



AN ASTROLOGO-PHYSICAL DISCOURSE OF THE HUMAN VIRTUES IN THE BODY OF MAN; BOTH PRINCIPAL AND ADMINISTERING

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HUMAN virtues are either PRINCIPAL for *procreation*, and *conservation*; or ADMINISTERING, for *Attraction*, *Digestion*, *Retention*, or *Expulsion*.

The scope of this discourse is to preserve, in soundness and vigour, the mind and understanding of man; to strengthen the brain, preserve the body in health, to teach a man to be an able co-artificer, or helper of nature, to withstand and expel Diseases. I shall touch only the principal faculties both of body and mind; which being kept in a due decorum, preserve the body in health, and the mind in vigour.

THE PRINCIPAL VIRTUES:

Virtue Procreative

The first in order is the Virtue Procreative: for nature regards not only the conservation of itself, but to beget its like, and conserve in *Species*.

The seat of this is the Member of Generation, and is governed principally by the influence of Venus. It is augmented and increased by the strength of Venus, by her Herbs, Roots, Trees, Minerals, &c. It is diminished and purged by those of Mars, and quite extinguished by those of Saturn. Observe the hour and Medicines of Venus, to fortify; of Mars, to cleanse this virtue; of Saturn, to extinguish it.

Conservative

The conservative virtue is *Vital*, *Natural*, *Animal*:

Vital

The Vital spirit hath its residence in the heart, and is dispersed from it by the Arteries; and is governed by the influence of the Sun. And it is to the body, as the Sun is to the Creation; as the heart is in the Microcosm, so is the Sun in the Macrocosm: for as the Sun gives life, light, and motion to the Creation, so doth the heart to the body; therefore it is called *Sol Corporis*,¹ as the Sun is called *Cor Coeli*² because their operations are similar. Inimical and destructive to this virtue, are Saturn and Mars. The Herbs and Plants of *Sol* wonderfully fortify it.

Natural

The natural faculty or virtue resides in the liver, and is generally governed by Jupiter, *Quasi Juvans Pater*³; its office is to nourish the body, and is dispersed though the body by the veins. From this are bred four particular humours: *Blood*, *Choler*, *Flegm*, and *Melancholy*.

¹ Bodily Sun

² Heart of the Heavens

³ In the image of the heavenly father.

Blood is made of meat perfectly concocted, in quality hot and moist governed by Jupiter. It is by a third concoction transmuted into flesh, the superfluity of it into seed, and its receptacle is the veins, by which it is dispersed through the body.

Choler is made of meat more than perfectly concocted; and it is the spume or froth of blood: it clarifies all the humours, heats the body, nourishes the apprehension, as blood doth the judgment. It is in quality hot and dry; fortifies the attractive faculty, as blood doth the digestive; moves man to activity and valour: its receptacle is the gall,⁴ and it is under the influence of Mars.

Flegm, is made of meat not perfectly digested; it fortifies the virtue expulsive, makes the body slippery, fit for ejection; it fortifies the brain by its consimilitude with it; yet it spoils apprehension by its antipathy to it.⁵ It qualifies⁶ choler, cools and moistens the heart, thereby sustaining it and the whole body from the fiery effects, which continual motion would produce. Its receptacle is the lungs, and it is governed by Venus; some say by the Moon, perhaps it maybe governed by them both, it is cold and moist in quality.

Melancholy is the sediment of blood, cold and dry in quality, fortifying the retentive faculty, and memory; makes men sober, solid, and staid, fit for study; stays the unbridled toys of lustful blood, stays the wandering thoughts, and reduces them home to the centre: its receptacle is in the spleen,⁷ and it is governed by Saturn.

Of all these humours blood is the chief; all the rest are superfluities of blood; yet are they necessary superfluities, for without any of them man cannot live. Namely; Choler is the *Fiery superfluities*, Flegm, the *Watery*; Melancholy, the *Earthy*.

Animal

The third principal virtue remains, which is Animal; its residence is in the brain, and Mercury is the general significator of it. Ptolemy held the Moon signified the Animal virtue; and I am of opinion, both Mercury and the Moon dispose it; my reason is

1. Because both of them in nativities, either fortify, or impedit it.
2. Ill directions to either or from either afflict it, as good ones help it. Indeed the Moon rules the bulk of it, as also the sensitive part of it: Mercury the rational part: and that's the reason, if in a nativity the Moon be stronger than Mercury, sense many times over-powers reason; but if Mercury be strong, and the Moon weak, reason will be master ordinarily in despite of sense.

It is divided into Intellectual, and Sensitive.

1. Intellectual

The Intellectual resides in the brain, within the *Pia mater*,⁸ and is governed generally by Mercury. This is divided into *Imagination*, *Judgment*, and *Memory*.

⁴ The gall bladder is a small sac near the liver which stores bile: a green watery fluid made in the liver. The colour of bile is derived from broken down products of decomposing blood cells. Bile is discharged into the stomach to reduce the surface tension of fats and thus aid digestion. In character description, to be 'full of bile' or 'bilious' is to be easily angered, bad tempered and irritable, which expresses the Martial influence.

⁵ In other words, it restores the brain but slows down responses and dulls the instinct to react.

⁶ Moderates.

⁷ The spleen is located near to the stomach. Amongst other functions it destroys worn out red blood cells and removes foreign particles from the blood.

⁸ Taking its name from the Latin for *Pious Mother*, the Pia Mater is the innermost of the three membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.

Imagination is seated in the forepart of the brain; it is hot and dry in quality, quick, active, always working. It receives vapours from the heart and coins them into thoughts: it never sleeps, but always is working, both when the man is sleeping and waking; only when Judgment is awake it regulates the imagination, which runs at random when Judgment is asleep, and forms any thought according to the nature of the vapour sent up to it. Mercury is out of question the disposer of it. A man may easily perceive his Judgment asleep before himself many times, and then he shall perceive his thoughts run at random.

Judgment always sleeps when men do, Imagination never sleeps; Memory sometimes sleeps when men sleep, and sometimes it doth not: so then when memory is awake, and the man asleep, then memory remembers what apprehension coins, and that is a dream. The thoughts would have been the same, if memory had tot been awake to remember it. These thoughts are commonly, (I mean in sleep, when they are purely natural), framed according to the nature of the humour, called complexion, which is predominate in the body; and if the humour be peccant⁹ it is always so. So that it is one of the surest rules to know a man's own complexion, by his dreams, I mean a man void of distractions, or deep studies: (this most assuredly shows Mercury to dispose of the Imagination, as also because it is mutable, applying itself to any object, as Mercury's nature is to do;) for then the imagination will follow its old bent; for if a man be bent upon a business, his apprehension will work as much when he is asleep, and find out as many truths by study, as when the man is awake; and perhaps more too, because then it is not hindered by ocular¹⁰ objects.

And thus much for imagination, which is governed by Mercury, and fortified by his influence; and is also strong or weak in man, according as Mercury is strong or weak in the nativity.

Judgment is seated in the midst of the brain, to show that it ought to bear rule over all the other faculties: it is the judge of the little world, to approve of what is good, and reject what is bad; it is the seat of reason, and the guide of actions; so that all failings are committed through its infirmity, it not rightly judging between a real and an apparent good. It is hot and moist in quality, and under the influence of Jupiter.

Memory is seated in the hinder cell of the brain, it is the great register to the little world; and its office is to record things either done and past, or to be done. It is in quality cold and dry, melancholic, and therefore generally melancholic men have best memories, and most tenacious every way. It is under the dominion of Saturn, and is fortified by his influence, but purged by the luminaries.

2. Sensitive

The second part of the animal virtue is sensitive, and it is divided into two parts, common and particular:

Common sense is an imaginary term, and that which gives virtue to all the particular senses, and knits and unites them together within the Pia Matter.¹¹ It is regulated by Mercury (perhaps this is one reason why men are so fickle-headed) and its office is to preserve a harmony among the senses.

⁹ Peccant: corruptible, faulty or violent.

¹⁰ Visible to the eye.

¹¹ See footnote 8.

Particular senses are five, *viz.*, *seeing*, *hearing*, *smelling*, *tasting* and *feeling*. These senses are united in one, in the brain, by the common sense, but are operatively distinguished into their several seats and places of residence.

The sight resides in the eyes, and particularly in the crystalline¹² humour. It is in quality cold and moist, and governed by the luminaries. They who have them weak in their genesis, have always weak sights; if one of them be so, the weakness possesses but one eye.

The hearing resides in the ears; is in quality cold and dry, melancholy, and under the dominion of Saturn.

The smelling resides in the nose, is in quality hot and dry, choleric, and that is the reason choleric creatures have such good smells, as dogs. It is under the influence of Mars.

The taste resides in the palate, which is placed at the root of the tongue on purpose to discern what food is congruous for the stomach, and what not; as the meseraik veins¹³ are placed to discern what nourishment is proper for the liver to convert into blood. In some very few men, and but a few, and in those few, but in few instances, these two tasters agree not, and that is the reason some men covet meats that make them sick, *viz.*, the taste craves them, and the meseraik veins reject them. In quality hot and moist, and is ruled by Jupiter.

The feeling is deputed to no particular organ, but is spread abroad, over the whole body; is of all qualities, hot, cold, dry, and moist, and is the index of all tangible things; for if it were only hot alone, it could not feel a quality contrary, *viz.*, cold, and this might be spoken of other qualities. It is under the dominion of Venus, some say, Mercury. A thousand to one, but it is under Mercury.

THE ADMINISTERING VIRTUES:

The four ADMINISTERING VIRTUES are *attractive*, *digestive*, *retentive* and *expulsive*.

The attractive virtue is hot and dry, hot by quality, active, or principal, and that appears because the fountain of all heat is attractive, *viz.*, the sun. Dry by a quality passive, or an effect of its heat; its office is to remain in the body, and call for what nature wants.¹⁴

It is under the influence of the Sun, say authors, and not under Mars, because he is of a corrupting nature, yet if we cast an impartial eye upon experience, we shall find, that martial men call for meat none of the least, and for drink the most of all other men, although many times they corrupt the body by it, and therefore I see no reason why Mars being of the same quality with the Sun, should not have a share in the dominion. It is in vain to object, that the influence of Mars is evil, and therefore he should have no dominion over this virtue; for then:

1. By the same rule, he should have no dominion at all in the body of man.
2. All the virtues in man are naturally evil, and corrupted by *Adam's* fall.¹⁵

¹² Pertaining to transparency and clarity; the *crystalline lens* is a biconvex transparent elastic lens in the eye; however, Culpeper's original spelling was 'christaline' which gives us a sense of how transparency is associated with the 'Christ principle' of bringing or accepting light.

¹³ What Culpeper refers to as the 'meseraik veins' are the mesentery veins which carry blood from the intestine to the portal vein and so to the liver. Lilly refers to them as the 'miseriaicks' and places them under the signification of Virgo (*CA* p.96).

¹⁴ The attractive virtue expresses the instinct to gather sustenance to maintain health. The word 'attractive' derives from the Latin term *attrahere* which means 'to gather towards' and demonstrates possession of a property that pulls or draws something towards itself and in so doing satisfies a pleasure or need.

¹⁵ The argument against Culpeper's views would be that the attractive virtue is creative and not destructive. In classical philosophy creativity, life and health is the result of matter being drawn together; whilst destruction, death and decay is the result of matter being separated. Since attraction opposes separation it seems logical that

This attractive virtue ought to be fortified when the Moon is in fiery signs, *viz.*, Aries and Sagitary, but not in Leo, for the sign is so violent, that no physic ought to be given when the Moon is there: (and why not Leo, seeing that is the most attractive sign of all; and that's the reason such as have it ascending in their genesis, are such greedy eaters.)¹⁶ If you cannot stay till the Moon be in one of them, let one of them ascend when you administer the medicine.

The digestive virtue is hot and moist, and is the principal of them all, the other like handmaids attend it: The *attractive* virtue draws that which it should digest, and serves continually to feed and supply it. The *retentive* virtue, retains the substance with it, till it be perfectly digested. The *expulsive* virtue casteth out, expels what is superfluous by digestion.

It is under the influence of Jupiter, and fortified by his herbs and plants, &c. In fortifying it, let your Moon be in Gemini, Aquary, or the first half of Libra¹⁷, or if matters be come to that extremity, that you cannot stay till that time, let one of them ascend, but both of them together would do better, always provided that the Moon be not in the ascendant. I cannot believe the Moon afflicts the ascendant so much as they talk of, if she be well dignified, and in a sign she delights in.¹⁸

The retentive virtue is in quality cold and dry; cold, because the nature of cold is to compress, witness the ice; dry, because the nature of dryness, is to keep and hold what is compressed. It is under the influence of Saturn, and that is the reason why usually Saturnine men are so covetous and tenacious, in fortifying of it, make use of the herbs and plants, &c. of Saturn, and let the Moon be in Taurus or Virgo, Capricorn is not so good, say authors, (I can give no reason for that neither);¹⁹ let not Saturn nor his ill aspect molest the ascendant.

The expulsive faculty is cold and moist; cold because that compasses²⁰ the superfluities; moist, because that makes the body slippery and fit for ejection, and disposes it to it. It is under the dominton of *Luna*, with whom you may join Venus, because she is of the same nature. In fortifying this, (which ought to be done in all purgations²¹) let the Moon be in Cancer, Scorpio, or Pisces, or let one of these signs ascend.

Also in whatsoever is before written, of the nature of the planets, take notice, that fixed stars of the same nature, work the same effect.

Mars, a destructive planet, is denied rulership over this administering virtue. However, as Culpeper explains, it may be associated with the corrupted aspect of its extreme effects.

¹⁶ Again, Culpeper makes plain that he cannot see the sense of excluding the Moon in Leo as a time ripe for fortifying the attractive virtue. But Leo, being a violent sign, tends towards an excess of the attractive virtue and all excesses bring damage. Since the attractive virtue is essentially defined by the leaning toward health and inner vitality, his traditional sources have warned against this placement as a time suitable for administering healing. This may also be because the nocturnal luminary is not well situated in the sign governed by the Sun.

¹⁷ The air signs, which are warm and moist in temperament and therefore conducive to the natural humour of Jupiter. The latter half of Libra is excluded because this falls in the *Via Combusta* (usually 15 Libra – 15 Scorpio) which is reputed to be hostile to the Moon.

¹⁸ Traditional works frequently warn against placing the Moon in the ascendant for electional astrology. The reason may be that the Moon, as a nocturnal and feminine planet, is often associated with darkness and weakness or at least confusion and a lack of expressed vitality. The Moon naturally delights on the western (occidental) angle which is defined as cold and moist, so it is not well placed on the eastern (oriental) angle which is defined as hot and dry.

¹⁹ One obvious reason would be that Capricorn is the house of Saturn, the greater malefic, which may bring a damaging excess of the retentive virtue rather than a restorative influence of it. Hence we are also told to avoid the body or harsh aspect of Saturn to the ascendant at the time of administering medicine.

²⁰ Limits and binds.

²¹ A purgative medicine causes evacuation of the bowels; so for example if someone is suffering from constipation (an excess of the retentive virtue) the purgative should be taken whilst the Moon is in a cold and moist (phlegmatic/water) sign.

Planetary rulerships of the human virtues
(virtues can be thought of as impulses or essential responses)

Procreative: The urge to reproduce
Governed by ♀, diminished by ♂, extinguished by ♃

Conservative: The urge to preserve

