"Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* is a valuable work. It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is great spirit and power in what Burton says, when he writes from his own mind."
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Thesis presented for the degree of Master of Arts at the Australian National University, 1969.

I declare that this thesis is my own original work, and that all sources have been acknowledged.

Ann Bright.
Plan of Contents

Introduction

Part I. The Subject

Chapter 1. Medical Matters
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Additional Notes

Books and Articles Consulted
What seems to be the only available copy in Australia of Burton's Latin play *Philosophaster* was for some time missing from the Victorian Public Library. It was not located in time for me to treat it in the general body of this thesis, but a brief comment on it follows in unnumbered pages after the conclusion.
Introduction

"Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy is a valuable work. It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is great spirit and power in what Burton says, when he writes from his own mind."¹

Doctor Johnson's acute comment on Burton may well be taken as a starting point for an inquiry into his originality. The question which arises is how Burton can ever write "from his own mind" when he makes such free use of other men's minds. In so far as The Anatomy is a medical treatise, it may seem to be a collation of material drawn from Hippocrates, Galen, and later physicians; in so far as it is a literary work, it may seem to be a collection of apt illustrations from the poetry and prose of a vast body of authors, ranging from Homer to Shakespeare. It may appear on the surface, then, that I am claiming originality for a glorified commonplace book; glorified, that is, by its elaborate Aristotelian framework, by its great length, and by its pretensions to be a serious work of science. Were the claim for originality based purely on these characteristics, it would be a feeble claim indeed.

Since the table of contents at the beginning of each volume is obviously modelled on Aristotle's minute system of division, A.W.Fox does Burton little service by his contention that "If his book is not original in the greater part of its details, the careful and elaborate plan on which it is constructed is in the highest degree original."² Perhaps the opposite contention, namely, that Burton's close analysis

of human nature is "in the highest degree original", while the framework which contains it is derivative, is also paradoxical, but is, I hope, more justifiable. Of course, this claim must be modified with regard to certain portions of The Anatomy; the section on human anatomy, for example, is included by virtue of its necessity in the total scheme of the work, rather than because of its personal interest to the writer, who has no scope for his particular talents in such a technical field. Neither examination of man's body, nor even theories about his soul, stimulate Burton; it is the analysis of man's emotions, or, as Bacon puts it, "the inquiry touching the affections",¹ that sparks off his original psychological speculations, and it is especially the excesses of human emotion, concerning love, for instance, that inspire his most brilliant and astonishing language.

The Anatomy of Melancholy may be seen as partly fulfilling (whether or not by deliberate intention) Bacon's programme for the advancement of learning. Bacon's statement that

as in medicining of the body, it is in order first to know the divers complexions and constitutions; secondly the diseases; and lastly, the cures: so in medicining of the mind, after knowledge of the divers characters of men's natures, it followeth in order to know the diseases and infirmities of the mind, which are no other than the perturbations and distempers of the affections...² may be compared with Burton's perception that "A divine in this compound mixed malady can do little alone, a physician in some kinds of melancholy much less, both make an absolute cure" (I, 37). Bacon goes on to say that "the poets and writers of histories are the best doctors of this knowledge; where we may find painted forth with great life, how affections are kindled and incited, and how pacified and refrained..."³ with

2. Ibid., pp. 207-208.
3. Ibid., p. 209.
which Burton, by the range and treatment of his illustrations, would seem implicitly to agree. That is, Hippocrates does no more than to inform him of facts, which he passes on to the reader, whereas the thought and expression of Horace, for example, which recur constantly in Burton's writing, are so sensitively absorbed into his own outlook and ideas that they cease to be borrowings, and become part of himself.

Burton's purpose, then, is a serious one; he is no mere literary dabbler, as Lamb half-suggests that he is. This is indicated by his initial justification of the book. He feels this to be necessary because, as he says, a divine might perhaps be expected by his public to write on matters of divinity, rather than to trespass into another profession. But in the field of divinity, Burton goes on to say, "queen of professions" though it may be, "I saw no such great need", since "there be so many books in that kind, so many commentators, treatises, pamphlets, expositions, sermons, that whole teams of oxen cannot draw them..." (I, 35). Burton, then, aims at being more original than his fellow-clerics, and wants to fulfil a real need, to do a service to knowledge, rather than to write just for the sake of appearing in print. Bacon had remarked that, although "both history, poesy, and daily experience are as goodly fields where these observations grow...", most people gathered "a few posies to hold in our hands, but no man bringeth them to the confectionary, that receipts mought be made of them for the use of life."¹ This is precisely what Burton hopes to do; that is, to bring the flowers he has gleaned from his reading and observation to the "confectionary" of his own sorting and organizing intellect. Burton, I believe, comes much closer than his predecessors, ancient and modern, who have written on the subject of the passions ², to achieving the wide-ranging, comprehensive understanding of human temperament and emotion that Bacon

2. Galen and Thomas Wright, for example. See below, pp. 23–25.
was looking for, in the interests of expanding the boundaries of knowledge in general.

Since Burton's is a complex, paradoxical personality, the reasons for the success of his book are also complex, and do not fit into neat categories. Nevertheless, it is possible, from one's general impression of *The Anatomy*, to point at certain features which immediately distinguish it, and remove it from the realm of the ordinary or the stereotyped; such features as the genuineness of Burton's wide sympathy for the "crucifying" cares of melancholics, which comes from personal experience as well as from theoretical knowledge; the unpredictable irony and detachment which prevent this sympathy from becoming cloying or morbid; and the immediately obvious individuality of his style.

It is, then, as an individual, and as an analyst of individuals, that I wish to explore Burton. In the end, the test of a book's originality — and indeed of originality in any form of art — is whether it is at once recognizable as the work of a particular person. Burton's work is well able to sustain such a test, as I hope to show. The delicate play of wit and irony in *The Anatomy*, and the enigmatical quality of Burton's temperament, are too subtle to be reproduced convincingly, as the imitations attempted by Lamb¹ and by Holbrook Jackson² suggest; and indeed, to a certain extent, elude definition. In so far as they can be defined, I have tried to trace the constantly changing colours of Burton's style and personality, and to show that the colours, wherever they come from, have been mixed by none other than himself.

It is obvious that Burton, since he has had no medical experience himself, has extracted most of his specifically medical knowledge of melancholy from the reports of cases drawn up by previous experts. Such is the wideness of his reading, however, and such the crudeness of the surgery practised in his time, that, even though he himself has never let anyone's blood, or performed the contemporary equivalent of a lobotomy, he is well acquainted with all the recognized methods of doing so (and they certainly seem to have been rather drastic methods; by the time the patient was relieved of his bilious blood and the "fuliginous vapours" in his brain, not to mention being purged upwards and downwards,¹ he must have been in a state of some delicacy).

Understandably, Burton's knowledge of physical causes, symptoms and remedies is for the most part theoretical; it is in the psychological analysis of these that one feels he adds more of his own experience and observation. A host of more or less obscure medical men - Palanterius, Agepetianus, Boterus, Giraldus Cambrensis, Fernelius, Fuchsius, and the like - swells the ranks of his examples, but for his major statements he relies on Hippocrates and Galen among the ancients; Avicenna and Averroes² among the Arabian doctors of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; Vesalius, Cardan, Laurentius (or Du Laurens) and his own countryman, Timothy Bright, among the moderns.

¹ For a more specific account of these treatments see pp.16-17.
² These are all included in Chaucer's list of the most well-known medical men up to his time:

...Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
Scraption, Razis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn...

Canterbury Tales, Prologue, 11.431-433.
The first of Burton's famous digressions is on the anatomy of the body and the soul. The analysis of the humours, which begins the discussion, is crucial to any study of melancholy. Hippocrates, we are told, had divided the body into "parts contained, or containing" (I, 147), the humours being of the former variety. The ideal is for the four humours, blood, phlegm, choler (or yellow bile), and melancholy (or black bile), to be equally mixed; as Hippocrates puts it: "Health is primarily that state in which these constituent substances are in the correct proportion to each other, both in strength and quantity."¹

Mark Antony's description of Brutus comes readily to mind here:

...the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'²

but in real life this ideal balance rarely, if ever, happens. In fact, if Brutus is a typical example of it, one is perhaps a little glad that the ideally balanced temperament was not more common; moreover, Brutus' tortured speculations and weak rationalizations about the assassination suggest that at this crisis he has veered towards melancholy, caused, Burton might say, by perturbation of the mind.³

There are numerous illustrations in medieval and Renaissance art of men representing the four temperaments; those depicting melancholics are particularly frequent. Klibansky, in his fascinating study of Saturn and Melancholy,⁴ gives many examples, the most important being Dürer's Melancholia I. Here the central figure, surrounded by mathematical, geometrical and astronomical instruments, sits in pregnant meditation. There have been various interpretations

3. This, the last of the six "non-natural" causes, is discussed below in Part ii of this chapter.
of this gloomy and enigmatic figure, as Klibansky shows at length; for example, the suggestion that she is disappointed that there are no more intellectual worlds to conquer (which recalls Alexander's famous complaint about the physical world). The most important and plausible explanation, however, is that she is a typical representation of melancholy as a temperament conducive to genius, which is derived from Aristotle's famous theory that all great men have been melancholy. Less obviously, Dürer's picture of the four apostles has been held to illustrate the four temperaments.

The theory of the humours rests on the assumption that blood is hot and moist, choler hot and dry, phlegm cold and moist, melancholy cold and dry. This determines the physical appearance as well as the mental outlook of the four types of men. The typical man of sanguine complexion is high-spirited, extrovert, and optimistic, inclining to corpulence and ruddiness. The phlegmatic man is rather dull, inactive and slow, also inclining to corpulence, but of a more flabby kind, and with a pale complexion. In violent contrast with this, the choleric man is fierce, headstrong, and violent, of graceful build, and with a yellow complexion. The typical melancholic is lean, dry, hirsute, and dark-complexioned; his mental constitution has been more variously interpreted than the others, and cannot really be fitted into a type, as will be suggested in the course of this study, but fairly constant characteristics are the propensity towards a brooding solitariness, and a detailed speculation and agonizing over subjects ranging from geometry to personal embarrassment.

The interpretations of melancholy by Hippocrates and Galen are in some ways fairly radically opposed to that of

1. Problemata, xxx,i. See below, pp. 8-9.
2. Klibansky agrees with this, though he rearranges the previously accepted allocation of the humours.
Aristotle; together these form the two streams of thought which flow into medieval and Renaissance interpretations. The opposition is between stagnation, physical and mental, resulting in lassitude and dulness, and intense mental activity, even genius. It is to some extent explained by the division between "natural" and "un-natural" melancholy; that is, melancholy as a temperament and melancholy as a disease, but the division is by no means as simple as this. Briefly, Aristotle's theory is that, whereas black bile is normally cold and sluggish and thus slows down the rate of blood-circulation, causing "apoplexy or torpor or despondency or fear"¹, it can become overheated; this happens especially in love-melancholy. The resulting state is one of poetic inspiration and frenzied excitement, with a very thin dividing line between the frenzy of genius and that of madness. The condition caused by this heating of the humour is called "melancholy adust"; any of the four humours can become adust, thus causing melancholy in different degrees, but black bile adust has the most marked effect, since the "atrabilious" temperament is naturally inclined to melancholy in any case. The nature of the affliction will vary according to which of the humours is adust; for example, adustion of phlegm is likely to cause listlessness and that of choler to cause madness. The degree of adustion which will advance the nobility of melancholy, as opposed to its unpleasantness, has been variously disputed, as Burton shows:

Why melancholy men are witty, which Aristotle hath long since maintained in his Problems, and that all learned men, famous philosophers, and lawgivers... have still been melancholy, is a problem much controverted. Jason Pratensis will have it understood of natural melancholy, which opinion Melancthon

inclines to ... and Marsilius Ficinus ... but not simple, for that makes men stupid, heavy, dull ... but mixed with the other humours, phlegm only excepted; and they not adust, but so mixed ... that they be neither too hot nor too cold. Apponensis, cited by Melanthon, thinks it proceeds from melancholy adust, excluding all natural melancholy as too cold. Laurentius condemns his tenent, because adustion of humours makes men mad, as lime burns when water is cast on it. (I, 422)

The important part of Aristotle's theory, which was taken over by the Renaissance humanist Ficino, was that

those who possess an atrabilious temperament in a slight degree are ordinary, but those who have much of it are quite unlike the majority of people. For, if their condition is quite complete, they are very atrabilious; but, if they possess a mixed temperament, they are men of genius.¹

All great men, Aristotle tells us, have been melancholy; witness Empedocles, Plato, and Socrates, for example. Dürer's Melancolia I has already been mentioned as an illustration of this conception of melancholy.

Melancholy adust, though it always produces intense excitement, does not, however, invariably produce a genius; it can just as easily lead to lunacy, or vatic prophecy, or epilepsy (the "sacred" disease, as it was called in ancient Greece²). But, as Dryden reminds us, genius and madness have always been near allied, and Socrates and Shakespeare both group together "the lunatic, the lover and the poet", Socrates remarking that "we owe our greatest blessings to madness".³ Hippocrates and Galen, on the other hand, confine themselves to describing the man of natural melancholy as

2. See below, pp.10-11.
torpid, and blockish, by reason of the thickness and sluggishness of the blood.

Among the moderns, Ficino (a philosopher) seems to be closest to Aristotle, Timothy Bright (a doctor) to Hippocrates and Galen. Ficino, following Aristotle, interprets genius as arising from the natural humour of melancholy itself, but, with Jason Pratensis and Melancthon, he introduces a new terminology which does not appear in Aristotle; that is, between "natural" melancholy, or melancholy of the temperament, which is compatible with genius, and "simple" melancholy, "simple" being interpreted as dull and heavy, the result of the coldness and dryness of the body - the equivalent of Aristotle's "natural" melancholy. This really excludes melancholy adust from being defined as melancholy at all; indeed, Timothy Bright remarks that it is "by an unproper speech called melancholy"¹, since adustion causes burning heat in the blood, which mounts to the brain, and it is in this condition that madness and genius merge into each other: "...that old aphorism of Aristotle may be verified, Nullum magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiae, no excellent wit without a mixture of madness." (I, 422) But as Bright points out, the dominant characteristic of melancholy is the coldness and thickness of the blood. As in much of the Anatomy, the principle of moderation decides the controversy about blood-temperature for Burton; melancholy, he tells us (citing Fracastorrio) should be "neither too hot nor too cold." (I, 422)

The unwillingness of Hippocrates to see anything resembling genius as a result of melancholy is paralleled by his refusal to see anything "sacred" in the disease of epilepsy. "I believe that this disease is not in the least more divine

than any other but has the same nature as other diseases and
a similar cause." 1 All the romantic suggestions of possession
by gods, inspiring divination, are brushed aside. It is a
physical disease and can be helped only by physical remedies;
if appeal to the gods is thought to help in any way, it should
be made in the form of prayer, rather than in attempts at the
"purification" of the victim, as was the custom. But despite
Hippocrates, the element of divine inspiration has a
considerable part in the "noble" interpretation of melancholy,
and physical seizures might be seen, as in the Delphic oracles,
as an extreme example of that type of melancholy which produces
prescience merging into madness. (Klibansky tells us that a
later addition to the Epidemica of Hippocrates "points out the
close connection between melancholy and epilepsy, and actually
states that the only difference between them is that while the
illness is one and the same, it attacks the body in the case
of epilepsy, but the mind in the case of melancholy." 2)

Burton also rather rules out theories of magic or divine
interference; his discussion of causes is specific rather than
numinous. In fact he tends generally to be sceptical about
romantic interpretations of melancholy; for example, he tells
us that melancholics are traditionally heavy eaters, despite
their leanness: "Melancholy men most part have good appetites,
but ill digestion." (II, 27). This is in violent opposition
to the doctrine of courtly love, by which the melancholy lover
cannot eat or sleep, and serves as an illustration of the
difference between the unromantic view of melancholy adopted
by medieval writers3 (that is, those writing outside the courtly

1. The Medical Works of Hippocrates, translated by J.Chadwick
2. R.Klibansky, E.Panofsky and F.Saxl, Saturn and Melancholy,
3. See note on p.175.
tradition of *The Romance of the Rose*, and the "melancholia
generosus" of Ficino and his contemporaries in the Renaissance. On the one hand, the melancholic is regarded as greedy, mean
and cowardly (he is often shown in medieval pictures counting
his wealth, or carrying a purse – a detail picked up by Dürer,
despite his Aristotelian bias\(^1\)); on the other he is seen by
the describers of "noble melancholy" as heroic, self-sacrificing,
and often poetically inspired. The issue is obviously crucial
in a discussion of "heroical love-melancholy".\(^2\)

Even those elements of romance and magic which Burton
does present appear in a very unromantic light; witches and
magicians, he says, "are base, poor, contemptible fellows most
part" (I, 204) – compare Hippocrates' contempt of "witch-doctors
faith-healers, quacks and charlatans"\(^3\) – although he gives some
credence to the idea that the devil breathes his influence into
them, and helps them to bewitch their victims. Again, this
idea of possession by supernatural force is crucial in the
discussion of religious-melancholy.\(^4\) On the other hand,
Timothy Bright, in his usual sane, rational way, treats such
ideas purely as delusions arising out of the disease, which
are to be treated with understanding and indulgence.

The causes of melancholy are either "inbred", proceeding
from the stars,\(^5\) or inherited from parents, for example; or
are divided between "those six non-natural things, so much
spoken of amongst physicians". (I, 216) These are diet,
retention and evacuation, air, exercise, sleeping and waking,
and perturbations of the mind. (The last belongs more properly
to the study of psychological than of physical causes.) In
discussing the first five, Burton again, as in the section on

1. See above, pp. 6–7.
2. See below, p. 60 ff.
5. See below, pp. 42–45.
anatomy, relies heavily on external authority. There is but a hair's breadth between sound advice and that typical of old wives (who always seem to be the scapegoats for erratic remedies).  

In the discussion of diet, the first non-natural cause of melancholy, there seems no reason either to recommend or spurn some of the foods mentioned except that writers of books have said they are good or bad. Burton recognizes his inability to arbitrate himself when he says "A blind man cannot judge of colours nor peradventure of these things." (I, 16) This leads to some ridiculous specifications; for example, bugloss and lettuce are allowed, but cabbage "causeth troublesome dreams, and sends up black vapours to the brain". (I, 220) When reasons are given they are often superstitious; for example, "Savonarola discommends goat's flesh, and so doth Bruerinus ... calling it a filthy beast, and rammish". (I, 218). Timothy Bright's regimen, on the other hand, is consistently organized on the principle of supplying the dryness of the body, and facilitating digestion, with such foods as broths and fruits. In between the more painful treatments of purging and blood-letting the patient is to be tempted by "the juyce, damsing, cherrie, figges, grapes, and abricots: neither are newe walnuts, and greene almonds hurtful in this case".  

This idea of providing dainties for the jaded palate recalls Ficino's recommendation of sweet-scented flowers as a restorative.) As Miss F.A. Yates sarcastically remarks, "We might be in the consulting room of a rather expensive psychiatrist who knows that his patients can afford plenty of gold and holidays in the country, and flowers out of season."  

1. See note on p. 176.  
In the case of a really wealthy melancholic, "aurum potabile" (II, 220) might be prescribed as a cordial, though one imagines it would give him more pleasure to look at his gold than to drink it.

After the rather arbitrary list of foods, bad and good, in the first volume of the Anatomy, Burton gives more constructive advice in Volume II, again exhibiting his love of the mean. "The extremes being both bad, the medium is to be kept..." (II, 34) - the medium, that is, between gluttony and starvation. His good sense and lack of fanaticism are further shown in his remark that "our own experience is the best physician; that diet which is most propitious to one is often pernicious to another..." (II, 29). The advantage which Burton has over the authorities he cites is that he can look more objectively at a varied range of remedies, giving them to the reader for the sake rather of completeness than of helpfulness. One of the differences between the books written by Burton and by Timothy Bright is, indeed, that Burton is writing a complete history of melancholy, and of all who have written about it, whereas Bright is giving his treatise a particular application by personally recommending all the remedies he lists. As has been said, Burton recognized that medicine was not his field; it is in sections such as the "Consolatory Digression containing the Remedies of all manner of Discontents" that his personal counsel comes. It is interesting to note that Bright becomes rather pompous and theoretical in his long section on religious consolation, though from the fact that he later became a divine, and also that he had more commerce with the world than Burton appears to have had, one would expect a more intimate approach. There is no doubt of his sympathy, but it seems to be given from afar. On the other hand, it is at these moments that Burton is in his element. The obvious reason for the more intimate
compassion of Burton is that he is speaking from his own experience, and puts himself in the role of fellow-patient, whereas there is nothing to indicate that Bright has any personal experience of melancholy. Moreover, Burton is here seen at his most original and speculative, though it is here that he has one of his greatest hoards of information. In giving religious counsel he quotes the Bible far less than Bright — and in the medical sections he quotes references far more often, showing a greater theoretical familiarity with the disease than Bright's. Here the defence of Bright would perhaps be that he speaks from experience of actual cases, while Burton sees through the spectacles of books.

Again, on the subject of the second of the non-natural things, retention and evacuation, Burton presents a comprehensive summary of different methods, whereas Bright presents his own particular method. In a melancholy person, Burton tells us, there is often something abnormal about the functions of the body: "A melancholy temperature, retention of hemrods, monthly issues, bleeding at nose..." (I, 381); this abnormality is both a cause and an effect of melancholy. Hippocrates mentions most of these symptoms in his Aphorisms and Epidemica; for example, about the humour itself he says, "In melancholic diseases, a flow of humours to one part of the body is dangerous, in that either apoplexy, a fit, madness or blindness will follow"¹, and about constipation, "At Thasis the wife of Delearces... took a high fever with shivering as the result of grief... She remained constipated even when the bowels were stimulated."²

As the last remark suggests, when normal evacuation does not occur it must be forced, and Burton mentions various methods

². Ibid., p. 79.
of doing this, all of which sound extremely unpleasant. However much the melancholic must be regaled with delicate meats, stimulated with exotic scents, and soothed with sweet music, he must also submit himself to the harsher treatments of purging and blood-letting and evacuation of other humours. No doubt he would have had to be very anxious to get better to allow horse leeches to be applied to his hemrods, or a hole to be bored in his head to let out noxious vapours. As has been said, the typical melancholic has black, sluggish blood,¹ and the removal of some of it will lessen the predominance of the melancholy humour. Burton cites Hippocrates' sanction for at least one of these painful remedies: "'...in melancholy and mad men, the varicose tumour or haemorrhoides appearing doth heal the same'." (II, 237)

More unpleasant, though perhaps not quite so painful, are the instructions for purging the patient, both upwards and downwards. Purges range from gentle ones such as senna and cassia, to strong, such as "the confection of hamech". One of the more extreme types of purges is hellebore, which Burton uses almost as a talisman for melancholy; indeed, he tells us of "a common proverb among the Greeks² and Latins, to bid a dizzard or a madman go take hellebore", (II, 230) and it is included in the frontispiece of the book.

Borage and Hellebore fill two scenes,
Sovereign plants to purge the veins
Of melancholy, and cheer the heart,
Of those black fumes which make it smart... (I, 8)

It has been suggested that the garland on the head of Dürer's Melancolia is of hellebore, though Klibansky identifies its twisted components as water parsley and water cress, used together as a kind of plaster on the sick person's head in

1. Bright mentions that his patient, M, has been found to have blood of this nature.
2. See note on p. 176,
order to restore moisture to his desiccated brain. We are told that "Quercetan prefers a syrup of hellebore ...before all remedies whatsoever." (II, 239)

The third of the six non-natural things to be considered is air (which provides the opportunity for the famous "Digression of the Air" to be discussed below). In one of his essays Hippocrates places much emphasis on the effects of climate, water supply and country on both the physical and mental attributes of men living in a particular area. For example, those who live in a place sheltered from northerly winds and exposed to warm winds from the south-east and south-west, and who are forced to drink brackish fen water, "will thus have moist heads full of phlegm, and this, flowing down from the head, is likely to disturb their inner organs." The curses of Coriolanus:

All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome!

or

You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens...

and of Caliban:

All the infections that the sun sucks up
From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall, and make him
By inch-meal a disease!

point to the unhealthiness of such a situation. Julius Claudinus is Burton's authority for the recommendation of a

5. Ibid., III,iii.
6. The Tempest, II,ii.
house inclining to the east. Winds from the south and west are to be shunned; Montanus "especially forbids us to open windows to a south wind". (II, 65) The phlegmatic temperament, accentuated by bad air and bad water, causes men living in such areas to be slow and flabby, and to lack energy and initiative. On the other hand, those who live in an area with prevailing winds blowing from the opposite direction (north-west and north-east) will be lean and lithe, troubled with an excess of bile, not of phlegm, and hence fierce, war-like and courageous. Hippocrates uses these examples to illustrate the advantages of climate and constitution which Europeans have over Asiatics. Indeed, Burton localizes this contrast within Greece itself: "...the Boeotians in Greece were dull and heavy... Attica most acute, pleasant, and refined." (II, 61)

There is, then, good precedent for Burton's consideration of the influence of climate on health, though he is more specific and personal than Hippocrates, mentioning various particular localities that he knows; in fact, it is here that some of our biographical knowledge of Burton emerges, as in his praise of "Segrave in Leicestershire (which town I am now bound to remember)" (II, 63-64); "For I am now incumbent of that rectory, presented thereto by my right honourable patron the Lord Berkly" (II, 273), he tells us in a note; and later on he speaks of "Oldbury in the confines of Warwickshire, where I have often looked about me with great delight, at the foot of which hill I was born." (II, 68) (Such indications of personal experience and recollection occur more commonly in the sections about psychological causes.)

The sweet and wholesome air of the country is of course to be preferred to the smoke and turmoil of the city, but when the latter is unavoidable one must "correct nature by art."(II, 66) Laurentius, for example, "commends water-lilies, a vessel of warm water to evaporate in the room, which will make a more
delightsome perfume, if there be added orange-flowers, peels of citrons, rosemary, cloves, bays, rosewater, rose-vinegar, benzoin, ladanum, styrax, and such-like gums, which make a pleasant and acceptable perfume." (II, 66) All this sounds rather overpowering, but Burton provides a more homely touch when he says that the smoke of juniper, recommended by Bessardus Bisantinus, "is in great request with us at Oxford, to sweeten our chambers." (II, 66)

The beneficial effect of exercise, the fourth of the "non-natural things", on the melancholy mind and body is a commonplace in twentieth century psychology, and seems to have been so from ancient times. For example, "Galen prefers exercise before all physic, rectification of diet, or any regiment in what kind soever; 'tis nature's physician." (II, 71) To cite Hippocrates again, he recommends the patient in the case of some "bodily superfluity" which has "disturbed the psyche", to walk in the early morning "gradually becoming more brisk, and gymnastics for those accustomed to this form of exercise, proportionate in severity to the increase of diet."  

Burton, however, points out that in most cases the exercise should not be very violent, and should proceed no farther than "a beginning sweat, as being perilous if it exceed." (II, 71) In fact, Burton seems to recommend exercise rather as a recreation of the mind than of the body. He starts off with such sports as tennis, hawking and hunting, fowling and fishing, bowling, shooting and football, sounding much like Corax in *The Lover's Melancholy*;

Where's your great horse, your hounds, your set at tennis,
Your balloon-ball, the practice of your dancing,
Your casting of the sledge, or learning how
To toss a pike? all changed into a sonnet!

When the matter is seen in this light, it is not surprising that the Queen remembers that Hamlet, having had in his melancholy state little inclination for exercise, is "fat and scant of breath".

But after listing these pleasures, sometimes rather dubiously ("Many gentlemen in like sort will wade up to the arm-holes upon such occasions, and voluntarily undertake that, to satisfy their pleasure, which a poor man for a good stipend would scarce be hired to undergo") (II, 73), Burton relaxes in the description of the pleasures he himself has experienced. Rather in the same way that a twentieth-century psychiatrist would recommend a fortnight in Florida, he speaks of rowing "with music...upon the waters" (II, 75), or floating in a gondola through the Grand Canal in Venice, or gazing on the sumptuousness of a Persian palace. (This looks forward to Burton's feverish curiosity about foreign countries, expressed in the "Digression of the Air", which was never to be indulged.)

There is no doubt, however, about where Burton's strongest inclinations lie, when one reads his rapturous praise of learning, and all who have advanced it, whether as patrons, historians, poets, philosophers, or divines. Like Bright, Burton speaks of the consolations of Scripture "...which is like an apothecary's shop, wherein are all remedies for all infirmities of mind, purgatives, cordials, alteratives, corroboratives, lenitives, etc" (II, 94), but unlike Bright he does not lapse into a paraphrase of the book of Job. In reading this section one is reminded of such passionate expressions of joy in light after darkness as that at the end of Book I of The Advancement of Learning, or of the solemn but genuine delight in absorbing and conveying knowledge found in such Renaissance scholars as Ascham and Cheke, and the more abandoned enjoyment expressed by the "University wits", such as Nashe and Greene.
The space Burton devotes to the recreation of learning is almost great enough to warrant its being called a digression, and as such it is really an answer to the "Digression of the Miseries of Scholars" in Volume I. Although there is still much bitterness expended, it is obvious from the later passage that to Burton the pure joy of exploration in ever more distant spheres of knowledge, and the appreciation of the great minds which have carried on the endless task, make it all worthwhile.¹

Although the wakeful state of melancholics is frequently referred to in *The Anatomy*, especially in the section on love-melancholy, Burton's actual sub-section on sleeping and waking, the fifth of the non-natural things, is very short. It is not always lack of sleep, he tells us, that causes melancholy (or vice versa); too much sleep can be just as harmful. In fact Hippocrates believes that there are circumstances in treatment in which sleep should be discouraged; for example, he says that when any one takes a draught of hellebore he should be made to move about rather than left to rest and sleep. Scholars and lovers are chiefly afflicted by sleeplessness, and this accounts for their leanness and dryness, and lack of strength. Here the distinction between the inspired and the dull melancholic is again important; while the first type, maddened by the fumes of genius, shuts himself up in his ivory tower and writes poetry through the night, as it were, the second shuts himself in his bed chamber and gives himself up to the fumes of Morpheus. As a result his head is filled with "gross humours" and "excrements", and he lapses into "that phlegmatic, swinish, cold, and sluggish melancholy which Melancthon speaks of." (I, 249).

¹ For a discussion of the "Digression of the Miseries of Scholars", see below, pp. 26–30.
Naturally enough, since it is more romantic to lack sleep than to have too much, most of the melancholies depicted in Jacobean drama suffer from the former. For example, Penthea in Ford's *The Broken Heart* refuses to eat or sleep and gradually dwindles away. On the other hand, timely sleep can be a sovereign cordial to restore the exhausted sufferer. Sleep and sweet music, followed sometimes by a reconciliation with a loved person, are the prelude to several such recoveries. Those which come most readily to mind occur in *King Lear* (where the beneficial effects of sleep are cancelled by later heart-tearing) and *Pericles*. In fact the reconciliation scene in *Pericles* is one of the most beautiful in all Shakespeare's work. The unreality of dream, "the rarest dream that e'er dull sleep Did mock sad fools withal", suddenly solidifies into such incredulous happiness when Pericles realizes that it really is Marina before him, that he is in danger of meeting the same fate as Gloucester, whose heart "burst smilingly":

> O Helicanus! strike me, honour'd sir;  
> Give me a gash, put me to present pain,  
> Lest this great sea of joys rushing upon me  
> O'erbear the shores of my mortality,  
> And drown me with their sweetness.

Ford does the same thing, though rather more laboriously, in *The Lover's Melancholy*, in the scene in which both Meleander's daughter and his health are restored to him.

The subject of sleeping and waking is intimately connected with the last of the six non-natural things, the perturbations of the mind, as any study of Lady Macbeth will show. But with this we pass on to the discussion of the causes of melancholy which are psychological rather than physical.

1. *Pericles*, V,i.
Chapter 1, Part ii. The Psychological causes

Here Burton is on more familiar ground than when he describes the physical causes of melancholy; the section on the miseries of scholars in particular reveals much bitter speculation on his own experience and observation. There is, however, ample precedent for a study of the "passions of the mind". Before proceeding to the subject, Burton gives passing reference to Plato ("it is most true which Plato saith in his Charmides, omnia corporis mala ab anima procedere, all the mischiefs of the body proceed from the soul" (I, 250)) and to "Democritus in Plutarch", and goes on to instance such near-contemporaries as Agrippa, Cardan, Lemnius, Suarez, Timothy Bright and "Wright the Jesuit" (I, 252). It is surprising that he does not mention Galen, since the latter's tract on "The passions and errors of the soul" was extremely influential on later works, such as that of Thomas Wright, who actually refers to Galen in using his well-known image illustrating self-exoneration: namely, that "other men's faults be before our eies, but our own behind our backs".  

Galen's division of the passions into two main types, the irascible and the concupiscible, was followed by most later writers (though not, for instance, by Descartes). The division forms the skeleton of most later classifications, though the flesh put around it at various times may be of

   Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,  
   Wherein he puts alms for oblivion...  
   Troilus and Cressida, III, iii.
3. In his ordering of the passions, Descartes remarks, "I know well that I am parting company with all those who have written on this subject before." Philosophical Works, translated by E.S. Haldane and G.T. Ross, Cambridge, 1931, p. 361.
slightly different colour and arrangement. Any division of the passions is in the end rather artificial, since in real life passions conflict and blur into each other; but a framework is necessary in order to discuss them. Although it was to be so widely taken over, Galen's conception of passion is rather different from that of other writers cited by Burton: "Aristotle reduceth all to pleasure and pain, Plato to love and hatred, Vives to good and bad."(I, 258) The whole point of Galen's division of the passions into consupiscence and ire is that all passion is contrary to reason; therefore a passion, by definition, cannot ever be "good". He does not follow Plato's idea, found in the Republic and the Crito, that the force for evil can be channelled into a force for good, and does not allow that passion can be compatible with reason, as Plato does with reference to love, in the Phaedrus for instance. Galen assumes that the passions, as Burton puts it, "rather follow sense than reason, because they are drowned in corporeal organs of sense". (I, 258).

In Wright's list of the passions, their violent opposition is stressed; for example he places together love and hatred, desire (or consupiscence) and "abomination", delight (or pleasure) and sadness (or pain), hope and despair, fear and audacity, and ire (presumably the opposite of ire is a sort of gentle sweetness, which cannot really be classed as a passion). This idea of opposition is also found in Sir John Davies' rather simplified list: "Joy, grieve, and feare, and hope, and hate, and love"¹ which resembles that of Burton:

All other passions are subordinate unto these four, or six, as some will: love, joy, desire, hatred, sorrow, fear; the rest, as anger, envy, emulation, pride, jealousy, anxiety, mercy, shame, discontent, despair, ambition, avarice, etc., are reducible

unto the first; and if they be immoderate, they consume the spirits, and melancholy is especially caused by them. (I, 258)

(Evidently the passion of anger is considered to be sufficiently implied by that of hatred.) Thus Burton does not really commit himself either to Galen (or Wright) or to Plato, preserving his usual detachment in recording all the known opinions.

Of course, in a study of melancholy the passions most immediately relevant are those of sorrow and fear, and these Burton deals with first. The main point about these passions is that they are often experienced for no apparent reason, and since Freud had not yet invented psychoanalysis the cause usually remained buried deep in the subconscious, as modern terminology has it. "In sooth I know not why I am so sad" could almost be a motto for seventeenth-century melancholy and twentieth-century depression. Freud, making a careful distinction between "mourning and melancholia", the first of which has a known cause, and the second none, says that "in mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself".1 In the former case one can console the sufferer for his loss of a loved person, but in the latter, since the cause of melancholy is not known, it is very difficult to eradicate. Also it is perhaps easier to restore the mourning person's faith in the world than the melancholic's faith in himself, as the latter will naturally assume that nobody is better qualified to know about his "ego" than he is.

Likewise, Burton knows that fear of the unknown is far more terrible than fear of a definite object. As in the discussion of sorrow, physical symptoms are inextricably joined with mental ones; where sorrow "hinders concoction, refrigerates the heart, takes away stomach, colour, and sleep; thickens the blood", (I, 260) and the rest of the afflictions of natural

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melancholy mentioned above, fear causes "Many lamentable effects...as to be red, pale, tremble, sweat; it makes sudden cold and heat to come over all the body, palpitation of the heart, syncope, etc." (I, 261) Hippocrates and Galen would recommend the appropriate physical remedies - blood-letting, purges and the like - but what is new in Timothy Bright, and what Burton takes over, is the attempt at consolation and understanding; that is, the attempt to treat the patient as a person, rather than the physical vessel of a disease. In Bright, and even more in Burton, one is constantly aware of a deep sympathy and commiseration. Burton was a divine, and Bright eventually became one, and this qualified them rather more than most people to counsel the distressed. Contrary to what one might expect, since Bright is first of all a doctor, he goes straight to spiritual consolation¹, whereas Burton comes forward with most personal feeling in the section on the "miseries of scholars". This again points out the difference between Bright and Burton noted earlier, that is, that Bright, as a therapist, speaks from experience with other patients, Burton, as fellow-patient, from experience with himself.

Burton's "Digression of the Miseries of Scholars" is more or less an expansion of Chaucer's description of the Clerk of Oxenford:

As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and thereto soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;
For he had geten him yet no benefyce...²

The miseries of scholars are two-fold, both of mind and of body. Great physical hardship is endured; scholars are initially prone to melancholy, because of their solitariness and incessant mental labour, which dries up the body and

1. See below, pp. 91–97.
subjects it to a multitude of horrible diseases, ranging from gout to "cachexia". (I, 302) These complaints are exacerbated by the scholar's lack of care for himself; a musician treats his instrument with far more consideration than a scholar does his, although it is his own brain.

Further mental anguish is caused by social inadequacy. Scholars are scorned in society, Burton says, because they cannot perform manly exercises, such as riding, "which every clown can do" (I, 303), cannot carry on a light conversation, flatter a lady, take charge of an entertainment, "which every common swasher can do" (I, 303). They often make themselves ridiculous through their constant preoccupation; Archimedes running naked through the streets is a typical if extreme example.

If the scholar survives the physical and social hardships, he can scarcely hope to overcome the material ones as well: "...after many expenses, he is fit for preferment; where shall he have it? he is as far to seek it as he was (after twenty years' standing) at the first day of his coming to the university." (I, 306) Most probably he will linger out his life in the menial capacity of schoolmaster or curate; "he hath his labour for his pain, a modicum to keep him till he be decrepit, and that is all." (I, 306) Burton laments the scarcity of true students at the universities, which he must have found in his own experience; most students are concerned to obtain, through influence, a good position in law, medicine, or divinity, and pass over history, philosophy and philology "as pleasant toys, fitting only table-talk, and to furnish them with discourse". (I, 309)

Throughout this digression, Burton expresses a deep disgust at superficial learning, and at anxiety for money

1. Burton, it appears from Anthony à Wood's account, did not suffer from this particular distress. See below, p. 153,
rather than zeal for knowledge. Ever moderate, even in criticism, Burton acknowledges that the fault is not all on the patrons' side: "In accusing them, I do not altogether excuse us; both are faulty..."; but he goes on to say, "in my judgement, theirs is the greater fault, more apparent causes, and much to be condemned". (I, 313) Since he himself was not concerned with gaining money, he says, he has not pushed himself forward, as he might have done. He, and any other true scholar, would feel that he had betrayed learning if he jostled for a place, for which he would be unfit because this very jostling would prevent him from giving sufficient time to his study.

The last part of this passage is in Latin, and as though released from moderation by writing in another tongue, Burton pours out abuse on the sort of scholars commonly found in universities at this time, and in particular those studying theology: "...sacred Theology is defiled and the heavenly Muses prostituted by these ignorant mountebanks" (I, 328). He himself is implicated in the "degradation of the universities," being a member of one which, like all the rest, hands out degrees to ignoramuses who have money and ambition, and neglects learned men, such as himself, who have not. These false pretenders to knowledge are compared, in a series of contemptuous images, to "huckstering harpies", "flies to the milk-pail", and "marionettes pulled by strings". (I, 328) Finally, because theology has been defiled by such men, Burton "ventures" to repeat the abusive expressions which some vulgar fellow has applied to the clergy, that they are a rotten crowd, beggarly, uncouth, filthy, melancholy, miserable, despicable, and contemptible". (I, 330)

1. All the quotations in this paragraph are from the translation in the Everyman edition.
The bitterness of this passage is only matched by that of the famous passage in Volume III in which Burton reviles rich people who refuse charity to the poor. In this section, as F.P. Wilson points out, the refrain-like repetition of the phrase "ride on" (somewhat like Iago's "put money in thy purse") is beautifully worked into the texture of the passage. But this very control tends to distance it a little, though there is no doubt as to the depth of feeling expressed in it, whereas in the "miseries of scholars" Burton completely unveils himself, revealing his bitter anger and contempt, and even more his sadness ("the pity of it") that precious learning should be abused. In this passage the passions of envy, malice, hatred, emulation and faction, which Burton has previously analysed as causes of melancholy, are all concentrated in the person of the superficial, ignorant cleric, while Burton avails himself in particular of the passion of anger in expressing his disillusion and disgust.

This passage illustrates well Burton's original approach to the subject of melancholy; he does not just list the passions but, as it were, personifies them. He acknowledges that he himself is no god, and puts himself in the position of fellow-sufferer with the reader. We know very little about Burton's life, beyond Anthony à Wood's short description, but he reveals enough of himself in the course of The Anatomy for us to gain a very deep insight into the character of his life and thought. We need not go to the extreme of Evans, who draws a full-length psychological portrait of Burton,

1. This passage has been shamelessly plagiarized by Sterne, as Ferriar points out in his Illustrations of Sterne, London, 1798. Compare Tristram Shandy, V, i., and The Anatomy, III, 35-36.
mentioning such traumas as his resentment towards his mother, his unhappiness at school, his frustration at being celibate, and so on, but The Anatomy is certainly to some extent an autobiography, and one has the same feeling of intimacy with Burton as if it were.

In any discussion of the passions, the ultimate aim must be to learn how to control them, and most writers on the subject suggest two remedies: moderation, and self-knowledge. Galen says that "The road to temperance is through self-discipline"¹, and compares the passions to a wild horse which must be made "submiss and manageable".² We are reminded of the image Plato draws in the Phaedrus, of the soul, like a charioteer, driving two horses, one docile, and one wild, and of how, when the wild horse tries to break away, it must be pulled up by the driver, and gradually brought to the state of obedience of the other horse. Wright uses this image when he talks of "unbridled"³ self-love, and Bright compares a sinful man to a "stubburne and unbroaken horse" which "shaketh off reason, dispiseth her manage, and layeth the noble ryder in the dust".⁴

Temperance and self-control are aided by self-knowledge; this was just as much a commonplace in Burton's time as it is now, as is shown by its inclusion in Polonius' trite list of axioms. Sir John Davies urges "Nosce teipsum" with rather more eloquence. The subject of self-control, he shows, goes right back to the doctrine of the humours, since the well-being and balance of the mind must be supplemented by that of

². Ibid., p.46.
⁴. A Treatise of Melancholie, p.190. Freud also uses the image of the horse in connection with the passions in The Ego and the Id, op.cit., XIX,25.
the body.

But purge the humors, and the rage appease,
Which this distemper in the fansie wrought,
Then shall the Wit, which never had disease
Discourse and judge discreetly, as it ought.

Man must recognize both his nobility, as of angels, and
his proneness to unruly passions, as of beasts. The best way
to achieve the former is to look into his own mind, as into
a mirror, and frame his life as a prelude to immortality,
rather than as an end in itself. In this search for truth
and meaning in life man's instrument is reason:

For all acts done without true Reason's light
Do from the passion of the Sense proceed.

The "dignity of man", praised by so many Renaissance writers -
Pico della Mirandola, Vives, Sir John Davies, Shakespeare
("What a piece of work is a man!") - can easily degenerate
into baseness, as Burton points out on the first page of
The Anatomy. Though he is speaking here rather of original
sin than of the passions, the Fall itself was an occasion in
which the passions of greed, vanity and ambition won the
victory over reason.

It is interesting to compare Burton's exposition of
melancholy with twentieth-century expositions of depression,
and to see how Burton stands out from obscure writers on the
same theme, like Timothy Bright, just as Freud stands out from
his predecessors and followers, through originality. Where
Burton's originality lies in the personal bias of his analysis
of melancholy, Freud's lies in revolutionary methods for
probing deep into the consciousness, methods such as psycho-

1. Sir John Davies, The Poems, ed.Clare Howard, New York, 1941,
   1,102.
2. Ibid.; 173. One might compare Donne's treatment of this
   theme in his verse-letter "To Sir Edward Herbert at Julyers"
   where the passions are compared to beasts which must be
tamed: How happy' is hee, which hath due place assign'd
   To' his beasts, and disaforested his mind!
3. E.Cassirer (ed.), The Renaissance Philosophy of Man,
4. Ibid., "A Fable about Man", p.387.
analysis, dream interpretation and hypnosis. Is Freud more successful than Burton in analysing melancholy? Evans does not seem to think so; in fact he asserts that hardly any treatment used in twentieth-century psychiatry, with the exception of shock therapy, is left out by Burton. "Modern psychiatry", he claims, "would not disagree with him except as to detail and emphasis."\(^1\) The main objection to Burton's work, when placed in the light of twentieth century knowledge, is that it is not scientific; Evans remarks that his classifications are outworn, his descriptions too discursive. But "what remains of his clinical picture is highly creditable."\(^2\) Burton's ideas can easily be translated into twentieth-century terms; for example Evans commends Burton's perception of "anxiety" as the "central symptom", the difference between real anxiety and that determined by feelings of "guilt", and the importance of "excess" as a symptom, rendered by Evans as a "regressive and compensatory mechanism". In other words, the ideas are sound, but they lack a system; "His therapy, like his etiology, lacked a supporting psychology."\(^3\) In the obvious sense, of course, Burton patently does have a system—witness the Aristotelian minuteness of division in his table of contents. He is, in fact, on the one hand so much concerned to be logical and comprehensive, as he laboriously demonstrates in his sections on the anatomy of the body and soul, and, on the other, so much inclined to enlarge on subjects that interest him, whether they are relevant or not, as in the famous "Digression of the Air", that one is at a loss whether to commend the uninspired diligence of the first passage, or to rejoice at the freedom of the second. One thing is clear, though: Burton would not be read today if he had confined

2. Ibid., p.99.
3. Ibid., p.106.
himself to the former task.

Yet how much more readable is Burton than even Freud! And in Freud's disciples, psychiatry becomes riddled with jargon (complex, frustration, perversion, and the like), and horrible neologisms by men Wright would have included among his "worthy parolists" had he lived in the twentieth century: words such as "deaggressivization", and (Mendelson's favourite word), "conceptualize". The universality of Burton's outlook, in his study of melancholy, on the perennial problems of man, becomes in twentieth-century studies a survey of much more specialized sections of human thought and emotion, which are signified by a rash of "nosological" terms: narcissism, libido, repression, paranoia, and so on; terms which are no doubt necessary in a detailed study, but which can be understood only by specialists. This means that whereas Burton makes obscure ideas accessible for people who are unable or disinclined to read the tomes he has explored, modern psychiatrists obscure them even further in a veil of syllables. One can hardly imagine a depressed person receiving much consolation from being told that in his present state of melancholia "an object-cathexis has been replaced by an identification". One wonders, too, whether concepts in which Burton believed - "conscience", for example - are any more abstruse or abstract than the deities of the Freudian mythology - the "censor", "id", "libido", "Oedipus complex", and so on. Even to modern psychiatrists, Burton is surely clearer than their contemporaries.

(Of course, the aims of Burton and Freud are completely different; Burton tries to make himself accessible to his fellow-melancholics, Freud to his fellow-psychiatrists. Since

the world contains more of the former than of the latter, it follows that Burton's audience will be larger.)

Burton, then, opens himself very intimately to his readers, as has been illustrated from the passage on the "miseries of scholars", and it is his ability to do this that is one of the chief attractions of the book as a whole, saving it from any suspicion of pedantry. Although potted accounts of ancient and modern causes, symptoms and remedies are put in for the benefit of those who have not access or inclination to the tomes Burton has drawn on, and for the sake of completeness, Burton does not retire behind his learning like a comfortable cloak, but reveals himself in all his rags and riches of body and mind. It is because the book is not only an anatomy of melancholy, but also of Burton's melancholy, that it is so different from all the treatises of melancholy which preceded it and which he cites so voluminously.
In contrast to his exposition of love, which begins with the Platonic definition of its two categories, spiritual and natural, Burton's treatment of the soul as an actual phenomenon tends to be confined to Aristotle rather than Plato. This is in keeping with the tone of strict analysis, rather than of rhapsodic description, which pervades the first book of The Anatomy. Of course, this is not to say that Plato is purely rhapsodic; he analyses the soul and its functions with as strict a regard for accuracy of terms as does Aristotle. The difference in the two treatments is that Aristotle divides the soul into ever-diminishing categories, starting with its vegetal, sensitive and rational qualities, and proceeding to expound these faculties in their logical order; Plato, on the other hand, pays much more attention to the fact that our experience of the soul does after all come from our experience of being human. Thus, he works from humanity back to its crystallization in the soul, whereas Aristotle works in the opposite direction, beginning with the anatomy of the soul and fitting it into plants, animals, and only then into human beings. The colder logic of Aristotle, as compared with Plato, on this subject, is seen when one sets Aristotle's treatise on the soul against Plato's Phaedo. What makes the Phaedo such an intense and exciting work is that Socrates' defence of the immortality of the soul is given a peculiar pungency by the fact that his own body is about to submit to death. The tension lent to the work by this situation is of course completely lacking in Aristotle, who is purely concerned with writing a treatise and presenting the facts as he sees them.
It is somewhat strange that Burton should adopt Aristotle's rather than Plato's mode of attack on this subject, particularly as he does refer to Plato with apparent approval in the discussion of love (III, 40), in which reference to the soul can hardly be avoided if one is following the *Phaedrus* or the *Symposium*, or any other Platonic treatment of love. One would imagine that Burton in speaking of the soul would be far more sympathetic towards Plato than towards Aristotle, considering the orientation of his whole work towards human nature and behaviour. It seems, however, that Aristotle's strict, scientific classification of the soul and its faculties is more acceptable to him than Plato's more abstract and philosophical approach; at least, this is so when his eccentric sense of duty obliges him to be as detached and crisp as possible.\(^1\) In the section on love-melancholy it is another matter; here, since the subject is so closely involved with human emotion, and cannot be abstracted from this colouring, Burton's interest in humanity is not outweighed by his feeling of the necessity for comprehensive and scientific accuracy.

Burton's "anatomy of the soul" follows immediately after the discussion on the anatomy of the body, and it seems almost to be suggested that the facts presented in both cases are equally capable or incapable of demonstration. Of course the anatomy of the body was in any case much more a matter of conjecture in the seventeenth than in the twentieth century, but it would seem that, on the other hand, knowledge of the properties of the soul was in the seventeenth century, by Burton at least, made much less a matter of conjecture and

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1. The fact that Aristotle presides in the discussion of the soul, and Plato in that of love-melancholy, in which Burton feels he has more scope for originality, may perhaps be seen as an example of the tension between extrinsic (theoretical) and intrinsic (observed and experienced) aspects of the subject which result in the double construction discussed below in Chapter IV.
much more definite and pragmatic than would be the case in
the twentieth. Aristotle, and Burton after him, simply
assume the existence of the soul as a part of the making of
vegetables, animals and humans, and analyse it into an
ascending scale of functions, ranging from the vegetal to
the divine. The lowest function is that of nutrition; the
highest, that of reasoning or intellection. All these faculties
are contained in the human soul, but, as Sir John Davies puts
it in *Nosce Teipsum*,

...these three powers, three sorts of men doe make;
For some, like plants, their veines do onely fill,
And some, like beasts, their senses' pleasure take,
And some, like angels, doe contemplate still. 1

There are various controversies about the soul which
Burton feels obliged to deal with, the most important being
where it is located, what it is made of, and whether it is
immortal: "...many doubts arise about the essence, subject,
seat, distinction, and subordinate faculties of it."(I, 154)
Burton's views on these topics seem to be largely dependent
on Aristotle's; in fact he refers in his first sentence to
Aristotle's definition as being one "which most philosophers
approve", and though he also refers to doubts raised by men
such as Paracelsus, Pico della Mirandola, "and other neoteric
philosophers"(I, 154), his main exposition proceeds in an
orderly way through an enumeration of the qualities found in
the three sorts of soul according to Aristotle, rather than
an analysis of the problems at any length.

These controversies about the soul are reflected in much
of the poetry written by Burton's contemporaries. Poets such
as Donne, most obviously in "The Extasie" and Sir John Davies
in "Nosce Teipsum", tend towards a Platonic point of view;

I,80.
for example, Sir John Davies refers at one point to Plato's theory of recollection:

How can we hope, that through the eye and ear
This dying sparkle, in this cloudy place
Can recollect these beams of knowledge clear,
Which were infused in the first minds by grace?¹

Perhaps it is significant that Aristotle's viewpoint, presented for example by John Davies of Hereford, makes much less exciting poetry; the soul, he says, is that

Wherein three Faculties still working be,
Animall, Vitall, and the Naturall:
The Animall divided is in three,
Motive, Sensitive and Principall:
The Principall hath three parts speciall,
Imagination, Reason, Memory,
The Power Sensitive includes the powres
Of the External Senses sev'rally
The Motive powre, the Corps to stirre procures,
As long as Vitall faculty indures...²

and so on. It is just as probable, however, that the fault here lies in the poet rather than in the source.

On the question of the composition of the soul, various philosophers, as Aristotle indicates in the first part of his treatise, had assigned it to different elements: fire, air, and water. The only element excluded was earth, for the obvious reason that it is too substantial, and would sink the soul with matter. There are many more theories about its location, and almost every human organ seems to have been at some time a candidate for possession; the most popular, however, are the heart and the brain.

At times Burton is even in conflict with Plato; for example, on the vexed question of whether the soul has an innate memory, referred to by Sir John Davies in the quotation above, he seems

to be in agreement with Aristotle, and, though he is well aware of it (I, 163), does not support Plato's theory in the *Phaedo*: namely, that the soul in its journey towards the body experiences the light of abstract truth and beauty, of which on earth we see but a shadow; and, when it joins the body and is born, has faint recollections of this ultimate vision, though it is mostly lost. On the contrary, Burton echoes the opinion of Aristotle that "when one first learns or receives a sense impression one does not recover any memory (for none has gone before)"¹, and presents the point of view, later to be adopted by Locke, that the soul is a passive receptacle of impressions: "as a bare and razed table at first, capable of all forms and notions."(I, 166)²

On the fundamental question of immortality Burton cannot be said to expand upon the orthodox doctrine. He begins by saying of the rational soul that it is "a pleasant but a doubtful subject" (as one terms it), and with the like brevity to be discussed"(I, 162). True to his word, he devotes but three pages to the topic, which consist largely of references to the many people who have plunged into its mysteries, rather than of a personal attempt at explanation. Consistently refusing to embrace Plato's point of view, Burton does not treat the famous "Elysian Fields" with any more respect than "that Turkey paradise"; both are "fabulous fictions"(I, 164); and where Tully had referred Atticus to the *Phaedo*, Burton, suddenly deserting even Aristotle, refers his readers to the

2. Locke's exposition of this idea was later to be explosively denounced by Blake as a pernicious doctrine which dealt death to any sort of effort on man's part to be a free-thinking individual.
Church Fathers:

Hierome, Austin, and other Fathers of the Church, hold that the soul is immortal, created of nothing, and so infused into the child or embryo in his mother's womb, six months after the conception; not as those of brutes, which are *ex traduce*, and dying with them vanish into nothing. (1, 164)

This view seems to be endorsed by Burton, but he offers no amplification of it. Evidently Aristotle can be trusted to analyse the souls of vegetables and animals, but when we step into the realm of humanity and the rational soul, Christian doctrine takes over. In the same way, Aquinas had earlier tried to combine his respect for Aristotle's method of analysis of the vegetable and animal souls, with his reflections of Christian doctrine about the human soul. An example of the clash which inevitably occurred at times is his parenthetical addition to the text of Aristotle's *De Anima*, on the question of whether the soul ever returns to the body: "(But it is utterly impossible that the dead rise again)".

Aquinas' commentary on the *De Anima* is for the most part a fairly literal one, but there are occasional remarks which reveal the conflict of doctrines; for example, he explains that Aristotle "says 'or god' because at that time men believed that the heavenly bodies were gods, and that they were alive". In the *Summa Theologica*, the Aristotelian system of minute division into categories is used in a Christian context, somewhat as in Burton's treatment of the soul.

In Burton's section on the soul there are some hints of the closer human analysis which is to follow; for example, he notes in passing the distortion of the faculty of imagination.

2. Ibid., p. 48.
suffered by melancholies:

In melancholy men this faculty is most powerful and strong, and often hurts, producing many monstrous and prodigious things, especially if it be stirred up by some terrible object, presented to it from common sense or memory. (I, 159)

thus foreshadowing his later treatment of the passions of the mind (I, 250-300), with its digression "of the force of imagination" (I, 253-258). The point is later developed in the treatise of Religious Melancholy; for example, in the "Definition of Despair", and its causes and symptoms (III, 392-408). Burton, though sympathetic on the whole towards the Stoic doctrine of patience in distress, does not believe that the irrational passions and fears suffered in melancholy should be imprisoned in the soul, but that the soul should be relieved by expression of these, to a close friend, for instance. Here Burton is very much in agreement with modern psychiatrists and, especially, with the system of psychotherapy in which the patient is encouraged to work off his resentments on the psychiatrist.

But apart from these brief glimpses of what is to follow, Burton cannot be said to show very much originality in his treatment of the soul, although it is a subject on which, considering his profession, he had presumably meditated at some depth. For his division of the soul into its various categories he relies on Aristotle, and for the doctrine about immortality that he accepts, he refers the reader to the Church Fathers. Perhaps one reason why he does not go into the subject very deeply at this stage is that he intends to talk of religious beliefs and doubts at so much greater length in the actual treatise of Religious Melancholy. Another reason could be that his analysis of the soul comes almost at the beginning of Volume I, when he has just been speaking of the anatomy of the body, a subject which does not seem to
enthrall him, and has not quite fallen into his proper vein. Again, the soul as a detached entity does not have the vital human qualities it has when talked about in connection with individual cases of melancholy. Whatever the reason, Burton on the soul is disappointingly dry and non-committal, and really quite lacking in his usual human sympathy; he treats the subject, as does Aristotle, with dispassionate detachment. The curiosity shown elsewhere about man's oscillating nobility and baseness, which one would imagine the subject might suggest, does not appear here; instead, the soul is anatomized without being fitted into a human context.

In the subject of astrology, though it is also treated very briefly, Burton takes a rather more personal interest. We know from Anthony a Wood that he had experimented in this field, even though the suggestion that he committed suicide to vindicate his prediction of his own death day is shaky to say the least, especially considering his remarks on "self-violence": "He that stabs another can kill his body; but he that stabs himself kills his own soul." (I, 438) But certainly, Burton is fascinated by the occult; for example, by the degree to which we are guided by our stars, and the extent to which we are influenced by the force of superstition. "An empiric oftentimes, and a silly chirurgeon, doth more strange cures than a rational physician." (I, 257) D.C. Allen devotes his interesting study of The Star-Crossed Renaissance to "the quarrel about astrology and its influence in England". The quarrel is not about whether the study of the stars is sinful (though this view has often been put forward on the grounds that it is not for man to busy himself with the affairs of the heavens - "Presume not God to scan" - but to

study his own salvation; as Sir John Davies put it,

We seek to know the moving of each sphere,
And the strange cause of th'epps and floods
of Nile;
But of that clock within our breasts we bear
The subtle motions we forget the while 1).

The real question, however, is whether judicial astrology,
that is, the attempt to forecast man's life-pattern from
his stars, is a valid or a dishonest art. The controversy,
as Allen shows, had been much debated in fifteenth century
Italy, with Pico della Mirandola, strongly influenced by
Savonarola, coming down on the side opposed to judicial
astrology. Pico puts forward what were already fairly
conventional objections, according to Allen; for example,
that astrologers never agree in their predictions, and that
they are in any case ignorant about astronomy, and therefore
cannot understand any art concerned with the stars. They
may be right sometimes through the pure odds of chance, but
such a claim to accuracy is hardly reliable. Some tasks,
for example, casting the horoscope of twins, seem ludicrously
beyond their powers. Pico's main point is that "The
heavenly bodies transmit heat, motion and light - a largess
scattered by all the stars - and nothing more". 2) Astronomy,
as Burton was later to agree in his "Digression of the Air",
is a noble and inspired art; astrology is a mercenary,
cheating occupation which exploits ignorant and superstitious
clients. Pico in his attack on astrology also goes back to
cite such philosophers as Pythagoras, Democritus (here unlike
Democritus Junior), Plato and Aristotle, as being sceptical
about astrology, in order to show that the dispute has
honourable precedents, and that he is not just giving vent
to a personal quirk.

After this continental introduction to the debate, Allen proceeds to show how it was carried on in Tudor and Jacobean England in such polemics as William Fulke's Antiprognosticon, Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton's A Defensative against the poyson of supposed prophecies, and William Perkins' Foure Great Lyers. (Perkins' religious works, such as The Reformed Catholic, are recommended by Burton in the consolatory digression on the cure of despair at the end of Volume III.) Burton is obviously well acquainted with the contentions of both sides, and refers to writers both ancient and contemporary. For example, the debate carried on between John Chamber, who wrote A Treatise against Judicial Astrologie in 1601, and Sir Christopher Heydon, whose A Defence of Judicall Astrologie, in Answer to a Treatise lately published by M. John Chamber appeared in 1603, is reflected in Burton's comment at the beginning of the section entitled "Stars a Cause":

If either Sextus Empiricus, Picus Mirandula, Sextus ab Heminga, Pererius, Erastus, Chambers, etc., have so far prevailed with any man, that he will attribute no virtue at all to the heavens, or to sun, or moon, more than he doth to their signs at an innkeeper's post, or tradesman's shop, or generally condemn all such astrological aphorisms approved by experience: I refer him to Bellantius, Pirovanus, Marascallerus, Goclenius, Sir Christopher Heydon, etc. (I, 206)

Burton obviously sides with the defenders rather than the attackers of astrology, though he does not go to the extreme of saying that everything man does is fore-ordained and therefore there is no free will; on the contrary, his considered opinion is that the stars "do incline, but not compel" (I, 206); that is, our character and prevailing mood are dictated by the stars which reigned at our birth, but these stars "so gently incline, that a wise man may resist them". The heavens are "a great book, whose letters are the
stars (as one calls it), wherein are written many strange things for such as can read." (I, 206).

Paracelsus, whom Burton also quotes, had written that "...the starry vault imprints itself on the inner heaven of a man", and that "The stars are our school in which everything must be learned." ¹ Burton, though he obviously respects Paracelsus, does not go as far as the earlier writer in his strictures on free will; where Paracelsus had said that "the stars must obey man and be subject to him, not he to the stars" ², Burton makes the more moderate postulation that the stars "rule us, but God rules them" (I, 206). In other words, we cannot make "heavenly compulsion" the excuse for wickedness, as most of Shakespeare's villains, Iago and Edmund for example, have the honesty to admit; The difference between Paracelsus and Burton is that Paracelsus asserts that man can directly control his fate through his actions, though this does not invalidate the use of astrology, especially in medicine; Burton puts humanity at one remove from the stars, so that though man can influence his destiny by his actions, this influence has to receive the sanction of God. This would seem to bring up the whole vexed question of predestination and free will, but Burton sidesteps the issue almost completely; his references to Boethius are made not at this point, but in the consolatory digressions. The reason for his failure to venture into such controversial topics seems to be not lack of interest but lack of space; he confines himself to examples of the more superficial manifestations of fore-knowledge, and even here cuts himself off before he is fairly launched: "But I am over—tedious in these toys."
(I, 209).

In the digression of spirits Burton turns the same

2. Ibid., p. 229.
Janus-face, half-credulous, half-cautious, towards the arcane. Spirits have been vouched for by so many thinkers he respects that he does not question their existence; the question is, how far we should allow ourselves to be guided in our actions by a belief in supernatural beings. We may not all follow the country housewife's precaution of leaving out a bowl of milk for Robin Goodfellow, so that the household supply will not go sour; but spirits have far more ominous habits than merely performing mischievous pranks; such habits as foretelling men's deaths "by several signs, as knocking, groaning, etc." (I, 194). Paracelsus, who had written "A Book on Nymphs, sylphs, pygmies, and salamanders, and on the other spirits" is again frequently referred to. In this work spirits are divided into those which inhabit water, air, earth, and fire. Other writers frequently referred to are Bodin, Cardan and Psellus. It is interesting to note which doctrines Burton seems to believe in, and which he rejects; as has been said, there is no doubt in his mind that such creatures exist, but he does not know "How far the power of spirits and devils doth extend, and whether they can cause this [melancholy], or any other disease" (I, 180). He does know, however, at what point his credulity unmistakably ceases; he has no sympathy, for example, with the "absurd and ridiculous" doctrines of the "Talmudists" or "The Turk's Alcoran" (I, 180) on the origin of spirits. What is more surprising, is to see how paganism rides along beside Christianity, even more than in the section on the soul; for example, at one point Burton mentions the daemon of Socrates, and then in the same breath says that "we Christians" have "our assisting angel" (I, 181); at a later point he relates, apparently with equal conviction of

1. Printed in Four Treatises of Theophrastus von Hohenheim called Paracelsus, ed. H.E. Sigerist, Baltimore, 1941.
their likelihood, such stories as that "Agrippa's dog had a
devil tied to his collar; some think that Paracelsus (or else
Erastus belies him) had one confined to his sword pummel;
others wear them in rings, etc." (I, 192) - or at least there
is no indication here that he disagrees. Again, Burton speaks
of miraculous removals of people from place to place effected
by angels, and immediately afterwards, of those effected by
Pythagoras and Apollonius (I, 182). The divine retribution
by which Nebuchadnezzar is transformed into a beast is set
beside the charms of Circe by which Ulysses' companions are
translated into "hogs and dogs" (I, 183). He does explode,
however, the views of the Platonists on "boni et mali genii"
(I, 186) as being "altogether erroneous", and says that "these
heathen writers agree not in this point among themselves..."
(I, 186). He even goes on to assert that "That which Apuleius,
Xenophon, and Plato contend of Socrates' daemonium, is most
absurd" (I, 187), though there had been no suggestion of this
in the earlier reference. Socrates seems to come back into
favour a little further on, when his division of nine kinds
of gods or devils, "which opinion, belike, Socrates took
from Pythagoras, and he from Trismegistus, he from Zoroaster"
(I, 189) is cited with apparent approval of the idea, if not
of its originality. But Burton refuses to commit himself
finally, since "what is beyond our comprehension does not
concern us" (I, 190). Socrates is, however, finally pushed
back into limbo with the remark that the idea of daemons or
familiar spirits is "rejected by our divines and Christian
Churches" (I, 199).

This apparent wavering with regard to Socrates typifies
Burton's whole attitude towards the supernatural. At one
point he relates, apparently in all seriousness, the most
fantastic examples of spirits manifesting themselves; at

1. Translated from the Latin in Everyman edition (I, 190).
another, he calls these fantasies tricks and "toys". Perhaps this is why the "Digression of Spirits" seems, in my own opinion, much more interesting than the lecture on the soul; in the latter he is just reporting what he has read, largely from Aristotle; in the former there emerges, it almost seems, a complete split in his views on the supernatural, and this gives the digression a certain tension and seesaw of paradox, as well as revealing much about Burton's own personality. When he remembers his Christian office, he condemns all superstition as being devilish and savouring of witchcraft; but this pragmatism is by no means invariable. Burton admits at the very beginning of the digression that spirits, charms, omens, and all other aspects of the supernatural cannot be reduced to explanation; hence the confusion in the discussion, of which he seems to be unaware, between Christian and pagan elements of the occult, between the rigidity of doctrine and the flexibility of surmises on the vast unknown. The "Digression of Spirits" is more flexible in this way than the treatise on the soul, mainly because he does not confine himself to one authority, accepted without demur, but ranges into far-lying regions to gather his authorities. True, the immediate considerations, such as the number of spirits, their kinds and ranks, the element in which they live, and their power and how it is used, are clear-cut enough, but they are also subsumed in the pervading sense of confusion and puzzlement; one cannot simply dispose of the problems with a few doctrinal encouragements, as is also shown in the related section at the end of the treatise of religious-melancholy (III, 325-328), in which Burton speaks of the power of devils to entice men to spiritual despair.

The paradox that Burton is most spiritless when writing about the human spirit is a fairly understandable one. What
excites his inspiration is the psychology of human emotion, not the biological features of the human makeup. He is interested in man's soul as a facet of his personality, not as a steadily rising scale of potentiality, beginning with vegetables and ascending to angels. Similarly, he is interested in spirits and devils not as beings in themselves, but as embodiments of superstitions and fears that trouble mankind. This is why in the "Digression of Spirits" he refers the reader to his treatise of religious-melancholy, where he is concerned with this aspect of the subject; that is, the embodiment of the supernatural in vague terrors which are real to the sufferer, whether they are valid or not. The subject of the stars, on the other hand, is one which deeply concerns him, as is evident from the "Digression of the Air", but even here, he is interested in the startling aspirations and intellect (and occasionally, lack of intellect) of the men who are advancing the study of the stars, rather than in the mechanics of the discoveries themselves. As for astrology, his moderate attitude has been indicated, that the stars "do incline, but not compel"; that is, it rests in man to resist or submit to their power. Though rather surprisingly, as has been said, the subject of man's opposing inclinations, on the one hand towards bestial passion, on the other towards angelic rationality, is not touched on in any of these three discussions, it is a matter which concerns him deeply. The view that to be a man is, as Sir John Davies puts it, "a proud, and yet a wretched thing" is in fact the central point of Burton's whole outlook on man, and is adumbrated at the very beginning of Volume I. The fact that he does not mention it in what might seem to be its most obvious context,

that is, the study of man's soul, suggests that he is approaching the "anatomy of the soul" in a strictly detached and objective way, rather as though it were an irksome duty. One can understand his refusal to wax idyllic about "Elysian fields" or their Christian counterpart; it is always easier to imagine hell than heaven, as Milton was soon afterwards to find. Burton in defining the soul is rather like Cowley on wit; he says what it is not. He criticizes most conceptions of life after death as "absurd tenents", but beyond endorsing the Christian view he does not advance any conception of immortality on his own account. The "Digression of Spirits" is perhaps his most successful excursion into the occult, but here the discussion, interesting though it is, is flawed by his wavering tendencies towards the fascination of pagan mysteries, and the strictures of Christian doctrine. In the treatise of religious-melancholy, where the ghoulish fantasies evoked by despair are again discussed, Christianity appears less in the form of stern authority, and more as a comforter and sovereign cordial for mental anguish; this makes the latter discussion far more satisfying.

Burton's genius is for the practice rather than the theory of consolation; this is why he adopts such a direct approach in his spiritual advice, almost as if he were actually speaking to the patient. On the other hand, when he does not adopt this intimate tone, but analyses from a distance the biological features of man's makeup which, when in disorder, lead to distress, he becomes dry and even trite, as has been noticed concerning his slavish dependence on Aristotle in treating the soul. His understanding and originality lie in the anatomy of man's psychological contradictions and dilemmas, and with the counselling and curing of these; he is interested not in general patterns of behaviour, but in the individual. Hence, whenever he starts to generalize, and particularly
about the soul, he loses the tension created by his detailed concern with private suffering and particular emotions. Moreover, these are most clearly demonstrated when he turns to a particular kind of melancholy, as will be shown in the following sections on love-melancholy and religious-melancholy. In depicting the individual, irregular lines of thought which spring from the torments suffered by individual minds, Burton shows that he is more interested, as it were, in tracing the streaks of the tulip than in botanizing on the whole flower.
Chapter 2, Part ii. 

Love Melancholy

A discussion of love as it has been written on through the ages - being, with death, a subject on which man has always expended his most powerful emotions and speculations - is likely to fall into two halves, according to whether it is concerned with spiritual or natural love. The division is clearly stated in the Symposium, when Pausanias speaks of two forms of Venus: one descended from heaven, with no mother, called celestial; the other descended from Jupiter and Dione, the Venus who is shown in Botticelli's Primavera, who rules over natural love and procreation of kind. One affects man's brain, the other his liver, one is expressed in spiritual contemplation of beauty, the other in earthly passion and desire. Burton's treatment of love is no exception to this pattern; he makes the division at the beginning of his section on love-melancholy, and one is taken back to the very first page of Volume I, in which he eulogizes mankind with the proper Renaissance wonder and fervour, but goes on to show how man can be betrayed by his appetites, and degenerate into bestiality. Timothy Bright, although he is one of Burton's main sources in the discussion of religious-melancholy, has little to say on the subject of love-melancholy, and in this section Burton perhaps relies most heavily on Du Laurens, whose A Discourse on the Preservation of the Sight was first published in Paris in 1597, and shortly afterwards translated into English by Richard Surphlet. It contains four discourses, on the preservation of the sight, on rheums, on melancholy, and on

1. One can perhaps compare the very different conceptions of love presented successively by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun in The Romance of the Rose, one being an almost holy cult, the other a very realistic exploration of the essential earthiness of human passion (although, of course, even in de Lorris' part, the aims of the lover are scarcely Platonic).
old age. They were written for the Duchess of Uzés, who suffered from bad eyesight, rheum, and hypochondriacal, or windy melancholy, and might be expected to suffer also from old age, but is tactfully assumed to be so far exempt: "I am persuaded (Madame) that no man can call you old in any respect, if it were not that you are past fiftie."¹ Du Laurens deals eventually with the Duchess's particular variety of melancholy, but before doing so he has much to say on love-melancholy.

Du Laurens has as few illusions as Burton concerning the popular conception of love as a "sweet passion or affection"; on the contrary, he maintains that "...of all other miseries this is the greatest miserie, yea so great as that all the tortures which have been devised by the wit of tyrants, will never be able to exceed the crueltie thereof".² Physical and mental degeneration together attack "the sillie loving worme"³; he cannot sleep or eat, and becomes "pale, leane, sooning...hollow and sunke-eyed"³; the despair of attaining his goal incites him at worst to suicide; at best to a continual sighing, groaning and weeping, noisome to himself and others. Violent contrarieties assail him; he turns in a moment from fire to ice and back to fire.⁴ The agonies of the sufferer are gruesomely illustrated by the fable of Titius, "who for his exceeding love unto the Goddesse Latona, is fained to have his liver ordinarily fed upon by two gryphens, and the fibres every day to grow againe".⁵

Love-melancholy, then, like religious-melancholy, is a disease of body and mind. The perpetual fretting and

2. Ibid., p.119.
3. Ibid., p.118.
4. See note on pp.176-177.
frustration causes disorder in the "frame of temperature", since the humours are dried up. As has been shown, dryness is one quality of melancholy in general, the other being either coldness or heat, depending on whether the humour is adust or not. (Adustion is caused by burning vapours rising from the heart, the seat of life, to the brain). Love attacks the heart first, because it fears conflict with reason ("fearing her selfe to weake to encounter it"\(^2\)). This fear does not accord with any sort of nobility in so-called "heroical" love, contrary to the idea of "the common sort" that it is "the Divine Passion"\(^3\). Love is a raging, fiery passion, which can overthrow all balance in its victim, and make him act more like a beast than a man.

It is interesting that, whereas Burton's famous passage on the blindness of men to the real appearance of the beloved (III, 155), so highly praised by Keats, stresses the manifold deficiencies of the women idolized, which are then denounced in detail, Du Laurens, while making the same point, devotes his description to the illusion, not the reality; that is, he sets forth all the perfections that the lover imagines his lady to possess. These are familiar from Petrarchan sonnets:

long golden locks...a high brow, like unto the bright heavens, white and smooth, like the polished Alablaster; two starres standing in the head very cleere, resembling the beautifull flowers...eye browes black as the Eben wood...a paire of cheekes of white and vermilion colour, like unto the purple lillie and damaske rose...a mouth of corall, having within it two sets of small orientall pearle...\(^4\)

and so on. Thus Du Laurens satirizes the conventional

1. Du Laurens, *A Discourse on the Preservation of the Sight*, translated by Richard Surphlet, 1599, p.120.
2. Ibid., p.118.
3. Ibid., p.117.
4. Ibid., p.120.
similes only in the sense that he implies that they are false, whereas Burton in his description devastatingly demonstrates that the "mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground". Du Laurens makes the state of illusion sound pleasant enough, so that this aspect of love is by no means "feral" or "excruciating"; it is obstruction, real or imagined, that sharpens the pangs of love, as poets have always shown; if Danger were not in the garden as well as Bilacoil, there would be no point in writing *The Romance of the Rose*.

Du Laurens completely ignores the humorous possibilities of illusion and disillusion in love, which is not surprising, as his purpose is quite different from Burton's. Whereas Burton is writing a comprehensive survey of human nature, with all its contradictions and absurdities, Du Laurens is writing a medical treatise, addressed, like Bright's, to a particular person. The account of melancholy is sandwiched between those of the Duchess' other complaints, and is viewed, like them, largely as a physical disease, which can be cured by the correct treatment. Du Laurens does not ignore the mental anguish also suffered, but his remedies are nearly all directed towards the easing of the physical state, from which mental ease will ensue. It is not his purpose to philosophize on love-melancholy, but to cure it.

The most effective cure of love-melancholy, according to Du Laurens, is the attainment of desire:

> this burning desire, being taken away, the diseased partie will find himself marvelously relieved, though notwithstanding there may remaine behind some certain prints and skarres in the bodie.  

Du Laurens here relates "a pleasant historie of a young man of Egypt", who, after suffering agonies of love for a

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courtesan, was cured after dreaming that he had possessed her. The courtesan demanded payment for having cured him; the judge decreed that the man should bring "a purse full of crownes, andoure them forth into a basen, that thereby the Curtisane might pay her selfe of the ringing sound and colour of the crownes, as he had satisfied himselfe of the sole imagination".¹ Most lovers, however, are not satisfied by their imaginations, and can be cured only by actual coition. It is interesting that Burton, in his discussion of remedies, puts this one last, classing it as the most desperate, but surest remedy. Apparently he is less optimistic than Du Laurens about the feasibility of such a method.

However, Du Laurens is prepared to admit that physical union cannot always be arranged, though there have been cases of amazing self-sacrifice, as when Seleucus permitted his son Antiochus to lie with his own wife, Antiochus' mother-in-law.

Where the attainment of desire is impossible, other less satisfactory cures must be tried; attempts to disillusion the lover about his mistress, and the ordinary physical remedies of melancholy in general - change of air, diversion, exercise, purging, baths, a delicate diet, and so on. Du Laurens deplores the use of such devilish devices as the drinking "of the blood of him or her which is the object of the mischief".² He is not entirely sceptical of these remedies, but condemns them on religious grounds; black magic is against nature and God.

Burton's indebtedness to Du Laurens is most apparent in his account of the symptoms and the cures of love-melancholy. "Laurentius" is duly mentioned in Burton's initial list of authorities (III, 4), and again at the beginning of the

¹ Du Laurens, A Discourse on the Preservation of the Sight, translated by Richard Surphlet, 1599, p.122.
² Ibid., p.124.
treatment of symptoms (ill, 133), as well as being referred to from time to time for illustration or confirmation of points made. It is, however, on the subject of the purely physical signs of love that Du Laurens' authority is useful; of the more abstract and metaphysical problems indicated by the division between physical and spiritual love, or of the more personal aspects involved in the question of marriage, for example, Du Laurens has little to say, beyond giving a few anecdotes. Burton devotes considerable space to the setting down of the medical aspects of the disease of love-melancholy, for which he draws on Du Laurens, but this necessary information does not seem to be so laboriously dragged in as does the anatomy lesson in Volume I. This is partly because, in addition to the medical references, literary illustrations, classical and contemporary, are thickly scattered; but the main difference is that whereas the anatomical details can be verified only by specialists, the physical symptoms of love can be verified by common, everyday observation. Moreover, as has been said, these medical details are in agreement with the literary tradition of courtly love, so that they can be supported by the reader's own experience both in life and in books. Du Laurens, then, has little to do with the success of Burton's section of love-melancholy as a whole - this proceeds from the wit and virtuosity of Burton's style, and the shrewd cynicism of his comments on love as it affects human emotions and behaviour, as will be shown - but he bolsters the framework of medical fact which is necessary to support the glittering curtain hung over it.

Other authorities besides Du Laurens are also cited by Burton, one of the most notable being Ficino, on the subject of Platonic love. Ficino wrote a commentary on the Symposium in which the opposing forces leading man towards divinity
or sin, apotheosis or bestiality, are clearly explained. The whole world, he says, is organized and run on the principle of love. The soul has two lights, one natural or innate, the other divine or supernatural; here one cannot help being reminded of the _Phaedrus_, in which the rebellious passion of lust is seen as yoked together with that of purity and reason, and is constantly being jerked to a halt by the latter. Ficino also has much to say on the actual physical symptoms of love-melancholy:

> All of the finer and clearer parts of the blood are continually exhausted in regeneration of the spirits; therefore, since the clear and pure blood is used up, there remain only the impure, thick, dry and black parts. Hence the body dries out, and grows rough, and hence lovers become melancholy. For from the dry, thick and black blood, melancholy, that is, black bile, is made, which fills the head with its vapours, dries out the brain, and unceasingly vexes the soul day and night with fearful, hideous images...This has happened usually with those who, neglecting contemplative love, have turned to a passion for physical embrace.  

Ficino and Du Laurens, however, while they provide much of Burton's actual medical material, are little more than a stepping off point, unlike Galen and Hippocrates, who provide most of the impetus to the discussion of anatomy in Volume I. Du Laurens presents a clinical view of causes, symptoms and remedies of love-melancholy; Burton is much more concerned, as has been said, with its emotional and psychological aspect. Of course the comparison is unfair; Du Laurens is writing a short treatise, in which he must include the essential details, whereas Burton has already devoted one volume to the actual medical side of melancholy,

1. Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's _Symposium_, the text and a translation, with an introduction by S.R. Jayne, the University of Missouri Studies, Vol.XIX, no.1, 1944, p.195.
and can afford to diverge into personal speculation.

Burton tends to veer towards Ovid and Catullus, rather than towards Plato and his disciples, in his ideas about love; that is, he is cynical rather than idealistic. He is concerned, in other words, with life as it is lived, not as it ought to be lived. Ovid's *Art of Love*, for example, which Burton frequently refers to, could hardly be less Platonic. Ovid believes in sensual, not sublimated love, in consummation, not contemplation. Lucretius also has a rather hedonistic outlook on Venus:

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Mother of Aeneas and his race, delight of men and gods, life-giving Venus, it is your doing that under the wheeling constellations of the sky all nature teems with life...
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and both Ovid and Lucretius give elaborate directions about the way in which the powers of Venus must be celebrated. There is no question of idealism or purity; loving is a physical pleasure, and this is its ultimate aim. Although in the pathetic letters of forsaken women of which Ovid composed the *Heroides* he does present the woman's point of view with sympathy, there is no feeling that he attaches much blame to such fickle lovers as Aeneas and Theseus. The way of love is the way of life; "enjoy it while you may", is the essence of his advice. Or again, as Catullus puts it, "Gather ye roses...". Catullus also shows the seamy side of love, but in this case with real bitterness, since he himself is the forsaken party. Love to him is mental torment:

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I hate and love. You ask how that can be.
I do not know, but know it's agony.
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whereas to Ovid it is an idyll of physical pleasure (while

The pain of betrayal excruciates Catullus' body and soul; it is a sickness which eats at his heart and destroys all his presence of mind. Burton comes closest to describing his state in the section on jealousy.

In his presentation of love Burton is about halfway between Ovid's frivolity and Catullus' deadly seriousness (in his later poems). He certainly holds out no hopes for divinization through love; for the communion of minds rather than bodies; or for the symbolic sword between two lovers, as in the Tristan and Isolde myth. Burton satirizes the ideals of courtly love from the very beginning of the section on heroical love-melancholy:

I come at last to that heroical love, which is proper to men and women, is a frequent cause of melancholy, and deserves much rather to be called burning lust, than by such an honourable title. (III, 52)

Simon remarks justly that in this section Burton's method is "noyer l'enthousiasme sous le mépris, décourager l'idéalisation par l'étalage écoeurant, d'un réalisme prosaïque, rogner les ailes de la poésie avec les ciseaux du ridicule." All the old trite similes which Shakespeare had found so tiresome are debunked, and the lover is seen as besotted rather than "courtly".

This satirical attitude towards "heroical" love-melancholy may owe something to Cervantes, whom Burton had probably read, for he twice refers to the dangers of filling one's mind with fantastic fables of chivalry. In the section on "Exercise Rectified", Burton specifically refers to Don Quixote:

...such inamoratoes as read nothing but play-books, idle poems, jests, Amadis de Gaul, the Knight of the Sun, the Seven Champions, Palmerin de Oliva, Huon of Bordeaux, etc. Such many times prove in the end as mad as Don Quixote. (II, 93)

Again, Don Quixote is perhaps implicitly referred to in the section on "Artificial Allurements" when Burton remarks that "Some again are incensed by reading amorous toys", and once more mentions "Amadis de Gaul, Palmerin de Oliva, the Knight of the Sun, etc..." (III, 109). Burton's iconoclastic attitude towards ladies whose lovers believe they are deities is foreshadowed by Sancho's unromantic description of Dulcinea:

> She's a brawny girl, well built and tall and sturdy ... O the wench, what muscles she's got, and what a pair of lungs ... she's not a bit shy ... She must be changed, too, for always trudging about the fields in sun and wind greatly spoils a woman's looks. ¹

Don Quixote himself unwittingly debases his lady by repeating a story of a widow who justified her love for a "stout and lusty young lay-brother" by saying that "for all I want of him he knows as much philosophy as Aristotle, and more". ² Don Quixote completely misses the irony of this, and clinches his misinterpretation by immediately adding that "for what I want of Dulcinea del Toboso she is as good as the greatest princess in the land". ³ A little later, when he has just written a letter to Dulcinea in which he makes passionate protestations of his love for her, Sancho asks him to "put the order for the three colts on the other side of the leaf..." ⁴ to which Don Quixote obligingly agrees.

Cervantes' satire of heroical love is complicated by his simultaneous relation of the loves of Garciénio and Lucinda, and of Ferdinand and Dorothea, all of whom illustrate the kind of love-melancholy that Don Quixote is trying to imitate. Garciénio's real madness is set, with brilliant satirical effect, alongside Don Quixote's counterfeited

4. Ibid., p. 212.
madness. Cardenio is made to exhibit in reality the mad pranks that Don Quixote is contemplating with such cool selectiveness that he wonders whether "to imitate Roland's downright madness or Amadis' melancholy moods". Where Don Quixote in his pretended madness performs ludicrous antics - "he took two leaps into the air, and twice turned head over heels, revealing such parts of his person as caused Sancho to turn Rocinante's head for fear he might see them a second time" - Cardenio's genuinely frenzied attack on Don Quixote and Sancho savours scarcely less of rollicking farce. Don Quixote's behaviour thus becomes almost a parody of a parody. This subtle interplay of reality and farce gives an added dimension to the comedy of Don Quixote's fanatical imitation of chivalry, and emphasizes the fact that he is love-lorn only in theory. On the other hand, it allows Cervantes to show, despite the irony of his tone, how excruciatingly painful love-melancholy can be when it is suffered in earnest. This combination of mock-heroic with genuine suffering is rather similar to that found in Burton's treatment of love; both authors seem to agree that however much anguish the infatuated or betrayed lover may be feeling, the excesses it leads him into are undeniably comic.

In Don Quixote there is an infusion of pathos provided by the romantic-pastoral sub-plot in the first part, but Burton, like Ovid, is unremittingly realistic in his brutal revelation of the sordid deceits practised by men and, especially, by women, in the interests of love. Burton's attitude, however, is that of onlooker, whereas Cervantes is involved at least to the extent that he must manipulate his characters, and Ovid and Catullus are both personally involved, frivolously or deeply as the case may be, when they write

about love. In fact, Burton consciously detaches himself when he says, "But what have I to do with this?" (III, 112), and further on, "I confess I am but a novice, a contemplator only", though he does add that "homo sum, etc., not altogether inexpert in this subject..." (III, 184). He provides countless examples of passion from literature, but the most striking passage of the section, where he satirizes the blindness of lovers (III, 155), is drawn from no source but his own originality and inventive genius. The closest parallel to the style here is that of some of the lustier passages of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama; compare, for example, the description of Petruchio coming to his wedding in The Taming of the Shrew. Burton's aptitude for colloquial vigour is never more clearly shown than in this torrent of vituperation:

... a vast virago, or an ugly tit, a slug, a fat fustilugs, a truss, a long lean rawbone, a skeleton, a sneaker... and to thy judgement looks like a mard in a lanthorn... (III, 155)

Some of his turns of phrase may have been suggested by plays he had seen or read, but as a whole the passage could not possibly have been written by any other than Burton.

Burton's individuality of tone and style, although apparent all through The Anatomy, is perhaps most obvious here. This will be illustrated more fully in the section on style, but it is impossible not to remark at this point on the imagination displayed in its colloquialisms and

1. "Why, Petruchio is coming, in a new hat and an old jerkin; a pair of old breeches thrice turned; a pair of boots that have been candle-cases, one buckled, another laced... his horse... possessed with the glanders and like to mose in the chine; troubled with the lampass, infected with the fashions, full of windgalls, sped with spavins, rayed with the yellows...", etc. III, ii.
parenthetical asides, and the sheer exuberance and delight he displays. Perhaps a few more examples would not be out of place; the picture of old age attacked by love is devastating in its stark, grotesque clarity: "...though our teeth shake in our heads like virginal jacks, or stand parallel asunder like the arches of a bridge..." (III, 179), and, again, the remark about "old men and women, that have more toes than teeth" (III, 178). Elsewhere, Burton asks, "How many decrepit, hoary, harsh, withen, bursten-bellied, crooked, toothless, bald, blear-eyed, impotent, rotten old men shall you see flickering still in every place?" (III, 56). Here, Burton is cynical, but not embittered; satirical about the artifices and self-deception of aging men and women, but in a humorous enough way for the satire not to be too cruel; realistic but not desperately disillusioned. It is the quality of the humour, and the hints of the man himself that make the passage so unmistakably by Burton.

Burton's section on love-melancholy after the initial definition falls into three parts: love of honest objects, that is, charity (here occurs the famous passage with the refrain "ride on" (III, 36)); heroical love-melancholy, which is the most common and well-known manifestation of the fierceness of love; and jealousy, the disillusion of hopes conceived in the freshness of infatuation.

It is in the section on "heroical love-melancholy" that Burton's play of humour and cynicism really comes into its own. J.Livington Lowes¹ has demonstrated how the crux in "The Knightes Tale" over the unfamiliar word "hereos" ("the loveres maladye") is very relevant to Burton's use of the word in the term "heroical love-melancholy". Since Speght

first emended Chaucer's word "hereos" to "Eros" in 1598, the word has gone through a series of different forms from edition to edition, wavering between "Eros" and "heroes". Lowes claims to have solved the problem to the satisfaction of both sides, by suggesting that "There is not one 'heroical' in English: there are two". It would perhaps be more accurate to say there were two, for Chaucer's use of the word to signify a combination of the two senses of "heroes" and "Eros" has quite gone out of use, and Burton was perhaps the last well-known writer to use it in this way. By the time Pope referred sarcastically to Caesar's "heroic love" for Cleopatra the double meaning had vanished.

Burton, we have seen, considered the word "heroical" to be a misnomer in any case, and here he is in agreement with Pope, who was to call Cleopatra a "punk" (even if Lowes will not allow him the double meaning). Perhaps it is this cynical attitude that gives rise to a little inconsistency in this section: namely, that after stating that heroical love—melancholy is "proper to men and women", Burton begins with a discussion of the loves of plants and animals. This in itself prevents the loves of men and women from being taken entirely seriously, and the effect of bathos is exacerbated by Burton's apparent credulity. The description of passionate palm trees wafting kisses to each other between Brundusium and Otranto (III, 43) is almost as ludicrous as Browne's famous questions in Pseudodoxia Epidemica about whether the badger's legs are shorter on one side than on the other, or

3. Ibid., I,131.
whether elephants can bend their knees.¹ (In describing the
loves of palm trees, however, Burton does not go to the strange
extreme of Browne, who in Religio Medici wishes that human
beings could copulate like trees,) The discussion of the loves
of vegetables, of course, means less to the twentieth-century
reader, since he is less imbued than the seventeenth-century
reader with the idea of the degrees of love experienced by
the soul: vegetal, sensitive, and rational. Plants possess
only the first soul, animals the second, and only man possesses
all three.

After this slight digression on the power of love over
plants and animals, Burton proceeds to that which it exercises
over men and women. Although men are capable of aspiring,
from a vast distance, towards that "amor cognitus", the highest
form of which is experienced by God, who is, Burton tells us,
"...love itself, the fountain of love, the disciple of love,
as Plato styles Him..." (III, 16), they more often descend to
brutal lust. This discrepancy between man's natural
inclinations and his rational aspirations has already been
noticed in Burton's treatment of the passions (I, 250 ff.),
and of the soul (I, 162-69). It is the dichotomy which
Pope was later to balance in the famous passage in the Essay
on Man:

In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;
In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err...
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all...²

It is man's tragedy that his inclinations do not accord

1. The belief that they could not was common at that time -
cf. Ulysses' remark that "The elephant hath joints, but
none for courtesy: his legs are for necessity, not for
flexure." (Troilus and Cressida, II,iii.) In view of the
prevalence of this belief, Browne and Burton need not
be censured too harshly for their credulity.

with his capabilities; this theme, which runs all through
*The Anatomy*, as has been noticed, is stated on the first
page of the first book. Du Laurens also starts off with this
theme, but his statement of it lacks the pathos of Burton's;
Du Laurens is speaking as a moralist, Burton as a human
being who can pity as well as chastise himself and his
fellows.

This sense of pity, which tends to be a little consumed
in the comedy of some of the descriptions of heroical love,
is found most obviously in the section on jealousy, which
Burton classes as "...a bastard branch or kind of love-melancholy,
which, as heroical love goeth commonly before marriage, doth
usually follow, torture, and crucify in like sort..." (III, 257).
The horrors of jealousy are not understated:

> A most violent passion it is where it taketh
> place, an unspeakable torment, a hellish
torture, an infernal plague,...a main vexation,
a most intolerable burden, a corrosive to all
content, a frenzy, a madness itself... (III, 264)

Jealousy, as well as heroical love, has frequently been
depicted in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, the example which
comes to mind most readily being that of Othello, who could
well have taken his stage directions from Burton before
"falling into a trance":

> "...those strange gestures of
> staring, frowning, grinning, rolling of eyes, menacing,
> ghastly looks, broken pace, interrupt, precipitate half-turns"
> and so on (III, 280). Bassanes in Ford's *The Broken Heart*
has been said by G.F.Sensabaugh to be directly modelled on
Burton's analysis of jealousy, and certainly his symptoms

1. *Othello*, IV,i.
seem to accord remarkably well with the above description:

How he stares,
Struts, puffs, and sweats! most admirable lunacy!¹

Bassanes experiences this malady in its most "feral" form:

Rip my bosom up,
I'll stand the execution with a constancy;
This torture is insufferable. ¹

The culmination of these torments is reached when Bassanes rushes wildly into the room where his wife is cloistered with her brother, and accuses her of infidelity; like Othello he is made incoherent by his frenzy.¹

It is not surprising that a dramatist should seize on such material as Burton provides in the section on jealousy; indeed, he himself often seems to have the drama in mind, as when he powerfully and directly presents the nagging ache of a jealous man's thoughts: "...why did she smile, why did she pity him, commend him? why did she drink twice to such a man? why did she offer to kiss, to dance? etc.; a whore, a whore, an arrant whore."

Burton does not just state the causes and symptoms of jealousy, he dramatizes them, penetrating into the most secret fears and torments with acute psychological acumen, presenting each turn and twist of suspicion as it verges towards panic:

Is't not a man in woman's apparel? is not somebody in that great chest, or behind the door, or hangings, or in some of those barrels? may not a man steal in at the window with a ladder of ropes, or come down the chimney, have a false key, or get in when he is asleep?

From the sections on heroical love and on jealousy, the reader is indeed made aware that Burton is "not altogether inexpert" in these matters, though it would seem that this understanding proceeds rather from the ability to project

1. The Broken Heart, III,ii.
himself into other people's calamities than from personal experience. To bring such a gift to the service of a literary treatise is, indeed, one of the most original aspects of Burton's performance in *The Anatomy as a whole*, and one which places it in the realm of literature rather than of science, although he did his best to fulfil the requirements of the latter. Burton is able to use his psychological insight, as has been noticed, in the way that a dramatist would. His ability to explore the byways as well as the main thoroughfare of human emotion, to treat human beings individually rather than collectively, whether satirically, as in the section on love-melancholy, or sympathetically, as in that on religious-melancholy, would have equipped him in the twentieth century to be either a novelist, or a psychiatrist, or both.

Simon believes that Burton is bitterly frustrated by celibacy; he draws significant signs of repression out of the fact that Burton completely omits a discussion of the genital organs in the anatomy lesson of Volume I. He sums up Burton's views on marriage as follows:

*Célibataires, ne vous mariez pas, car vous passeriez votre vie à le regretter!*  
*Célibataires, mariez-vous, car c'est là devoir d'hommes!*  

Certainly, Burton's prognostications for love are anything but optimistic. One is constantly aware of time's winged chariot, of brightness falling from the air. The descriptions of love in old age are ludicrous and horrible. But I see no reason to suppose that Burton is personally frustrated; it sounds rather as though he is relieved at being out of the turmoil and strife. He seems singularly

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aware of the advantages of his situation: "...consider last of all these commodious prerogatives a bachelor hath, how well he is esteemed, how heartily welcome to all his friends..." (III, 224). Of course he is also being a little ironical; bachelors are plagued by parasites, he later adds; but how far are the disadvantages of bachelordom outweighed by those of marriage: "...bethink thyself what a slavery it is, what a heavy burden thou shalt undertake, how hard a task thou art tied to..." (III, 225). There is no reason to suppose — and here Anthony à Wood provides supporting testimony — that Burton did not enjoy the advantages of bachelordom to the full, Just as he approves of wine in moderate quantities, though he does not partake himself, he also approves of moderate coition; in fact he says it is often essential for health. Simon, I believe, does not sufficiently take into account the fact that Burton is thoroughly enjoying himself in his farcical descriptions of women. It is hard to see any bitterness here; the case is not as strong for frustrated love as for frustrated ambition in Burton, which claim on Simon's part will be taken up below.¹ It seems that the only reason for saying that Burton is frustrated in love matters is the fact that he has to remain a celibate while in Christchurch — but if he had found this situation irksome he could surely have escaped from it.

Livingstone Lowes describes the section on love-melancholy as The Anatomy's "longest and most interesting" section, and says that in it

Burton's fundamental statements regarding Love-Melancholy are drawn, often with due reference to his authorities, straight from Avicenna, Arnaldus de Villanova, Bernardus Gordonius, Valescus de Taranta, Savonarola, Forestus Sennertus and their contemporaries and followers.²

1. See pp. 156–158.
He emphasizes the fact that although *The Anatomy* is "a great and original literary masterpiece" it is also abounding in authorities. I would like to lay the emphasis the other way, and, assuming the authorities, attest to the originality. This is surely evident in the brilliant farce of the heroical love-melancholy section, and the humane sympathy exhibited in the section on jealousy. No one could accuse his treatment of the subject of being "light", though at the beginning he fears that the subject itself will be thought "too light for a divine"; despite the satire, he has too deep an understanding of the agonies which love can cause for his treatment of it to be consistently frivolous. But he certainly enjoys himself in some of the more spectacular sections. The exuberance of the passage on ugly women referred to above (III, 155) is unsurpassed in the whole of *The Anatomy*; it is here that Burton's sense of humour is seen at its most mordant and grotesque. It is hard to see how he could be thought to be frustrated and prudish when he can write with such brio on such a subject. One is reminded of the gusto with which sordid details are piled up in some of Skelton's poetry, such as "The Tunning of Eleanor Rumming". Burton perhaps learnt something besides booklore from the bargemen he is reputed to have laughed at uproariously on occasions;¹ at any rate some of his laughter, wherever it sprang from, has been preserved in the pages of Volume III.

¹ See below, p.134.
Chapter 2, Part iii. Religious Melancholy

It is rather surprising that Burton should state so immediately and categorically, in his section on religious-melancholy: "I have no pattern to follow as in some of the rest, no man to imitate." (III, 311) It is even more surprising when one recalls some of the names he most frequently cites: Lucian, Augustine and Timothy Bright, for example. "Scoffing Lucian", as Burton calls him, has written extensively on superstition (what Burton would call "religious-melancholy in excess") and atheism ("religious-melancholy in defect"), Augustine on religious-melancholy as a depressive state, and Timothy Bright on the nature and suggested cure of religious-melancholy in general. True, Burton does allow that religious-melancholy has been spoken of in previous treatises, such as that of Hercules de Saxonia, as a branch of love-melancholy (because it sometimes involves excessive and fanatical love of God), but he believes that he is certainly the first to treat it as a "species or kind" (III, 312) and is apprehensive whether "this subdivision...be warrantable" (III, 311). There is no need for such diffidence here. It is surely a very dubious claim to originality to have been the first to give the actual term "Religious Melancholy" to a disease which had for so many centuries preoccupied poets, saints and mystics (St. John of the Cross can represent all three), and had been considered, if not specifically named, by physicians such as Timothy Bright and Du Laurens (so that it is patently untrue to say that "No physician hath as yet distinctly written of it" (III, 311)). Burton's claim to originality must be modified for other reasons. The atheist is extensively represented in Jacobean
drama as well as in Lucian's poetry. Tourneur, for example, wrote of *The Atheist's Tragedy*, and most of Shakespeare's villains - Don John, Iago and Edmund, for instance - are inclined towards atheism, or at least towards dubiety about astrology, and its alleged influence on their lives ("'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus."). It seems, then, that although Ford may have had Burton particularly in mind when portraying the atheist, Giovanni, in *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, the subject had been one of fascination for dramatists well before Burton began to write. Superstition, too, had been satirized by Ben Jonson, for example in *The Alchemist*, in the ridiculous astrological instructions given to Dapper by the "Queen of Fairy", and in the misled zeal of Ananias:

He bears
The visible mark of the Beast, in his forehead.
And for his stone, it is a work of darkness,
And, with philosophy, blinds the eyes of man. 2

In both classical and contemporary literature, then, Burton was forestalled in the study of superstition and of atheism, and a reading of Augustine's *Confessions* will attest that he was not the first to write about melancholy as a depressive state. It is possible to be deeply disturbed about one's religion without necessarily being either an atheist or a fanatic. Augustine, Boethius, and later the medieval mystics, all write of that form of religious-melancholy which can perhaps be most accurately termed "accidie". In his fascinating study of the history of the seven deadly sins,3 M. Bloomfield traces accounts of them back to the emergence of the concept "in the deserts of

Egypt around 400 A.D. The two most important accounts of the sins in the western world are those of Cassian, and of Gregory the Great. Cassian settled in Marseilles in the fifth century, bringing with him from Alexandria the learning he had amassed while in Egypt and Syria, and in particular, the concept of the sins. His list contained eight cardinal sins. This was later modified by Gregory in the sixth century, who replaced it with a seven-fold list in which the order of the sins was altered, so that the sins of *gula, fornicatio* and *acedia*, stressed by Cassian as being the most dangerous temptations in the monastic life, are replaced at the head of the list by *superbia*. The change made by Gregory which is most pertinent to this discussion is that *acedia* was merged with *tristitia*, and in this way the number of the sins was reduced to seven.

Cassian describes *acedia* as *anxieta sive taedium cordis* (with which one can compare Burton's description of his own melancholy state as *gravidum cor* (I, 21)). The *taedium* or torpidity which weighs on the heart results in spiritual dryness and lack of inspiration and of all interest in life, whether of the spirit or of the body. When Hopkins heartrendingly prays to God to "send my roots rain", he is in sympathy with the malady described and suffered by such mystics as St. Teresa, and St. John of the Cross. Necessarily, the state of spiritual rapture, of "dying that I do not die", cannot be sustained permanently, and this mystic experience is often interspersed with blank periods in which it seems

1. M. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Michigan, 1952, p. 44. Bloomfield adds that "Some have sought to find the origin of the Sins in Greek philosophy and speculation or in the Judaism of the time or earlier, but their efforts cannot be called successful."

2. Ibid., p. 69.

that all visionary and creative power has faded away. These periods of stagnation, however, are often really periods of germination and growth, rather than of deadness. Burton's understanding of this cause for hope, even in the midst of despair, is shown in his comforting assurance that

...although as yet thou hast no inclination to pray, to repent, thy faith be cold and dead, and thou wholly averse from all divine functions, yet it may revive, as trees are dead in winter, but flourish in the spring; these virtues may lie hid in thee for the present, yet hereafter show themselves, and peradventure already bud, howsoever thou dost not perceive it. (III, 414)

This image of underground roots which will spring and bud again, however dead they seem, has been noticed in Hopkins' poetry; it is also beautifully expressed by Herbert, when he describes how his "shrivel'd heart" has "recover'd greenness":

And now in age I bud again,
After so many deaths I live and write.
I once more smell the dew and rain,
And relish versing...

and also by Vaughan, perhaps the seventeenth-century poet who comes closest to the feeling of the medieval mystics:

O Joyes! Infinite sweetnes! with what flowres,
And shoots of glory, my soul breakes, and buds!
    All the long houres
    Of night, and Rest
    Through the still shrouds
    Of sleep and Clouds
    This Dew fell on my Breast...

By Elizabethan times, however, the interpretation of accidie as spiritual dryness had become debased, and accidie had become more or less interchangeable with the sin of sloth,

which signified slovenly physical habits rather than spiritual inadequacy. This transference was already taking place in medieval times; Chaucer, for example, in the "Second Nun's Tale" refers to accidie as "Ýodelnesse".¹ (interestingly enough foreshadowing Burton by his recommendation of "leveful bisjness" as a remedy for this sin). Both Chaucer and Spenser speak of idleness as being the sin from which all others are derived²: Chaucer calls it "The ministre and the no rice unto vyces", and Spenser "the nourse of sin".³

Though properly speaking he was not a mystic, nobody could know more about spiritual despair than Donne, and it is interesting to compare some passages in the Sermons with Burton's analysis of religious-melancholy, and in particular the horrors of accidie (in its older sense). Donne's consolatory advice is of course given in an entirely different way from Burton's; Donne is speaking to a congregation, and Burton to an intimate; but in substance some of their remarks are strikingly similar. The main point they both make is that God's mercy and love are infinite; Donne speaks of "that great and Endless Sea, of God's mercies",⁴ and Burton twice uses a biblical saw which also occurs in Donne's Sermons⁵: "whom He loves, He loves to the end" (III, 426, 427). Both arouse not only verbal and thematic echoes, such as these, of the Bible, but also

2. This would seem more in line with Cassian's grouping of the sins, in which accidie had a leading position (though its meaning was, of course, different) than with that of Gregory, who made pride predominant.
3. Faerie Queene, I.iv.
5. Ibid., IV,96.
of Faustus; Burton speaks of the sinner who "in a reprobate sense goes down to hell" (III, 425), and Donne actually recalls, perhaps unconsciously, Marlowe's words, when he pictures men "begging of the hills that they would fall down and cover thee". Both emphasize that worldly misery is a prelude to heavenly bliss: Donne speaks of "this clod of earth, this body of ours" being "carried up to the highest heaven", and Burton promises "be secure then, believe, trust in Him, hope well, and be saved" (III, 421). And above all, both show an acute understanding of the state of religious-melancholy which they are trying to dissipate by their compassionate counsel. Donne, for example, says that "as melancholy in the body is the hardest humour to be purged, so is the melancholy in the soule, the distrust of salvation too" and, in another sermon, speaks of "a cloud of diffidence" (which recalls Bright's description of the state of mind suffered in religious melancholia as "the fogge of that slime and fennie substance"), and elsewhere of the degeneration of the virtue of humility into "an uncomly dejection and stupidity".

Thus Burton's near-contemporaries are eloquent on the subject he claims to monopolize, but his analysis, as has been said, arouses much earlier echoes too. One of the most sensitive analyses of religious anguish and doubt ending in faith is surely that found in Augustine's Confessions. The

2. Ibid., VI, 265.
3. W.R. Mueller remarks, however, that "Burton the social scientist eyes Burton the Christian somewhat skeptically", and that he sees poverty can be sordid as well as saintly.
5. Ibid., VII, 56.
6. A Treatise of Melancholie, p. 100.
moving passage describing his final conversion seems to be wrung from his deepest thoughts and emotions. Augustine's religious-melancholy before his conversion stems from his inability to command his will for redemption, to tear himself from worldly pleasures:

So these two wills within me, one old, one new, one the servant of the flesh, the other of the spirit, were in conflict and between them they tore my soul apart. ¹

No one can ever have known the dark night of the soul more intimately than Augustine. "What agony I suffered, my God! How I cried out in grief, while my heart was in labour!"² But relief and consolation come from his hard-won decision to forsake the world and give himself to God. Not every sufferer from religious-melancholy, of course, can have experienced despair and relief in so great a measure as Augustine, but his account of it sets a pattern for religious struggles such as Burton may have observed in some of his contemporaries, and even at times gone through himself. Admittedly Augustine speaks mainly of himself, and does not actually head his eighth section "Religious Melancholy", but Burton's general claim to originality is still, as has been said, a dubious one.

Even this excuse is not forthcoming when Burton in his initial statement that he is ploughing virgin ground passes by Bright's Treatise of Melancholie, a work he undoubtedly knows well, and in fact frequently cites on this very subject. One of the themes Bright emphasizes most strongly is the difference between religious-melancholy and despair, which is also the subject of one of Burton's sections. In fact, Burton actually refers to Bright in making the distinction:

2. Ibid., p.143.
But melancholy and despair, though often, do not always concur; there is much difference: melancholy fears without a cause, this upon great occasion; melancholy is caused by fear and grief, but this torment procures them and all extremity of bitterness; much melancholy is without affliction of conscience, as Bright and Perkins illustrate by four reasons... (III, 396)

Melancholy, they concur in believing, is a physical as well as a mental state; despair is purely in the mind, although the two conditions are obviously very much interrelated, and their causes and symptoms cannot always be distinguished. As Bright puts it, "Here no balm, no medecine, no purgation, no cordiall, no tryacle or balme are able to assure the afflicted soule and trembling heart..." 1

Mystic union, a gift from God, is one way in which religious despair can be dissipated - "Transcending knowledge with my thought", as St. John of the Cross puts it. Another is philosophy. In a time of faith-shaking scientific advances it is debatable whether there is more need for a Descartes or a Bacon. Bacon's separation of science and religion as two separate spheres which cannot interact (except insofar as the latter can be a general stimulus of the former) is notoriously unsatisfactory to twentieth-century readers, but in view of the biblical contradictions beginning to spread in Burton's time how else could religious stability be maintained? The medieval taboo on religious conjecture was still more or less in force in the early seventeenth century; in fact Burton believes that "needless speculation" is one of the chief causes of religious-melancholy. Here he is thoroughly in accord with such pillars of the church as Eusebius ("it is not permissible to suggest the First Cause of the universe") 2 ) and Boethius:

1. A Treatise of Melancholie, p. 189.
If she [the soul] knows that which she doth so require,
why wisheth she known things to know again?
If she knows not, why strives she with blind pain?  

Bacon asserts that God's mysteries are inaccessible to human understanding, and that the reason for the original Fall was that man pried into secrets he was not meant to know (compare the fate of the rash builders of the Tower of Babel). But this stopgap, as it had become, obviously could not, in view of the increasing seventeenth-century thirst for knowledge, remain firm for long.

Descartes, on the other hand, agrees that the mysteries must be explored and reconciled with the advance of knowledge, but his assertions implying that all God was needed for was to start the world spinning like a top with his finger, and that man is constructed in clockwork fashion - "I compare a sick man and an imperfectly constructed clock, with the idea I have of a man in good health, and a well made clock" - are also notorious, this time in the direction of unorthodoxy. In Bacon's work religious authority redolent of medieval scholasticism contrasts oddly with the revolutionary ideas in his reorganization of experimental method, and desire for a Great Instauration. Descartes dispenses with authority, and tries to work out the reasons for the existence of a divine being from his own intellect - "bodies themselves are not properly perceived by the senses nor by the faculty of imagination, but by the intellect alone". His method and reasoning are, however, not designed to alleviate terrible

3. Ibid., p.141.
doubts, but to express the hypotheses reached by a reasonable, thinking man, who is speaking to other reasonable, thinking men.

Burton's originality, then, lies not in his actual recognition and exploration of the state of religious-melancholy, but in the way he attempts to alleviate it through his understanding treatment. Bright had attempted to do the same for his patient, M, but as will be shown he does not succeed to the same extent, partly because he becomes too pompous, and partly because his advice is directed towards a particular case, whereas Burton, however closely he explores the individual, also speaks to all mankind. Bright shows, however, a full understanding of the horrors of religious-melancholy:

...pittie the estate of such as groane under the burthen of that heavy crosse, wherein no reason is able to minister consolation, nor the burthen whereof the Angels themselves have ability to sustaine.  

Bright believes that spiritual sickness is a temptation, not a weakness. The temptation is to collapse under a mountain of real and imagined sin, without trusting in God's infinite forgiveness; to succumb, in fact, to accidie. Contemplation can cause pain as well as ecstasy, as Donne, Herbert and Vaughan had reason to know. It is only for brief periods that the soul can be united with God; at other times prayer seems arid and unproductive.

But those people not gifted with mystic inspiration experience the aridity without the illuminating flashes, and it is to these that Bright, and later Burton, speak and offer consolation. Bright would of course be careful to distinguish between the actual mystic experience of contemplatives, which is an acceptance of God's will, and the attempt to force out

the secrets of God's will, which is a false conception of contemplation, and can result in the melancholy person's being "caught and devoured of that which his presumptuous curiosity moved him to attempt to apprehend". This looks back to Boethius, Eusebius, and Augustine (who did not always adhere to his own admonitions), and forward to Bacon's and Burton's strictures on "needless speculation".

Although, as has been said, melancholy is a physical disease, caused by the settling of the heavy, dark humour of melancholy in the blood, and the consequent disorder of the other humours, whereas religious-melancholia is a disease of the mind, yet it is also true that melancholics are particularly subject to spiritual anguish, owing to the sluggishness of the humour afflicting them, which discourages action and lays the mind open to torturing speculations. As Burton says, "melancholy is balneum diaboli, as Serapio holds, the devil's bath, and invites him to come to it" (III, 417). True religious despair, however, is suffered because of real sin - and here Bright cites the cases of Saul, Judas and Esau - and not because of any bodily disorder. It is the peculiar affliction of melancholics that the imagination is troubled by horrible fancies, "...vaine feares, frightfull dreames, distrust of the consumption, and putrifying of one part or other of your bodie", whereas the real sinner has every reason to fear the wrath of God. The "whirlepoole" of false terrors experienced by the melancholic is not directly caused by the humour, "which resteth in their bodies, and toucheth not the minde", but it is because "they are more curious and distrustfull than other complexions" that melancholics are

1. A Treatise of Melancholie, p.199.
2. Ibid., p.195.
3. Ibid., p.205.
initially disposed to spiritual questioning and doubt. Relief of the bodily condition can relieve the spiritual disease, whereas true religious despair can be relieved only by God's mercy.¹

But when it comes to the actual administering of spiritual comfort, Bright, who elsewhere writes so simply and sympathetically, slides into a sort of florid harangue redolent of biblical metre and imagery. His main point is that M is being tried by the temptations of Satan, in order to make him stronger in his faith than before (this suggests Burton's idea that spiritual trials are a kind of "academy"). M is being bent like a young tree, but his roots are firm; in another image he is a soldier in the thick of battle, and his dangers should stimulate rather than dishearten him. The cadences of the Book of Common Prayer pulsate strongly in passages such as the following:

He girdeth us with truth, and buckleth on us the breast-plate of righteousness; he shoeth our feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace... ²

In this very long section of Bright's Treatise his intimate, twentieth-century psychiatrist-like relationship with M is shaken, though not entirely lost. Burton, however, is at his best when offering spiritual consolation, since he gives practical, not theoretical solutions, speaks in the capacity of friendly advisor, doffing his cloth (whereas Bright, despite being a doctor, dons it), and in fact deprecates "those

1. Burton remarks in connection with this point: "Some divide it [religious despair] into final and temporal; final is incurable, which befalleth reprobates; temporal is a rejection of hope and comfort for a time, which may befall the best of God's children." (III, 394).
thundering ministers, a most frequent cause...of this malady", mentioning Erasmus in support of this point (III, 399). (One would, of course, except such thunder as proceeds from Donne's lightning.) Indeed, despite his calling, Burton is rather diffident about giving religious counsel at all, and says that he has added this section only "at the request of some friends" (III, 409). It is fitting that this section should come at the end of the whole work, since it contains some of his most profound reflections expressed in some of his most beautiful language.

One could perhaps object that in this passage, as in Bright's passage just quoted, the echoes of biblical language are at times a little overt; for example, the unacknowledged quotation from Isaiah: "the Lord will not quench the smoking flax, or break the bruised reed". The fact that Burton is usually so meticulous about acknowledging his sources, suggests that this echo is an almost unconscious one. There are also copious acknowledged quotations from the Bible, those from the Book of Job being especially pertinent to the subject in hand: "The Lord gives, the Lord takes, blessed be the name of the Lord" (III, 426). It is natural that when writing on the tribulations suffered in life both Bright and Burton should fall into a vein reminiscent of the scriptures; the Bible is, after all, a highly recommended panacea in cases of despair. But whereas Bright's echoes of the Bible seem forced and pretentious, with their strident, triumphant ring as of an exhortatory sermon:

1. The friends are "My brother, George Burton, Mr. James Whitehall, rector of Checkly in Staffordshire, my quondam chamber-fellow and late fellow-student in Christ Church, Oxon" (III, 500).

2. Isaiah, xlii, 3.
Burton's seem much more natural, and even inevitable, as though he treats the Bible as an intimate friend, and cannot help echoing its musical fluency, and lyrical, poetic imagery: "As a drop of water is to the sea, so are thy misdeeds to His mercy" (III, 411). Burton's view of the divine will is very similar to that expressed by Hamlet: "There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow...". Despite his obviously close acquaintance with all kinds of biblical doctrines and controversies, it is the simplicity and peace gained by religious trust that Burton emphasizes, and this is available to anyone, however unlearned. Of course one is all the better equipped to combat despair if one does have a solid bulwark built up by a reading of the Church Fathers, and this is why Burton transcribes for his readers so many consolatory passages gleaned from his own reading.

And because ignorance is liable to be worked on by the devil, one must be doubly careful to store one's mind with defences against dangerous superstition: "This hath been the devil's practice, and his infernal ministers', in all ages; not as our Saviour, by a few silly fishermen, to confound the wisdom of the world, to save publicans and sinners, but to make advantage of their ignorance, to convert them and their associates; and that they may better effect what they intend, they begin, as I say, with poor, stupid, illiterate persons" (III, 339).

Burton has no intention that his readers shall remain ignorant; on the contrary, he stores their minds with a vast

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2. By which Burton specifically means the papists.
supply of precepts and "comfortable words" which will, he hopes, insulate their minds from the fire of zeal or the coldness of atheism.

In his suggestions for the cure of religious-melancholy, Burton shows a deep understanding of the needs and objections of those afflicted. He conducts this section almost in the form of a dialogue, or interview, as though he were actually talking to the reader; this is a far call from Bright's pontifications in a similar situation. Objections and fears are dealt with in an orderly and reasonable way, yet also very feelingly. In his counsel Burton emphasizes the comfort which should be derived from God's word (despite pointing out some parts of the Bible which can alarm those who are prone to despair; for example, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" (Ill, 419)); and goes on to mention the immense love and mercy of God, and the fact that "A true desire of mercy in the want of mercy, is mercy itself..." (Ill, 415); the idea that stagnation of faith (accidie) may be a period of germination; that no man is free from the temptations of Satan, though melancholics are more subject to them than most; that "needless speculation" is wrong, and often results in bewilderment and loss of faith; that affliction is a "school or academy"; that God often works by contrarieties ("Hope, ye unhappy ones; ye happy ones, fear" (Ill, 432)); that there are various remedies for terrible visions and chimeras - herbs, music, fires, perfumes, exorcism - and that if the melancholy condition is caused by fasting and other rigours, the removal of the cause will remove the effect. What seems to be Burton's final advice is as follows: "But the best remedy is to fly to God, to call on Him, hope, pray, trust, rely on Him, to commit ourselves wholly to Him." (Ill, 431)

In this final section Burton seems to sum up all the wisdom and sympathy he has displayed throughout his long work; that
found, for example, in the "Digression on the Misery of Scholars", or the "Remedies against Discontents". Fear of mountains of sin, damnation, temptation, machinations of the devil, and simply lack of belief are systematically explored. Only someone who had himself experienced the horrors of religious uncertainty could understand so well the causes of it. It is not surprising that Doctor Johnson found that *The Anatomy of Melancholy* was the only book which could draw him out of bed two hours earlier than usual. Other churchmen of course, notably Donne, had written of the sin of spiritual listlessness, and the necessity of trusting in God; in fact, so many sermons were being published in Burton's time that he is, he says, loath to add to the number (I, 35); but few achieved Burton's intimate and understanding tone. Timothy Bright's section on religious-melancholy typifies the kind of advice that has the right principles, but lacks the communion with the mind of the reader or listener so necessary for their adoption. Perhaps one of the closest resemblances to Burton's style of consolation is that of Boethius; in fact, J.L.Lievsay believes that Boethius, and earlier Seneca and Plutarch, created with the "consolatio" a genre in which Burton is advisedly following. It seems hard that such a fluent outpouring of humane sympathy should be given an index card in a file, but then the same can be done to Milton in his use of the pastoral convention for *Lycidas*. Like Milton, Burton, if he is following a tradition, makes it his own - here by administering spiritual comfort in a manner which is intimate, compassionate, and above all unpretentious.

This unpretentiousness, and unwillingness to claim

exemption from the problems he analyses in others - "I write of melancholy, by being busy to avoid melancholy" (I, 20) - has been vigorously denied by J. Simon. Burtons denunciation of the "bull-bellowing Pope" (III, 332) is not kindly received by M. Simon, who believes Burton to be claiming that everyone who is not a member of the Church of England is a religious maniac. Simon's accusations against Burton of blind conservatism and bigoted dogma - "Jamais satire [of the church] ne fut plus livresque et d'un contenu moins original" - accord ill with his later witticism about Burton: "Le bonheur vaut bien un credo, aurait dire a son tour le pasteur de Saint-Thomas." Although he sees Burton as being bigoted and narrow in his religion, he sees his philosophy as advocating "a sort of practical hedonism"; "un épïcureïsm chrétien synthèse des tendances de celui qui fut pasteur par profession et, par inclination, médecin." Simon's appraisal of Burton's personality will be dealt with later, but it would seem appropriate here to question some of his statements on Burton's attitude to religion. One of the main obstacles to an impartial appraisal of this on Simon's part is that Simon is, it appears, a Catholic, and is therefore not initially equipped to take very seriously Burton's strictures on Roman Catholicism. He treats these in a mildly patronizing way: "Bien entendu, le lecteur catholique aura quelque peine à reprimer un sourire en voyant le Révérend Robert Burton, pasteur d'une Eglise schismatique, stigmatiser le schism." Simon also accuses Burton of taking no account of the learning of men who belong to sects of which he

2. Ibid., p.126.
3. Ibid., p.419.
4. Ibid., p.377.
5. Ibid., p.405.
disapproves (unlike Bacon), but this is not true as, despite his satire of the Jesuits in general, Burton frequently mentions "Wright the Jesuit" in terms of respect. In fact Simon dismisses all attempts to see Burton as one who has thought with any depth on religious matters - that is not where his genius lies, as it were. Surely a reading of the last section of the work, analysed above, would justify a more serious reckoning of Burton's religious outlook. If he is narrow, it is in the way that Bacon is; that is, he subscribes to the doctrine of "forbidden knowledge", which was beginning to disintegrate in his time. Donne was still able to write in 1619 that God "hath limited our eyes with a firmament beset with stars, our eyes can see no further: he hath limited our understanding in matters of religion with a starry firmament too...". (Paradoxically, despite Burton's fierce denunciation of the papists, nothing could be more Roman Catholic than his respect for this sort of embargo.) Burton's adherence to the Church of England, the via media, and his distrust of unorthodox creeds, look ahead to Swift's similar attitude expressed, for instance, in A Tale of a Tub. It is not surprising, in view of his recommendations of temperance and moderation in all matters - diet, exercise, the passions, and so on - that Burton should advocate moderation in religious practice as well.

It is not true either, that Burton is in a fool's paradise about the state of his own church, as Simon's accusations of self-satisfaction seem to imply. W.R. Mueller remarks that whereas Burton's strictures on Roman Catholicism are purely destructive - and understandably highly offensive

1. III, 345, for example.
to a Catholic - his comments on the Church of England offer constructive ideas for reform, such as better education for aspiring clerics, and appreciation, in the allocation of benefices, of learning and virtue rather than of money and position. Of course here the imputations of self-seeking and frustration readily offer themselves, and in fact Simon, suddenly and unexpectedly in agreement with Middleton Murry, does believe that Burton thought himself capable of better things in life than he had the chance of achieving. But whether or not Burton was bitterly conscious of his own failure and frustration belongs more properly to the discussion of his personality. Suffice it to say here that he cannot have been blind to his literary gift, and that the best proof of having thought deeply about religious melancholy is to be able, as Burton seems to be, to discuss and dismiss the doubts and objections of others in the light of one's own experience and spiritual development.

The likeness between the kind of consolation administered by Burton and by Boethius has been mentioned. It is in the role of spiritual counsellor and consoler, as has been said, that Burton's originality lies, whether he is aware or not of casting his material in the traditional mould of the "consolatio", as J.L.Lievsay claims he does. What makes both Burton and Boethius original is their direct and individual method of spiritual advice; Boethius imagining a dialogue between Philosophy and himself, Burton imagining one between himself and the reader. Both are writing partly to cure themselves, but both are also very anxious to mitigate the wretchedness of those of their readers who are subject to religious despair, a state which both writers seem themselves to have experienced. A.W.Fox could not be more wide of the mark when he says of Burton that "He wrote to cure himself, if possible, with only a secondary care for any who might
read him..."¹ On the contrary, his aim is similar to that of a paraplegic in the twentieth century describing how he learned to walk, or drive a car, for example; that is, to show the best way of overcoming a disability, whether physical or mental, or both. As Burton constantly shows, to shut oneself away and brood introspectively on one's sins and failures is the very worst way of combating melancholy. The best way to drive the black dog outside is to be "busy" about some positive task, and this is why, Burton tells us, he undertook The Anatomy. This personal experience of melancholy is strikingly attested to in the section already noticed, on the "Cure of Despair". The use of the words "feral" and "crucify", which F.P.Wilson remarks on, ² is here particularly frequent; on the first page, for example, Burton speaks of "this feral passion", and "some such feral accident" (III, 409). The theme of the passage is somewhat similar to that of Herbert's poem, "Love" - "Love bade me welcome, but my soul drew back": namely, that however atrociously magnified personal guilt may become in the mind -

a sea full of shelves and rocks, sands, gulfs, euripes and contrary tides, full of fearful monsters, uncouth shapes, roaring waves, tempeests, and siren calms, halcyonian seas, unspeakable misery... (III, 313)

yet, God's power of forgiveness is infinitely greater. The quiet, yet emphatic tone Burton adopts in this section is also somewhat similar to that of Herbert in his best poetry. Some of Burton's fulminations on Roman Catholicism may be a little wild, but these attack a whole institution; he also attacks the administration, if not the doctrine, of his own church. But it is with the individual that his sympathy lies.

²F.P.Wilson, Seventeenth Century Prose, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960, p.45.
His ranting diatribes against the Roman Catholics, and against sects such as the Familists and Brownists, are in sharp contrast with his sane, balanced approach towards the mental instability which results from irrational doubts and superstitions about religion. It is Burton's ability to make each reader feel that he is being spoken to personally that makes the passage on the "Cure of Despair" so natural and convincing. One expects to find human warmth and understanding in a work with such a title as *The Consolation of Philosophy* (even if all such works are not as satisfying in this way as Boethius' is) but to find it in a scientific treatise is rather more unusual. One feels that the comparative serenity gained after so much heart-searching must compensate to some degree for the anguish suffered; and in fact, Boethius, Bacon and Burton all agree with Seneca and the Stoics that, as Boethius puts it, "their very distress is an opportunity". ¹ Burton, for one, has not wasted the opportunity.

Burton is not quite ingenuous when he claims in his introduction, "Democritus to the Reader", that he labours "wholly to inform my reader's understanding, not to please his ear" (I, 32). Similarly, the longings he expresses for the green fields of Latin prose (I, 30) sound odd in a work which depends so much for its appeal on the way in which the English language is manipulated. What Burton means to imply through these disclaimers of any conscious efforts towards a distinctive prose style is that his thoughts have, as it were, sprung onto paper without undergoing any sort of interim moulding. He compares his work, in a traditional image, to a bear cub which has not been licked into shape. Burton's name for his style is "extemporanean" (I, 26); that is, he claims to be dependent wholly on his natural genius for expression, and to take no account of artful devices. Here Sidney's dictum that poetry should instruct through pleasing is relevant; Burton denies having paid any attention to the reader's natural penchant to be amused as well as instructed; any pleasure evoked by the sound of his words, we are told, is purely accidental. Croll, speaking of the "loose" style, says that

Its purpose is to express as far as may be, the order in which an idea presents itself when it is first experienced...The period - in theory at least - is not made; it becomes.  

Donne expresses this idea in one of his letters:

Yea, words which are our subtlest and delicatest outward creatures, being composed of thoughts and breath, are so muddy, so thick, that our

thoughts themselves are so, because (except at the first rising) they are ever leavened with passions and affections. 1

Burton aims at setting down his thoughts before they grow thick.

But as Sweeney said, "I gotta use words to talk to you", and inevitably thoughts, in being translated into words, must be coloured by the method of expression used. After committing himself to English, Burton has to decide on the best way in which to present the teeming knowledge he judges to be relevant to his subject. Part of this decision consists in the rejection of orotund Ciceronian periods and rhetorical devices; although, no one with a sense of style as acute as Burton's could fail to employ a little rhetoric for purposes of emphasis — witness the passage in "Democritus to the Reader" in which he deplores the iniquities and follies of man, and wonders how Democritus would have expressed his scorn were he "To see" the thefts, injustices and faults of insincerity men now commit. The words "To see" (I, 67) are rapped out like drum notes at the beginning of each paragraph for about six pages. The same device is used in the section on charity in Volume III; here the words "ride on" (III, 36) are used as a sort of refrain.

Anti-Ciceronianism really started long before Cicero was born, in the sense of rhetorical schemata being rejected in favour of "natural", everyday speech. This is evident from the Gorgias of Plato, in which Socrates compares rhetoric to cooking; 2 both flatter men's appetites, one satisfying the body, the other the soul. A cook flatters the body of a glutton; an orator flatters the soul of a fool.

Whereas Gorgias complacently states that the orator can persuade his audience that he possesses, for example, more skill in medicine than a doctor (as mountebanks actually did in Burton's time), Socrates denounces the use of the rhetorical schemata as being inimical to reason, truth and justice, and transparently false to any man of sense.

On the other hand, it is reasonable, and indeed essential, for a writer to gain the interest of his reader by presenting his material in as accessible a way as possible. Rhetorical devices, when used too much, cause language to be bombastic and over-emotional; but brevity must also be employed with caution, since it can lead to frigidity and obscurity. Demetrius distinguishes two kinds of style: the "compacted", which consists of periods (here Demetrius cites Isocrates and Gorgias) and "disjointed", which consists of members which are not closely united by connectives (here he cites Hecataeus and Herodotus). Demetrius favours the via media, by which style should be "elaborate and simple at the same time...neither too untutored, nor too artificial". Demetrius goes on to make subtler divisions into plain, elevated, elegant and forcible style, each of which can be combined with any other. It is in the section on "elevated" style that Demetrius enumerates the various figures which should be employed to give dignity, such as metaphors, compound words, onomatopoeia, allegorical language, and so on. In the plain style, on the other hand, clearness must be sought for, long members must be avoided, and each member should follow the natural order of words, and end with precision.

The problem became, in the time of Socrates, the way to

2. Ibid., p.309.
present philosophic ideas in a "pure and neat language", instead of relying on emotional persuasion through stylistic devices. Aristotle says that one of the chief merits of style is "perspicuity"; that is, one cannot rely on a torrent of words which sound impressive but obscure the sense, just as a pianist cannot rely on a torrent of notes which sound very difficult but obscure the musical logic of a piece (even if it is written by Ives). Aristotle suggests five rules for purity of style: connecting particles should be introduced in the natural order, so that the reader will not be lost in a morass of distantly-spaced clauses; special, not generic terms should be used; ambiguous terms should be avoided; genders should be kept distinct; and numbers should be observed. All this is to say that purity can be preserved only by accuracy.

Longinus On the Sublime has much to say about the dangers of frigidity which beset the writer who aims at elevation of diction. Donne's ideal of immediacy of thought is foreshadowed by Longinus' dictum that "art is only perfect when it looks like nature and Nature succeeds only by concealing art about her person". That is, the writer must give the impression that "words do not seem premeditated, but wrung from him". The sort of expression suitable for philosophic ideas is brief and pithy, but still the philosopher must be careful, for "extreme conciseness cripples the sense: true brevity goes straight to the point". Burton, despite his apparent indifference, must have been very much aware of the demands made on him by the classical rules. It would

3. Ibid., p.195.
4. Ibid., p.243.
appear, in fact, that he is not as single-minded as he makes out, and that he is very much aware of the traditions of style. He is certainly very conscious of the pitfalls of style — "harsh compositions, pleonasm of words, tautological repetitions...perturbations of tenses, numbers..." (I, 33) — and it seems reasonable to assume from some of his more pyrotechnical passages that he was equally conscious of style in the positive sense of aiming at particular effects.

Cicero, who has been both emulated and reviled in different ages, was in the time of Burton rather under a cloud. Throughout the seventeenth century the ideal of the Royal Society, stated by Sprat in his History of the Royal Society, was that of a "close, naked, natural" way of writing, and thus Cicero, whose thoughts were nothing if not fully clothed, might be expected to be a little out of favour. In fact, what Cicero has to say on oratory is clear and sensible; he requires that style should be correct, lucid, ornate, and appropriate to the subject matter. The ornamentation "must be so distributed that there may be brilliant jewels placed at various points as a sort of decoration".¹ It is this ornamentation that was the bête noire of critics such as Ben Jonson, who complains that

Right and naturall language seeme to have least of the wit in it; that which is writhed and tortur'd is counted the more exquisite... Nothing is fashionable till it be deform'd, and this is to write like a Gentleman.²

This gave rise to the vice of "points", as illustrated in Love's Labour's Lost, for example. Armado, in his frenzy to be thought clever, educated and witty, "draweth out the thread

of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument”,¹ and distorts language into ridiculous forms, as is seen in the letter he writes to the King: "Great deputy, the welkin's vicegerent, and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's God, and body's fostering patron..."² Holofernes typifies the kind of pedantic nonsense sometimes affected by scholars -- fortunately Burton had the saving grace of humour -- for example,

The deer was, as you know, sanguis, in blood; ripe as a pomewater, who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of caelum, the sky, the welkin, the heaven; and anon falleth like a crab on the face of terra, the soil, the land, the earth. ³

In fact, the whole play is, among other things, a satire on language, and at the end the hero himself is rebuked for his linguistic showing off, and has already berated himself for indulging in

Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,
    Three-pill'd hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical...⁴

The Senecan ideal is then preferred: "Honest plain words best pierce the heart of grief". ⁴

Despite his avowed disregard for his predecessors in the matter of style, and his determination to follow his own bent, Burton is very much aware of his responsibilities to his readers. His chief model is Seneca, who was very much in vogue at the time that Burton was writing, and understandably so, since he exemplifies the sort of style Sprat was looking for; brief, aphoristic, relatively bare of ornament, and above all, natural. It is the last quality that is most difficult to emulate, since a too-staccato Senecan style can be just as artificial as a bombastic

1. Love's Labour's Lost, V,i.
2. Ibid., I,i.
3. Ibid., IV,ii.
4. Ibid., V,ii.
Ciceronian one. Seneca's ideal was for language to be "spontaneous and easy", and "just what my conversation would be if you and I were sitting in one another's company or taking walks together".¹ This is what Burton means by "extemporanean". Allied to this ideal of naturalness is that of sincerity: "Let us say what we feel and feel what we say; let speech harmonize with life".² The river of words should be broad and deep, neither trickling in drought nor swirling in flood; here Denham's description of the Thames is perhaps analogous:

Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full. ³

(Of course, Seneca is speaking specifically of the epistolary style, but it is obvious that his letters are directed to posterity as well as to Lucilius, and that each letter is a kind of "moral essay".)

In his Essays Bacon deliberately follows the Senecan tradition of epigrammatic terseness and brevity, even to the point of expressing the same idea in similar language; for example, Bacon's dictum that "Prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue"⁴ strongly resembles Seneca's statements that "Disaster is Virtue's opportunity",⁵ and "It is only evil fortune that discovers a great exemplar".⁶ This affinity with Stoic philosophy

2. Ibid., II, 139.
3. F.P.Wilson in Seventeenth Century Prose (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960) applies these lines to the prose of Dryden (p.11). Burton himself compares his style to a less predictable kind of river: "...sometimes precipitate and swift, then dull and slow; now direct, then perambages; now deep, then shallow; now muddy, then clear; now broad, then narrow; doth my style flow..." (I, 32).
6. Ibid., I, 17.
and expression shared by Bacon and Burton will be dealt with more fully below.¹

Neatness and aptness of expression are often aided by balance; for example, by chiasmus, or parallelism of words, as in Seneca's statement that "...since you cannot read all the books which you may possess, it is enough to possess only as many books as you can read",² or, again, "It is equally faulty to trust everyone and to trust no one".³ Whereas by the Ciceronian writers clause is elaborately balanced against clause, the Senecan writers balance word with word, making each sentence end with a kind of ring. In Ciceronian prose the "schemata" of Isocrates embellish and elevate the style; in Senecan prose, figures of wit "point" each idea, giving it cogency and emphasis.

Burton's regard for Seneca appears both in his style and in his philosophy, as has been said. In his introduction he refers to "divine Seneca" (I, 20), and later describes him as "that superintendent of wit, learning, judgement..."(I, 29) and defends him from cavillers such as Lipsius (who, despite his criticism, was indebted to Seneca): "If Seneca be thus lashed, and many famous men that I could name, what shall I expect?" (I, 29) Seneca's influence on Burton's style is evident throughout The Anatomy, in his use of short phrases and omission of connectives, the penchant for neat aphorism, the intimate tone of address, and the witty concision with which he pokes fun at the absurdity of human nature, as when he speaks of old women with "more toes than teeth" (III, 178). Croll calls his style "style coupé" or "libertine" prose, and compares it with that of Rabelais and Montaigne.

All this makes Burton sound rather derivative, unoriginal,

² Epistulae Morales, I, 7.
³ Ibid., I, 13.
and in fact pigeon-holed, and it is rather the qualities of his style which point to his originality than those which are the general characteristics of Senecan prose that I wish to emphasize. Burton himself was aware of his own individuality and the way in which his style mirrors his personality; as he says, "our style bewrays us, and as hunters find their game by the trace, so is a man's genius descried by his works" (I, 27). Perhaps the best way of illustrating the qualities of Burton's prose is to take a particular passage; for example, the "Digression of the Air" (II, 34-61).

Burton's digressions are in the nature of detachable essays, written on topics which interest him so much that he cannot help diverging from the mainstream of his subject matter. Since most of them have such an aura of burning curiosity and fascination, it follows that in writing them Burton is closer to revealing his own personality and individuality than he is in, say, the discussion of anatomy at the beginning of Volume I (which, one feels, is a digression made for the purposes of duty rather than of interest, and is therefore the only digression one reads out of duty).

Characteristic of essay form is the rounded, balanced construction of the "Digression of the Air". At the beginning and end Burton points out his self-indulgence with a sort of eccentric mock-guiltiness which adds to the charm of the piece; as in his remark, "But hoo! I am now gone quite out of sight..." (II, 60). The image he uses for this purpose is that of a "long-winged hawk" roving through the air before "stooping" to its prey; Burton also intends to range through the "ample fields of air" (II, 34), both metaphorically and literally, so that the image is doubly appropriate. At the end, the image of falconry is brought back and again expounded in the correct terms: "my melancholy spaniel's quest, my game, is sprung, and I must suddenly come down and follow" (II, 61).
This guise of a hawk which Burton assumes unifies and frames the passage.

The subjects Burton "roves" through are various, though most of them concern contemporary advances in knowledge; the invention of the compass, the exploration of new lands, and, most apposite of all to the fields of air, new research in astronomy. The general theme of the passage is that of journeying, both physically and mentally. Burton, like Jane Austen, has been castigated for not referring to the political scene of his time, but surely his interest in the new science indicates that he does not only bury himself in books, but is vitally concerned with discoveries made in his own time.¹ The whole passage is filled with late-Renaissance excitement about the way man is moving "plus ultra" (as Glanville expresses it), beyond the symbolic pillars of Hercules which in the Middle Ages had formed the boundary to all man was allowed to know.

Burton, like Browne, is divided in his opinion about this infringement of the mysteries. He rejoices that the domains of darkness are being lit up, but at the same time he is a little anxious that man is becoming too arrogant:

But why should the sun and moon be angry, or take exceptions at mathematicians and philosophers, whenas the like measure is offered unto God Himself, by a company of theologasters? (II, 58)

This problem is one which intimately concerns him, since it touches on his own profession of divinity. As a student he is concerned that new areas of knowledge should be explored; as a divine he is anxious that man should "presume not God to scan". One of the causes of religious-melancholy is that of trying to puzzle out vexed questions in theology; the lack of faith in "wingy mysteries" which this reveals is inimical

¹. See note on p. 177,
both to the questioner and to God. It is not surprising that when speaking on subjects which interest him so closely Burton should reveal to their fullest extent his personality, and his artistry with words.

This artistry is shown in the beautiful construction of the first sentence, which almost resembles the introduction to an epic:

As a long-winged hawk, when he is first whistled off the fist, mounts aloft, and for his pleasure fetcheth many a circuit in the air, still soaring higher and higher till he be come to his full pitch, and in the end when the game is sprung, comes down amain, and stoops upon a sudden: so will I, having now come at last into these ample fields of air, wherein I may freely expatiate and exercise myself for my recreation, awhile rove, wander round about the world, mount aloft to those ethereal orbs and celestial spheres, and so descend to my former elements again. (II, 34-35)

There are two parallel parts of the sentence; in the first part the image is expounded, in the second part it is applied. Both parts have a distinct movement of rising and falling, which reflects the hawk's leisurely mounting into the sky, and its sudden descent. The climax of the first part is reached at the words "full pitch", and the gradual ascent and circling motion is suggested by the shorter clauses into which the sentence is divided; the verbs which begin each clause represent higher and higher stages of ascent, while the rest of the clause reflects the floating circles performed on each progressive level. The progress from climax to resolution is also pointed out by the verbs; the clause "stoops upon a sudden", with its brevity and pungent alliteration, contrasts with the former leisurely movement, and this corresponds with the second part of the sentence, in which the climax reached in the words "mount aloft to those ethereal orbs and celestial spheres" suddenly slopes into the end of the sentence, "...and so descend to my
former elements again".

As has been noticed above, one of the chief characteristics of what Croll specifies as "libertine" prose, into which category he puts Burton's writing, is the omission of connectives. It often happens that the reader has to wait as long for the sense to emerge as in a Ciceronian sentence, in which a series of clauses leads up to the decisive verb at the end. But this is the only point of resemblance, for whereas in Ciceronian prose one is aware of the studied smoothness of transition, and the way each clause follows a logical progression, in "loose" or "libertine" prose the writer often seems to forget, by the time he reaches the middle of a sentence, that the first part requires completion, and changes the whole construction of the sentence to accord with a later idea, leaving grammatical parts of speech, if not abandoned, at least ambiguous. The following long sentence may be taken as an example of such forgetfulness:

And 'tis true they say, according to optic principles, the visible appearances of the planets do so indeed answer to their magnitudes and orbs, and come nearest to mathematical observations and precedent calculations; there is no repugnancy to physical axioms, because no penetration of orbs; but then, between the sphere of Saturn and the firmament, there is such an incredible and vast space or distance (7,000,000 semi-diameters of the earth, as Tycho calculates) void of stars: and besides, they do so enhance the bigness of the stars, enlarge their circuit, to solve those ordinary objections of parallaxes and retrogradations of the fixed stars, that alteration of the poles, elevation in several places or latitude of cities here on earth (for, say they, if a man's eye were in the firmament, he should not at all discern that great annual motion of the earth, but it would still appear punctum indivisibile...and seem to be fixed in one place, of the same bigness), that it is quite opposite to reason, to natural philosophy, and all out as absurd as disproportional (so some will), as prodigious, as that of the sun's swift motion of heavens. (II, 53)
After beginning with the words, "And 'tis true they say...", Burton immediately makes the planets, not "they", the subject of the sentence. This would be reasonable enough, except that after four separate propositions about the planets, "they" suddenly becomes again the subject: "...and besides, they do so enhance the bigness of the stars, enlarge their circuit..."; here again, the subject is changed almost immediately and becomes "the stars". Later, in the same sentence, Burton again refers to the original subject: "for, say they, if a man's eye were in the firmament". The apparent confusion is intensified by the use of parentheses; there are three in this sentence, one lasting for four lines. The word "so" in the clause "they do so enhance the bigness of the stars" is divided from its corollary by this very long parenthesis, and is not reached until almost the end of the sentence. It is as though new thoughts are occurring all the time the sentence is being written, and have to be fitted in as they arise. The air of excitement and expanding interest which this causes compensates for the slight confusion experienced by the reader.

Browne also separates the sense of his statements with parentheses, giving a slightly disjointed effect, as is seen in the famous first sentence of Religio Medici:

For my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all, - as the general scandal of my profession - the natural course of my studies, - the indifferency of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion (neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another), - yet, in despite hereof, I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian. ¹

But the parentheses are not without purpose; they serve to heighten and emphasize the assertion of Christianity when it is finally reached. The simplicity and concision of statement in *Religio Medici* hardly lend themselves to the imputation of Ciceronianism, but *Urn Burial* has sometimes been described as Ciceronian, because Browne uses so many words of Latin origin (much more skilfully, it must be added, than Holofernes), giving the orotund effect typical of the Ciceronian period. But the actual structure of the sentences is loose, though the words are ponderous. Burton is surprisingly restrained in the use of Latinisms, though of course they do occur: as "incomprehensible celerity" (II, 52), "parallaxes and retrogradations" (II, 53), and at one stage he wonders where the Caspian Sea "exonerates" (II, 37) itself.

Another general resemblance between Burton and Browne is the fascination with polysyllabic names of places and people, which add sonority and dignity to their prose. Milton also frequently gives lists of names to assist a melodious utterance; names such as "Vallambrosa", for example. Admittedly Burton's "Cirknickzerksey lake in Carniola" (II, 37), though clearly polysyllabic, is not exactly a model of euphony, but he does better with "Manoa or Eldorado in that golden empire", "Madrid and Valladolid in Spain", "...gigantic Patagones in Chica" (II, 37), and so on. An aura of romance and adventure surrounds these lists of exotic names, which are deliberately extended to include the strangest-sounding places possible; one wonders how Burton pronounced the name of "Ybouyapab in the Northern Brazil" (II, 37), but its inclusion gives point to the digression's general theme of expanding horizons.

The imagery Burton uses is at times as unexpected and as astonishing as that of some metaphysical poetry. One of Burton's techniques is to couple grandeur with mundanity,
giving an effect not of bathos, but of striking originality of thought. This is particularly noticeable in the part about astronomy in the "Digression of the Air". The efforts of astronomers to probe the mysteries of the universe are described with mordant irony: "the world is tossed in a blanket amongst them, they hoist the earth up and down like a ball..." (II, 57). This planetary familiarity recalls Donne's "Busy old fool, unruly sun", or Marvell audaciously making the sun run. Earlier, the earth has been compared to "haycocks in harvest" being "turned inside out...top to bottom, or bottom to top" (II, 40), or, even more startlingly, to apples being turned to the fire (that is, to the sun)(II, 40). This juxtaposition of the sublime and the homely is daringly unexpected, but it comes off because of the air of witty urbanity with which the surprising is taken for granted. Burton, when ranging in the fields of air, takes good care not to be carried away with his freedom; instead of indulging in airy speculations he is always sternly realistic. It is paradoxical that the images which recall the reader to earthy reality are themselves strikingly imaginative, and can be described in the metaphysical terminology of "conceits". Burton's imagery, like Donne's, gives the reader an entirely fresh way of looking at the subject in hand, which is both humorous and profound. The famous "metaphysical shudder" is felt at their daring originality. For example, when Burton describes the Milky Way as "a confused light of small stars, like so many nails in a door" (II, 51), it is seen, after the first shock of the idea has been experienced, that Burton's description of stars, though quite different from the comparison to tears on the cheek of night, for instance, is just as poetic as the more conventional image; that is, in the manner of Donne, not of Herrick. It is effective because of its "strong lines", not because of its mellifluousness.
The bird-image introduced at the beginning of the "Digression of the Air" is continued throughout the piece, and this is appropriate, since air is the element of birds. These connected illustrations add to the unity of the passage. For example, Burton wishes he could see that great bird ruck, that can carry a man and horse or an elephant, with that Arabian phoenix described by Adricomius; see the pelicans of Egypt, those Scythian gryphes in Asia... (II, 36) Later he speculates on whether, as was supposed by those not yet purged of pseudodoxia, birds lay at the bottom of lakes and rivers through the winter, or whether they "follow the sun" or "lie they hid in caves, rocks, and hollow trees, as most think, in deep tin-mines or sea-cliffs, as Mr. Carew gives out?" (II, 38) And later he wonders again, "Why hath Daulis and Thebes no swallows? ... Why so many thousand strange birds and beasts proper to America alone, as Acosta demands?" (II, 43) Burton is sensitive to both the strange and the familiar aspects of nature. Here it is the strangeness he is stressing, but at other times, as in the beautiful description of "Whiteness in the lily, red in the rose, purple in the violet... the clear light of the moon, the bright beams of the sun... the colour of birds, peacocks' tails, the silver scales of fish..." (III, 66) he shares with Herrick the ability to see poetry in the everyday - "Brooks... Blossomes, Birds and Bowers" - as well as in the exotic.)

The most distinctive stylistic feature of all in The Anatomy has not yet been mentioned, and it is the feature which most obviously lays Burton open to the imputation of unoriginality; that is, the way in which he continually introduces learned illustrations and quotations from a host of other authors. The page itself, with its scattering of italics, characterizes The Anatomy as soon as it is opened. It is on good authority that Burton presumes to build up his
"paper-kingdom" (I, 22) out of "a rhapsody of rags gathered together from several dung-hills" (I, 26) – though Seneca refers to his sources in rather more polite terms:

We should follow, men say, the example of the bees, who flit about and cull the flowers that are suitable for producing honey, and then arrange and assort in their cells all that they have brought in. ¹

It is interesting to compare Seneca's epistle LXXXIV, on the subject of "gathering ideas", with Burton's remarks in "Democritus to the Reader". Seneca develops the imagery of bees into further apt comparisons:

Certain others maintain that the materials which the bees have culled from the most delicate of blooming and flowering plants is transformed into this peculiar substance by a process of preserving and careful storing away, aided by what might be called fermentation, – whereby separate elements are united into one substance...

and later,

...we should so blend those several flavours into one delicious compound that, even though it betrays its origin, yet it nevertheless is clearly a different thing from that whence it came. ²

In another letter Seneca speaks of Epicurus' words as being "public property";³ that is, they do not belong only to Epicurus, but have become part of a common heritage. It is as such that Burton uses the scientific and literary sources he quotes from; his originality, paradoxical as it may seem to claim this, arises from the compilation of these sources into a continuous theme, "one delicious compound". Thus when Burton says "Omne meum, nihil meum" (I, 24), the emphasis is on the first two words; the blend is Burton's, though the components are not. Here one of Goethe's maxims is relevant:

2. Ibid., I, 219.
3. Ibid., I, 147.
"The best sign of originality lies in taking up a subject and then developing it so fully as to make everyone confess that he would hardly have found so much in it."¹

It is difficult to divide up the qualities of Burton's style and say "this way lies originality" and "this way derivativeness". Certainly his style is modelled on the precept of Seneca that style should be easy and familiar, and certainly his style belongs to a genre which stems from Seneca and his imitators, and includes Rabelais, Montaigne and Browne. But at what point does Burton cease to be a pupil and become an artist in his own right? The chief qualities which make Burton's style individual are his deft use of colloquialisms, aided by the fitting in of innumerable proverbs; connected with this, at the opposite extreme, is the patchwork quality of his illustrations and quotations; his self-revelatory frankness, combined with a certain ironic distance (that is, though morbidly fascinated with his own personality he keeps up a jocular strain, and does not earnestly analyse his psychological traumas - he leaves that to his twentieth-century critics)²; and the third, and perhaps most striking feature is the wit of his imagery and his fresh way of looking at things. Of course, these qualities are not revealed in an equal degree throughout the work. Much of Volume I, for example, is written in a style which is functional rather than decorative; that is, Burton is concerned with expounding the strictly medical aspects of melancholy, and in order to do this he has to prune all extravagances and set down in a neat and orderly fashion the relevant facts. In the "Digression of Anatomy" - unlike the rest of the digressions - it is obvious that Burton is not very interested in his task, and

2. Such as Evans and Simon.
as Simon has judiciously pointed out, he is often inaccurate in his use of medical terms and details. The style used here is dry, and even a little empty; indeed, there is not much scope for imagination in setting down this information extracted from Hippocrates and Galen, and later physicians. Burton collates this information quite skilfully, but he appears to do so rather as a duty than as a pleasure; he has to do the spade work before he can expatiate. On the other hand, the subject matter of Volume III, love- and religious-melancholy, is interesting in itself, in that it is something one can study and observe around oneself, instead of relying on authorities. Burton has exonerated himself, in Volumes I and II, of the necessary definitions and explanations, and can therefore concentrate on the human and personal aspects of the subject, instead of having to swamp them with technical detail.

In the section on love-melancholy, Burton gives his language a freer rein than in any other part of the work - so free, in fact, that it almost bolts away with him. Probably the often-quoted passage on the blindness of lovers (III, 155) is the best-known example of this almost inebriated revelling with words, and Keats' appreciation is not needed to give it currency. But the vein in which this passage was written continues to flow throughout the whole section. Take, for example, the paragraph in which Burton describes men preening themselves:

'Tis the common humour of all suitors to trick up themselves, to be prodigal in apparel, pure lotus, neat, combed and curled, with powdered hairs, comptus et calamistratus, with a long love-lock, a flower in his ear, perfumed gloves, rings, scarfs, feathers, points, etc., as if he were a prince's Ganymede, with every day new suits, as the fashion varies; going as if he trod upon eggs; and, as Heinsius writ to Primerius, "If once he be besotten on a wench, he must lie awake anights, renounce his book, sigh and lament, now and then weep for his hard
hap, and mark above all things what hats, bands, doublets, breeches, are in fashion, how to cut his beard and wear his locks, to turn up his mustachios and curl his head, prune his pickitivant, or if he wear it abroad, that the east side be correspondent to the west: he may be scoffed at otherwise, as Julian, that apostate emperor, was for wearing a long hirsute goatish beard, fit to make ropes with, as in his Misopogon, or that apologetical oration he made at Antioch to excuse himself, he doth ironically confess it hindered his kissing, nam non licuit inde pura puris, eoque suavioribus labra labris adjungere [it made it impossible to put lips to lips without impediment, which would have been more pleasant], but he did not much esteem it, as it seems by the sequel, De accipiendis dandisve osculis non laboro [I am not much concerned about taking and giving kisses], yet (to follow mine author) it may much concern a young lover, he must be more respectful in this behalf, "he must be in league with an excellent tailor, barber,"

Tonsorem puerum sed arte talem, Qualis nec Thalamus fuit Nerois;
[A young barber, but a greater artist than Nero's Thalamus;]

"have neat shoe-ties, points, garters, speak in print, walk in print, eat and drink in print, and that which is all in all, he must be mad in print." (III, 176-7)

This whole long paragraph consists of one sentence, but there is no difficulty in following it to the end; though the correspondence between the connectives "as" and "yet" may be a little obscured by the amount of the material which separates them, the sense is carried on by the flow of thought from clause to clause. By the time one reaches the parenthesis: "(to follow mine author)", one has probably forgotten that the author is Julian, and has to look back, but this is not really a serious stumbling-block to the sense. Even when Burton makes a quotation inside a quotation, towards the end of this paragraph, the zest of his style is strong enough to carry the thought through the interruption. This also indicates the fierce inspiration with which ideas and
illustrations are rushing out here - so quickly, that is, that they are falling on top of each other.

One of the most noticeable stylistic features of this paragraph is the predominance of alliteration; for example, of the letter "l": "a long love-lock, a flower in his ear". The effect here is the same as that of Shakespeare's line: "To the lascivious pleasing of a lute"; namely, that of a musical and luxurious fluency, suggesting abandonment to the pleasures of love. Burton constantly uses alliteration with brilliant artistry; the letter "p" is another favourite, as in "prune his pickitivant", which is an intensification of the non-committal phrase in the previous line, "cut his beard" - as though Burton had suddenly thought of something much better, and had forgotten to cut out the earlier expression. The alliteration of "p" here suggests affected preciseness and fussiness about trivia, and this effect is accentuated by the word "pickitivant" (Burton's individual spelling of "pique-devant", a word then current, meaning "beard"), with its short, staccato plosives, which are particularly noticeable in Burton's spelling. Probably he intended his readers to associate with it such words as "picked" (spruce, neat) and "pioked" (pointed); but the modern reader can still oblige with such associations as "pernicketty" and "titivate"; that is to say, the onomatopoetic effect is not lost, even if the word is.

Burton's similes, as has been said, frequently have something homely or earthy about them, which is why so many of

1. Richard III, I, i.
2. Compare the alliteration of "p" in an earlier part of the section on love-melancholy: "with...a pretty pleasant peevishness they will put you off" (III, 116), which cleverly paints the mistress' pouts and little tantrums.
them sound like, or have become, proverbs - similes such as that just before the paragraph under discussion: "He was upon a sudden now spruce, and keen as a new-ground hatchet" (III, 176), which recalls the proverb "as neat as a new pin"; and, in the paragraph itself, the affected, finical gait of the courtly suitor is compared, with a superb effect of bathos, to "going as if he trod upon eggs".¹

Again Burton's love of lists is illustrated, as: "perfumed gloves, rings, scarfs, feathers, points, etc.", or, with adjectives: "neat, combed and curled". The tendency to scatter lists of words through his writing sometimes suggests that Burton's mind is so teeming with knowledge and ideas that he cannot wait to prune them into shape, and certainly this contributes to the effect of spontaneity he wishes to convey. The lists are, however, usually employed for a definite satiric purpose; here, to make fun of modish gallants and their concern with unnecessary details of clothing and ornamentation according to a fashion which changes by the hour. (compare Hamlet ridiculing Osric: "Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head"²). Perhaps the most well-known example of this subtle use of lists for a satiric effect is Burton's explanation of why he does not spend his time writing sermons, instead of an *Anatomy of Melancholy*; the impatience and scorn he feels at the wordy emptiness of many of the sermons multitudinously appearing in print at the time, is graphically conveyed by his hammering out of the word in phrases which gradually increase, and then diminish, until finally the word is thumped out by itself:

1. With this we may compare the similarly deflating statement that "as much pity is to be taken of a woman weeping, as of a goose going barefoot" (III, 125).

...I might have haply printed a sermon at Paul's Cross, a sermon in St. Mary's Oxon, a sermon in Christ Church, or a sermon before the right honourable, right reverend, a sermon before the right worshipful, a sermon in Latin, in English, a sermon with a name, a sermon without, a sermon, a sermon, etc. (I, 35)

(The final sting comes in the "etc.", as often happens in Burton's lists.) A similar effect is obtained in the paragraph under discussion, in his skilful translation of Julian:

"...he must be in league with an excellent tailor, barber...have neat shoe-ties, points, garters, speak in print, walk in print, eat and drink in print, and that which is all in all, he must be mad in print."

This is also a good example of Burton's ability to make his borrowings his own - we have seen that he says himself, "Omne meum, nihil meum" - by subtle placement in the context, and by skilful translation into his own style (the prose translations are, however, usually much superior to the poetic ones). When even Burton's translations are expressed as originally as the one just quoted, it is a fair indication that the thoughts outside the quotation marks will be so too.

The very fact that Burton's style is so easy to imitate, yet so hard to reproduce convincingly, indicates its individuality. Lamb in the nineteenth century, and Holbrook Jackson in the twentieth, have both attempted to do this. Lamb, styling himself "Burton Junior", concocted some "Curious Fragments extracted from a commonplace book which belonged to Robert Burton, the famous author of The Anatomy of Melancholy", in which he lays emphasis on the "fantastic" or "quaint" side of Burton which he was so prone to exaggerate: "...they call me singular, a pedant, fantastic, words of reproach in this age which is all to neoteric and light for
my humour". The features of style emphasized by Lamb are disorderliness, the tendency to produce long lists, and scattered felicities of expression which shine out from their overcrowded setting: "melancholizing in woods where waters are". But Lamb tries too hard; his piece is affected and precious, and, as Jonson said of Spenser, "In affecting the ancients he writ no language". Jackson's attempt is even less successful, not only because it is so much longer, but also because his command of language is much inferior to Lamb's. His efforts to reproduce Burton's taste for alliteration and assonance: "a goodly portly book and a corpulent, as ever there was...", or his use of balancing phrases and pseudo-Senecan brevity: "exaggerations which strain a point to point a strain" are dismally feeble.

Neither of these imitations of an imitation fulfils Seneca's criterion:

I think that sometimes it is impossible for it to be seen who is being imitated, if the copy is a true one; for a true copy stamps its own form upon all the features which it has drawn from what we may call the original, in such a way that they are combined into a unity. — but Burton's method of using the words and ideas of other men undoubtedly does. Probably the most important single influence on his style is that of Seneca, but it is assimilated, not plagiarized. Jackson calls The Anatomy a "literary mosaic", but it would perhaps be more accurate to describe it as a picture studded with jewels. The jewels complement

2. Ibid., I, 34.
4. Ibid., p. 44.
6. It is not only Seneca's style that is adopted, but also (with reservations) his outlook on life. See above, p. 100, n. 1.
the picture and give it brightness, but the lines of the picture unify them and give them their design.
Chapter 4.  Construction

There are really two separate constructions working together in *The Anatomy*, one intrinsic and natural, the other extrinsic and imposed. By "extrinsic" construction I refer to that signified by the elaborate Aristotelian table of contents which appears at the beginning of each volume, imposing a logical progression from causes and symptoms of melancholy, treated in the first volume, to cures, treated in the second, and to the separate treatment in the third of two of the most important kinds of melancholy, those involving love and religion. By "intrinsic" construction I mean a series of essays on assorted subjects, mostly digressions according to the formal structure, held together by the continuous theme of human interest and sympathy which branches off from the central theme of melancholy and by the continued presence of Burton's temperament in the work. This is like making Beatrice and Benedick, not Hero and Claudio, the hero and heroine of *Much Ado*. Perhaps another illustration from Shakespeare might be made here, in that the double construction of *The Anatomy* can be compared to the double time scheme in *Othello*; the literal one of two days, in which period Desdemona would simply not have had time to be unfaithful with Cassio, and the longer period of time which would be needed for Iago's allegations to be feasible. The two time schemes, by interacting, create a kind of tension which tightens instead of confusing the action, and seems to hasten the inevitable disaster. Similarly, in *The Anatomy* the two constructions, interacting, unify the book instead of breaking it apart; the unity is given by the dominant theme of human interest, not by the minute, methodic organization of subject matter implied by the synopses. This minuteness would tend to make Burton resemble a medieval scholastic; it is the warmth
of human interest and compassion expressed in the moral essays incorporated in the work that give it modernity and universal application. Thus, it is by the intrinsic construction, I believe, that Burton manifests his original approach to the subject of melancholy. Had he merely restated the ideas he had gleaned from his reading of medical and philosophical tracts his work would still be of historical interest, but would lack the human appeal it has obviously exercised over the centuries.

It is in the first and second volumes that digressions most frequently appear, and this would seem to show that Burton is rather chafing at the task of presenting in due order all the relevant medical material. The first digression, on anatomy, does indeed savour rather of duty than abandon, but even here the central theme of human interest is dominant. It is necessary that man should be taken apart physically before his mental state is analysed, since the states of body and mind are so intimately connected. Just as Democritus was found by Hippocrates dissecting animals in his search for the cause of melancholy, so Democritus Junior begins by anatomizing man's body, since here clues may be found to the riddle of his nature. The other most important digressions in Volume I are the fascinating "Digression of Spirits"(I,180-202), and the "Digression of the Miseries of Scholars" (I, 301-330), which involves much personal detail about Burton. In the second volume are found the "Digression of the Air" (II, 34-64), and the "Consolatory Digression, containing the Remedies of all manner of Discontents"(II,126-205) (this last is by far the longest digression in the whole work). In the third volume, the material itself is of such wide human interest that there is less need to diverge, and the only digression is that at the end of the book, where Burton again attempts to console the troubled minds of his readers (III,408-432).
It is the presence of the digressions that makes the construction, as well as the style, of The Anatomy seem "extemporaneous". The very fact that so many people have characterized it as a "bedside book" suggests that each section is complete in itself; that, so to speak, there is a pearl on every page. Simon¹ quotes several critics who all seem to concur in saying that one can pick up The Anatomy at any point to pass an idle hour; critics such as Johnson and Warton, in the eighteenth century, and Legouis and H.W. Taeusch in the twentieth. Lamb also treats the book rather as a collection of unset gems. In writing his "Curious Fragments", supposedly extracted from Burton's commonplace book, he implies that The Anatomy itself is a series of sententiae and stories which Burton has strung together from time to time, rather than a connected argument. Sir William Osler, on the other hand, believes The Anatomy to be very much a connected argument, and, as such, to be of great relevance to twentieth-century psychiatry. Lamb tends to see Burton as a dabbler, Osler as a physical and spiritual physician of immense seriousness of mind. This does not mean that Lamb doubted Burton's scholarship, but simply that he characterized it as a sort of fluttering from volume to volume, as from flower to flower, rather than as a solid bulwark of detailed information.

Both these views are extreme. One welcomes the salutary reaction against the nineteenth-century view of Burton as a "fantastic great old man" shown by Osler's willingness to take him seriously instead of bestowing on him the rather patronizing admiration exhibited by Lamb or Augustine Birrell. The first step, that of treating him as

the possessor of a young mind, rich in knowledge and ideas, instead of the dallying, disconnected thoughts of a frisky old gentleman, is highly satisfactory; one wishes only that Osler and Evans would give him credit for a little more detachment and irony. The synopses should not perhaps be taken too seriously. Burton does all he promises, but he does much more which is not included in the general layout. What he does is to extend the boundaries of his treatise to include his intuitions about human nature, and his all-embracing interest in "Man, the most excellent and noble creature of the world", who is also "one of the most miserable creatures of the world" (I, 130). It is this that gives The Anatomy such general relevance, and relegates Timothy Bright to the position of historical predecessor or stepping-off point, important though the information he provides may be. In the digressions is found the clearest expression of Burton's fascination with man's mind and man's misery. The dauntingly detailed table of contents is not really as binding as it seems; it instigates, but does not control the subject matter. Like the stars, it "inclines" but does not "compel". The air of happy discovery by which Burton gives spontaneity to his style is connected with the freedom he feels to diverge whenever the spirit takes him. What makes the individual essays so delightful is that one is made to feel that one is personally invited to explore these fields with Burton, almost as if one were playing truant with him, and that he is enjoying the holiday as much as his reader. Also delightful is the self-conscious air of guilt Burton assumes on returning to the subject: "But I digress", "But I rove", "But hoo! I am now gone quite out of sight, I am almost giddy with roving about" (II, 60). The air of relief with which he relaxes after a rather tedious section is also infectious: for example,
After a long and tedious discourse of these six non-natural things and their several rectifications, all which are comprehended in diet, I am come now at last to Pharmaceutice... (II, 207)

Burton's sigh of relief at the completion of the task is in unison with the reader's. We may compare the holiday gaiety expressed at the beginning of the third volume:

After a harsh and unpleasing discourse of melancholy, which hath hitherto molested your patience and tired the author, give him leave... to recreate himself in this kind after his laborious studies... (III, 6)

In a work as long as The Anatomy, it is essential that there should be occasions for relaxation; it is only in the third volume that the interest can be sustained through its human relevance, without needing to be supplemented with interruptions, and even here, as has been mentioned, there is a second consolatory digression. The purpose of the extrinsic framework, then, is to enable Burton to mark off the small areas in which he wants to expatiate, without disrupting the whole.

Thus the impression of immensely detailed and logical exhaustiveness given by the synopses is deceptive; one feels that it was never Burton's object, and indeed not in his temperament, to stick very closely to the subject in hand. This of course lays him open to the charge of dilatoriness and wandering disorder, but this charge is unjust, even though it may be made with affectionate indulgence, as it is by E. Bensley and Augustine Birrell. Burton does not need to be patronized; he knew too well what he was doing. The logical divisions into Causes, Symptoms and Cures made in the first and second volumes form a framework for Burton's philosophical speculations on the nature of man and the breadth and narrowness of his mind, and it is this theme that he stresses throughout The Anatomy, and that gives it unity despite the apparently rambling character given to the book.
by the presence of the digressions. Each digression in itself, however, is a complete and rounded whole, as has been noticed in the analysis of the "Digression of the Air", and after all, no one accuses Bacon's Essays of lacking order, though they are all on different topics.

The construction, then, is determined by the digressions, which may be seen as a series of essays related by recurrent themes, rather than by the organization of the medical material. As literature, the book is best approached in this way. Faced with the problem of form, and hankering for more freedom than his self-imposed, exhaustive task represented by the plan of contents seemed able to provide, Burton adopts a recognized genre, a genre which had been brought to a state of high elegance and sophistication by Seneca and Cicero, and other classical writers, and was just beginning its modern career at the time Burton was writing. The two figures always put at the head of its development are Montaigne and Bacon, whose essays first appeared in 1580 and 1597 respectively. From these two essayists descend two different styles: Bacon writes in the Stoical tradition, of which one of the most notable exponents is Seneca; Montaigne, though sympathetic with Stoic philosophy, chooses to seek a much more intimate relationship with the reader than Seneca achieved. Of course it had been Seneca's aim, as has been said,\(^1\) to write as if he were having a private conversation with the reader, but in fact his attitude towards the reader is still very formal; he never seems to temper his lofty ideals of moderation, virtue, courage, and so forth, with any sort of allowance for human frailty. Certainly his style is not ponderous - this is just what he wanted to avoid - but he does distance the relationship with the reader by his stern,

\(^1\) cf. p.\textsuperscript{99}.
moralistic teaching. In other words, Seneca tells the reader what he ought to think; his brief, pithy aphorisms do not permit the thought of any kind of weakness or defeat. Similarly, Marcus Aurelius in his Meditations, predecessor of the commonplace book, teaches that one should be above all passion, speaking of death, for example, in terms rather similar to those the Duke inMeasure for Measure uses towards Claudio; that is, any kind of fear is a pointless protest against the natural order of things. It is Montaigne who first introduces the human element into the essay, so that one can feel he would have been sympathetic towards Claudio's anguished cry, "Ay, but to die, and go we know not where". In the preface to the Essays, Montaigne announces that "I am myself the matter of my book".¹ (Similarly, Burton tells us "I have laid myself open..." (I, 27)). Seneca would have thought it frivolous to give a moment's notice to his own personality; his subject was how man ought to live, whereas that of Montaigne's and Burton is how man does live, and naturally enough the chief guide to knowledge of this is their observation of the men around them, and, more particularly, of themselves.

Thus, whereas Bacon in his Essays modelled himself on the plan of Seneca, alternating brief statement with apt illustration, Montaigne, though his actual style is modelled on Seneca's, infuses into his Essays a sense of warmth and intimacy which is lacking in the clearcut, sculptured coldness of Seneca's and Bacon's. Of course, this is no denigration of the last two writers, who both write with superb compression and artistry; but it is meant to suggest that Montaigne's whole approach to the essay form is completely different from Bacon's, and it is Montaigne's

rather than Bacon's that Burton's work resembles. Montaigne is discursive, and even at times rambling; Bacon generally sticks firmly to the subject in hand and makes each point resoundingly. If one compares two essays by them on the same subject, the difference is clearly seen. In his essay "On Friendship" for example, Bacon begins with an apt quotation, immediately setting the theme of the essay, that man is a social animal: "'whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a beast or a god.'" He goes on to expound the medicinal value of friendship, "the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce", and sums all this up in the brilliantly compressed description of friendship as "a kind of civil shrift or confession". The benefits from this are two-fold; as Bacon succinctly puts it, "it redoubleth joys and cutteth griefs in half". After this first point has been illustrated by various historical examples (a trait, again, common to Seneca, Montaigne and Bacon) he passes on to the second fruit of friendship, which concerns the mind, as the first had the affections. Intimate communion of thought with another man can be helpful in that it both clarifies one's own ideas, and adds the ideas of another mind, so that one "waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation". Counsel from a friend is further divided into "two sorts: the one concerning manners, the other concerning business". The third fruit,

2. Ibid., p.81.
This idea of unburdening the heart is pertinent to Burton's discussion of the "mind rectified", in which he advises that "the best way for ease is to impart our misery to some friend, not to smother it up in our own breast"... (II, 107).
3. Ibid., p.83.
4. Ibid., p.84.
which is "like the pomegranate, full of many kernels", is the aid a friend can render in all the business of life, so that to his friend he is not so much "another himself" as "far more than himself".

Thus Bacon's essay falls into three distinct sections describing the three fruits of friendship, the first being illustrated by historical examples, the other two by examples of situations in which friendship can be a sovereign cordial. The form of the essay is beautifully clear and logical, condensing a considerable amount of subject matter into incredibly few words. The difference from Montaigne's essay on the same subject emerges in Montaigne's first two words; in his whole essay Bacon does not once refer to himself; Montaigne begins: "As I was considering the way a painter I employ went about his work, I had a mind to imitate him." Like Bacon, he uses a quotation early in the essay, but whereas Bacon's is apt and pithy, and immediately announces the theme of the essay, Montaigne's is not so obviously appropriate; it has to be fitted in and explained. In fact, this quotation from Horace, "'A lovely woman tapers off into a fish'", is not meant to illustrate friendship at all, but refers to Montaigne's own confession, with which he begins, of the disorder of his essays - "grotesques and monstrous bodies" - any such confession from Bacon would be out of the question, not only for the obvious reason that his essays are not disordered, but also because to refer to himself would destroy the balanced detachment of his essay, and detract from its axiomatic nature. Montaigne, on the other hand, is not interested in providing axioms, but passes immediately to the

2. Ibid., p. 86.
particular friend he has in mind, Etienne de la Boétie, with whom his relationship had been an intimate and delightful one: "Truly the name of brother is a beautiful name and full of affection, and for that reason he and I made our alliance a brotherhood." This provides the theme of the essay, on which variations are played as they occur to Montaigne. In the first half of the essay Montaigne gives a rhapsodic description of the sweetness of his friendship with La Boétie, and states his ideal of perfect friendship, which is that each one gives himself so wholly to his friend that he has nothing left to distribute elsewhere; on the contrary, he is sorry that he is not double, triple, or quadruple, and that he has not several souls and several wills, to confer them all on this one object.

(with which we may compare Browne's similar remarks in *Religio Medici*). The second half of the essay is a kind of lament for "this boy of sixteen", and Montaigne speaks of the emptiness of his life without this friend: "Since the day I lost him...I only drag on a weary life", and says that compared with the few years he spent with La Boétie the rest of his life is "nothing but smoke, nothing but dark and dreary night". At the end of the essay he had intended to quote La Boétie, but, according to D.M.Frame, changed his mind after the publication in 1576 of a discourse written by his friend. Though he does not include the quotations he retains the introduction to them - "But let us listen a while to this boy of sixteen" - so that the end of the essay rather loses point.

I have tried to show that Bacon and Montaigne have

2. Ibid., p.141.
completely different aims in their essays. Bacon is concerned to analyse friendship as an abstract concept; Montaigne is recalling a friendship that he himself has experienced. Montaigne's essay is far longer than Bacon's, yet makes far fewer actual statements; he roams through his experiences, giving quotations from classical poets as they arise in his mind. (With Bacon one feels that each illustration was worked out before the essay was begun; with Montaigne and Burton they are fitted in as they occur in the course of writing the essay.) Both essays are fine in different ways; Bacon's for its measured gravity of judgement and its spare yet full expression; Montaigne's for its personal warmth and sincerity of feeling, and spontaneous, easy, and what Burton would call its "extemporanean" expression. What they are both saying is fundamentally the same: namely, that, as Bacon puts it, "a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast", ¹ or as Montaigne, "There is nothing to which nature seems to have inclined us more than to society", ² but Bacon illustrates the point by general, Montaigne by particular, examples.

Burton is closer to Montaigne than to Bacon in the form of his "essays", as I call the digressions. The "Consolatory Digression, containing the Remedies of all manner of Discontents" also begins on the theme of friendship:

... I have made mention of good counsel, comfortable speeches, persuasion, how necessarily they are required to the cure of a discontented or troubled mind, how present a remedy they yield... (II, 126)

He actually refers to Montaigne early in this section: "If I make nothing, as Montaigne said in this case, I will mar

nothing" (II, 127), and the diffident attitude implied by this remark, which is in sharp contrast with Bacon's assured weight of statement, sets the tone of the passage. The personal quality of Burton's compassionate advice, as compared with Bacon's composure and distance from the reader, is shown by his characteristic remark, "If it be not for thy ease, it may be for mine own" (II, 127). In other words, whereas in Bacon's essays the personality of the writer is irrelevant, in Burton's and Montaigne's the personality of the writer is vital to the whole essay, and in fact determines its structure, in that they are constantly interrupting themselves, and fitting in new thoughts as they arise. It is the revelation of the writer's engaging personality that compensates for the disordered construction. Whereas Bacon's construction is determined by his subject matter, Montaigne's and Burton's is determined by personal whim; that is, Bacon looks out into the world for his material, while Burton and Montaigne look inward into themselves for the unifying theme of their work, and for the ultimate test of their statements about human nature.

But although the method of attack adopted by Montaigne and Burton is so different from that of Bacon, they have a common model in Seneca. Burton frequently refers to Seneca and the Stoical ideal; for example, to the very common Stoical maxim about bearing pain: "... if it be long, 'tis light; if grievous, it cannot last" (II, 128). Again, in the same section: "If it be violent, it cannot endure..." (II, 164) - to which we may compare this meditation of Marcus Aurelius: "Of Pain. If it is past bearing it makes an end of us; if it lasts it can be borne." The difference lies in the way this influence is used. Bacon follows Seneca closely in his liking

for aphorisms, which, as he says in The Advancement of Learning, "representing a knowledge broken, do invite men to inquire further"; in his tight and methodical structure, and his stern reflections on courage and endurance, and on moderation; in fact he diverges little from the pattern Seneca had set for the moral essay. Montaigne and Burton, on the other hand, adapt Seneca to their own use; that is, while agreeing with most of his ideals, they introduce the human element by their realization that ideals are not always lived up to. The idea, too, that the writer should speak to the reader as to an intimate friend, and set down his thoughts as in a kind of commonplace book, such as, for example, Marcus Aurelius' Meditations, is carried much further, and developed to a point which almost at times contradicts the original aim, in that whereas Seneca always maintains a stern hold over himself and his emotions, Montaigne and Burton give free rein to their emotions and most intimate thoughts, as though drawing the reader into their confidence, and occasionally desert moderation altogether, as Burton does in his vituperations about Roman Catholicism.

It is interesting that the first known essay published in English, Anonymous his Remedies against Discontentment, which appeared in 1596, has the same theme as Burton's "Remedies against Discontents", and seems from its chapter headings to treat the subject in a similar way; for example, the writer speaks "Of the choice of friends...", "Of prosperitie", making "A Comparison of our own estate with the fortune of other men", "of other men's faultes", "of injuries, wrongs and disgraces", "of povertie", and "of death",

all of which Burton was later to inquire into. But this similarity of themes probably stems rather from their common origin in Seneca than from direct influence, though there is no reason why Burton should not have seen the essay. The anonymous writer himself acknowledges that, as Burton was later to put it, "'tis not my speech this, but of Seneca, Plutarch, Epictetus, Austin, Bernard, Christ and His Apostles" (II, 127), using, like Seneca, Montaigne and Burton, the image of the bee:

From these faire flowers, whiche their labours have afforded me I have as I passed by gathered this small heape, and as my time and leisure served me, distilled them, and kept them as precious. 1

In fact, both this essay, in its minor way, and Burton's "Digression of the Remedies against Discontents" are in the tradition of the "consolatio". 2 Burton gives ample recognition to his predecessors; as well as giving those names already mentioned, he continues; "...so Tully, Cardan, and Boethius wrote de consolatio, as well to help themselves as others; be it as it may, I will essay" (II, 127).

What makes Burton's essay so much more a personal document than a string of pearls from other men's oysters, is his obvious anxiety and concern over the miseries he mentions, so that the section is threaded through with his own understanding of suffering, and his compassion for the difficulties of others. The two main sources of his advice seem to have been Seneca and the Bible; statements such as that "Our life is but short, a very dream, and while we look about, immortalitas adest, eternity is at hand" (II, 131),

or that "men are tried in adversity" (II, 131), spark off copious quotations from these and other sources. Yet in his treatment of these themes, Burton constantly asserts his own personality, sometimes through his dramatizing of the material, as when he conducts a dialogue of question and answer: "Yea, but I am ashamed, disgraced, dishonoured, degraded, exploded... Be content, 'tis but a nine days' wonder..." (II, 199); sometimes by repetition and emphasis: "'Tis a patient and quiet mind (I say it again and again) gives true peace and content" (II, 171); sometimes by cryptic autobiographical details: "I was once so mad to bustle abroad, and seek about for preferment..." (II, 188); sometimes by outbursts of irony and cynicism, as in his statement, while on the subject of base birth, that "married women are all honest" (II, 138); and sometimes simply by beautiful expression of a perennial idea, as in the paragraph where he asks "What is our life but a prison?" and goes on to declare what is even more relevant to the twentieth century than to his own:

The world itself to some men is a prison, our narrow seas as so many ditches, and when they have compassed the globe of the earth, they would fain go see what is done in the moon. (II, 173)

Burton's "Remedies against Discontents", then, has more in common with Montaigne's essays than with Bacon's. The fundamental construction of the section is clear enough; it is formed by the elaboration of each "discontent" in turn - sickness, base birth, poverty, servitude, imprisonment, and sorrow for the death of friends - but within this framework there is ample scope for the personal revelation and "extemporanean" quality characteristic of Montaigne, and which makes the material seem at times to be bursting out of its framework; this never happens with Bacon. On a larger scale, all of Burton's digressions can be seen as bursting out from the Aristotelian framework, and forming the book, as
has been said, into a structure quite different from that of the formal treatise; namely, that of a collection of essays. It is in the digressions that Burton expresses most clearly his personal opinions, and his own particular version of the Senecan view of life; that is, he combines the usual stern ideals with the unusual recognition, like that of Johnson in *Rasselas*, that there are situations in which the Stoical ideals are, if not impossible, at least irrelevant.
Chapter 5. Humour and Satire

Burton is a humorous man in both the Jonsonian and the modern sense. We are told by Anthony à Wood that he was in disposition "a melancholy and humorous person", and most of the snippets of biographical material we have tend to support this description: Hearne's amusing anecdote about Burton's lack of desire to converse with the Earl of Southampton\(^1\) — whether he was being anti-social or just absent-minded is left ambiguous; White Kennet's description of how he used to laugh at the bargemen\(^2\) — which sounds like a rather self-conscious imitation of Democritus; and the myth, spread by à Wood\(^3\) and by Aubrey,\(^4\) that he hanged himself, though it is almost certainly not true, at least illustrates the quirkish side of his character — it would seem to be "facete" in the extreme to hang oneself in order to fulfil a self-imposed specification of one's own death day. The fact that these rumours, however spurious, could be circulated at all, indicates that Burton was inclined to a certain extent, as was Browne, to indulge in somewhat freakish whims. These have their own idiosyncratic charm, but should not obscure the fact that the Saturnine "humour" of melancholy could also be excruciatingly painful, as we know from Burton's own testimony: "I had \textit{gravidum cor, foedum caput}, a kind of imposthume in my head" (I, 21).

The traditional story of Democritus and Heraclitus demonstrates that the melancholy humour can be expressed

1. See below, p.154, n.2.
equally by laughter or by tears. As Browne puts it, "Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply Hypochondriack as Heraclitus, that bewailed them."¹ It is in accord with his assumed persona of Democritus Junior that Burton should be able to laugh, though at times the opposite extreme of Heraclitus might seem just as appropriate. This oscillation of farce and bitterness gives Burton's humour a tension and toughness rather similar to that of the porter's speech in Macbeth, or the grave diggers' dialogue in Hamlet, in which the surface comedy has deep reverberations of the tragedy of death and mutability, and, in the case of Macbeth, seems to open out into the whole structure of heaven, earth and hell bodied forth in the medieval cycles. The flame of humour which is always wavering over the subject matter, however ponderous, is what lights up The Anatomy's fire of originality. Nothing like this had ever been found in any previous treatise of melancholy; to Timothy Bright, Du Laurens, or Ficino, it would have been unthinkable to mix comedy with the deadly serious matters they were analysing. The originality of Burton's humour is connected with his other great fund of originality: his knowledge and exploration of human nature. Certainly Bright and Du Laurens make us aware of man's frailty and contradictoriness, but at no stage is this a subject for laughter; rather it is a matter for lamentation and pious pity. It is Burton who first turns the Janus-face of melancholy, and shows that Democritus was not irrational to laugh at human failings, as the Abderites thought he was; in fact, it was only through laughter that he remained sane. The element of humour in Burton's writing has often been passed over or underestimated by critics; when Burton is

treated seriously, as by Osier and B. Evans, his ability to detach himself from his subject with fine irony is completely overlooked. On the other hand, when he is patronized, however kindly, as by Lamb, his humour is made to appear as a series of quaint quirks rather than the exceedingly delicate instrument it often is.

Influences which helped to form Burton's humour divide into two streams, one descending from Rabelais and one from Montaigne. This is not to deny the idiosyncratic and peculiarly English qualities of his sense of humour, but he did learn much from these two writers in matters of style and outlook. Neither Rabelais nor Montaigne had any intention of taking human nature entirely seriously, but whereas Rabelais' humour is farcical and robust, Montaigne's is subtle, and executed with what Simon calls the "pince-sans-rire", or, as we would put it, dead pan. A standard example of Burton's Rabelaisian vein, which tends to occur in set pieces, is his section on ugly women (III, 155). The element akin to Montaigne is seldom absent from Burton's prose, but perhaps one of the best examples of "pince-sans-rire" is his solemn translation of "veritas odium parit [truth makes enemies]", as the Everyman edition translates it, into the nonsense-jingle words, "verjuice and oatmeal is good for a parrot" (I, 96). The way in which Burton can thus satirize erudition in the middle of a learned geographical analysis, shows his ability to detach himself from any sort of pedantry or earnestness. The seriousness of his criticism of human nature is made more cutting, not blunted, by his Democritian laughter.

Burton's laughter is directed at three main objects: humanity in general, women in particular, and himself. In the passage called "Democritus to the Reader" he outlines the reasons why he laughs at mankind, and why Democritus did;
in fact, he says, Democritus would have far more cause for laughter now than when he was living:

Never so much cause of laughter as now, never so many fools and madmen...we have now need of a 'Democritus to laugh at Democritus'...a great stentorian Democritus, as big as that Rhodian Colossus. (I, 52)

Burton tries to picture Democritus' reaction to "the superstition of our age, our religious madness" (I, 54), to the fury and iniquity of "so many bloody battles" (I, 55); to social injustice, as when a man is hanged for stealing a sheep to save himself from starvation, while "a great man in office may securely rob whole provinces" (I, 62); to the confusion and deceit of the law which makes possible "a lamb executed, a wolf pronounce sentence" (I, 63); to insincerity, double-dealing, hypocrisy ("To see a man turn himself into all shapes like a chameleon" (I, 65)); to the dominance of bestial passions; and, most pertinently to Burton, "To see a scholar crouch and creep to an illiterate peasant for a meal's meat" (I, 67). (One is reminded of Swift's satire of lawyers in Gulliver's Travels, or Doctor Johnson's bitter remarks about patrons.) Here the satire is vitriolic; laughter is only another form of weeping. The mood is similar to that of Shakespeare's sonnet in which he speaks of "...captive good attending captain ill". ¹ Burton is so disgusted by the weakness and folly of man, "this miserable and puny creature", ² as Montaigne calls him, that he cannot, he says, restrain his bitter imprecations - "'tis a most difficult thing to keep an even tone, a perpetual tenor, and not sometimes to lash out" - though he apologizes to the reader for his bitterness - "pardon a rude hand, an unskilful  

1. Sonnet LXVI.
knife" (I, 123). Here the title of "Anatomy" is justified literally; Burton intends to lance and probe at man's nature, both bodily and mental, in order to reveal, if he can, the source of the evil he has observed in the life around him.

The laughter in "Democritus to the Reader" is savage and cutting, but it is not entirely destructive. After expressing his dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs, Burton sketches out a kind of Utopia in which there will be no poverty, no corruption in government (though not complete equality - "Utopian parity is a kind of government to be wished for rather than effected" (I, 101)); no legal controversy, no family strife; in short, a state of ideal order and happiness, like every Utopia. The other positive feature of Burton's social criticism is that he does not exempt himself or his kind; philosophers and scholars "have as much need of hellebore as others...Democritus, that common flouter of folly, was ridiculous himself; barking Menippus, scoffing Lucian, satirical Lucilius..." (I, 111). Burton is far from living in an ivory tower, or even from making a world of a college bedroom; he realizes that he is as much subject to folly and error as any of the mistaken men he criticizes; the difference is that they do not know when they are wrong.

Burton's ideal of moderation in all things comes close to breaking down in his satirical diatribes against women. These look back to Skelton, or the medieval cycles, for example Noah's marital strife in the Towneley Cycle, and forward to the more sophisticated comedy of Swift and Pope. The sordid preparations that women make in the cause of beauty, the ravages time works, so that beauty becomes only a memory, ∧ and "more toes than teeth" (III, 178) a reality, ¹

¹ Here the Ubi sunt theme of much medieval and Renaissance poetry is echoed; for example, Skelton's threnody on a skull, and Nashe's beautiful poem about the plague and death, in Summer's Last Will and Testament, which still seems to have a medieval ring.
the deceits women work on their husbands— all are exposed as mercilessly as in Restoration drama, and with equal gusto. Burton does not neglect to remark that faithfulness has been known among women— witness the case of the young girl who was scolded by her husband for not telling him he had bad breath, and protested that she thought it must be a characteristic common to all men (III, 294) — but he is not prepared to vouch for its frequency. The transformation worked at the dressing table, later to be described by Pope in one of his most horrifying images:

So morning Insects that in muck begun,
Shine, buzz and fly-blow in the setting-sun. ¹

may be compared with Burton's spelling out of the most intimate sordid details of a lady's attire and cosmetics, and his invitation to the lover to imagine his mistress, like Sappho, in a "dirty smock"²— "foul linen, coarse raiment, besmeared with soot, colly, perfumed with opoponax, sagapenum, asafoetida, or some such filthy gums, dirty, about some undecent action or other" (III, 207) — or, to quote Pope again, "at her toilet's greasy task".³ Though she is beautiful by candle light, "It may be for all her costly tires she is bald" (III, 208), and when divested of these, "it may be she is like Aesop's jay or Pliny's cantharides, she will be loathsome, ridiculous, thou wilt not endure her sight" (III, 208). And even though she is really beautiful, "As a posy she smells sweet, is most fresh and fair one day, but dried up, withered, and stinks another" (III, 208). This is tough consolation for the frustrated lover, but is the only way to open his eyes to the deceit or ephemerality of his lady's beauty, and is one of the recognized cures for love.

2. Ibid., II, 24.
3. Ibid., II, 25.
Burton's satire of women, biting as it is, does not, however, have the same quality of bitterness and disgust which Pope was later to assume. Both can conjure up quite nauseating portraits of women, as does Richardson's description of a bawdy house in *Clarissa*, or Swift's of the Brobdingnagian queen's bedchamber, but one feels that whereas the later writers are bitterly denouncing the ugliness and deceit women are capable of, Burton is more concerned with the comical side of such revelations, and that he is carried away with words rather than with disgust, somewhat as Skelton is in "The Tunning of Eleanor Rumming". As the title suggests, in Skelton's poem rhyme follows rhyme in pounding profusion; Burton similarly strikes out phrase after phrase, or adjective after adjective - "a nasty, rank, rammy, filthy, beastly quean..." (III, 155) - without pausing for breath, or allowing the reader to do so. Whereas in his satire of the church, for example, he pours out his personal resentments in real earnest, in his satire of women he is giving a set performance with all the elan of a virtuoso in words. The obvious comparison in the native tradition that comes to mind is that of Elizabethan drama, and in particular Shakespeare's early comedies. Shakespeare also, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, is carried away with the sheer joy of using words; in fact the whole play, as has been said, is a satire on language, ranging from Armado's fantastic gallantries to Holofernes' pedantic mumblings, and reaching its height in the speeches of Berowne, for example in the famous one about love's power:

For valour, is not Love a Hercules,  
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?  
Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical  
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair...

Like Shakespeare, Burton illustrates various stock comic figures; the converted misogynist such as Stratocles who,

a severe woman-hater all his life...was taken at last with that celestial and divine look of Myrilla...What young man, therefore, if old men be so intemperate, can secure himself? (Ill, 78)

(One might compare here the case of Malvolio.) Other standard jokes are the lover's besotted condition - "soused, imparadised, imprisoned in his lady" (III, 146) - and the cornuted or hen-pecked husband - "wedding is undoing (some say), marrying marring, wooing woeing" (III, 216).

The playing with words exemplified above is redolent not only of Elizabethan drama, but also of Rabelais; in fact Simon, who, as a Frenchman, is well qualified to make such a comparison, calls Burton the "Rabelais de la prose anglaise". Master of understatement though he is, Burton is also capable of monstrous and humorous exaggeration through his exuberant piling up of words. Sometimes the humour comes from a chain of abstruse words, whose general meaning is, however, sufficiently plain from the context, as in the enumeration of diseases to which the scholar is subject:

...hard students are commonly troubled with gouts, catarrhs, rheums, cachexia, bradypepsia, bad eyes, stone, and colic, crudities, oppilations, vertigo, winds, consumptions, and all such diseases as come by overmuch sitting... (I, 302)

(Here one may compare the humorous juxtaposition of learned polysyllabic and common monosyllabic words in Rabelais' description of the virtues of green sauce, which cleaned out the urethra, dilated the spermatic vessels, and jacked up the cremasters or testicle-strings...finally it set the belly in apple-pie order, so a man could belch, fart, poop, piddle,

Although a comparison with the French reveals that English lends itself more readily to this kind of humour, because of its vast resources of Anglo-Saxon monosyllables, many of the verbs used by Rabelais are strong enough to have the effect of monosyllables.) Sometimes the humour is created by lists of lustily derogatory epithets and names, as in the description of a woman as "A filthy knave, a deformed quean, a crooked carcass, a maukin, a witch, a rotten post, an hedge-stake" (III, 93); sometimes from farcical situations, as that of the man who could not be induced to piss for fear of drowning the town until he was told that the house next door was on fire (even Du Laurens permits himself a wintry smile at this story); sometimes from comic imagery, as in the description of learned astronomers tossing the world in a blanket (II, 57). And, like Rabelais, Burton derives intense enjoyment out of juggling words and phrases with brilliant dexterity. The whole point of the word-play is that each cracker should be fired almost before the last one has burst, so that the reader is dazzled and delighted by the writer's fertility of imagination. This is sometimes done by alliteration and assonance - "a vast virago" - sometimes by rhyme - "a slug, a fat fustilugs" - sometimes by repetition - "Persian hook-nosed, have a sharp fox-nose, a red nose, China flat, great nose...a nose like a promontory" (III, 155). (Sterne also found noses amusing.) Similarly, Rabelais piles up words in long cannonades - "these fucker

1. **Gargantua and Pantagruel**, translated by J. Le Clercq, New York, 1944, p. 307. Because I am concerned to demonstrate the idiomatic nature of Rabelais' style, I have appended the original (see note on p. 178.)
squirrels used to light fires of faction, schism, ballocking sects and partisanship among the idle schoolboys"¹ - makes puns, admittedly rather weak in English - such as "fizzle-offer"² for "philosopher" - uses polysyllabic nonsense words - such as "testiculotitillation"³ - of whose meaning, however, one can make a fairly definite surmise; makes the mentioned juxtaposition of learned and crude words; gives lists of proverbs, real or invented, of which Burton is also fond (for example, "as much pity is to be taken of a woman weeping, as of a goose going barefoot" (III, 126)); or builds up comic suspense by long, elaborate descriptions of trivia, as in the gesticulatory conversation between Panurge and the Englishman.⁴ (Sterne is also fond of this device.)

In short, both Rabelais and Burton are supreme virtuosos in the use of words, and that Burton was acquainted with his predecessor is attested by his reference to "Rabelais, that French Lucian" (I, 229) in "Democritus to the Reader". Like Rabelais, Burton combines verbal subtlety with farcical comedy of situation, and enlivens his subject matter with his sense of fun which constantly plays over even the most serious statements. For instance, no subject could be closer to Burton's most serious resentment and bitterness than the current abuses in the church, yet one is always aware of Burton's ability to step aside and laugh at himself and what he criticizes, as in his ironic remark that

\[
\text{if I shall see a monk or a friar climb up a ladder at midnight into a virgin's or widow's chamber-window, I shall hardly think he then goes to}\]

¹. Le Clercq, p.501. Boulenger, pp.551-2. "...lesquelles, viventes, allomoient couillonnamenent le feu de faction, simulte, sectes couillonennes et partialeté entre les ocieux escholiers."


³. Le Clercq, p.501. Boulenger, p.552. "ces petites philauties couillonniformes" (Fr.couillon = testicle)

administer the sacraments, or to take her confession. (Ill, 279)

Similarly, while criticizing the present state of the church and the administrators of its rule, Rabelais also makes them extremely comic, as in his chapter "Why monks are pariahs and why some have bigger noses than others".  

Through ridicule the criticism is made far more pointed than it would have been by a ranting diatribe. A similar device of understatement, or apparent acceptance of the preposterous, is used by Donne in Ignatius his Conclave (to which Burton refers (II, 42)), and later by Swift in A Modest Proposal. (Of course, Burton does not always confine himself to understatement in criticizing the Roman Catholic church; witness his savage denunciation of "the dam of that monstrous and superstitious brood, the bull-bellowing Pope which now rageth in the West, that three-headed Cerberus" (III, 332). But such outbursts come only when Burton can contain himself no longer; they are at variance with his Senecan ideal of patience and moderation, and in fact savour almost of hysteria. And even here his Democritean laughter is not absent, as is shown by the word-play - "rope of popes" and the like - though it is rather more frenzied than usual.)

Burton, like Rabelais, is always alive to comedy of situation, even when his fundamentally serious pity underlies his elaboration of this, as in his descriptions of the delusions suffered by melancholics. It is by no means comic that melancholy people should suffer in this way, but the delusions themselves can be very ridiculous, like that of the baker who thought he was made of butter and feared to go

near his oven, or the scholar who thought he was made of
glass and was afraid of being broken (I, 403). (Cervantes
also used the latter situation in his Nouvelles Exemplaires.)
Sometimes delusions can be pleasant, like that of the
Athenian who thought all the ships in Piraeus belonged to
him, and was very annoyed when he was cured. Similarly,
the sufferings of jealous husbands are a subject for
compassion, as Shakespeare had shown, but nevertheless
jealousy can cause ridiculous excesses, though both Burton
and Ford are more sympathetic toward these than is Jonson
in Volpone.

Despite the similarity of some of their humorous
devices, one thing which separates Burton from Rabelais is
the moderation implied in such remarks as "Let's drive down
care with a cup of wine: and so say I too (though I drink
none myself)" (II, 246). The stupendous amounts of wine
drunk by Rabelais' heroes and of which he invites his readers
to partake would be measured out in barrels rather than cups;
in this trait of moderation Burton is more akin to Montaigne.
Of course, the advocacy of temperance and "mediocrity"
goes back to Seneca and the Stoical ideal. To lose control
of one's faculties is to sink to the condition of beasts
by relinquishing the gift of reason. Thus, though Burton
is quite capable of falling into a Rabelaisian style, full
of lusty bravado, as in much of the section on love-melancholy,
one feels that he is here playing a part, whereas in the
"Digression on the Remedies of Discontents", for example, he
is speaking more in his own person. His prose can at times
assume a superb flow of dramatic eloquence, but one is always
pulled back by the realization that he himself is no advocate
of excess; although "I did sometime laugh and scoff with
Lucian, and satirically tax with Menippus..." yet, "I was
much moved to see that abuse which I could not mend" (I, 19).
In fact, it is only when he is providing consolation, as at the end of the section on religious-melancholy, that one can be sure that it is Burton speaking.

There is nothing gently benign, however, about his satire of women; it is superbly savage and brilliantly comic. To introduce such satire into a medical treatise is more than original; it is unheard of, and it is this that makes the form of Burton's work defy definition, as has been said; it is certainly far more than the medical treatise it purports to be. This is particularly evident when one compares Burton and Du Laurens on the subject of love. Like Du Laurens, for example, Burton speaks of the hyperbole indulged in by lovers, but whereas Du Laurens merely gives a list of Petrarchan commonplaces, Burton waxes poetic in spite of himself, and one can detect an echo of Ben Jonson:

Stars, sun, moons, metals, sweet-smelling flowers, odours, perfumes, colours, gold, silver, ivory, pearls, precious stones, snow, painted birds, doves, honey, sugar, spice, cannot express her, so soft, so tender, so radiant, sweet, so fair is she. (Ill, 157)

Whereas Du Laurens simply provides clinical information on the state of body and mind of the lover, Burton philosophizes, psychologizes, and satirizes the subject as one of general importance to humanity. It is this that makes him so much more accessible to the common reader than Du Laurens or Bright; whereas the latter confine themselves to stating the problems of melancholy, Burton applies them to life, and the reader in turn can apply them to himself, as he pleases. It is just that Burton's medical knowledge and intuition should be taken seriously, as by Osler, but this should not obscure the fact that he provides so much more than purely medical detail. One imagines Bright and Du Laurens solemnly delivering a lecture to an audience of stern-faced specialists,
but Burton so dramatizes and expands his material that his book ceases to resemble a lecture at all, and has the breadth of a tragi-comedy, whose audience would certainly not be stern-faced all the time - least of all in the section on love-melancholy.

They would not be stern-faced either at Burton's self-revelations, though one hopes their smiles would be not quite so cloying as Lamb's. Florio's Montaigne appeared in 1615, so that Burton would have had ample opportunity to read it before putting out The Anatomy; in fact he refers to Montaigne several times (I, 17; III, 266). The influence of Montaigne on Burton, as on Browne, seems to have been considerable. One of the chief characteristics of all three writers (though less in Urn Burial than in Religio Medici) is the penchant for self-analysis, and intimate personal detail. All pose as something of an eccentric, and are fond of revealing rather paradoxical quirks in themselves which bring them to life behind their writings. This trait is partly derived from Seneca, but Seneca always seems oracular rather than intimate (despite his aim to address the reader as though he were having a private conversation with him); one feels that Seneca would be a rather formidable person to talk to, and that one would find it difficult to live up to his ideals, the two prototypes of which are Mucius Scaevola, who held his hand in a flame until it roasted, and Cato who tore out his own insides when he found that the wound he had given himself was not a fatal one. With Montaigne and Burton it is different; although they still embrace the Stoic ideal, they allow more latitude to human weakness, and are particularly ingenuous about revealing their own private weaknesses. Montaigne, for example,
tells us "I have little control over myself and my moods", and admits to having a poor memory. Browne sees no reason for keeping secret the fact that: "I am naturally bashful; nor hath conversation, age, or travel, been able to effront or enharden me." Similarly, Burton confesses to having "an unconstant, unsettled mind" (I, 17). Whereas Seneca never relaxes in his writing, but always preserves his rock-like Stoic stand, Montaigne, Browne and Burton let us peer into their minds by opening little windows such as the above confessions.

The danger of such a method is that a relationship of ingratiating intimacy or coy familiarity will be set up between author and reader, and this tends to happen with nineteenth-century critics of Burton, who describe Burton with affectionate adjectives such as "quaint", or "that fantastic great old man". But if the reader refrains from this patronizing attitude, the practice of frankly revealing one's own prejudices and peculiarities has many virtues. The virtue most relevant to this chapter is the sly humour and self-satire which often emerges from such pleasant ingenuousness. For instance, Montaigne and Burton are perfectly frank about the fact that they have pillaged the works of other writers in order to illustrate their ideas. Montaigne says, "I go about cadging from books here and there", and Burton speaks of his work as "a rhapsody of rags" (I, 26); this free acknowledgement disarms criticism. Similarly, Burton in chastising himself for his forays into fields not very closely

3. One wonders why these critics all refer to "old" Burton; he cannot have been more than fourty-four when The Anatomy was first published.
related to melancholy admits his fault with such a charming air of guiltiness that it ceases to be a fault in any other than strictly structural terms, and is rather a grace than a blemish. Montaigne is even more self-depreciatory:

And what are these things of mine in truth but grotesques and monstrous bodies, pieced together of divers members, without definite shape, having no order, sequence or proportion other than accidental?  

Burton has an amusing habit of interrupting himself in midflow and calling himself to order, as has been observed in the "Digression of Air". Another example occurs when, after speaking of the passion of lust with considerable and graphic detail, he suddenly remarks, in his bachelor role: "But what have I to do with this?" (III, 112), assuming a tone of ironic mock-innocence. Elsewhere on the subject of women's diseases, he pulls himself up in pretended shock:

But where am I? Into what subject have I rushed? What have I to do with nuns, maids, virgins, widows? I am a bachelor myself, and lead a monastic life in a college... (I, 417)

The virtue of this ironic self-satire and acknowledged disorderliness is of course its spontaneity; although, as Montaigne says, "Even in my own writings I do not always find again the sense of my first thought; I do not know what I meant to say"; yet he tells us elsewhere that his mind's "speech is better than its writings". In other words, his thoughts are conceived in such burning intensity that their full impact cannot always be conveyed when they are organized into words; it is Montaigne's and Burton's wish to retain as much as possible of the first intensity

2. Ibid., pp.425-6.
of an idea's conception, but they realize that this may at times cause confusion. It is this constant self-criticism and alertness that makes Montaigne's *Essays* and Burton's *Anatomy* so natural and so convincingly human.

Burton's sense of humour, then, is influenced in different ways by both Rabelais and Montaigne; from Rabelais stem the farcical, word-playing passages such as are found in the section on love-melancholy; from Montaigne the ironic self-scrutiny, and sophisticated "pince-sans-rire" jokes, such as the famous mistranslated passage about the "parrot". But these are surface influences; Burton's wit and personality are entirely individual. His sense of humour is in fact one of the chief guides to our knowledge of his personality, and one can well imagine that his "merry, facetious and juvenile" sallies would have aroused much amusement among his colleagues. He does not sound trumpets before his jokes and humorous examples, but an element of humour is mingled into the most serious analyses. For instance, in the middle of a fierce diatribe against superstition he relates with poker face the anecdote of the Turk who,

being to drink a cup of wine in his cellar, first made a huge noise and filthy faces, "to warn his soul, as he said, that it should not be guilty of that foul fact which he was to commit". (III, 364)

The picture this arouses is quite ludicrous, but Burton hastens on so fast to the next point that unless one pauses one may not savour its absurdity to the full. This is why *The Anatomy* is such a rewarding book to return to and take up at any time, even though its length prohibits the ordinary reader from devouring it from cover to cover with any frequency. In this perhaps it resembles Boswell's *Life of Johnson*; fresh facets appear on every reading, however
fragmentary. It is the ironic yet sympathetic approach of Burton to his subject that enables him to sustain the interest for so long, even if he and the reader may occasionally nod in the more technical passages, and it is his sense of humour that enables him to preserve his detachment, despite his absorbing interest. As has been suggested by the comparisons with Skelton, and with the drama, Burton's humour, despite the French influences, is unmistakably in the native tradition; the rollicking farce of the Tudor interludes is mixed with the subtle innuendo and acute perception of human nature found in Jacobean drama. Unlike Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Burton is aware of the world around him as well as of the world of books, and it is his Democritean laughter at the human absurdity he has observed that makes his book come home so lastingly to "men's business and bosoms".
Chapter 6. **Personality**

Critics of Burton, particularly in the twentieth century, have attempted to build up a sort of case history of his personality, based partly on fragmentary remarks and partly on the more lengthy and more reliable self-revelations in which he indulges at times. Examples of the first variety of evidence are his remarks on the cruelty of schoolmasters—"as schoolmasters do, rather correct their pupils than teach them when they do amiss" (I, 64)—from which Evans deduces that his school life at Sutton Coldfield was unhappy and contributed to his melancholy.

More reliable evidence may be gleaned from his remarks about preferment in the church—for example, "Greater preferment as I could never get..." (I, 18), and the "Digression of the Miseries of Scholars"—though the conclusions drawn may not always be sound. Simon, for instance, and Evans before him, believe Burton to be embittered by frustrated ambition, and to be torn between an active life, involving immersion in public duties, and a passive life, which he follows, involving immersion in solitary reading and writing within the precincts of Christ College, Oxford.

Contemporary evidence as to his personality is based largely on Anthony a Wood's short description in *Athenae Oxonienses*, and a few apocryphal stories; a Wood's suggestion of an eccentric suicide is repudiated with indignation by Babb and Simon. Of all Burton's critics, Evans perhaps draws the most questionable portrait, giving Burton all kinds of

1. Aubrey also lent currency to this rumour. See above, p.134, n.4.
interesting complexes and frustrations: for example, his resentment towards his dominating mother, and his mental block about women in general, which result in embittered introspection. Evans really seems to follow his own bent in analysing Burton's psyche, and then try to squeeze it into the confines of the book.

Although Burton pays the reader the compliment of saying "Thou thyself art the subject of my discourse" (I, 16), where Montaigne had said, "I am myself the subject of my book", Burton does see humanity through the spectacles of his own personality, and indeed tells us later, "I have laid myself open..." (I, 27). Simon is sceptical that Burton ever wanted to remain anonymous at all:

"Jamais anonymat ne fut plus mal gardé, ou plutôt jamais il ne fut trahi avec un désir plus évident de livrer au public le secret qu'il affectait de preserver."

On the one hand Burton shrouds himself in mystery, on the other he speaks out about himself freely and confidingly.

This is only one of the paradoxes which surround Burton's personality; that there are many is suggested by the divergent interpretations made by different critics. The first paradox is inherent in Anthony à Wood's portrait. It seems that Burton, in spite of being a "melancholy and humorous person", was in company "very merry, facete and juvenile". This does not accord with Simon's conception of him as being frustrated through lack of communication. Simon avoids the paradox by saying that it was only among his learned colleagues that Burton was able to converse with freedom; with the outside world he would have been frozen.

and inarticulate. (To this one might counter that his alleged laughter at the bargemen when he walked abroad does not paint him as being particularly inarticulate, though admitted it cannot be classed as "facete and juvenile" conversation.)

On a larger scale, the paradox is that Burton, while cloistering himself in Christ College, poring over multitudinous tomes, is yet so little of a pedant. He casts himself, like Democritus, as "a general scholar, a great student" (I, 16), and one can deduce his aims in life from his praise of Democritus. The dialogue between Hippocrates and Democritus, described by Burton, resembles the old joke about the policeman who drew a man away from the edge of a cliff, in an attempt to dissuade him from jumping off, and then came back in half an hour and jumped off with him. Far from being mad, Hippocrates finds, Democritus is frightenningly sane; so sane that all the rest of the world seems mad to a greater or less degree; as Burton puts it, "all fools are mad, though some madder than others. And who is not a fool, who is free from melancholy?" (I, 39). This is the Aristotelian theory of melancholia; that is, melancholy can impart a shade of deeper understanding and a nobility of imagination of which the unafflicted man is incapable. Democritus was one of these, and Burton aspires after him, though declining with modesty the ability of doing so with any skill; "thou canst not think worse of me than I do of myself" (I, 26).

The most fundamental paradox of all is that Burton is both tormented and delighted by melancholy. This can be illustrated by his prefatory poem, "The Author's Abstract of Melancholy", in which he alternates one view of melancholy,

1. See above, p.134, n.2.
2. See note on p.178.
"All my joys to this are folly", with its opposite, "All my griefs to this are jolly", and contrasts the "sweet" and "divine" aspects of melancholy with those that are "sad", "sour", "harsh", "fierce", "damn'd". The fact that the negative adjectives are on the whole stronger than the positive, and that the poem ends with a negative one, suggests that melancholy is to be regarded rather as a danger than a pleasure, but even so, the adjectives are not meant to cancel each other out, but to show that melancholy should be treated as a "mixed passion" (I, 19). While Burton does sometimes "satirically tax" mankind, he is also "much moved to see that abuse which I could not mend" (I, 19). This paradox of melancholy itself is reflected in the paradox of Burton's personality. The autobiographical details given in "Democritus to the Reader" suggest that the melancholy which troubles him is uncommonly severe; "I had gravidum cor, foedum caput, a kind of imposthume in my head, which I was very desirous to be unladen of" (I, 21); but on the other hand it is possible for him through his writing to "expel clavum clavo... make an antidote out of that which was the prime cause of my disease" (I, 21).

Thus Burton's personality can be seen as a series of expanding paradoxes, like circles in a pond. The stone which sets them off is the emblem of the two philosophers, Democritus and Heraclitus, whose laughing and weeping are aroused by the same cause and signify the same emotion differently expressed. The paradoxes encircle Burton and spread out to include all mankind. Since melancholy itself is a "compound mixed malady" (I, 37), it is not surprising that it should express itself through contradiction. It is part of Burton's originality that he never simplifies human nature. In Bright's treatise it is implied that all will come right if his remedies are used; Burton, on the other hand, realizes that there are
aspects of the disease which are incurable and inexplicable, and even quite outside our control. The stars, for instance, obey their own logic; Burton is powerless to prevent the fact that "Saturn was lord of my geniture" (I, 18). Browne also believed he had "a peice of that leaden planet" in him. Of more immediate concern, however, are the contradictions in man's own nature; his aspirations and downfall, his divinity and bestiality.

These contradictions and paradoxes in Burton's personality, and in his outlook on human nature, are interpreted by Simon, as has been said, as pointing to the frustration he suffered during his life; his supposed inability to converse except with his best friends, his awkwardness and repressions about women, his lack of an important office in the church, and so on. His ambition for preferment conflicts with his lack of confidence and his inability to push himself forward; his desire to be a brilliant causeur conflicts with his inarticulateness; his attraction towards women conflicts with his secluded, monastic way of life. Middleton Murry carries this theme of frustration to such lengths that he says it results from Burton's disappointment at having spent most of his life putting together a useless conglomeration of dusty fragments doomed to disperse into nothingness:

"The book and the melancholy were both largely the outcome of his resentment against his destiny; it was hardly to be expected that a man who had spent twenty or thirty years in erecting a vast monument to his own pitiful lack of occupation would be made very merry by contemplating the architecture of it."

Literary history has refuted Middleton Murry's assertion — and indeed had done so long before he made it — but Simon's

deserves more attention. It shows a welcome reaction against the nineteenth-century view of Burton that Simon attributes positive qualities to him. The nineteenth-century view of Burton is rather like that of Hamlet; he is nearly always depicted in a negative way, as being gloomy, brooding, dreamy, indecisive, cut off from humanity. Hamlet's mental and physical toughness and energy have since been vindicated by twentieth-century critics, and it is just that Burton should be also. Simon, however, only goes half way; although he gives Burton positive qualities, such as ambition, he says that they are overpowered by the stronger negative characteristics, such as diffidence about his own ability. He believes that Burton was dissatisfied with his unobtrusive existence, and longed for more responsibility; witness the bitter mocks in the "Digression of the Misery of Scholars" at the corrupt nature of the men empowered to hand out posts: "there are a debauched, corrupt, covetous, illiterate crew again, no better than stocks" (I, 321). And the fact that he lets slip in "Democritus to the Reader" the casual remark that "Greater preferment as I could never get, so am I not in debt for it" (I, 18) does suggest that he has tried and failed. But this negative imputation of failure and misdirection must be counterbalanced by two things; first his positive aim of emulating the scholar Democritus together with his rapturous praise of study as a cure of all kinds of melancholy except that caused by intellectual strain:

The like pleasure there is in all other studies, to such as are truly addicted to them...the like sweetness, which as Circe's cup bewitcheth a student... (II, 90)

(and with this we may compare Seneca's consolatory advice to Polybius:)

1. Seneca, Moral Epistles, II, 131
Now...bury yourself more deeply in your studies, now encircle yourself with them as bulwarks for
your mind in order that sorrow may find no point
that will give entrance to you. ¹)
The second point, which Simon fails to allow for, is the obvious success of the course he took. Burton gained considerable acclaim in his own time, and can hardly have been unaware of his popularity. That he should have been so immediately successful must have greatly diminished his inferiority complex if he had one (as Evans asserts), and that he went on working at the book all his life suggests that he was aware of its worth.

The thesis of Burton's originality depends very closely on his possession of a mental alertness and energy which were anything but passive or negative. Had he been content merely to filch the ideas of other writers (as Middleton Murry claims), he could not have contributed so much of himself to the work, nor would the statement "Omne meum, nihil meum" be correct, since the book would be wholly second-hand. That this is not so is surely evident from the fascination the book has exerted for over two centuries; having read the book one feels that something solid and positive has been achieved by the writer (and by the reader too!), and that what holds the whole book together is the unifying force exerted by the writer's personality.

The positive qualities, then, that I would attribute to Burton, are intense energy and fertility of thought; love of knowledge, both ancient and contemporary; understanding of human nature; compassion for human distress, together with an awareness of the particular problems of his day; and last, the dry sense of humour which has already been spoken of.

His energy and abundance of thought, though rarely absent, are perhaps best illustrated in the digressions:

the occult, far-ranging speculations in the "Digression of the Nature of Spirits"; the passion and rancour of the "Digression of the Miseries of Scholars"; the almost feverish interest in contemporary discoveries, scientific and geographical, shown in the "Digression of the Air". All these passages indicate not only a capacious memory, but also an inquiring, original mind. Of them all, the "Digression of the Air" seems to me to show the greatest originality and far-sightedness. Burton appears to be as passionately anxious for new knowledge as he is avid of the old. His exploration of the world of books has not dimmed, but rather brightened his awareness of the world around him. The most interesting remarks in the digression perhaps are those concerned with astronomy, which also look back to his remarks in Volume I on judicial astrology, a subject in which we are informed by à Wood that he was a practician — in fact à Wood circulated the rumour that by a caprice Burton "sent up his soul to heaven thro' a slip about the neck" purely because he had calculated through astrology a certain day for his own death. Shaky though this story is, it is obvious that Burton is fascinated by the researches into astronomy and astrology being carried out in his own day. Despite the fact that he sometimes makes grim reflections on the arrogance of man, he is also imbued with the Renaissance eagerness for an ever-expanding and clarifying world of knowledge about man and his environment. It is interesting

1. Anthony à Wood tells us that "no man in his time did surpass him for his ready and dextrous interlarding his common discourses among them with verses from the poets or sentences from classical authors. Which being then all the fashion in the university, made his company more acceptable." Athenae Oxonienses, ed.P.Bliss, London, 1815, II,653.
2. See above, pp.42, 134.
to see how researches into astronomy and astrology are treated with equal respect as branches of science; Paracelsus is on an equal pillar of authority with Galileo. It is not surprising that Burton should pay heed to astrologers and empirics, many of whom were well-respected in his time; what is surprising is that he is so well informed on the more important progress of knowledge achieved by the great astronomers of his day: Kepler, Galileo, Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, his own countryman John Dee, and a host of lesser-known men whom Burton lists at length, and this at a time when the acceptance of their views was by no means general.

The force of Burton's grasp of knowledge and ideas is shown by the way he can assemble his authorities in an orderly unfolding of different opinions, as in the "Digression of the Nature of Spirits". Though his personal comments are relatively rare, one is always aware of the organizing mind behind this mass of divergent ideas. His humility in spite of his wide range of information is shown by his diffident remark at the beginning of this section: "I confess I am not able to understand it [the nature of spirits]" (I, 180). It is this humility that saves Burton's exposition from being the forced display of fact and opinion which it might otherwise appear; on the contrary, it seems the most natural thing in the world that Burton's mind should resemble an encyclopaedia. He asserts his own opinion only twice in this section; once to declare, about the opinion that the devil has power over stars or heavens, "'tis all false" (I, 190), the other time to assent that "I am of Bodine's mind" (I, 191) (that is, that whirlwinds are caused more frequently by supernatural than natural, meteorological causes). Both these points about the supernatural look forward to his more personal treatment of religious-melancholy, as he himself
notes: "heresies, superstitious observations of meats, times, etc., by which they crucify the souls of mortal men, as shall be showed in our Treatise of Religious Melancholy" (I, 197). But although Burton here makes himself so unobtrusive, one is always aware of the intelligence behind the scenes, weighing opinions and setting them against one another in a carefully balanced way; for example, in the controversies whether spirits are corporeal, or whether they are mortal (controversies of great import to the medieval scholastics).

One of the best instances of Burton's broad understanding of human nature is the section on the "cure of despair" at the end of the treatment of religious-melancholy. At first sight this would seem to be merely a rehash of platitudes uttered by the Church Fathers. Indeed, Burton himself begins this passage, just as he begins the "Digression of the Remedies of Discontents", by saying that all he is doing is to "recollect out of their voluminous treatises" (III, 409) whatever comfort the Church Fathers (Augustine, Bernard and Chrysostom, for example) or the Stoics (Seneca, Marcus Aurelius) are able to render. This in itself would perhaps not be a very useful undertaking, though again we are aware of the organizing mind which has distributed the illustrations ranging from Job to St. Chrysostom into a coherent framework. But Burton does much more than this. Most daringly, he even relinquishes his unifying theme of biblical and saintly consolation to remark that

A small sickness; one lash of affliction, a little misery, many times will more humiliate a man, sooner convert, bring him home to know himself, than all those paroecetical discourses, the whole theory of philosophy, law, physic, and divinity, or a world of instances and examples. (III, 425)

In other words, experience from life is more valuable than book lore; this very admission shows how little of a pedant Burton was.
It is in the section on religious-melancholy as a whole that Burton is at his most sympathetic concerning human misery. In the section on love-melancholy he seems to feel more inclination towards laughter than tears, bitter as the laughter may be. Although he shows a full understanding of the tormented suffering experienced by lovers, there is a general attitude, as has been said, of amused raillery. The comic side of lovers' symptoms and quirks is emphasized by the brilliant word-play, and the agonies suffered seem less significant, even less morally creditable, than those of the man doubtful about religious doctrine. The discourse on the cure of despair is one of the few passages in the book which are entirely free from irony; here Burton is speaking in his own role of ordained divine, and his assumed role of quasi-physician. Burton's attempt to combine in himself these two roles could be made to point to what Evans might call a split personality, but I prefer to see it as another example of supreme Burtonian good sense; that is, that the roles of doctor and divine in combination will be much more likely to produce a cure than either physic or doctrine alone, as Burton stresses both at the beginning and end of the work. Burton apologizes in the preface for having "meddled" in the affairs of the physician, but it is his ambition to co-ordinate the two roles in order to cure the melancholic in both body and soul. It is the unifying personality behind the succession of doctrinal consolations in the "Cure of Despair" that makes this section so much more than a series of extracts from a commonplace book. Burton's sympathy for these "feral" torments of superstition or doubt that "crucify the souls of too many" (III, 421) is

1. As F.P. Wilson remarks (op. cit., p.45), "feral" and "crucify" are words which recur almost obsessively throughout The Anatomy.
always implicit in his cheering counsel, and his emphasis on the salutary effect of real rather than second-hand experience suggests that he himself has gone through some of the misfortunes he describes.

The third positive quality in Burton is his compassion for social evils resulting in poverty and injustice. His commitment to the problems of his day is demonstrated in "Democritus to the Reader", where he laments the social diseases of his country, and maps out a Utopia. Like Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida, Burton believes that what is needed for the health of a kingdom is order, and this must begin from the top of the hierarchy, and descend through all the different degrees of the body politic; "as the princes are, so are the people" (I, 82); that is, corruption in the ruler is reflected in the next degree down, for example that of the magistrates, who are "unskilful, slothful, griping, covetous, unjust, rash, or tyrannizing" (I, 80), and so down through the aristocracy, if there is one, to the "vulgar". The image of the kingdom as a body consisting of different members, familiar from Menenius' speech in Coriolanus, is used by Burton to illustrate the sickness of the state; "the whole body groans under such heads, and all the members must needs be disaffected" (I, 81).

After these initial comments on government in general, Burton turns to England and its particular troubles:

...so many thousand acres of our fens lie drowned, our cities thin, and those vile, poor, and ugly to behold in respect of theirs, our trades decayed, our still running rivers stopped, and that beneficial use of transportation wholly neglected, so many havens void of ships and towns, so many parks and forests for pleasure, barren heaths, so many villages depopulated, etc.... (I, 87)

The chief cause of all this misery, Burton goes on to say, is idleness; many beggars are simply too lazy to work (with
this assertion we may compare some remarks of the Elizabethan pamphleteers, such as Greene and Nashe), and the chief defects resulting from this are the "want of conduct and navigable rivers", and the empty though excellent harbours, and consequent lack of traffic and trade. All these defects Burton proposes to guard against in his Utopia.

In his suggestions for ruling his state, another paradox emerges: Burton seems far less inclined to clemency than one would expect from his sympathetic treatment of hardship and poverty in other parts of the book (for example, the little Theophrastian character of the rich man, who refuses to hear the pleas even of his own poverty-stricken relatives as he relentlessly "rides on" (III, 35-36)). It is surely a little unjust that he that cannot pay his debts, if by riot or negligence he have been impoverished, shall be for a twelvemonth imprisoned; if in that space his creditors be not satisfied, he shall be hanged. (I, 105)

Even if the money has been squandered, a year in prison gives him little chance to recover it. Although Burton's heart is harder in theory than in practice, and he can fully sympathize in real life with the poor man who steals a sheep to keep himself alive, yet he does seem in his outlining of a criminal code to regard justice in the Old Testament way, and to pay little heed to mercy. (One has the feeling that he would have been a ruthless marker of examination papers.) But Burton's social and political criticism is at least constructive; he realizes that the healing of the body politic must proceed from the head downwards, and that a state can be fully healthy only when each member is performing its function in an orderly way, as he envisages in his Utopia. The sickness and melancholy of a state are mirrored in that of its members; in "Democritus to the Reader"
Burton discusses the macrocosm, or world affairs, before proceeding in the book proper to the microcosm, that is, the human body and its disorders. This initial broad canvas of humanity, like a Breughel painting before the details are picked out, or, to use an image more appropriate to an Anatomy, like a body on the operating table before the lance is applied, gives The Anatomy a breadth of vision which it would lack if Burton had begun immediately with the analysis of causes in Volume I.

Together with his sense of humour which, as noticed in the previous chapter, oscillates between broad Rabelaisian farce and subtle irony, these are the positive aspects of Burton's personality, which must be balanced against those on the negative side; morbid introspection, lack of self-confidence, pessimism, brooding solitariness and gloom. The evidence for these negative characteristics comes largely from Burton's own statements; for example, his acknowledgement in "Democritus to the Reader" of his personal experience of melancholy. But even these negative characteristics are put to a positive use, for Burton tells us that one of his reasons for writing the book was to cure, "by being busy", his own tendency towards melancholy. This in itself completely separates the book from any previous treatment of melancholy, in that Burton includes himself in his discussion, and writes from his own experience as well as from his voluminous reading. He fully understands the temptation to slide into the abyss of melancholy, and this personal testimony which colours the whole book helps to build up a

1. Of course, these characteristics may sometimes be assumed by Burton to accord with the particular role he is playing at the time; as has been said, it is only in the consolatory digressions that one can be sure that Burton is speaking in his own person.
sympathetic understanding between author and reader which Bright and Du Laurens, with their clinical detachment, completely fail to achieve. In fact, they would not even want to achieve this at the cost of their own superior position of authority; Burton, on the other hand, has no pretensions to be any more sane than the sufferers he describes; "I confess it again, I am as foolish, as mad as anyone." (I, 120)

The paradox of Burton's personality, wavering between positive and negative qualities, between optimism and pessimism (with the victory, one might say, going to a kind of positive pessimism), is intensified by the fact that he often seems to be playing some sort of role, rather than speaking in his own person. This is shown, for example, at the end of "Democritus to the Reader", where he quickly changes from one extreme attitude to the opposite. In a kind of simulated rage he demands from the reader the right to "speak my mind freely? If you deny me this liberty, upon these presumptions I will take it: I say again, I will take it" (I, 122), and then immediately changes to an attitude of almost cringing apology; "If through weakness, folly, passion, discontent, ignorance, I have said amiss, let it be forgotten and forgiven" (I, 122-23). It is obvious that he is enjoying his self-dramatization. The two roles Burton specifically assumes, those of doctor and divine, are expanded by a number of less obviously stated roles; those of satirist (with "barking Menippus and scoffing Lucian"), social idealist, Stoic, and polymath, all roles that Burton adopts in his capacity of Democritus Junior. The times when he least fits into this persona are those when he assumes the office of spiritual comforter, as in the "Cure of Despair", an office, incidentally, which the real Democritus was not qualified, and probably not interested,
in assuming. Burton is on the whole a more human Democritus, though he can lash out, as has been noticed, with sufficient fury.

Thus Burton, though he often talks about himself - "I have laid myself open" - still preserves a certain detachment, though this is quite different from the detachment of authority from pupil, noticed in the work of Timothy Bright. Even the negative characteristics of Burton's personality - his brooding introspection, the "imposthume" in his head - which he reveals so freely, are toughened by a kind of Stoic calm; it is anger, not despair, that causes him to let himself go, when this happens. Burton models himself on Seneca in more respects than one; his emulation of Senecan style is accompanied by that of the Stoic ideal itself, though with reservations; it is not always possible to "gulp down a groan" when one is in extremis. The Stoic characteristics which Burton seems to count most important are moderation and self-control; the exercise of reason rather than passion, and the anxiety for spiritual rather than bodily fulfilment; and the recognition of the omnipresence of death and the need for the acceptance of change, since "dying is also one of life's duties". Burton agrees with Seneca that "the larger part of goodness is the will to become good"; as he puts it in his treatise of religious-melancholy, "A true desire of mercy in the want of mercy, is mercy itself; a desire of grace in the want of grace, is grace itself..." (III, 415). Another point on which they agree is the danger of idleness, and the need for whole-hearted commitment to some absorbing task in order to obtain "honourable consolation" (both naturally favour scholarship),

2. Ibid., I,243.
instead of wallowing in misery and self-pity; "A man is as wretched as he has convinced himself that he is". Such parallelism between Seneca and Burton frequently occurs.

This grim Stoic outlook is however softened by Burton's numerous little quirks and eccentricities which, like Montaigne, he freely reveals. "Quaint" is too jejune a word for a man of such intellectual acumen; "roguish" or "playful" are perhaps slightly better, but still bear a patronizing overtone. Perhaps Anthony à Wood's is still the best summing up of his wit: "very merry, facete and juvenile". The bleakness of the stern Stoic outlook can be irradiated at any moment by a sly quip or pointed observation; for, as Burton says, "one may speak in jest, and yet speak truth...sharp sauces increase appetite" (I, 122). Thus, while agreeing for the most part with the Stoic philosophy, Burton modifies its rigidity and austerity by allowing his wit and sense of fun to intrude.

It is an innovation in medical treatises for the writer's personality to be at all evident; the two chief sources of Burton's medical material, Hippocrates and Galen, would have considered any sort of digression into private and personal matters completely irrelevant. For the personality which emerges to be in itself so complex and paradoxical suggests that Burton's is more properly a literary work (a collection of essays) than a scientific treatise, though he is also perfectly adequate to the task of collecting and collating his information. The fact that after reading The Anatomy one is left with such a strong impression of the writer's personality suggests that it is more than half an autobiography. It is, however, risky to try to assess how far it is one,

because Burton in his self-revelations is so often being ironical rather than frank. The lightning changes of mood which have been noticed, the unpredictable assumption of different personae, as when he suddenly steps from the role of worldly-wise satirist into that of innocuous bachelor - "But what have I to do with this?" - keep his personality enigmatic, despite the clues he provides. It appears from the preface that even anonymity itself is a role he is playing. Simon's remark that Burton, despite his stated wish to be anonymous, in fact wishes to introduce himself to his readers as fully and as intimately as possible - "Jamais anonymat fut plus mal gardé" - misses the ever-shifting irony of Burton's attitude towards himself and towards the reader, and his love of self-dramatization. At the beginning of the preface, he actually speaks of himself as an "antic or personate actor", who (in an image favoured by Shakespeare and Raleigh), "insolently intrudes upon this common theatre to the world's view" (I, 15).

That The Anatomy is a work of literature rather than a technical treatise is suggested by the fact that it borders on the essay in its form, and on the drama in its direct, forceful manner. The originality of The Anatomy stems from Burton's use of his literary, rather than of his scientific sources. Hippocrates and Galen often appear verbatim, and are useful only for the information they provide. Seneca, on the other hand, is subsumed into the whole structure and outlook of the work. Burton perhaps erred in putting so much of himself into a work which purported to be a treatise, but he erred so magnificently that the error became a virtue. That The Anatomy is still of interest to professional men of medicine, such as Osler, shows that he did not fail in his specific task; that it has been read for pleasure by so many professional men of letters (Doctor Johnson, Keats, Lamb),
shows how much more than this set task he achieved. Much of the fascination of the book arises from the enigmatic personality behind it; ingenuous yet reserved, learned yet anything but pedantic, tolerant yet passionate, even rancorous, when roused, darkly pessimistic yet keenly sensitive to humour, cloistered yet endowed with a broad and comprehensive view of humanity. It is obvious that despite his "monastic" existence Burton learned from life as well as from books, and wanted to portray himself as well as his learning. That both these aspects of The Anatomy are of general interest is indicated by its continued life.
The criteria which I have set up in order to criticize The Anatomy of Melancholy are those of literary rather than of scientific excellence, although to say that it is an original piece of scientific analysis would, Osler and Evans assure us, be true. Because Burton's understanding of psychology has its basis in personal experience and observation of human nature, it is deeper than that of Bright or Du Laurens, for example, who, on the whole, merely relate the conclusions they have drawn from one particular case. This breadth of vision is especially obvious in the third volume of The Anatomy, in which Burton, having freed himself from the task of anatomical and biological analysis of man's body, can wholly concentrate on the traumatic influence that love- and religious-melancholy work over the mind. Paradoxically, it is this very breadth and adaptability of Burton's psychological insight that draw his work into a literary context. It is hard to imagine the psychological material provided by Bright being used for literary ends, since, however painstakingly accurate it may be, it is localized by its extremely limited application; M can hardly be regarded as an everyman. Similarly, it would be unlikely that a twentieth-century novelist would glean much from the work of a clinical psychiatrist such as M. Mendelson, and even Freud's massive contribution to psychiatry is directed towards specialists who understand the terms of reference, rather than to the general reader. But the psychological material provided by Burton proved, as Ewing and Sensabaugh show, a rich source of dramatic themes and emotional analysis on which Ford drew freely. And its continued influence over literature is illustrated by Sterne's
adaptation and even at times, as Ferriar shows, verbatim transcription of it in *Tristram Shandy*, and by the imitations of Lamb and Holbrook Jackson.

The readers of Burton, as of Bacon and Browne, perpetuate a situation which in the early seventeenth century was fast coming to a close; the situation, that is, in which knowledge could be viewed as a whole, without being split into the divergent streams of science and literature. It was still thought in Bacon's time to be possible for one man to encompass in his mind the whole body of human learning built up since man first began to think. In so far as such a thing was possible, the great polymaths of the age, such as Bacon and Burton, must have come closer than most to achieving it. But after this time, the volume of scientific knowledge built up by expanding research and experiments has become so vast that it is possible for scientists only to specialize in a certain area. The case is different, of course, in literature, in which there is no such thing as progress; a medieval lyric is as perfect and timeless a piece of work as one of Eliot's "Preludes", just as a piece of medieval plainsong is as sophisticated an achievement as a Bartok quartet. The same person, with reservations as to taste, may appreciate equally the work of the two eras. But the same person who appreciates Burton is not equally qualified to understand Freud. Burton's frame of reference has been both widened and narrowed by twentieth-century writers on psychiatry; as psychological research has expanded, its audience has narrowed.

Both Bacon and Burton, despite their anxiety to contribute their scientific and psychological material to the "great instauration", also direct their work towards literary criticism by their concern with style; or rather, their
concern not to be concerned. Intelligibility was the criterion by which Bacon judged language, though this did not prevent Shelley from saying that he was a poet. Burton pretends to be indifferent to the vagaries of language, and to aim at a close, uncluttered brevity, such as Sprat desiderated - "...'tis not my study or intent to compose neatly, which an orator requires, but to express myself readily and plainly as it happens" (I, 32) - but how far he was from following his own maxim has been indicated in the treatment of such passages as "The Digression of Air", or the description of ugly women (III, 155) in the section on love-melancholy, both of which offer a concentrated and brilliant demonstration of his periodic intoxication with language.

Since, then, Burton's work deserves, and has in general received, greater recognition for its literary than for its scientific merits, though the latter are by no means non-existent, it should be judged finally by the canons of originality which apply to any permanent work of art; such canons as Eliot sets up in his essay on "Tradition and the Individual Talent", when he speaks of the necessity for a writer to possess the "historical sense" which compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence, and composes a simultaneous order. 1

Burton, like Eliot, fulfils this criterion both thematically, through style and thought, and literally, through quotation. Although, of course, when he quotes Hippocrates and Galen he is merely using them as authorities, when he quotes Ovid and Catullus on love, for example, he is using them, though

less self-consciously, as Eliot was later to use the patchwork of allusions in *The Waste Land*, in order to convey forcibly a richness of already built up association which will complement his own interpretation of a theme. Again, in the matter of style, the fact that such writers as Rabelais and Montaigne have clearly influenced Burton, does not make *The Anatomy*, according to Eliot's criteria, any less original. Eliot believes that a balance must be set up between "tradition", or the "historical sense", and "the individual talent", or originality, so that "a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal" will be together present in a work of art. "Tradition" is not mere conformism, for "To conform merely would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would therefore not be a work of art".¹ Neither is originality simply abstinence from conforming; as Northrop Fry, here clearly under the influence of Eliot, puts it:

> The possession of originality cannot make an artist unconventional; it drives him further into convention, obeying the law of the art itself, which seeks constantly to reshape itself from its own depths... ²

The convention which Burton is "driven" into is the essay form, each essay forming in itself a coherent whole, rather than a part of the tightly structured scientific treatise which the Aristotelian plan of contents seems to promise. On the contrary, it is only by writing the digressions that Burton can sustain himself through his task of collating the known medical facts about melancholy, and the constant exuberance of style in the section on love-melancholy perhaps

to some extent expresses his relief at being freed from this heavy burden. It is these portions of the book, in which Burton feels himself to be free, which possess simultaneously, to quote Eliot's criterion again, "tradition"; that is, an acute sensitivity to perennial themes and modes of literature, and permanent contemporaneity, or equal validity in the twentieth as in the seventeenth centuries, which is perhaps as good a test of originality as can be found.

page 13, note 1.

The well-known case of Burton's throwing cold water on his mother's device of an "assistant of a spider in a nut-shell lapped in silk" (11, 230), and then coming to respect it on finding it verified in Dioscorides, is an illustration of his high regard for bookish authority in these matters.

page 16, note 2.

John Hill, author of a "practical treatise" on Hypochondriasis, published in 1786, seems almost fanatically in favour of a herb called "spien-wort", first used, he says, by the "wise and happy" Greeks. We are told in the introduction that he grew it in his own garden, and sold it at a profit. Hypochondriasis has been reprinted by The Augustan Reprint Society, with an introduction by G. S. Rousseau, Los Angeles, 1959.

Chapter 2: Part II.

page 93, note 4.

J. Livingston Lowes in his article "The Lovers' Malady of Heroe", M.P., II, 1914, pp. 491-516, shows that all these characteristics of the courtly lover have a firm foundation in the medical treatises of the time; for example, those of Arnaldus de Villanova, Bernardino Gardenius, Valacius da Taranta, and earlier in those of Hippocrates and Galen, and the Arabian physicians of the eleventh century such as Rhazes and Avicenna. Jacques Ferrand published in 1612 a book called Armouma, which bears a striking resemblance to Burton's section
Michael Scot's characterization of Saturn as "stella damnabilis, furiosa, odiosa, superba, impia, crudelis, malivola, hebes, tarda, multis nociva, sterilis, nutrix paupertatis, conservans malum, vitans bonum, dura, senex et sine misericordia" hardly requires translation. (Cited in Klibansky, op.cit., p.191)

The well-known case of Burton's throwing cold water on his mother's device of an "amulet of a spider in a nut-shell lapped in silk" (II, 250), and then coming to respect it on finding it verified in Dioscorides, is an illustration of his high regard for bookish authority in these matters.

John Hill, author of a "practical treatise" on Hypochondriasis, published in 1766, seems almost fanatically in favour of a herb called "spleen-wort", first used, he says, by the "wise and happy" Greeks. We are told in the introduction that he grew it in his own garden, and sold it at a profit. Hypochondriasis has been reprinted by The Augustan Reprint Society, with an introduction by G.S. Rousseau, Los Angeles, 1969.

J. Livingstone Lowes in his article "The Loveres Maladye of Hereos", M.P., XI, 1914, pp.491-546, shows that all these characteristics of the courtly lover have a firm foundation in the medical treatises of the time; for example, those of Arnaldus de Villanova, Bernardus Gordonius, Valescus de Taranta, and earlier in those of Hippocrates and Galen, and the Arabian physicians of the eleventh century such as Rhazes and Avicenna. Jacques Ferrand published in 1612 a book called Erotomania, which bears a striking resemblance to Burton's section
on love-melancholy, especially in construction, but Burton claimed that he did not know of its existence until he published his third edition. (See E. Bensley, "Robert Burton and Jacques Ferrand's Mélancholie Erotique", Notes and Queries, Series X, xi, 10/4/1909.) The symptoms of the courtly lover are of course familiar from the poetry of the time, and earlier; for example Chaucer's Knigtés Tale and Troilus and Criseyde, Spenser's Amoretti, and, in France, the poetry of the Pléiade.

Chapter 2. Part iii.

page 77, note 1.

With which compare:

Mountains and hills, come fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God.

The echoes of Faustus also reverberate with the idea of spiritual pride and overweening curiosity. See below, pp. 59-59. Another Marlovian echo occurs in a later sermon, in which Donne says, "And then for gold, to hord, and treasure it up in a little room." (Sermons, ed. E.M. Simpson and G.R. Potter, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1954, III, 66.)

Chapter 3.

page 102, note 1.

And although Burton does not refer to actual political events in the main part of his work, he does show in his introduction that he has thought seriously about problems of government, and about the religious and economic situation of his time, in Europe as well as in England. One of the most interesting results of this political speculation is his proposal for "an Utopia of mine own, a New Atlantis" (I, 97), in which the corruption of government, in both church and state, and the injustice dealt in the law courts, leading to poverty and need, which he has observed around him, will not be allowed to exist.
...vuide les uretères, dilate les vases spermaticques, abrèvие les crémastères, expurge la vessie, enfile les génitoires, corrige le prépuce, incruste le balane, rectifie le membre, vous fait bon ventre, bien rotter, vessir, pêder, fianter, uriner, esternuer, sangloutir, toussir, cracher, vomiter, baisler, mousscher, haleiner, inspirer, respirer, ronfler, suer, dresser le virolet...


Chapter 6.

page 153, note 1.

Needless to say, Evans, who finds "frustrations... on almost every page", using, for example, the passage on ugly women referred to above (III, 155)("this dreadful passage") to illustrate Burton's insistent prurience, quickly detects the real motives behind this feint of anonymity: "Such 'anonymity' can hardly be regarded as a true desire for privacy; it seems, rather, a form of vanity that desires the glory of fame and the glory of self-effacement."


page 154, note 2.

Hearne's story, referred to above (p.134), of the encounter between Burton and the Earl of Southampton would tend to be a better support for Simon's hypothesis: "The Earl of Southampton went into a shop and inquired of the bookseller for Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy. Mr. Burton sat in a corner of the shop at that time. Says the bookseller, 'My Lord, if you please, I can show you the author.' He did so. 'Mr. Burton,' says the Earl, 'your servant.' 'Mr. Southampton,' says Mr. Burton, 'your servant,' and away he went."


But his failure to converse with the Earl could have arisen just as easily from "humorous" disinclination as from bashfulness.
Philosophaster

The obscurity into which Burton's play Philosophaster has fallen is darker than it deserves. One trembles at the thought that if Burton had followed his inclination to write The Anatomy in Latin it would have met with a similar fate. Jordan-Smith, who has made a free translation of the play,\(^1\) notes that "Burton's Latin is not the easiest; it abounds in both idiom and epigram; it is packed full of allusions to ideas, proverbs, and men familiar enough to the University men of his time but occult to ours."\(^2\)

This idiomatic fluency with which Burton expresses himself in Latin, of which one catches brief glimpses in The Anatomy, obliges me to retract somewhat the statement made in Chapter III that Burton is not being quite genuine when he remarks how much he would have preferred to write in Latin all the time, if it were not for the uneducated members of his audience. This does not mean, though, that in using English he is merely pandering to his public; since he addresses himself not only to scholars, but also to anyone who is in need of consolation and advice about remedies for melancholy, it is essential that he should write in the language which is freely available to the majority. It is fortunate that the transition from Latin to English seems to have been effected with little difficulty, and, in fact, with some relish.

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2. Ibid., p.xix.
Many of the preoccupations of *The Anatomy* are foreshadowed in *Philosophaster*. The disease of melancholy is referred to about six times, usually in connection with the "miseries of scholars", which later form the subject of a digression in *The Anatomy* (I,300-330). Similarly, he decries the corruption of the clergy: "Most arts they contemn; a rich Benefice's the one thing to which they pay their devotions."\(^1\) The vituperative Latin peroration to the Digression is here clearly anticipated: "They're most part human asses, infants, outsiders, phantastick shadows, barren mannikins, straw men, clods, dolts, sots, dullards, giddy-heads, lazy-bones, idiots, slaves of bed and belly, ignorant dizzards, puff'd-up clowns, mummers, babblers, whose whole equipment consisteth of venerable beards and shameless impudence."\(^2\)

Of course, Burton's scorn of sham scholarship is particularly relevant when one considers that the play is being performed by and to university students and scholars. In fact, Burton is obviously satirizing himself and his kind in the remark: "Methinks he is either melancholick, or one of these academick asses."\(^3\)

Elsewhere, the self-satisfaction of frauds who pose as scholars

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2. Ibid., p.197.
3. Ibid., p. 65.
is satirized with a mordant bitterness not far short of that found in parts of The Anatomy: "Whilst here you starvelings, through some years, read the Divine Thomas and Duns Scotus, pale from much study, we cockering ourselves, fish out betimes the fat Benefices."¹ The fact that this theme is so recurrent at this early stage of Burton's career tends to give Simon's claim² that Burton suffers from an obsessive, frustrated ambition more credence, although this should not obscure the fact that Burton's purpose here is ironic, even if the satire does contain hints of a more serious concern with unmerited suffering. This more serious element is apparent largely because one is looking back at the play with a knowledge of Burton's later work, rather than because it is overt in the dialogue of the play itself, which, on the contrary, constantly keeps up its bantering tone. Burton's assertion that his play is

"Not stuff'd with jests, nor spiced with witty speech
Such as old custom hath in tales of other men;
The fault we freely own: it suited not our pen."³

is characteristically modest and self-depreciatory; the play is in fact witty and entertaining, and able to sustain interest.

¹. Philosophaster, p.159.
². See pp.156-157.
despite certain ineptitudes of plot, at which, Jordan-Smith assures us, Burton's great Stratford contemporary would have smiled.

The other major topic of *The Anatomy* which is foreshadowed in *Philosophaster* is that of women. As in most of *The Anatomy*, the portrait he draws of them is not a flattering one. The satirical description in *The Anatomy* of the deceptive arts of cosmetics and costume (III, 95, 207) is anticipated in the remarks on

"...the women of the court...

Who, painted with ceruse, stiltsicum, and carmine dye,

Gird and primp themselves; by tricks they make their beauty;

To gowns alone, they owe it all; such loveliness hath come by art."\(^1\)

Feminine falseness is even more savagely denounced in the exclamation: "O beguiling women who pursue their prey so close, like unto wild dogs seizing fast with their teeth."\(^2\) Here again, however, the cutting severity with which women are satirized should not obscure the fact that Burton's purpose is primarily a comic one, and it is not necessary to conclude that such bitterness

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2. Ibid., p.191.
must proceed from frustration and repression. The cornuted or hen-pecked husband is a stock figure of comedy, and Burton is drawing on this fact, rather than expressing his own views on marriage, in the exchange in which two such husbands, after a supplicant to the Duke has complained that "An unskill'd tyro of a doctor with his noxious drugs hath kill'd my dearest wife," remark to each other, "Oh, would that he'd killed mine!" "Mine also, please God."¹ That is, the satire of women and their dupes is in the tradition of Greek and Latin farce, and should not be taken too literally as an indication of Burton's personal opinion.

It is doubtful that Doctor Johnson would have thought Philosophaster a "valuable work", but it certainly should not be dismissed as worthless. It is interesting both in its own right, and in the way in which it foreshadows some sections of The Anatomy. The part of à Wood's monograph in which he notes Burton's lively sense of humour, and his ability to keep his colleagues amused comes to mind when one reads his play; even in translation, the fertility and variety of his wit are apparent. As has been noticed in The Anatomy², Burton's humour ranges from broad Rabelaisian farce to sharp-drawn satire. An example of the former is the fight among the philosophasters over the question of who is

1. Philosophaster, p.207.
2. See Chapter V.
to sit at the head of the table; when they are challenged to explain "this hurly-burly? A Lapithian feast?" one of them quickly responds, "Naught that's serious; it arose out of a contention 'twixt a peripatetic and a physician concerning the origin of life: we hold for the Idea, they for the Atom."¹ Similarly, the blatant drunkenness of one of the party is explained away by his being "only moved by a kind of inspiration."¹ Rather more subtle are the gibes at the philosophasters' misconstruing of Latin passages (these jokes would obviously be particularly appreciated by the original audience of students); for example, "categories" are explained to be "certain Macedonian fowls, having a sense of reason, like unto that of dogs and horses..."² This looks forward to Burton's joke about the parrot in The Anatomy (I.96), and demonstrates the lack of pedantry or over-seriousness, which makes his real love of learning all the more convincing when it is expressed without satire.

In fact, Burton actually creates a satirical portrait of a pedantic schoolmaster (Pedanus), who is cast in the same mould as Shakespeare's Holofernes.

Jordan-Smith (with acknowledgements to E. Bensley) informs us that in Philosophaster Burton "has borrowed (perhaps echoed would be the truer word) from Plautus, Terence, Ovid, Ausonius, Juvenal, Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, Horace, Quintilian, Porphyrius, Latin

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¹ Philosophaster, p.39.
² Ibid., p.61.
editions of Plato, and Palingenius' *Zodiac of Life* - so that even at this early stage it seems that Burton is in the habit of using his wide reading widely, though the references are not in this case given, and one must rely on such classical erudition as is possessed by Bensley to supply them. But Burton also uses his learning wisely: *Philosophaster* is not simply a lifeless imitation of Greek and Latin comedy. Burton infuses into it, as later into *The Anatomy*, his own ironical outlook on human deceit or folly, and his acute sense of the ridiculous. The dry wit which is so apparent throughout *The Anatomy*, and which, as has been said, is one of the chief indications of its originality, is here already very much in evidence. In *Philosophaster* Burton is able to reveal simultaneously his knowledge and observation of the world of men, and his sophisticated understanding of the world of books, which were later to be expanded and developed in *The Anatomy*. It is to be hoped that Jordan-Smith's competent translation will cause the considerable wit and charm of *Philosophaster* to be more widely appreciated.

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