to one man that is not so to another: as when a man by the Physician’s advice draws a bow in his chamber, which he takes no pleasure in, nor does it for or with delight, it is an exercise only; but no pastime, as to him that shoots abroad upon pleasure. So when two ride together in hunting, the one only to exercise his body by riding, or to accompany or attend the other, not regarding the game; the other merely or mainly for the game and the sport; it is an exercise only, or an office, or service in the one, a recreation to the other.

The end and scope then of an action is one thing; the means, whereby this end and scope is effected and attained, is another thing. The end and scope of recreation is the refreshing of the body or mind, and the delight of either. The means whereby this is effected are divers: For sometimes it is done by industrious exercise of body or of mind, which comes nearer in its own nature to serious business, than to recreation and refreshing; in regard whereof it is said well of such as after long study betake them to chess to refresh themselves therewith, that they do not leave study, but change study, like one that leaves binding of fagots to go to thresh hemp. Sometimes it is effected without such industrious exercise, as in taking a nap, (for that is a kind of recreation too), lying a long on the grass, viewing some pleasant sight, bearing some noise of music, or charm of birds, and the like: and therefore the Proposition of the prosyllogism is not sound. Now this may be and is usually effected by games consisting merely or mixedly of Lots, as well as by other, with those that take delight in them. Neither is it a thing simply evil or disallowable to take delight in the casual and uncertain or unexpected event of a thing, (that which makes jests and witty speeches many times the more pleasant, in regard that the answer is other in them than was expected) as being a matter light and frivolous; since of recreations it is not required that they be serious.

CHAPTER 8. Answer to the Arguments less principal against lusorious Lots.

§ 1. Thus then we have dispatched all the principal Arguments that tend directly to prove Lusorious Lots simply unlawful, and so evil in themselves. We proceed now to the less principal, that tend to prove them inconvenient and inexpedient; or such as have been generally disallowed and condemned by the most.

These Arguments therefore may be ranked in two rows: The former sort of them are such as are drawn from the evils and inconveniences that necessarily or ordinarily attend these lusorious Lots, and the games that consist of them.

The evils that they are charged with are referred to four heads:

- 1. Cursing, banning and blaspheming:
- 2. Loss of time, and decay of health:
- 3. Unlawful gain, or desire of gain:
- 4. And lastly, wasting of wealth.

From the first of these they thus reason:

That which causes most horrible cursing, banning, and blaspheming, is not to be endured: Dice-play so doth; Therefore not to be endured.

I answer: Lot games, mixed especially (but those this Author impugned not) do no more cause these things than Bowls, or Chess, or other like, which many take occasion by of the like outrages.

Secondly, it is not so much the game itself ordinarily in either that makes men thus overshoot themselves, as the wasting of their wealth, and loss of money at or by either; which being severed from the game itself, it
will neither cause it with the well-disposed otherwise, nor would ordinarily occasion it with others.

These evils therefore (as the rest that follow) arise not from the nature of the game, but either from the immediate and inordinate use or rather abuse of it, or from the evil and impious disposition of the gamester otherwise, make it unlawful only to those that so use it, or are so affected at it, but not simply in itself, nor to those that shall use it with due Caution in that kind.

Yea but these Lot-plays, said one, do necessarily draw or at least tempt the very best to horrible blaspheming and profaning of God’s name: and are therefore thus specially charged afresh.

To say, what luck is this, how crooked? is a horrible blaspheming of God’s name:

But Lot-games necessarily draw or tempt the best so to say:

Therefore they necessarily draw or tempt the best to horrible blasphemy.

The Proposition is thus proved:
To say, What a God, what perverse and crooked Providence of God? is horrible blasphemy.

But to say, what luck, how crooked, is in plain words to say so:

Therefore to say, what luck, how crooked? is horrible blasphemy.

The Assumption is proved; because in Lot-games there is nothing that can be accused (as in other games infirmity or want of skill may) but God’s immediate direction, unless we will bravishly give God’s glory to Fortune.

To answer hereunto directly and briefly. Neither do Lot-games necessarily tempt the best to say so; neither is it blasphemy so to say. There is great difference between those two speeches rightly conceived, and as they may be and are of good Christians ordinarily used: yea they are nothing alike indeed.

There is somewhat else beside God and his providence, as in all other casual events, so in Lots, that such speeches may be applied unto. I am enforced too oft (I confess) to repeat what was laid down at first, (while I tread the maze of sundry men’s fancies;) that in casual events there are two distinct things, the work of the Creator and the act of the Creature: the latter whereof may such speeches be well applied unto, and so have no tang or taint at all of impiety or blasphemy. They build all upon this wrong ground, that there is a mere and immediate providence of God in all Lots, which is not true, as has formerly been proved, you may conceive it by examples of like casualty in other cases: To pass by actions of contingency carried by man’s will and forecast oft crossing us in our lawful and warrantable courses, (as in David’s despiteful wrong done him in the abuse of his Concubines by his own son Absalom,) wherein we use such like terms without any impeachment of or disparagement to the divine providence, which yet extended itself even unto those actions: Suppose a man riding on the way through the Forest, where a Deer rushing suddenly out of the covert makes his Horse start and throw him: in this case for a man to say, what luck was this? or, what a cross accident was this? is no blasphemy, nor any accusing of God’s providence, but a complaining of the Creature’s act and the event of it. Yea for any man to censure such a speech as blasphemous, or to construe it as if he should say, What a God is this? or, what a cross and crooked providence of God? were to make himself one of those Masters, whom the Apostle James reproved: the rather for that he charged that with blasphemy, wherein he cannot show the least point of impiety.

For that of Fortune; if indeed by Fortune we understand such a blind Deity, as the fabulous Poets fained, and idolatrous Infidels adored; it is idle and impious for any man to ascribe ought thereunto. But if by it we understand the casual and uncertain motion of the Creature, whereby something beside the scope thereof is further effected; so we have heard that the holy Ghost uses the term, and our Saviour himself ascribes the Priest’s lighting upon the Passenger that lay wounded on the way thereunto: By chance, or, by fortune (for the words are all one) a Priest came down that way, and likewise a Levite.

For the difference and dissimilitude of games, it is great indeed: but as there are other things that a man may as be the cause of his loss unto in other games be God’s providence, which yet swayed also in them: so is there somewhat else here, to wit, the casual motion, and various disposition of the Creature, a thing in itself and of itself distinct from God’s providence, as we formerly showed.
§ 2. The second evil attending on or accompanying these Lot-games is loss of time, and decay of health by long sitting at them. The sum of the Argument which the Author cuts into twain, but may well be reduced to one, is this:

That which causes loss of time, which might much better be spent, is unlawful: So does hazard in play: Its therefore unlawful.

The Proposition is confirmed by the Apostles authority, who wills Christian men to redeem the time, that is, to spend their spare time in honest and profitable employments, as in reading on God’s word, visiting the sick, their friends, and such like.

The Assumption is proved by the nature of this kind of disport thus:

That which neither wearied the body, nor cuts of hope of conquest in time and by continuance, that recreation caused loss of time:

But this kind of disport neither wearied the body: for there is no exercise at all in it: nor cuts off hope of conquest in time and by continuance; because it depended wholly upon hazard, wherein the weakest and simplest may hope, after never so long continued loss, at length to conquer and recover, the dice changing their course, which they may as well do as otherwise: and those that have won, hope well to have still the same luck, that before they had.

This kind of game therefore causes loss of time, having no stint or end in it: which other games of necessity must needs have, either the body being over-wearied, or the weaker side for want of skill past hope of winning.

This might have done well for a Caution; it doth scarce well for an Argument. For first, for the proposition of the former Syllogism, if it be understood without limitation, that time ought to be spent always in the best duties simply, it will over-throw all kind of disport whatever. For it fights equally against all, be it of hazard mere or mixed, or of exercise of bodily strength or wit. But that is not sound; neither is it the Apostles meaning or purpose in that place to cut of all kind of recreation, when God’s word gives good warrant for; but to cut off that idle and vain trifling out and mis-spending of time needlessly, not only by recreations, but by other worldly occasions, whereby men many times over-laid themselves, with neglect of those things that do most principally concern them, and which our Saviour therefore would have them to seek principally and in the first place, using the main as a by-matter, and by-matters as the main, as one sometimes said wittily; and living rather to any end than what they should live unto. And thus not only gaming and play, but buying also and selling, and building and planting, and eating and drinking, and wiving and wedding, and husbandry and tillage may become sins against that injunction of redeeming the time, when they shall take up the due time of other necessary duties. And yet are both of them warrantable and good taken in their own time.

For the best works simply are not ever to be done; else should every day be a Sabbath day, (as he sometimes said in another sense) and not any week day a work day; or if the week be for work (I mean worldly work) then the whole week one work-day, and no minute or moment left for any kind of recreation; it being a worse thing than work, since that work is the end of it, and the end is ever more excellent than what tended thereunto.

No sin indeed is ever or anywhere to be done: but the same good works are not to be done at all times. Negative commandments bind everywhere and to all times: Affirmative precepts bind every where and at all times; but they bind not to every place, nor unto all times. The work therefore fittest for the time is ever then the best work; because the best, though not simply, yet in regard of all circumstances at that instant concurring.

For the seasonable doing of each thing is a matter of much moment: since there is a time and season for all lawful employments, be they serious or lusorious, civil or sacred. And neither is a good action good when it is not seasonably done; nor a meaner matter omitted without sin in his season, though it be to tend a matter in itself of more moment. It is a sin for a man sometimes not to recreate himself: it is not only a sin for him to do a less good when he might and should do a greater; but it is a sin for him to be about something, though a better thing otherwise, when he is called to tend a meaner matter: as it is sin for a servant to be reading on a good book, yea on the Bible itself, when he should be serving in his Master’s supper.

The Apostles speech therefore cuts not off all recreation, it being in itself lawful and good, and warranted by God’s word, as that which refreshed both body and mind, and makes either more fit and better able to go through with and hold out in more serious
employments, which would otherwise oppress either; and that which therefore it is no wise nor religious part for any man utterly to neglect. It proves loss and misspending of time to be sin, as it is questionless a great and a grievous, though too common a sin: but it proves not that to be sin or evil in itself, wherein some men, yea or many men, misspend their time, albeit it be evil then to them.

Secondly the Assumption makes as well against other games that men may spend much time in, as against those of this kind. Such are Tables and Cards as well as bare Dice: yea such is Chess, which some also, as one well observes, have sat continually close at, neglecting all serious affairs: neither is there any game ordinarily that takes up more time than it, with those that dote on it, especially where two singularly skilful and somewhat equal concur.

For the proof of the Assumption; It is no sound course of arguing to reason from what may be: as to say, What a man may spend much time about without tediousness, or despair of being ever overthrown in, that a man doth misspend, or must needs misspend much time about. That indeed, if he will, he may misspend much time about, but he need not, unless he will: neither sins he if he do not, because he might if he would. Many other things there are that a man may spend time amiss in, and more than he well may; yea wherein many do, as in pleasant and delightful discourse with such friends whose company a man takes special delight in, or in journeying abroad, and in flitting from place to place and from house to house, and the like; which things yet are not therefore simply evil in themselves (I mean, mutual society, and journeys for pleasure) if they be not evil used, though they be evil to them by whom they are so abused.

To this may be annexed that which is alleged by way of amplification in one of the former Arguments, that by long sitting at this game, while men spend whole days at it, they impair their bodily health and strength, and get of the gout. An inconvenience arising from the immoderate use of it; (and such as may spring likewise from the immoderate use of other things, though not evil in themselves:) which as no wise, nor godly man but condemned and abhorred; so none of the one will, or the other ought to condemn the thing itself so abused, especially where it may otherwise be well used, for it.

§ 3. The third evil accompanying it or occasioned by it is the feeding of covetous affections. For where is there greedier desire of gain? where more cheating and cony-catching (cheating) than in these games? yea worse are they than usury, yea than usury upon usury: for here is increase without loan or delay of time, in an instant, and that equal all out with the main principle: worse than robbery by the high-way side: stripping those that they eat and drink with not of money only, but of apparel too, even to the very shirt; that which thieves will scarce do.

I answer in a word: All this may be helped easily either by playing for nothing; or if men be of that mind, that they think without gaining cold gaming; by playing for such trifles as may be won without much loss to the loser, making choice of such to play with as we know able well to spare it, and spending presently what is so won in common between the winners and losers. Neither ought those evils to prejudice the lawful and honest use of any exercise that may easily be severed from it.

Beside that this ground admitted will overthrow all playing, even for victory too, as well as for gain: since we may as well condemn, and so some do, the one for feeding and fostering ambitious humours, as we may the other for nursing and nourishing covetous desires: and so all gaming for either shall together go to ground; that which seemed over-harsh, and to savour rather of Stoical austerity, than of Christian severity.

§ 4. The fourth evil these games are charged with is the wasting of wealth and of men’s worldly estates, that which should sustain and support them and theirs, and wherewith they should be helpful and beneficial to others. For there is no game that men spend and waste more upon than these, at which many make away Land and living, goods and chattels, jewels and plate, and their apparel from their backs. Yea some when they have played all away, have at length staked themselves, if they lost, to be made Slaves: in so much that these games have oft been the very bane of great personages, and the ruin of great houses.

The same answer must be given here, that was oft given before. This arises not from the nature of the thing itself: it comes not from the spring, but from the filthy channel that the stream passes by: it may be taken at the fountain-head without any of this filth, and it is no more defiled to those that there take it, than if there were no such abuse or defilement at all of it.
Beside that on this ground might bowls, and shooting, and tennis, and many other like exercises (yea any game) be likewise condemned, because at such also many misspend both their time and their estates. If at these more than at those, it is because they are more usual and more obvious: And the difference, being but in degree, may make the one worse than the other, but must of necessity cashier both, if it condemn either.

I might well here pass by, should I not be suspected to conceal somewhat that were of some weight, what is alleged out of Lyra, that in his Preceptory (a little Treatise of his upon the commandments), as coveting another man’s goods greatly; being a mighty means of deceit; passing usury; causing lying, swearing, brawling and many idle words; being an offence to the godly; breaking the Laws; misspending time; and what not? and that thereupon he concluded that such games are not to be tolerated or endured among Christians.

True it is that Lyra out of Hostiensis named 9. circumstances, which being all, said he, deadly sins make the game therefore such that is accompanied therewith, as these games oft are. And instead of those nine he might as well, with some others, have reckoned up 16. for so many has Hostiensis in certain verses that he cited. To which also we may add, passing by many that allege fewer, that Antonines in his sum, and some others out of him, raise them to a whole Alphabet of evils that usually accompany these games, even as many as there be aces or points on the dice: as also that some other Friars find in dice-play, as one of ours of late in the use of the Cross, the breach of the whole Decalogue, and of all the ten Commandments.

These, I say, I might well pass by, as well the one as the other; partly because in effect they bring no new matter; and partly because these evils are equally common to all games, and do not so much concern the nature of this kind of play, as contain general abuses of all kind, though applied more specially to these: they are the faults of the Gamesters not of the games: and as one said well of Lots writing of this argument of Lottery; so say I of game, and of Lots used in game. The Lawful use of them must be distinguished from the unlawful abuse.

Besides that the scope of these Authors both the one and the other (in regard whereof I may well say that they are not so sincerely cited, but forced to say what indeed they do not) is to condemn only the games so used or rather so abused as too, too commonly they are; not to quarrel with the light and lusorious use of a Lot, nor to pass a peremptory sentence against the use of all such games in general, which themselves both in the same places and elsewhere do otherwise allow.

Let me add but a word or two concerning that clause that to this Argument is annexed; and so I leave it and pass to the next: The Lord forbade all appearance of evil; and all occasions of evil.

True it is; the Commandments that forbid any sin, forbid those things also that may be occasions of that sin. But they inhibit not generally the use of all things to all, that any doth or may take occasion of evil by. They forbid them to those to whom they are that way dangerous, not to those that may and do use them without danger in that kind.

And no less true is it, that Christian men ought to abstain from all appearance of evil: that is, that they are both to avoid, what they may justly suspect to be sinful, though they do not evidently see it or certainly know it to be such: as also to forbear what may make them suspected to be Sinners, and to live otherwise than either indeed they do, or of right they ought to do by the rules and laws of Christianity: for further than these two branches, as I take it, that precept extended not. But how the use of any Lot at all in game, or the use of a Lot simply in this kind of game, should be brought within compass of either of these two branches, I see not; especially being so used as it is or may be used of those that are godly and religiously disposed, and with such Cautions as hereafter shall be given.

§ 5. After these arguments fetched from the Evils and inconveniences pretended necessarily or usually to accompany these games, comes the last main argument taken from human testimonies public and private, of such as have either in judgement condemned, or by authorities inhibited these kind of games. I will endeavour to bring their arguments into some form that we may the better judge of them.

First therefore they seem to reason on this manner:

That which is forbidden both by the civil Magistrate and the spiritual Governor, cannot be used without offence: But Lot-games are forbidden by both:

Therefore they cannot be used without offence.
The Assumption is confirmed by many instances, which may be referred all to two heads, civil constitutions, and Ecclesiastical canons.

The Civil constitutions are either of the whole Roman Empire; whereof some are said to be general forbidding the use of those games to all generally, either in public or private, by being partakers in them or spectators at them; amercing fourfold for the money lost in them; denying relief or redress to any wronged in game; and fining such as entice or compel any to play.

Other some are special, forbidding some sort of men, to wit, Ecclesiastical persons only, the use of them; or condemning some particular abuse of them only, to wit, where men play away more than their ability will well bear. Or they are positive laws of some particular nations; as of the Land we live in; wherein all dicing is said to be generally forbidden; Dicers taken punished with six days imprisonment, and with sitting in the stocks; Keepers of dicing houses with three years, Players there with two years imprisonment: and of the state of Geneva, wherein the very making of dice is condemned and inhibited.

The Ecclesiastical Canons likewise produced in this point are either general and universal, as the Canons of the Apostles so commonly termed, inserted into the body of the Decree, depriving every Clergy-man given to dice or drunkenness, unless he reform: according to the tenor whereof a certain Clerk in the Decretall is found deposed for being a Dicer and a usurer: and the Canons of two general Councils; the one held at Rome under Innocent the third, forbidding Clergy-men dice and hucklebones, either to play with them, or to be present at such play; the other at Constantinople under the Emperor Justinian, inhibiting all in general, as well Lay-men as Clerks, to play ever after at dice, under pain of excommunication.

Or they are Particular Canons of national or provincial Synods, as of a Spanish Council held at Eliberis; suspending every Christian man from the Lord’s table, that shall play at dice or tables, for a twelve-month, upon promise of amendment to be received again then: and of two French Synods held, the one at Rochelle, the other at Nimaux, both condemning and inhibiting the use of these games in general.

§ 6. For the Proposition of this argument and the conclusion following from it; as it is conceived, it comes not near home to the main point in question: If it be conceived as it should, that whatever is forbidden by the civil or canon Law is evil simply in itself, it is not true: a thing confessed by some before alleged in this very particular we now deal in. Human laws restrain the common use of things indifferent; which things notwithstanding cease not to be indifferent in themselves and in their own nature: and so make them unlawful so far forth as they bind, and no further. But the main question here is, not whether the use of a Lot in game be prohibited by man’s law, but whether it be inhibited by God’s law or no. For many things are lawful by God’s law, that are not lawful by man’s law: as to transport such and such commodities without special licence, to trade and traffic into such and such foreign parts, to eat flesh at certain times, to bring some sorts of fish into the market for sale, and the like, which things yet are not evil simply, or in themselves.

Yea take the Proposition as it is propounded, that Whatsoever is by human Laws forbidden, cannot be done without offence; and it is not all out true neither. For how many cases are there wherein the Summits and Casuists both Civilians and Canonists with the School-men agree, that without just offence given that may be done, which by the letter of some positive law is unlawful? Or what is more common than these and the like rules in their writings; that we are rather to mark the cause that moved the Law-giver to make the Law, than the words of the Law itself: that, A law ceased where the reason of it ceased, though the letter of it do not: that, A law enacting something in regard of some inconveniences, binds not, where such inconveniences are not: that, A reasonable cause ever excuses a man, in case he break some human Law: and that That cause is a just and sufficient cause, for which the Law-giver would himself hold the party excused: that, Common equity ought to sway both in exposition of Laws, and in exaction of things enjoined by Law: that, Human constitutions are to admit favourable constructions: that, He is no Transgressor, that crossed not the mind of the Law-maker, though he break the letter of the Law: and lastly that, Custom interpreted Laws: yea that it gives strength to them; as on the other side that disuse or Counter-custom is a kind of abrogation of them. Let me add that which in the present case sometimes may be somewhat, what they say of him that kept not a Law, where it is a hard matter to keep it, and where
that which he should be but counted a fool if he should, that such a Transgressor is in common equity excused. In some case therefore may that be done without just cause of scandal, the doing whereof is by human Laws inhibited. Neither suppose I there any man so extremely censorious, that because flesh on Fridays is forbidden with us by law, he will in that regard hold a man guilty of sin, for every bit of flesh, that being in company with others, or having it reader at hand when he is hungry, he shall put into his mouth, especially not doing it of any contempt, and being one that is regardful of the end of that Law otherwise.

§ 7. For the Assumption of the former argument, it would be considered, both what is forbidden, and how it is forbidden. For the former; neither is all Lottery used in game generally condemned: for there might be use of it in those games that the civil Laws expressly allow, (to omit that some good Lawyers suppose a Lot game to have been one of them; for what they were indeed is not certain) for joining and leading, and taking of turns, and the like; as there is use oft thereof in that kind in games allowed by our Laws; as when in shooting by arrows shuffled and severed again, men are sorted into sides, or it is decided who shall lead.

Neither are those games alone prohibited that consist of Lot or depend thereupon, much less are they rejected or condemned upon that ground; but all games at Tables (within which compass comes even Chess too, whatever some say to the contrary) which yet, bare dice only excepted, those Authors whom I now deal with expressly approve; yea all games whatever, though by slight and skill managed, five only excepted, that are in the Law there by name mentioned.

Again they condemn not these games simply as evil in themselves, which they confess to have been formerly used to good purpose; but restrain the use of them in regard of some common abuse; and forbid all playing for gain at them; which yet at some other games with some kind of caution, and at these also upon somewhat stricter terms, as for somewhat to be spent privately in common, they allow.

So that it is not the games themselves that are simply condemned, but the evil and hurtful usage of them, to wit, either the immoderate and customary, or the excessive and expensive use of them; as both by the letter of the law itself plainly appeared, the best Interpreters according therewith; and as the Authors also that cite them do themselves some of them confess. A man, well said one of them, is not to be condemned, if being weakly or evil at ease he recreate himself by playing at Hazard, so he hazard not his monies: for it is especially to be observed, what the scope was of those laws, that forbade such kind of games: now that was that men should not waste their estates: to which purpose it is enacted, that no man hazard above a shilling: this was the scope and drift of the Law, to provide that monies might not be misspent. Which if they be not, then the Law is not broken.

§ 8. For the Laws of our Land how unfitly they are alleged to the present purpose, to wit, to prove dice to be evil and utterly to be condemned, yea or generally prohibited, Cards and Tables being notwithstanding allowed and approved; may appear by a particular survey both of the Laws to that end cited, as also of others that have since in later times been enacted.

The first Law wherein dice are said to be generally forbidden, enacted only that All servants of husbandry, labourers, servants of any artificer or victualler shall have bow and arrows, and use the same on Sundays and Holidays: and shall leave all playing at Tennis, foot-ball, quoits, dice, casting of the stone, kales, and other such importune games. The next Act imposing a penalty of 6. days imprisonment upon all offenders against the former. The third of them discovered the main scope of these acts, namely, to bring in a more frequent use of the bow, because the defence of the Land was much then by Archers: and withal gives many other grounds of the former prohibitions then revived and renewed, to wit, sundry unlawful games as clash, kales, bowls, geckboard &c. newly invented, gaming houses erected and so commonly employed: Gamesters thereby impoverished; murders and robberies occasioned &c. Whereupon it enacted further a penalty of twenty pounds and three years imprisonment against every one that shall keep, and of ten pounds and two years imprisonment against every one that shall haunt, any such house. The fourth commanded that no servant or labourer play at tables save for meat and drink: nor at any other unlawful game save at Christmas, and then in his Master’s dwelling house only: every one so offending to be set in the stocks, and he that suffered it in his house to forfeit a noble at least. To which, though not alleged, may be annexed another Act of little later date, forbidding the same persons to play at tables, tennis, clash, dice &c. save as above, with the
same penalties upon persons therein delinquent imposed.

And these are all, yea more than all, the laws that are particularly cited. But because we are referred to another work for more matter in this kind: let us see also what later Laws have enacted concerning such games, if we shall not tire out our Reader with proofs so impertinent.

The later laws therefore forbid keeping any common house, alley, or place of bowling, quoiting, clash, kales, tennis, dieing, tables, or carding for gain, lucre and living, and haunting places so kept, without special placard expressing what games, and what persons to use the same: As also private playing at tennis, tables, dice, cards, bowls, clash, quoiting or logeting by any artificer, husbandman, labourer, apprentice, journeyman, serving man &c. out of Christmas, and then also any where save in his Master’s house and presence: And further, playing at bowls by any man at any time in open places out of his garden or Orchard; several pecuniary mulcts imposed upon the former offences; yet allowing any servant to play at cards, dice or tables with his Master, or any Gentleman repairing to his house openly in his house and in his presence; and permitting any Nobleman or Gentleman of a hundred pound lands per annum to licence his servants at his discretion to play at cards, dice, tables, bowls or tennis within his house, garden or orchard, either among themselves, or with others repairing to them: Victuallers to put in recognisance not to suffer such games in their houses: And lastly all wandering persons using unlawful games to be punished as Rogues and Vagabonds.

By this particular recital of the several Laws that either have been or might further have been alleged in this argument, may to any dim eye at the first view plainly appear, that the Laws of our Land rather justified and approve than condemn the games questioned. For first they forbid indeed some use of them, but withal they forbid as well bowling and coiting and tennis, and logetting, and throwing the stone: some exercises of art and skill, some of industry and activity, or of dexterity and agility; yea bowling more strictly and more generally than either carding or dicing; which yet no man that I know doth thereupon condemn or conclude to be unlawful.

Again though they forbid them to be used by some persons in some places at some times; yet they allow them to other persons, and those of the best note; as also to the same persons in other places at other times. Whereby it appeared evidently that they restrain the use of the games only, but condemn them not as simply evil in themselves; yea rather that they approve them, in that they appropriate the common and ordinary use of them to great personages; unless we will say that the laws licence great ones to sin more than others, whose greatness rather should restrain them from any thing that is simply evil, in regard of the hurt that their evil examples may do.

The end and scope of the Law is partly to reform abuses about these games, as misspending of time and coin in common gaming houses or elsewhere; and partly to bring into use another kind of exercise in the room of them, which such variety of games made the more to be neglected; to wit, shooting in the longbow, a matter of much use, and of great weight then in war.

Now for mine own part so far am I from disliking these laws, that, considering the great and general abuse of the games by them prohibited, committed by such as both waste their preciousness time, and throw away their wealth and thrift together at these exercises and the like; I wish rather that both the laws were yet severer than they are, and that those that are, were better put in execution than for the most part they be.

For the French States and Synods with their Canons and Constitutions, having not seen them, I can say nothing but this to them; that if they have utterly abandoned the use of those games among them; (which I doubt much of) yet neither doth that prove every lusorious Lot simply unlawful, nor make the games in that regard evil unto us.

§ 9. For the Canon-law, it condemned dicing and tabling no otherwise than the Civil-law doth, as the Glassers and Summixts did before expound either: both more specially in the Clergy; because many things that are lawful to others, yet are not so fit for, or so well beseeming men of their rank: In which regard the same Canons and Councils together with others, that forbid them the use of these games, forbid them also all secular employment and traffic, the baser sort of it especially; to go into any Tavern, or to eat and drink there save for necessity in journey, to play openly at tennis; to use hunting and hawking; and the like, (as the Statutes of our Universities, and the Civil laws likewise restrain Students of many such courses) which things yet at this day neither are simply condemned as unlawful to all
Christians, nor are generally taxed in Ministers being seasonably and soberly used by them, though the abuse in this kind may be also, and no doubt is over-great.

Again neither were the Canons, it seemed, of old very precisely kept in this kind; (neither kind of exercise being wholly forborne by Bishops and Ecclesiastical persons even of good note otherwise;) neither are they commonly understood to inhibit all use of those games that are by them condemned.

The party reported to have been deposed for them in the Decretall is said to have been a common Dicer, and an open usurer: Whereupon by that Constitution are all such voluptuous games condemned in Clergy-men, by occasion whereof affecting a courtly kind of carriage, they fall into dishonest and dissolute courses. But of that more anon.

§ 10. I pass to the next argument much of the same nature with the former:

That which has been generally both by Christians and Heathen condemned as evil, cannot to Christian men be lawful:

But dicing has by both been generally condemned.

It cannot therefore be lawful to Christians.

The answer to this argument (to omit that it come not home to the main question concerning the general use of Lots in disport, which though all here said were granted, still stands) must consist in a survey of the particular allegations, that for proof of the assumption are produced.

To begin with Christian writers, some indeed of them condemn all use of dice as simply unlawful: but those not many, nor till of late days, as by the former discourse also may partly appear. Yea they that allege these Testimonies themselves allow some use of them, and such use as the Authors alleged by them do even as much condemn as that use that these themselves do disallow.

For the Ancients; to omit, that some other exercises, as hunting and hawking, have been as commonly, yea are more generally and peremptorily condemned by them, which yet are confessed not to be simply evil or unlawful therefore in themselves: The testimonies alleged are not past two or three beside those that were discussed in the former argument; and those either of no weight at all, or nothing pertinent to the purpose.

Cyprian, said one, as holy a man as any other in his time, said that even the Devil himself was the first Author of this harmful invention: in regard whereof that godly man witnessed that it ought with the whole heart to be accursed and abhorred of us, since we can have no safe or saving traffic with the Devil or any of his devices. Whereunto it is further added that Cyprian reported that the Devil, said one, Mercury the Heathen’s God, said another, having invented both cards and dice, caused his own image and the images of other Idols, to be painted on the cards (instead whereof we have other pictures now upon them) to be adored ever by the gamesters, with a cup of wine and a kiss, at the entrance into game.

A man might upon better ground argue thus against Physic and Gold-smiths work:

Tertullian an ancient Father, and one that Cyprian commonly called his Master, said that the use of Herbs for physic, and curious working in costly metals were invented by evil Angels to please women withal; and that Enoch himself said so in a work of his yet extant, whereof that authority in the Epistle of Jude is a part: But Christians may have no dealing with the Devil or with any of his devices: and therefore may not meddle in that kind either with herbs or with metals: nor Christian women wear any gold about them: (as Tertullian supposing the Apostles also to speak for him thereupon there concluded;) nor Christian men or women use the benefit of physic; as some other of the Ancients have held. But this argument were too weak: and yet the other is far weaker; being built upon the testimony and authority of a mere counterfeit Author.

There is a work indeed of that argument in the late editions of Cyprian, (for in the ancients of them it is not;) the Author whereof, whoever he was, (sure Cyprian he was not; the rudeness of the style showed it to be none of his, who for purity of Latin phrase and fineness of speech has special commendation of all generally given him;) tells an idle tale in it, how that a certain learned man after long study invented the game of dicing by the instinct of the Devil: and that thereupon he caused his own picture to be drawn with the dicing tables as his invention in his arms (for as for Cards or any image painted on them there is no one word in the book) to be adored by the Gamesters at the beginning of their
game. Whereupon he termed the dicing Table the Devil’s hunting sphere; and said that who so played at dice, doth first sacrifice to the Devil the Author of that game, and polluted his hands with diabolical sacrilege. If any such custom were in his times, it was impious: but both the story itself seemed idle and frivolous; and the Author being uncertain the authority is of no weight.

And the foolish Friars, (out of whose forge this counterfeit Cyprian may well seem to have come, first found cited by them) have much idle matter in them to this purpose. One tells us that Hazard is the same with Astaroth (or Astarte as the Greeks speak) the proper name of one of the principal Devils: and that the dice are therefore the Devil’s altars; and the points on them his eyes: at which men call on God and the Devil together, when they say, God and good Hazard: and that those that play at them, either tables or cards, with the idolatrous Jews, spread a table to Fortune, putting themselves in play upon her. Another said that as God invented an Alphabet of 21 letters which make up the Bible, so the Devil has invented an Alphabet of 21 abuses, and as many points on the dice, which make up his black book or his Bible. A third tells a long tale of a Parliament held by Lucifer in hell, wherein this game was agreed upon, and a Church constituted of those that follow it, whereof Lucifer himself should be Pope or chief head, the other Devils his Cardinals, the common dicing houses the cathedral Churches, the Taverns parish Churches, and each family a private Chapel for the 12. days in Christmas; the dice the Missal or Mass-book with his 21 black letters; and so he goes on in his apish manner to apply all the Priests Mass-attire, and all the mysteries of their Mass to this devilish device; as indeed well suit they may and sort the one with the other. And of the same stamp with these Friary fancies, mere poetical fictions, are that counterfeit Cyprians conceits: both the phrase and the frame of the work betray what the Author was.

§ 11. Yea but Augustine said that the Devil invented Dice; and that in a work that is unquestionably his; in his fourth book of the City of God.

It is true that those words are found in Augustine’s Index; but with reference to a place not in Augustine’s fourth book of the City of God, where there is no such matter, save that Stage plays are by Varro esteemed a part of divine worship, and that the Devils much delighted in them; but to a place of Lewis Views his Commentary upon Augustine; where Augustine said that there is a Society of ungodly men, who live not after God but after man, following human traditions and doctrines of Devils in the worship of false God’s and contempt of the true God: And Views on him; There are learnings that Devils have delivered unto men, as Magic, Astronomy, and all kind of divination except prophesy. Plato writes in Phaedrus (a Dialogue of his so intituled) that a Spirit or a Devil called Theuth invented letters, Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, and Dice, and presented them to Thamus who was then King of Egypt. And there is no doubt said he, that this wrangling and cavilling Logic proceeded from some devilish disposition: it loves always to strive so against the truth, refusing to yield to any that shall speak to better purpose, and by falsehood rejoicing to overcome truth. Augustine’s Index therefore deceived the Author of this Argument, and made him father that on Augustine which he nowhere said, but another only on him, and that not as his own neither, but as the report of another. It is a fable of Plato’s, whose works are full of such poetical fictions, though aiming ever at some moral matter. Among other of that kind he tells a tale, and he tells it as a tale, of one Theuth a Damon, or a good spirit (for so they esteemed them; in regard of their singular skill and knowledge giving that title unto them) who having invented many Arts, of special use, as he deemed, to wit, of Numbering and Counting, and Geometry and Astronomy, dice also and tables, and the use of letters, came and presented his devices unto Thamus then King of Egypt: and when among other of his inventions he had highly commended the use of letters and writing as a singular means for the increase of wisdom and help of memory; Thamus made him answer, that it would rather prove clean contrary, a means to make men more careless, while they trusted thereto, and so more forgetful than afore; and to make them self-conceited rather than soundly wise, by stuffing their brains more with variety of opinions, than with sufficiency of matter and soundness of judgement.

For the thing itself whether it be true or false, is not greatly material. For, not to make stay upon the great variety of opinions among Authors concerning the first original and invention of these games: some referring them to the Lydians, as Inventors of the most games and sports, (by the Grammarians therefore supposed, though with small probability, to have their usual appellation in Latin from them) others to the Grecians, and they the most to Palamedes, (one that helped to furnish
Greece also with letters,) only one kind of them some ascribing to Helen: For as for Isadora's conceit of one Alea a soldier at Troy, it is like the learning of his times; and that which some others have of Attalus King of Asia, has as little, if not less ground; the invention is far anciernt. To pass, I say, by the main current of Authors and Writers crossing Plato in this point, we might as well upon this ground condemn Grammar, and Astronomy; and Arithmetic, and Geometry, and the use of Letters and Ciphers, as of tables and dice, as diabolical inventions; seeing this fable of Plato referred them all to the same original and to the same Author: as the common use of the Heathen was to ascribe the invention of every Art and matter of moment to some one Idol or other.

Chrysostome indeed (for I will conceal nothing that may seem anything to this purpose) speaking in general terms said, that Play or game is not of God but of the Devil: and that we read that Christ wept oft, but never that he laughed, or so much as once smiled: yea that none of the Saints in Scripture are reported to have laughed, or so much as once smiled: Sara only, who is presently thereupon also checked for it. Which yet, said that reverend Father, I speak not to abandon laughter, but to banish looseness.

Thus Chrysostome: which yet is not all out sound or true neither: For did not Abraham laugh too as well as Sara? and yet is he not taxed nor rebuked for so doing; nor indeed was Sara simply rebuked for laughing, but for doubting, yea if I may say so, for mocking: Abraham's laughter, as the Ancients have well observed, proceeded from joy, Sara's savoured of distrust. Neither is it at all to the present purpose: For however some have thought that Chrysostome therein should allude to that fable of Plato before rehearsed and discussed: and others have applied that speech of his to the games here questioned; yet in truth it is apparent that he had an eye to the Israelite's disport, which he there also mentioned, by them used at the worship of the golden Calf: and that he speaks only (as the sequel of his discourse plainly showed) of Stage plays and such like as among the Heathen were celebrated in honour of their Idols; (as some also of the same Authors themselves well observe) which indeed may be well termed a devilish invention both as they then used them, and as they are used at this day; as also that grave father to the same purpose further said, that the Devil was the first Builder and Founder of Theatres. And surely some good ground there was for Chrysostome to fetch the pedigree of Stage plays from him, for whose honour and at whose command at first they came in, who was directly and evidently honoured in them, and who ever and anon in honour of his Idols enjoined them and called for them. But for dice and tables both Plato and the counterfeit Cyprian speak without ground, the one professing to tell a tale, the other pretending to relate a true story, but an idle one, and one as improbable as the other. Howsoever I deny not, but as the Apostle termed some heresies Doctrines of Devils or devilish Doctrines: and Views wrangling Sophistry (for so I suppose his meaning is) a Devilish device: so the abuse of these games, in regard of such impieties as accompany it, may well be termed, as some have termed it, a Devilish invention, and a service of Satan: and our common Dicers may well be marshalled among the flock of his followers.

§ 12. Thus then have we examined two of the Fathers produced in this point, and have found the one to be a forger and the other forged: the one a counterfeit pretending to be him whom he is not; the other having that fathered on him that indeed is not to be found in him.

There remained one other only of the ancients, though one not very ancient, and that is Bernard; reported to write, that the godly Christians at Jerusalem detested the use of these games.

But let Bernard speak out, and he will speak little to the point. Chess and Dice, said he, they detest: hunting they abhor: hawking, as the manner is, they take no delight in. And again, they live altogether without wines or children, in an Evangelical, or Angelical perfection, as at other times he termed it. So that he joined Chess and Dice together, as some others also do passing the same sentence upon either: the one whereof the Author that cited him, approved, nor doth he utterly condemn the other. And he said that as well Hunting and Hawking as gaming are alike abhorred of them. To be brief he speaks of the Knights of the Temple, a company of persons retired from the world and worldly things, addicted to a monkish course of life, restraining themselves from the lawful use of the good ordinances of God, and affecting a superstitious and more austere manner of carriage than God or his word has tied any man unto. Their example therefore as it is no precedent to others, so it is no prejudice to any that shall sworn from the same.

§ 13. From the ancient Fathers pass we on to Heathen writers. Tully, say they, objected
dicing to Catiline and his Accomplices: Yea when he would spit fire in Antonio's face, he laid to his charge that he was a Dicer himself, and his house a common receptacle of such.

True indeed: Tully in the sixth rank of Catilines Companions placed Dicers and adulterers, and filthy folk of all fashion: as else-where also he noted many of them to have been Dicers and Drunkards. He taxed Antonio likewise for a common Dicer and a Drunkard: and a favourer and restorer again of such as for such doings had been condemned: and among other things describing his running riot and revelling, he tells how by dicing and drinking and other riotous courses he had suddenly wasted and made away all those ample spoils, that upon Pompey the Great's fall had come into his hands; his excess being such and his prodigality so great, that it was able soon to consume the riches of whole realms. Who so reads but the places shall easily see, what Tully condemned in either of them and their crew.

But does Tully therefore utterly condemn all use of Tables or Dice? Nothing less. He allowed else-where the use of them to men wearied with other ordinary labours, or by weather restrained from other exercises abroad: so that they dote not upon them and so grow excessive in them, as some do upon tennis and other exercises sometimes. But in more special manner he deemed them very fit recreations, as another before for sick and weakly persons, so he for old men, grown wearied, and past games of activity. As Sidonius also an ancient French Bishop accordingly sets the young men to tennis and the old-men to Tables: by whose writings also, as one writing on him well observes, it appeared, that learned men, yea and Divines too, in his time did ordinarily use such kinds of disport: the Bishop himself using also both privately to play with his familiar friends in his own house as well at Tennis as at Tables; and bearing the Emperor Theodoric also sometimes company at that game; whose civil and moderate and courteous demeanour at the same in one of his Epistles he thus very wittily described: At afternoon hours oft he betakes himself to Tables: the Dice he catches up nimbly; viewed warily, shaks cunningly, casts speedily; called for his chance merrily, and expected it as patiently: in good casts he is silent, at evil ones he smiled; he is angry with neither, he carried himself wisely in either: a good chance he scorned either to fear or to make: the opportunity whereof he refused when it is offered him, he lets pass when it goes against him: he is neither moved if he be defeated, nor uses covine to defeat: he behaved himself at game, as if he were at his weapon; his care is all how to win. While he is at play, he sets aside his royal state: he invited those be played with, to frolikness, and freedom, and fellow like behaviour: to speak as I think, he is afraid to be feared: in a word, he loves to see them moved, whom he has beaten in play, scarce believing but that they played booty, if they be not thoroughly angry. And having told how that oft many obtain suits at game of him by watching and taking their time; I myself, said he, also when I have a suit to him, am sometimes luckily beaten by him, and am well content to loose my game to him, that I may gain my suit of him.

§ 14. But to return to our task: Augustus, say they, got by his dicing a reproach never dying, even to be counted a dissolute man: and it was reputed a notorious vice in him who was otherwise both a very great, yea and a very good Emperor; but this infamous blot blemished all his other great virtues.

Suetonius indeed reported that Augustus was taxed by many for his common dicing; and a rhyme thereupon made of him to this effect;

At sea twice beaten, and his ships lost twice;
To win yet once, all day he plays at dice.

Yet Suetonius, and so others, seem withal to excuse him in part, alleging, that he played simply and openly for delight alone, and that in his old-age too. But he had fouler matters that blemished his fame, some shrewdly suspected by him, some confessed even by his friends: and his fault herein was twofold; partly that he was somewhat too profuse, and spent more at play than was meet, though nothing to that, that some of them did, even to be counted a dissolute man: and partly that he was somewhat too profuse, and spent more at play than was meet, though nothing to that, that some of them did, that succeeded him: and partly that he used game somewhat unseasonably, as some other also of his Successors did, in bestowing usually that time on his sports, that other serious affairs might more justly have laid claim to. This was taxed in him, not the game itself simply.

Again, Claudius, say they, was hereby especially noted to be of a dull and sottish disposition, because he took so much delight in Tables and Dice.

Claudius is indeed noted to have been a very serious Dice-player, in so much that he wrote a discourse of the game, and used to play by the way as he rode in his Coach, having the
Tables so fastened to the seats, that the men might not mingle and the game be marred: whereupon also Seneca in derision of him related how that after his decease he should be put in hell to this penance, to take his dice up with a box that had an hole in the bottom, and so made him still lose his labour. But I find not where his bent and study that way is made a note of his stupidity, neither see I how it should so be, (the game used by him requiring Art and dexterity for the managing of it) nor if it were, were it any whit material to the point that is here questioned of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the game in itself.

§ 15. Yea but Gabilo, or Cobilo, or Chilo, or Stilpo, or some Spartan or other (for upon his name they cannot accord) coming to Corinth to treat of a league between his Countrymen and them, observing the Corinthian Governors (or the people generally) to be commonly given to that game, went this way again without conclusion, yeu or treaty of ought; as deeming it a matter both dishonest and dangerous to be in league and amity with such idle persons and gamesters as they. And the King of Persia, say some, of Parthia, more truly say others, sent Demetrius, King of Asia golden Dice for a present, thereby noting his sloth, and where his bent and study that way is made a note of his stupidity, neither see I how it might not mingle and the game be marred: Tables so fastened to the seats, that the men might not mingle and the game be marred.

All this needed no long answer. The Corinthian looseness both in that kind and otherwise (which no well minded man will either excuse or defend) might well discourage a Spartan of a generous and warlike disposition from proceeding in a business of such weight as that was: though the story be scarce found in any authentic Author, and the allegers of it vary in their reports. But take it for undoubted, yet neither doth that prove that no Lot in or about game may lawfully be used, which the Spartans, as well as other Greeks, used for the joining of them together, that in certain Games they had for their youth, were to fight either with other; nor that these kinds of Lot Games were not used at all in Sparta, it being noted to have been a common byword with one of their Commanders, that Children use to be cozened with Balls and Dice (or Hucklebones then used as Dice) and men cheated with words and oaths.

For the Dice that the one King is said to have sent to the other; the story is by them much mistaken, much at least misreported. The Dice were indeed by Phraartes King of Parthia sent to Demetrius, who had sometimes been King of Syria, and a valiant man, as the Parthians well knew, having been oft beaten by him; but then, surprised by a train, was prisoner in Parthia; where though honourably used, yet desirous of liberty, having twice attempted to break away, and being twice brought back again, he had these Dice sent him, not to tax him of sloth, or for tending such toys, but to note, faith mine Author, his childish inconstancy, or rather (think I) to show him what he must wholly tend, without attempting of greater matters, unless he grew weary of his life. But admit one King in derision had sent such a present to another; as we read in our own stories, that the Dolphin of France sent a ton of Paris-balls sometime to Henry the fifth, though without just cause, and with no great good success: yet would not that prove the use of the one to be evil or unlawful, no more than this doth the other. It is indeed an unseemly thing and a great disparagement for a King to addict himself to either of those or any the like sports, though good and honest otherwise in themselves, with neglect of State-business and of serious affairs, or of such other exercises as better beseeme his place and person; which has been a foul blemish to many Princes and great personages, such especially as were sprung from Parents that had taken the clean contrary courses: In which regard our royal Sovereign right wisely advised that hopeful Prince (that then was, but, to our woe, now is not) his son, leaving the ordinary use of Dice to debased Soldiers to play at on the Drum-head, and tumbling tricks to Players to win their bread with, to make choice rather of riding, and tilting and hunting and the like, such exercises as best beseeme a Prince and may further fit him for martial affairs. But yet the evil practise of the former doth no more prejudice any Prince that shall use the same exercise of Tennis or Tables in sober and seasonable sort; then the riotous courses of luxurious Princes ought to restrain the royal entertainment of others performed upon just occasion, and agreeably to their estate.

§ 16. In the last place are Poets produced for the condemning of dice. And Poets indeed, Satirists especially, are the common scourges of the vices and abuses of their times. Neither is it my purpose to be either a Panderer to any sin, or a Proctor to plead for it, to excuse or extenuate, much less to justified or acquit any abuse used in game: (let my tongue first cleave to the roof of my mouth, nay let it rather rot to the very root in my mouth, then that I should once attempt ought in that kind;) but to consider only of these games pared from such abuses, as men may, if they will, and I doubt not but many do, use them. But let us hear what these Poets say.
The Poet put it among the common Cankers
that consume men and make Beggars of them,
Dice, Wine, and Women.

When I first read this, I remembered indeed a Greek Epigram wherein Baths, Wine, and Women, are joined together as Cankers corrupting and consuming men’s bodies, and making a speedy dispatch of their lives: which some turning into Latin, to mend the matter, add withal, that these may as well prove restoratives or preservatives as cankers and corrosives, being used and taken as they ought.

Since I find in some obscure Authors somewhat near that which is alleged, of dice, wine, and women. Which admitted for authentic all, yet doth no more enforce an absolute and general condemnation of dice, than it doth of the other two, wine and women, that are therein joined therewith; which no wise man or in his right wits will therefore utterly condemn. And yet can there not be more said in that kind of this one, than (I say not Poets alone, but) the Spirit of God itself said, (not to press ought out of the Apocrypha) of the two other, as well of women as of wine. Howbeit neither are therefore either the Vines in foreign parts to be rooted all out, or all use of wine to be wholly forbidden us, who yet might live well without it, because by many wine is much abused: nor are women therefore to be abandoned, or deemed Evils, if many of them, by the abuse of themselves, or others abuse of them, prove as the Spirit of God speaks: or yet marriage, being God’s own ordinance, in itself no less helpful, beneficial and comfortable, then it is holy, honest and honourable, is to be in that respect any whit the less regarded; but the use of either limited, the abuses stripped from them, as the rules both of reason and religion require.

Yea but another grave Author, reckoned up this game among those vices that most grievously and easily are wont to corrupt a whole family:

If wasteful Dice the old man please,
His sons sick of the same disease;
Where father sits at cinque and six,
The child in side-coats loves the dice.

And one of our own Poets Chaucer said;
Dicing is very mother of leasings,
(And of deceit and cursed for swearings;)
Blasphemy of God, manslaughter, and waste also,
Of battle, of naughtiness, and other mole,
It is a reproof and contrary to honour,
For to behold a common Dicer.
And ever the higher he is in estate,
The more he is holden desolate.
If thou a Prince dost use hazardie,
In all governance and policy,
He is by a common opinion,
Holden less in reputation.
Lords might find other manner of play,
Honest enough to drive the day away.

In a word it is a wonder taking any Author Christian or Heathen almost in a man’s hands, if a man find not something in him against dicing.

Here is nothing but that which I willingly yield to; and indeed nothing at all to the point or the purpose.

For first, do not all those Authors and all these authorities impugn and condemn Tables and Dice as well as bare bones? How is it then that the Citers of them sever these games, and allowing the one sort, allege these testimonies against the other sort, which equally concern either?

Again what one of those Heathen or Christian writers was ever either so scrupulous or so censorious, that either of conscience he utterly forbear all such games himself, or condemned them in all others besides himself? Themselves evidently show what they disliked and condemned in them, (in such places especially where they define that more distinctly, which in general terms they deliver else where,) to wit, either the immoderate use of them, or the wastefulness of expense at them; which no man defended. But that is nothing to the game itself. For any man to spend more time than is fit about it, or to waste himself and his worldly estate at it, it is no way warrantable either in that, or in any other recreation, though never so warrantable, allowable, yea or commendable otherwise.

Lastly what book shall a man lightly lay his hand on, but he shall find somewhat in it against drinking, as well as against dicing? yea more by much against that then against this, if that be true that one said, that none ever before himself Poet, Orator, or Philosopher did ever directly and professedly deal against dice. Yet doth not the one prove that all sorts of men condemn drink: no more than doth the other that all sorts of men detest dice.

To draw near land at length: A Dicer, said the Heathen man, the better the worse. And if a man, said one of our Countrymen, hear one to
be a Dicer, and know him not, he by and by judged him to be a light and a vain person, and of no credit or account.

And no marvel. For to be a Dicer imported a habit, a profession, a practise, a trade: and to make a trade or a practise, or a man’s living of any recreation is not commendable, though the recreation itself be such. But it is one thing to play at dice or cards, and another thing to be a Dicer or a Carder: as it is one thing to drink wine, and another thing to be a wine-drinker, or as we use to say, a winebibber. In a word as they are not all Courtiers that live in the Court (as we commonly take Courtiers in no very good sense, Princes palaces are so much abused) so they are not all Dicers or Carders that at any time use cards or dice, but such only as make a gain or a common trade of them; which to do is most base, and a course not by Christians only but by Heathens also, indeed generally condemned.

To conclude for this argument, I condemn willingly as much as any of the Authors produced do: But no one of them all condemn that which they do that allege them, and therefore they nothing at all concern that for which they allege them.

Yea to retort the argument applied to the present purpose. Were this problem propounded, not whether it were lawful for men to use dice; but whether it were not as lawful for children to play at even and odd, as at cherry-pit, or at heads and points as at Push-pin, or at cross and pile as at Spain-counter; I suppose there is none of the Authors formerly alleged either Heathen or Christian, but would judge it to be a question moved only in jest, and scarce worthy to be answerd in good earnest. And yet is it not made a question only whether such children’s sports be lawful, but it is put out of question that they are utterly unlawful, by those that condemn simply all lusory Lots, whom we deal with principally in this point. Who had therefore need to see to it, that the grounds be good and sure which they build upon in condemning of that which scarce any Heathen or Christian ever made scruple of before them.

§ 17. But yet there is somewhat further pressed and enforced upon this last ground: For first, say some, All things of evil report are to be banished and abolished. But cards and dice, as appeared, are things of evil report: and therefore ought among Christians to be utterly abandoned.

I answer: the immoderate use or abuse of them is of evil report, the moderate and sober use of them is not. To be a Tobacconist or a common Tobacco-taker is a matter of no great good report: yet is not the seasonable and profitable use of it in that regard therefore to be utterly abandoned and abolished: nor those reverend Divines, that, beside others, find benefit by it, to be restrained of their Christian liberty in that kind.

Secondly, We shall confirm others, that abuse them, by our use of them. We ought indeed to be wary that we give as little advantage that way as may be. But by a discrete and moderate usage of them we shall rather teach them how they may use that well, which they will hardly be wholly weaned from; and shall make it plainly appear, that the faults pretended are not the things but the men’s, not in the Creature itself used, but in man’s corruption abusing it.

Thirdly, It cannot but give scandal to those that condemn these games both within the Church and without it: which in things indifferent ought not to be done.

For those without, there is little fear of offence to be given by the sober and seasonable use of them. we heard before what they condemned. For those within the Church, it is true indeed, that it is not good to do ought whereby a weak brother may be offended; yea to do ought with offence it is evil. And therefore men shall do well to forbear them among those that are diversely minded, and may therefore be scandalized and grieved therewith. But withal those that are otherwise minded, ought not to be so peremptory in censuring and condemning those that use them, or that herein differ in judgement from them: neither ought they to take offence at them for the doing of that which they know to be held lawful and approved by many others learned and religious; being condemned or questioned but by a few in comparison; especially being no main point or matter of faith.

§ 18. Yea but lastly, This difference among the learned cannot but make men doubt, and to use them doubtingly is a sin.

I answer: first, this consequence simply and generally granted will infer grievous inconveniences, and drive men into strange straights. For if a man may do nothing about which there is any difference among the learned, how many matters will be utterly cast and cut off, which yet no man now condemned other for the doing, being of the same mind and judgement with himself? yea what a troop
of dilemmas shall men continually be encountered and entangled withal, wherein they shall be at a stand, able to take neither part, when yet they must needs be on some side, some holding it a sin to do a thing, others a sin not to do the same, as it falls out in many controversies both between the Separatists and our Ministers, and between our own Ministers among themselves.

Secondly, difference among the learned is not generally just cause of doubt: in two cases especially it is not: First, where a man discovered evidently the weakness of their grounds that defend the adverse part.

Secondly, where a man finds sure ground for the one side, which he therefore sticks close unto.

How many main points are there in the body of Divinity, which yet many, no doubt, yea the most among us, now doubt not of, notwithstanding they find differences among the learned about them? What troops of the ancients have condemned second marriages, which yet no divine, or other that I know, makes any doubt of at this day? How many of them have held, that a man that had been twice married, was by the Apostle’s own constitution incapable of the ministry? May no man therefore so qualified, without scruple and doubt, undertake that office, nor execute the same in that regard without sin? Are there not great and many differences about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist between Papists and Protestants? yea was there not much difference, and that with eager opposition about the same point between Luther and Zwinglius many learned and religious taking part on either side, and continuing the controversy even to these times? Cannot a man therefore without wavering, even a plain ordinary Christian, adjourn himself to either side? yes; doubtless he may, and many questionless do. Difference therefore among the learned gives good cause of disquisition and discussion, not necessarily just cause of doubt.

Thirdly, general Faith may stand with some kind of doubting, as special Faith may stand with some kind of wavering. Neither is it every sudden injection, or idle scruple, or snarling objection, though a man cannot assailed it, that makes a man’s actions unwarrantable unto him, or brings him within compass of that Apostolic censure, He that doubted is condemned, because he doth not, what he doth, of Faith: and whatever is not of Faith, is sin. A man may be certain of the lawfulness of a thing, having sure or sufficient ground for the same; and yet have some scruple arising in his mind about it otherwise, which he cannot well avoid: as a man may hold firmly some points of doctrine, as the Articles of his faith, though he be not able to answer every subtle sophism that against the same may be objected. And certainly in civil actions not precisely and expressly determined in the word, a moral certainty, as some Casuists say well, doth suffice to keep a Christian man from incurring God’s displeasure, having done his best endeavour to inform himself aright, and resting ready to yield unto any better information. Which moral certainty, yea and more than it, I see not why it may not be well had in the present point concerning the use of a lusorious Lot, notwithstanding the difference among those that be both learned and religious. For the ground whereof (to return that that here is objected) let thus much alone for the present be considered: that as a reverend Minister of our Church now with the Lord, in conference with certain Separatists sometimes well alleged, that It was a sufficient argument to prove the truth of our ministry in that such wrangling and cavilling Companions as they were, could not object ought against it, but what might well and easily be answered: so it may be thought a sufficient warrant for the use of these Lots, in that the oppugners of them being men so learned, and so well read in God’s word, can say nothing against them (for by that they do say, when they strive of purpose to do their best in it, they show what they can say) but what either has been or may be sufficiently answered by others. Lastly if any man want good ground for the use of them, or have just cause of doubt, he were best to forbear them, till he be better assured of sufficient warrant for the use of them; yet without censuring of others that use them with warrant, seeing more, it may be, herein, then he as yet doth.
CHAPTER 9. Of Cautions to be observed in the use of
lusorious Lots.

§ 1. Thus having answered the arguments produced by the learned of contrary judgement against these lusorious Lots, and proved the use of them to be in itself not unwarrantable: It shall not be amiss, as we did before in the former, so to annex here some caveats and cautions to be observed in the use of them, both applying some of the former to this particular; and beside adding some others, that may meet with such abuses, as to such kind of Lots may be incident; that so things not unlawful in the right and warrantable use of them, may not become unlawful to us by our abuse of them.

Lusorious Lots therefore, as all other recreations, are to be used soberly, seasonably, ingenuously, inoffensively, prudently, and religiously.

First, I say, soberly and moderately, and to this purpose the holy Ghost has commended unto us Christian sobrieties and temperance as a principal virtue, yea as a nurse and a staff of godliness and righteousness; which consisted in a sparing, a moderate use at least, not of meat and drink only, but of all bodily benefits; those more specially that are merely or mainly for recreation and delight. And the Heathen men themselves by the light of nature have discerned; that there is a measure and a golden mean to be observed in all things; that there are certain bounds and limits of them even in nature prescribed, which when men transgress they swerve from the right use of them; and that even the best things used immoderately become inconvenient; as waters breaking their banks, or surrounding their bounds grow incommodious and dangerous; and meat and drink taken either unreasonably or excessively hurt rather than help. As in all other things therefore, so in these pastimes especially a mean is to be held, partly in regard of the measure of time and expense, and partly in regard of the manner of our usage of them. In regard of measure, for time, regard is to be had, that they take not up too much time with us, nor we spend over much time about them. Wherein those offend that spend, as we say, the live long day, yea some both day and night too, at game: an evil practise, yet too too common in most places among us, (by a reverend Prelate, besides others, publicly heretofore complained of) especially at the usual solemnity of our Saviour’s nativity: At which time, as the Heathen in their Saturnalia, held much about the same season, were wont to give themselves wholly to gaming, and revelling; so many (too too many) among us who profess ourselves Christians, setting then aside all sage, and serious, yea and sober demeanour; give themselves wholly to game and play and all kind of excess, misspending their time, than which nothing is more precious, nor ought more charily to be spent; and carrying themselves in that loose and dissolve manner, that if a stranger should by chance come among them not knowing what religion they were of, he would by their behaviour rather guess them to be worshippers either of Bacchus the revelling and drunken God, or of Saturn the riffling and gaming God, than the servants of Christ Jesus the Preacher and Practiser of sobriety and temperance. As the Apostle speaks, My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Though Heathen have walked thus that were ignorant of God; yet we must not do so, that have learned Christ; if so be we have heard him, and have been taught of him, as we profess our selves to have been.

Christian religion gives no liberty for such courses at any time, much less at that time, when we should (if we will aright celebrate the memory of God’s mercy toward us in Christ) carry our selves most religiously and most conformably to the life of Christ, we ought carry our selves most religiously and most conformably to the life of Christ, we ought therefore to remember both then and at all times, that recreation to other affairs is but as sauce or salt to our meats: As the use of sauce or salt is to prepare our stomach for food, or to help our appetite in eating; so the use and end of recreation is to refresh us after labour, and to make us fit for labour: It is not an employment that our principal and precious time ought to be spent in; which was the fault of those both in Esau’s days; and in Noah’s time (whom the holy Ghost therefore taxed) that they gave themselves wholly to their delights and their pleasures, regarding nothing else, and minding nothing else; like the idle Athenians that applied themselves to naught else but to hear or tell news. And surely as it is preposterous to use more sauce than meat, and to cloy the stomach with that which should whet up the appetite: so it is no less preposterous a course to have the greater part of men’s lives taken up with disport, so that it...
is a mean to withdraw and with-hold them from that, which it ought to fit them for.  

The rule therefore is here that Game is to be used as an extraordinary refreshing, not as an ordinary employment: as Physic in sickness for the restoring of health, so recreation upon weariness for the refreshing of the spirits. In which regard is that saying applied better to play than it was sometimes to study, We must play but a little: delights of this kind being well compared unto Honey, with the finger's tip to be taken rather than with the whole hand.  

§ 2. For matter of expense likewise is great regard to be had, that we spend no more than is fit upon them, nor than our estate may well afford to be spent upon our sports; that in our lawful recreations we go not beyond our ability; and therefore that either we play without staking or wagering, or at least without staking and wagering more than any man’s estate will well permit one of his rank to spend on his lawful delights, and without disabling of himself to the doing of that which God required of him otherwise.  

In which regard is such play by reverend Divines justly condemned, wherein the matter engaged endangers a man’s stock or his state. As also the civil Law in this regard inhibited these games among others, for that many did not so much play as cast their wealth away at them, playing night and day for gold and silver, and jewels and plate; and soldiers pawning their weapons and armour at play. And for this cause the same Law allowing yet some other games, forbade any man to hazard at them above a shilling a game, though he be of good ability, or a far less sum if he be of meaner estate, that the Loser may sustain no notable loss. And our laws likewise inhibit any but the richer and better sort the use of these games and other the like, whereat much may be soon lost, save at certain times only: whereby to prevent the wretched practise of such, as would otherwise be continually crumbling away their wealth by the ordinary use of them: Which for any man to do it is no better than plain stealth. It is to rob the poor, whom he ought to relieve (but by this means unrelieved, and their servants unrewarded, but their rents are so racked and their estates so improved, that their Tenants that hold of them are thereby also impoverished, and yet themselves as Pharaoh’s lean Kine when they had eaten up the fat ones, never a whit the richer, or better able to do King or Country service, for all that they have scraped and gathered together in that sort.  

And again the poorer sort, on the other side, though they complain of penury, yet will not be beaten from play: even those that will pretend want, to shift of the least common charge, yet will make shift to get somewhat wherewith to hold game: who when they have spent what they had that way, wanting means to recover ought soon or suddenly again, and being inured to idleness by such thriftless haunts, are enforced most to betake themselves afterward to such courses, as bring upon them at length as well loss of life as of living.

But here is a question moved among the learned, whether a man may play for, or wager anything in play. And it is a question that required a larger discourse thoroughly to discuss it than this present work, growing already too great, will well permit. Some utterly condemn it: and I have seen of late in writing a long discourse containing sundry arguments tending thereunto: of which yet (to speak my mind freely, and ingenuously without exception to the Author, whom I think reverently of otherwise, though in judgement dissenting from him herein) I am not able to apprehend the force and validity. Neither indeed can I discern anything that should make
it unlawful for a couple of familiar friends to put it to the event of a game, whether of them shall part with such a trifle to the other, as either of them may spend lawfully at that present upon his pleasure, or they might otherwise well freely bestow either on other. Others therefore allow it, as the Civil law does in some cases, for somewhat presently to be expended and spent in common between them, as when men play together for the charge of a supper. Yet may men go too far also that way; as in feasting of friends (a fault in these times too usual) a man may exceed. It is said of Nabal the Churl that he made a feast like a King. And as by feasting, a rich man may soon bring himself to poverty, and a poor man to beggary: so may either do the same, which some seem to have observed, by hazarding overmuch to be spent and wasted that way.

For mine own part, I approve the judgement of that reverend Divine who thus determines this doubt; When so little is played as no way disabled a man to any duty of his calling, or the money, being not much, is bestowed in some meeting for the maintenance of love, or that which is won is a reward appointed for the exercise, (bestowed by such as may well be at that charge) then I think with others, that it is not unlawful.

So that the rule is here that nothing be hazarded but what may very well be spared, and what a man may expend lawfully at that present on his lawful delight.

§ 3. And thus may we keep within compass for the measure or quantity both of time and expense. Now for the manner of using game further consideration would be had. For therein also many offend, when they are too eager upon play, or are overmuch transported and carried away with delight in it; when, as one well said, they either sleep at it, or are drunk at it: that is, when it either so occupied men’s minds that it makes them unwatchful against the motions of sin, or so overcomes them with the delight of it, or other passions procured by it, that it makes them break forth into outrage of swearing, blaspheming, fretting, cursing, and quarrelling, and such courses as sobriety in such cases would never admit. For a man may be drunk as well without wine as with wine; with the dry smoke of Tobacco as well as with drink. As one said well of prosperity, that it so transported some, that they are even as drunk with it; and some sorts of mirth and music are said to make men little better: So we may well say that men are drunk with game, when they are so addicted thereunto, that it stirred up in them such distempered passions as men soberly minded cannot but condemn and abhor, and which they themselves could not but dislike in themselves, if they were not for the present besides themselves.

As therefore it is well advised by one, that Men at no time give themselves wholly to sleep: so much more have we good cause to be wary, that we set not our minds at any time wholly upon play, and so sleep waking at it, (the more dangerous sleep of the twain) nor suffer our affections to be overmuch carried away with it, least we become no less dangerously drunk therewith than some other are with wine or strong drink. For as worldly cares, so bodily pleasures, and Game among others, though not evil simply in themselves, yet become spiritually prejudicial and dangerous unto us, when our hearts are either wholly possessed with them, or over-eagerly and earnestly addicted unto them.

In this kind especially to exceed is the rather discommendable, because the business itself (if it may be so termed) is but light, being but matter of recreation and ordinary delight: and it is no less an imputation for a man to be over serious in trifling matters, than to trifle in serious and weighty affairs.

The rule then is here that Disports be used sporting: so as we be content to win or to loose at them, and stand indifferent to conquer or to be conquered by them, and to go well through with or to be crossed in them, as it shall fall out: our affections being no further fixed upon or fastened to them, than the weight and worth of them may well warrant.

§ 4. Secondly recreations are to be used as soberly, so seasonably. For there is a time and season for all things, and for recreation among other things. There is a time, said Solomon, for laughing, and mirth, and a time for dancing and delight. There are times for recreation and sport, and times for sad and serious affairs. Recreation therefore is good when it is seasonable, when it comes in his due time: else, as it is with fish and fowl when they come out of season, that is evil, that is good otherwise.

Herein then men offend, not only when they take up too much time with it, but when they take not fit times for it. For a man may spend too much time at it, and then he sinned in using it immoderately: and again he may spend but little, yet not fit time about it, & then he sinned in using it unseasonably. Now then do men use game & recreation unseasonably,
when they should and ought to be otherwise employed, either in the works of their special callings, or about the holy things of God.

First, when they should be about any necessary duty concerning their estate and place, or the means of their maintenance, and the good of themselves and theirs. In which regard was not that parties course commendable that said, he neglected his own business to attend others at play: nor can those be justified that either sit at cards and tables within doors, or be in the bowling alley abroad, when other affairs of great consequence require their presence elsewhere. Since the use and end of recreation is not to withdraw or withhold us from our more serious employments; but to make us fitter for them, and better able to go through with them. As peace is the end of war; and peace is aimed at in war; so is business the end of recreation, it being ordained for business, and not business for it. Yea as the right end of war is peace, so the main end of peace is not so much the taking of our pleasure, (though we enjoy that benefit also thereby) as the freedom of following our serious affairs. The time therefore that ought to be employed in the one, must not be unseasonably misspent in the other. Our vacant time only is allowed for sport: which is then most seasonable, as food, when hunger craves it, or as sleep, when heaviness after watching called for it, so when weariness after other employments required it.

Secondly, when they should be tending the holy things of God either in public or private. And thus is it a sin to follow game on the Sabbath, as the Jews used to do, and do yet to this day both on their Sabbaths and solemn feasts, and as the Popish sort are noted ordinarily to solemnize their festivals. For this is not to sanctify or consecrate the Sabbath as holy to the Lord. The Sabbath indeed is a day of rest, but of holy rest; of rest not to worldly recreations but to heavenly meditations, of rest to religious and spiritual employments. It is sacrilege therefore to follow game on the Sabbath; at such time as we should be plying the service and worship of God: it is time stolen from God that we spend so on our sports: Which it were less sin therefore for us to spend on some more serious affairs, according to that which one of the ancients well say, that It were better for a man (in such manner) on the Sabbath to plough than to play, and to dig and delve than to dance all day. For the lighter the occasion of sinning is, where all other things are equal, the greater the sin is.

Yea and those also that on other days waste that time this way, which they ought to spend either in their own private and personal devotions, or in instruction of their families and performance of holy duties with them, are not herein to be justified no more than the former: the one turned it to sin as well as the other, in neglecting of that duty for the following of their own pleasure, that God himself has enjoined them, and will one day require of them.

So that the rule is here, that That time alone may be spent in play, which we have free from other, serious and religious affairs.

§ 5. Thirdly, recreation must be used ingenuously, freely and liberally: not with any greedy desire of lucre and gain. For recreation is no trade or course of life, for a man to make a living of or to live by: As it is not playing, but spending when men waste themselves that way: so it is not playing with, but preying upon those we seem to play with, when by such courses we pillage them and make a spoil of them. It is to alter the very nature of the thing itself, to make a trade and a traffic of dispastime; to make not a lusorious, but a serious Lot of it; yea more than a serious, a sad and a heavy Lot (as it oft falls out) of that which should be merely for recreation and delight. Thou makes thy self both a Sinner, whosoever thou art, in so doing, by taking that from thy brother, that neither he ought to part with, nor thou to receive; and a Partner also with him in his sin, whereby he misspends, or hazards the misspending of that, which he ought otherwise to employ.

But it is not lawful at all then, may some say, for a man to receive any gain, or live in any wise by Game?

I answer in some kind, and in some case it may, and that either ordinarily or extraordinarily.

Ordinarily those may be said to live lawfully by Game, whose trades & professions are employed in whole or in part in making, providing, selling, & uttering such instruments or other furniture as are used commonly in Game, as Bowyers, and Fletchers, and Turners, and Dice-carvers, and Card-makers, and Haberdashers of small wares: For if the games themselves be lawful, the callings are not unlawful whereby men are set on work to provide necessaries for the same, which could not otherwise so commonly, or so conveniently be had.
Extraordinarily a man may sometimes also by the Game itself receive gain; as thus: Suppose a man of good wealth either being evil at ease or otherwise desirous to recreate himself, called in a poor man from his trade or his work that he is otherwise employed in, to accompany him in his game, which he cannot use without company; it is not unlawful for the poor man so accompanying the rich to receive some gain from him, as a reward of his employment with him, and in lieu of that loss, which he sustained by intermitting of his own work. But among equals, or others ordinarily, that play together for mutual recreation and delight, for the one to enrich or, to desire to enrich himself by the others damage and loss, it is a note of a base and an illiberal disposition, and against the nature of disport, which ought to be free.

The Rule then is here, that Play be used as play; for pleasure not for profit; for game not for gain: and as no man therefore ought to waste his precious time or his estate thereat, and to buy his recreation at so dear a rate as were the expense and loss of either; so neither ought any man to seek or desire by play to increase or advance his estate, or to make a prey and a spoil of him that he plays with.

§ 6. Fourthly recreation must be used inoffensively, or without offence. For if in all things regard is to be had hereunto, than in recreation also among the rest: if in eating and drinking matters of more and greater necessity, then much more in things lighter and of less weight, as being matter of mere delight only, which may otherwise also well be had.

Now the offence that may be given by game is either general or special; public or private; in regard of our superiors or in regard of our equals.

Public offence may be given to the Laws and State we live under by common use of such Games as are by the Law made unlawful. For however it be true indeed that positive Laws, as they are such, do not simply bind the conscience, nor alter the nature of things lawful and indifferent in themselves; yet may men by the breach of them become guilty of sin in God’s sight, where they restrain for good and wholesome ends the use of things even indifferent, partly through contempt of supreme authority enacting them; and partly also through hindrance of the public utility aimed at in them: which is either of them severally, (much more both of them jointly) sufficient to make a man stand guilty of sin against God.

The like is to be said of those that live in such Churches where the use of some particular Games is held unlawful or inhibited; every one being bound for peace and quietness sake to conform himself in things indifferent to the Church he lives in.

As also of those that live under the ministry of such Pastors as are of a contrary judgement in this point: the Apostle requiring Christian men not to obey them only, but to yield unto them that have the oversight of them, and that watch over them for their soul’s safety; that is, not only to be ruled by them for necessary duties, and such as they shall be able to convince them of by the evidence of God’s word; but to be over ruled also by them in matters of indifference, when they shall deem somewhat unlawful that may well be forborne, though either the grounds of such judgement of theirs be insufficient, or their people be not thoroughly convinced of the same.

Neither ought children or servants to take liberty to themselves for the use of such games, as their parents or masters under whose government they are, shall think good to restrain and to inhibit in their houses; where the Law both of God and man has given them a power of command: the breach whereof therefore may cause guilt of sin even in God’s sight.

So that the rule here is, that Men be content to be restrained in matter of game for the ordinary use of it, by the Church and State they live in, by the Pastor they live under, or by the Master they serve with.

Now as offence may be given publicly or generally to those that we live under or among, so may offence be given also to those, that we converse with in private. For which cause therefore are these games to be forborne in some cases in regard of our brethren, that either making scruple and doubt of them, or being persuaded in judgement of the unlawfulness of them, may there-through either offend with us, or be offended at us. For that is not indifferent, that is done with offence: since we ought not unnecessarly to give offence unto any; but to seek to please others as well as our selves, and that now and then even with displeasing of our selves: doing that therein for them, that Christ once did for us.

And therefore, it is not good, said the Apostle, to eat flesh or drink wine, or to do anything whereby thy brother may stumble, or be offended, or be weakened. And undoubtedly, if it be evil for a man, when he eats with offence;
then it is no less evil to him, when he games with offence.

Now in this kind we may offend two ways.

First when we cause others to sin, and so to offend with us, not by partaking with us in sin, but by partaking with us in that, which though it be no sin in itself, yet is it a sin unto them, because they hold it to be such. For to him that holds a thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean; and him therefore it delights in the doing of it or dealing with it. Whereas then by thy practise thou encourages such an one to do the like to that thou doest, as is unresolved in the point, thou lays a stumbling block before him, who either for dimness of sight discerned it not, or for weakness of limb avoided it not, and so by occasion of thy default stumbled and falls.

Secondly when we cause others to be offended at us, and to think evil of us, as being such as make no conscience of our courses; because we use that which they supposing to be sin, suppose withal that we cannot but see to be sin. For it is the common guise of most men to suppose withal that we cannot but see to be sin, and undeservedly to think evil of us, and to our selves, in causing others though unjustly, therefore in this case in this kind, it is a wrong themselves once apprehend. To give offence think that every one should see presently what sin. For it is the common guise of most men to suppose withal that we cannot but see to be sin, and they use that which they supposing to be sin, make no conscience of our courses; because at us, and to think evil of us, as being such as they hold it to be such. For they hold it to be unclean, to them it is unclean; and him therefore it delights in the doing of it or dealing with it. Whereas then by thy practise thou encourages such an one to do the like to that thou doest, as is unresolved in the point, thou lays a stumbling block before him, who either for dimness of sight discerned it not, or for weakness of limb avoided it not, and so by occasion of thy default stumbled and falls.

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The rule here is in a word, that It is not lawful to play needlessly before or with those that hold such games unlawful, and who it is likely will in that regard take occasion of offence at it.

§ 7. Fifthly our recreations are to be used prudently and providently in regard of our selves, as well as inoffensively in regard of others: it being a point of spiritual wisdom therefore, to forbear the use of such games either in whole or in part, as either may be, or we have found to be, occasions of sin to us. For as the former made them inconvenient, so this makes them inexpedient, when they may, and so far forth as they may, endanger us by sin.

In part they are to be forborne in some cases, when not the game itself, but the manner of it (which yet may be reformed by us) occasioned the evil. Where comes to be condemned again that eagerness in game, that we spoke of before, that playing for great sums, not in regard of itself alone, and the loss that it brings with it; but further also in regard of those grievous abuses and enormities that it usually occasioned men to break forth into. For let men say what they will, that it is all one to them whether they win or lose, (as a reverend Prelate of ours yet living, whose words I oft willingly use in this argument, well said,) in such profusion of substance, as the loss cannot but pinch, so men’s passions cannot but be moved, and a troop of wretched sins commonly ensued, swearing, for swearing, cursing, banning, defying, heart-burning, quarrelling, fighting, spilling of blood, unsupportable sorrows of heart, cursed despair, self-executions, weeds able to blemish and disgrace the lawfullest recreation that is: whereasover they be found, as the Harpies defiled the clearest meats.
Again in some cases these games are in this regard wholly to be borne. For where a man shall find his own disposition to be such as he cannot use them at all ordinarily without much distemper, that he cannot contain himself when the cards or dice go against him, but that he is ready to break out into profane and bad language; or that he cannot endure to be beaten at play without wrath and vexation and disquiet of mind; or though he can at some times with somewhat ado suppress his unruly passions and perturbations in this kind, yet that ordinarily and usually he is overtaken on these occasions, and in danger therefore to be ensnared and entangled that way; there it is best for a man to take the safer side, and as Job made a covenant with his eyes, so to make a covenant with his hands not to handle cards or dice, which the rule of inexpediency here strikes out of his hands.

Yea by the former rule for a man to join in play with those whom he know to be such is no less evil unto him, than it were to use it in the like case himself.

The rule then here is that we use not these games unless we can rest quiet and content with the event of them: and again, if we can, that we do so use them, that we may not be tempted to disquiet and discontent thereof. Agreeable whereunto are those golden rules of our gracious Sovereign concerning play to his son, First ere ye play, consider ye do it only for your recreation, and resolve to hazard the loss of all that ye play; and next, for that cause play no more than you care to cast among Pages: otherwise if you cannot keep these rules, my counsel is that all-utterly ye abstain from these plays: for neither a mad passion for loss, nor falsehood used for desire of gain can be called play;

§ 8. Sixthly and lastly these recreations are to be used reverently and religiously, that is, with such due reverence and regard of God’s majesty, and of his presence and providence, as the nature of the business that we are about, requires it. For Christian men are to do all things whatever to the glory of God, and in the name of Christ Jesus, with thanksgiving unto God: and all their actions are to be sanctified unto them by the word and by prayer.

Now this Caveat excludes two extremes, Profaness and Presumptuousness. First Profaness, that we behave not our selves in play profanely and ungodly: that we so play, that we shut not God out at doors; so play that we make not the Devil our play-fellow:

Remembering that we play in God’s presence, as well as pray in God’s presence; and that there is a providence of God watching over us as well while we play, as while we sleep; yea that by his goodness we have freedom and liberty as well for our sports and pleasures and lawful delights, as for other our sager and more serious affairs: which are therefore as well the one as the other to be used with acknowledgement of God’s mercy and goodness, and of his gracious providence, whereby we enjoy them, with freedom and liberty for them, not to the dishonour of him, from whom we have the free use of them.

Secondly it excludes Presumptuousness; that however we have an eye unto and take notice of God’s providence thus in general, yet we take heed how we attempt to draw down or call in his immediate providence or special presence in play to stickle between us and those we play with. As that we be not so gross (to use again the words of that worthy Prelate) on the one side as to make Fortune our Goddess, as assigning good or evil luck unto her; so that we be not so saucy on the other side, as to call God’s majesty from heaven (to guide our game, or to further our play, or) to determine our doubts: for we look not so high in such frivolous and gamesome quarrels, but as we carelessly undertake them, so we follow them as lightly, and end them as merrily. And therefore to say, as some use, in play; God send me such a card, or such a chance of the Dice, or, I pray God I may win this or that game, is too saucy and malapert behaviour for any.

But, will some say, may not a man lawfully pray for whatever he may wish or desire? or are not all our actions to be sanctified by prayer? as was formerly said.

I answer: True it is that every action of a Christian man is to be sanctified by prayer either general or special, but not every action with every sort and manner of petition or prayer. A man may pray for his recreations, that he may carry himself soberly and without offence in them, and that even by them he may be the better fitted for better things: and such prayer is sufficient to sanctify them to him conceived either in general or in special, as he finds and feels his heart affected, and as occasions and circumstances either admit or require it. This then in game ought to be a man’s general desire, which he may also by prayer lawfully impart to God, if he please. Beside which other again more particular desires a man may have also in game, as to win rather than to loose, to overcome rather
than to be conquered; neither are such desires evil, so they be moderate; (for they are idle and frivolous, yea dangerous where they grow excessive and immoderate, being other than befitted the nature of that which they concern) yet are they not such as it is seemly to acquaint God withal. For the better conceiving whereof consider we thus much: that every desire is not by and by a prayer; albeit every prayer ordinarily import some desire; neither is every lawful desire a fit matter for prayer. For prayer is a wish or desire of the heart directed unto God. But many things we desire and may lawfully desire, which yet are not matters of that moment as may be fit to acquaint God in particular with our desire of them, or to direct our petitions in special manner to him for them; much less to expect or require at God’s hand any special work or help of his for the effecting of them. And of this kind are those latter sort of desires; of which to say therefore in game, I pray God I may win, or, I would to God I might have such a card, or such a cast, is too much presumptuousness, and will not well stand with that reverent respect that each one of us owed to God’s majesty.

The rule then is here, that as we exclude not God’s presence in play; so we call not in his providence to further our play. It is one thing to play before the Prince and in his presence, another thing to call him in to stickle between us at some question about a measuring cast: So it is one thing to play as before God and in his presence; and another thing it is to make God our play-fellow, or to call him in to help and further our game, that which a Christian man may not do.

§ 9. And these be the Cautions that I have thought good to propound for the limiting and rectifying of the use of these games: Which cautions, I confess, the most of them are such, as concern game in general, (of which as well as of more serious and sad matters either civil or sacred, account also must be given unto God) and in that regard are not so proper and peculiar to this particular kind of Lot. Yet I supposed it not amiss to point at them, and in some sort also to press them: partly that I might not be taxed and censured as a Pleader for sin and such abuses as are common as well in these game as in other, by means whereof those that condemn all Lots used in game simply are wont to take occasion to make them in general more odious: and partly also that no profane person that abuses any of these or other the like games, might be able to take any colour of advantage by ought that has been spoken of the lawfulness of the games themselves in themselves simply considered, to justify his own abuse of them in misspending his time, or wasting his estate at them, or otherwise inconsiderately and irreligiously abusing them: which it may be some would have done, had I been silent in this part, and propounded such Cautions only as the nature of the Lot itself might seem to require.

Yea but, will some say, had it not been much better to have passed over all this with silence, knowing your judgement in this point to be such as differed from many very reverend and religious? Or is it not in this case, as one sometimes said of Images, an easier matter wholly to take away the use of them, than to keep them free from abuse?

Hereunto I answer: First, these abuses are common to all kind of game: they accompany other games as well as these in those that be evil minded and profanely disposed. And the like therefore in that regard may be said either of all other games, or of any other particular game, at least in ordinary use.

Secondly, it is true indeed, that where the use and the abuse of a thing are so enwrapped and entangled together, that they cannot be easily severed the one from the other, there the use of the thing itself, if it be unnecessary otherwise, would wholly be abandoned. But in these games the use and the abuse may, for the most part, (some special dispositions only excepted,) by those that desire to walk in the fear of God, easily be served. For as for those that make no conscience of their courses, they will not be dissuaded from them, though it be never so evidently discovered unto them in what manner they abuse them, and by their abuse of them make that evil and unlawful to themselves, that otherwise were not such in itself. And for those that fear God, they may with ease as well rectify and sanctify these lusorious Lots to themselves, as they may any other games of the like use, and as easily sever them from such abuses as are commonly committed in them, as they may other disports, as draughts, and boules and the like, that are commonly used and generally allowed.

Thirdly, though many godly dissent, yet, I am sure, many, and, I suppose, more by many, both reverend and religious concur. And the truth is needful to be known, especially concerning matters in common practise, that men may have whereby to inform themselves a right.
And lastly, though the minds and judgements of others were not known; yet were not a truth to be concealed, because some few godly have denied or opposed it, and none publicly by writing have contradicted them in it, especially being a point, very needful to be known.

§ 10. For my self, I was at first the rather induced to deliver my judgement in the point the more largely (having entered into this discourse of Lots in general by pursuit of that Scripture that then I dealt with, though far then from any purpose to publish anything of this argument) upon these considerations.

First I considered that there is a fault as well in straightening as in widening of God’s way; and a subtly of Satan as well in the one as in the other. For in the one he does as a Juggler that by putting a pair of false spectacles on a man’s nose makes the bridge seem broader than indeed it is, that he is to go over, that so he may without fear step aside and fall in; and so he dealt with the dissolve: In the other he does as a Magician that shows a man the bridge that he is to pass, through a false glass of another kind, that represented it as narrow as the edge of a rapier or the point of a needle, that so he may terrify him from attempting to go over it; and thus dealt he with those that be over-timorous and full of scruple. And that it is not good therefore by possessing of men’s minds with unnecessary scruples, either to discourage those that be coming on to some love and liking of the good ways of God, or to cast those that are already come on into snares of men’s knitting, tying them in stricter and straighter bonds than God himself has done, and making more things unlawful than the word of God has made. Yea that it is in truth a spice and a branch of superstition, as well for a man to suspect that those things displease God· which indeed do not, as for a man to suppose that the creature can do that which indeed it cannot do.

Secondly, I considered that many (as I am verily persuaded) truly fearing God, and sincerely religious, have used and do commonly use these games; and besides, that many well affected are and have been constrained in regard of scruple in this kind, to strain themselves to some inconveniences by the refusal of them, when by those whom they have had dependence upon, or familiarity withal, they have been urged occasionally thereunto. It seemed fit and needful therefore to be known, what ground and warrant both the one had, and the other might have for the use of them; which were I not upon due and diligent discussion, and that not of late only, undoubtedly persuaded to be sound and firm, far should it have been from me ever to have opened my mouth in this Argument.

Thirdly, I considered that the Arguments and Grounds whereupon these Games are condemned, have made many waver in the necessary use of serious civil Lots, which by occasion of bargains bought in common between them and others, they are enforced oft to use, but have doubted whether they might lawfully give consent unto or no. That which was indeed the first occasion of my searching and sifting out more narrowly the nature of Lots in general. And certain it is, admit we the principal arguments used against this kind of Lots for good, and we utterly overthrow all kind of Lots whatever.

Fourthly, I considered the great offence and scandal that is taken by many of contrary judgement against those that use these games, though never so soberly and seasonably, as they suppose, on good ground: a means oft of much heart-burning and of breach of Christian affection, yea of peremptory, uncharitable and unchristian censuring either other: Such being commonly our corruption, and the natural disposition of the most, that diversity of judgment, especially manifested by practise, breeds alienation of affection, though indeed it ought not so to do. Considering therefore that these games can hardly be wholly removed, being so common, so general, so usual with the most every where, I supposed it would not be unfit to assay, if by discovery of the ground of them, such scandal and offence might be stayed, and Christian concord and amity in part procured and maintained between such as were before diversely minded in this matter; so many of them at least as might hear and apprehend the force and weight of the former Arguments, and be brought to see the invalidity and insufficiency of their own grounds against them. Wherein what I have done (mine endeavour has been to do it) let the judicious and impartiall whatsoever, be Judges.

To draw to a conclusion, I could wish in this case, as the Apostle doth in some other cases, that every one were affected in this point as myself: to wit, that albeit in judgement they be rightly informed of the truth concerning the lawfulness of these games in themselves, yet that in godly discretion (which I wish yet without prejudice to any that use them as they ought) they would rather abandon them and forbear the use of them; considering the too too common and ordinary abuse of them, and that many, it may be, among whom they...
live, may remain unresolved and unsatisfied concerning the lawfulness of them. But because this is rather matter of wish than of hope, my second suit shall be the same with that which the Apostle makes in the like case, to either side; Let not him that played, condemn him that played not: nor let him that played not, condemn him that played. For, Why condemns thou thy brother? may I well say to the one: and, Why condemns thou thy brother? may I as well say to the other. Why condemns thou thy brother as too strict and strait-laced for forbearing of that thing, which he makes scruple and doubt of; and has no necessity to do? and why on the other side condemns thou thy brother as too dissolute and loose girt, for the doing of that which he has sufficient ground and warrant for out of God’s word? And to both sides say I, (and would to God I might with both sides prevail not for this alone, but for all other controversies afoot among us at this present) Let us follow those things that may further peace; and Seek after the truth either of us in love: ready to yield with Apollo’s to any, be he never so mean, that being otherwise minded than we are, shall be able more thoroughly to instruct us in ought that we were not so fully informed of before.

CHAPTER 10. Of Extraordinary or Divinatory Lots.

§ 1. Hitherto have we considered of the former sort of Lots, which we term Ordinary, be they serious or lusorious, because the use of them requires but an ordinary power only, for the effecting of that whereunto they are employed; which we have showed to be lawful, if they be lawfully used.

We are now to consider of the latter sort of them, which we term Extraordinary, and are by most Divines commonly called Divinatory Lots.

Extraordinary Lots therefore are such as require an extraordinary power and providence, for the disposing and directing of them or the event of them, in regard of those things whereunto they are applied. Because it is not in the power of those that use them, or in the nature of the Lot itself simply considered, to effect that thereby necessarily, whereunto it is employed. And herein consisted the main difference between these Lots and the former, (which being not considered has bred much confusion, and occasioned such diversity of opinion among Authors in this argument) that in the former Lots there is nothing necessarily required, but what is in the natural power of the creatures using them and used in them to effect; it being in the natural power of the one to fall this or that way, and of the other upon mutual consent thereby to determine of such matters as are in their power: whereas in these latter Lots, which we come now to consider of, it is not at all in the natural power either of the persons using them or of the creatures used in them, to effect necessarily that whereunto they are used; but some other secret work, either divine or diabolical, is of necessity thereunto required. And these are those that are most commonly termed Divinatory Lots; under which head may we well comprehend also those that they call consistory; being used, as the former for division and distribution, so these for divination, and consultation by way of divination: the former were mere dividing or deciding, these are also divining Lots; those merely civil, these either sacrilegious or sacred.

§ 2. Now these Lots Extraordinary are used for two ends; either for the discovery of some hidden matter past, or present; or for the presaging and foretelling of some future event. Of either sort we have Examples great, and more than good, store, both in holy writ, and in profane Writers, beside the daily practise of many as well among us as else-where.

In holy writ we find that they have sometimes been used for the discovery of some hidden truth in things present or past, and that either in matter of distribution, or of retribution; of office or of justice. In the former case they have been used to discover and make known, whom God deemed fittest, or has secretly fore-assigned to some place or estate. And herein is the difference between the former used ordinarily in election of officers and disposition of offices, and the use of those in these cases that now we entreat of; that in the former it being in the power of the parties choosing to choose where they list and like best, they agree to make their election by Lot,
and there is nothing else required of the Lot, but to light upon any one of those that are by them propounded; whereas as in these latter it is not wholly in their power, but either there is required the further consent of some other whose good-will they are uncertain of and seek to know it by Lot, or the choice is to be made by God’s special appointment, whose secret will and purpose they desire by this means to discover.

Examples we have in Scripture of Lots used on this manner in matter of Marriage, and of Magistracy, or of Office as well civil as sacred.

In matter of Marriage it is somewhat of the nature of a Lot that Eliezer Abraham’s servant used, when he desired of God, what time he was sent to fetch a wife for his young-master and stood by the well-side, that if of the Maidens that came thither to draw, she of whom he should request to drink of her pitcher, should make him offer to water his Camels also, she might thereby be known to be the party that God had appointed to be his Masters son’s wife: which falling out afterward with one of them accordingly, he used it as an argument to persuade her parents that God had so appointed it; who being also thereby persuaded do likewise rest thereupon and condescend thereunto.

For as for Josephus his idle conceits that Eliezer should desire by prayer that Rebecca, whom his Master and he had made choice of before, if God approved that their choice, might be one of those wenches that came to draw water, and might hereby be known which of them she were, many coming together, by giving him drink when the rest should deny it him; and that accordingly when they refused all but she to let him drink, excusing themselves that they drew it for other necessary uses, and that it was not easy to draw, she should thereupon rebuke the rest of them for their uncurteous demeanour, and offer herself kindly to fulfill his request; they are but mere surmises and fancies, having no ground in, nor well agreeing with the story, as others also have well observed.

Those also of the ancients that would distinguish this from the usual manner of divination, spend much pains to small purpose: for it is apparent that it is used as a divinatory sign for the manifestation of God’s mind concerning his hidden purpose and pleasure, as also concerning the issue and success of that journey and the business for which it was undertaken, and is of itself no more warrantable than those courses that they compare with it.

Neither is that sound that some others have conceived of this example; as if his meaning and purpose had been to pray unto God, that such a Maiden among them that came to draw water, as should by her behaviour in that particular show herself to be of a free, courteous and ingenuous disposition, might be the wife that God had appointed for his young-master Isaac. And so it should not be either a Lot, or a sign so much of God’s design, as of the Maid’s inward disposition arguing one meet for such a match. Now there is great odds indeed between these two, for one to pray that the party, that by such an answer shall show herself to be thus or thus disposed, may be wife to such an one; and to pray that that party that God in his providence has appointed to be such a one’s wife, may be certainly known and distinguished by such a casual sign from all others: as I have heard of one that having cast his wandering affection in that kind on a woman, would needs propound this as a sign to himself, that if at Church asking to see her book she should point him withal to the Preacher’s text, she should be the woman that God had assigned to be his wife. In the former there is no Lot, nor divination at all, to speak properly; but an human and moral conjecture by outward behaviour of inward disposition, and a desire of matching with such an one, if God see it so good. In the other there is a sign set in nature of a Lot, to discover what lay hid in God’s secret counsel; and that by such a course as of itself has no kind of congruity in nature with the thing to be discovered. Eliezer’s act is rather of the latter kind than of the former, not justifiable unless it were done, upon special instinct, known to the concever of such prayer, for the use of such a sign in such sort.

§ 3. Again thus have Lots been used as in matter of Marriage, so in matter of Magistracy and government, for distribution of offices as well civil as sacred.

First civil: and so Saul was by Lot chosen King. Which Lot was not merely divisive, used barely to determine who should govern God’s people, but divinatory rather, used to discover whom God had secretly appointed and set apart for that place as than fittest for the same. The business was thus carried. Samuel that had the chief hand in the ordering of it, caused the people sorted into their several Tribes to appear before the Lord (that is, before the Ark of God, and the High-priest, say some) at Mispa by the chief heads of their
houses: then upon prayer conceived and Lots drawn or cast, the Tribe of Benjamin was taken: and of that Tribe appearing in the heads of her houses, by a second Lot the house of Matri: and the several persons of that Family being put all upon a third Lottery, Saul the son of Kish was taken, and thereby manifested to be the man whom God made choice of to be the Ruler of his people; as he had before signified secretly so much unto Samuel, and Samuel had likewise afterward imparted to Saul, and had thereunto solemnly, though privily and privately, by a visible sign with sacred oil sanctified and set him apart to that office; as after he did David also on the like occasion and in the like case.

Secondly sacred Offices of employment have been disposed also by Lot. For so was Matthias set apart to succeed Judas in his Apostles place. They (that is, the whole assembly) presented two, said the text: and a solemn prayer first conceived, that God who knows all men’s hearts, would vouchsafe to show whether of the twain he had appointed to that place, they gave out their Lots; and the Lot lighted on Matthias, who was by common consent thereupon reckoned one of the twelve. A course reported by some, (if their words be not mistaken) and assented to by others, to have been used for some time afterward by the Apostles in the like cases for the supply of the ministry; but with little show of probability; the holy Story of those times reporting things rather otherwise.

For as for that conceit that some of the ancients have, that the Apostles should use Lottery at the choice of Matthias for want of God’s Spirit, which they were not yet so baptised withal as after at Pentecost they were; (that which the former report crossed recording a later use of it, as one falsehood commonly breaks the neck of another;) As also that which some others have, that they should not use any Lots at all, but make suit only to God by some visible sign, a streak of light or some such like to make known his own choice; are the one without all ground of Scripture, and the other against the express terms in the text.

Neither is their judgement herein sound that propound their practise for a precedent to be ordinarily imitated; no more than theirs that exclude all Lottery from Ecclesiastical elections. The example was extraordinary, done no doubt by special instinct and direction of God’s Spirit; and the Lot itself not merely divisory, but manifestly divinatory, discovering God’s secret counsel and choice in that business, as by the prayer conceived before it, plainly appeared.

§ 4. And thus have Lots divinatory been used in matter of distribution, and of office: now there has been likewise further use of them for matter of retribution, and of justice, in question of offence: and that either where the offence is either altogether uncertain whether there have been any committed or no; or where the offence is certain in general, that there has been some committed, but it is not known in particular either who the Offender or what the offence is; or lastly where the offence is known in particular what it is, but the Offender is not. So that the Lot has in these cases been used to discover sometimes whether there were any offence done or not; sometimes who were the Offenders, and so what the offence was; sometimes who were the Offenders in such an offence as was known to have been committed before.

Sometimes a Lot has been used where it was wholly uncertain whether any offence had been committed or no, where both offence, Offenders, and party offended have been altogether uncertain. Thus when there was a plague upon the Philistines, but they knew not well either from whence or for what it came, they were advised by their Wizards, to send away the Ark of the God of ISRAEL taken before in fight by them, in a Cart drawn by two new-milch Kine that had calves, which if they drew it toward Bethshemesh, they might thereby know, that it was the GOD of ISRAEL that had plagued them; if any other way, that it was then but some chance that befell them. Which course being accordingly put unto trial, the Kine drew the Cart directly unto Bethshemesh; and thereby discovered unto them both their offence, and the party offended with them, the Author of the quill that had lately befallen them. Which practise of theirs though I dare not say as some do, that it was undertaken of them by divine instinct, much less by any such instinct that themselves were aware of, (for both these must concur to make such an act as that warrantable to any) it seeming rather to have risen from their wonted magical superstitions; yet was it no doubt accompanied with a special providence of God, as the same Authors with others have well observed, thereby convincing them as it were by their own evidences, and by their wicked courses gaining glory to himself.

§ 5. Sometimes again a Lot has been used, where the offence in general has been certain, but the particular of it uncertain, for the finding out of the Offender, that by his
confession upon his apprehension the offence also might come to light.

Thus was Jonathan discovered, having tasted of the honey, that they met with in the wood, when his father Saul had accursed all that eat anything till evening, because he would not have his people hindered from pursuit of the adversary whom they had then in chase. Saul asking advice of God whether he should follow them by night or no, God gives him no answer. He concluded hereupon that God was offended, but he knows not how, nor by whom. To find it out he cast Lots between himself and his on the one side, and the people on the other side: and having entreated God to give a right or a perfect Lot, (though some expound his words otherwise) he and his are at first taken, the people past by: and upon a second casting between himself and his son, the Lot lighted on his son Jonathan, who thereupon confessed his offence in tasting of the honey with the tip of his staff, against his father’s charge in that behalf, at that time to him unknown. Which Lot though used without warrant (as the prayer was made without faith) yet was guided by God in special manner, thereby to punish Saul deservedly for his unadvised act, and to show what snares men enwrap themselves in, as in Jephtha by inconsiderate vows, so, in Saul by idle, rash and unnecessary Oaths.

Thus was Jonah also discovered. The ship being on a sudden in strange danger and distress, they presumed that it was God’s hand upon them for somewhat amiss with them; but for what sin or whose they were not able to guess, till that Lots being cast by them, and the Lot lighting upon Jonah, both the Offender, and his offence committed, in flying from God, when he should have gone another way on his errand, being by him thereupon confessed, were both by that means discovered.

That which a learned Linguist gathered out of the change of the number in those words of that story, They gave out their Lots; and the Lot lighted on Jonah; to wit, that they should cast Lots oft over and over to be more fully assured of the certainty of the thing, and that upon every casting the Lot lighted still upon the same party; is not unlike that which one of the Rabbines gathered from the change of the Gender afterward in the same story, that Jonah should be in the bowels or belly of two several Whales, a male and a female, the one after the other; the one an idle and senseless, the other also a groundless conceit. For as the Genders in that language are oft indifferent and indefinite, else there might be three Whales as well as two picked out of the text, the gender being also once again afterward changed: so the interchange of numbers in passing sometimes from the plural to the singular, sometimes from the singular to the plural is a thing no less usual, as well with the penmen of holy writ, as with other profane Writers, and those of the best note. And yet this help needed not here neither: for there is an Article of some emphasis in the original, They cast their Lots; which were, it may be, many, as usually there are; and the Lot, or, that Lot, to wit, that that was assigned to show who was the delinquent, that Lot lighted upon Jonah; who being thereby discovered, discovered thereupon unto them, what had been done by him.

Which course of Lottery as it was undertaken of them, not upon any general light of natural grounds, as some great ones without good ground have delivered, (for then might men imitate them now in the like case) or by any special divine inspiration; as some others with as little likelihood have taught, but rather after the common manner of their own heathenish superstitions, observed (as is likely) by them then also in the use of it; and therefore was it no lawful or warrantable, as some have said, but a wicked rather and unwarrantable course in them: so it took effect and fell out as it did, not, as some have imagined, by force of the Lot used; or through the faith of them by whom it was used; or by any ordinary course, that in that kind God has tied himself unto; or in regard of any prayer conceived by Jonah as a Prophet, (a thing unlikely, considering his estate at that instant, in God’s displeasure, and guilty to himself that he was the man aimed at) but because it pleased God extraordinarily making good use of their wickedness, secretly so to guide and dispose the event of that action, not regarding them or any act of theirs; but thereby to effect and work his own ends, that his fugitive servant might by that means be reclaimed and brought back to his obedience; and his power and providence be proclaimed among those, that were before altogether ignorant of either.

And thus has a divinatory Lot been used, where the offence and the Offender have been both equally unknown. Now the like has been used also where the offence has been known, but not the Offender; where the offence has both been certainly known in general that it is, and discovered in particular also what it is, but the party delinquent has remained yet undiscovered.
Thus was there a Lot used for the discovery of Achan. For when God had told Joshua that an offence had been committed, in retaining some part of the accursed spoils of Jericho, which ought wholly to have been destroyed, for which the wrath of God was kindled against the whole army; but the Offender unrevealed and undiscovered lay hid; by God’s special appointment a Lot was used, (as most agree, however some idle Rabbin’s dream of other means of discovery) and Achan thereby made known to be the party delinquent. For Lots being cast for the Tribes first, the Tribe of Judah was taken; being cast again for the Families of that Tribe, Zerach’s Family was taken; and cast lastly again for the several houses and persons of that Family or Kindred, Zabdie’s house, and in it Achan was at length caught and discovered; who thereupon confessed his fault.

§ 6. Now these were all extraordinary and divining Lots: in regard whereof those that define a divinatory Lot to be that only whereby men enquire into future events, (as the great Schoolman doth, and the most treading his track,) come far short of the compass and extent of this Lot. For it comprehended sundry others also beside such, to wit, all those that tend to the discovery of any hidden truth by any casual event, which no power of human wit or skill can of itself directly reach unto, or is able simply by such means to discover.

Which course as it seemed alluded unto rather, as some of the soundest take it, then indeed directly intended by Joseph and his Steward, when the one said of the cup pretended to be stolen either by Benjamin or his brethren, Is not this the cup that my Lord drinks in; and whereby he divined, or conjectured, what you are? and the other after to them, Know ye not that such an one as I am can certainly divine? or, take some course as certainly to discover your theenery, as if either I dealt with Diviners or were such an one my self? So it has been an usual practise with sundry nations, to seek by such courses to try or discover persons suspected or guilty of some crime.

For so were the ancient Frislanders accustomed to try such as were suspected of or charged with manslaughter having offered to purge themselves by oath: and the French of old time were wont to use the like trial with persons apprehended upon suspicion of theft, where some grounds were of presumption, but pregnant proofs failed.

Yea so Marcian a Nestorian Abbot would needs have Lots cast, after the example of the Apostles forsooth, between his heretical Monks and the orthodox Bishops, to be thereby informed whether of them held the truth: which being cast, said the story, it went with the Bishops, whereupon he and his Monks, the most of them, came home unto them. And so lastly in our English Writers we read that one Peter of Toulouse being accused of heresy, and having denied it upon his oath, one of those that stood by for the trial of the truth of his oath opened suddenly at adventure the book that he had sworn upon, wherein the first words he lighted on were those of the Devil to our Saviour, What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God, Jesus? Which, said the reporter of it, sorted well with such a Heretic, who indeed has nothing to do with Christ. But of this manner of book Lottery we shall entreat further hereafter.

For the thing itself, it is too too common among us even to this day, by Lot to make enquiry after thieves, and for things stolen or lost, some using a hollow key and a book, some an axe and an helve, some a file and a pair of shears or other like toys, and some repeating part of a Psalm, others abusing the name of some Saints; of which practise well said that reverend Prelate before oft alleged, that the Devil whom such Persons as use it, gratify by this their Sorcery, and who also produced Scripture and Saints names to as good purpose as they do, has sifted them to the bran and scarce left a grain of good Christianity in them; and the laws both Canon and Civil condemn it.

§ 7. Now further Lots Extraordinary have sometimes been used as for the discovery of some hidden matter past or present, so for the presaging or foretelling of some future event, thereby to direct men what course to take in their affairs, or what success they might therein expect. So that as the former extraordinary Lots were partly divisory and partly divinatory, being used partly for consultation and partly divinatory, so these latter are partly consultative and partly divinatory, being used partly for consultation and partly for divination, or for consultation by way of divination. For to divide ought by Lot barely is ordinary, and makes a Lot merely divisory: but to divide or share out ought by Lot, expecting to have the division by Lot made exactly and precisely according to the right of the thing divided in regard of those among whom it is divided, or according to the truth of some thing that is thereby enquired into, is extraordinary and makes it a divinatory Lot. Again to distribute offices by Lot barely, as to design thereby who shall have this place who that place, or who be admitted and who excluded,
is ordinary and but divisory; but to expect that God should thereby reveal whom he deemed fit or unfit, or whom he has fore-assigned to any office, is extraordinary and divinatory. And so here to determine by Lot what course a man shall take of two equally and indifferently propounded, is ordinary, and makes a Lot merely divisory; or if consultative, but improperly so termed: but to enquire or determine by what course is best to take as likely to prove luckiest and most successful, is extraordinary, and makes a Lot divinatory and consistory properly so termed.

Now to this purpose areLots found used, either where the attempt itself is questioned, or where the attempt and business itself is resolved, but the circumstances of time place and person are yet undetermined.

First where the attempt itself is not fully resolved on. As where Jonathan and his armour-bearer agree to show themselves to a garrison of the Philistines, who if upon discovery of them they should will them to stay till they come to them, they would then stay their attempt and not proceed on with it; but if they should call them to come up to them, they would go on in their attempt, taking that as a sign that God would give them victory against them. Which when they had accordingly made trial of, and the Philistines invited them to come up unto them, they clambered up the rock on their hands and their feet to them, and GOD discomfited the Philistines that fled before them, and they slew a twenty of them within compass of an acre of ground. It was not a conjecturing of the minds or courage of their adversaries by their marks on them, the one for耶和华’s leading toward City: there he should consult with his Divines, that is, his Soothsayers or Sorcerers; and among other courses, beside inspection of the liver and entrails of beasts sacrificed, (a practise among the Heathen likewise much used) thereby to conjecture what success he should have; he should draw Lots also to try which way were best for him to take, whether to bend his forces in the first place against Ammon or against Judah, against Jerusalem or against Rabba: and the Lot in his right hand should come forth for Jerusalem; God in his secret providence so disposing it, as he foretold by the Prophet, for the deserved destruction of his own rebellious people.

Now this divination of theirs was performed and practised, as some think, by mingling of arrows with several inscriptions, which being first secretly shuffled were after openly drawn out: as others think, by casting up of a rod or shooting of an arrow as directly as could be plumb upward into the air, observing on which side it lighted when it came down: (the clause that both build on is somewhat ambiguous, and by many others turned otherwise:) as others again think, by stones with inscriptions or marks on them, the one for Jerusalem, the other for Rabba: which is not altogether unlikely. Howsoever it were, it is apparent by the place, that some kind of Lottery or other was used in that consultation of his, and wherein Authors all agree.

The like course may be thought to have been used also by Senacherib King of Assur: howbeit the one took not the same effect with the other, because it pleased not God to grant that success to the one, that he thought good to vouchsafe the other. Sometimes again are Lots used where all other circumstances are resolved on, and the time only undetermined.

Thus then Haman had resolved to do what he could for the destroying and rooting out of the whole Jewish nation, he caused Lots to be cast for the day and the time; that is, by Lot he made enquiry what time would be fittest and most fortunate for the enterprising or executing of that his exploit. And the Lots being cast in the first month Nisan about our March from day to day and from month to month, fell out upon Adar the twelfth Month much about our February, near upon a twelve-month between; what time it fell out contrary to Haman’s expectation, and to that success that his Sorcerers had by their sorceries promised him:
As the like delay upon the like ground was a mean to save a noble Roman in the enemies hands; and gave Caesar a famous victory against the Germans when they looked to have had the like against him. Which custom the ancient Frislanders are reported also to have ordinarily used; and that a certain Christian Bishop with many his Disciples being oft put upon it, the casting Lot never lighted either upon him, or upon any of his company, save one alone, who by that means was made a Martyr.

§ 9. This kind of divination was very common and usual among the Heathen; whose Idols also used to give their answers oft times by Lot. Whence it came to pass that their Oracles were in general called Sorts or Lots, though given many of them otherwise; and their Wizards or Soothsayers were called Sortilege or Sortiarij; which name of Sorcerers and Sorcery we likewise now give generally to Witches and Witchery of all kinds: The means and manner of their performance thereof were manifold; as were also the matters and affairs wherein they made use of it. For the Sclavonians, as the Jewish Rabbines write of them, used to peel a stick or a green piece of wood on the one side leaving the bark on the other side, and then casting it up into the air, by it to conjecture of the good or bad success of their business intended, as it lighted with the bark or the bare side of it upward. Not altogether unlike that which is reported of the Chinois, that they use to the like purpose two sticks tied together with a string of some length, on the one side flat, and round on the other; which sticks if they light and lie both alike on the flat side, they account it a good sign, if unalike, an quill sign. As also many barbarous people in Germany are recorded, some of them by little pieces of wood white on the one side & black on the other; and their women by lines drawn at all adventures in the Ashes, as they fell out even or odd, and others by little sticks or sprigs marked with several inscriptions first shuffled together and then solemnly drawn; the Scythians, some of them with bundles of willow-wands; others of them with the rind or bark of the Teil-tree; and the Gauls with Lots of Veruen-leaues; to have usually presaged in their businesses of several natures what success they were like to have. Among other superstitions practises of this kind (to pass by many) famous is that example by many diversely reported, whereby not Valens the Emperor himself, as some have misreported it, but some other in his time made inquiry, who should succeed him in the Empire: which was done, say some, by an enchanted ring hung by a silken thread in the midst of a basin with an alphabet of letters engraved round about on the sides of it, which letters the ring struck upon as it was stirred to and fro; or as others say, by letters drawn in the dust with a corn of some grain wheat, or barley, laid on each of them, and a cock turned in to them to pick up of them which he would: both herein agree that these four Greek letters Θ Ε Ω δ were in that order as they here stand, either struck upon by the ring, or picked upon by the Cock, whereupon they concluded that one Theodorus a noble man of special note was the person whom that Oracle of theirs then aimed at: which coming by some means or other to the Emperors ear, was occasion not of the death of that Theodore alone, but of many others also whose names began with those letters; and yet missed he of Theodosius, who afterward did indeed succeed him in the Empire.

Of special note among the Romans and so famous that Carneades used to say of them that he never knew Fortune any where so fortunate as there, were the Lots at Praeneste, whose fabulous original Tullie reported and derided: they were certain wooden pins or the like, with several inscriptions; which they kept in a box or a chest wrapped up severally in wooden fillers; which Tiberius, say some, assaying to remove from thence, when the box or chest was brought to Rome, the Lot were found wanting, and so continued, till the box was brought back again to their wonted place of abode. These they used to draw as at other times, so of ordinary course at every New year's-tide, to fore-tell them what should betide them the year following; at which time drawn by Domitian the last year of his reign they are said to have given him a heavy and a bloody Chance, that which accordingly fell out afterward; whereas they had ever given him light some and lucky ones before.

Instead of these wooden-pins or wands, in some other places were dice used or hucklebones of the same use with dice. For so among others at an Oracle of Hercules his in Achia, they used to cast dice with certain marks upon them; which according as they lighted, directed them to a Table, wherein they found thereby their Fortunes. And so at Padua, Tiberius willed by a Lot, drawn at an Oracle of Germans, to cast golden dice into a spring there at hand, had the Empire foreshowed him by the fall of the dice affording him the highest Chance.

§ 10 But none, it seemed was more usual both there and else-where than their book or verse-
Lotteries, when taking a book of some famous Poet as Homer or Virgil, or of some of the supposed Sibyls, they either write out many verses into several scrolls and afterward drew of them; or opening the book suddenly took that which they first lighted on for an answer to their present doubt or demand. So Adrian is reported by certain verses of Virgil to have had his advancement by Trajan to the Empire foretold him: so Claudius Albinus his stay of further tumult upon the death of Pertinax, and his victory against the Gauls by the like: so Alexander Severus yet a child his universal Sovereignty by certain Greek verses; confirmed after to him, using the like consultation at the change of his studies, by the like verses of Sibyls; as also by the Bible God's own book, and the Heathen in this kind, Christians have done the farther off, and to come nearer home; in steed of Poets works used (or abused rather) by Heathen in this kind, who upon report to excuse him) was not free from some spice of superstition in this kind, who upon report brought him that some of his Clerks were by a Witch that gave him good hope of it; to make yet further trial of the truth therein, the Apostle's and the Evangelists on the Altar, who having laid the books of the Prophets, the like by the Bible God's own book, and the several parts of it, the old and the new Testament, the Epistles and the Gospels, the Psalms and the Prophets. And hence, (nor from the Apostle's use of Lots sometimes in Ecclesiastical elections, as some have supposed) sprung that term of the Apostle's Lots, and of the Lots of the Saints, which we find in so many Canons and Constitutions condemned.

Thus the Emperor Andronicus the elder, being at jar with his Nephew and in some doubt what to do in the business, had recourse to his Psalter, and by chance lighting on that verse, as the Greek has it, When the God of heaven designs Kings, they shall be snowed upon, or over-whelmed with snow, in Solmon, he was thereby persuaded to give way to a reconciliation.

Thus Heraclius the Emperor in his war against the Persians being at a standing, and in doubt of going back or staying by it, after a three day's public fast, betaking him to the Gospels, opened upon a text, which, as he took it, advised him to winter in Albania.

Thus Gregory of Taurus reported that Morovans thirsting after his Father Chilpericks royal estate, and having received an answer from a Witch that gave him good hope of it; to make yet further trial of the truth therein, the Psalter, the book of Kings and the Gospels to be laid on Saint Marius shrine, and after fasting and solemn prayer coming to open them, he lighted, little to his comfort, on these words in the first of them, Because ye have left the Lord your God, and walked after other God's, and done quill in his sight, therefore has God delivered you into the hands of your enemies; In the second upon these, as the vulgar Latin has them; But for their deceitfulness hast thou laid evils upon them: Thou hast cast them down, when they were advanced: How become they desolate? they perish for their iniquities; In the third upon these; Yee know that after two days the Paschal feast shall be; and the Son of man shall be delivered up to be crucified. Which sayings somewhat sorted with those things that then afterward befell.

Yea this Gregory himself (though some seek to excuse him) was not free from some spice of superstition in this kind, who upon report brought him that some of his Clerks were by one Leudastes apprehended, resorted to his Psalter, and therein lighted on that verse, He led them out in hope, and they feared not: and their enemies the sea over-whelmed. Which he noted to have taken in part effect in Leudastes, in great danger shortly after of being utterly drowned.

As also the like course he reported (whereby it may appear that it was no strange or unusual matter even with the best in those times) that Tetricus Bishop of Aruer and his Clerks took, who having laid the books of the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Evangelists on the Altar, desired God thereby to show them what should become of Chramus then in arms for the crown; and that opening the books they lighted
on the song of the vineyard to be laid waste, in *Essay*; the prophecy of Christ’s second coming to the sudden destruction of secure persons, in *Paul*; and the Parable of our Saviour of the house built on the sand, in the Gospel.

Thus Peter of Blese sometimes Arch-deacon of Bath reported of himself, that having dreamed once or twice of a friend of his, that he saw him invested as a Bishop, but with omission of some ceremonies, out of a natural curiosity he betook himself to his Psalm-book by way of Lottery; wherein the first words that offered themselves to his view were those; *Moses and Aaron among his Priests*.

Thus Saint Theodora, as they style her, (if we may believe their reports of her) having by ungodly persuasions yielded to an adulterous act, repaired to a Prioress and desired from her by an Evangelical Lottery to know what should become of her; and thereupon putting herself into man’s apparel, she ran away from her Husband, and became a professed Monk, and so lived undiscovered to her dying day.

And thus lastly, to make up this troop, foolish Saint Francis, (I may well so term him, if all be true that Papists themselves report of him) when one Bernard, a man of wealth would needs be a follower of his; advised him first to consult with God about so weighty a work; which he did, said the story, by repairing with Saint Francis to a Priest, who after Mass ended making a cross on his Mass-book, and then opening it at adventure three several times one after another, lighted still on some text or other that tended to that purpose; whereupon that Bernard, by Saint Francis his advice, left all, and became one of his followers. As also the same Saint Francis, as they say, reported of himself that being tempted to have a book, which seemed contrary to his vow, he that denied him anything but *coats and a cord and hose, and (in case of necessity only) shoes*, he resorted for advice, after prayer premised, to the Gospel; and there lighting on that sentence; *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others by parables;* he thereupon concluded that he should do well enough without books, and suffered none of his followers therefore to have so much as either a Bible or a Breviary or a Psalter.

So that it is not much to be marvelled if other ordinary persons and ignorant people have been carried away with such superstitious fooleries, when we see such Bishops and other learned men addicted unto them, as were both for knowledge and holiness esteemed of the greatest note in their times: Notwithstanding that all such kinds & courses of divination & Lottery were both by the Civil & Canon Law, as also by many and sundry Synod call constitutions from time to time, generally prohibited and condemned.

### CHAPTER 11. Of the unlawfulness of such Lots.

§ 1. Now of these extraordinary and divinatory Lots before mentioned (for such all of them were) some were lawful, some were unlawful; but none of them are now lawful. Those were lawful that were used either by express word and warrant from God, as that used by Samuel for the election of Saul; and that used by Joshua for the discovery of Achan; or by special instinct of the Spirit of God; as it is certain of that that was used by the Apostles for the supplying of Judas his place; and it is probable, yet questionable, (for the event of it proved not the point, no more than in some others that have had the like success) of that used by Eleazer Abrahams servant; and of that used by Jonathan and his Armour-bearer, paralleled usually with it: which though approved in them, yet are not to be imitated of us, because they are extraordinary examples, and such as are beside rule; and therefore are no precedents or patterns to us, who must walk by ordinary precepts, not by extraordinary practises.

Those were unlawful that were done without either, whether the event were expected from the true God, as in the Lot used by Saul that lighted upon Jonathan; or from false God’s, Devils and Idols, as in that used by the Philistine Sorcerers and Soothsayers; that used by the Mariners for the discovery of Jonah; that used by Nebuchadnezzar in way of consultation for the siege of Jerusalem, and that used by Haman for the destruction of the Jewish nation. Of which some took effect indeed accordingly, as *Nebuchadnezzar’s*
Lottery for his journey and expedition against
Jory, God framing the event of it to his desire,
for the effecting of his own will in the
punishment of that people; and so likewise in
those Lots cast upon Jonah and Jonathan:
Sometimes they took not effect, as in Haman's
Lottery for a fit time to destroy the Jews,
where God turned the event to a clean contrary
issue, and made that day the downfall of him
and his, and other the enemies of his people,
which the Lot had assigned for their
destruction by them.

For however some grave Authors stick not to
say, that some of these latter were done by
divine instinct: and it is true indeed that God
has a secret hand and power and providence in
directing and ordering all projects and
purposes both of good and bad: yet we cannot
safely say, that there was such a special and
immediate instinct, as in some of the one that
made their actions warrantable, so in the other
whose courses were unwarrantable in them.
And the difference herein is this, that the one
speaks and worked at random, as Caiphas did
sometime, not intending or regarding any such
divine motion or direction, however God
secretly direct the business they deal in and
their actions therein, to such event as he sees
good himself: whereas in that special instinct
that makes an act warrantable, the party
employed in it by God knows it and
understands it to be such, and concurred with
God as well in will as in work, as well in
intention of his end as in execution of his will.
Now the former alone will not serve to justify
an action, not so much built on it, as
accompanied with it; no more than God's
secret counsel or purpose, his predestination or
preordination will acquit the cursed Jews from
sin in the crucifying of Christ.

None of them are at this day lawful to us;
neither do either of those kinds afford us
warrant for the like: the former being to be
admired as marvellous, the latter to be
abhorred as superstitious; and neither of them
to be nowadays imitated of us; because neither
have we any such warrant, as the one had;
neither may we do ought without warrant or
against warrant, as the other did.

§ 2. So that the point we propound concerning
these Extraordinary and Divinatory. Lots is
this, that It is not lawful, (without express
warrant or special revelation from God) to use
Lots, either for the discovery of any hidden
truth, or for the foretelling and presaging of
any future event: for the discovery of any
hidden truth, as to tell where treasure lies hid,
to discover a theft, to recover things lost, and
the like: or to foretell things to come, as what
fortune in general a man shall have, which by
fortune books is sought into, or what success
he is like to have in some particular affairs, as
in matter of marriage, in going to war or to sea,
journeying by land, or the like: under which
head are comprehended all Consultative Lots,
with the rest therefore alike condemned.

For first God himself in his word has expressly
forbidden all such kinds of divination, and this
of Sorcery or Lottery (for so that word
signified) by name among the rest.

To pass but lightly by that place in Leuiticus,
though of great and sufficient weight in this
point; wherein God inhibited his people to use
Sorcery, and some other superstitious like it: In
the book of Deuteronomy he reckoned up the
same amidst many other detestable and
abominable courses, which practised by the
Heathen, whom he then threw out, he
prohibited his people to have any dealing
withal. When thou come, said he, into the land
that the Lord thy God gives thee, do not learn
to do after the abominations of those Nations
that God casts out before thee. Let none be
found among you, that makes his son or
daughter pass through the fire: a foolish
ceremony, as many take it, used of Heathen to
purify their children and preserve them from
perils of spells and witch-craft, as they
supposed, by making them pass between two
fires, or by drawing them hastily through the
flame of the fire; though others expound it of
burning their children in sacrifice to Idols and
Devils, which in imitation of the Heathen some
idolatrous Jews also did: Or that uses any kind
of divination; for the discovery of hidden
truths, or the foretelling of future events,
without the compass of man's natural skill:
There is the general, the several sorts whereof
after ensue, this particular that we purposely
deal with among the rest, and of the same
nature and stamp therefore with the rest. But
let us view the particulars.

The first of them is a Regarder or Observer of
times: one that uses such observation of times
as has no ground in nature, accounting some
days lucky and some unlucky or dismal days,
as our common Almanac-makers do, and as
other superstitious people, that have an idle
conceit of Childermas-day, as they termed it,
as an unlucky day to undertake ought on all
that year, and the like: though some expound it
of juggling, or deceiving of the sight by
casting a mist before men's eyes.

The second is a Sorcerer, or a Conjecturer;
that one by casting of Lots, as Human did; or
by drawing arrows out of a quiver, as some think the King of Babel did; or by a sieve, as the Gentiles had wont to do, and it is a byword in their books, and as many superstitious ones among us yet do; or by throwing of dice or stones or bones; or by opening of books; or by marks and figures made in the dust or in ashes, or the like in writing drawn and done out at adventure; or by sticks, or leaves shuffled and severed, or left to the wind; or by any other such casual course undertakes to conjecture and guess at things hidden and secret.

The third is a Witch; one that by hurtful confections doth mischief; or by flight and collusion seemed to alter the nature of the creature, and so to work miracles; as those Egyptian Magicians did, Iannes and Iambres, and sundry false Prophets in these latter times under the kingdom of Antichrist have attempted to do: for to this head rather would such Jugglers be referred then unto that former.

The fourth is a Charmer, or an Enchanter, (for these two be the same) one that uses spells and charms, or characters and ligatures, for the enchanting of Serpents, preventing of harms, staunching of blood, assuaging of swellings, and the like; courses merely superstitious, and such said the Heathen man, as no wise Artist will use, his cure requiring another course.

The fifth is a Consulter with Spirits or with Familiars: one that dealt directly and immediately with the Devil, as the other all deal indirectly with him, or work immediately from him; using his help either to hurt or to heal, to tell or to foretell ought.

The sixth is a Wizard, or a Wise-man, as they termed him, a Soothsayer, or a Fortune-teller: one that by the flight of fowls, or shrieking of birds, or entrails of beasts, than which nothing was more usual among the Gentiles, professed to foretell future events. To which purpose it is reported that when Xerxes had sometimes made his army stay while his Wizards observed the flight of a fowl, a Jew in the troop understanding it, shot the fowl stark dead, and then asked how the fowl could tell what should befall them, which had it foreknown what was to befall itself, would not have flown that way at that time.

But to return to the text. In the last place come those that ask advice of the dead: that go, as the Prophet speaks, from the living to the dead, consulting with those that raise up the souls of the deceased, as the Devil bears men in hand, and makes many believe. So that all these courses are there joined together, as they hang all on one string, and they are all alike prohibited and condemned by God, as being practises that pollute all that use them, if not in body, yet in soul; and that make them abominable, if not in man’s eye, yet in God’s sight. So said the text expressly. For all that do such things are abomination to the Lord thy God: who will not therefore suffer any of his to do so. What could be more plainly or pregnantly spoken for the condemning of these courses, and for the removing of that objection, which men commonly make? to wit; What hurt is there in these things? What evil is there in a spell or a charm, as long as there is nothing but good words in it? or what harm can there be, in casting of Lots, or in drawing of cuts, or in pulling an arrow out of a quiver, in holding a sieve between two hands, making a child run between two fires, breaking a bone between twin, and the like? Yea but, said God, these be courses that I utterly abhor, when they are used to these ends; and all that so use them, or have dealing with them, by causing such things to be done by others for them, are not abominable only, but even abomination itself in my sight. That which should be a sufficient argument to us, to make us if we do sincerely love him, to hate and abhor them, albeit we could see no hurt or harm at all in them.

§ 3. But that we may the better conceive the cause why God thus forbade and abhorred these courses: (for it is not without special reason ordinarily that God enjoins or inhibits ought:) let us in the next place more particularly consider the manifold evils that are in these practises: whereby it shall evidently appear, that men make themselves guilty of Curiosity, of Superstition, of Idolatry, of Presumption, of diabolical Impiety, and of high Treason against God’s majesty.

First of Curiosity: For it is a point of vain, yea of impious Curiosity to enquire into those things that God has concealed and kept in his own power: in which regard therefore our Saviour reproved his Disciples when even by lawful means they enquired into things of that nature; as also he rebuked Peter by name for being over inquisitive in that kind. But where God has denied men ordinary means of discovery, there doth he reserve and keep things in his own power; concerning which therefore that rule of God’s Spirit holds, Things concealed belong to God, things revealed to us. So that though they be things
that concern us, and might be of some use to us, if by ordinary means and direct courses we could come to discover them; yet when God has either so concealed, or suffered them so to be concealed from us, that by ordinary courses they cannot be discovered, it is not lawful for us to seek to come to notice of them by extraordinary means: (no more than it was for our Saviour Christ as he was man, and made for us under the Law, to seek to his Father to have stones turned into bread, when food failed him:) but we must be content with the good pleasure of God, and rest satisfied with so much as by lawful means may be known, unless we will make our selves guilty of unlawful Curiosity.

And in this regard are the Arts that tend hereunto called Curious Arts; the books whereof the good Christians at Ephesus that had professed them before, burnt afterward in token and testimony of their renunciation and condemnation of them, upon their conversion to Christ. Which place of the Evangelist however it may be understood of some other curious kind of craft or mystery tending to the furtherance of Idolatry: yet most interpreters, or all generally, expound it of this kind of curious Arts applied to Divination; which (as Heathen stories also testify) were so frequent at Ephesus, and so famous, that the Spells of Ephesus were become a common by-word.

It was death for any man to look into the Ark, or but to peep into the holy of holies. And as it is sin for a man to search and pry into what God has concealed; so to search by such courses as he has not warranted; or to search into such things, as it is therefore apparent that he has concealed and would have hid from us, in that he has taken away all ordinary means of discovery, and offered not extraordinary means of himself: which however we may accept, yea we ought not to refuse, when God offered and suggested them to us; for that were to condemn God; so we ought not to desire or request at God’s hands, much less frame them to ourselves, when God shall not see good so to do; for that is manifestly to tempt God. God has promised his people his Word and his Spirit to direct them, and to raise up Prophets, as occasion shall be from time to time to instruct them, in whatever shall be necessary or needful for them to know: so that they shall not need to seek to such indirect courses, as can neither probably nor profitably acquaint them with his will, being taken up beside and against his will.

§ 4. Secondly such courses make the Users of them guilty of Superstition. For what is Superstition but to ascribe that to a Creature, or to use a Creature to that end, which it has no natural power and efficacy unto, or whereunto it is not by any divine ordinance enabled. But in these cases is a Lot applied unto that use, and that virtue ascribed unto it, which it neither has by any natural power of it own, nor has received by any ordinary ordinance of God, nor can achieve by the will or power of the User joined with it. For herein is the difference between the former Dispository, and these Divinatory Lots; as also between those special ones used at God’s express appointment, and these; in that the former were applied to no other ends than Lots have power of themselves joined with man’s will and consent to effect; the latter likewise to such as they had power to effect by virtue of God’s covenant or appointment joined with them.

For example: a Lot has a power of itself to light uncertainly, and yet certainly in some sort; uncertainly, because indefinitely, for it is in possibility to fall many ways: and yet certainly in some sort, because it can light actually but one way alone: this power it has naturally of itself; but beside this power, from the will of men and their mutual consent it may receive further power to arbitrate such things as they have power to dispose of. But neither has a Lot any power of itself, neither can any man by his own will, or many men by their mutual consent give any such power unto it as to make it light so that it shall necessarily discover somewhat that is hidden and secret to them that so use it: and therefore so to use it is mere superstition.

Again a Lot may have power by God’s will and appointment to reveal and discover some such matter, and it had so in the lawful Lots extraordinary before mentioned. But in these we now deal with, there is no such appointment or agreement of God between us and him; and therefore they can not be sure to have any such power now from him. To make that we say by instances more evident: Water has a natural power to wash and to cleanse the body, and men may use it therefore to that end. But to be a sign and seal of God’s covenant of grace, that it has not but by special appointment from God, and therefore may not to that end be used of any save those alone that are in such covenant with God. Bread likewise has a natural power to nourish man’s body, and yet not that neither, unless a man receive it and retain it and concoct and digest it. But to be a Type of Christ’s body, that it has from his institution only; without out which no power or skill of man could make it to be such: else...
why might not a piece of flesh do as well as a bit of bread? and that was once, but now is not, a Type of Christ’s body, because there was an ordinance then for it, whereas now there is none. Again the Samaritan is said to have washed his neighbours wounds with wine and oil mixed together. But our Saviour Christ cured the Beggar that was born blind with clay tempered with spittle, and another that was both dumb and deaf too with spittle alone. The one has warrant to be used still, because it had and has still such power from the nature of the creature; and therefore it is not superstitious: whereas the other can not with any good warrant be now used, because it had his power then not from the nature of the creature, but from the special will and pleasure of the Creator; which power therefore ceasing with his pleasure then, to use the creature now to that purpose were merely superstitious. In like manner here to use a Lot unto that which of itself it has a natural power unto, or by human help it may have power to effect, is not in that regard unlawful: But for a man to attempt to do that by a Lot, which neither by any natural faculty, nor by any human institution it has power to perform, where there is no ordinance of God enabling it, is mere superstition.

§ 5. Thirdly those that thus use Lottery stand guilty of Idolatry. For what is it but Idolatry to ascribe that to the Creature that is proper to the Creator? But in such cases is that ascribed to the creature that is proper to the Creator, namely to foretell tell things future without the causes or grounds or natural signs of them, such as the Lot whereby they are foretold has no connexion or congruity at all with. For whereas we sorted Events before into three ranks; some necessary, that keep in a constant course naturally; some contingent and not casual, that fall out for the most part alike, though they vary now and then; some contingent and casual, that are altogether uncertain, as the causes also are, whereupon they depend: The first sort, as the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon may be certainly foreknown and foretold, because the causes of them are constant and certainly known of us; the second sort also, as disease and death in some cases may with some good probability be preconjectured and guessed at by those that are well seen and experienced in the signs and causes of either: but the third sort depending upon causes utterly uncertain and unknown unto us, cannot be foreseen or foreknown, and therefore not foretold certainly but by God himself alone. And in this third sort of Events alone is this kind of Lot conversant, which no wit or skill of man is able to fore determine or foresee. This kind therefore of Lot Divinatory and Divination by Lottery is not only, as the Canon justly charged it, a step to Idolatry; but even a spice also of Idolatry and sacrilege itself, robbing God of that that is his proper due, and attributing that unto the creature that is peculiar to the Creator.

§ 6. Fourthly such lotting makes men guilty of presumption against God. For whereas some, it may be, will say: Yea but we expect not the event when we use Lots on this wise from the creature, but from God himself the Creator. I answer those that so say: It is impiety and presumption for any to do so. For what is this but a tempting and a stinting of God? what is it but a prescribing of God what he shall do? It is not therefore true nor sound that some say, that men may by Lots require an immediate sentence from God in some cases, so it be done with some cautions; and an extraordinary, yea a miraculous hand of God may therein be expected, where human helps fail: as if it were then only unlawful for men to use Lots in this manner, when there is no necessity urging and enforcing them thereunto.

For, to argue from that which one of those Authors himself lays for a ground of his opinion in this point; Where no faith is, the act done cannot be free from sin. But there can be no faith here; because no ground or warrant out of God’s word: (and faith without ground is no faith but a fancy; it is but a mere opinion in this point; Authors himself lays for a ground of his...
have ought done: but for a man to require some extra-ordinary work of God even for his profit or his safety as well as for his pleasure without special warrant from God so to do, is likewise to tempt God: As not to admit it when God offered it in such case, is to neglect and contemne him: so to require it before he offer it, is to tempt and to stint him. The Jews are said to have tempted and stinted God, not then only when they required to be fed with flesh having other food sufficient already, but even then also when they required to have water by miracle, what time they were ready to perish for thirst, and had nothing else to drink. And how much more than is it a tempting and stinting of God, when we prescribe him to work thus extraordinarily for us, for the recovery of some trifling loss, or the discovery of a Thief?

§ 7. Fifthly this kind of Lottery or Sorcery (for that is the right sense of that termed) is no other than plain Witchery: and we find them therefore in Scripture oft coupled together. For can we think that God will be at our command to work for us upon our pleasure, and as we shall appoint him, for the finding of a rag? No: it is the Devil indeed, not God, whom we work with, when either we deal so our selves, or make use of those that deal in such sort. For whence sprang these courses? or whom were they brought up by? as, the finding out of a Thief by a key and a book, or a pair of shears and a file; of foretelling what shall befall a man by Fortune-books, or by opening of a Bible or any other book at all adventures, or by throwing of Dice, or by drawing of tickets. Are they any where found revealed in any word of God? or were they ever delivered by any Prophet of God? or are they grounded on any principles of reason and nature? or were they learned by any course of natural and ordinary observation? no such thing at all: but they have been brought into use only the most of them, either directly by Satan, or by some limbs and instruments of Satan, by blind, superstitions and ignorant persons, addicted wholly to vanity and to ungodly curiosity.

For as for those things indeed that have some ground in nature either for them or the use of them, it is not material of whose intention they are: they discover nothing but what lay hid before in God’s work, and apply the Creature only unto that use, which God has endowed it with an ordinary power to effect. But for such things as require an extraordinary power either divine or diabolical to work together with them, being not able else of themselves to effect what is required from them, how can we better judge of such then by the first Broachers and Teachers of them?

Yet to let the Authors and Masters of them pass for the present, & to turn the course of our speech, with a grave Writer, to some one of those that now use them. Thou that by lotting professes to tell fortunes, or to find out a theft or a Thief; either thou must do this by miracle, or by nature, or by some evil act: By miracle (I am sure) thou dares not say; for thou art not a likely person that God should work miracles by: And, by nature, (I am as sure) thou can not say; for there is no such natural efficacy in the creature thou uses. It must needs follow then that that is done that is done by some evil Art, and so consequently by the Devil the only Author and ordinary Assister of such Arts.

In regard whereof it is truly inferred by all Divines generally, that there is at least a secret, if not an open, league and commerce with Satan in the practise of such superstitions, (which no Christian ought to have) whatever men may pretend, yea or intend in the use of them. For as the Apostle tells the Corinthians that haunted the Heathen’s idolatrous feasts to please or pleasure their Heathen friends, that albeit in so doing they had no such purpose as to be in league and amity with Idols or Devils, yet that very act of theirs was a kind of society with either: so here the very use of these diabolical courses, though many it may be intended nothing less in the use of them, is no other than a trading and a trafficking with Satan, which even in that regard therefore all good Christians ought to abhor.

So then, dost thou make enquiry into such things as God by ordinary courses refuses to discover? thou becomes guilty of Curiosity. Doest thou use the creature to that purpose that has no natural power thereunto? it is mere Superstition. Doest thou expect the event of it in that kind from the Creature that thou uses in it? thou commits gross idolatrty: thou makes an Idol of it. Doest thou expect it from Satan? that is plain and evident witchery. Or lastly do thou use only such superstitious courses as he or his limbs and instruments have been Authors and Broachers of, and which can have no efficacy of themselves without him and his help? whether thou do expect the event from him or no, even so also is it no better than Witchery; yea it is heinous impiety, and (which in the last place we now charge it with) it is high Treason against God’s Majesty, which he therefore has at sundy times punished most severely.

§ 8. For the further yet, and fuller manifestation whereof, let it be considered,
that there are in this world two adverse powers, and two contrary kingdoms; the one of light, the other of darkness; the one of God the Creator, the other of the Devil his Adversary; who for that cause is called the God of this world, that is, of the wicked of the world, because they place him in the room of God by following and obeying him rather than GOD. Now so opposite are these two powers and parties either to other, that he can not be a subject of the one that belonged to the other; and he falls from, and rebelled against the one, that flies or seeks to, or has ought to do with the other. As therefore when a Prince shall have proclaimed open war against some foreign foe, or rather when he shall have proclaimed some one of his Subjects a Rebel and a Traitor, yea such an one as he will never vouchsafe to pardon, or receive to grace or mercy again, and shall thereupon have had dealings, either directly or indirectly, either prohibiting and forbidden any of his other Subjects to resort unto him or to have intercourse and a Traitor, yea such an one as he will never receive again on any terms and a Rebel & a Rebel irrecoverable, such an one as he will never receive again on any terms for that cause is called the Creator, the other of the Devil his Adversary; and his accursed faction? and Christian religion, and a Follower of Satan and his cursed faction?

Beside if when a Prince shall have disgraced or amerced one of his Nobles or other Subjects, and deprived him of goods or dignity for some offence upon some displeasure, or (as it may be) but to try how he will take it, and what course he will take in it; if the party so used by his Prince shall repair to such a Rebel to seek help against his Prince at his hands, and by his aide to recover such losses and damages as at his Sovereign’s hands he has sustained, could his Sovereign choose but take such an act exceedingly evil? yea were it not the next way to move his Sovereign to deal in like manner with him, as he had done before with the other, whom he seeks to for succour; not only to proclaim him a Rebel and a Traitor, but even to deny him all hope of grace or favour again? Now Christian men know well all, (or at least they should know; and cannot but know, if they have read and observed anything in God’s word) that there is no evil befall any man in the world, be it loss of life, or health, or goods, or good name, (by what means so ever it be effected, or by whosoever inflicted) but it comes from God, either for the exercise and trial of his obedience and patience, or as a punishment justly laid upon him for his sin. If any man then when he sustained loss or damage some way in his person or in his worldly estate, (which must needs be acknowledged to come so to pass by the holy permission and just judgement of God,) shall seek unto the Devil God’s utter and professed enemy, or his wicked and wretched Factors for help and relief, for the recovery of his losses, or for the discovery of the party by whose means he sustained them, as if he meant to make trial what the Devil in Hell will do for him, when the God of Heaven has afflicted him, or refuses to relieve him; how can it but exasperate the wrath of God against such a party as shall set so light by him, as that for so small a trifle he is so ready to forsake him, and to resort to an enemy, whom he is known to hate so extremely? Yea how a meaner man would take it, any one that has tenants, or children, or servants, if some one of them that depend on him or belong to him, should upon some hard usage of him, or because he refuses presently to right and relieve him, when he may, in some wrongs that he has sustained at some enemies hand, or by means of a bad neighbour, betake himself instantly to his deadly and irreconcilable enemy, one that he knows his Land-Lord, or Father, or Master cannot endure or abide of all men in the world; how offensive, I say, such a course would be
unto any even the meanest of us, I may well leave to each ones particular heart to determine. And can we think or hope then that God will take it better at our hands, (God, I say, whom we wholly depend upon, and who has graciously promised to right all our wrongs, and not to discover only, but take vengeance upon all our wrong-doers, if we will stay but his time) when we deal with him in the same sort? and that when he has so often, so expressly, so strictly forbidden us so to do, enacted grievous penalties against all offenders in that kind, and inflicted fearful punishments upon the transgressors.

§ 9. The prohibitions some of them we saw before what they were: consider we further now the fearful penalties and comminations annexed unto them, together with some examples wherein God has made the same good. As God therefore has sprightly forbidden such courses, so he has set a penalty of death on the practise or use of them. Thou shalt not, said he, suffer a Witch to live: where by name also he mentioned the woman Witch; (for so the word is in the original) partly because women are more prone usually to offend in that kind; and partly also to show that no infirmity or weaknesses (the woman being the weaker) shall serve to privilege or to excuse any whatever in that case.

Yea further elsewhere enacting laws against capital crimes, and mentioning many such only as he would have punished by death, as idolatry, adultery, incest, Sodomy, and such like, sins so horrible and unnatural as they are not almost to be named; next after Idolatry, to show the heinousness of the sin by the neighbourhood of it, and between it and Adultery, he placed this sin of Witchery; which he reiterated also again in the conclusion of that sanction, (because that which comes last, is wont to stick best in mind) wherein he included them all also within compass of the former constitution, that seek unto the Witch or the Wizard, as well as the Witch or Wizard him or herself: But let us weigh the words themselves a little. Whosoever man or woman shall have a familiar spirit, or shall be a Wizard, let them die the death; their blood be upon them: or they deserve well to die; they are the cause of their own death. And again, If any turn aside after such as work with Spirits, or Wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will set my face against that person, and will cut him of from among his people. Where observe we how God said that not only Witches and Wizards, but such also as seek to them, do turn aside and go from him, and that even they also commit spiritual whoredom or adultery, that is, idolatry, in making the Devil their God, while they seek to him in a manner for help against God, or for help at least where God refuses to help them: And therefore threatens he even these as well as the former, that he will set his face (or his wrathful countenance) against them: (a fearful thing for God in anger to turn his face away from one; much more fearful for him in anger to set his face full against one) that he will set himself against them, as they set themselves against him; and both cut them of by temporal death through the Magistrate his Minister’s hand here, as also sever and sequester them to their eternal perdition from the society of his Saints in heaven for ever hereafter: or, as before he had said of some Idolaters, and the like else-where of other Transgressors, that though men and Magistrates should wink at and neglect such, yet he himself will take vengeance for it both on them and theirs.

§ 10. But some, it may be, will not stick either to say or to suppose, that many things in this kind are spoken but to terrify men only; and that God notwithstanding, being a good and a gracious God, will be better than his word, and not so fierce in execution as he seemed severe in the sanction. That we may see therefore that God’s threatening and comminations in this kind are not idle or formal, words of course only; consider we lastly some examples of the fiercenesses of God’s wrath against sundry persons and people that have been faulty this way. And to begin with the Canaanites, and those other nations whom God cast out before the Hebrews; God himself propounded their example, and the example of his wrath and indignation against them, in deporting his people from these practises. Be thou upright, said he, with the Lord thy God; and take not such abominable courses as these Nations do, whom the Lord expelled before thee to place thee in their rooms: as implying that we walk not uprightly with God, we are not sincere and entire with him, but as the Israelites sometimes halted between God and Baal, so we halt between God and Belial, between God and Beelzebub, when we use courses of this kind. For the nations whom thou succeeds, give ear to Diviners, Astrologers, Witches, Sorcerers, Wizards, Charmers, Conjurers, Necromancers; (for all these abominations had he formerly recited as usual among them:) and because of these abominations doth the Lord cast them out before thee: as implying, what he said elsewhere in another case, that they must look for the like if they be found alike faulty; to wit, that their Land it should spew them out, as it
had spewed those out, that were before them in it. And surely, if God destroyed those Gentiles, not for doing these things themselves so much, as for hearkening to those that dealt in them, as he there said; if he destroyed those Gentiles, I say, for so doing, that had never these laws given them, but the general light and law of nature alone to direct them; how much more justly may he destroy those, that after his will so particularly, so precisely, so expressly revealed to them in this point, shall notwithstanding make no conscience of forbearing such practises, as appear plainly to be so offensive to God, and may prove so prejudicial to themselves.

§ 11. But God, it may be, though he be so sharp to others, yet with his own will not deal so rigorously, though they be this way faulty. Nothing less. As for these practises he destroyed those Heathens; so he spared not his own people when they took the like courses: his judgements inflicted upon them remain upon record, as well on Prince as people, yea upon the whole body, even on both of them together for sins of this nature.

Where consider we the Examples, first of two Kings; then of two Kingdoms and States. The one of Ahazias, who for sending to Beelzebub the Idol of Accaron to enquire whether he should rise and recover again, lying then sick and sore bruised with a fall; as if there had been no God for him to advise with in Israel; has this answer returned him from the true God, whom he should have sent unto, by Elias his Minister, meeting by the way with the King’s Messengers, that therefore he should not rise again from his sick-bed that he was laid on, but should assuredly die. The other of Saul, of whom this is noted as the main cause of his overthrow: Thus died Saul for his sin, whereby he sinned against God, in that he regarded not his word; and in that he sought to, and asked advice of one that had a familiar, and asked not of the Lord: and therefore the Lord slew him, and turned the Kingdom to David. Where are two sins especially pointed out as the principal causes of Saul’s downfall: the former whereof is said elsewhere to be as Witchery and Idolatry; the latter was Witchery and Idolatry indeed. And yet was Saul’s case more excusable, than the case of the most is that use the like practises among us. For he had not lost some sorry trifle, and desired to know what was become of it: but he stood in jeopardy of losing life and living, crown and kingdom; and he had tried all the courses he could whereby he might be resolved of the issue of it, ere he repaired to the Witch. For it is said, He asked advice of God, and God would give him no answer, neither by Vision, nor Prophet, nor by Urim and Thummim. And how is it said then, may some say, that he asked not advice of him? But the Holy Ghost accounted it as good as no asking, when God refusing to revealed things by lawful means, men rest not therein, but seek to come to the knowledge of them by such courses as God would never counsel or advise them unto. Again his request to the Witch was to have a word or two with Samuel only; not with the Devil, but with a good Prophet of God lately deceased: neither did he suppose it to be the Devil that he talked or dealt with; for he took him that he saw to be Samuel, though indeed he mistook him. And yet for this practise of his principally, said the Spirit of God expressly, that the Lord deservedly deprived him both of sceptre and life.

Add we unto these two Kings, two whole States, two entire Kingdoms; the Kingdom of Israel, that of the ten Tribes, and the Kingdom of Juda consisting of the other two Tribes. The Kingdom of Israel was first destroyed under Hoshea. And what was the cause thereof? Other sins indeed withal, but these sins among others by name expressed in precise terms, Divination and Sorcery; which enormity withal is there branded with this mark, that it is a selling of a man’s self to sin, and to incense God’s wrath against himself. Again for the destruction of the Kingdom of Juda begun under Jeconias, and consummate under Zedekias; God determined to destroy Judah, as he had done the ten Tribes: And what is the cause of it? this is still inculcated as the principle, the sins of Manasses. And what were his sins, (amidst many other indeed) but Witchery and Sorcery? Yea left any should surmise that his oppressions and murders were rather the main cause of all those miseries that befell that State, because in some places there is special mention made of them; the Holy Ghost therefore in the story of Manasses comes in with them afterward as a by-matter, making the other the main cause, for which God would stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the level of Ahab’s house, and do with that famous City, as a man doth with a dish, that he wiped, and whelmed upside down when he has done with it: and so ascribed not his fall only, but the ruin of the whole State to Idolatry, and Sorcery, and sins of that sort.

§ 12. To draw all to an head then, and so to conclude this last argument: Seeing that God has restrained us of all resort unto Satan, and we our selves in our Baptism have renounced
all kind of dealing with the Devil; we break our faith solemnly plighted to God, and make our selves guilty of rebellion and high treason against God, wh ensever by these courses we seek to him and ask advice of him, whether we believe and trust in him or no.

Again seeing that the sin of Witchcraft (and this Sorcery is one kind of it) is so heinous and so capital a crime that God commanded the Witch to be put to death, whether she help or hurt, even for this cause because she is a Witch and dealt by the Devil, and we our selves in our own conscience cannot but condemn such kind of people, as those of whom, no less truly than usually, we are wont to say, that they have sold themselves and their souls to Satan; then surely it must needs be a most damnable and detestable practise in us, though there were no further sin on our part then so, to employ any, or to use the employment of any in such actions, as we know that they hazard the casting away of their souls in them. We might as well make use of some swaggering Cutter to revenge us by murder on one that has wronged us; or procure some Knight of the post to perjure himself for the recovery of a just debt unjustly denied us; or hire some light Housewife to entice a man to lewdnesses and to play the Whore with him, as Delilah with Sampson, thereby to discover something that we suspect him to have wronged us in. For murder and witch-craft are sins alike notorious in God's eyes, who has therefore assigned the same penalty for either. And Sorcery and Perjury are very near of one nature: since by the one a man wilfully casts his soul into God's hands; and by the other he solemnly puts his soul over into the Devil's hands. And Fornication in itself simply considered is a far less sin than this is: as appeared plainly hereby, in that God has assigned only a mulct or a money payment for the one, but has appointed a capital punishment, even loss of life, for the other. But now more than that, when God himself has adjudged those to death also that seek unto such, as well as the parties themselves; and has sealed up his hatred and detestation of such courses, by staying two Kings for them Abazias and Saul, the one by sickness, the other by the sword, by his own sword, by himself; yea not slaying Saul himself only, but rooting out his posterity and cutting the crown of from him and his; and further yet by destroying whole Nations and overturning whole States for these sins, as the Canaanites and those that he cast out before his people, and his own people themselves too as well as those that he cast out before them, when they took the like courses: We cannot but see, if we will not wilfully wink and shut our eyes against the light of God's truth concerning this point so clearly shining forth in his word, how heinous and horrible a sin this is in God's sight: and we cannot but tremble to think of the heavy wrath of God justly provoked and procured by such practises, if we shall know our selves to be any way guilty of such, unless we have hardened our hearts against the fear of God, or make doubt of the undoubted truth of God's word: which it were much better for us now to believe the truth of unto wise and careful repentance, than find true hereafter by dreadful and woeful experience, when it shall be too late for us either to believe or to repent, to believe the truth of the one, or to repent us of the other.

CHAPTER 12. An Admonition to avoid these divining Lots, with Answer to some Arguments alleged in defence of them: and the Conclusion of the whole.

§ 1. These things then well weighed that have formerly been delivered, those come in the first place here to be admonished, that have been at any time overtaken this way, (not considering, it may be, the greatness and grievousness of the sin) not to justify their evil act, or to soothe up themselves in it, because, as the Apostle Paul said of himself, when he blasphemed and persecuted, and Peter of the Jews, when they crucified Christ, they did it in ignorance. For though that may lessen the sin, yet it soiled not the sinner. Neither did the
Jews ignorance cause that their hands were not wicked that were employed in that action; nor Paul’s ignorance privilege him from being a prime sinner. Yea if thine ignorance were not a simple and naked, but a wilful and affected ignorance, if it were a companion only, not the cause or occasion of thy sin, it doth not so much than as once lessen thy sin; and therefore thou hast in that regard the more cause to repent. And though it were simple, yet hast thou still cause to repent; yea if it were simple, thou can not now but repent thee of thy sin. For if thine ignorance were simple, and so the cause of thy sin, that therefore thou did it, because thou knew it not to be sin, thou can not then chose now coming to see thy sin, which thou saw not before, and to know thine offence which thou knew not before, but bewail and lament it, be sorry for and repent of it, seek for pardon and forgiveness at the hand of God for it, and be careful in time to come to avoid the like evils. This if thou do not (assure thy self) Satan has thee in a snare, thou art entangled in his toile, and it is by repentance alone that thou can wind thy self out of it. The Devil holds thee fast by the heel, as he speaks. And as the Fowler, having the Fowl fast by the one foot, is content to let her have the liberty of both wings and the whole body besides; that is enough to give him the command of the whole: So though thou live otherwise unblameably, yet is this one wicked course enough of itself to engage thee body and soul unto Satan; it is alone sufficient to give the Devil title and interest to the whole. In a word, either thou sinned ignorantly, or wittingly: if ignorantly, thine ignorance was either simple or affected: if of simple ignorance thou sinned, thou can not but repent, now thou come to see thy sin; if of ignorance affected, thou hast the more cause to repent, because that lessened not thy sin: and if thou sinned not of ignorance, but with knowledge, then hast thou yet much more cause to repent, because that aggravated thy sin: every way thou hast good and just cause to repent, because thou can no way be freed from sin.

§ 2. Again, both such and all other are in the second place to be admonished, that they take heed how they give way to such superstitious conceits and courses, whereby they shall in this manner enthral their souls unto Satan, and incense the wrath of God against themselves; yea which their own conscience cannot but tell them, if they deal sincerely with it and it with them, that they are devilish and abominable, wicked and unwarrantable. For consider me this seriously with thy self; when some trifle is missing, and thou go to work with thy Book and thy Key, or with thy Sine and thy Shears, for the finding of the Thief; (and that it may be, when it is not stolen neither; but admit it be:) first do thou think that the Book and the Key, or the Sine and the Shears are either jointly or severally able to do anything herein of themselves? Sure thou can not be so simple as so to suppose, unless there be as little within thee as in them. Art thou able thy self then to put any such power into them, which they have not of themselves? Undoubtedly thou can not: it is a thing utterly out of thy power. What then? do thou think that God upon thy fooleries will extraordinarily and miraculously work for thee? then belike thou imagine that thou hast a miraculous faith: if thou think thou hast, try it rather in some better, in some greater matter, in some matter of more moment, as in raising of some one that is at deaths-door in an instant: or rather, try it in neither; thou should but tempt God in either. But suppose thou should try him, dost thou think he would do it? And what reason hast thou to imagine, that God should work extraordinarily for thee more in the one than in the other? Alife ground and warrant there is for either; a word of promise for neither. Neither can thou easily be so sottish as to suppose that God should do anything in it; especially when for the most part there is no solemn seeking to God, however there be some abuse of the name, or of the word of God now and then. If neither the thing itself then be able to do anything of itself, nor thou able thy self to give any such power unto it, nor God have an hand in it, other than in all actions else whatever; what can there be then that doth it (if anything be done) but the Devil, whose aide thou employes, yea whom thereby thou show that thou trust in and believes, whatever thou pretend? For did thou suppose it to be a vain and an idle thing, of no certainty, thou would never use it. Yea did thou not believe that the Devil could and would tell thee the truth, thou would never resort to him, nor ground anything on his answers; thou would never use any such tricks of his, nor conclude anything out of the event of them. So that in truth thy practise showed that thou believe and trust in him, whatever thou say; and so thou cross our Saviour; in that whereas he said that the Devil is a Liar and the father of lies, thou supposes, yea and assure thy self that by these means he not only can, but will and doth tell thee the truth. Thine own heart therefore, if it do seriously and sincerely deal with thee, cannot but inform thee, that it is the Devil thou deal with, the first Author of all evil, a Liar and a Murderer from the beginning: and what good
or gain, what faith or truth, what help or health
than can be expected from him?

Oh let not then the wretched desire or love of
things lost, or of any other wealth else what
ever it be, much less a vain curiosity and
lusting to foreknow and be acquainted with
future events, which God has reserved to
himself, prevail so far with thee, as to persuade
thee to pass the lists and limits that God has
prescribed thee, and to join with Satan by
satanical courses for the satisfying of thine
own worldly and fleshly desires against God.
Remember that as Shimei, when he went to
seek his servant that was fled away from him,
going beyond the bounds set him by Solomon,
he went to his own end: so when by such
courses thou seek to recover thy losses, thou
run upon thine own ruin, thou draw destruction
upon thy self. As it is said truly of those, that
in sickness, either directly or by use of indirect
courses, seek to Satan for health, that they are
strangely and strongly deluded by the Devil,
when they think him willing to help them, who
is ready rather to destroy them, yea who would
do it undoubtedly, if he had his own will: and
if there be ought done for them in that kind, it
is not done in God’s name, but in the Devils
name; and better were it for them to be sick
still, then to be helped or healed in that sort: If
the Devil do anything for them at their desire,
they think to regain and recover the former: Or if he
done for them in that kind, it
is not done in God’s name, but in the Devils
name; and better were it for them to be sick
still, then to be helped or healed in that sort: If
the Devil do anything for them at their desire,
they think to regain and recover the former: Or if he
if there be ought done for them in that kind, it
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name; and better were it for them to be sick
still, then to be helped or healed in that sort: If
the Devil do anything for them at their desire,
they think to regain and recover the former: Or if he

Let us rather therefore in the fear of God, and
as we regard our own good, put far from us
such practises; and not forbear them only, but
even abhor them, defy and detest them, not in
word only, but in deed, not in tongue only, but
in truth: that so our hearts may be sincere and
entire with God, not divided between God and
Satan; our heads and brains busied about
searching out the holy and acceptable will of
God, not about curious inquiries into such
secrets as the wisdom of God has hid from our
eyes; our hands employed only in the good
works of God, not in the works of that wicked
one, which he came to dissolve and destroy
in those that be his: and our feet lastly walking in
the straight-ways of God’s word, that lead to
life and salvation, and not in Satan’s crooked
and blind by-paths, that tend to death and
destruction.

§ 3. An idle Objection or two would be
answered, and all were at an end. In these
courses therefore, say some, there are many
good words used, yea even Scripture itself oft:
and then how can they be but good? at least
how can they be so bad, as you seem to say of
them?

Augustine indeed, as some other have well
observed, is in this regard over-favourable to
some of these and the like courses, when he
wished that men would rather make Lots of the
leaves of the Gospel, than run directly to
enquire and ask advice of the Devil: and some,
as I showed before of no very evil note have
been over-taken that way. Yet both he himself
disliked it; and the ancient Canons have not
without good ground and warrant condemned
offered to the same in substance with those that the Jews offered to Idols, and in them to Devils, were sin. And the Gentiles sacrifices that they produced Scripture to persuade our Saviour to may be abused as well as profane. The Devil superstitious uses as these are. Holy things such idle vanities, and applied to such it, that God’s holy Oracles should be used to such idle vanities, and applied to such superstitious uses as these are. Holy things may be abused as well as profane. The Devil produced Scripture to persuade our Saviour to sin. And the Gentiles sacrifices that they offered to Idols, and in them to Devils, were the same in substance with those that the Jews offered to Jehovah. The holiness of the thing used excused not the abuse of it; which is rather the more heinous, the holier the thing is.

§ 4. Yea but, lastly will some say, these observations oft fall out aright; and the event of them is according to the truth of the thing enquired into by them. For was it not so in many of the examples before mentioned? Did not the Lot light right upon Jonathan, and upon Heman? Did not the Philistine and the Babylonian Lotteries answer the expectation of those by whom they were used? Yea we have found, may some say, by our own experience, that in ordinary practise they oft prove true.

To this I answer: First, they mark when they prove true, but not how oft they prove false; as the Philosopher said of dreams, that they seldom prove true, and yet many men trust in them, because they mark those only that so prove. And as one said of relics and monuments hung up by such as had made vows to our Lady (as they term her,) and were delivered being in danger and distress, that there were many indeed of them; but there were no relics of those that had made the like vows and were not delivered, but were drowned or perished otherwise: which yet would be many more, if they were to be seen. So here a few events are scored up and recorded that have fallen out aright, whereas many more, ten or twenty for one, had they been observed, might have been registered, that have fallen out clean otherwise. In the former examples; it proved aright with Nebuchadnezzar; but clean contrary with Haman. Yea so oft thus fall they out, that, as one of the Ancients well said, though they lie but by casualty, they may seem to do it of industry, and of set purpose to tell untruths.

And yet strange and miserable is the blandness and madness (as one well observed) of most men, who, whereas in other and better matters they are extreme hard of belief, and will refuse to give credit to a certain truth, though confirmed by infinite and innumerable undoubted examples, if they can pick out any one singular precedent, wherein it has fallen out otherwise: as for example, tell them how many have died evil that lived evil, and that they themselves therefore taking the like courses in their life may justly look for the like issue in the end at their death: yet they will nothing regard all that is alleged in that kind, as long as they can name one, suppose the Thief on the Cross, though he be but one, and that questionable too; but let it go for granted; one, said he well, that no man might despair, and but one, that no man should presume. Whereas, I say, in matters of moment, and that more nearly concern them, they will reject a thousand truths for some one untruth; or a thousand examples of events that have fallen out alike and aright, for some one that extraordinarily has fallen out otherwise: in these cases on the other side by one truth they will excuse an hundred untruths, and for one event that casually falls out aright, pass by an hundred, it may be, that ordinarily fall out otherwise. So light of belief are we in vain and hurtful things, and such as we ought rather to distrust: so hard of belief in good and profitable things, and such as by God we stand bound to believe.

§ 5. Secondly issue or event argued not either the truth and certainty, or the lawfulness and warrantableness of an action, as even Heathen themselves have seen and observed. How many be there every where that thrive in sin and by sin? How many have been Conquerors in unjust wars? The length of the lance argued not the equity of the cause, nor the sharpness of the sword’s-edge the lawfulness of the course or the quarrel. It followed not that the Benjamites cause was good, or the other Israelites bad, because in two several battles they beat down their brethren, and their Adversaries fell before them. But to come nearer home, take we example from the like: How vain and idle, how frivolous and ridiculous was the Heathens course of Divination, by opening the bellies of beasts and pouring into their entrails, by observing the voices or the flight of souls, and whose wit and wisdom lies buried in the权威 among them had wont to say that he wondered, how their Wizards and Soothsayers, that by such courses deluded the common sort of people, could forbear laughing when they looked one on another: and the wiser sort among them did but scoff and flout at them: one affirming that These Wizards and Soothsayers, that can tell what the birds chirp, and whose wit and wisdom lies buried in the bellies and bowels of beasts; may well be heard, but are in no wise to be hearkened unto. And another that, The Marsian Enchanters and Spell-mongers, and the common Sacrificers.
and Bowel-searchers, with the Star-gazers and Figure-casters; as also the Egyptian Fortune-tellers, and Dream-readers; are not worth a button all of them. For that they are not such as have any divine Art or skill at all with them: but are either superstitious Wizards, or blind Buzzards, or idle-headed, or addle-brained, or arrant Beggars. That, like fools as they are, profess to tell other men their fortunes, when they are ignorant of their own; and promise to help them to hidden hoards of gold, whom they beg a grey groate of: which groate, said he, they may do well first to take out of that hootard, and then return them the rest. Yet did not these also oftentimes prove true? yea did they not both prove alike true, both this and that other, when by Nebuchadnezzar they were both used together? Heathen stories, we know, are stuffed full of the like events of them: the observations of eight hundred years and upwards, said one of their Writers, going most with them. In regard whereof the argument drawn from the event to justified the act of Eliezer Abrahams servant, though it may carry with it some good probability, yet is not of undoubted certainty. For the sign that the Philistine Sorcerers set themselves fell out as rightly: and the Witches Samuel of Endor told Saul much truth, and what shortly after came accordingly to pass. And yet are neither of their courses, by any that I know, justified. Reasons and arguments, said the Heathen man, must be produced for the confirmation of men’s courses, not examples of uncertain and casual events. And well: for, as a Noble man of ours said in a learned and elaborate work of his of somewhat the like subject, Examples which fall out by chance were never currant, where the cause is to be justified by reason: And therefore till a man can as readily produce a certain ground to make his guesses good, as score up a register of blind events, we may rather commend his luck than his learning.

§ 6. Thirdly and lastly when these things prove true and fall out accordingly to the intent and desire or purpose of the User, it is not as Hierome and others from him have well observed, by the force or from the nature of the thing itself that is used: and therefore the argument, said one well, drawn from the event is weak and feeble, as mistaking much the ground of the matter, and assigning that for a cause which in very deed is none: like the superstitious Papists or Idolatrous Heathens concept, that ascribed God’s usual bounty in blessing the year ordinarily with plenty to their idle Processions, (for both used such, and they were alike idle that both used) because it followed thereupon: or like the practise of unskilful Empirics, that giving medicines at adventure one after another, when the disease breaks away by other means or of itself, ascribe the cure to the medicine they last gave, because that the disease went away upon the use of it. But they come to pass by other means, and those either Ordinary or Extraordinary.

Ordinarily it falls out so either by mere Casualty, or by human Slight and subtilty. By Casualty; as one faith of unskilful Physicians, that they indeed cure not their Patients, but Chance, if any be cured by them: because they minister medicines without ground or good reason, and yet by chance sometimes give that that doth good: and another of Fortune-tellers, that He was the best Diviner, that could give the best guess. For that they went by mere conjecture, wherein a man without any divine help or divining faculty yet many times, as we say, hits the nail on the head: and as a third said of Dreams and Dreamers, that though there be no divine matter in them, yet they oft fall out: for that men dreaming so oft, and of so many and sundry things of all sorts as they do, it is not strange if they light on some things that casually fall out so accordingly; as those that play at even and odd, though they go merely by guess, yet they guess oft aright; and two casting stones as they come to hand one at another, may chance to cast the same stone twice: or as a man shooting oft, though with little skill, yea or blind-folded, may by chance sometimes hit the mark; and dicing all day long, sometimes have the Chance he would have, or the highest chance that the dice have.

Thus Augustine tells of two Young men, that travelling by the way made many believe that they were Figure-casters, whereas they knew not so much as the 12. Signs in the Zodiac and when they perceived that their Host where they inned seemed to give some credit to them telling him many strange matters, they grew bolder; and being demanded by him whether they could tell him ought of his son, who was then abroad, and staying out beyond his time appointed, made his Father their Host somewhat fearful that some evil had befallen him; they little regarding how the matter would fall out in their absence, so they might give their Host contentment, and get themselves somewhat for the present, bad him be of good cheer, his son, they would warrant him, was safe, and not very far off: Which though they knew no more, as we say, than the post, or than their Host himself that asked them, yet by mere casualty beside their
expectation fell out accordingly: For the
Young man came in just as they were leaving
their Inn; which made them to be accounted
men of extraordinary skill.

§ 7. Again sometimes these courses take effect
not by mere casualty, but either in an Ordinary
course by some slight of man, or in an
Extraordinary by some secret work of Satan, or
by some hidden hand of God himself.

For as Augustine said of the miracles done or
pretended to be done by the Donatists, that
they were either of men's forging or of the
Devil's doing: and a learned Schoolman and
our Countryman of popish miracles wrought
for confirmation of the Mass, that they were
either procured by men or effected by Satan:
so it falls out oft in these Lotteries and
Divinations by Lot.

Sometimes they take effect by means of some
sleight, that seeming casual that indeed is not,
and so a Lot thought to be used, where indeed
there is none: as with those that cheat at dice.
As in the event, that seemed skill sometime,
that is indeed but mere Chance: so in the act
itself, that seemed Chance sometime, that
indeed is sleight and skill: as Lyra testified of
the miracles of his time, that many of them
were wrought by sleight for gain to delude the
people, by the Priests and their Accomplices:
and as the Heathen Oracles were oft cunningly
and craftily carried to speak to private men's
purposes: and the entrails in their sacrifices by
Art and crafty conveyance caused to give signs
of success for men's better encouragement,
which they could not of themselves.

Thus we find in ancient Story, that whereas
Temenus and Cresphontes Aristomachus his
sons accompanied with the forces of their
Uncle Aristodemus (who deceasing left issue
two twins Procles and Eurythestenes in the
custody of his brother in law Theras) had by a
joint conquest made recovery of Peloponnesus
held by the issue of Hercules, of which linage
they were, long before, till by Eurythestus
they were forcibly dispose of it; and were now to
make a partition of it divided into three
portions, Argos, Sparta or Lacedaemon and
Messena: Cresphontes desirous at any hand to
have Messena, persuaded his brother Temenus
(who had seized already upon Argos, and was
chosen to make Lots for them for the
assignment of the other two parts between
Cresphontes and Theras as in right of the two
Orphans) to use some sleight and fraud for
him; which he accordingly did, as all agree in
the report of it, though for the manner of it
there is some difference among them. For
some of them write that it was agreed upon,
that he should have Messena, or his choice of
all three, whose Lot came out first; whereupon
Temenus made two pellets of clay, the one
dried in the sun for his Nephews, and the other
baked in the fire for his brother, which being
cast both at once into the water, and lying there
for some time, theirs being dissolved, his of
necessity came forth first. Whereas others
report that it was agreed among them all, that
he, whose Lot came out not first but last
should have Messena; and that when the other
two cast in either of them a white stone,
Cresphontes cast in a piece of white clay,
which being dissolved in the water was not at
all drawn, and so by that means he obtained his
desire, not by chance, as it might seem, but
indeed by counie and deceit.

And not altogether unlike hereunto is that
course which a Writer of natural secrets
prescribed to be used, not so much for the
finding out of a Thief, as for the drawing of a
confession from one that is upon some good
ground suspected so to be, by putting his name
in a scroll of paper together with many other
wrapped all up in lumps of clay severally, but
his wrapped somewhat more loosely than any
of the other, into a basin of water, that so
seeming by chance to unfold first, he may,
thereby supposing himself miraculously
discovered, be induced to confess it.

In this kind may Imagination also oftentimes
do much. For a strong Imagination either in the
agent or in the patient, in the doer or the
sufferer, many times furthered an effect. In the
Agent; as when using the Siue and the Shears,
and naming many, whom they think good to
question, but among those many, strongly
suspecting some one, the strong Imagination of
those, or the one of those that hold it between
them (though no wilful slight otherwise be
interposed by either of them) may be a mean
sufficient to work an insensible motion in the
hand of the Holder so strongly possessed, for
the turning of the siue and shears upon the
naming of the party by him or them formerly
suspected.

In the Patient; as it is observed in some
superstitious courses of cure, that they may
receive some strength from the Imagination of
the party: which yet a grave Writer wished
Physicians to be wary in and beware of, least
while they cure other men's bodies, they cast
away their own souls: and as the former
Author prescribed a course for the discovery of
a Thesis, by making bread or paste of meal
mingled with the powder of a stone said to be
found usually in the Eagles nest, which the
Angels came sometimes to appear before God: was present when First as present at the doing of them; for so he Partaker also in them.

and either present at the doing of them, or a men ordinarily do; in regard that he is a Spirit, may know many things, and much more than hidden things past or present, the Devil well past, or present, or future contingent. For I answer: The things thus discovered are either discovered?

know such things as by these courses are discovered?

But how can the Devil, may some say, come to know such things as by these courses are discovered?

I answer: The things thus discovered are either past, or present, or future contingent. For hidden things past or present, the Devil well may know many things, and much more than men ordinarily do; in regard that he is a Spirit, and either present at the doing of them, or a Partaker also in them.

First as present at the doing of them; for so he was present when the sons of God, that is, the Angels came sometimes to appear before God: and so is oft no doubt with us, when we are little aware of it. By this means therefore being of a swift and subtle nature, as he can take notice of many things done in secret, while he is in presence unseen, so he can give notice in one place, what he knew to be in doing or to be done in some other place, though far distant there-from: to which purpose Augustine tells an Example of a party possessed, that would tell those that were in the house with him, when one set forth a twelve miles of to come toward him, and how far he was still every foot forward on the way, till he came to him, at whose hand alone he would take sustenance: Which yet was indeed no Divination or Prophecy, said a good Divine, to speak properly, but as if a Soldier standing on a sentinel should tell of a troop of Horse, that he should esp'y on the way, how far they were come forward, and how near they approached to the place where they were expected.

Secondly as a Partaker in them, by way of instigation or assistance. For so was he with Judas, and therefore knew well what he went about, in the betraying of his Master CHRIST JESUS: so with the Chaldeans and Sabaeans in the robbing and spoiling of Job. And thus as he incited men to sin, and then accused them to God of sin: so oft here he sets men on sinning, and to their public shame or bane afterward bewrathieth and betrayed them, when they have sinned.

For future contingents ordinarily he knew them not certainly, but either extraordinarily or uncertainly only.

First uncertainly; yet probably in regard of his natural skill; (whereof in Greek he has his name,) as also of his long experience adjoined thereunto. And no marvel. For if a skilful Physician can by reason of his skill say much more of the state of his Patient and the likelihood or unlikelihood of his recovery, than an ignorant man or some other ordinary person is able to do; and old men, by reason of their long experience can tell and foretell many things on good ground preconjectured by observation of men's usual courses and carriages, than the younger sort commonly can: no marvel if Satan termed for his subtilty and to their public shame or bane afterward bewrathieth and betrayed them, when they have sinned.

And no marvel. For if a skilful Physician can by reason of his skill say much more of the state of his Patient and the likelihood or unlikelihood of his recovery, than an ignorant man or some other ordinary person is able to do; and old men, by reason of their long experience can tell and foretell many things on good ground preconjectured by observation of men's usual courses and carriages, than the younger sort commonly can: no marvel if Satan termed for his subtilty a Serpent, for his antiquity, an old Serpent, of above 5000. years continuance, be able to guess probably at many things, that men can see or say little of. And so might he foretell Saul, seeing how things then stood with him, what was likely to befall him: that which a man even of mean and ordinary capacity might at that time have given a shrewd guess at.

Again Extraordinarily he may more certainly fore-see and fore-show, what he has or heard from God or the servants of God; or what he is permitted to do, or is employed about by God.

First what he has heard from God himself, or from the Angels, or the Prophets of God, whom the very Angels also learn some things from: as one sitting on the ground or abiding within, may have news privily imparted to him from the watchman standing on the sentinel or watch-tower without, which he may relate to others, as by vision or apparition seeing and discovering them himself: And thus might he foretell as Saul's down-fall, so his own fall, which he is said sometimes to have done: yea thus coming to the notice of many future events, under colour of prophetical divination has he drawn unto himself divine adoration.
Secondly what he is permitted to do by God, or what he is employed for the doing of from GOD; what he is about to do by the permission of God, or is bound to do by special commission from God.

For evil Spirits are many times by God permitted to do much mischief both corporally and spiritually, by infecting of maladies and infecting the air, or by inciting and egging men on to evil courses, with whom knowing their disposition they doubt not to prevail and to persuade them thereto. Hence they take occasion oft-times to foretell what themselves are about to do, or will draw others unto; and to bear men in hand, when they can do no more mischief, being near the end of their tether, that they help or heal them, because they leave hurting them; or, because they cannot get leave to molest them any longer, that their evils at such a time shall have an end, if such and such fooleries be performed.

Sometimes again they are employed by God to this purpose: For the Devil is God’s Executioner, whom he makes off good use of. So he used an evil Spirit (not the soul of Naboth, as the doting Rabbin’s dream) to entice Ahab out to his ruin: So he used evil Spirits, as the most think, for the plaguing of Egypt; (though some expound the Psalmist otherwise; and it is against the rule that some others give that God is wont to afflict good men by bad Angels, and bad men by good Angels;) yea thus it is evident that he used one of them for the vexing of Saul, stilled therefore in the text, an evil Angel of God: an evil Spirit in regard of his malicious quality, and yet a Spirit of God, because an Executioner of God’s justice, as the Ancients have well observed. And thus may the Devil further foretell, what God himself has set him or sent him about: as that he might well by that mean also read Saul’s destiny, as ones that God had given over and given up into his hands.

Now in these cases, wherein such evil Spirits have an hand, the events of them fall not out always alike; by reason that sometimes they fail, notwithstanding their skill, in those things that by their natural wisdom and subtlety they foresee in the secret causes or signs of them, when God by some extraordinary course turned things about, and controlled the ordinary carriage of the creature: As the Patient sometimes dies through some inward accident unexpected, where the Physician according to the rules and grounds of his Art saw no signs but of safety: or as if a Mariner upon good grounds of observation should give his opinion, that that storm of wind should last long that Christ suddenly calmed: Or an Husbandman should promise much fruit of a vine such a year, judging according to his skill, which should afterward either be blasted with lightning, or rooted up by some wild beast breaking into the Vine-yard: And so these unclean Spirits, notwithstanding all their skill and experience, fail oft in their predictions, when some greater power over swayed that that they built upon.

They fail also in those things that they are enjoined and set or sent about by God; when God altered his courses, and either revoked his sentence, as with Ezekias, as with the Nineuities; or gives a countermand, as to Abraham, about the sacrificing of Isaac: which is as if the Judge should send suddenly and unexpectedly to reprieve a Prisoner whom he had condemned, when the Executioner were ready to do his office with him, and made full account to make sale of his spoils.

§ 9. Thus then have we seen how by Satan’s help such superstitious Divinations and predictions may either fail or hold: Now further in the last place those things that in this kind take effect, come to pass by God’s permission and providence indeed always, but by his permission for special purpose sometime, and sometimes for many causes by his special ordination and appointment, which no Devil nor creature therefore can cross.

First by Permission for special purpose; and that either for the trial and exercise of some, or for the punishment of other some.

For the trial of some, to try whether they will heed such superstitions as these are, as the crowing and croaking of Ravens, the shrieking of Owls, this kind of Lottery, and the like. To which purpose God forewarning his people to beware of those that assay by evil courses to withdraw them from God, he doth not tell them, that they shall not give heed to them, unless they see things fall out accordingly as they foretell them; but, though they do set them some sign, and it come to pass accordingly, yet they shall not give heed to them: For that God suffered it so to do, to try them, whether they do indeed so love him, and sit so close to him, as that they will not by such superstitious means, though falling out as was foretold them, be drawn away from him.

Again for the just punishment of some others; that they may be whipped and scourged with a rod of their own making, with a cord of their own twisting. For therefore doth God suffer these things oft-times to take effect, that they
may be given up to strong delusions to believe lies, that loved not the truth; that they may be further entangled in Satan’s snares, that would rather give heed to him than to God: that as God’s children have been sometimes by true miracles and the predictions of God’s Prophets confirmed in their holy Faith; so such wicked Wretches may by counterfeit miracles and diabolical predictions be, with Pharaoh, hardened in their false belief.

And therefore, do we see such superstitious courses oft take effect, and to have their event answerable to their expectations that use them? Let us remember, that, as sin the more successful it is, the more dangerous it is for the Sinner: so in this case, the offener such courses take effect, the more perilous they are, because the more powerful to prevail, if we be not the wiser and the more wary, and in that regard the rather to be suspected and shunned of us.

Secondly by God’s special ordination and appointment, do these things sometimes so fall out, to work his own ends by the wickedness of others. For God worked even by them that are used, sometimes for the punishment of things, though evil in themselves, and as they do work contrary to him; and they fight his battles, even that fight against him.

Now thus doth God give success to these things, though evil in themselves, and as they are used, sometimes for the punishment of those that deserve to be punished, & his will is to have either destroyed or corrected; & those either the users of them or others.

The Users of them, as in the Lot cast by Saul that lighted on Jonathan, to punish Saul thereby for his unadvised adjuration and presumptuous inquisition, and to show what straits men wilfully cast themselves into by such idle, rash, unnecessary & inordinate oaths: as for this cause also it seemed that he suffered the Devil to foretell Saul his overthrow, thereby to punish him for that his impious act by dejection before hand, as he did afterward by death.

Or some others; as in the Lot that lighted on Ionas; of which Hierome said well, that We ought not in that regard to give heed or credit to Lots in the like case (for how know we that God has still the like work or end to work; or that he is willing ever so to work?) or to match it with that Lot that we read of in the Acts used in the choice of Matthias. (As reasoning from the lawfulness of the one to the other) since that singular privileges make no common Law: and God used well that course that was familiar with them, and wherein they did evil, for the finding out and fetching back of his fugitive servant: as he did Nebuchadnezzar’s idolatrous divinations, and his Lottery of the like kind; which himself also by his own Prophets foretold that he would make good for the just and well deserved punishment of his perverse and perjured both Prince and people. Again sometimes God gives way and event to these courses, for the manifestation of his own glory, his power, and his providence; to let men see discovered to them by their own projects, though evil and impious, who it is that plagued them, & has power over them, though they either know not, or acknowledge not him. And so was it in that sign that the Philistine Soothsayers set themselves; whereby God put them out of doubt of that concerning his hand on them, which they made some doubt of before. Where we may withal consider, that as these courses took effect when God had such an hand in them; so the like courses used by others, as by Haman, and by Senacharib, at other times failed and took not effect, but fell out clean contrary, when God pleased not to give success unto them, or had not (and who can tell when he hath?) any such ends in them. Considering therefore, that there can be no certainty, in such Lottery, unless that God himself have a special hand in it, which we have no reason to expect, unless it be for our evil, to plague us for our perverse courses in that kind; as also that the Devil, as he may be deceived, so he may deceive us; yea from a professed and notorious Deceiver we can expect nothing but deceit, whether he himself be deceived or not: Let us take heed how we give heed or credit to, such deceits as seldom prove true; yea how we give any regard to them, though they prove never so oft true: remembering that Saul’s witchcraft was not therefore the more allowable, because the Devil told him nothing but truth; nor the Apostles of Christ ever a whit the more spared the unclean Spirits, because they told truly what they were; yea bearing ever in mind that God has forewarned us before hand, that though they should prove true, yet we should not believe them, nor give credit unto them, as being but sleights of Satan to draw or drive us away from him; yea such sorry flights these, that even the wiser sort of the heathen ones have descried and discovered the folly and vanity of them; and it is a foul shame for Christian men to come short of such. And thus much may suffice also for these latter sort of Lots, to wit, Extraordinary and Divinatory, Lots, which however they have been lawful some of them at some times unto some, yet are none of them lawful in these times unto any.
§ 10. To end where we began. *Take the dross, said Solomon, from the silver, & there will be a vessel fit for the sinner.* So take the ordinary abuse from the ordinary Lot, & it will prove an ordinance of no evil use. Neither are the use and the abuse of it so mixed together, but that men may, if they will, sever them the one from the other. As for the extraordinary Lot, the very ordinary use of that Lot is a mere abuse of a Lot: and it is therefore, as drossy matter, that will not endure the Finer's fire, but runs all to smoke or ashes when it comes to the assay, utterly to be rejected. There may be superstition as well in the condemning of the one, as in the approving of the other. Let the one therefore go, as it well deserved, to the dunghill: let the other be so wisely and warily used, that God be not dishonoured, who has given us the free use of them; nor our brethren offended or wronged, for whose good God has given us them; nor our selves hindered in better things, that more nearly concern us, and whereunto these things should be as a furtherance unto us.

FINIS.