

Tractatus de superstitionibus

[*A Treatise on Superstitions*]

(c. 1510)

by Martín de Arles y Andosilla (c. 1451–1521) — *Martinus de Arles, in sacra Theologia professor meritissimus, canonicus et archidiaconus vallis de Aybar in Ecclesia Pampilonensi, Regni Navarrae*

Translation by Scott Weisman



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Upright reason dictates that the recipients of the good, of whatever type and level of beneficence it may be, must show gratitude and blessing to the beneficent person in every way possible, commensurate with the value of the beneficence. And one who has benefited all the people of the world — for example, one who invented a new instrument for the good of the world, or a good book — it is fitting for every discerning person, out of the obligation of love of fellow beings, to at least purchase it, so that the man will profit and his heart will be encouraged thereby to invent yet more good instruments in the world. And similarly, all other wise-hearted people will likewise strive and exert themselves to invent good things and instruments needed for the repair of the world and its perfection.

And therefore, whoever says: "What do I need this new instrument for?" — he does not act well towards the world. For if not for the man who invented it, where would you be? And what would your city do? And more than this, if the man did not exert himself, what would the world do?

— R. Pinchas Eliyahu Hurwitz, *Sefer HaBris HaShalem* (1797)

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A NOTE ON THE WORK

A Navarrese archdeacon's field report on the popular religion of his own parishes. Martín de Arles opens with the rogation processions his cathedral chapter mounted against drought and hail, then turns to cataloguing and judging the observances he had met on visitation: charms and written *schedulae* worn against illness, lucky and unlucky days, images cast in bronze or wax under particular constellations, divination by *pythones* and necromancers, herbs gathered with formulas, saints' days observed for the wrong reasons. Each practice is stated as a question and answered from Aquinas, Gerson and the *Decretum*. Written c. 1510, it is one of the earliest attempts to distinguish licit devotion from superstition using evidence the author had gathered himself.

This translation is made from the treatise as printed in the composite demonological volume issued at Frankfurt in 1581 — the volume title page, then the treatise itself at pp. 351–451. That volume gathers six separate works, of which this is the fourth; the other five are not part of this edition, and the pagination here follows the volume's own printed sequence, pp. 351–451. Two of its companion pieces, Nicolas Jacquier's *Flagellum haereticorum fascinariorum* and Thomas Erastus's *Disputatio de lamiis*, are translated separately in this series.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION PROCESS

This translation was produced with the translation-pipeline. See the linked repository for details on the process.

A note on the references. A scriptural or bibliographic reference given in brackets or parentheses is, in most cases, an **editorial identification of an allusion rather than a citation printed in the source**. Books of this kind quote and weave scripture constantly without naming it, and the identification is supplied here as a convenience to the reader. Where the source does print a reference of its own, it is given as printed. **An identified allusion is not evidence that the author cited that passage** — look at the original before resting an argument on one.

This text is the product of a highly refined automated translation process. It has undergone only cursory human review and should not be treated as an authoritative or scholarly rendering. It is offered solely as a reference and reading aid — a way to make an otherwise inaccessible work approachable — and any passage of real consequence should be checked against the original source.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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[Manuscript inscription (early hand, upper margin): "Benedictinorum Anglorum Parisijs 1620", with "sancti" and "Edmundi" added in the same hand at either side of the line below — the English Benedictines of St Edmund at Paris.]

FLAGELLVM HÆRETICORVM FASCINARIORVM *The Scourge of Bewitching Heretics*

By F. Nicolaus Iaquerius [Nicolas Jacquier], of the Order of Friars Preachers, formerly Inquisitor of heretical depravity.

TO THESE HAVE NEWLY BEEN ADDED

Dialogues of D. Lambertus Danaeus [Lambert Daneau] on poisoners [*de Veneficis*], the people commonly called *Sortiarii*.

A *Letter* of D. Ioachimus Camerarius Pabebergensis [Joachim Camerarius] on Plutarch's *On the Failure of the Oracles*.

A *Treatise* on superstitions by D. Martinus de Arles [Martín de Arles], professor of sacred theology, canon, etc.

Three *Questions* of Ioannes Trithemius [Johannes Trithemius] on reprobates and sorcerers [*de Reprobis atque Maleficis*], addressed to Maximilian I, Emperor of the Romans.

Likewise

A *Book* of D. Thomas Erastus on witches [*de Strigibus*].

Published by the utmost care and industry of F. Ioan. Myntzenberg [Johann Myntzenberg], of the Carmelite Order.

A full INDEX will show what else is treated in this book.

By the Grace and Privilege of His Imperial Majesty, for ten years.

FRANKFURT AM MAIN, 1581.

TRACTATVS DE SVPERSTITIONIBVS

A TREATISE ON SUPERSTITIONS

Published by the reverend lord Master Martinus de Arles, most deserving professor of sacred theology, and canon and archdeacon of the valley of Aybar in the Church of Pamp. [Pamplona], in the Kingdom of Navarre.

One day, when the divine offices had been said and dinner was over, a few of us brother canons were together in the pleasant gardens of this distinguished church of ours, taking our recreation. Among other decent topics of conversation, talk arose about superstitions — which, sad to say, are thriving in the world at present through the contriving of the ancient enemy. As we were discussing them, one of the company put a question to me: the venerable lord Archdeacon de Vssum, a brother most dear to me. He told me that in a certain town of his archdeaconry there is an old custom. Whenever some emergency of drought threatens the fruits of the earth, the clergy and the farmers [*coloni*] go with great devotion in procession, with hymns and canticles,

to Saint Peter de Vssum — the titular church, that is, of his archdeaconry. There, once mass has been celebrated and the prayers said, they take the image of the blessed Peter from the altar and carry it on their backs or in their arms down to the river bank, with songs and praises. Some of them, however, address their petition to the image itself, saying: "Saint Peter, come to our help in the need we are placed in, and obtain rain for us from God," and so on. This a second time; this a third time. And when it makes no answer to any of these, they shout: "Let the image of the most blessed Peter be ducked under, if he does not obtain for us from Almighty God the favour we have demanded for our pressing need." Some of the chief men answer: "No, it will certainly not come to that, for like a good shepherd he will obtain the favour in question and will intercede with God." And so, once sureties [*fideiussores*] have been given on blessed Peter's behalf, they have never — so the farmers themselves assert — been disappointed or left without what they needed and wanted, rain above all: they have always had rain within 24 hours. Wanting to be informed by me on this point, then, he asked his question: whether any sin is committed in this, in the way of idolatry, of superstition, or of anything else of the kind? [The printed text has the genitives *idolatriae superstitionis vel alterius huiusmodi* without a governing noun.] This question, venerable brother, without

doubt lies — I confess it — beyond the powers of my mind to explain to you and to set out for others. I do not see in myself anything I could bring forward

worthy of your wisdom or of anyone else's, either in elegance of expression or in weight of judgement. Nevertheless — since charity supplies the strength that inexperience denies — so that the salvation of souls may be provided for; and mindful, besides, of my profession and fired with devout zeal: I shall take care to gather for you the few things the Lord may furnish me with out of the chief and approved Doctors. In this little work — to use the words the Master of the Sentences uses in his prologue — I ask not only for a devout reader but for a free corrector. Would that there were as many men zealous against the *maleficia* and superstitions of carnal-minded people as there are, sad to say, *pythones* and *maleficia* [acts of sorcery] to be found in our own time.

First of all, venerable brother, the people themselves, as I see it, commit a good many evils under the pretext of religion — evils that can be drawn out both from your own account and from another which I have had from trustworthy persons of that place. For, first, they commit an act of superstition. Second, sacrilege. Third, they tempt God [*tentant Deum*], and act foolishly, and give scandal by what they do. All of these must be dealt with in order; and first, superstition.

QVID SIT SVPERSTITIO, DECLARATUR. — WHAT SUPERSTITION IS, EXPLAINED.

Superstition, as the Doctors have it — and as they explain it on that passage on Colossians 2 [*ad Colloceses* 2.], "things which have an appearance of wisdom in superstition" — is religion observed beyond due measure [*Religio supra modum servata*]. It has the character of wisdom, yet not in truth but in falsehood; it is abundance where there is no usefulness; and it comes by human wisdom, which, as James 3 [*Iacob*. 3.] says, "is earthly, animal and devilish."

Gregory likewise, on the same passage in the gloss: superstition is a counterfeit religion, contrived so that things which are false may appear true; it presses minds down into earthly things, so that they will not be raised up to the things above. And Nicolaus, on the same passage: "in superstition," that is, in superfluous and empty religion.

From all this it follows that superstition is religion observed beyond due measure — that is, observed in bad and defective ways and circumstances. For a fuller explanation of the point, however, note what the blessed Thomas Aquinas says in the *secunda secundae*, question 92, article 1. "Superstition," he says, "is a vice opposed to religion by way of excess, rendering more in divine worship [*cultum divinum*] than true religion does, because it renders divine worship either to one to whom it is not owed, or in a manner in which it ought not to be rendered" — as when something is done in divine worship that ought not to be done.

But the act of plunging the image under water — the act these people perform — is of just this kind. For in divine worship they do what ought not to be done; therefore divine worship is being rendered in the very manner in which it ought not to be rendered. And if their whole act is made bad by a bad circumstance — since, according to Dionysius in *De divinis nominibus*, good

comes from a cause entire and whole, but evil from individual defects — then these people, and others who act in the same way, are committing superstition.

That they go in procession to that church, and that they celebrate mass there, and so on, is an act of religion [*actus religionis*], since religion is the virtue that inclines a person to render to God the worship and honour owed to him by reason of his excellence, as Saint Thomas Aquinas lays it down in the *secunda secundae*, question 81, article one — and this in acts of the heart as much as in acts of the body.

QVÆSTIO, RELIGIONI OPPOSITUR SUPERSTITIO, DECLARATUR. — A QUESTION: SUPERSTITION IS OPPOSED TO RELIGION, EXPLAINED.

To this act, however, there stands opposed the first species of superstition, the one blessed Augustine sets out in his book *De doctrina Christiana*: it occurs when divine worship is rendered to the true God, but in an undue manner. For inasmuch as divine worship is ordered towards a certain directing of human acts according to the ordinances of the God who is worshipped, the superstition of certain observations or observances belongs here.

So when, under the pretext of religion, these people lead the image of Saint Peter down to the river bank and plunge it under — or try to plunge it under — hoping in that way to obtain the outcome they want, this is superstitious. For what they ought to wait for patiently from God or from the saints, and to obtain through the proper means, they instead require of creatures unlawfully and unduly, by superstitious means: by words and deeds that are disordered and not in use among other people, and so on.

That there can be something superstitious within divine worship the holy Doctor proves in the book named above, q. 90. 3. ar. 2., where the definition of superstition is set out more fully. He first proves this conclusion on the authority of blessed Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana* 2, where Augustine says that the good and true Christian rejects superstitious fictions even in literature, and that it is through the sacred writings that God is shown to be the one to be worshipped. The conclusion, then, is that there can be superstition even within divine worship, arising from some superfluity.

So in the body of the article he says that a thing is called superfluous in two ways. In one way, by absolute

quantity — and in this sense nothing can be superfluous in divine worship, since a man can do nothing that is not less than what he owes to God. In the other way, a thing can have something superfluous about it by quantity of proportion, namely because it is not proportioned to the end. Now the end of divine worship is that a man give glory to God and subject himself to him in mind and body. And so whatever a man does that bears on God's glory, and on the subjecting of a man's mind to God, and of his body too through a moderate restraint of the desires, in accordance with the ordinance of God and of the Church and with the custom of those among whom a man lives

with God [*consuetudinem eorum, quibus homo Deo conuiuit*], is not superfluous in divine worship.

But suppose something is done which, so far as it is of itself, has no bearing on God's glory, nor on the mind of man being carried towards God, nor on the restraining of the disordered desires of the flesh; or suppose it falls outside the institution of God and of the Church, or runs against common custom, which according to Augustine is to be held as law. Then all of it must be reckoned superfluous and superstitious, because, consisting in outward things only, it has no bearing on the interior worship of God. So Augustine, in his book *De vera religione*, brings in what is said in Luke

17: "The kingdom of God is within you." He is speaking against the superstitious, who spend their chief care on outward things. So far the blessed Thomas.

QVOD SVBMERSIO ILLA IMAGINUM, QUANTUMCUNQUE CUM HYMNIS & CANTICIS AGATUR, PERTINET AD INIURIAM SANCTORUM, & EST ACTUS SUPERSTITIOSUS. — THAT THIS PLUNGING OF IMAGES UNDER WATER, HOWEVER MUCH IT IS CARRIED OUT WITH HYMNS AND CANTICLES, AMOUNTS TO AN INJURY TO THE SAINTS, AND IS A SUPERSTITIOUS ACT.

It is clear, then, that to plunge the image of blessed Peter under water has no bearing on the glory of God, by which the Lord is praised in his saints, but bears rather on his dishonour and injury. Nor is it in accordance with the ordinance of God and of the Church, which ordained that the images of the saints be venerated, as will be said below. On the contrary, no people and no country has ever commonly undertaken to do such things. The conclusion must therefore be that this act is in every respect bad and superstitious. For if there were anything of the divine [*aliquid numinis*] present in an observance of this kind, then theologians — men religious and devout — would be the ones who ought to acknowledge and keep such an observance more than anyone. What one finds is the opposite: they argue against it, condemn it and forbid it. Such a rite therefore passes over into superstition, which is nothing other than empty religion [*vana religio*], as was said

above. And it is called empty because it lacks both reason and effect. So Master Iohan. de Gerson [Jean Gerson], in *de directione cordis*, part 3, lays down this rule:

PONITVR REGVLA GENERALIS AD COGNOSCENDUM, QVIS SIT ACTUS ILLICITUS, VEL SUPERSTITIOSUS. — A GENERAL RULE IS LAID DOWN FOR RECOGNIZING WHICH ACT IS UNLAWFUL OR SUPERSTITIOUS.

Every observance whose effect is expected on any grounds other than natural reason, or a divine miracle, or the divine will, ought in reason to be condemned and to be held strongly suspect of a pact with demons, whether express or hidden. This (he says) is what the sacred faculty of theologians of the University of Paris determined in our own time. Thus far Gerson.

From this I shall draw several propositions. The first: those neighbours of Labiano who act in the same way — carrying the body of Saint Felicia in procession in time of drought and finally plunging it under water, and holding the same false belief as the people of Lumbier [*de Lūbier*] spoken of earlier — are in that respect superstitious and empty. Such an act lacks the grounds set down in the rule just given, and God is offended by it. For according to Augustine, *de dec. cor.*, "Superstition," he says, "is among the greatest of the servile works of demons, and is against the reverence owed to God."

INFERT QVADAM PROPONENS DE SINGULARIBUS ACTIBUS SUPERSTITIOSIS PERACTIS IN DIE SANCTI IOHANNIS BAPTISTÆ, & BEATORUM PETRI & PAULI. — HE DRAWS CERTAIN FURTHER PROPOSITIONS, SETTING OUT PARTICULAR SUPERSTITIOUS ACTS PERFORMED ON THE DAY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST AND OF THE BLESSED PETER AND PAUL.

The second proposition. On the feast day of Saint John the Baptist many things are done devoutly by the faithful for the sake of the festivity — the ringing of bells, for instance, and festive fires; likewise, at first light people go out to gather herbs that are fragrant, of the best quality and medicinal, both by their own nature and by the fullness of their powers at that season. But some of the common people are so superstitious that they believe the things done for the solemnity and gladness of the feast are done as superstitious remedies — the ringing of the bells, for example, to drive off spirits or *malefici* [workers of harmful magic]. Some kindle fires at the crossroads of the paths out in the fields, so that no such *sortilegae* and *maleficae* [women who cast lots, women who work harmful magic] may make their passage there on that night; this I saw with my own eyes. Others again burn the herbs gathered on Saint John's day against lightning, thunder and storms, and believe that by their fumigations they ward off demons and tempests. This is common among us, and time and again on my visitation I have taken care to reprove it. Some do this, some that; on that day they behave superstitiously

in gathering herbs and in cutting branches from walnut trees or from other trees, believing that by this those with swollen throats [*guturnosi*] can be healed. All the same, we ought not to deny that those herbs have a medicinal power for making the fumigations used against the illnesses of children, and of draught animals as well. This power, however, does not come from their being gathered precisely on that day, nor from their being gathered before sunrise or after sunrise (as some foolishly believe), but from the natural power of those herbs, which at that season they have in fact already reached. Nor is it permitted, in gathering medicinal herbs of any kind at any time whatever, to kindle [*accendere*, as printed] any observances or incantations, except with the divine Creed or the Lord's Prayer, so that the Creator and God of all alone may be honoured — as Saint Thomas says, *secunda secundae* q. 96. art. 4. Nor do I see on what grounds these blacksmiths, or *mulciberi*, bleed or phlebotomize horses and other draught animals precisely on the day of Saint John the Baptist and on the day of

the Apostles Peter and Paul, rather than on other days in the same season. This looks superstitious, and prompted by the devil, so that the days and solemnities of such great saints may be broken up, against the reverence owed to God. Similar observances of days we shall touch on further below. Others bathe themselves early in the morning on that day, and at night leap over a fire made of those herbs, in the belief that this will keep them free of itching and scab for the whole of that year. Some do one thing, some another, all of them superstitiously and unfaithfully; each of these must be taken up in order.

QVOD MVLIERES SORTILEGÆ & MALEFICÆ, QUÆ VULGARITER BROXÆ NUNCUPANTUR, NON TRANSFERUNTUR LOCALITER AD LOCA, IN QUIBUS SE FUISSE DE NOCTE DICUNT, SED MENTALITER & FANTASTICÈ TANTUM. — THAT WOMEN WHO ARE *sortilegae* [CASTERS OF LOTS] AND *maleficae* [WORKERS OF HARMFUL MAGIC], COMMONLY CALLED *Broxae*, ARE NOT CARRIED LOCALLY TO THE PLACES WHERE THEY SAY THEY HAVE BEEN BY NIGHT, BUT ONLY MENTALLY AND IN FANTASY.

And first, about the false opinion of those who believe that those *maleficae* and *sortilegae* — the wretched women who are especially rife in the Basque region [*regio Basconica*] on the northern side of the Pyrenean mountains, and who are commonly called *Broxae* — can be transported from place to place by a real change of place. For in truth, as is laid down at 26. q. 5. *Episcopi*, from the council of Acquiren., such persons are not carried locally by the demon into the places where they say they have been, believing that they ride at the night hours with Diana or with Herodias, or that they change themselves into other creatures. Rather, once Satan himself has taken hold of the mind of any such woman and has subjected her to himself through her unbelief, he at once transforms himself into the appearances of various forms and the likenesses of creatures, and presents fantasies to the sleeper who follows superstition of this kind. The mind he holds captive he deludes in her sleep, leading it now through joyful things, now through sad ones — but in imagination only, not truly. And although it is the unbelieving soul alone that undergoes this, she supposes that it happens not in the mind but in the body.

So certain wretched women, in Satan's service and led astray by the illusions of demons, believe and openly profess that in the night hours they ride with Diana, the goddess of the pagans, or with Venus, in a great throng of women, and that they do other unspeakable things: tearing infants from their mother's milk, roasting them and eating them, entering houses through the chimneys or the windows, and troubling those who live there in various ways. All of this, and everything like it, happens to them in fantasy only.

QVOD ALIQVANDO MVLIERES ETIAM PROBÆ IMPROBÈ PATIUNTUR CON-
CUBITUM À DÆMONE INCUBO. — THAT SOMETIMES EVEN RESPECTABLE WOMEN
SHAMEFULLY UNDERGO INTERCOURSE WITH AN INCUBUS DEMON.

And this illusion happens not only among the *maleficae* but also in the case of other respectable women. For I had it from the report of a certain priest that in these times a certain respectable married woman disclosed to him in confession that it often seemed to her in her sleep that she was really riding on draught animals through the fields along with others; that as she went along in this way over water a man had intercourse with her, and she felt an intense concupiscence in the act; and that this had often happened to her. When her confessor questioned me about it, what other answer could be given about that riding than that it had befallen her — as with the malefic practices already discussed — not really but in fantasy, and this by an illusion of the demon, in accordance with what has been said above? So Augustine, on Genesis, in the literal commentary: "For those things that are said to have happened — that certain men remembered themselves being in the bodies of certain animals — either false deeds were being reported, or else this was done in their minds by the illusions of demons. For if it can happen that someone in his sleep, by a deceiving memory, remembers that he was something he was not, or did something he did not do, what wonder is it if, by some just and hidden judgement of God, the demons are permitted to have such power in the hearts of men?" Thus Augustine. For the same reason, as Iohan. Nider [Johannes Nider] says, these things are fictions and merely imaginary when certain women say that at the Ember days [*in quatuor temporibus*] they see, in a rapture, the souls in purgatory, and many other phantasms besides. I have inserted all this here in order to remove the false opinion of these common people, who attribute what

the Church does out of pious custom, and turn it into superstitious opinions. But as for its having seemed to her so ardently that a man was having intercourse with her, and with such great concupiscence — this, I say, can be procured by an incubus demon, as Saint Thomas proves in the *prima pars*, q. II. artic. 3. ad sextum, where he cites Augustine, *de civitate Dei* 15, who says: "Many affirm that they have found by their own experience, or have heard from those who have, that sylvans and fauns — whom the common people call incubi — have often behaved shamelessly toward women, and have sought intercourse with them and carried it through." To deny this therefore looks like impudence. And further on: if, nevertheless, from this intercourse of demons children are sometimes born, this is not by seed emitted by the demon, nor from the bodies it has assumed, but by the seed of some man taken for this purpose — inasmuch as the same demon that is a succubus to the man becomes an incubus to the woman, just as demons also take up the seeds of other things for the generation of certain things, as Augustine says in *de Trinitate* 3. And so the one who is born is not the son of the demon, but of that man whose seed was taken.

QVOD PVLSATIO SIGNORUM SIUE CAMPANARUM IN NOCTE SANCTÆ AGATHÆ, NON AD EUITANDUM HAS SORTILEGAS & MALEFICAS FIT, VT QUIDAM FATUÈ INTELLIGUNT, SED ALIJS DE CAUSIS. — THAT THE RINGING OF THE *signa*, THAT IS, OF THE BELLS, ON THE NIGHT OF ST. AGATHA IS NOT DONE TO WARD OFF THESE *sortilegae* AND *maleficae*, AS SOME FOOLISHLY UNDERSTAND IT, BUT FOR OTHER REASONS.

There are some who hold that the ringing of the bells on the night of St. Agatha as well is done on account of *maleficae* of this same kind, and because on that night in particular they roam abroad, as has been said. But this is false and superstitious. That ringing is done out of devotion to St. Agatha, on account of the miracle worked at the eruption of Mount Etna in Sicily. Seeing it, even the pagans ran together to Agatha's tomb, drew out her veil from there, and held it up in the face of the fire that had broken out — and it miraculously stopped. That is why in some churches that have a devotion to her the bells are rung.

QVOD SVPERSTITIOSI SVNT QUI CREDUNT QUOSDAM DIES SANCTORUM ALIQUORUM ESSE INFORTUNATOS & PERICULOSOS, SIMILITER PONENTES QUOSDAM DIES ESSE ÆGYPTIACOS INFAUSTOS & PERICULOSOS. — THAT THOSE ARE SUPERSTITIOUS WHO BELIEVE THAT CERTAIN DAYS OF CERTAIN SAINTS ARE UNLUCKY AND DANGEROUS, AND LIKEWISE THOSE WHO HOLD THAT CERTAIN DAYS ARE EGYPTIAN DAYS, ILL-OMENED AND DANGEROUS.

Thirdly, those are superstitious who say and believe that certain days are unlucky,

ill-omened and dangerous — the Egyptian days, for instance — as is found in the decrees at 26. q. 7. *non obseruetis*. They are called Egyptian days either because it was on those days that Egypt was struck and plagued, or because the Egyptians were the first to work out which days were to be guarded against as ill-omened. So too the day of the holy martyrs John and Paul, and the day of blessed Martial; and also the day of the Holy Innocents. And so they say that they observe such days as pestilential and unlucky for beginning anything, because of the outcomes and dangers that regularly overtake those who begin some work, or a journey, or anything else on such a day. But this is empty and superstitious.

QVOD OBSERVATIO PRÆDICTORUM DIERUM EST CONTRA RATIONEM NATURALEM ASTROLOGICAM & THEOLOGICAM. — THAT THE OBSERVANCE OF THESE DAYS IS CONTRARY TO NATURAL, ASTROLOGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL REASON.

For this observance would have to be proved either by some astrological reason, or by a natural one, or by a theological one. But none of these is a sufficient ground for laying it down, nor are they all together. Therefore such an observance is empty and to be rejected. The astrological case is proved as follows. If this observance of days is put to the astrologers, they will answer that it runs contrary to their own rules and principles, since astrologers vary their judgements

according to the varying position of the stars, so that no uniform perpetual almanac can be drawn up. Monday [*dies Lunae*], for example, which at present is ill-disposed or ill-omened by their rules — even if their rules should be true, in the following week it will be of another disposition.

QVOD IN HIS QVÆ CONCERNUNT ARBITRIJ LIBERTATEM ASTRA NON IMPO-
NUNT NECESSITATEM. — THAT IN MATTERS CONCERNING FREEDOM OF THE WILL
THE STARS IMPOSE NO NECESSITY.

Note above all that in matters concerning freedom of the will the stars impose no necessity, following Ptolemy's saying that the wise man will rule the stars. This argument is regularly and effectively brought against the marking found in calendars, of Egyptian or dangerous days according to the disposition of the stars occurring at the several seasons of the year. But to hold that the days of the saints named above, or the day of the translation of blessed Martin — which the common people say is always dangerous, calling it in their mountain or Basque tongue *Iando ne Martie erroya*, which understood in Latin comes to the same as *sanctus Martinus corruus*, "Saint Martin the crow" — to hold this is superstitious, because the matter must not be judged by what belongs to it *per accidens*, but by what belongs to it *per se*. That such a feast falls on such a day is *per accidens*; for such a feast

could fall on another day that is holy and well-starred.

PONIT CONCLVSIONES THEOLOGICAS CONTRA OBSERVATIONEM HUIUS-
MODI DIERUM. — HE SETS DOWN THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS AGAINST THE
OBSERVANCE OF DAYS OF THIS KIND.

Next, the theological argument would be made from the topic of authority, in this way. In any one art the expert is to be believed rather than the untrained or those ignorant in that science, who neither understand it nor assent to it. For it is Gregory's judgement that it is presumption to want to teach someone more learned than oneself. It is one thing to chatter about whatever comes into the imagination; it is another to deliver a discourse out of the sacred scriptures. The second stands firm, with the precision of the discipline behind it; the first slips away, with nothing solid in it. I would say this because there are certain wise men of this world who, when they see themselves honoured for some branch of knowledge — whether of the laws, or of canon law, or of worldly enterprise — and likewise certain untrained men, puffed up over their riches, open their mouths freely on subjects they know nothing about, such as theology and astrology, as though they would be ashamed to be ignorant of anything. Or sometimes, with greater madness still, what they do not recognize in themselves they despise in others as superfluous and harmful, so that the things which are useful may not be seen at all know at all. For a great part of knowledge, as Jerome says, is to know what you do not know; and it is in the end a mark of great madness to lay claim to knowledge in that fashion [?]. Let each man,

then, be content with the limits of his own competence, and not snap at in others what he is himself entirely ignorant of.

QVOD OMNES DIES ANNI BONI SUNT, & OMNI ANNO, & OMNI DIE, & OMNI HORA DIEI BONUM & LAUDABILE EST OPERA QUALIBET SANCTA, LICITA & HONESTA INCHOARE. — THAT ALL THE DAYS OF THE YEAR ARE GOOD, AND THAT IN EVERY YEAR, ON EVERY DAY, AND AT EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY IT IS GOOD AND PRAISEWORTHY TO BEGIN ANY HOLY, LAWFUL AND HONOURABLE WORK.

Now, then, let us prove theologically that the observance of these days is vain and superstitious. We shall do so by setting down a number of conclusions gathered from the Doctors, and chiefly from Master Iohannes Gerson [Jean Gerson]. The first of them runs as follows: all the days of the year are works of God the most high. This is clear from the text of sacred scripture at Gene. 1, where the works of the six days are set out through the whole chapter, and how the first of God's works were the days and the years. Now God the most high began to produce the first good out of what is good and best, and the creator of all things is the highest and the best; therefore all his works are good. Gen. 1: God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good. Therefore the days and the years, since they are his first

works, are good as well. The royal prophet David attests the same thing in the Psalm, when he says: *Yours is the day, and yours is the night; you made the dawn and the sun.* This is why the Church sings: *Eternal maker of the world, who governs night and day, and gives the seasons their seasons, to relieve our weariness.*

Second conclusion: the days of the year are good, and in every year, on every day and at every hour of the day it is good and praiseworthy to begin, to do, to carry out and to profess any holy, lawful and honourable work. Understand this to hold unless it is forbidden by a precept of God or of the Church — as certain kinds of laborious work are forbidden on feast days. The first part of this conclusion is clear from what was said in the preceding conclusion, since the days and the years are works of a goodness that is supreme and infinite. And it belongs to what is best to bring forth what is best. To say, then, that some day is evil by its own nature is to do injury to God, who is the maker of days and years; and a bad work convicts its maker of badness. The second part is clear, because just as the days and the years — and the hours of the day as well — proceed from God the creator, so too every holy, lawful and honourable work that is begun and completed on any day and at any hour is directed, begun and completed by the Lord. As the Lord says: *Without me you can do nothing.* And again: *All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made.*

From this it follows that it is a superstitious and vain religion [*Religio*], and deservedly to be rebuked, not to begin, to carry on, or to complete on particular years or days a good or holy work that the Church has not forbidden. This is expressly the mind of the Apostle, directed against people like those to whom he was writing at Gala. 4; and it is a text of Augustine, 25. q. 7. Quis, where he

takes the Galatians to task and rebukes them in these words: *You observe days and months and seasons and years*; and there follows: *But I am afraid for you, that I have perhaps laboured among you to no purpose* [*sine casu*] — preaching in accordance with the Catholic faith, which rejects all these things as superstitious and vain. Not, however, if such an observance of days is made out of reverence for the holiness of some solemn day, or out of devotion to one of the saints. But if such an observance is made on account of the dangerous outcomes that commonly befall those who are beginning some piece of work or some journey, then what they are seizing on is vain and superstitious, and has no reason behind it — for good things and bad alike occur on any day, at any hour of the day, and in any year. To this judgement one may fit

a certain Paris article, which Gerson sets down in the book on the errors concerning the magic art, and it is the 20th.

QVOD IMAGINES DE ÆRE, PLUMBO, VEL CERA ALBA VEL RUBEA, VEL ALIA MATERIA BAPTISATÆ, EXORCIZATÆ, IMÒ POTIÙS EXSECRATÆ PER ARTES MAGICAS, & QUÒD SUB DIEBUS CERTIS HABEANT VIRTUTES MIRABILES, QUÆ IN LIBRIS TALIAM ARTIUM RECITANTUR, ERROR NON EST CONTRA FIDEM. — THAT IMAGES MADE OF BRONZE, OF LEAD, OR OF WHITE OR RED WAX, OR OF OTHER MATERIAL BAPTIZED AND EXORCIZED — OR RATHER EXECRATED — BY THE MAGIC ARTS, AND THAT ON CERTAIN DAYS THEY POSSESS THE WONDROUS POWERS RECITED IN THE BOOKS OF SUCH ARTS: THAT THIS IS NOT AN ERROR AGAINST THE FAITH.

That images of bronze, or of lead, or of gold, or of white or red wax, or other materials baptized, or exorcized and consecrated — or rather execrated — by the arts of the magicians, should possess on certain days the wondrous powers that are recited in the books of such arts: Error. Error in faith, in natural philosophy, and in true astrology. Artic. 21: that to use such things and to give them credence is not idolatry and unbelief: Error.

It should be noted, however, that in the case of astronomical images — those made at set times, with the planets standing in certain determined places of the heaven — St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas] raises a difficulty at *secunda secundæ* q. 96. art. 2. argu. 2: whether it is unlawful to make such images, or to use them to alter bodies, for instance for health or something of that kind. For, as Master Robertus Holkot [Robert Holcot] reports on the books of *Sapien.*, ch. 14, lecture 160 — in his own day a certain man in London was said to have been cured of a quartan fever by a golden image of a lion made under a particular constellation. Holcot says that it is difficult to say whether this is true, given the wondrous operations of the heavenly bodies; for this much is certain, he says, that nothing of this kind is unlawful which nature is able to accomplish. But the answer is given from St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas], in the book, question, article and passage already cited [libr. q. art. & loco praeallegatis], where the holy Doctor cites blessed Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei* 10, to the effect that Porphyry's opinion about the construction of such images was false.

It is indeed true that natural things derive their forms and their powers from the heavenly bodies. But artificial images can derive no power from the art that makes them, and can have no power other than the one they possess by reason of their matter; shape is not a principle of alteration. The gold of such an image therefore has no different power of causing an effect than any other gold of another shape. And if it does produce some further effect, that comes from the operation of demons, who — according to Augustine — are the mockers of men. So images made astronomically obtain their power through a demon, and the sign of this is that certain characters [characteres] must [?] be imprinted on those images, since of themselves they have no natural operation at all.

From this it should be understood that astronomical images and necromantic images [imagines nigromanticae] differ in this: in the making of necromantic images certain express invocations of demons are performed, so that such images belong to express pacts entered into with demons. But in the making practised by the astronomers there are tacit pacts with demons, by means of certain characters and figures devised by the demons themselves; and in return for the making of those characters the demons lend their support to the makers. So much from St Thomas, in the place cited above. From this it appears expressly that such images and characters have their effect from the operation of demons, and that the use of characters and of all figures (the figure of the cross excepted), the invocation of unknown names, the tying of Gospel-slips [schedulae] around the neck of the sufferer along with the rest of the conditions, and many such things, belong to superstition, according to Augustine.

And they are certain relics of idolatry; but we shall speak below about these little papers [chartulae] tied around the neck.

QVOD INIENTES PACTVM CUM DÆMONIBUS TACITUM VEL EXPRESSUM, SUNT IDOLATRÆ, HÆRETICI, & ALIENI À CATHOLICA FIDE. — THAT THOSE WHO ENTER INTO A PACT WITH DEMONS, WHETHER TACIT OR EXPRESS, ARE IDOLATERS, HERETICS, AND STRANGERS TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

Third conclusion. Just as the true and Christian faith works wonders in those who believe rightly, so also a false and evil credulity — God permitting — sometimes brings about evil outcomes, or rather earns them as its due. The Apostle develops the first part at length, with examples, in Hebrews II; and the Gospels themselves say a great deal about the power of faith. The remaining part of the conclusion is borne out daily in the badly credulous and the superstitious, whom God punishes in just this way for their bad faith. Indeed, when the Lord recognizes that someone is clinging too closely to certain empty observances [vanae obseruantiae], he permits certain outcomes to happen. And so they come to be confirmed all the more firmly in such an opinion, so that their blindness grows greater and they fall into the snare they have set for themselves. Through these things, then, comes sin: men are deceived through the cooperations of demons, on account of the false credulity that went before. And so those who

observe such things meet with many misfortunes because of their false belief — misfortunes that others, who pay no attention to such things, in no way suffer.

QVOD OBSERVANTES DIES & ANNOS PER SUAM FALSAM IMAGINATIONEM QUICQUID MALI EUENERIT, IMPUTANT AUGURIANTES MALITIÆ DIEI & ANNI. — THAT THOSE WHO OBSERVE DAYS AND YEARS, OUT OF THEIR OWN FALSE IMAGINATION, TAKE AUGURIES AND IMPUTE WHATEVER EVIL HAS HAPPENED TO THE MALICE OF THE DAY AND OF THE YEAR.

Furthermore, when the imagination of such people — those who observe days and years — is hemmed in too narrowly about days of this kind, they turn augurers and impute whatever evil has happened to the malice of the day. For example: a man is thrown from an unbridled and untamed horse on a slippery road, or is drowned in a river; and ordinary people, as soon as they hear of it, will assign the causes of a misfortune of this kind in all sorts of ways — causes that are in no way the causes of what happened. One will say that as he left the house he had a cat, or a hare [habuerit vnum catum, vel leporem]; or that on going out of the house he had stubbed his foot; or that in the morning he had put his shirt on inside out; or that the right shoe had been taken for the left — a sign that Caesar Augustus reckoned most ill-omened. To all these things and to what follows, together with countless other superstitions, that Spanish people of the province of Lusitania, commonly called Andaluzia, clings above all with false credulity (for they are exceedingly superstitious beyond all the other peoples of Spain). Hence someone says one of them will say, "I had dreamed it so." A raven was croaking on the roof, or an owl had flown over screeching — the omen that Lucius Sylla [Sulla] took as foretelling his own death, as Appianus [Appian] says in *De bello ciuili* — or a cock had crowed out of its hour. Or if magpies chatter, the arrival of guests is signified. Another will say, "There you are: it was a bad day, an unlucky one, a sick one." Another will say that the moon was in its fourth day, or its third; or that the sun at its rising was wrapped in cloud and went pale; or that a falling star had flashed through the air. Or, as one reads in the Comic poet: it came into the house — a strange cat; a snake fell through the impluvium; a hen fell off the roof-tiles. Blessed Augustine speaks at length in condemnation of such things (*August. 2. de doctrina Christiana, c. 2.*), saying that observances of this kind are superstitious — as when some people see their boots being gnawed by mice and take fright, fearing some misfortune to come.

Hence we read that Cato laughed at a man who reported to him, as a marvellous sign of misfortune, that his boots had been gnawed through by mice. "It is certainly no marvel," he said; "it would have been a marvel if the boots had gnawed the mice."

To this class belongs the man who gets out of bed and goes back to it because he sneezed before he could get his shoes on. So too when a man with the hiccups is told to hold the thumb of his left hand

in his right hand; or — as I confess I have seen myself — when some hold their chin in their right hand for as long as the Gospel is being sung, and others hold the right foot raised, one man doing this and another that. Again, it is taken for a bad sign if, when two friends are walking together, a boy runs between them, or some other animal: the reckoning is that their friendship is due to be broken up. It is much the same to turn back home if a man stumbles as soon as he sets out; and Augustine recites many such foolish observances in the same place. Like these two is the practice of hunters, who, if they meet friars or priests on their way to the hunt, give up all confidence in the hunt for that day. Since, then, significations of this kind are not instituted by God, the Doctors say that observations of signs like these have been introduced by human vanity with the malice of demons cooperating in it — demons who delight in entangling people in vanities and errors. And sometimes it has happened by chance that such an outcome did follow such a sign; but afterwards, once people had begun to indulge in these things, much followed through the cooperation of demons, so that they might become still more addicted to such curious practices and be bound over more tightly to superstitions of the kind.

Since, then, there can be no reason at all why an encounter with holy men should hinder a hunt

— seeing that hunting, at least when it is lawful and is practised lawfully by suitable persons, is a legitimate thing — it is plain that this and the rest are superstitious, mistaken and empty. It would take too long to go through them all. By them foolish and common people are deceived and deceive others, treating their experience as though it were certain and building on it wicked and false fabrications; and they never look at the things that turned out well and prosperously on such a day. Indeed their imagination is so taken up with a few less-than-good outcomes that it cannot be turned toward the other good things that occur on that same day.

QVOD MERITO PERMITTIT DEUS TALES AUGURES & SUPERSTITIOSOS DECIPI, & IN LAQUEUM SUÆ VANÆ INCREDULITATIS INCIDERE. — THAT GOD JUSTLY PERMITS SUCH AUGURERS AND SUPERSTITIOUS PEOPLE TO BE DECEIVED, AND TO FALL INTO THE SNARE OF THEIR OWN VAIN UNBELIEF.

Hence God justly permits such people to be deceived and to fall into the snare of their own false credulity, since they are hateful to God, as is written in *Psalms*. 3.: "You have hated those who observe vanities to no purpose." On this Nicol. de Lyra [Nicholas of Lyra] comments: by dreams, auguries and the like, through the observance of which some hope to escape dangers and tribulations — but they observe to no purpose, because such observance is useless and harmful, being superstitious. These are his words.

QVOD OBSERVATORES DIEI SANCTI VINCENTIJ, & CONVERSIONIS SANCTI PAULI, SUNT VANI & SUPERSTITIOSI CUM SUIS INEPTIS VERSIBUS, QUIBUS DICUNT: VINCENTI FESTO, &C. ET CLARA DIES PAULI. — THAT THOSE WHO OBSERVE THE DAY OF ST VINCENT AND OF THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL ARE VAIN AND SUPERSTITIOUS, WITH THEIR SILLY VERSES, IN WHICH THEY SAY: "VINCENTI FESTO," ETC., AND "ET CLARA DIES PAULI."

From all of this we can infer that those who observe the days of St Vincent and of the Conversion of St Paul are vain and superstitious, with their silly verses, in which they say:

Vincenti festo, si sol radiet, memor esto, Para tuas cuppas, quia multas colligis vuas.

On Vincent's feast, if the sun shines out, remember: get your vats ready, for you will gather many grapes.

And further:

Clara dies Pauli, multas segetes notat anni, Si fuerint nebulae, aut venti, erunt praelia genti.

A clear day of Paul marks many harvests for the year; if there are mists, or winds, there will be battles for the people.

This cannot stand: it can be proved neither by natural reasoning, nor by theological, nor by astrological, as was said above. For that the sun shone on that day, or that there were mists or winds, stands only *per accidens* [de peraccidens] to there being a larger vintage that year, or animals dying, or battles breaking out. These things happen not because of such a feast day, but rather from the divine will. Indeed we often see the contrary to be the surer thing.

QVOD STERILITAS FRVCTUUM & ANIMALIUM, & QUOD PRÆLIA VIGEANT, NON ACCIDIT À DISPOSITIONE QUORUNDAM DIERUM, SED À DISPOSITIONE NATURÆ, & POTIUS À VOLUNTATE DIUINA EFFECTIVÆ VEL PERMISSIVÆ. — THAT THE BARRENNESS OF CROPS AND OF ANIMALS, AND THE FACT THAT WARS ARE RIFE, DOES NOT COME ABOUT FROM THE DISPOSITION OF CERTAIN DAYS, BUT FROM THE DISPOSITION OF NATURE, AND STILL MORE FROM THE DIVINE WILL, WHETHER EFFECTIVE OR PERMISSIVE.

That the death of livestock, or the abundance or barrenness of the seed-crops, comes from the divine will as from a higher cause — and comes on account of sins — is clear from Joel 1, where, because of the people's sins, it is said: "The granaries are laid waste, the storehouses are ruined, the wheat is confounded. The beast has groaned, the herds of cattle have lowed because there is no pasture for them, and the flocks of sheep too have perished." And in Haggai 1: "Set your hearts upon your ways, says the Lord. You have sown much and gathered little. You have eaten and are not filled. You have drunk and are not drunk" — and further on — "You looked for more, and see, it came to less; and you brought it into the house, and I blew it away. For this reason," he says, "the heavens over you have been held back from giving dew, and the earth has

been held back from giving its produce; and I called a drought upon the land and upon the mountains, and upon the wheat and the wine and the oil, and whatever the ground brings forth, and upon men

and cattle, and upon all the labour of your hands.” And in chapter 2 he says: “I struck you with a scorching wind and with mildew, and all the works of your hands; and there was no one among you who turned back to me.” These things also come about from the constellation of the heavens, which exert their influence in different ways according as we serve God or do not. Hence Leviticus 26: “If you do not carry out my commandments, I will give you a sky of iron above you and an earth of bronze, and your labour will be spent for nothing. But if you walk in my precepts, I will give you rains in their seasons, and the earth will bring forth its produce.” But of the good things that come from God on account of conversion and penitence, Joel 2 says: “The Lord was jealous for his land and spared his people”; and he says: “See, I will send you grain, wine and oil, and you will be filled with them. And I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.”

QVOD VICTORIA BELLI NON DIEI, SED SOLI DEO ATTRIBUENDA EST. —
THAT THE VICTORY OF A BATTLE IS TO BE ATTRIBUTED NOT TO THE DAY, BUT TO GOD ALONE.

As for battles — how they happen as a punishment for sins, and how they come from a good and just God for vengeance on evildoers and for the patience of the good — it would take long to set out, since the whole of sacred Scripture is full of it. And so, even though many wars

are stirred up by evil men, or by the prince of darkness, and are permitted by God, it is nevertheless clear that the victory of a battle is to be attributed not to the day, but to God alone. To attribute so great a work — victory — to the day is to take away the honour owed to God, whose it is to conquer. That victory belongs to God alone is found in many places of sacred Scripture — for example in the books of Joshua, Judges, Kings, Chronicles [Paralipomenon], and Maccabees. Solomon bears witness to it in Proverbs, chapter 21, saying: “The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the Lord will grant deliverance.” Hence it is that the most devout king David, whenever he was about to fight, is recorded to have sought and called upon the help of God. Hence too the common proverb: *Los hombres hazen laguerra, idios la victoria* — that is, men make war, and God makes the victory.

From all this it is concluded that the observance of days for the purpose of producing some effect which cannot reasonably be expected either from God working miraculously or from natural causes must be held among Christians to be superstitious, and suspect of a secret pact, implicit or explicit, with demons. This is the teaching of the holy Doctors, and especially of Augustine in many places, where he strongly condemned these observances — as in *De ciuitate Dei* 5, *Confessionum* 4,

De doctrina Christiana 2; and many of them are set out in the *Decretum* [in decretis], 26. q. 5. & q. 7., in several chapters.

QVOD SVPERSTITIOSÆ SUNT QUÆDAM MULIERCULÆ, AFFIGENTES HUMERIS PARUULORUM SPECULA VEL FRUSTULA CORIJ VULPIS VEL MELOTÆ, NE INFICIANTUR AB OCULIS VETULARUM. — THAT CERTAIN SILLY WOMEN ARE SUPERSTITIOUS WHO FASTEN TO THE SHOULDERS OF LITTLE CHILDREN SMALL MIRRORS, OR SCRAPS OF THE HIDE OF A FOX OR OF A BADGER [MELOTA], SO THAT THE CHILDREN MAY NOT BE TAINTED BY THE EYES OF OLD WOMEN [VETULÆ].

In the same way, certain women are superstitious who fasten to the shoulders of little children some fragments of mirrors, or scraps or little patches cut from the hide of a fox or of a badger, believing that by this such children will not be tainted by the eyes of women who work *maleficium* [maleficæ]. This is empty and superstitious, and rests on no reason at all, natural, astrological, or theological, as was said above.

QVOD PVERI REALITER POSSUNT FASCINARI, HOC EST À MALO OCULO INFICI, SED QUALE REMEDIUM SIT ADHIBENDUM. — THAT CHILDREN REALLY CAN BE BEWITCHED [FASCINARI] — THAT IS, TAINTED BY THE EVIL EYE — BUT WHAT REMEDY IS TO BE APPLIED.

That little children can be bewitched, that is, tainted by the evil eye and injured by it, is held by St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas], 1. part. q. 118. art. 3. ad 3., where he says that by a strong mental image the spirits of the body joined to it are altered, and that this alteration of the spirits occurs most of all in the eyes in the eyes, which the more subtle spirits reach; and the eyes then taint the air, continuously, up to a fixed distance. It works in the way that mirrors, if they are new and clean, take on a certain impurity from the gaze of a menstruating woman, as Aristotle says in the book *de somno & vigilia*. So then, when a soul has been violently stirred toward malice — as happens most of all in old women [vetulæ] — that soul's gaze becomes, in the manner just described, poisonous and harmful, and harmful above all to children, who have a tender body and readily take in impressions of such things. It is also possible that, by God's permission, or else through some hidden deed, the malice of demons cooperates in this — demons with whom old women who practise sortilege [vetulæ sortilegæ] have some pact. These are his words.

But on Galatians 3, on the text "who has bewitched you [quis vos fascinavit] not to obey the truth," the Gloss [glo.] says that certain people have burning eyes and by their look alone taint others, and children most of all. Petrus de Tarantasia [Pierre de Tarentaise] says the same on the same passage: "There are some," he says, "who have burning eyes, and who injure tender little children by looking at them, so that they throw their food up out of the stomach and suffer nausea; and this is possible according to nature. For a soul strongly affected alters the eyes."

The altered eye alters the air; the air alters the tender flesh of the child, and so injures it."

Even so, no incantation [incantatio] or superstitious practice is to be performed to get rid of it, as women frequently do. Certain sacred words may be taken up instead, such as these: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man may do to me," or the Lord's Prayer, with the sign of the cross, and so on. It is therefore dangerous to fix one's faith and belief on incantations of that sort, which take away all judgement and all reasoning to the contrary. So God deservedly allows such people to be deceived and to fall into the snare of their own false credulity, as has been said.

PONIT QVADAM SVPERSTITIONES, VT PER ILLAS INTELLIGERE POSSUMUS INNUMERAS ALIAS. — HE SETS DOWN CERTAIN SUPERSTITIONS, SO THAT THROUGH THEM WE MAY UNDERSTAND INNUMERABLE OTHERS.

There are other superstitions beyond counting, and particular ones, by which the ancient enemy strives daily to draw the human race to himself. For instance, fastening *actus* [?] and *spintera* — clasps or brooches — to a certain tree beside the church of St Christopher, which stands on a high mountain near our city of Pamp. [Pamplona], in the belief that by doing so they will suffer no headache for the whole year following: this is empty and superstitious and rests on no reason at all. In the same way, for girls to hang their own hair in front of the image of St Urban in our cloister, believing that by this their hair cannot fall out, or is bound to grow more beautiful, or anything else of the kind, is empty and superstitious.

But how piously and religiously one of our brother canons acted — a man who has now departed this life! Loathing the superstition of the thing, one night after matins he put the flame of the candle he was carrying in his hand to them, and burned nearly all of them.

Superstitious in the same way is a practice emptily observed almost everywhere in this country of ours. When a woman is close to giving birth, they take the belt or girdle she wears and hurry with it to the church; they wind that girdle or belt around the bell [cymbalum] as best they can, and, striking the bell three times, they believe that its sound has power to bring about a prosperous delivery. That is superstitious and empty. For the bell's sounding three times is rather so that everyone who hears it may pray devoutly for the woman in labour, who is close to danger, offering the Angelic Salutation three times to the Blessed Virgin, so that she who was untouched and free from such pain, as she was from all sin, may free such a woman from the danger of that hour.

QVOD SVPERSTITIOSÆ SUNT QUÆDAM VETULÆ AFFIGENTES SCHEDULAS, SIUE NOMINA VULGARITER NUNCUPATA CONTRA FEBRES, CUM QUIBUSDAM VANIS OBSERVATIONIBUS. — THAT CERTAIN OLD WOMEN [VETULÆ] ARE SUPERSTITIOUS WHO ATTACH CHARM-SLIPS [SCHEDULÆ] — OR WHAT ARE COMMONLY CALLED "NAMES" — AGAINST FEVERS, TOGETHER WITH CERTAIN EMPTY OBSERVANCES.

In the same way, certain old women are superstitious who attach little written slips [chartulæ], or what are commonly called "names," even with Catholic words on them; but they say these do no good unless they are written on virgin parchment [charta virginea] and hung facing the sun with three threads twisted by the hands of some virgin girl named Maria. And they say this is worth nothing to the person it is tied to, or to whom they have given some herb to eat for curing fevers, unless he receives it facing the sun as it rises, on bended knees — as I remember a certain old woman telling me more than once when I was down with fever. This, I say, is superstitious and empty and devoid of all reason. For, as Ioh. Gerson [Jean Gerson] says, what else do such traditions amount to: let them write this on virgin parchment; let it be carried in a triangular shape, with unknown characters [characteres]; let it be censed and hung about the neck; and let all this be done at set hours; then within three days, or before three days are out, that effect we are looking for will come about beyond doubt. Indeed, this...

is asserted at the peril of one's head, that practice is superstitious and diabolical. Hence Augustine — and the passage is found at 28. q. 2. c. illud — where he says that all ligatures [ligaturæ] and remedies which the discipline of medicine condemns belong to superstition: whatever the objects may be that are hung on and bound to a person.

QVOD VERBA SANCTA ET RELIQUIAS POSSUMUS SUSPENDERE IN COLLO, & PER EASDEM BENEDICERE INFIRMOS HOMINES, VEL IUMENTA, SERUATIS QUINQUE CONDITIONIBUS. — THAT WE MAY HANG HOLY WORDS AND RELICS AT THE NECK, AND BY THEM BLESS SICK PEOPLE OR BEASTS OF BURDEN, PROVIDED FIVE CONDITIONS ARE OBSERVED.

That holy words may be fastened at the neck, and may bless sick people or beasts of burden — whether written charms [carmina scripta] or sacred words — and that it is licit to carry and wear them on one's person: this I can [show] from St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas] 2.2.q.96.art.4, provided five conditions are observed.

The first: that they take care the words contain nothing belonging to invocations of demons, whether express or implied.

The second: that they contain no unknown names, since according to Chrysostom such things are to be feared, in case something superstitious lies hidden in them.

The third: that the substance of the words contain nothing false, since in that case its effect could not be looked for from God, who is no witness to falsehood.

The fourth: that nothing empty be contained there, such as characters [characteres] written apart from the sign of the cross.

The fifth: that no hope be placed in the manner of the writing or of the binding, or in any such empty thing as has nothing to do with reverence toward God — for otherwise it would be judged superstitious. Hence it is said in the decrees [in decretis] at 26. q.6. that one may attend to nothing but the divine creed, or the Lord's Prayer, so that only the Creator and God of all may be honoured.

Besides these five conditions, Ioannes Nider [Johannes Nider] lays down two others in his *Praeceptorium*, at the first precept, c.ii.[?] The first of them is that, in citing, uttering, or writing divine words, regard be had only to the sacred words themselves, to their meaning, and to reverence — that is, to the divine power from which the effect is looked for — or else to holy relics, through which too the things just named are looked for secondarily, though principally from God. The second is that the effect one hopes for be committed to the divine will, which knows whether such health will profit the one who calls upon him more or less, or whether it will do him harm. This condition, he says, is laid down by St Thomas in the *prima*. 2. on the matter of grace, and in book 4, distinction 15 [in 4. distinct.15.]: so that if none of these seven conditions is present in the practice, it will be illicit.

What has just been said is proved by that passage at the end of Mark, where Christ says: "These signs will follow those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will take up serpents."

Again, the words of God are of no less holiness than the relics of the saints, as Augustine says: "The word of God is no less than the body of Christ." But on everyone's account it is permitted to carry relics of the saints reverently on one's person. Therefore, in whatever way the name of God is duly invoked — through the Lord's Prayer, through the Angelic Salutation, or in any other licit manner — hope may be placed in it, provided one commits the effect to the divine will.

QVOD PER DIVINA VERBA LICITUM EST ARCERE LUPOS, SERPENTES, & LOCUSTAS, & ALIA HUIUSMODI, & QUOMODO HOC LICITÈ FIAT, & QUOMODO ILLICITÈ. — THAT BY DIVINE WORDS IT IS LICIT TO DRIVE OFF WOLVES, SERPENTS, LOCUSTS AND OTHER SUCH CREATURES; AND HOW THIS MAY BE DONE LICITLY, AND HOW ILLICITLY.

From all this the holy Doctor says — at 2.2. in the place cited above, and also in Quodlibet 12, art. 14 — that once the conditions set out have been observed, it is licit to drive off serpents by divine words, and by the same reasoning any animals whatever, provided the only regard had is to the sacred words and to the divine power. With those conditions observed, I say likewise that a conjuration [coniuratio] may licitly be made against wolves, to keep them from carrying off or preying on flocks and other animals. Likewise against lo-

—cists, and against mice that lay waste the fruits of the earth — provided that in doing so they say, teach, or do nothing superstitious, as Guilhelmus Lugdun. says.

So if the question is raised whether it is permitted to adjure an irrational creature, St Thomas answers at 2.2.q.90. that it is — by way of a conclusion [per modum conclusionis], which must then be referred to the devil, who uses irrational creatures to our harm; and this manner of adjuring is found in the Church's exorcisms, by which the power of demons is shut out from irrational creatures. For if the intention were directed to the irrational creature in itself, which understands nothing, it would be empty. This is also how we are to understand what is written at Genesis 3, that the serpent was more cunning than all living things: that cunning is to be referred principally to the demon who appeared in the serpent, and is referred to the serpent only in so far as it was being driven by the demon's cunning — just as some man's tongue is called learned, because it is moved with judgement by the intellect. Hence what follows: "And the Lord said to the serpent" — the gloss: that is, to the devil who lay hidden and spoke in the serpent; so it is in the serpent that he is cursed. We can therefore adjure demons in irrational creatures by the power of the divine name, and drive them off as enemies, so that they do not harm us, either spiritually or bodily, according to the power given by Christ at Luke 10: "Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you." This holds provided we use only licit words and adjurations — such as by the passion and cross of Christ and the like — in the way we read that Simon and Jude adjured dragons and commanded them to go off into a deserted place.

But if any useless words and superstitious practices are mixed in with the holy words — as these charmers [incantatores] of horses and draught animals do, hanging up a certain worm and watching for the day of the waxing or waning moon — then those who do such things are to be forbidden, according to the Apostle's word at I. ad Thess. 5.: "Abstain from all appearance of evil"; and *extra, de vita & honest. cler. cum ab omni.*

QVOD DAMNABILIS ET IGNI TRADENDUS EST QUIDAM LIBELLUS CONIURATORIVS, QUI IN ALIQUIBUS ECCLESIIJS REPERITUR PROPTER VERBA SUSPECTA & MANIFESTA MENDACIA, QUÆ IN EO CONTINENTUR & APPARENT. — THAT A CERTAIN CONJURING-BOOK [LIBELLUS CONIURATORIVS], WHICH IS FOUND IN SOME CHURCHES, IS DAMNABLE AND TO BE GIVEN TO THE FIRE, ON ACCOUNT OF THE SUSPECT WORDS AND MANIFEST LIES THAT IT CONTAINS AND DISPLAYS.

From what has been said it appears that a certain conjuring-book against storms is likewise damnable and to be given to the fire, along with any others like

it that may be found. I have one in my own keeping, which I came upon in a parish during my visitation, and it begins like this:

*In nomine domini nostri Iesu Christi ad saluandum fructus terræ †
Christi † Christi, sed fortiter descendisti ad terram, &c.*

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to save the fruits of the earth
† Christi † Christi, but you came down mightily to the earth, etc."

For in truth, in among good invocations it contains a great many suspect and scandalous words — words that involve an invocation of demons, either expressed or implied, and so run against the first condition set out above from St Thomas; obscure, suspect and unknown words, against the second; words that contain a falsehood, against the third; and so on with the rest. This little book is almost entirely full of such superstitions and lies. On its second leaf, for instance, it says:

Dominus dicit, pax in cælo, pax in terra, pax sit in isto, alleon, irastem, drachon, salus tibi Deus magnus, Deus mirabilis.

"The Lord says: peace in heaven, peace on earth, peace be in this one, *alleon, irastem, drachon*, salvation to you, great God, wonderful God."

And further down:

Coniuro te, alligo te per ælim, per olin, & per saboan, per ælion, per adonay, per alleluia, per tanti, per archabulon, per tetragrammaton, per mare, per mundum, per crura, per tibias, &c.

"I conjure you, I bind you by *ælim*, by *olin*, and by *saboan*, by *ælion*, by *adonay*, by *alleluia*, by *tanti*, by *archabulon*, by *tetragrammaton*, by the sea, by the world, by the legs, by the shins, etc."

And further down again:

Sed sitis alligati & constricti per ista sancta nomina Dei Alleluia, hir, ælli, habet, sat, mi, filisgiæ, adrotij gundi, tat, chamiteram, dá[?], yrida, sat, sathan. de 70. DEVS Agnus,

"But may you be bound and constrained by these holy names of God: *Alleluia, hir, ælli, habet, sat, mi, filisgiæ, adrotij gundi, tat, chamiteram, dá[?], yrida, sat, sathan. de 70. GOD, Lamb, omnipotens, Iesus Christus, aquila, &c.* almighty, Jesus Christ, eagle, etc."

Now I ask what those names are supposed to mean — *alleon, irastem*, and *drachon*, and *satan*, and the rest — set in among the blessed name Jesus, and *Adonay*, and *tetragrammaton*. For according to the Apostle at 2. ad Cor. 6.: "There is no fellowship of light with darkness, nor of Christ with Belial." Does not Satan transform himself into an angel of light, as is said at 2. ad Cor. 11.?

There are still other names in this little book far more obscure and more suspect, which I pass over writing out, since I am hurrying on to a certain falsehood and manifest superstition near the end of the book, which runs like this:

Coniuro te sabella, quæ faciem habes mulieris & renes piscis, caput tenés in nubæ & pedes in mari, septem ventos baiulas, dæmonibus imperas. Adiuro te sabella per ista nomina per balestaco, per ariona, & adiuro vos ductores ventorum per Deum patrem, &c.

"I conjure you, *sabella*, you who have the face of a woman and the loins of a fish, holding your head *in nubæ* and your feet in the sea, you who carry the seven winds and command the demons. I adjure you, *sabella*, by these names, by *balestaco*, by *ariona*; and I adjure you, leaders of the winds, by God the Father, etc."

And further down:

Sabella sabella alta & excelsa, ventum validum contra illas, quas de terminis nostris eijciat.

"*Sabella, sabella*, high and lofty one, a strong wind against those, that it may cast them out of our bounds."

From all this it is clear that there is reason to fear, not only from these unknown words, that this text holds many suspect and scandalous words, but also that from the invocation of this monster *sabella* many things appear that are false and superstitious — indeed pernicious and offensive to pious ears. For as Augustine says in his book

contra mendacium, the most pernicious lie is the one that is told in matters belonging to the Christian religion. And a lie occurs when someone outwardly signifies the contrary of the truth. Now to adjure *sabella* is contrary to the truth — contrary, he says, not only to physical truth but to theological truth as well. That it is contrary to physical truth is plain. For nothing of the kind can be found among natural things, which are contained under fixed genera and determinate species. According to the Philosopher, 2. *de anima*: for all things that are constituted by nature there is a set limit and ratio of size and of growth, and this comes from the soul. So since each of the animals has its own proper species, its own quantity and its own operation, if this monster has its head in the clouds and its feet in the sea, so that it reaches from the sea all the way up to the clouds, then by the rule just stated it will not be numbered among natural things.

That any such thing should exist is also repugnant to theological truth, since everything created in the nature of things was created by God, and in so far as these things exist they are good. Genesis 1: "God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good." Now the nature of the good consists in measure, species and order, which belong to the essential character of any species whatever, as St Thomas says in the first part, quæstio. 8. artic. 5., by way of measure is signified the determination, or the commensuration, of a thing's principles — whether of its matter or of the efficient causes that produce it. Form itself is signified by species, because it is through its form that each thing is constituted in a species; and from form there follows an inclination to an end, or to an action, or to something of that sort, and this belongs to order. So the character of the good, in so far as it consists in perfection, consists also in measure, species and order. That is to say: a thing is perfect and good, and for a thing created by God and natural or corporeal it is required that it have the principles of its essence [*principia essentia*] — that is, a determinate matter ordered to a determinate form, which gives the thing its being, by which it

is placed in a determinate species, and in consequence of which it has its own proper operation. But none of this is present in this monster *sabella*. Therefore there is no good in it, and consequently it is not from God.

This is clear because, in the same *quæstio*, where St Thomas brings in Augustine's book *de natura boni*, these three — measure, species and order — are as it were the general goods in the things God has made, so that where these three are great, the goods are great; where they are small, the goods are small; and where they are altogether absent, there is no good at all. Therefore no such monster among natural things is from God; nor will it be

God or an angel. Not God: it is a sacrilege to attribute such forms to God, since God is spirit, *Ioan. 4*. So, since it is blasphemy to attribute such a likeness to God, invoking God in this way would not be invoking him in spirit and in truth, but in manifest falsehood. Nor can a good angel be *sabella*, since there is nothing monstrous in a good angel; he is wholly most beautiful, both in his natural endowments and in those of grace [in naturalibus, & in gratuitis]. Nor do we ever read that an angel took on such monstrous forms — printed *menstruosas* [recte: *monstruosas*] — for his work. It remains, then, that such an invocation is addressed to the prince of the demons, since he can also command demons, as the Master says in *2. sententiarum, distin. 6. c. 4.*: "As long as the world lasts," he says, "angels are set over angels, demons over demons, and men over men."

It follows, therefore — on the score of the unknown names as much as on the falsity of this invocation of *sabella*, since these names are suspect and scandalous and, according to Chrysostom, to be avoided and guarded against — that wherever a conjuring-booklet [libellus coniurationis] of this kind is found, it is by law to be condemned and consigned to the fire as superstitious, suspect and scandalous. And if such names are said to be found among Hebrew names, we true Christians do not use terms of that sort in the Church. On the contrary, there is all the more reason to be

suspicious, since the Hebrews themselves are for the most part impious and workers of harmful magic [malefici]; and not only they, but also certain New Christians drawn from them and converted to the faith, who in great part have been found in Spain in our own times to be unbelievers, heretics and apostates from the faith.

We are not short of conjurations that are holy, upright, catholic and approved by provincial and synodal councils — the kind used in our own diocese, which are free of any suspicion and contain nothing that is not holy and catholic. Not one unknown name is to be found in them, but only the invocation of the most holy Trinity and of the saints. Nor is it an objection that the name of the Trinity is sometimes invoked, and that certain holy names are mixed in among these superstitions. For a great many things that are holy and upright are frequently found to be observed within the magic arts, within *sortilegia*, and within superstitions — fasting, for instance, keeping chaste, saying the *Pater noster* [Pat. no.] and the Gospel. For as Jean Gerson says in his prologue to the

Astrologia theologizata, superstition is the worse the more good things are mixed into it, since by the very means through which God ought to be honoured, the devil is honoured.

QVOD SVPERSTITIOSÆ, SUSPECTÆ & SCANDALOSÆ SUNT QUÆDAM SCHEDULÆ SINE NOMINE NUNCUPATÆ, DATÆ QUIBUSDAM SUPERSTITIOSIS QUARUM FORMA PONITUR. — THAT CERTAIN SLIPS [SCHEDULÆ] CALLED "WITHOUT A NAME", GIVEN TO CERTAIN SUPERSTITIOUS PEOPLE, ARE SUPERSTITIOUS, SUSPECT AND SCANDALOUS; AND THEIR FORM IS SET DOWN HERE.

In the same way, certain slips of paper [schedulæ] called "without a name" are superstitious, suspect and scandalous. They are handed out by certain superstitious people, and some of them have come into my hands, running as follows:

† on † coriscion † matatron Caladafon, Corobam, Ozcozo, Vriel,
vriel, Yosiel, yosiel, Michael, Azariel, Raphael, Daniel, Ya, Ya, Vba,
Adonay, Sabaoth, Heloim

— and others like them.

The reason is, first, the authority of Chrysostom, who says that we ought not to use unknown names, because such names are to be feared: something superstitious may lie hidden beneath them, as was said above. This is what Paul means when he said to his disciple, *prima ad Timoth. 8.*: "Avoid profane novelties of words." How sacred words may be carried [deferri], provided five conditions are kept, has been stated above. And if you say that these are Greek and sacred names, my answer is that we Latins, who do not know the Greek language, ought not to use them, because of the suspicion they carry. We are not short of terms in the Latin tongue, so that we should have to go looking for Greek and suspect terms in a matter of this kind.

For the same reason certain little briefs [breuiola] called "without a name" are to be rejected. They were handed out long ago against fevers by a certain rascally pardoner [nebulo quaestor], and their form was this:

Ananisapta ferit mortem quæ lædere quærit. Est mala mors capta
dū dicitur ananisapta. Ananisapta Dei, miserere mei, à signis cœli,
quæ timent gentes. Nolite timere, quia ego vobiscum sum, dicit
Dominus.

That is: "Ananisapta strikes the death that seeks to harm. The evil death is caught when *ananisapta* is said. Ananisapta of God, have mercy on me; from the signs of heaven, which the nations fear. Do not be afraid, for I am with you, says the Lord."

The falsity of it is plain from the very opening. Wherever this word *ananisapta* is found in the dictionaries [vocabularia], these two verses stand:

Ananisapta ferit morté, quæ lædere quærit. Est mala mors capta
dum dicitur ananisapta.

Now *ananisapta*, as Guarinus says, is interpreted "evil death", and each letter stands for one word, according to the following: *antidotum, nazareni, auferat*,

necem, intoxicationis, sanctificet, alimenta, pocula, trinitas, alma ["may the antidote of the Nazarene take away the death of poisoning; may the kindly Trinity sanctify our food and our cups"]. So the sense of the first verse is this: *Ananisapta*, that is, the evil death of Christ — evil in its own kind, or on the part of the Jews, precious on the part of God and in the fruit of the redemption — strikes death, that is, the devil, which seeks to harm. For Christ by dying destroyed our death. That first verse of the slips [*schedulæ*], then, agrees neither in the form of its words nor in its sense with

the true verse expounded here; on the contrary, its words and its sense are the opposite, as is plain to anyone who looks at it.

Those slips are suspect on the giver's side as well. For that man was an apostate from the Order of Friars Minor, going about preaching now in the habit of a canon regular, now in the habit of St Anthony. As it says in *Prouerbiorum* 6: "An apostate, a useless fellow, walks with a perverse mouth." From this it follows that any slips of this kind, handed out by men like him or by other uneducated people [*idiotæ*], ought first to be examined with great care by learned men.

Guilhelmus Lugdunen. [Guillaume of Lyon] says the same: those briefs [*breuia*] that carry words of this sort — "whoever carries this will not perish by fire or water; he will not die a sudden death or of the plague"; or "he will obtain such a good" — are to be rejected and not carried; and those who make them, use them, give advice about them and sell them all sin. For the catholic faith must on no account admit traditions and superstitions of this kind, the ones that are called by that name and hung about the neck, except on the advice of superiors and learned men, whom we ought to believe — not the unlearned and impious idolaters, not men given over to a reprobate mind.

QVOD SVNT QVÆDAM SPECIES ALIÆ SUPERSTITIONUM, VIDELICET PYTHONUM & MALEFICORUM, & DIUINORUM, & QUI SUNT DIUINI PYTHONES & MALEFICI, & VNDÈ PROUENIT EORUM DIUINATIO. — THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN OTHER KINDS OF SUPERSTITION, NAMELY THOSE OF THE *pythones* AND THE *malefici* AND THE DIVINERS [DIUINI]; AND WHO THE DIVINERS, *pythones* AND *malefici* ARE; AND WHERE THEIR DIVINATION COMES FROM.

There are other kinds of superstition as well, namely those of the *pythones* and the *malefici*, with which — the grief of it — this whole kingdom is full in our own day. The *pythones* take their name from Pytho, that is Apollo, whom they used to call the author of divining, as Isidore says in 8. li. *Etymologiarum*. Diviners, again, are called *diuini* as though they were *dij pleni*, "full of gods": they pretend to be full of divinity, and by a certain cunning of fraud they guess at future things for people.

Divination, then, is one kind of superstition, by which someone tries to find out either hidden things or future ones, through pacts with demons, whether hidden or open. This divination has several kinds, which Blessed Thomas touches on at 2.2. q. 95. artic. 3., where he says: "Every divination, for the

foreknowledge of a future event, uses some counsel or help of demons; and this is either expressly begged for, or else, without the man intending it, the demon secretly thrusts himself in to foretell certain future things which are unknown to men but known to

the demons.” For demons that are expressly invoked commonly foretell the future in more than one way. Sometimes they force certain deceptive apparitions on people's sight in order to announce the future, and this kind is called *præstigium*, from the fact that men's eyes are dazzled [*præstringantur*]. In the second article, the one before it, he says that all divination comes from the working of demons — either because demons are expressly invoked to make the future known, or because demons thrust themselves into these empty inquiries about the future, so that men's minds may be entangled. Of this vanity the Psalm says: “He has not looked to vanities and lying follies.” So much from what St Thomas says.

QVOD NIGROMANTICI, PYTHONES & PRÆSTIGIOSI SINT HI, AD QUOS POPULARES CONCURRUNT, VT FUTURA AGNOScant, VEL AUT PERDITA SIBI RESTITUANTUR, & QUÒD ISTI SEMPER MISCERE CONANTUR SANCTA INTER SUAS SUPERSTITIONES, & HOC INSTINCTU DÆMONUM. — THAT THE NECROMANCERS [NIGROMANTICI], *pythones* AND ILLUSIONISTS [PRÆSTIGIOSI] ARE THE VERY MEN THE COMMON PEOPLE FLOCK TO, TO FIND OUT THE FUTURE, OR ELSE TO HAVE WHAT THEY HAVE LOST RESTORED TO THEM; AND THAT THESE MEN ALWAYS TRY TO MIX HOLY THINGS IN AMONG THEIR SUPERSTITIONS, AND THIS AT THE PROMPTING OF DEMONS.

From this it can be inferred that the illusionists, *pythones* and necromancers are these very men, to whom the foolish and witless populace flocks every day to learn the future, or else

or to get back what they have lost. For such people there occur — as is commonly said — apparitions of demons in *filialis* [?] or in rings, where the demons come when they are invoked, either to foretell the future or to disclose what has been carried off. And, as the report goes, these *arioli* [soothsayers] always try to mix holy things in among their superstitions, as the simple people who flock to them testify. Indeed, on the very day on which these wretched men do not shrink from perpetrating such abominations, they unhappily dare to celebrate the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Master Johannes Nider confirms this in his *Præceptorium*, where he says: the *malefici* contrive to bring the instruments of their malice into contact with the sacraments of the Church, or with other divine things — for example, by drawing a thread through the holy chrism, by placing an earthen image under the altar pall [*sub pala altaris*] for a time, and by doing similar things. For they use the sacrament of the Eucharist, so it is reported, in their *maleficia*, and they commit a great many other abominations, mixing holy objects into their superstitions.

These things are done at the prompting of the demon for three reasons, as the same doctor sets them out. First, so that through such acts men may

become not only faithless but sacrilegious as well, defiling divine things so far as it lies in them to do so — so that they may offend their Creator more deeply, despise their own souls more inwardly, and make many more rush headlong into sins. Second, so that God may be gravely offen-

-ded by men, according to the judgement of blessed Augustine: the demon exercises greater power over evil men, to whom God in anger grants what he would deny if he were favourable. Third, so that in this way, under the appearance of an apparent good, more simple people may be taken in the more easily — people who, because these things have been touched with divine objects and with prayers, suppose that God has actually conferred something of divine power on them, where in fact only graver sins have been committed. So much from him.

But in the other superstitions practised by these country people, even where demons are not expressly invoked — as in the question set out here and in others like it — the demons nevertheless insinuate themselves into these empty and superstitious acts, so that men's minds may be deceived.

QVÆRITVR, VNDE DÆMONES SCIANT FUTURA INTERDUM, & VNDÈ TÀM MIROS EFFECTUS FACERE POSSUNT, ASSIGNANTUR CAUSÆ. — IT IS ASKED FROM WHERE THE DEMONS SOMETIMES KNOW FUTURE THINGS, AND FROM WHERE THEY CAN PRODUCE SUCH ASTONISHING EFFECTS; THE CAUSES ARE ASSIGNED.

But the question is raised: given that these *pythones* and diviners [*divini*] disclose hidden or future things, and do so by a pact entered into with a demon — from where, and for what reasons, do demons sometimes know the future, and from where can they produce such astonishing effects, when God permits it? Augustine answers this question in *de natura dæmonum*, assigning seven causes in summary form — not that the demons know future contingents,

since that belongs to God alone, but that they conjecture probably. First, because although they are darkened by the privation of the light of grace, they are nevertheless bright with the light of their intellectual nature. Second, they know more than we do because of their experience of the ages. Third, because of the speed of their motion, demons can foretell many future things that are hidden from men. Fourth, by their own power, when God permits it, they can send diseases and then foretell them. Fifth, they can predict future things from signs more subtly than a physician does by inspecting the pulse and the urine. For just as a physician sees by signs something in a sick man that an ordinary man does not see, so too the demon sees what no man sees naturally. Sixth, from the signs that proceed from the mind [*ab animo homines*, printed thus] they conjecture, more shrewdly than a prudent man, the things that are or will be in the soul; for they know which impulses of theirs are likewise going to follow. Seventh, they know the deeds and the writings of the Prophets, from which they can foretell things to come.

These points are touched on at 26. q. 4. c. *sciendum. in glossa*. And as St Thomas says in the place cited above: men can consider effects in themselves

only while those effects are present — as a man happens to see someone running or walking — but to consider things of this kind in themselves before they come to be is proper to God, who

alone, in his eternity, sees the things that are to come as though they were present. Hence it is said in *Esaia 41*: "Declare the things that are to come in the future, and we shall know that you are gods." If anyone presumes, in whatever manner, to foretell or to know beforehand future things of this kind, without God revealing them, he plainly usurps to himself what belongs to God.

VNDE DIVINI DICVNTVR, & DIUINATIO QUÀM GRAUE SIT PECCATUM. —
FROM WHAT THE *divini* (DIVINERS) GET THEIR NAME, AND HOW GRAVE A SIN
DIVINATION IS.

And it is from this that some are called *divini*, as Isidore says in his book of *Etymologia*, as was noted above. How great a sin divination is, St Thomas shows in the book and question cited above, *artic. 4*. First by authority, in the text written at *Deut. 18*., where it is said: "There is not found in you anyone who consults *arioli* or takes counsel of *pythones*." He then proves it by reason as follows: every divination that is carried out by incantations of demons is unlawful on two grounds. The first of these is taken from the side of the principle of the divination: it is a pact expressly entered into with the demon through the very invocation of the demon, and this is altogether unlawful. Hence it is said against certain men at *Esa. 28*.: "We have struck a covenant with death, and with hell we have made a pact." And graver still it would be still graver, if a sacrifice or an act of reverence were offered to the demon once he had been invoked. A second ground is taken from the side of the future outcome. The demon aims at the ruin of men, and so, by responses of this kind — even when he does on occasion say something true — he intends to accustom men to believing him, and in that way intends to lead them into something harmful to human salvation. Hence Anastasius, expounding the passage at *Luca 4*., "He rebuked him, saying: Be silent": although the demon was confessing those things, Christ checked his speech, so that he should not proclaim his own wickedness along with the truth, and also so as to train us not to concern ourselves with such beings, even when they appear to speak the truth. For it is a sacrilege that we should be taught by the devil when divine Scripture is at hand for us. So blessed Thomas. Hence at *II. q. 7. Episcopi*: they are held captive by the devil who abandon the Creator and seek help from the devil.

QVOD PYTHONES ISTI ET NIGROMANTICI SUNT APOSTATÆ À FIDE, & QUI AD EOS CONCURRUNT PRO REMEDIJS RERUM PERDITARUM, & ALIJS HUIUSMODI SUNT SUPERSTITIOSI & CLAUDICANT À FIDE. — THAT THESE *pythones* AND NECROMANCERS [*nigromantici*] ARE APOSTATES FROM THE FAITH, AND THAT THOSE WHO RESORT TO THEM FOR REMEDIES FOR LOST PROPERTY AND FOR OTHER SUCH THINGS ARE SUPERSTITIOUS AND LIMP IN THE FAITH.

From all this it is gathered that these *pythones* and necromancers now flourishing in this kingdom, who expressly invoke demons in order to have the future disclosed and other effects carried out, are apostates from the faith — as St Thomas says in the second book of the Sentences, *d. 7. q. 43. art. 2*. And in the same way those who resort to them to obtain remedies for lost property, for the sick, and for healing them, or to learn something of the future; and those who set about securing rain or other bodily necessities through superstitious observances — these too are superstitious and limp in the Catholic faith. For just as the true faith deserves to be endowed with miracles, when there is need of them for edification, so a false faith earns that endowment with portents and fabrications, to its own damnation or to the testing of others. They also sin mortally, because they act against the first commandment, and because it is expressly forbidden at *Deuteron. decimo octauo*: "Let there not be one who consults *pythones* or diviners [*diuinos*]." For those who consult *pythones* believe that by that act they really obtain what they are after — the disclosure of a theft, say, or foreknowledge of a future event, or rain, or the winning of someone's love. It is certain that those who believe such things are obtained through that act are de-

-ceived, in that such a man believes that act to possess something of divine power; and then he denies the faith, as is found in Augustine at *26. q. 7. non observabitis*, where, after listing many superstitions, he concludes as follows: whoever observes this observance or any other whatever, or *facta*, or auguries, or gives heed to them, or consents to those who observe them, or believes such people, or goes to their house, or brings them into his own house, or questions them — let him know that he has broken faith with the Christian faith and with his baptism, and that as a pagan and an apostate and an enemy of God he gravely incurs the wrath of God for eternity, unless he is amended by the penance of the Church and reconciled to God.

QVOD MALEFICI, MAGI, INCANTATORES, DIUINI & NIGROMANTICI, PRO EODEM SUPPONUNT, IMÒ VERIUS IDEM SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITER. — THAT *malefici*, *magi*, *incantatores*, *diuini* AND NECROMANCERS STAND FOR ONE AND THE SAME THING — OR, MORE TRULY, IN COMMON USAGE SIGNIFY THE SAME.

Now we must speak of the *malefici*, certain points being presupposed. First, that *malefici*, *magi*, *incantatores* and *diuinatores* are commonly taken for the same thing: *26. q. 4. ergò*, and *q. 5. si quis*. For *malefici*, as Master Johannes Nider says in his *Præceptorium ca. 9.*, are those who strive to alter bodies away from settled health, to impede genera-

-tion, to rouse the soul to love or to hatred, and to do things like these — as Isidore says at 8. *Etymologiarum*, c. 18.: "*Malefici* are so called from the magnitude of their crimes. They shake the elements, they throw the minds of men into confusion, and without daring to use any poison at all they nevertheless kill by the violence of a spell [*carmen*]."

QVOD MALEFICI DÆMONE OPERANTE POSSUNT SUIS MALEFICIJS & INCANTATIONIBUS VERACITER HOMINES LÆDERE, AGROS & FRUCTUS EORUM DEUASTARE, & IN QUIBUS DÆMONES POSSUNT HOMINES SPECIALITER LÆDERE, DEO PERMITTENTE. — THAT *malefici*, WHEN THE DEMON DOES THE WORK, CAN TRULY INJURE MEN BY THEIR *maleficia* AND THEIR INCANTATIONS, AND LAY WASTE THEIR FIELDS AND THEIR CROPS; AND IN WHAT MATTERS THE DEMONS CAN INJURE MEN IN PARTICULAR, GOD PERMITTING IT.

For the fuller explanation of this, note the following. First, whether *malefici* can truly injure men by their *maleficia* and their incantations, and lay waste their fields and their crops, and if so, in what ways. The Doctors of Theology answer this question by saying that *malefici* can bring about injuries to men and to their property in all these ways, with the demon working alongside them. In these matters the demon alone can do the injuring and the deceiving as principal agent, while the *malefici* act instrumentally or ministerially; for as St Thomas says at in 4. *distinct.* 34. *arti.* 3., *maleficia* are truly wrought by demons and not merely in appearance only. Nevertheless, those who lead the demons to do it are themselves called *malefici*.

With God permitting it, demons can indeed injure men gravely, and they can do so in five ways, as Magister Johannes Nider says in his *Praeceptorium*, at the first precept, c. 11. — namely in a man's property, his reputation, his body, the use of his reason, and his life. As for property, this is plain from *Iob.* 1. & 2.: the devil took away from him his livestock, his house and his children. As for reputation, it is plain from the life of the blessed Jerome, in the original source, 3. *parte Epistolarum*, *tractatu* 15. *Epistola* 86. *capit.* 3.: the devil transformed himself into the shape of St Silvanus, bishop in Nazareth, who was a friend of St Jerome. This demon began at night to solicit a noblewoman in her bed and to provoke her to lust with words, and then went on to press her toward evil by deeds. When she cried out, the demon — still in the bishop's likeness — hid himself at once under the bed; and when he was searched for there and found, he falsely claimed, with lewd words, that he was Bishop Silvanus. The next day, the devil having vanished, the holy man was most gravely defamed; for he was at last cleared at the tomb of St Jerome, when the devil confessed it in a body he had possessed. As for the body, it is plain in blessed Job, who was struck by the devil with a most foul ulcer, *Iob.* 2. As for the harming of the use of reason and the disturbance of the interior senses, it is plain in those who are possessed

and seized, and is established through the Gospel histories too. As for death, and the fact that the demon deprives some people even of life, it is plain from

Thobia 2., concerning the seven husbands of the virgin Sarah who were killed on account of their lustful and unbridled appetite for the virgin Sarah, since they were not worthy of marriage with her. So far Nider — but as to the ways in which they do the harm:

QVOD MALEFICATVS A DÆMONIO IMPEDITUR AB ACTU CONIUGALI SECUNDUM PETITIONEM SORTILEGÆ MULIERIS & MALEFICÆ. — THAT THE MAN WHO HAS BEEN BEWITCHED [*maleficatus*] IS IMPEDED BY THE DEMON FROM THE CONJUGAL ACT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PETITION OF THE WOMAN WHO IS A *sortilega* AND A *malefica*.

St Bonaventure, at *in 4. dist. 34. art. 2. q. 2.*, in his reply to the last argument, speaking of the impediment to marriage brought about by *maleficium*, says that a man impeded in this way is impeded by the demon, in that the demon stands in his way and sets himself against him in accordance with the petition of the woman who is a *sortilega* and a *malefica* — she obtaining this by the merit of her unbelief. Just as faith obtains that God should be present to work miracles, so the *sortiaria* works her *sortilegium* with respect to one determinate person, because the devil is on hand in that act. And then, either by his own power, or by means of a herb, or by means of a stone, or by some hidden natural cause, he blocks the power so that it does not pass into act — and this only with respect to that woman, not with respect to another, either because it was for this that he was invited, or because GOD does not permit it.

For God's hidden judgement lies concealed here, as is plain in the case of the wife of Tobias. So far Bonaventure. But why is this power of the *malefici* permitted to demons in the act of the generative faculty rather than in other acts? St Thomas answers at *in 4. distin. 34. arti. 3. ad primum*: because it is through the generative power that original sin is transmitted.

QVOD HERBA ET LAPIS, ET ALIA HUIUSMODI, QUIBUS VTITUR MALEFICA, NULLAM VIM HABENT AD EFFECTUM MALEFICIJ, QUANTUM EST DE SE, SED VTITUR HIS MALEFICUS, TANQUAM SIGNIS PACTI INITI CUM DÆMONE. — THAT HERB AND STONE, AND OTHER THINGS OF THE KIND WHICH THE *malefica* USES, HAVE NO POWER AT ALL, SO FAR AS THEY THEMSELVES GO, TOWARD THE EFFECT OF THE *maleficium*; RATHER, THE *maleficus* USES THEM AS SIGNS OF THE PACT HE HAS ENTERED INTO WITH THE DEMON.

Note, however, that a herb, or a stone, or anything else of the kind, has no power at all toward the effect of the *maleficium* so far as it goes of itself, as St Thomas says at *I. part. q. 115. art. 5. ad 3.*, citing Augustine, *21. de ciuitate Dei*: that demons are drawn by various kinds of stones, herbs, woods, animals, chants and rites — not as animals are drawn by food, but as spirits are drawn by signs, in so far as these things are set before them as a sign of divine honour, which they covet. It is these things, then, that the *maleficus* or the *malefica* uses, at the demon's prompting, through a pact of invocation whether tacit or express — either to bring into ill repute the creatures of God, which are good

in themselves, or to increase the credulity and the deception in faith of the souls of lost men, who use these things and others for the invocation of demons.

So the *maleficus* — or, more truly, the demon — does not use things of this kind because they are more effective for such a *maleficium*, but as signs of that pact between himself and the *maleficus*, whom he already possesses as his own worshipper, as a heretic and a stranger to the faith.

QVOD INIENTES PACTVM CUM DÆMONIBUS TACITUM VEL EXPRESSUM SUNT IDOLATRÆ, HÆRETICI, & ALIENI À CATHOLICA FIDE. — THAT THOSE WHO ENTER INTO A PACT WITH DEMONS, TACIT OR EXPRESS, ARE IDOLATERS, HERETICS, AND STRANGERS TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

That these people are heretics is established by an article among the errors concerning the magical art: "that to enter into a pact with demons, tacit or express, is not idolatry, or a species of idolatry and apostasy." Error. And we hold that a pact is implicit in every superstitious observance whose effect cannot reasonably be expected either from God or from nature. So anyone who practises such things is an idolater. For among the other articles on the errors concerning the magical art which Gerson sets out, the fourth in order is this: that by the magical arts demons are, in stones, rings, mirrors or images, in their name consecrated — or rather execrated — induced, compelled, or driven off, or that to wish to bring such objects to life is not idolatry. Error. And article 19: that the blood of a hoopoe [*vpupa*] or of a kid, or of some other animal, or virgin parchment [*pergamenum virgineum*], or a lion's hide, and the like, have efficacy for expelling demons through the ministry of arts of this kind. Error.

Understand this of such objects as they are things in themselves: for as such they exist, and as such they are good and come from God. But, as has been said, the *maleficus* uses them as a sign of a demon invoked tacitly or expressly. And what I say about these things I mean equally about *characteres*, which they use very frequently indeed in their superstitions.

QVOD VBI PER MALEFICI-UM CONCUBITUS NON SEQUITUR, VEL ALTERIUS ALICUIUS MALEFICI EFFECTUS, NON AD NIGROMANTICOS, SED AD DEUM EST RECURRENDUM PRO SOLUTIONIS REMEDIO. — THAT WHERE, THROUGH AN ACT OF SORCERY, INTERCOURSE DOES NOT FOLLOW, OR THE EFFECT OF SOME OTHER ACT OF SORCERY APPEARS, ONE MUST HAVE RECOURSE FOR THE REMEDY OF RELEASE NOT TO NECROMANCERS BUT TO GOD.

Note, however, that where, by an act of sorcery — God permitting it by his hidden judgement, and the devil procuring it — intercourse does not follow between a married couple, or where the effect of some other *maleficium* appears, one must not have recourse for release and remedy to magicians [*magi*], necromancers [*nigromantici*], and casters of lots [*sortilegi*], as in our own day these common people are not afraid to run, all over the place, to certain abominable priests. Rather, one must have recourse to God, through humble confession and devout prayer — as is laid down at 33.quæstio.1.cap. ultimo.

Gerson too, in his treatise on errors concerning the magical art, among certain articles condemned at Paris, sets down as fifth in order this: that it is lawful to do certain things by the magical arts, or by certain other superstitions forbidden by God or by the Church, for any good end whatever. Error. For, according to the Apostle, evil is not to be done so that good may come of it. Article 6: that it is also lawful to promise to drive off *maleficia* by *maleficia*. Error.

On this you have an example in the legend of St James: how he loosed Filetus from the bonds in which Hermogenes the *maleficus* had bound him fast — and this not by an incantation, but by the power of that utterance, namely: "The Lord looses those who are fettered, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord raises up those who are cast down," and so on. Saul did the opposite, as is recorded at 1.Regum vigesimooctauo, where it says that Saul consulted a *pythonissa* and had not hoped in the Lord — for which reason the Lord killed him and transferred his kingdom to David.

But Magister Iohannes Nider [Johannes Nider], in precept 1, chapter 10, raising the question whether it is lawful to remove *maleficia* of this kind,

answers by a distinction, in agreement with the Doctors: either they can be removed without superstitious means — as by a lawful exorcism, or by prayer, or by the intercession of the saints, or by the sacramental confession of the *maleficus*, or by the plain showing or pointing-out of someone who knows where the image is, or by mere local motion, or in some fitting manner. In the same way, and on those terms, it is lawful. Or else it cannot be removed except by a superstitious means, or by fresh works of sorcery, and on those terms it is unlawful, by the authority of the Apostle already cited: evil is not to be done, and so on. So far Nider.

QVOD ET SI NIGROMAN-TICI & MALEFICI ALIQUANDO VERA DICANT, SÆPIÙS TAMEN FALLUNT & MENTIUNTUR, QUARE AD ILLOS NON EST CONCURRENDUM. — THAT EVEN IF NECROMANCERS AND WORKERS OF HARMFUL MAGIC SOMETIMES SPEAK THE TRUTH, THEY MORE OFTEN DECEIVE AND LIE, AND THEREFORE ONE MUST NOT RESORT TO THEM.

No one, then, ought to resort to these necromancers, sacrilegious persons, and diviners [*diuini*], over and above the fact that they sin mortally and become sharers in their guilt and their damnation. The reason is that even if, by God's permission, they do sometimes say true things, their testimony is still not to be used, because they more often deceive and lie. This is clear, since in the spirit of truth there is no falsehood, whereas in the spirit of lying there are very many

truths at times, so that it may deceive by one hidden falsehood — as Gerson says in *de probatione spirituum*. "For this reason," he says, "Christ forbade the possessed, and Paul the *pythonissa*, to bear the witness to the truth that they were confessing" (Actuum 18). And elsewhere: the demon sometimes theologizes (says Thimacus, as is plain in the Gospels), even in the presence of Jesus, whom he presumed to tempt, and to say: "It is written: God has given his angels

charge concerning you.” And nonetheless Christ silenced him, as has been said, so that no testimony, however true on the surface, should be accepted from those possessed by demons, or from *pythones*, or from accursed magicians. For what fellowship has light with darkness, or Christ with Belial, as is said at 2.ad The.6.

The first reason is that these *pythones* and necromancers are excommunicate. The second, that they say nothing true for a good end. The third, that either at once or in the end they will foist in a falsehood, and will have put something resembling it in front of the truth. For there is no deceiving doctrine which does not mix in some truths, according to Bede.

It must be recognised, however, that it is one thing to invoke a demon in order to learn or to have something done by him — which is never lawful. It is another thing to ask something of a demon who has not been invoked but presents himself, for the benefit of others, and especially when by divine power he can be compelled to say certain true things, as many saints have sometimes done.

QVOD ACTVS ILLE SVBMERsIONIS IMAGINUM & RELIQUIARUM EST SACRILEGIUM, & QUID SIT SACRILEGIUM. — THAT THAT ACT OF SUBMERGING IMAGES AND RELICS IS A SACRILEGE, AND WHAT SACRILEGE IS.

The next question is in what way that act — the plunging of the image of St Peter under water — is a sacrilege. For as St Thomas says at 2.2.q.99.ar.1, sacrilege is the violation of a sacred thing, that is, injury done to a sacred thing; and he proves it in this way. A thing is called sacred because it is ordered to divine worship [*cultus divinus*]. Now just as a thing takes on the character of good from being ordered to a good end, so too, from the fact that something is assigned to the worship of God, it is made something divine. A certain reverence is therefore owed to it, and that reverence is referred to God. So everything that has to do with irreverence toward sacred things has to do with injury to God, and carries the character of sacrilege. So says St Thomas.

That such a submersion of an image is a sacrilege is proved out of the same author from article 3, where he lays it down that the species of sacrilege are distinguished according to the sacred things concerned, and that sacrilege has different degrees according to the difference of sacred things, places and persons. For sacrilege is graver in proportion as the sacred thing sinned against possesses greater holiness. Among sacred things the highest place is held by the sacraments, by which a person is sanctified; and the chief of these is the sacrament of the Eucharist,

which contains Christ himself. Hence the sacrilege committed against this sacrament is the gravest of all. After the sacraments, the second place is held by the vessels consecrated for the reception of the sacraments, and by sacred images themselves and the relics of the saints, in which the persons of the saints are in a certain manner venerated or dishonoured. So says St Thomas.

Now it is established that in that utterly deranged act of submerging the image of St Peter, or of any other saint whatever, the saint is mocked and dishonoured in the highest degree; therefore those who do it commit sacrilege — and most of all those who, sad to say, abuse the most worthy and most precious sacrament of the Eucharist for the practice of their superstitions and their acts of divination by lots [*sortilegia*], since it has been discovered that those abominable *pythones* and necromancers [*nigromantici*] frequently abuse it in their *maleficia*.

It is also a special sin, distinct from the others, as the same Doctor says at article 2 of that same question, because in it there is found a special character of deformity — namely, that a sacred thing is violated by some irreverence, and that it is opposed to the virtue of religion, so that the very irreverence and disorder done to a sacred thing is called a violation. For just as honour is in the one who honours, not in the one who is honoured, as is clear at 1. Ethicorum, so irreverence is in the man who behaves irreverently, even though he does no harm to the one to whom he offers the irreverence. Hence too

the sacred thing is not violated; nevertheless, so far as it lies in the sacrilegious man himself, he does violate it. It is like purple: once it has been made into a royal garment it is honoured and glorified, and if anyone pierces it he is condemned to death as one acting against the royal majesty, even though he does nothing to the king's person — this is according to Damascene. In the same way, if anyone violates a sacred thing, by that very fact he commits an irreverence against God, and so sins through irreligion. So says St Thomas.

QVOD VERA FIDES IMAGINES ASSUMIT AD DIVINUM CULTUM IN ECCLESIA, NON VT EIS CULTUS LATRIÆ EXHIBEATUR, EXCEPTA IMAGINE CHRISTI, SED QUANDAM SIGNIFICATIONEM. — THAT THE TRUE FAITH TAKES UP IMAGES FOR DIVINE WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH NOT SO THAT THE WORSHIP OF *latria* MAY BE OFFERED TO THEM — THE IMAGE OF CHRIST EXCEPTED — BUT FOR A CERTAIN SIGNIFICATION.

The true faith does indeed take up certain images for divine worship in the Church, and the faithful adore them; and in the tabernacle there were images of the Cherubim, as we read at Exodus 25. Yet neither in the tabernacle or temple of the old law, nor now either, are images set up so that the worship of *latria* may be offered to them, but for a certain signification: so that through images of this kind faith in the excellence of the angels and the saints may be impressed on people's minds and confirmed there. It is otherwise with the image of Christ, to which, by reason of his divinity, *latria* is owed. So says St

Thomas, 2.2.q.494[?].artic.2.ad primum. But it is lawful now to set up images of Christ and of the saints and to adore them, although this was not so in the Old Testament, as the same Doctor holds in the third book of the *Sentences* — and this only with the adoration of *dulia*, as he proves at 3. parte, q.25.ar.6, on the relics of the saints. Therefore a man who commits an irreverence against an image commits it likewise against the one imaged, since, as the same Doctor

holds at article 2 of that same question, Damascene brings in Basil, who says that the honour of the image belongs to the prototype, that is, to the exemplar.

QVOD FACIENS IRREVERENTIAM IMAGINI, FACIT ETIAM IMAGINATO PER IPSAM. — THAT A MAN WHO COMMITS AN IRREVERENCE AGAINST AN IMAGE COMMITS IT ALSO, THROUGH THE IMAGE, AGAINST THE ONE IMAGED.

For, as the same Doctor says at 2.2.q.81.art.3.ad tertium, the worship of religion is not offered to images according to what they are considered to be in themselves — mere things, that is, of wood and stone — but according as they are images leading to God incarnate or to the saints; and the movement directed toward an image, precisely as it is an image, does not come to rest in the image itself but tends toward that of which it is the image. For from the fact that the worship of religion is offered to images of Christ, neither the character of *latria* nor the virtue of religion is made anything different. So says St Thomas. If therefore, in its own manner of adoring, by adoration — — it is by reason of *dulia* that such honour is paid to the images of the saints. For in the same manner in which a man is carried toward the image of a saint with honour or with invocation, so it is done — expressly or interpretatively — toward the saint himself. And since the merit and the act of religion consist in this, that a man conduct himself reverently toward sacred things, it follows (as the same Doctor says in the same book, q.99.art.3.) that the sin of sacrilege consists in this, that someone conducts himself irreverently toward a sacred thing. Now reverence is owed to a sacred image by reason of the holiness of the saint whose image it is. Necessarily, then, an irreverence shown to the image itself tends toward irreverence and injury against that saint himself. Such is the act under discussion here, and such are the acts of very many others who, in a like emergency, irreverently and superstitiously baptize images and relics of the saints.

QVOD TRIPLEX POENA EST SACRILEGORUM. — THAT THE PENALTY OF THE SACRILEGIOUS IS THREEFOLD.

But what the penalty of these sacrilegious *pythones* is [*Pythonū sacrilegorum*], St Thomas sets out in the same book and question named above, ar.4. It is threefold: sometimes excommunication, sometimes a monetary penalty, sometimes beheading. Understand this according to the different degrees of sacrilege. Hence, according to the same Doctor,

such men ought to be held back from these abominable works by excommunication or by a monetary penalty, and a man should be tormented by the very things in which he sins, as Wisdom II says. In this way the fitting penalty for a sacrilegious man, who does injury to sacred things, is excommunication, by which he is barred from sacred things; and penalties are inflicted as a kind of medicine, so that men, frightened by them, may leave off sinning. But a sacrilegious man, who does not revere sacred things, does not seem to be sufficiently held back from sin by being interdicted from the sacred things he does not care about. That is why, under human laws, capital punishment is

applied, while under the Church's own institutions, which do not inflict bodily death, a monetary penalty is applied, so that men may at least be called back from acts of sacrilege by temporal punishments.

QVOD ILLI SVBMERSORES IMAGINUM & RELIQUIARUM TENTANT DEUM, & QUID SIT TENTARE DEUM. — THAT THOSE MEN WHO SUBMERGE IMAGES AND RELICS TEMPT GOD; AND WHAT IT IS TO TEMPT GOD.

Next we must say how these men tempt God by their act, when they declare: *let the image of the blessed Peter be submerged, if he does not obtain rain for us from God in this pressing emergency.* On this point note that, as Thomas says at 2.2.q.97.throughout, a man tempts God when he takes a trial of him, or

explores, by his own words or deeds, God's power, wisdom, mercy, and goodness or will. For a man who takes a trial or explores is said to tempt, because to tempt is to take a trial of something, and no one takes a trial except concerning a matter that is unknown or doubtful. From this it is clear that everyone who tempts God is ignorant of God, or doubts some perfection of his — which is always a sin.

Now we take a trial of something by words and by deeds. By words, when we test whether he knows what we are asking, or whether he can or will fulfil it. By deeds, when through what we do we explore another's prudence, or will, or power. Each of these happens in two ways. In one way openly, as when a man declares himself a tempter — as Samson, at Judges 14, put a riddle to the Philistines in order to test them. In another way insidiously and secretly, as the Pharisees tempted Christ, as we read at Ma. 10. And sometimes it happens interpretatively: that is, when a man does not intend to take a trial, yet does or says something that appears ordered to nothing else than the taking of a trial.

If, then, these men tempt God in their superstitious act, both by words and by deeds, not openly like Samson, not

insidiously like the Pharisees, not expressly but as it were interpretatively — since, even if they do not intend to take a trial of God expressly, they nevertheless ask or do something in the matter which is useful for, or can be ordered to, nothing else than testing God's power, goodness or knowledge. For a limit is fixed there for the working of the divine omnipotence itself; a manner is prescribed by which the divine wisdom itself is as it were compelled to act; and an end is even laid down for the divine goodness and clemency itself.

For what else do those words mean — *if he does not obtain for us from God the rain we have demanded* — than to tempt God by doubting his omnipotence; by fixing for oneself a limit upon the divine operation with respect to his goodness and clemency, which comes from grace alone; by wishing to attain, through those unlawful acts, an effect belonging to his wisdom; and by prescribing a superstitious manner, so that he is as it were compelled to grant their petition at their own pleasure? All this is not according to the order of his wisdom, *which reaches from end to end mightily, and orders all things sweetly* — Wisdom 8. For

God knows whether that thing is expedient for them or not. But insofar as they fix for God the time of his mercy, they are like those of whom it is said at Judith 8: *Who have set a term, and if, once it has passed,*

five days had passed and God had not shown them mercy, they would hand over themselves and their city into the hand of Holofernes, prince of the Assyrians. Judith rebuked them for this, saying: *Who are you, that you tempt the Lord? This is not a word (she says) that provokes mercy, but rather one that stirs up anger and kindles fury. You have set (she says) a time for the divine compassion, and you have appointed a day at your own discretion.* Hence the gloss says on this passage that we ought to prescribe to the Lord neither a time nor a manner, but should rather leave everything to his own decision.

Hence we read that a certain boy said in his prayer: *Son of God, as you know and as you will, have mercy on me.* For just as those Jews whom Judith rebuked sinned gravely by fixing in advance a term for God's compassion — as Nicolaus de Lyra says — so do these men who submerge images and relics. Both alike were found to be probing divine things unlawfully. St Thomas proves this too, in the question cited above, article 2, where he says that such a testing is a sin because it is forbidden in the law of God, Deuteronomy 6: *You shall not tempt the Lord your God*; and the Lord said the same thing against the Devil, Matthew 4. It is also an act opposed to the virtue of Religion, because, as the gloss says on that verse of the Psalm — *And they tempted God in their hearts* — to tempt

God is to ask in a disordered way. But to ask in the due manner is an act of Religion; therefore to tempt God is an act opposed to Religion. The point is confirmed, since the end of Religion is to show reverence to God, and so everything that pertains directly to irreverence toward God is opposed to Religion. Now it is plain that to tempt someone pertains to irreverence toward him, for no one presumes to tempt a person of whose excellence he is certain. It is therefore plain that to tempt God is a sin opposed to Religion.

QVOD TENTARE DEVM EST GRAUISSIMUM PECCATUM, NON TAMEN GRAVIUS QUÀM SUPERSTITIO. — THAT TO TEMPT GOD IS A MOST GRAVE SIN, YET NOT GRAVER THAN SUPERSTITION.

For it belongs to Religion to profess faith [*protestari fidem*] by certain signs that pertain to divine reverence; and therefore it belongs to religiosity [so printed — *Religiositatem*; the sense requires *irreligiositatem*, as the parallel clause below has *irreligiositatis species*] that a man should, out of uncertainty of faith, do things that pertain to divine irreverence — and tempting God is of this kind. And so it is a species of irreligiosity and a most grave sin, yet not graver than superstition, as the same St Thomas holds in the question already cited, art. 3. & 4. He gives the reason: because the superstitious man sins more gravely and is more opposed to divine reverence

— those men who by their own deed profess an error against the divine excellence — than the man who professes a doubt; for the man who tempts God

has doubted about the divine excellence, that is, about his power, his wisdom, or his goodness, as has been said.

QVOD ILLI SVBMERSORES IMAGINUM SCANDALUM COMMITTUNT & STULTÈ AGUNT. — THAT THOSE MEN WHO SUBMERGE IMAGES COMMIT SCANDAL AND ACT FOOLISHLY.

From what has been said above it is clear how these superstitious people also commit scandal: by their words or their less than upright deeds they offer others an occasion of ruin. *It must be* (says the Saviour, Mar. 9.) *that scandals come*. This necessity, however, is a necessity of the consequent, not of the antecedent. For it is not necessary that these men perform those disordered acts antecedently; but it does follow necessarily that a good many people — the unlearned at least — are scandalized by that act consequently, since on their example others will set about doing similar things. In this too they sin most gravely, since Christ says in the same place: *Whoever shall scandalize one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for him that an ass's millstone be hung about his neck and that he be sunk in the depth of the sea*. On this Nicolaus de Lyra remarks that the Saviour is speaking after the manner of the Palestinians, who used to bind a stone to the neck of men condemned to death for a graver crime and cast them headlong into the sea. The sense, then, of *it would be better for him*, and so on, is this: it would be better for a man to die a temporal death than by his own bad example to make another fall into mortal sin, since by this he earns eternal death, which is graver than temporal death.

From this I infer that it would be better to punish these abominable superstitious people and necromancers [*nigromantici*] of this kingdom by a rigorous inquisition than that so many souls should perish in particular through them and God inflict so many plagues upon us.

They also act foolishly in seeking divine help through such superstitious means. For what is more foolish than this act of submerging an image in water, and relics too, in order to obtain rain? What is more insane than to address an image and to make protest against it — an image that has ears and does not hear, eyes and does not see? Hence the Holy Spirit — or rather he who speaks through the Holy Spirit — mocks superstitious people of this sort at Wisdom 8 c., when he says: *They are not ashamed to speak with that which is without a soul*.

QVOD SACRILEGIA ET MALEFICIA HABENT EFFICACIAM EX QUINQ. — THAT SACRILEGES AND *maleficia* HAVE THEIR EFFICACY FROM FIVE SOURCES.

But since people possessed of a false credulity, and others like them, firmly believe that through such unlawful acts

they will obtain rain within a fixed term, or other effects. Now it remains to set out a few points. And first: from where do *sortilegia* and *maleficia* draw their effect?

To this question Johannes Nider answers in his *Praeceptorium*, precept 1, ch. 9, that *sortilegia* and *maleficia* have their efficacy from five sources.

First, from the small trust men place in God; and so he permits them to be obstructed by demons, according to the text of Psalm 110: *Because he has hoped in me, I will also deliver him* — that is, the just man. And by the argument from the contrary sense, those who do not hope in God are left to the demon's power.

Second, from the error that is in men, of which the effect of an act of sorcery [*maleficium*] is very frequently the outcome, according to the text at Romans 1: *When they had known God, they did not glorify him as God, etc., and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Third, so that the faith of the good may be tested, according to Augustine, who proves it by that text of Deuteronomy 13: *If a prophet rises up in your midst, or one who says he has seen a dream, and foretells a sign or a portent, and what he has spoken comes about, and he says to you: let us go and follow strange gods whom you do not know, and let us serve them — do not listen to the words of that prophet, or of somnatorijs* [so printed; for *somniatoris*, "of that dreamer"], *for the Lord your God is testing you, that he may plainly know whether you love God or not.*

Fourth, on account of the express or tacit pact entered into with the demons, and the fellowship with them — as happens in every superstition, as Augustine says in *De doctrina Christiana*, book 2. That fellowship (as he says) must be utterly shunned by every Christian.

Fifth, from the devil's own desire, since he strives continually to deceive. 1 Peter 5: *Your adversary the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; resist him, strong in faith.*

And in ch. 11 of the same book already cited, this Doctor says — in agreement with St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas] in the second book, on distinctions 7 and 8, and in the fourth, distinction 34, and in agreement with the common view of all the theologians writing on that passage — that workers of harmful magic [*malefici*], with the demon procuring it, can by all these means bring about injuries to men and to their property, the Demon cooperating; and by these means the demon alone can injure and deceive.

QVOD MALEFICI NON FACIUNT ILLOS EFFECTUS IMMEDIATE ACTIONE PROPRIA, SED TALIA FACIUNT PER DÆMONES EX PACTO CUM EIS INITO. ET HOC, PERMITTENTE DEO, AD CÆCITATEM, & IN PÆNAM EORUM, QUI SIMILIBUS VANITATIBUS NIMIUM ADHÆRENT. — THAT WORKERS OF HARMFUL MAGIC DO NOT PRODUCE THOSE EFFECTS IMMEDIATELY BY THEIR OWN ACTION, BUT DO SUCH THINGS THROUGH THE DEMONS, BY A PACT ENTERED INTO WITH THEM; AND THIS BY GOD'S PERMISSION, FOR THE BLINDING AND IN PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WHO CLING TOO CLOSELY TO VANITIES OF THIS KIND.

For those things are not done by the workers of harmful magic through their own immediate operation. Rather, such things are done through the demons, who — once they have seen the acts of sorcery — know at once, from the pact long ago entered into with the workers of harmful magic at the beginning of

the world and in the time of true idolatry [*tempore veris idolatriæ*], what sort of effect they must bring about to match the intention of those acts of sorcery.

Take an example. The broom that a female worker of harmful magic [*malefica*] dips in water so that it may rain does not cause the rain; the demon does, once such signs have been seen. If GOD permits him, he has power over all bodily things — over the air, the winds and the clouds — and he is able to bring about and cause such things at once. The *maga* [sorceress] does indeed give the sign by means of the broom, but it is the demon who procures and performs it, so that the rain comes by the demon's action; and it is the demon whom the *maga* serves in bad faith and by her work, and to whose service, or to that of others, she has handed herself over.

If at any time a worker of harmful magic makes an earthen image, or *characteres*, or something similar, in order to work harmful magic on someone; or if at some time, by someone's act of sorcery, such a thing appears in water or in lead — then whatever injury is inflicted on that image, the same is found to befall the person represented and everyone worked upon by the sorcery, a puncture, say, or some other wound. Any such injury is indeed really inflicted on the image, by the worker of harmful magic or by some other person. But invisibly the demon injures the bewitched man [*maleficatum hominem*] in the same way, by God's permission, if he has deserved

it as guilty. Gerson proves this in part I of the *triologio Astrologiæ theologizatae* [so printed for *Trilogio*], proposition 21, where he says: that angels, and especially evil ones, undoubtedly operate in the magic arts and in all superstitious operations — operations that have neither a natural explanation nor a true miracle behind them, but rest on a pact, whether known or hidden — and that they bring about the effect.

Hence in the commentary on the same proposition he says, citing Augustine, that all such observances are the more to be suspected and shunned the more often they appear to obtain their effect.

The same Doctor, writing against the superstition of a certain physician, in the same book, conclusion 6, as was said above, holds that just as the true and Christian faith works wonders in those who believe rightly, so bad and false credulity, with God permitting it, sometimes brings about evil outcomes — or rather, deserves them. For we see this daily in those who believe badly, whom God punishes in this way for their bad faith. Indeed, when the Lord recognizes that they cling too closely to certain empty observances [*vanis obseruantijs*], he permits certain outcomes to occur, and so permits them to be confirmed still further in such an opinion, so that their blindness grows greater and they fall into the snare they have made for themselves.

And in *De erroribus circa artem magicam*, article 17, he says this: that through such arts and impious rites, through *sortile*- *sortilegia* and charms, through the invocation of demons, through certain image-workings [*inuultuationes*] and gestures, and through such *maleficia*, no effect whatever ever follows by the ministry of demons. — An error.

For God does sometimes permit such things to happen, as was plain in the magicians of Pharaoh, and often enough elsewhere: either to test the faithful, as we have it in Deuteronomy 13; or for the deserved scourging of wicked men; or because those who abuse these arts, or consult them, on account of bad faith or other wicked sins, have been given over to a reprobate mind, and so deserve to be made sport of in this way. So he.

QVOD AD DIGNAM FLAGELLATIONEM & PUNITIONEM HORUM FLAGITIORUM PERMITTIT DEUS TOT INFIRMITATES, PESTILENTIAS, & TEMPESTATES, STERILITATES QUOQUE TERRÆ, NASCENTIUM FRUCTUUM, & INTERITUM PECORUM & IUMENTORUM EUENIRE. — THAT FOR THE DESERVED SCOURGING AND PUNISHMENT OF THESE OUTRAGES GOD PERMITS SO MANY ILLNESSES, PLAGUES AND STORMS TO OCCUR, AND BARRENNESSES OF THE EARTH AND OF ITS GROWING FRUITS AS WELL, AND THE DESTRUCTION OF FLOCKS AND OF DRAUGHT ANIMALS.

From all this it appears plainly enough from what source, in this age of ours, so many illnesses, plagues and barrennesses of the earth, of the growing fruits, of the crops and of the vines befall us; and so many thousands of sheep and of other livestock die off one after another; and so many hailstorms, tempests, disorders of the air and lightning-strikes occur. For — the grief of it — in this kingdom, for the most part, small and great alike flock everywhere

to these diviners [*diuinos*], *pythones* and necromancers, and that for the most trifling thing to be found out or learned.

QVOD HIS DIEBVS HÆC PESTIS SUPERSTITIONUM MAXIMÈ VIGET IN PRINCIPIBUS, PRÆLATIS, & NEPHANDIS QUIBUSDAM SACERDOTIBUS. — THAT IN THESE DAYS THIS PLAGUE OF SUPERSTITIONS FLOURISHES MOST OF ALL AMONG PRINCES, PRELATES, AND CERTAIN ABOMINABLE PRIESTS.

So that saying of Isaiah I can be verified of us: that every head is sick and every heart is grieving; from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is no soundness in it. By the *head* the princes are understood, according to what is written at 1. Reg. 15. of King Saul: he was made head among the tribes of Israel. By the *feet*, the *heart* and the *whole body* we can understand the lower and the middling sort in the mystical and civil body — those who everywhere and without any fear run day after day to these superstitions and demonic abominations, and who ought to be kept away from such follies most strictly by princes secular and ecclesiastical, and by faithful inquisitors.

But none of this is done, and so Gregory's saying in the *Pastorale* is borne out: when the shepherd goes over broken ground [*per arrupta*, so printed], the flock must inevitably be dragged to the precipice. But woe to them, because (as the same Isaiah says at ch. 9): *And the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail* — that is, the bad princes, and the priests who fall in with them,

according to Nicolaus in the moral gloss. For in expounding the text he himself says: *The long-lived and honourable man, he is the head; and the Prophet speaking a lie, he is the tail*. And who are these lying prophets, if not certain

abominable priests, *pythones* and necromancers, to whom this foolish and senseless people everywhere flocks — believing that by them they will be delivered in their illnesses, and that they will recover lost property through their divination, and so abetting these men's bad faith and idolatry, to their own damnation and to the very great scandal of others.

But woe to them all, because (as Isaiah says in the chapter just named): *And there shall be those who call this people blessed, and those who are called blessed* — that is, they deceive and are deceived — cast headlong, that is, into the pit of hell. For these false *pythones* are called the *tail* because they cling to the devil as to their prince, just as those who attach themselves to an earthly prince are commonly said to go at his tail. And in this tail — that is, in this clinging — they bend the people by their lies away from the straightness of truth, and bow it down through false superstitions to sacrificing and worshipping demons: either expressly, as these men themselves do, or by implication [*subintellectæ*, so printed], as the people does in putting its trust in its *maleficia*. But let the princes and nobles of this time consider whether they themselves are free from this

vice — they who are bound to punish others like them. And would that they [went astray] alone, since they lead themselves into it willingly and drag others with them.

For, as Iohan. Gerson [Jean Gerson] says in *De superstitiosa obseruatione dierum*: that in his own day one of the princes, when he was being urged to seek counsel from learned men whom he knew to be such and to be well disposed toward him — as to whether the superstitions he practised and believed in were licit [*licitè*, so printed] — replied: Why should I inquire of such men? For I know that they would advise me against it. Yet I have utterly determined to act so and to believe so, and I will not give it up. And set in this unhappy state, and cut off by a sudden death, he did give it up, willing or unwilling, and now acknowledges in hell that the Lord hates those who observe vanities to no purpose. And on the contrary: *Blessed is the man whose hope is the name of the Lord, and who has not looked to vanities and false follies*. So he.

QVOD SVPERSTITIO TANTÒ PEIOR EST, QUANTÒ IN TALI ACTU PLURA MISCENTUR BONA. — THAT A SUPERSTITION IS THE WORSE, THE MORE GOOD THINGS ARE MIXED INTO SUCH AN ACT.

But these common people say that many of the things enjoined on them for observance by these necromancers in their acts and *sortilegia* are holy and honourable — such as to fast, to be chaste, to celebrate masses, and to say the Our Father and the Gospel — which these necromancers — perform. But the wretches do not notice that, according to the Doctors of Theology, a superstition is the greater the more good things are mixed into it [*superstitio tantò maior est, quantò plura miscentur bona*], since where God ought to be honoured, it is the devil who is honoured. In reality it is the demon who is worshipped through the prayers and sacrifices and the incensings ordered to

be performed in the magic arts. For the angel of Satan is transfigured into an angel of light (as the Apostle says) by altering doctrines and holy observances, and under cover of the love of chastity and of virtue — so that he may seduce the more easily, rather than that he should be venerated and worshipped as God. For, as Jean Gerson says in *De passionibus animæ*, par. 3, consideratio 16: for what other reason is it ordered [*iubemus*, so printed] that incensings and devout prayers and fasts be performed in magical superstitions — and he also demands that the ministrations be carried out by innocent boys — except that he may deceive the more effectively and be worshipped as God?

QVOD ILLI SVBMERSORES IMAGINŪ, & QUI IN CONIURIJS & INCANTATIONIB. CONCURRUNT QUOTIDIE AD HOS NIGROMANTICOS, & CÆTERI IN ALIJS SIMILIBUS, SI EX SUIS SUPERSTITIONIBUS OBTINEANT OPTATUM EFFECTUM À DÆMONE ACCIPIUNT, DEO PERMITTENTE. — THAT THOSE WHO SUBMERGE IMAGES, AND THOSE WHO IN CONJURATIONS AND INCANTATIONS RESORT DAILY TO THESE NECROMANCERS, AND THE REST WHO DO THE LIKE IN OTHER MATTERS, IF THEY OBTAIN THE DESIRED EFFECT FROM THEIR SUPERSTITIONS, RECEIVE IT FROM THE DEMON, GOD PERMITTING.

From all of this one may also draw a further conclusion: how those superstitious submergers

of images and of relics, and others like them, believing that by such acts they will undoubtedly obtain rain in time of need, do obtain their effect — because it comes from the demon, God permitting, for the punishment of their misdeeds and of their perverse credulity. In the same way one can see how those abominable conjurations named above, and other superstitious conjurations — such as throwing pebbles against the clouds, believing that by that conjuration they drive off the storm (and I confess that I have seen a certain priest doing just this) — [obtain their effect]. For the effect, if it ever does come, does not arise from any power in that superstitious conjuration, but from the demon's pact, express or tacitly understood, together with the causes stated above, GOD permitting, as has been said. Demons do indeed have great powers for altering bodies and the elements, for causing rain, and for producing other effects and certain marvellous actions, as Holy Scripture teaches about Pharaoh's *magi* in Exodus 7 and in chapter 8, who by the power of demons made real serpents and frogs, as St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas] sets down, I. par. q. 114. ar. 4. in corpore. He sets down the same thing on Job, c. 1. They can also produce genuinely natural effects, but by the mediation of natural agents, as the same Doctor holds in *De potentia Dei*, q. 6. ar. 5. In the same way one may gather from this how those who

resort in our own day, with no fear of God at all, to those workers of harmful magic [*malefici*] and diviners [*diuini*] in order to recover lost property, do sometimes happen to find it, and where this comes from. For the evil angels can, so far as God's providence permits, do many things comparable to what the good angels do, both because of the subtlety and vigour of their substance

and because of [*q̄ hoc*, so printed] the clearness of their natural intelligence, and also because of the long duration of their experience [*experientiam diuturnitatem*, so printed]. Now in natural actions, upward and downward, in heaven and on earth; now in the miraculous operations of the angels and of all the blessed spirits — although they frequently go astray. For a raving malice blinds them, a seething pride, an envy running mad without law or order. Above all they are blinded by the just judgement of God, which makes sport of them, turning their perversities and their [*cognatus*, so printed] against his own elect to the service of his goodness.

QVÆ AVTEM ET QVOT NEPHANDA ISTI NIGROMANTICI COMMITTANT IN SUIS DIUINATIONIBUS, REFERANT STULTI ILLI QUI PASSIM AD ILLOS CONCURRERE NON VERENTUR. — BUT WHAT ABOMINATIONS, AND HOW MANY, THESE NECROMANCERS COMMIT IN THEIR DIVINATIONS — LET THOSE FOOLS TELL, WHO EVERYWHERE ARE NOT AFRAID TO RESORT TO THEM.

What abominations, and how many, these wicked *pythones* and necromancers commit in their divinations — even under the pretext

of Religion, a sacrifice, say, or a fast — those fools know well, who daily are not afraid to resort to them, against the piety of the faith, which condemns and execrates all these impious superstitions. For as was said above — and I am not ashamed to repeat it — just as true faith deserves to be endowed with miracles when there is need of them for edification, so false faith, by portents and fabrications, deserves to be deluded, to its own damnation or for the testing of others. We ought not, then, to place our hope [*specie* printed; recte: *spem*] in these acts of *pythones* and necromancers, but in God, saying that verse of the Psalm: *My lots are in your hands* — which gives us to understand by this that our confidence is not to be placed in superstitions and in invented *sortilegia*, which are for the most part harmful. Right hope is to be placed in God, not in vanities of this kind nor in their observances. They are sometimes harmful to the commonwealth, and they open the way to heresies and idolatry. For there is a Paris article, among others, first among the errors concerning the magic art, which Jean Gerson sets down in the first part: that to seek intimacy with demons and their assistance through magical arts, acts of sorcery [*maleficia*], and abominable invocations, since it is Idolatry.

Error.

QVÆRITVR VNDE PROVENIT, QUÒD FÆMINÆ IN MAIORI NUMERO REPERIANTUR SUPERSTITIOSÆ QUÀM VIRI. — AN INQUIRY INTO WHY WOMEN ARE FOUND SUPERSTITIOUS IN GREATER NUMBER THAN MEN.

Now we must ask where it comes from that women are found superstitious and given to harmful magic [*maleficæ*] in greater number than men. To this Johannes Nider answers first, in his *Praeceptorium*, that the cause is threefold. First, because they are quick to believe — and it is bad faith that the demon seeks above all. Hence Ecclesiasticus 19: *He who believes quickly is light of heart.*

Second, because by nature, on account of the fluidity of their complexion, they are of readier impressionability for receiving revelations through the impression of separated spirits, as Guilelmus Lugdun. says: because when they use that complexion well they are very good, and when they use it badly they are worse. Third, because they have a slippery tongue, and what they know by evil art they can hardly hide from their fellow women; and since they do not have strength, they readily seek to avenge themselves in secret by acts of sorcery [*maleficia*]. Hence Ecclesiasticus 25: *It will do less harm to keep company with a lion and a dragon than to live with a wicked woman. Every malice is brief beside the malice of a woman.* So far Nider. And Jean Gerson, writing against the superstitious observance of days, says that old women [*vetulæ*], boys and girls, and the simple [*idiotæ*] are more

inclined to believing and observing superstitions of this kind — and from this arose that epithet, “the *sortilega* old woman” [*vetula sortilega*].

QVÆRITVR VNDE PROVENIT, QUÒD RES PERDITÆ VEL FURATÆ, QUAS QUÆRÛT SIMPLICES CONCURRENTES AD NIGROMANTICOS IN SPECULIS & FIALIS, SIUE VNGUIBUS MALEFICORUM, & CUR MALEFICI AD SUA MALEFICIA POTIÛS RECIPIUNT VIRGINES MARES VEL FÆMINAS, QUÀM CORRUPTOS, & VNDÈ ISTI NIGROMANTICI VT PLURIMÛM TURPES HABEANT ASPECTUS. — AN INQUIRY INTO WHY LOST OR STOLEN GOODS, WHICH SIMPLE PEOPLE SEEK BY RESORTING TO NECROMANCERS, [APPEAR] IN MIRRORS AND PHIALS, OR IN THE FINGERNAILS OF WORKERS OF HARMFUL MAGIC; AND WHY THE WORKERS OF HARMFUL MAGIC TAKE VIRGINS, MALE OR FEMALE, RATHER THAN THE CORRUPTED, FOR THEIR ACTS OF SORCERY; AND WHY THESE NECROMANCERS FOR THE MOST PART HAVE FOUL LOOKS.

It is asked, further, where it comes from that lost and stolen goods, which simple people seek by resorting to necromancers, appear in mirrors, in phials [*fialæ*], or in the fingernails of workers of harmful magic and necromancers; and why the workers of harmful magic take virgins, male or female, rather than the corrupted, for their acts of sorcery; and where it also comes from that these *sortilegi* for the most part have foul faces.

To the first question St Thomas [Thomas Aquinas] answers in the first part, q. 114. arti. 4. Ad 3: that this can indeed come about in two ways. In one way from within, inasmuch as the demon can alter the imagination [*fantasia*] of anyone, and the bodily senses too,

so that something is seen otherwise than it is. This is also said to happen at times by the power of certain bodily things — as he sets down an example elsewhere, that a certain herb placed at the light of a candle makes beams appear as serpents. In another way from without: since the demon can take on a form and a body out of air, of whatever shape and figure he pleases, so that in taking it on he appears visibly in it, by the same reasoning he can wrap around any bodily thing whatever bodily form he pleases, so that the thing is seen under the appearance of that form. Hence the demon, who forms some species in

a man's imagination, can likewise present the species of another thing to the senses. So far that author [*Hæc ille*].

But Guil. Parisiensis [Guillaume d'Auvergne], in the last part of *De vniuerso*, says that the work of demons is done in several ways. First, by the natural application of some thing, since in this he has more power and more knowledge than a man has, especially when God permits him to carry it through, as was said above. In a second way, having taken on a body, he can display himself as some thing that he is not — as a lettuce, for instance, as seems to have happened to the nun whom Gregory reports in the first book of the *Dialogues*, who was possessed by the demon the moment she had tasted it. Or as a lump of gold, as we read was done to blessed Anthony; or

he can display himself as a wolf, or a bear, or other things of this kind, and so cover another thing with the body he has taken on. Third, he can disturb the organ of sight, so that a thing which is clear is seen as clouded, and the like — just as after weeping a light looks different than it did before. Fourth, by working on the imaginative power through a transmutation of the sensible species, or by stirring up various humours, so that fiery or watery things of this kind appear. St Thomas states, at I. par. q. III. art. 3, q [quod] — that, as Nider says as well, this is what happens naturally in melancholics and in those possessed by demons.

The demon nevertheless deceives virgins, male or female, who are suited to this, for a threefold cause, although he could show the same things to the corrupted. The first: so that he may falsely feign that he loves the chastity which he hates — for he hates in the highest degree that most chaste Virgin who crushed the head of the serpent, and so he lies in wait for her heel. Hence God said to the serpent: *I will put enmities between you and the woman, and your seed and her seed; she shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for her heel.* Genesis 3. St Thomas says the same in *De potentia Dei* q. 6. ar. 10. ad 4: that demons summoned by virgins come in order to lead people into the opinion that they are divine, as though they loved purity. Second, so that in this way they may deceive the souls of the workers of harmful magic, and of those who believe them, once these are inclined to friendship with the demon, through unfaithfulness — a vice under the appearance of good, not under the appearance of evil. Third, so that in this way he may injure the bodies of the innocent, or of those less infected with vices; for afterwards (as experience makes plain) such people frequently have a more horrible look than they had before, from the traces of demons left behind in the eyes or in the face of the one who has seen them.

This much is drawn from the doctors already named. But Jean Gerson too, in *de distinctione verarum visionum à falsis*, part one, speaks as follows: "Moreover, anyone who examines the sacrilegious and impious traditions of the magic arts even a little more keenly recognizes very easily that a great many observances are laid down there — concerning immoderate fasts and other matters — for no other end than the disturbing of the senses and of reason. So it comes about

that those given over to such practices generally fall into insanity, and take on a terrifying disorder of the face and of the eyes.” So far Gerson.

But we see this by natural reason and by experience as well. For, as a certain Spanish preacher puts it: [Spanish: *Amarillo bazeel* [recte: *haze el*] *oro al que sige suminero y tenblador el thesoro dela azogue aldel venero.*] — which is to say: gold makes pale the man who follows his own ore, and the treasure of quicksilver makes the man who works its vein tremble; and so with the other minerals. For if the face of Moses was made shining through his converse with the divine word, so that the children of Israel could not look upon his face because of the brightness of his countenance, as Exodus 34 has it,

it is no wonder if the faces of these necromancers [*nigromantici*] and sacrilegious men appear foul and utterly hideous from their converse with visions of demons so horrible — like the faces of the foul animals in which those demons appear. Of these, as St Thomas says on Job, chapter 19, lecture 2, at the beginning, on the gravity of this sin: demons frequently appear in the shapes of beasts, and those shapes mark out their conditions by God's providence.

FINIS.