

*“Hac ex consilio meo via progredieris”:
Courtly Reading and Secretarial Mediation
in Donne’s *The Courtier’s Library***

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John Donne’s The Courtier’s Library (ca. 1603–11) is a catalogue of imaginary books that derives its inspiration from Rabelais’s satirical description of the Library of St. Victor. Donne’s depiction of courtly knowledge parodies the humanist work that secretaries performed for their masters by offering a path to ignorance and mockery rather than a path to learning and advancement. This essay investigates The Courtier’s Library, published here in a new translation (see Appendix), in the context of Donne’s habits of reading, marginal annotation, and note-taking, examining both the complicated negotiation involved in producing knowledge for courtly display, and Donne’s own attempts to reconcile the roles of secretary, scholar, and gentleman.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sometime after the execution of the Earl of Essex in 1601, and probably before he joined the Drury household in 1610, John Donne (1572–1631) wrote a short Latin *jeu d’esprit*, the *Catalogus librorum aulicorum incomparabilium et non vendibilium*, now known as *The Courtier’s Library*. First published in 1650 as an addition to posthumous editions of Donne’s poetry, the *Catalogus* originally circulated in manuscript among a coterie audience.¹ Like Rabelais’s (ca. 1494–1553) list of the books belonging to the Library of St. Victor in the seventh chapter of *Pantagruel*, *The Courtier’s Library* uses the form of the library catalogue to make a series of jokes at

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¹Donne, 1930, 7–13 (Evelyn Simpson’s “Introduction”). Simpson’s dating is conjectural, but on balance the broad range she offers, as opposed to the tight date of 1604–05, seems likely. As she points out, a number of the items in the list refer to the execution of Essex, and the publication dates of several books owned by Donne and alluded to in the list suggest 1603 as the *terminus a quo*. Her suggested latest date of 1611 is far less firm, but I am inclined to accept it, not, as Simpson suggests, because of Lady Drury’s possible disapproval of items mocking her half-uncle Francis Bacon, but because of the mention of a “Catalogus Satyricorum” in the letter to Sir Henry Goodyer: Donne, 1635, 275–76; mentioned by Simpson in Donne, 1930, 4.

the expense of learned culture.² However, where Rabelais satirizes the scholastic learning associated with monasteries, Donne takes aim at the humanist methods adapted by secretaries to produce knowledge for courtly display. The *Catalogus* provides a parodic image of the Republic of Letters seen from the contemporary English perspective. It lists imaginary books attributed to major Continental figures, such as *Martin Luther, On shortening the Lord's Prayer* and *On the Diametrical Current through the Center from Pole to Pole, Navigable without a Compass, by André Thevet*; alongside these are titles that satirize contemporary English figures and institutions, for example, *One Book On False Knights, by Edward Prinne, Slightly Enlarged by Edward Chute* and *On the Privileges of Parliament* by the famous clown Richard Tarleton.³ This list is prefaced by an introduction in which a fictive secretary or tutor offers these books as a course of study, suggesting that its "incomparable and unsaleable" books will provide courtiers with irrefutable authorities to support their assertions.⁴ However, the *Catalogus* is not simply a conventional attack upon courts and courtiers: while its jokes are often not particularly subtle, they attest to the problematic displacement of the secretarial labor that undergirded the courtly display of learning.

Despite the complex relation between knowledge production and courtly display in *The Courtier's Library*, it is one of the most neglected works by Donne. Only two critics, Evelyn Simpson and Anne Lake Prescott, have engaged seriously with the text during the last century. Simpson identifies the allusions in the individual items of the *Catalogus* and considers both dating and general context.⁵ Indeed, her exemplary thoroughness is probably one reason for the work's subsequent neglect. Her emphasis on the identification of the figures whom Donne satirizes has

²On the relationship between Donne's and Rabelais's lists of imaginary books, see Prescott, 173–75.

³"M. Lutherus de abbreviatione orationis Dominicae"; "De Gurgite diametrali a Polo ad Polum, per centrum navigabili sine pyxide per Andr. Thevet"; "De militibus Apocryphis per Edw. Prinne lib. unus, per Edw. Chute paulo amplior factus"; "Tarltonus de privilegiis Parliamenti." For the original Latin and new translation of *The Courtier's Library*, see the Appendix below, pp. 858–63. All references in the text, unless otherwise noted, follow the new translation, with the Latin appearing in the accompanying notes. For comparison, I have also consulted Percy Simpson's translation in Donne, 1930, 27–38.

⁴The 1930 edition was the first to adopt the title *The Courtier's Library*, based on the title of the Trinity manuscript, *Catalogus librorum aulicorum incomparabilium et non vendibilium*. In the four editions prior to the twentieth century (1650, 1654, 1669, and 1719), the introduction appears untitled, while the list of books is headed by the title *Catalogus Librorum*. See Donne, 1930, 79–89.

⁵See Donne, 1930, 1–26; Simpson, 149–58.

framed its reception: *The Courtier's Library* has been consulted only occasionally, usually in a biographical context in order to situate Donne's opinions on a variety of authors and fellow countrymen, rather than as a text in its own right.⁶

By focusing attention on the individual items of the *Catalogus*, such biographical readings ignore the importance of secretarial activity to the framing of the text, which is striking given Simpson's dating of the *Catalogus* to the first decade of the seventeenth century. These years — from 1601, when Donne lost his place as secretary to Lord Keeper Sir Thomas Egerton (1540–1617) as a result of his marriage to Ann More (1584–1617), until 1610, when he gained a relatively secure position with Sir Robert Drury (1575–1615) — were perhaps the most difficult of his life. For much of the decade, Donne and his family lived in borrowed lodgings, first at Pyrford, the home of his cousin-in-law Francis Wolley, then at Mitcham. Donne's letters from this period attest to his desire for a stable and productive place in society where his abilities would be put to use, as they had been during his employment with Egerton. The context of *The Courtier's Library's* composition thus suggests that it might offer itself as a source for understanding Donne's perception of his time as Egerton's secretary.⁷

Anne Prescott's perceptive treatment in *Imagining Rabelais in Renaissance England* suggests that the *Catalogus* is amenable to far more nuanced readings than simply the biographical. Her consideration of *The Courtier's Library* as a Rabelaisian paratext places Donne's work in the context of the wider European culture of learning (albeit one that had changed significantly since Rabelais was writing).⁸ In this scholarly context, both Rabelais's account of the Library of St. Victor and Donne's *Catalogus* are more important than their relative brevity would suggest: not only do they draw attention to the activities of the Republic of Letters, but they do so in one of the forms by which scholarly learning was itself organized and mobilized.

Prescott concludes with a question that points to a lacuna in book history: "What is the material history of books with names but no bodies?"⁹ Her question draws attention to the problematic relationship between this list of bodiless titles and the material practices — the acts of annotation,

⁶See Bald, 34, 73–74 n. 3, 113–14, 145, 216, 223, 241, 259 n. 2; see also Marotti, 1986, 188–89; Knafla, 2003, 52, 55, 62–63.

⁷For Donne's life during this period, see Bald, 128–99.

⁸Prescott, 173–75.

⁹Ibid., 175.

summary, and citation — used to organize and transmit them. Seen in this light, the imaginary works of the *Catalogus* are almost indistinguishable from the excerpts and summaries of real works that circulated separately from their original forms. Disembodied books offer the fantasy of knowledge without the labor of humanist learning, and thus implicitly draw attention to the neglected figure of the secretary, whose practices of reading, interpretation, and organization are displayed in the text.

The Courtier's Library offers a chance to reconsider the role of secretaries in the acquisition and display of learning in English courtly settings during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This article examines the material history of disembodied knowledge and its interaction with the cultural matrix in which it was produced, distributed, and consumed, and considers the secretary's problematic relationship with both the material he mediated for his master and the social position he occupied. Taking Donne's secretarial career and his habits of reading, marginal annotation, and note-taking as an example, this article investigates the production of knowledge by secretaries for courtly display and considers Donne's difficult negotiation of his liminal and shifting positions in English gentle society — as courtier, as gentleman, and as secretary — and his struggle for preferment that might support his claim to any of these positions.

First, I focus on the preface to the *Catalogus* and its portrayal of courtly reading, considering the use of humanist learning as a stepping-stone to courtly advancement in the context of the classical binary of *otium* (leisure) and *negotium* (work). Then, I examine the secretarial mediation of learning for courtiers in the context of Donne's career and of the unstable politics of late Elizabethan and early Jacobean England. Finally, the argument turns to the *Catalogus* itself and to Donne's practices of humanist reading and note-taking. I examine the relationship between satire, knowledge-making, and authority that Donne constructs in the *Catalogus*, and the alternative to these reductive forms of knowledge that he proposes to the friends in his coterie circle.

2. HUMANIST READING AND COURTLY DISPLAY

Though *The Courtier's Library* contains, to use Prescott's term, "nonbooks," the majority of the forty parodic titles are based on real books. I want to begin by considering a real book whose material body suggests both the argument and the method of *The Courtier's Library*. The first item in the *Catalogus* is one of five items in the satire that critiques authors whose books appear in Donne's extant library. The description of *Nicolas Hill*, *On*

Distinguishing the Sex and Hermaphroditism of Atoms; The same, On their Anatomy, and How to Aid in their Births when they are buried is a mocking reference to Nicholas Hill's (1570–ca. 1610) *Philosophia Epicurea, Democritiana, Theophrastica proposita simpliciter, non edocta*, a collection of excerpts from the newly revived Skeptical writers, printed in Paris in 1601.¹⁰ Hill's book, with its simplified and fashionable atomism rendered in *sententiae*, presents exactly the sort of inappropriate learning that Donne satirizes. Indeed, skepticism, with its claim that one can know nothing, acts as a figure for reductive knowledge in the *Catalogus*.¹¹

Donne's copy of Hill's book, now in the library of the Middle Temple in London, is ornately bound in tooled, gilt leather with the badge of Christ's College, Cambridge in the middle of the front cover, and contains interleaved blank pages for note-taking, which nevertheless remained unused.¹² Although it is by no means unusual to discover an interleaved book with unused, blank pages, the combination of expensive binding and interleaving distinguishes the book in Donne's library as both conspicuously valuable and intended for study.¹³ The contrast between the ornamented exterior and the neglected interior is suggestive of the disjunction between the appearance and the reality of learning that the *Catalogus* satirizes. The elaborate binding signals the value of the book's contents and the status of

¹⁰I list books from Donne's library by the numbering established in the standard bibliography: Keynes, 1973, 258–80 (L1–L218). See also Dubinskaya; Keynes, 1977 (L219–L228) and 1978 (L229–L240); Hobbs; Pearson; Woodhuysen. For Hill's book, see Keynes, 1973, 270–71, L102. The other books in Donne's library whose authors reappear in *The Courtier's Library* are: [Sir Francis Bacon], *A Declaration of the Practices & Treasons attempted and committed by Robert late Earle of Essex and complices*, London, 1601 (263, L3); William Barlow, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference in his Maiesties Privy-Chamber, at Hampton Court. January 14, 1603*, London, 1604 (264, L17); Edward Hoby, *A Letter to Mr. T[heoph.] H[iggons]*, London, 1609 (271, L103); Mathew Sutcliffe, *An Answere unto a certaine clumnious letter published by M. Job Throckmorton*, London, 1595 (276, L173); Mathew Sutcliffe, *Subversion of Robert Parsons, his confused and worthlesse work, entituled a Treatise of Three Conversions of England*, London, 1606 (276, L174). For Donne and atomism, see Hirsch.

¹¹Donne, 1959, 260 (7.10) makes the following remarks in a sermon: "One Philosopher thinks he is dived to the bottome, when he sayes, he knows nothing but this, That he knows nothing; and yet another thinks, that he hath expressed more knowledge then he, saying That he knows not so much as that, That he knows nothing."

¹²Philip Oldfield, personal communication, 29 November 2007.

¹³While a complete provenance of the book is only conjectural, its presence among Donne's books at the Middle Temple library, which were probably acquired as a lot by its founder Robert Ashley after Donne's death in 1631, suggests that the book passed directly from Christ's College to Ben Jonson, to Donne, to Ashley, and then into the library upon its foundation in 1641. On Ashley's acquisition of Donne's books, see Keynes, 1973, 258.

the college to which it belonged, but the complete absence of notes on the blank interleaved pages suggests, by contrast, that its readers may have failed to transform that content into useful knowledge, a failure that is particularly noteworthy given the simple, unmethodized form — *proposita simpliciter, non edocta* — that the title advertises. The disjunction between exterior embellishment and interior neglect mimics the critique of the ignorant courtiers in the *Catalogus*, who are concerned with the appearance of learning rather than the real fruits of scholarship.

The marks of subsequent ownership in the book comment on this disjunction, attributing it in part to an inappropriate choice of reading matter. The book bears the crossed-out motto of Ben Jonson (1572–1637) in the top right-hand corner of the title page and, in the center, Jonson's name underneath a pasted slip of paper with Donne's signature. The mocking inscription at the top of the verso of the title page, "non lectore tuis opus est, sed Apolline libris" ("your books do not need a reader, but [rather] Apollo"), when read in this context, seems to comment on the misused learning of the book.¹⁴ It suggests both the incomprehensibility of the contents to the less-than-divine reader and the disjunction between the work for which this book was prepared — the acts of reading and note-taking by a student, possibly with the aid of a tutor — and the value of the knowledge it contains.¹⁵ The prominent position of Hill's book in the *Catalogus* suggests that this copy was either an inspiration for Donne's list of books or a gift commemorating it. In this context, the author of the epigram suggests that the book is not valuable in itself, but only for the poetic uses to which it might be put: scholarly practice is thus transformed into literary material for use in courtly settings.

This literary transformation takes the form of a parodic courtly world portrayed in the *Catalogus*, in which the appearance of knowing rather than actual substantial knowledge is important. Donne begins with a claim about the task of reading in relation to the appearance of knowledge: "We are cast by chance into an age in which nothing is worse than to be openly ignorant, nothing more rare than to be fully learned. Just as everyone

¹⁴See Keynes, 1973, 270–71, L102. Mark Bland, personal communication, 23 February 2008, suggests that the inscription might be in Jonson's hand, but is definitely not in Donne's.

¹⁵Jonson also mentions Hill and Democritus disparagingly in Jonson, 1975, 86–92, lines 124–31 ("On the Famous Voyage"): "Here several ghosts did flit / About the shore, of farts, but late departed, / White, black, blue, green, and in more forms outsmarted, / That all those *atomi* ridiculous, / Whereof old Democrite, and Hill Nicolas, / One said, the other swore, the world consists. / These be the cause of those thick frequent mists / Arising from that place." See Donne, 1930, 55.

knows something of letters, no one knows everything. The middle, and therefore common, way to proceed in order to avoid both the shame of ignorance and the bother of reading, is to use one art in all things in order to seem to know all the rest.¹⁶ By presenting ignorance as disgraceful, rather than as a defect, and reading as merely tedious, the introduction suggests the ignorance hidden under the veneer of knowledge displayed to the court.¹⁷ Put in this way, the *Catalogus* seems to be a simple unmasking of courtly decadence. However, while the list includes references to actual satires of courtly corruption, such as Sir John Harrington's *The Metamorphosis of Ajax* — whose joke about the need for “jakes” at court appears amplified as *Hercules, or Concerning the method of emptying the dung from Noah's Ark* — Donne's satire is not so onesided.¹⁸ The highly competitive environment of the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean courts implicated everyone, courtiers and scholars alike, in a complex negotiation between depth of knowledge and the display of learning, both of which were important in different contexts.

Donne's satire is striking because, instead of offering a conventional satirical condemnation of excess, *The Courtier's Library* instead attacks the attempt to pursue a *via media*, or middle way, between ignorance and laborious study. In doing so, it suggests the failure of the conventional early modern divisions between scholarly and courtly activity, in particular the distinction between *otium* and *negotium*. These classical categories were mapped onto different cultural formations throughout the early modern period, in particular the secular *vita activa* and the religious *vita contemplativa*, the active life involved in the world, and the contemplative life separated from it. Donne's own motto — “Per Rachel ho servito & non per Lea” (“I served you for Rachel and not for Leah”) — that appears on the title page of many of his books plays on this distinction. Drawn from Petrarch, it refers to Jacob's two wives, who in medieval allegory represented the different rewards gained by laboring in the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*: the plain Leah substituted for her sister, and the beautiful, beloved Rachel only obtained after a further seven years' toil.¹⁹

¹⁶“Aevum sortiti sumus quo plane indoctis nihil turpius, plene doctis nihil rarius. Tam omnes in literis aliquid sciunt, tam nemo omnia. Media igitur plerumque itur via, et ad evitandem ignorantiae turpitudinem et legendi fastidium ars una est omnibus ut reliquas scire videri possint.”

¹⁷For Donne and courtliness, see Marotti, 1986, 34–37, 192–232; Wiggins, 1–20, 87–94. For the history of courtesy in the period generally, see Bryson. For courtesy and humanist education, see Hexter; Grafton and Jardine.

¹⁸“Ioh. Harringtoni Hercules, sive de modo quo evacuabatur a faecibus Arca Noae.”

¹⁹Keynes, 1973, 260; Bald, 122–23.

These binaries came under increasing strain during the sixteenth century due to competing conceptions of scholarly work. Sir Francis Bacon's (ca. 1587–1657) essay "Of Studies" (1597) divides the uses of learning into three, rather than two, categories: "Studies serve for pastimes, for ornaments, and for abilities. Their chief use for pastimes is in privateness and retiring; for ornament is in discourse, and for ability is in judgment."²⁰ Bacon distinguishes between the leisurely, courtly, and instrumental purposes to which classical and humanist learning might be turned, and suggests the split in the conception of *otium* caused by the courtly appropriation of humanist work. This new use of the *studia humanitatis*, drawing on the classical tradition and on Cicero in particular, was significantly mediated for Renaissance England by Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. In describing learning as ornament, Bacon's formulation puts an emphasis on a display of knowledge linked with the conception of *sprezzatura* that Castiglione articulates: a seeming nonchalance and unstudied familiarity with the classics based upon intensive study and practice.²¹

The function of humanist learning as a marker of nobility and as an asset for the conduct of governmental business became well established in England during the course of the sixteenth century.²² While Castiglione describes the duty of a courtier to advise the prince on affairs of state, the development of bureaucratic systems of government in England, staffed by men chosen for their ability, broke down the distinction between expert and learned advice by making scholarship applicable to the affairs of government.²³ In providing administrators for government, humanist education attempted to transform itself into a system of expert knowledge, and became divided around the laborious nature of humanist learning and the value of new forms of education. The contrast between the preferment available to those with a humanist education and the lack of learning associated with an earlier aristocratic model of upbringing — which valued leisurely noble activities such as hunting — led to attempts by the gentry

²⁰Bacon, 1996, 81, quoting from the 1597 edition. The longer version of the essay in the 1625 edition substitutes "delight" for "pastimes": Bacon, 1985, 152.

²¹For the descent of ideas of courtesy from Cicero, see Pincombe, 6–9, 15–36. For Castiglione as an interpreter of Ciceronian dialogue, see Richards, 43–64. For Cicero, Castiglione, and the performance of the self, see Posner, 9–16. See also Whigham, 88–93 ("The Fetish of Recreation"), 93–95 ("Sprezzatura").

²²For an overview of humanism in sixteenth-century England, see Elton; Boutcher, 1996; Woolfson.

²³On humanism and early modern schooling, see Bushnell; Grafton and Jardine, especially 122–57; Waquet, 7–40.

and nobility to monopolize educational resources.²⁴ In response, humanist scholars developed a streak of competitive self-abnegation, in which acquisition of such specialized knowledge was portrayed as incompatible with the leisurely activities of the noble and gentleman. As humanist education became the norm for young men hoping to improve their position, gentle and aristocratic families attempted to differentiate themselves through the choice of tutors and increasingly sophisticated programs of study for their children.²⁵ The appropriation of humanist learning by the nobility established this knowledge as a marker of distinction in Pierre Bourdieu's sense: as a mutually supporting signal of taste and status. This increasingly successful system produced more and more young men whose studies suited them for government.²⁶ As a result, in the competitive world of Elizabethan and Jacobean preferment, which demanded ceaseless application to business, literary activity had a problematic, peripheral place. While providing a route to advancement, its association with exile — voluntary or involuntary — made it antithetical to the business of government.

For English humanist scholars of this period, the appropriation of study as a pastime in the noble sense — as in some way interchangeable with hunting, dancing, and other frivolous activities — was inherently contradictory. Such an appropriation devalued the intense effort involved in acquiring a humanist education and was incompatible with the devotion to governmental business necessary to gain advancement. Officials who had risen because of their expertise, such as William Cecil, Lord Burleigh (1520/21–98), appropriated humanism as an ornament for governmental business. Burleigh's habit of carrying a copy of Cicero's *De officiis* while conducting business functioned both as an admonition to attend to business and as a display of learning and diligence.²⁷ At the same time, courtly graces remained an equally important marker, without which the value of humanistic learning was limited, as Gabriel Harvey's failed attempts to use scholarly methods to study courtly manners suggest. Harvey's embarrassing appearance as a courtier at Audley End, which Nashe derides in *Have With You to Saffron Walden* (1596), as well as his failures to gain advancement at university or at court, demonstrate the extent to which a lack of courtly refinement could lead to embarrassment.²⁸

The *Catalogus* reveals this conflict between the use of courtly and

²⁴See Hexter; Crane, 116–35.

²⁵Boutcher, 2002, 248–51, provides a good account of this double movement.

²⁶Marotti, 1981, 210; Glimp, 30–36; Bourdieu, 11–96.

²⁷Crane, 118.

²⁸See Pincombe, 84–103; Wolfe, 125–60.

scholarly activity as markers of status in its description of courtiers' daily appearance at court: "And because the natural occupations of court, in which you spend your time, do not allow you the leisure for literature, because, after sleep, which by custom must not be shaken off until after ten in the morning; after you have dressed in the clothes appropriate to the day, place, and passions; after having composed your face in the mirror, and worked out whom to receive with a jeer or with a frown; after banquets and amusements — how much time is left over in your life for reading and the improvement of your mind?"²⁹ Donne's choice of vocabulary and phrasing slyly conflates these preparations for court with the processes of rhetorical composition. The courtier's preparations mimic the rhetorical processes of *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *actio* (or *pronuntiatio*), implying that the lazy activity of the courtier is both incompatible with diligent study and a replacement for it. Thus, the use of *excutiendum* suggests not only the burdensome necessity of shaking off sleep, but also the inventive practice of searching for material. The process of dressing ("vestes diei, loco, affectibus proprias indutas"), plays on the metaphorical equivalence of dressing for court and ordering words according to place, occasion, and effect. Then, the courtier "compos[es]" himself in front of the imitative surface of the mirror and makes a decision about the gestures he will make, before he proceeds to the "banquets and amusements" that are the site of rhetorical performance.

Donne's description of the courtier sleeping until ten is remarkably similar to Isaak Walton's (1593–1683) description of Donne's own habits of study during his youth, which involved a similar attempt to negotiate the demands of study and leisure: "Nor was his age onely so industrious, but in the most unsetled dayes of his youth, his bed was not able to detain him beyond the hour of four in a morning; and it was no common business that drew him out of his chamber till past ten. All which time was employed in study; though he took great liberty after it."³⁰ Donne's division of his day between a period of intensive study and the "great liberty" he allowed

²⁹"Et quia per occupationes Aulae, qua degis, naturales, tibi vacare literis non licet (nam post somnum non nisi post decimam ex more excutiendum, post vestes diei, loco, affectibus proprias indutas, post faciem speculo compositam, et quo quis cachinno, superciliove excipiendus sit resolutionem, post epulas lususque, quota pars vitae literis, animoque excolendo relinquitur?)"

³⁰Walton, 61–62 ("The Life of Dr. John Donne"). Walton's portrayal of Donne's habits of work undermines the dichotomy between Jack Donne and Dr. John Donne that he constructs throughout the autobiography, reducing Jack Donne to an outward pretense supported by an underlying diligence. For a critique of Walton's account of Donne, see Flynn, 5–16.

himself afterwards, while he was at the Inns of Court, provided a solution to these competing needs. By contrast, in a letter to his friend Sir Henry Goodyer (ca. 1571–1627), written while in rural exile, Donne is able to find no such compromise, owing to his desire to be usefully employed. Donne compares his situation to that of his friends Goodyer and Sir Henry Wotton (1568–1639), remarking that “the memory of friends (I meane onely for letters), neither enters ordinarily into busied men, because they are ever employed within, nor into men of pleasure, because they are never at home. For these wishes therefore w[hi]ch you won out of your pleasure & recreation, you were as excusable to mee if you writ seldome as Sir H. Wootton is, under the oppression of businesse, or the necessitie of seeming so: Or more than hee, because I hope you have both pleasure and businesse. Only to me, who have neither, this omission were sinne.”³¹ At the root of Donne’s complaint is not only a lack of employment in service to the crown, but also the absence of income necessary to pursue a compensatory leisure: he is prevented from contributing to the commonwealth, and his fortune will not support his leisure. In these straitened circumstances, Donne could not display a taste for the conventional noble pleasures of either court or countryside that were available to his friend Goodyer, nor could he claim the distraction of business and its associated prospects for advancement.

Sir Francis Bacon, seeking preferment for himself in the dedication of his *Advancement of Learning* (1605), negotiates this dilemma differently, by reconstructing the categories of work and leisure to make them compatible. He claims: “And that learning should take up too much time or leasure: I answere, the most active or busie man that hath been or can bee, hath (no question) many vacant times of leasure while he expecteth the tides and returnes of businesse (except he be either tedious and of no dispatch, or lightly and unworthily ambitious, to meddle in thinges that may be better done by others), and then the question is, but how those spaces and times of leasure shall be filled and spent; whether in pleasures, or in studies.”³² Bacon’s claim “that learning take up too much time or leasure” is not simply rhetorical amplification, but points to the mutually exclusive definitions of the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. Bacon responds by making leisurely activity coexist with diligent application to duty. Indeed, he defines diligence, in his essay “Of Dispatch” (1625), as attention to the proper moment for different activities, a definition that allows the business

³¹Donne, 1635, 290.

³²Bacon, 2000, 13.

of government to coexist with humanist learning.³³ Bacon, however, passes over the unnamed secretaries that supported his discovery of a middle way between *otium* and *negotium*. His depictions of courtly learning focus on display without considering the methods or individuals that mediated knowledge for use by courtiers. Much like Donne's description of preparing for court elides the aid of valets in the process of dressing, descriptions of courtly learning neglect the roles of these scholars. I will now turn to the secretaries, tutors, and professional readers who gathered knowledge and prepared their masters for courtly display.

3. SCHOLARLY LEARNING AND SECRETARIAL COUNSEL IN THE EGERTON CIRCLE

Donne's marriage to Ann More and his subsequent dismissal from the service of Sir Thomas Egerton have conventionally been framed as a major turning point in his life, representing the moment when Donne lost his footing upon the ladder of advancement, and thus his opportunity for a career in service to the crown. However, there is a substantial continuity in the methods by which Donne sought advancement and the sorts of services he offered his patrons and employers, both while Egerton's secretary and in the years that followed.³⁴ While Egerton's positions as the Master of the Rolls and the Keeper of the Great Seal meant that his endeavors were overwhelmingly concerned with the legal system, Donne's work demonstrates the wide range of activities that a scholarly reader might provide. As well as legal work, both for the Lord Keeper and later for Robert Cotton, Donne wrote controversial and polemic works, as well as the poetic works for which he is more commonly known.³⁵ He acted as a secretary, or gentlemanly companion, not only for Egerton, but also for Sir Walter Chute and later for Sir Robert Drury. These struggles to turn secretarial work to productive ends frame our understanding of the *Catalogus* and reveal the extent to which secretarial culture in late Elizabethan England is implicated in this satire.

The introduction to *The Courtier's Library* portrays its contents as a plan for learning aimed at courtiers, prescribed by a secretary or tutor. Such scholarly advice was a *via* in two senses: it was not only intended as a course of study, but also as a path of advancement for both the courtier and his scholarly assistant. Lisa Jardine, Anthony Grafton, and William Sherman

³³Bacon, 1985, 76–78.

³⁴For Donne as Egerton's secretary, see Knafla, 2003; Wiggins, 25–32.

³⁵Bald, 142–43.

describe “knowledge transactions” and point to the importance of “scholarly services” in late sixteenth-century England that were provided by both those employed as secretaries and those working on a more informal basis.³⁶ They suggest that these professional readers mediated texts for their employers and patrons in a variety of ways, via accompanied readings, oral advice, and written arguments. They also emphasize the utility of “goal-oriented reading,” drawing attention to humanist activities beyond the rhetoricizing of material for persuasive purposes, activities that took the form of expert advice and methods for collecting, organizing, and mobilizing information.³⁷

Walton’s biography suggests that Donne was an extremely capable scholar and secretary. He claims that Egerton, when dismissing Donne, said that he “parted with a Friend, and such a Secretary as was fitter to serve a King, then a subject.”³⁸ This testimony to Donne’s ability as a secretary is undercut by its implication that there were problems of subjection, and thus subordination, in the relationship between Donne and Egerton. While Walton claims that Donne was Egerton’s “Chief secretary,” he was in fact only one of five secretaries in Egerton’s household, serving with the more experienced legal secretaries, George Carew and Gregory Downhall, and alongside the secretaries who dealt with Egerton’s private affairs, Henry Jones and John Panton.³⁹ However, the absence of any evidence of Donne’s work or remuneration among Egerton’s remaining papers makes it difficult to assess his position in the household, though Donne’s secret marriage to Egerton’s stepniece and its disastrous fallout hint at the apparent disjunction between Donne’s evaluation of his position and his employer’s conception of that position.⁴⁰ Egerton’s secretariat, however, was only the core of a wider network of scholarly and legal activity that centered upon the Lord Keeper, ranging from those employed for particular tasks — such as Sir John Davies’s work on a reform of the laws of Ireland or Donne’s work on the project to reform lawyers’ and courts’ fees — to the wider circle of writers who dedicated books to Egerton.⁴¹ Together, the whole

³⁶See Jardine and Grafton; Jardine and Sherman; see also Stewart, 1997, 148–60.

³⁷Jardine and Grafton, 30.

³⁸Walton, 19 (“The Life of Dr. John Donne”).

³⁹Knafla, 1983, 44, 51–52; Bald, 96–98.

⁴⁰For Donne and Egerton’s circle, see Knafla, 2003, 62–63; Bald, 93–127; Flynn, 173–77. On Egerton and patronage more generally, see Knafla, 1983. For the lack of evidence concerning Donne’s work as secretary, see Donne, 2005, 26, n. 15; for an evaluation of the circumstances surrounding Donne’s marriage, see *ibid.*, 10–32.

⁴¹See Knafla, 2003, 48, 52–53; Knafla, 1983, esp. 104–15.

circle of clients and retainers presented an image of their patron's nobility, learning, and wisdom.

This wider circle gathered not in the closet, but at the dinner table, which Walton explicitly connects with Donne's status in the household. According to him, Egerton "did alwayes use [Donne] with much courtesie, appointing him a place at his own Table, to which he esteemed his Company and Discourse to be a great Ornament."⁴² Donne's dinner-table conversation thus becomes a reflection of Egerton's own learning and a means for the exchange of knowledge among the members of the extended household. Donne is dismissive of this sort of superficial learning, which he satirizes elsewhere as the product of "Tables, or fruit-trenchers," linking conversation at dinner with the use of table books and collections of *sententiae*.⁴³ In *The Courtier's Library*, he extends this critique to the table manners of other members of Egerton's circle, who are depicted as having inappropriate responses to the consumption and digestion of knowledge: thus his inclusion of *The Afternoon Belchings of Edward Hoby, or On Univocals and What not? or a confutation of all errors in Theology as well as in the other sciences, and the mechanical arts, by all men, dead, living, and to be born, put together one night after supper, by Doctor Sutcliffe*.⁴⁴

The diverse range of patronage that Egerton offered — gifts to authors for dedications, positions in his secretariat, other offices and benefices, and other advantages offered by his favor at court — bound these individuals together. As Paul Hammer's description of the contemporaneous activities of Essex's secretariat (in which Donne's close friend Sir Henry Wotton served) suggests, the differing divisions of labor, responsibility, and reward both within and outside of noble households were strongly related to social status. The anxiety and jealousy among those in Essex's service reinforced the marked distinctions among those seeking, but denied, the position of secretary, such as Edward Jones; those employed as secretaries, including Edward Reynoldes, William Temple, Henry Cuffe, and Henry Wotton; and those, like Anthony Bacon, who performed similar functions but were rewarded as equals, rather than as employees.⁴⁵ The differentiation of status among Essex's secretaries and other retainers, and between this group and

⁴²Walton, 17 ("The Life of Dr. John Donne").

⁴³Donne, 1968, 212–13, line 44. On the use of table books, see Stallybrass.

⁴⁴"Edw. Hobaei eructationes pomeridianae, sive de univocis, utpote de praerogativa Regum, et chimaeris, morbo Regio, et morbo Gallico, etc."; "Quid non? sive confutatio omnium errorum tam in Theologia quam in aliis scientiis, artibusque mechanicis, praetertorum, praesentium et futurorum, omnium hominum mortuorum, superstitum, nascendorumque; una nocte post coenam confecta per D. Sutcliffe."

⁴⁵Hammer, 28–29, 34–35.

the gentlemen in Essex's wider affinity who aided him, was reinforced by the methods by which these different scholarly readers were recompensed.⁴⁶

The Courtier's Library suggests similar frictions within Egerton's circle: a number of individuals associated with the Lord Keeper appear in the *Catalogus*, including Sir Francis Bacon, William Barlow, Sir John Davies, Mathew Sutcliffe, and Richard Topcliffe; works by Bacon, Barlow, and Sutcliffe were also in Donne's own library.⁴⁷ Donne's satire of these figures suggests that Donne, like Wotton, saw his position as secretary only as a stepping-stone to the preferment that they both eventually achieved, despite the lapses in their careers.⁴⁸ As such, their cultivation of gentle learning outside of the context of their respective secretariats was aimed, in part, at establishing their status, sometimes at the expense of their competitors.

While the employers of these humanist intelligencers were not the ill-learned courtiers parodied in the *Catalogus*, but well-educated and serious members of Elizabethan government, their reliance on the work of others raised worries for both patron and scholar. As Richard Rambuss suggests, there is a potential inversion of authority implicit in the relationship between secretary and master.⁴⁹ Rather than the secretary appropriating the master's voice, however, here the worry is that the master has appropriated the voice of his servant. Donne attacks this sort of appropriation by depicting it as a failure of digestion in his *Satire 2*:

hee is worst, who (beggarly) doth chaw,
Others wits fruits, and in his ravenous maw
Rankly digested, those things out-spue,
As his owne things; and they are his owne, 'tis true,
For if one eate my meate, though it be known
The meate was mine, th'excrement is his owne.⁵⁰

Rambuss notes that secrecy became vital because it obscured those moments of appropriation, in which the secretary became the tutor and the master his pupil. Thus, the policy arguments produced as a result of these consultations depended on the secretary as a trusted and discreet mediator

⁴⁶Ibid., 35; Jardine and Sherman, 107–12. Compare the secretariat of the Cecils in A. Smith, 1968.

⁴⁷For the *Catalogus* and Egerton's circle, see Knafla, 1983, 62–63; Bald, 113–14.

⁴⁸For contemporary accounts of both Donne and Wotton, see Walton ("The Life of Dr. John Donne," 1–88; "The Life of Sir Henry Wotton," 1–79). Ibid., 17, claims that Egerton appointed Donne secretary "supposing and intending it to be an Introduction to some more weighty Employment in the State; for which . . . he thought him very fit." For Wotton's biography, see L. P. Smith.

⁴⁹Rambuss, 38–48.

⁵⁰Donne, 1968, 18–22, lines 25–30.

of texts — someone “to whom [the courtier] can safely confess [his] ignorance” — because the secretary also potentially exposed the employer to mockery.⁵¹ The implied secretarial author of the *Catalogus* abuses this trust by slyly purveying nonsensical books to his ignorant patron, suggesting the frustration experienced by scholars who were condemned to subordinate positions despite their superior learning. Read in this way, the *Catalogus* acts as a critique by the providers of mediated learning, directed at the recipients of such learning.

Worries about the ventriloquization of knowledge went both ways. Not only was there a concern on the scholar’s part about the appropriation of his words by his patron, but there was also a concomitant discomfort about the value of the learning conveyed. Though written as an intervention in serious debates concerning policy and later used as a source for directed readings, John Dee’s *General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the perfect Arte of Navigation* (1577) is parodied in the *Catalogus* as *On the Navigability of the Waters above the heavens, and whether Ships in the Firmament will land there or on our shores on the Day of Judgment*.⁵² The fictitious work ascribed to Dee suggests the extent to which speculative policy advice could later be seen as slipping free of its mooring to the realities of politics.⁵³

These worries reach their extreme in the titles that comment on the circumstances of the Essex revolt of 1601. Donne’s position as a secretary to Egerton, who was held captive during the revolt, allowed him to witness the event at close hand.⁵⁴ Secretarial counsel was deeply implicated in the aftermath, particularly in the case of Essex’s secretary Henry Cuffe.⁵⁵ While both Essex at his trial and official accounts written afterwards blamed Cuffe for leading his master astray, the *Catalogus* suggests that two figures, William Barlow and Sir Francis Bacon, are guilty of disloyalty, hypocrisy, and lack of discretion.

The *Catalogus* attributes to Barlow, who had given the encomium for Essex after the Cadiz expedition in 1596 and had heard his last confession, a book entitled *An Encomium of Doctor Shaw, Chaplain of Richard III*, presumably on the strength of Barlow’s decision to announce the official

⁵¹Rambuss, 42. For secretaries and secrecy, see *ibid.*, 5–9, 30–48; Goldberg, 231–78; Stewart, 1997, 161–68 (all of whom draw upon Angel Day’s *English Secretorie* [1586]). See also Biow, 155–96.

⁵²“De navigabilitate aquarum supercoelestium et utrum ibi an apud nos navis in firmamento in iudicio sit appulsura.”

⁵³On Dee’s *Navigations*, see Sherman, 152–71; Jardine and Sherman, 112.

⁵⁴See Bald, 103–14.

⁵⁵See Stewart, 2005.

explanation for Essex's execution from the St. Paul's Cross pulpit.⁵⁶ Bacon, one of Egerton's clients who was closely connected to Essex's circle via his brother, Anthony, comes off looking even worse. His contribution to the affair is commemorated by two consecutive entries, *The Brazen Head of Francis Bacon: On Robert I, King of England* and *The Lawyers' Onion, or the Art of Weeping during trials*.⁵⁷ Donne's attribution of these books to Bacon is an accusation of disloyalty and hypocrisy that sharply contrasts Bacon's role as an advisor before Essex's plot with his role as prosecutor at his trial afterward.⁵⁸ These titles underline the importance of the secretary's role in political judgment by suggesting the very real harm that could result from inappropriate and disloyal secretarial advice. The mechanical methods of mediation may be the cause of this harm: by depicting an advisor who portrays himself as an oracular automaton or one who uses an onion to provoke false tears, *The Brazen Head* and *The Lawyers' Onion* transform the reliability of secretaries and the methodical nature of their products into a threat.⁵⁹

4. LIBRARIES, SATIRE, AND THE MEDIATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Secretarial mediation relied not only on individuals, but on their practices of marginal annotation, note-taking, and summary. The books listed in the *Catalogus* display these problematic acts of mediation. However, while the entries that parody English figures usually critique societal failings, those directed toward Continental figures concentrate on defects of scholarship, whether religious or secular, such as *That the Chimera is a Sign of the Antichrist, by an anonymous member of the Sorbonne* and *A Handful of Oak Trees, or The Art of Getting Ahold of Transcendentals, Written by Raimond*

⁵⁶"Encomium Doctoris Shaw Cappellini Richardi 3. per Doct. Barlow." On Barlow, see Knighton.

⁵⁷"Caput aeneum Fran. Baconi: de Roberto primo Angliae rege"; "Caepe advocatorum, sive ars plorani in Iudiciis, per eudem." The depiction of Bacon counseled by the "Brazen Head" also draws upon the link between his name and that of Roger Bacon, as depicted in Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594), as well as intimating a connection between the work of the two Bacons in natural philosophy.

⁵⁸Donne's accusation of Bacon's insincerity during the trial is confirmed by the paraphrase of Samuel 16:10 that Donne inscribed in his copy of Bacon's account of the trial (Keynes, 1973, 263, L3): "*Sinite eum maledicere, nos[ter] Dominus iusit & reg[ist]*" ("Let him curse, our Lord has ordered and ruled it"). See Bald, 113.

⁵⁹On mechanism in early modern Europe, see Wolfe, especially 88–124 on ambassadors as automata.

Sebond.⁶⁰ *The Courtier's Library* is founded on the humanist tradition of organizing and mediating knowledge. Donne's use of the term *catalogus* connects his little work to the great book lists of the sixteenth-century compilers Abbot Trithemius and John Bale, as well as those of their successor Conrad Gesner. As Roger Chartier points out, both Trithemius and Bale call their lists of hypothetical libraries by the name *catalogus*, suggesting both a library and a list, and it was only after Gesner's *Bibliotheca Universalis* that the term *bibliotheca* came to displace it as the common term for such a production.⁶¹ These formal, compendious book lists depend on and refer to methods of organizing books and ordering knowledge, whether the lists of cited authors appended to learned works as far back as Pliny or the more modest domestic library lists produced by secretaries, the latter private rehearsals of the sort of advice that Gabriel Naudé was to give in his *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* (1627).⁶²

These idealized attempts at a comprehensive list of books bear the same sort of relation to the frivolous *The Courtier's Library* as the famous library of the Monastery of St. Victor does to Rabelais's parodic recounting of its contents. In parodying these methods of organizing knowledge, both satires depend upon an understanding of their function and social context. While Donne's and Rabelais's lists of imaginary books do not attempt to organize the material they contain, they resemble their real counterparts to the extent that they also attempt to survey and describe all knowledge, if only to satirize it. Rather than taking the methodical form of alphabetical lists or division by discipline, however, their ordering follows the associative logic of jokes: the satirical force of the two entries attributed to Sir Francis Bacon depend on the contrast between the activities described in the consecutive titles. While this ordering may seem arbitrary, it resembles that of Erasmus, who preferred methods of organization based upon "infinitely extensible chains of words connected by likenesses, affinities, and contraries," in order to promote rhetorical invention.⁶³

Among Donne's other works, the nearest equivalent to the list of books in the *Catalogus* appears in the altogether more serious treatise on suicide, *Biathanatos* (1608). It is prefaced by a list of the authorities cited in that work that self-consciously mimics the list at the beginning of Pliny the

⁶⁰"Chimeram praedicari de Antichristo autore Sorbonista Anonymo"; "Manipulus quercuum, sive ars comprehendendi transcendentia. Autore Raim. Sebundo."

⁶¹Chartier, 71–76.

⁶²On the Renaissance library and the organization of knowledge, see Chartier, 61–88; Grafton, 19–35; Blair, 1997, 153–79; Moss; Nelles. For the reconstruction of the contemporary library of Egerton's daughter-in-law and stepdaughter, see Hackel, 240–255, 260–281.

⁶³Moss, 44.

Elder's *Historia Naturalis* written to refute charges of plagiarism.⁶⁴ Even more than Donne's other divine writings — *Pseudo-Martyr*, *Essays in Divinity*, the *Devotions*, or his *Sermons* — *Biathanatos* provides an example of his diligent scholarly activity, with its dependence on methodical note-taking practices, as Donne's note to his list of cited works suggests. He claims: "In citing these authors, for those which I produce only for ornament and illustration, I have trusted my own old notes, which, though I have no reason to suspect, yet I confess here my laziness, and that I did not refresh them with going to the original."⁶⁵ While the citations in both *Biathanatos* and *Pseudo-Martyr* testify to the original work of reading performed during their composition, they depend more fundamentally still on the accumulated scholarly work from Donne's wide reading, collected in his notes (further evidence of which can be seen in his library).

Donne's extant library provides much-neglected evidence for his reading methods, though his collection of books almost certainly underrepresents the ambit of his reading. The lending and borrowing of books played a significant part in the dissemination and circulation of knowledge in the period, and the books that have been officially associated with Donne — because his inscription is on the book's title page or because the book was bound with a book so inscribed — comprise only a part of the books he owned or read.⁶⁶ Donne's own letters testify to this fact: he writes to Sir Henry Goodyer, while in residence at Mitcham, of receiving "the Catalogue of your Books" and refers in a later letter to his "study, (which your books make a pretty library)."⁶⁷ Similarly, Donne's closeness to his hosts at Pyrford, courtesy of his cousin-in-law, Sir Francis Wolley, is marked by the presence in his library of a copy of Robert Moor's *Diarium Historicopoeticum* inscribed to Sir Francis's father, Sir John Wolley, Queen Elizabeth's Latin secretary and the former owner of Pyrford (L126). This suggests that there existed a widespread tradition of borrowing, lending, and giving books as gifts, in which Donne himself participated, as his own gifts suggest (L214–L218).

Equally significant is the evidence provided by Donne's marginalia. Walton remarks on Donne's practices of note-taking and annotation and describes his copy of Cardinal Bellarmine as "marked with many weighty observations under his own hand."⁶⁸ This untraced annotation of Bellarmine is, according to Walton's description, entirely different from

⁶⁴Donne, 1982, 7–10.

⁶⁵Ibid., 9.

⁶⁶See Sherman, 38–45.

⁶⁷Donne, 1977, 31, 60.

⁶⁸Walton, 15–16 ("The Life of Dr. John Donne").

Donne's other books. Other than his title-page inscriptions, Donne's marginalia is primarily in pencil and, rather than consisting of "weighty observations," mark the text with vertical and diagonal lines and brackets, and, very occasionally, NBs, question marks, and underlining.

Donne's decision to gather and keep notes separate from books, rather than to inscribe notes in them, is indicative not only of his lack of resources, but also of the dependent situation in which he found himself as a secretary. His use of pencil for his marginalia left him the option of removing the traces of his work from books. The patterns of Donne's marginalia point to a hybrid method of note-taking and annotation with two modes: one in which sections of interest are marked for later digestion into notes, and another, in which the markings are confined to discrete sections, in which they indicate working directly from books at hand. In both cases, the emphasis was on the work that could be carried away from the book after reading.

In a letter to Walton, Henry King, Bishop of Chichester, writes that Donne "gave me all his Sermon-Notes, and his other Papers, containing an Extract of near Fifteen hundred Authors."⁶⁹ In Walton's own account, these notes, which were later lost, shrink slightly, to "the resultance of 1400. Authors, most of them abridged and analyzed with his own hand," but they are more than supplemented by the other notes Donne made: "Nor were these onely found in his study; but all businesses that past of any publick consequence, either in this, or any of our neighbor nations, he abbreviated either in Latine, or in the Language of that Nation, and kept them by him for useful memorials. So he did the copies of divers Letters and cases of Conscience that had concerned his friends, with his observations and solutions of them; and, divers other businesses of importance; all particularly and methodically digested by himself."⁷⁰ Here Donne's formal methods of note-taking and commonplacing, acquired during his time at university and at the Inns of Court, become mingled with secretarial methods used to digest his master's business. One of Donne's own descriptions of his notes suggests something of their form. He writes that, "It were no service to you, to send you my notes upon the Book, because they are sandy, and incoherent ragges, for my memory, not for your judgement; and to extend them to an easinesse, and perspicuity, would make them a Pamphlet, not a Letter."⁷¹ The notes were compiled with a compression and haste suggested by both their raggedness and their sandiness. Not only is the information reduced into torn pieces that need to be fitted back

⁶⁹Ibid., 2.

⁷⁰Ibid., 62–63.

⁷¹Donne, 1977, 162–63.

together, but Donne's description of the sandy papers suggests the semantic latitude of the verb *excutere* that Donne exploited in the passage on the sleeping courtiers. The gathered leaves had been neither searched through nor shaken out since the final stages of their composition, when they were sprinkled with sand to dry the ink.

These serious practices reappear through a comic lens in *The Courtier's Library*. Donne's satire sets itself apart from these supposedly diligent practices of scholarly collection and organization, at the same time that it depends upon them for its form. As a genre, satire simultaneously attends to and flattens out the qualities of its subjects, in much the same way that Donne's transformation of Cardano's 1550 *On the subtlety of things* (*De subtilitate*) into *On the nothingness of a fart* seizes upon his conception of subtlety only to transform it into a joke about the tenuous nature of farts.⁷² This resort to the scatological recalls many of the books Rabelais includes in his library, and also suggests the limitations of the *Catalogus* as a medium of knowledge. Yet the *Catalogus* mediates knowledge by means of, rather than in spite of, its satirical form. For all its parodical distortions, satire is both a rehearsal and a display of knowledge. While in some cases this is topical rather than literary knowledge, the heterogeneous contents mimic the products of his note-making practices, in which Donne appears to have been an inveterate gatherer of diverse knowledge. Donne's parodies depend upon familiarity with the works and authors he describes, and his satire of the advice given to courtiers recalls the serious advice from which it was born. In the *Catalogus*, the knowledge contained in the original books is digested and reshaped to satirical ends. In the same way that early modern book titles function as summaries of their contents, Donne's titles not only satirize, but also epitomize, the works and authors that they parody. Moreover, like the grotesque figures prescribed in the *Ad Herennium*, they connect ideas with striking images, so that they might be more easily recalled. Associating Pico della Mirandola (1463–94) with Kabbalistic numerology by ascribing to him a book titled *The Judeo-Christian Pythagorus, in which 99 and 66 are shown to be the same number if the page is turned upside down* may not be fair, but it is certainly memorable.⁷³

⁷²“De nullibietate crepitus.”

⁷³“Pythagoras Iudaeo-Christianus, Numerum 99 et 66 verso folio esse eundem, per super-seraphicum Io. Picum.” The characterization is particularly ironic, given Walton's account of Donne's early gifts (Walton, 12–13, “The Life of Dr. John Donne”): “in his tenth year was sent to the University of *Oxford*, having at that time a good command both of the French and Latine Tongue. This and some other of his remarkable Abilities, made one give this censure of him, *That this age had brought forth another Picus Mirandola; of whom Story sayes, That he was rather born than made wise by study.*”

Donne's preface to the list makes clear that satire is not only the genre of *The Courtier's Library*, but one of the methods of organizing knowledge that it criticizes: "The middle, and therefore common, way to proceed in order to avoid both the shame of ignorance and the bother of reading, is to use one art in all things in order to seem to know all the rest. Thus, others delight in epitomes, paradoxes, and the stings of extravagant wits, and hence place a high value upon Ramon Lull, Gemma Frisius, Raimond Sebond, Sextus Empiricus, the Abbot Trithemius, Henry Cornelius Agrippa, Erasmus, Peter Ramus, and the heretical writers."⁷⁴ Donne's grouping of writers seems eclectic: they do not appear to offer "one art" by which courtiers may "seem to know" all the rest, but rather a multiplicity of competing and contradictory strategies. Donne's list of the authors links synthesizers, organizers, and compilers of various sorts (Agrippa, Lull, Gemma Frisius, Trithemius, Erasmus, Ramus) with skeptics (Agrippa, Sextus Empiricus, Raymond Sebond), occultists (Lull, Trithemius, Agrippa), and satirists (Agrippa's *De Vanitate Scientiarum*, Erasmus's *Encomium Morae*).⁷⁵ Indeed, the list itself mimics the sort of ragbag assortment of learning and approaches to knowledge that the *Catalogus* critiques.

All of these writers, however, offer strategies that mediate knowledge for consumption by the reader. Donne's description of these methods of summary and compression — "epitomes, paradoxes, and the stings of extravagant wits" — makes sense of the list that follows by associating the effects of these different genres. He suggests that the summary of knowledge provided by epitomes is similar to the startling juxtapositions of paradoxes, and that paradoxes are like the itchy sting of satirical writing. By equating epitomes, paradoxes, and satires, moreover, he points to what is lost in the mediation of knowledge in these forms. While the fragments of knowledge remain the same, the processes of summary remove them from their context, potentially distorting their comprehension. The epitome of a book may turn its argument into a paradox, and paradox teeters on the

⁷⁴"Media igitur plerumque itur via, et ad evitandam ignorantiae turpitudinem et legendi fastidium ars una est omnibus ut reliquas scire videri possint. Inde Epitomis, paradoxis, et pruritibus exorbitantium ingeniorum delectantur. Hinc tam sunt in pretio, Lullius, Gemma, Sebundus, Empiricus, Trithemius, Agrippa, Erasmus, Ramus, et Haeretici."

⁷⁵Agrippa also appears as one of the additional authors in the Trinity Manuscript of the *Catalogus*, where he is mocked. See Donne, 1930, 53: *Agrippa, On the Vanity of the Sciences; and the Praise of the Ass by the same* (38: "Agrippa de vanitate Scientiarum; et Encomium Asini per eundem"). The inclusion of the real *De Vanitate* in the *Catalogus* satirizes that work both by implying that it is as ridiculous as the imaginary works with which it is associated, and by joining it with the imaginary *Praise of the Ass*, a genre of paradoxical encomium with which it is usually associated: see Lehigh, 32–36. The implication is, of course, that Agrippa is the ass in question.

brink of satire. Donne's addition of the heretical writers at the end of his list punctuates his critique of misplaced authority, and points directly to the dangers inherent in reliance upon the authority of an interpreter. In a sense, all these methods — whether Trithemius's act of compendious listing, Ramus's reduction to dichotomies, or Empiricus's skeptical questioning of all knowledge — act as competing forms of false authority that substitute themselves for a well-grounded set of sources. These authors are implicitly contrasted with the authors that are strikingly absent from the *Catalogus*: classical authorities, who conventionally provided the foundations of early modern knowledge. Instead, they are deliberately dismissed in the preface: the courtiers are advised to leave “those authors that they call the Classics to academics and schoolmasters to wear out.”⁷⁶

Donne's library and marginalia suggest that this attack on mediated knowledge was not a simple rejection of the use of epitomes and collections of *sententiae*. For instance, in Donne's copy of the *Opera Omnia* of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (L176) the most intensive annotation is confined to the *gnomologia* that collects and organizes quotable sentences from throughout the book. Likewise, the marginal annotation of a work such as D'Averoltius's *Catechismus Historicus, sive Flores Exemplorum* (L60) shows Donne's willingness to make use of collections of *sententiae*, a practice common to both scholars and divines. Donne does, however, attend scrupulously to his citational habits, as his preface to *Biathantatos* makes clear: “Of those few which I have not seen in the books themselves — for there are some such even of places cited for greatest strength — besides the integrity of my purpose, I have this safe defense against any quarreler: that what place soever I cite from any Catholic author, if I have not considered the book itself, I cite him from another Catholic writer; and the like course I hold for the Reformers, so that I shall hardly be condemned of any false citation, except to make me accessory, they pronounce one of their own friends principal.”⁷⁷ Though engaged in an argument against received authority on the topic of suicide, Donne attempts to assure his readers about his use of sources. He does so not on the basis of a claim concerning his own reliability, but by citing authorities who would, owing to their own partisan attachment, be likely to reproduce the quotations faithfully.

At issue here is the status of authority in a system of learning where knowledge is repeatedly mediated and remediated, summarized, digested, compressed, epitomized, and transmitted: a society suffering from information overload.⁷⁸ In the *Catalogus*, the novel solution to this problem is

⁷⁶“Relictis Authoribus quos vocant Classicos Academicis et paedagogis terendis, enitere.”

⁷⁷Donne, 1982, 9–10.

⁷⁸See Rosenberg; Blair, 2003.

the provision of nonexistent books, promising that “your audience — who before seemed to know everything — may, with reverence for you, hear about new authors.”⁷⁹ Following the advice of his secretarial advisor, the courtier will not “produce anything in conversations from generally known authorities,” relying instead on irrefutable citation of the *Catalogus*, so that he “might suddenly spring forth, on almost all topics, if not more learned than others, at least as learned in a different way.”⁸⁰

5. CONCLUSION: CONVERSIBLE KNOWLEDGE

The *Catalogus* advises a move from the use of summaries and collections that encapsulate knowledge to the mere citation of irrefutable authority, in the form of nonbooks that no one else can consult. This parodic suggestion is not just a critique of the secretarial mediation of knowledge but also of the baseless authority of those who rely on it. As a moralized lesson, the *Catalogus* suggests that learning as a marker of status is useless without a proper educational foundation. Moreover, by asserting that attempts to evade this problem will be convincing only to others with the same lack of learning, it seeks to reinscribe the cultural superiority of humanist learning at a moment when its value as a path of advancement seemed to be uncertain.

As a performance of learning, however, *The Courtier's Library* intervenes in the circulation and display of knowledge. Both the manuscript transmission and the contents of the *Catalogus* suggest that it was meant for a coterie audience; as a result, the bonds of friendship meant its critique of the disjunction between authority and learning would not apply. By cataloguing these authors in the form of satirical book titles, Donne makes the knowledge implicit in these parodies amenable to courtly taste. Although the imaginary books of *The Courtier's Library* are not useful to his putative audience of courtiers, they are useful to his readers, friends who share his learned background and desire for advancement, and who are thus able to benefit fully from Donne's mixture of the pleasing with the useful. As such, the nonbooks of the *Catalogus* function as a literal recapitulation of knowledge, a reordering of old material under new heads. Satirical reuse becomes, as in the literary games of the Inns of Court, a rehearsal of shared knowledge among a coterie of close friends, a practice that, Donne argues in a letter, is vital to its comprehension and retention: “much of the knowledge buried in Books perisheth, and becomes ineffectuall, if it be not applied, and refreshed by a companion, or friend. . . . For with how much

⁷⁹ “[N]ovos autores cum reverentia tui audiant illi, qui omnia anti visi sunt.”

⁸⁰ “Hunc ergo catalogum ad usum tuum exaravi, ut his paratis libris, in omni pene scientia, si non magis, saltem aliter doctus, quam caeteri, subito prosilias.”

desire we read the papers of any living now (especially friends), which we would scarce allow a boxe in our cabinet, or shelf in our Library, if they were dead? And we do justly in it, for the writings and words of men present, we may examine, controll, and expostulate, and receive satisfaction from the authors; but the other we must beleeve, or discredit; they present no mean.”⁸¹

Donne’s description of the advantages of living knowledge, which one “may examine, controll, and expostulate, and receive satisfaction from the author,” emphasizes the importance of searching, sifting, and organizing knowledge as a conversation among equals, where the authority associated with authorship is set to one side. The discussion of material gathered from reading in letters, as in a dialogue, lies in the chewing over and proper digestion of the material. In contrast to the dyspeptic scenes associated with some of Egerton’s circle, these playful exercises in virtuosity are opportunities to practice methods of invention, organization, and deployment, and to make the products of such work available to his correspondents. Donne’s letters unearth the “knowledge buried in Books” — which “perisheth, and becomes ineffectuall, if not applied and refreshed by a companion, or friend” — and sends it abroad. These processes of exchange vivify knowledge. After receipt, the letters of friends are placed in “a boxe in our cabinet, or shelf in our Library” (whereas the letters of the dead are not), and become part both of the library and of the system by which knowledge is organized. Indeed, they become material that can be reused in subsequent exchanges.⁸² The aim is to become conversant in the literal sense: to have mastered material sufficiently for the purposes of conversation in the social world of court.

Donne’s idealistic description of learning as inhering in conversation or in the exchange of letters between friends allowed him to find a mean, a straight path between aristocratic and humanistic conceptions of *otium*. He transformed the scholarly matter of the *Catalogus* by mobilizing it in a palatable form. If elsewhere the materials gathered from books that Donne circulates among his coterie are serious, not flowers but the bitter “sallads and onions of Mitcham,” the fruits that he purveys to his friends in the *Catalogus* are very much the outlandish “Melons and *Quelque-choses* of Court.”⁸³

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⁸¹Donne, 1977, 106–07.

⁸²The circulation of literary material occurs, for example, in Sir Henry Goodyer’s reuse of one of Donne’s letters in a poem that commemorates Prince Charles’s journey to Spain in 1623. See Considine.

⁸³Donne, 1977, 64.

*Appendix: The Text of
The Courtier's Library**

Aevum sortiti sumus quo plane indoctis nihil turpius, plene doctis nihil rarius. Tam omnes in literis aliquid sciunt, tam nemo omnia. Media igitur plerumque itur via, et ad evitandam ignorantiae turpitudinem et legendi fastidium ars una est omnibus ut reliquas scire videri possint. Inde Epitomis, paradoxis, et pruritibus exorbitantium ingeniorum delectantur. Hinc tam sunt in pretio, Lullius, Gemma, Sebundus, Empiricus, Trithemius, Agrippa, Erasmus, Ramus, et Haeretici. Satis enim sibi videntur scire ignava ingenia si aliorum scientiam imperfectam esse probabiliter possint demonstrare. Sed nimis invidiae subest, et se prodit aerea haec, procax et tuberosa scientia. Tibi generosior, celerior, candidior, et minus speculatoribus literarum obnoxia via subeunda est. Et quia per occupationes Aulae, qua degis, naturales, tibi vacare literis non licet (nam post somnum non nisi post decimam ex more excutiendum, post vestes diei, loco, affectibus proprias indutas, post faciem speculo compositam, et quo quis cachinno, superciliove excipiendus sit resolutionem, post epulas lususque, quota pars vitae literis, animoque excolendo relinquitur?) et tamen doctus videri non dedignaris, ut aliquando habeas quo eleganter et apposite canes Regios conservos tuos possis laudare, et quamvis scire quae alii sciunt non poteris, saltem scire valeas quae illi nesciunt; hac ex consilio meo via progredieris.

Relictis authoribus quos vocant Classicos Academicis et paedagogis terendis, enitere per omnes quibus ignorantiam fateri secure poteris, libros aliis inventu difficiles exquirere. Nec in colloquiis quid ex autoribus vulgo notis afferas, sed ex istis ut ita quae dicis aut tua videri possint, si nomina taceas, aut si minus digna sint, et autoritate egeant, novos auctores cum reverentia tui audiant illi, qui omnia scire sibi ante visi sunt. Hunc ergo catalogum ad usum tuum exaravi, ut his paratis libris, in omni pene scientia, si non magis, saltem aliter doctus quam caeteri, subito prosilias.

¹I follow the original published text in Donne, 1650, 371–75, with the emendations made by Evelyn Simpson from her collation of that text with the Trinity Manuscript: see “Textual Notes” in Donne, 1930, 79–93. For the identification of historical persons in the text, see “Explanatory Notes” in *ibid.*, 54–78.

We are cast by chance into an age in which nothing is worse than to be openly ignorant, nothing more rare than to be fully learned. Just as everyone knows something of letters, no one knows everything. The middle, and therefore common, way to proceed in order to avoid both the shame of ignorance and the bother of reading, is to use one art in all things in order to seem to know all the rest. Thus, others delight in epitomes, paradoxes, and the stings of extravagant wits, and hence place a high value upon Ramon Lull, Gemma Frisius, Raimond Sebond, Sextus Empiricus, the Abbot Trithemius, Henry Cornelius Agrippa, Erasmus, Peter Ramus, and the heretical writers. It is enough for lazy wits to have the appearance of knowing, if they are able to plausibly show that others' knowledge is flawed. But envy underlies this attitude, and produces as a result this ungrounded, frivolous, and overblown knowledge. You must climb a nobler, swifter, and clearer path, and one less open to those who keep an eye on literature. And because the natural occupations of court, in which you spend your time, do not allow you the leisure for literature, because, after sleep, which by custom must not be shaken off until after ten in the morning; after you have dressed in the clothes appropriate to the day, place, and passions; after having composed your face in the mirror, and worked out whom to receive with a jeer or with a frown; after banquets and amusements — how much time is left over in your life for reading and the improvement of your mind? Yet you do not disdain to appear learned, that you sometimes might praise elegantly and suitably your companions, the royal hounds, and although you are not able to know those things that others know, at least you manage to know what they do not know; you will advance yourself along this path, by means of my advice.

Having abandoned those authors that they call the Classics to academics and schoolmasters to wear out, instead strive — with the help of those to whom you are safely able to admit ignorance — to seek out books difficult for others to locate. Nor should you produce anything in conversations from generally known authorities. Instead cite from these other authorities, such that your words either seem to be your own, if you leave the names unmentioned, or, if what you say is not dignified and is in need of authority, your audience — who before seemed to know everything — may, with reverence for you, hear about new authors. Therefore, I note down this list for your use, that having prepared these books, you might suddenly spring forth, on almost all topics, if not more learned than others, at least as learned in a different way.

Catalogus Librorum

1. Nicolai Hill Angli, de sexu et Hermaphroditate dignoscenda in Atomis; Idem de eorum Anatomia, et obstetricatione in partibus humatis, cui annectitur ars conficiendorum ignis vasorum, et instrumentorum ad haec omnia propriorum, per conterraneum, et synchronon suum Magistrum Plat.
2. Aemulus Moysis. Ars conservandi vestimenta ultra quadraginta annos, autore Topcliffo Anglo. postillata per Iac. Stonehouse anglice, qui eodem idiomate edidit tractatum, *To keep clothes near the fashion.*
3. Ars exscribendi omnia ea quae vere ad idem dicuntur in Joanne Foxe in ambitu denarii, autore P. Bales.
4. Chimaeram praedicari de Antichristo autore Sorbonista Anonymo.
5. Galatinus, Judaeos ubiquitarios esse, quia nusquam sunt.
6. Librum Tobiae esse canonicum. Ubi ex Rabbiniis et secretioribus Theologis numerantur pili caudae eius canis, ex quorum varia retortione, et invicem conjunctione conficiuntur literae, ex quibus mirifica verba consistunt. Autore Francisco Georgio Veneto.
7. Pax in Hierusalem, sive conciliatio flagrantissimi dissidii inter Rabbi Simeon Kimchi, et Onkelos, utrum caro humana ex carne suilla comesta (quod avertat deus) concreta in resurrectione removebitur, annihilabitur, aut purificabitur, per illuminatissimum Doctorem Reuchlinum.
8. Pythagoras Iudaeo-Christianus, Numerum 99 et 66 verso folio esse eundem, per superaphicum Io. Picum.
9. Quidlibet ex quolibet; *Or the art of decyphering and finding some treason in any intercepted letter*, by Philips.
10. Ioh. Harringtoni Hercules, sive de modo quo evacuabatur a faecibus Arca Noae.
11. Crede quod habes et habes. Criterium Antiquitatum; lib. magnus de minimis a Walt. Copo dictatus, et ab uxore exscriptus, et ab amanuensi suo Iohan. Pory latinitate donatus.
12. Subsavior; in quo illuminatus, sed parum illuminans, Hugo Broughton incredibiliter docet linguam Hebraicam esse de essentia salutis, et sua praecepta esse de essentia linguae.
13. M. Lutherus de abbreviatione orationis Dominicae.
14. Manipulus quercuum, sive ars comprehendendi transcendentia. Autore Raim. Sebundo.
15. Oceanus Aulicus, sive Pyramis, sive Colossus, sive Abyssus ingeniorum: ubi per 60000 literas a Milordis omnium nationum ad evitandam ostentationem vulgaribus semper linguis datas et acceptas, traditur quicquid tradi potest de Dentiscalpiis et unguium reduviis. Collectae sunt et in unum corpus reductae singulisque autoribus dedicatae per Io. Florio Italo-Anglum. Eorum quae in hoc libro continentur capita habentur primis 70 paginis; Diplomata Regum cum eorum titulis et approbationes inquisitorum 107 sequentibus, poemata in laudem Autoris 97 libris proximis.-

The List of Books

1. Nicolas Hill, On Distinguishing the Sex and Hermaphroditism of Atoms; The same, On their Anatomy, and How to Aid in their Births when they are buried. To which is added The Art of Making Fire-Pots, and all the equipment necessary for that purpose, by his countryman and contemporary Master Plat.
2. The Imitator of Moses. The Art of Preserving Clothes beyond Forty years by the English Author Topcliffe, with a commentary in English by Jacob Stonehouse, who has put forth a treatise entitled *To keep clothes near the fashion*, in the same language.
3. The art of writing out, within the circumference of a penny, all true things in John Foxe that were related to him, written by Peter Bales.
4. That the Chimera is a Sign of the Antichrist, by an anonymous member of the Sorbonne.
5. Galatinus: That Jews are Ubiquitaries, because they belong nowhere.
6. That the book of Tobit is canonical. In which, drawing upon the Rabbis and other more obscure Theologians, the hairs on the tail of the dog are counted and from their differing turns and combinations letters are put together to create amazing words. By Francis George, the Venetian.
7. Peace in Jerusalem, or The Settlement of the most passionate disagreement between Rabbi Simeon Kimchi and Onkelos, On whether a human body composed (may God forbid) from the consumption of pig flesh will be put away, annihilated, or purified on the Resurrection, by the most enlightened Doctor Reuchlin.
8. The Judeo-Christian Pythagorus, in which 99 and 66 are shown to be the same number if the page is turned upside down, by the more than angelic Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola.
9. What you please out of what you please; *Or the art of decyphering and finding some treason in any intercepted letter*, by Philips.
10. The Hercules of John Harington, or Concerning the method of emptying the dung from Noah's Ark.
11. Believe you have something and you have it. A rule for antiquities: a great book on tiny things, dictated by Walter Cope, written down by his wife, and translated into Latin by his amanuensis John Pory.
12. The sub-savior: in which the enlightened, but barely enlightening, Hugh Broughton surprisingly teaches that the Hebrew language is the secret of health, and that his teachings are the secret of the language.
13. Martin Luther, On shortening the Lord's Prayer.
14. A Handful of Oak Trees, or The Art of Getting Ahold of Transcendentals. Written by Raimond Sebond.
15. The Princely Ocean, or The Pyramid, or The Colossus, or The Abyss of Wits: where by means of 60,000 letters to the Nobles of all nations (always sent and received in the common tongues, in order to avoid ostentation) are related everything that is able to be related concerning toothpicks and hangnails. They have been brought together and reduced into a single collection, dedicated to each individual patron by John Florio, the Italo-Englishman. On the first seventy pages are the headings of those things that this book contains; the Diplomas of the Kings with their titles and the approval of the inquisitors on the next 107; [and] poems in praise of the author in the next ninety-seven books.

16. Iustitia Angliae. Vacationes Io. Davis de Arte Anagrammatum verisimiliter conficiendorum, et sententiolis annulis inscribendis.
17. Tractatuli aliquot adjectitii libris Pancirolli; libro de rebus perditis, additur de virtute, et de libertate populi; quod a Capellano quodam Io. Cadi inchoatum a Buchanano perfectum est, libro de rebus inventis, additur de morbo multinomino per Tho. Thorney Anglice, et post latine per Tho. Campianum, et de uxoratione post vota per Carolostadium.
18. Bonaventura de particula Non a decalogo adimenda, et Symbolo Apostolorum adicienda.
19. De militibus Apocryphis per Edw. Prinne lib. unus, per Edw. Chute paulo amplior factus.
20. De navigabilitate aquarum supercoelestium, et utrum ibi an apud nos navis in firmamento in iudicio sit appulsura, Io. Dee Autore.
21. Manuale justiciariorum, continens plurimas confessiones veneficarum Manwoodo iudici exhibitas, et ab illo abstergendis postea natibus, et evacuationibus adhibitis; nunc a servulis suis redemptae, et in usum suum collectae sunt a Io. Helo.
22. Aequilibrium. Tom. 2. Sive ars acquiescendi in Controversiis. Primus modus dicitur simplex, quia data controversia (utpote estne transsubstantiatio?) scribitur sic, et non, variis sed aequalibus chartulis, et trutinæ imponuntur, et ponderosiori adhaerendum. Alius modus est compositus, quia data thesi ex una parte, datur etiam altera ex altera: ut Petrus sedet Romae, et Ioannes sedet Romae, et etiam si aequalibus literis scribuntur, etc. ponderosiori adhaerendum: autore Erasmo Roterod.
23. Cardanus de nullibetate crepitus.
24. Edw. Hobæi eructationes pomeridianæ, sive de univocis, utpote de prærogativa Regum, et chimaeris, morbo Regio, et morbo Gallico etc.
25. Ars Spiritualis inescandi mulieres, sive conciones subcingulares Egertoni.
26. De Pessario animato, et omni morbo foeminis dando, per Magistrum Butler Cantabr.
27. Caput aeneum Fran. Baconi: de Roberto primo Angliae rege.
28. Cæpe advocatorum, sive ars plorandi in Iudiciis, per eundem. Sesqui-barbarus, sive de medietate linguae.
29. De Gurgite diametrali a Polo ad Polum, per centrum navigabili sine pyxide per Andr. Thevet.
30. Quintessentia inferni; sive camera privata infernalis, ubi tractatur de loco quinto ab Homero, Virgilio, Dante, caeterisque papisticis prætermissis, ubi Reges præter damni poenas, et sensus, recordatione præteritorum cruciantur.
31. Encomium Doctoris Shaw Capellani Richardi 3. per Doct. Barlow.
32. Quid non? sive confutatio omnium errorum tam in Theologia quam in aliis scientiis, artibusque mechanicis, præteritorum, præsentium et futurorum, omnium hominum mortuorum, superstitum, nascendorumque; una nocte post coenam confecta per D. Sutcliffe.
33. De Episcopabilitate Puritani. Dr. Robinson.
34. Tarltonus de privilegiis Parlamenti.

16. The Justice of England. The holiday work of Sir John Davies, On the Making of Approximate Anagrams, and of Writing Little Mottoes in Rings.
17. Several little accounts added to the books of Panirolli; to the book on lost things is added On the virtue and liberty of the people; begun by the Chaplain to John Cade and perfected by Buchanan. To the book of things discovered, is added the Many-Named Disease in English by Thomas Thorney and afterwards in Latin by Thomas Campion, and On a desire for a wife after vows, by Carlstadt.
18. Bonaventura, On Removing the Word Not from the Ten Commandments, and adding it to the Apostles' Creed.
19. One Book On False Knights, by Edward Prinne, Slightly Enlarged by Edward Chute.
20. On the Navigability of the Waters above the heavens, and whether Ships in the Firmament will land there or on our shores on the Day of Judgment, by John Dee.
21. The Judges' Handbook, containing the many confessions of poisoners given to Justice Manwood, and used by him afterwards in wiping his buttocks, and in examining his evacuations; now recovered from his servants, and gathered together for his own use, by John Hele.
22. On Equilibrium, Two Volumes. Or The Art of Settling on a Position in Controversy. The First method is called simple, because given a controversy (such as, Is there such a thing as transubstantiation?) yes and no are written on different but equal pieces of paper, and placed on a pair of scales, and the heavier must be stuck to. The other method is compound, because given a proposition from one side, another is given from the other: such as Peter sits in Rome, and John sits in Rome, and even if they are written in letters of equal size, and so on, the heavier must be chosen: by Erasmus of Rotterdam.
23. Cardano, On the nothingness of a fart.
24. The Afternoon Belchings of Edward Hoby, or On Univocals, namely, On the Right of Kings, and On Chimeras, such as the King's Evil, the French Disease, and so on.
25. The Spiritual Art of Enticing Women, or Egerton's Sermons Beneath Undergarments.
26. On the Living Pessary, and the Means of Producing every Female Disease, by Master Butler of Cambridge.
27. The Brazen Head of Francis Bacon: On Robert I, King of England.
28. The Lawyers' Onion, or the Art of Weeping during trials, by the same. The More-than-Half Uncivilized, or On the Mid-Point of the Tongue.
29. On the Diametrical Current through the Center from Pole to Pole, Navigable without a Compass, by André Thevet.
30. The Quintessence of Hell; or the Private Chamber of the Infernal Regions, in which is discussed the fifth area overlooked by Homer, Virgil, Dante, and other papist writers, where Kings and their senses, in addition to the pain of damnation, are tortured by the recollection of the events of the past.
31. An Encomium of Doctor Shaw, Chaplain of Richard III, by Doctor Barlow.
32. What not? or a confutation of all errors in Theology as well as in the other sciences, and the mechanical arts, by all men, dead, living, and to be born, put together one night after supper, by Doctor Sutcliffe.
33. On the Suitability for a Bishopric of a Puritan, by Doctor Robinson.
34. Tarlton, On the Privileges of Parliament.

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