

Hermes his } Divine Pymander,  
                  } and Asclepius.

*Hermes Trismegistus*

HIS  
Second Book,  
CALLED  
*Asclepius.*

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Containing fifteen Chapters,  
With  
A Commentary.

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MDCLVII.

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THE  
Second Book  
OF  
*Hermes Trismegistus.*

CHAP. I.

**T**Hou, *Asclepius*, serves  
in stead of a Sun un-  
to me; for God hath  
brought thee to us,  
that thou mightest be present  
with us in thy divine Discourse,  
being such which may seem  
worthy to carry a greater lustre  
of Piety and Religion, than all  
the works before done of us, or  
any gifts inspired by divine In-  
spiration; which if understand-  
ingly thou shalt regard, thou  
shalt be richly filled with all  
A 2 good

2 The second Book of  
good things thorowout thy  
whole Soul: If notwithstanding  
there be many good things,  
and not one generall, in which  
all things are, for the one is per-  
ceived to consent and agree  
with the other; all these things  
belong to that One, and that  
One is All; for the one so co-  
heres to the other, that they can-  
not be separated. But in the fu-  
ture Discourse, by a diligent  
hearkening, thou shalt fully  
know it. But thou, O **Ascle-  
pius**, proceed a little, and call  
forth him which should be pre-  
sent; who entering, **Asclepius**  
also suggesteth **Amnon** to be  
present. **Trismegistus** saith, No  
Envie hindereth **Amnon** from  
us; for to his name we remem-  
ber many things to be written  
of us, as also to his loving and  
dear Son, many things of natu-  
rall Philosophy, and of many  
Out-

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 3

Outlandish and strange things:  
but this Tractate I will ascribe  
to your name, neither call any  
other save **Amnon**, lest a molt  
devout Discourse of so weighty  
a matter should be violated by  
the intervention and presence of  
many comers; for it is an argu-  
ment of no honest and religious  
heart, to publish a Tractate re-  
plenisht with the fulnesse of the  
divine Majesty, to the view of  
every mans conscience. Holy  
**Amnon** being now entered into  
a private closet, fitted with the  
Religion of four men, and the  
Divine Presence of God, in  
much reverence and secrecie he  
begins thus to declare himself  
in the name of all the **Hermes-  
tes** to the consciences and souls  
of them who are prepared to  
hear.

**Trism.** O **Asclepius** the soul  
of every man is immortall, but

A 3 not

4 The second Book of  
not all alike; for there is a difference both in the time and manner.

**Asclep.** No indeed, O **Trismegistus**, for every Soul is of one quality.

**Trism.** O **Asclepius**, how quickly hast thou learned, by the very light of reason; for said I not this, That all things are one, and one all things? that all things were in the Creatour, before he created all things; neither unworthily is he said to be All, whose parts are all things: therefore in this whole Discourse have a care to remember him, who being One, is All, even the very Creatour of all things; all things descend from Heaven into the Earth, into the Water, and into the Air. The Fire onely, in that it is carried upward, is lively subservient to that which descends; for  
what-

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 5

whatsoever descends from above is generating, and whatsoever ascends upward is nourishing; the earth alone abiding in it self, is the receiver of all things, and the restorer of all things she receiveth. In this therefore wholly (as you said) even all things, both the Soul and the World, are naturally moved and concluded. So the various equality of every shape being differenced, that the **Species** of the qualities, by distance, may be known to be infinite, yet so united to this, that the whole may seem one, and from that one, all to have their being; wherefore the whole World are the four Elements of which it is compounded, Fire, Water, Earth, Air; one World, one Soul, one God. Now be thou present with me, as much as thou art able, both in minde, and wisdom; for the reason of

A 4 the

6 The second Book of  
the Divinity which is to be  
known by the divine intention  
of the understanding, is most  
like unto a Torrent running  
with a violent and swift stream  
from a high Rock, whereby it  
glides away from the under-  
standing of such, who are either  
Hearers or Dealers in it.

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This first Chapter teacheth,  
that all things belong to one, and  
that all things are one, of one, as  
from which all things are, One;  
as all the effects which in their  
cause are one, as that every mans  
Soul is immortall: but yet after  
a different sort. All things de-  
scend from Heaven; that which  
descendeth affords generation, that  
which ascendeth and goeth up-  
ward, giveth onely life. This  
thing*

*Hermes Trismegistus. 7  
thing to be one, of which all things  
are: and this which is all things  
to move the world, and all the  
forms of which the world is com-  
pounded, to wit, the Fire, the Air,  
the Water, and the Earth. And  
as all bodies make one body of one  
world, so it will have all the forms  
of things to make one uniform  
form of one world, which it cal-  
leth the Form of the world; and  
these are one Body, one Soul, one  
World, one God; from whom Di-  
vine Understanding and the Word  
passeth from above, with a swift  
lightening downwards, like unto  
a swift Torrent, which flows in-  
to, and fills all things, and this  
Divine VVisdom and the VVord,  
what is it (I pray) but the Divi-  
nity, or Divine VVisdom it self,  
which is the Creatour of all  
things, which as the wise man  
sings, is the onely Mover of all  
things, and which being one can*

8 The second Book of  
*do all things, and which abiding  
in it self changeth all things.  
This is the first part.*

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CHAP. II.

**H**Eaven therefore is the  
sensible preserver of all  
those bodies whose encrease and  
decrease the Sun and Moon, have  
as it were power of. But God  
who is the Creator of all things  
is the Governour of Heaven, and  
of its Soul, and of all things in  
the world. For from all the  
foresaid things, of all which  
there is a Governour, there  
is a frequent influence carried  
through the world by nature it  
self, and by the soul of every  
Genus and Species in it: for the  
world is prepared of God to be

a

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 9

a receptacle of every sort  
of Species or form; and fashi-  
oning out nature by the forms,  
hath brought the world by the  
four Elements even to Heaven.  
All the works of God which are  
pleasing to the eye, and which  
hang over us are divided into  
Species, and in that manner I  
am now about to relate. The  
**Genera**, or kinds, of all things  
follow their **Species** for that the  
**Genus** is the totality, or sub-  
stance of it, & the **Species** a part  
of the **Genus**: wherefore there  
is a **Genus** of good Spirits, and  
a **Genus** of bad, as also of men;  
and likewise of Birds, and of all  
things which the world hath, it  
begets **Species** like to it self:  
there is another **Genus** of brute  
Beasts wanting indeed under-  
standing and reason, but yet not  
a soul or life, whereby it takes  
delight in Benefits, & pines and

MORINES

10 The second Book of

mournes away at injuries. I say of all things which live on the Earth by the preservation of Roots, and Plants, whose **Species** are dispersed throughout the whole Earth, the very Heaven it self is full of the Majesty of God, whose **Genus** inhabiteth that place where all **Species** are immortal; for the **Species** is a part of the **Genus**, as the Soul a part of man being a point of necessity to follow the quality of its **Genus** from whence it proceeds, that albeit every **Genus** or kind be immortal, yet every **Species** is not immortal; but the **Genus** of the godhead and the **Species** are immortal, yet the kinds of other things whose eternity remains in the **Genus**, albeit it dyes in the **Species**, is yet preserved by the fruitfulness of growing: therefore the **Species**

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 11

**Species** are mortall as man is mortall, his soul immortal; yet with every **Genus** the **Species** of every **Genus** is mixed, some which before were made, some made of these; but all these which were made are either of God, of Angels, or of men; being all formes most like unto their kindes: for it is impossible for Bodies to be formed without the will of God; **Species** to be fashioned without the help of Spirits, or brute Beasts to be ordered or disciplined without men. Whatsoever therefore ill Spirits swarving from their kind are joynd into the form of any **Species** of a divine **Genus**, are by that Proximity and nearness accounted like unto Gods, but the **Species** of which Spirits persevering in the quality of their kind, and these loving the wisdom of man are called Spirits;

12 The second Book of  
rits : there is also the like **Spe-**  
**ctes** of men, but more large; for  
the **Species** of mankind is of  
many Shapes, and full of vari-  
ety, and coming from above from  
the aforesaid fellowship makes  
a conjunction of necessity almost  
with all other **Species**, in which  
respect it comes nearest to God;  
who with Divine worship hath  
joyned himself unto God, even  
in that holinesse he requires;  
and they come nearest to ill  
Spirits, who joyne themselves  
to them: and those men who are  
contented with a mediocrity in  
their **Genus**, shall be like those  
**Species** they resemble and  
joyne themselves to.

The  
COMMENTARY.

The Second Chapter for the bet-  
ter understanding of what is and  
shall

Hermes Trismegistus. 13  
shall be said, intimateth that Mer-  
curius doth use the word Animal  
in a far other signification then we  
have accustomed, as also the  
word Anima. For out of the Se-  
cond Dialogue of Pimander he  
defineth the Soul by motion; where-  
fore whatsoever hath a moving  
faculty by the observance of his  
speech, hath Animam a Soul;  
whatsoever hath Soul and Body is  
Animal. The Heaven therefore  
is an Animal, so likewise the  
world, Plants, and the Elements.  
But it is our custome only to call  
that an Animal, which is a living  
Creature, and hath sense; Anima  
we define not only by motion but by  
Life, Sense, Voluntary motion, and  
Understanding. Therefore when we  
hear of the word Animal let us  
take it in his sense, and not in our  
own. But now to the Dialogue;  
he compareth Heaven and Hea-  
venly bodies to other sensible things



14 The second Book of  
as a man to other Creatures ; but  
yet man with other Creatures as  
a reasonable Soul, and Hea-  
ven with other sensible things as  
a sensible preserver. But that  
God is the Ruler & Governor of all  
things which are in the world, is  
nothing else, but that God provideth  
for all things, dispenseth all things  
in their kinds and Species, of all  
which the World is the receptacle,  
and God imparteth to every one as  
to a fit instrument some gift or  
propriety; as the Sun and Moon  
are the Divine Organs for the  
Springing and growing of things,  
and for their encrease, and de-  
crease, and disposeth of men by  
Angels, and of brutes by men.  
But what he speaks of spirits, that  
Species cannot be formed without  
their help, and that certain have  
cleaved to a divine Genus, and  
in nearness and conversation have  
been accounted like unto Gods, and  
certain

Hermes Trismegistus. 15  
certain in the quality of their Ge-  
nus to have persevered Lovers of  
the wisdom of men. We know,  
out of the sacred Scriptures, that  
those Angels which kept not their  
first State, but left their habita-  
tion, were reserved in everlasting  
chains, under darkness unto the  
judgment of the great day: for al-  
beit they counterfeited themselves to  
be Lovers of men, yet they love  
them not, but draw them to the  
same damnation which they them-  
selves have had from the Begin-  
ning. They counterfeited even to  
love, when they brought death up-  
on all men, saying, Ye shall not  
die, but shall be as Gods knowing  
good and evil: what therefore he  
here speaketh of Angels or Spirits,  
can not seeme fitly to be applyed to  
any divine knowledge, but to imi-  
tate the error of the Gentiles; but  
what he speaks of men are those  
which cleave unto God and grow  
religious,

16 The second Book of

religious; but those which joyn themselves unto evil Spirits we confesse to be those which shall be received into the Company of Devils, and shall be joyned unto the evil Angels which shall be reserved, (as hath been said) in eternal chaines under darknesse unto the great day; for we know it pronounced out of Gods mouth what he will say to them on the left hand in the day of Judgment, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill, and his angels; and who are those, but those who are joyned unto them, and love the works of darknesse in this life? Thus much for the Second Chapter.

CHAP.

Hermes Trismegistus. 17

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CHAP. III.

**I**N this regard, O Asclepius, Man is a great miracle, a Creature both to be revered and honored being after the nature & Image of God, as though he were a God. This the Angels know, for as much as they were created after the same nature, but disdained part of the humane Nature, & relied only on the Divine Nature. O therefore, the more temperate the Nature of man is, and comes nearest to God and to the divinity, the more he despiseth that part of his, whereby he becomes earthly; all other things below, with whom he must

18 The second Book of  
must needs be, he knoweth  
with a Heavenly disposition, and  
are near unto him in way of  
Charity, yet his desires are in  
heaven: so therefore he is happily  
placed in the midst, that what  
things are here below him he  
loveth, and is himself beloved  
of those things above. He  
inhabiteh the earth, and by his  
agility is mixed with the Ele-  
ments, yet by the sharpnesse of  
his understanding he divideth in-  
to the depths of the ~~Sea~~; all  
things appear manifest to him  
neither do the Heavens seem to  
be above his reach, but as it were  
near by the quicknesse of his  
Spirit; no obscurity or darknesse  
of Air, can disturbe his fan-  
tasie, no thicknesse of ground  
can hinder his endeavour, nor  
depth of water hinder his eye-  
sight; all things are the same  
with him, even all creatures  
whether

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 19  
whether they take root from  
above or below. Things with-  
out life, grow upwards from  
one root into woods and bush-  
es; some are nourished with  
two Elements, some with one;  
the food is for two parts, the Life  
and the Body, of which the *Anti-*  
*mal* consisteth. The soul of  
the World is alwaies nourished  
by a continuall and restles agita-  
tion. Corporeall things encrease  
and are nourished by such  
things which the water and  
earth affordeth. The Spirit,  
of which all things are full, is  
mixt with all things, quickens  
and inlivens all things, adding  
sense unto the understanding  
of man, which fifth part by Di-  
vine Inspiration is only gran-  
ted to man; and which not to be  
seen in any other Creatures doth  
beautifie advance and lift up the  
understanding of man to the  
knowledge

20. The second Book of  
knowledge of divine mysteries;  
but for that I am put in minde  
to speak of the understanding,  
I will hereafter expound the  
reason of it unto you; for it is  
most holy, excellent, and no lesse  
than that which belongs to the  
Divinity it self: but now I will  
dispatch what I began; for I said  
in the beginning, that in the  
nearnesse and conjunction of  
the Deity onely, men enjoy the  
favour of God: for whosoever  
have attained to so much felicity,  
that they perceive that Divine  
Sense or Understanding, they are  
nearest unto the Divinity and  
Wisdom of God, which men onely  
partake of.

*Asclep.* O *Trismegistus*,  
there is not a like understanding  
of all men.

*Trism.* O *Asclepius*, All  
men have not attained that true  
Understanding, but apprehending

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 21

ing some false fantasie, and that  
without any true reason, out of  
a rash opinion, are meerly de-  
ceived, which begets wicked-  
nesse in the minde, and trans-  
forms the best man into the na-  
ture and likenesse of a beast. But  
of the Understanding and the  
like, when I come to speak of  
the Spirit, I will give you the  
full reason; for man is only of  
two parts: the one part simple,  
which the Græcians call *εισωδης*,  
or which we call the Image of  
God; but the other fourfold,  
which the Græcians call *κοσμικον*,  
and we the earthly substance, or  
pourtraiture, being the body, in  
which is inclosed that which we  
have affirmed to be the divine  
part of man, which is his Soul.  
In which the pure Divinity of  
the Soul, with the sense and feel-  
ing of a clear conscience, resteth  
at peace within it self, as within  
a Castle of Defence. *The*

The  
COMMENTARY.

This third Chapter extolleth the dignity of man, in which the Authour of so great benefits is chiefly to be acknowledged, and for ever to be praised and lauded, who hath honoured man with such excellent gifts; for, as he meaneth, man is made, that he might be like unto Angels, acknowledging them both to be, and that they are born with him, whom he hath to be his Guardians and Preservers, even from the first beginning of his nativity, consisting of a nature near unto Immortality, marked with the character or image of God, compounded of a mortall and immortal, earthly and supernaturall part: but who soareth after diuine things, despiseth and undervalues

values these earthly, hath his assistance in immortall and heavenly things, looks up and sighs after Heaven, knowing that to be the place of the better part of him, & of neereſt affinity to his Soul: nevertheless, he is placed here in the middeſt of the world, tying other things here below unto him, with whom (by Divine Ordinance) he knows he muſt needs be in the bond of love and charity, loving ſe theſe earthly things, that he may be loved of heavenly. He inhabiteth the earth by his agility, is mixed with the elements, & by the ſharpeſſe of his underſtanding, deſcends into the deſcend. All things are manifeſt to him. Heavens ſeem not to be above his reach: for that by the quickneſſe of his Spirit he perceives them to be (as it were) neer unto him. The darkneſſe of the air can neither con-found the intention of his minde,

nor yet the thicknesse of the earth hinder his endeavour, or the depth of the waters obscure his eye-sight; and above all creatures, God hath beautified, advanced, and lifted up the understanding of man, to partake of Divine Knowledge; the understanding being onely the celestiall and immortall part, and challengeth a Divine Essence, and some men have attained to this Divine Knowledge, and therein are happy, bearing alwayes a zealous and religious minde towards God. Others content themselves onely with a shadow of Divine Knowledge, which whoso followeth, erreth and is deceived; for this mist of a shadow of godlinesse, begetteth wickednesse in their mindes which are so deceived, and transforms a man (though by nature a creature good and divine) into the likenesse and condition of a beast.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

**A**sclep. Why then, O Trismegistus, must man have his abode in the world, and not most happily live in that part where God is?

**Trism.** Thou rightly enquirest, **Asclepius**: For we also beseech God, that he will enable us to give the reason; for seeing all things depend on his will, then even those also which are most mysterious, the reason of which we endeavour to unfold, by our present discourse: Hear therefore, O **Asclepius**: The Lord who is the Creatour of all things, whom we truly call God, made the world first, which might be perceived and seen: but yet I affirm it to have

B 2 na

26 The second Book of  
no sense. For of this, whether  
it hath or no, I will declare an-  
other time; but so that it may  
be seen of all. Because there-  
fore he made this first, and that  
the work seemed fair and good  
unto him; as most full of the va-  
riety of good things, he loved it  
as a part of his Divinity and  
Power; and therefore, because  
it was of such excellencie and  
goodnesse, he would have Man  
made, that he might behold the  
works he had thus made, and  
likewise imitate his Wisdom  
and Providence; for the will of  
God is the chiefest perfection,  
in that he fulfilled both his will  
and his deed, in one and the  
same moment of time. When  
therefore God perceived that that  
image of his (the Soul) could  
not be studious of all things, un-  
lesse he should cloath it with an  
earthly covering, he builded for  
it

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 27

it this house of clay, confound-  
ing and mixing both parts in-  
to one, as much as each body  
should be capable: Wherefore  
he made Man of an immortall  
Soul, and mortall Body, that be-  
ing a Creature thus composed,  
he might satisfie both ends,  
which was, to be in admiration  
of Heaven and to pray for spi-  
rituall and heavenly things, and  
to inhabit, and govern these  
earthly things below: and I do  
not onely avouch the Earth and  
the Water to be mortall things,  
which two (out of the four Ele-  
ments) Nature hath subjected  
to the use of man; but all other  
things whatsoever belonging to  
man, as tillage, pastorage, build-  
ings, ports, shipping, navigation,  
traffique, & merchandise, which  
is the strongest bond of humane  
Society: And there is a part of  
the world which is Water and

B 3 Earth,

28 The second Book of Earth that which is the Earthly part of the world is preserved for the knowledge and use of Arts, and discipline without which God would not have the world to be perfect, for necessity followeth the pleasure of God; and the effects follow his will, for it is not credible that God should be displeased with his own will for he knew long before what would be, and what would please him.

### The COMMENTARY.

This fourth Chapter, why God did not place man in the spiritnall region but in this world; and the answer is plaine, and also why he formed man of both natures a mortall and immortall; and why the soul which he created after his own Image and likenesse, he put in  
a

Hermes Trismegistus. 29

a corporeall and earthy closure; and that the will of God is the chief perfection of things, which necessity follows, and effect the necessity; for God fulfilled both his will, and his deed in one and the same moment of time. That he calleth the world, the second Deity, is as much as if you should call a second duetie and unity; for two is one and one two, but one is absolutely one, but two not absolutely one but by participation and contraction one, and the duety one. So there is one absolutely God, but the world is not God, but God by participation, being the very stamp of all sensible and detestable things. Thus, for the fourth part of Alclopis.

B 4

CHAP.



## CHAP. V.

**B**Ut, O *Asclepius*, I observe that thou dost earnestly desire to heare, how a man may come to enjoy that musically harmony and divine Worship, which belongs to heaven. Wherefore hear, O *Asclepius*, there is one frequent assemblie amongst men for this service of God; and this no other Creature can perform but man alone. For God is only pleased and delighted that man should extoll his admired work, sing praises of thanksgiving unto him, and perform such worship and service as belongs to his holy name. Neither do those heavenly graces unworthily descend into the congregations

tions of men, lest that this earthly World should seeme unbeautified in respect of the want of this heavenly and sweet Musick; but rather that his name who is the Father of all things, might be celebrated with the well tuned voices, and comely praises of men. So that neither in heaven nor earth this sweet Harmony of thanksgiving might cease; for there are some men (though few in number) that are indued with so divine and holy a spirit, that their care is only to please, reverence, and serve the Lord: but whose ever through the confusion of both natures, the flesh prevailing, have darkned their spirituall understanding, they are so much given over to their own lusts, and are only intent upon these outward and lower things. Therefore a man is not to be

32 The second Book of  
esteemed the weaker in respect  
that he is in part mortall, but  
peradventure thereby he may  
seem the more fitly and effectually  
composed to encrease in  
full knowledge and understand-  
ing, to wit, because unlesse he  
had been made of both natures  
he could not have sustained  
both, therefore was he framed  
of both that he might have both  
an earthly and divine choice.  
I desire thee O *Asclepius*, not  
only to harken unto the reason  
of this tractate; but also to en-  
ertain it with much Zeal & fer-  
vency of Spirit. For the reason  
to many is incredible, but to  
devouter mindes it seemes true  
and good; wherefore from  
hence I will begin.

The

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 33

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This fifth Chapter sets forth  
that sweet Musick granted to men,  
to set forth the praises of God, which  
we know the prophet did well con-  
ceive, who being full of the spirit of  
God, commanded to sing psalmes  
unto the Lord with a loud voice,  
and in the assemblies to praise the  
Lord, upon the Cymbals, upon  
the Like, Harp, and Organs, for  
this is the chief end both of singing  
and Musicks. The Letter is in  
it self conspicuous.*

CHAP. VI.

**T**He Lord of eternity is first  
God, secondly the World,  
and thirdly Man. The maker  
of

34 The second Book of  
of the World is God, and all  
things therein governing all  
things with man whom he hath  
appointed **Uicegerent** or go-  
vernour, whom he hath made, pro-  
perly to take the Charge of his  
whole work, that both he and  
the world might be an Orna-  
ment of praise unto himself,  
that by this divine composition  
of man, the world in Greek  
might be the more truly called  
*κόσμος*, that is, an Order or Or-  
nament. For he knew himself,  
and knew the world to wit that  
remembering what resem-  
blance it had with his parts,  
what was for his use, and what  
for his service, He might la-  
bour to give praise and great  
thanks unto God and to hon-  
our his Image; being not Igno-  
rant, that he was made also  
after the Image of God, of  
which there are two Images, to  
wit

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 35  
wit the world and man; whereby  
it cometh to passe, that for as  
much as there is but one joyning  
together on that part, he con-  
sists of soul and sense, and Spi-  
rit and understanding he is di-  
vine, and thereby may seeme  
to ascend up into heaven; but  
on his earthly part which con-  
sists of fire, water, and air, he  
remains a mortall Creature  
upon earth, is altogether fixed  
on the things below and swal-  
lowed up of Nature; for so man  
is partly divine and partly mor-  
tall abiding in one body, but he  
hath a measure of each.  
Religion before all men  
(which a virtuous life follows)  
seemes only then to be profit,  
when there is a contempt of all  
lustfull desires and unlawfull  
concupiscence, assisted with all  
manner of virtues. For all such  
things are contrary to the Soul  
and

36 The second Book of  
and Spirituall understanding,  
which are possessed with a corpor-  
al, and earthly desire which are  
well called by the name of goods  
or possessions, in that they are  
not born with us but afterwards  
are possessed of us, wherefore  
all things of this kind are differ-  
ing from man that we may even  
despise the body, and those  
things which we greedily cover,  
or any vice or wickednesse  
which we lustfully desire, for  
so far as he is led by reason; so  
far he is a man; that contem-  
plating of the divinity, he may  
contemn and despise that part of  
his, which is mortall, but only  
so far as necessity compells for  
preservation of the soul. For,  
that man may be most perfect in  
either part, observe him in each  
to be formed of four Ele-  
ments, or principall parts with  
two hands and two feet, and  
other members of his body, with  
which.

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 37  
which he may do service to this  
lower or earthly world, but  
with his other four parts, to wit,  
his understanding, soul, memo-  
ry, and providence, he searcheth  
and looketh into all divine  
causes and things, from whence  
it happens that man with a  
Restles search enquires into the  
diversities, qualities, and effects  
of things. But being hindered  
by the weight, and too much  
imperfection of his body, he  
cannot properly foresee the true  
naturall causes of things. This  
man therefore, so framed and  
fashioned, and that for such a  
ministry & service commanded  
of the great God, as in decently  
governing the world, piously  
worshipping his God, & worthily  
& fitly obedient to both the wills  
of God, what gift dost thou  
think he shall be recompensed  
with? for seeing that this world  
is the work of God, and man  
by

38 The second Book of

by his labour and industry preserveth and encreaseth the beauty of it, joyneth his labour with the will of God, when by the help of his body, and by daily paines and care he adorneth that ~~Species~~ and forme, which by divine wisdom he first created, but with that with which our parents were rewarded? with which also that we may be rewarded if it may seem good to his wisdom, we do most earnestly pray and desire, that he will releate and free us out of this worldly prison, deliver us from these earthly bonds; and restore us like unto the divine nature, pure and holy.

**Aseleph** Thou saiest the very truth, **O Trismegistus**, for this is their reward who live piously towards God, and faithfully to the World; but to them that live otherwise and wickedly, both

a

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 39

a passage is denied them into heaven, and a fearfull change into other shapes, unbecoming a righteous soul. But to proceed, **O Trismegistus**, sundry soules under the hope of future eternity are much indangered in this world, which seemes to some Incredible, to some Fabulous and to others Ridiculous; for the fruit which is reaped by worldly possessions in this temporall life, seemeth to be a very sweet thing, wherefore it obliquely holdeth the soul; that it cleaveth too much on that part of it which is mortall, neither suffers it to take notice of the divine part, envy hating immortality: for I will, as it were by foreknowledge tell you, that none after us shall have simple election, which is true Philosophy; being a frequent beholding a holy worship and knowledge

40 The second Book of  
knowledge of the divinity, for  
many do confound it after a di-  
vers manner; how therefore do  
many men corrupt this in-  
comprehensible Philosophy, or  
diversly confound it.

*Wisr.* O *Asclepius*, in this  
manner mixing it by little de-  
vices into divers disciplines not  
comprehensible, Arithmetick  
Musick Geometrie, but pure  
Philosophy, and that only  
hanging upon divine religion,  
ought to apply it self wholly to  
the rest, that it may admire the  
course of the Starrs and Planets,  
their appointed stations, and  
their Commutations and  
changes to consist of numbers:  
but the dimensions, qualities,  
and quantities of the earth, the  
depth of the Sea, the Vertue of  
fire, and the effects of all these,  
acknowledging nature that it  
may admire, adore, and praise  
art

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 41  
art and an excellent understand-  
ing. But to know Musick is no-  
thing else then to know the Order  
of all things, which pertakes of  
divine wildome; for an order of  
all things artificially pitched up-  
on one generall, will make in di-  
vine Melodie a certain sweet  
founding and most true *Harmo-  
ny.*

*Asclep.* What then shall be-  
come of men after us.

*Wisr.* They shall be decei-  
ved by the Subtly of Sophisters,  
and turned away from pure and  
divine Philosophy; for out of  
a pure mind and soul, to  
worship God, to honour him  
in his works, and to give thanks  
unto him for his will, which is  
only full of goodnesse, this is  
Philosophie violated or cor-  
rupted by no foolish or unseaso-  
nable curiosity of the minde; and  
of these, thus far.

The

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This sixth Chapter discourseth that God is the first God absolutely, the World the second, not absolutely but by participation God, as which is the first Image of an absolutely deity; man, the third God by participation of the divinity, and the second Image of God: but God is not an Image, but the truth of all Images, that man may ascend up into heaven by his soul, by his understanding, by his spirit, by his reason, as it were by the Superior Elements. But wherein he is made of fire, of air, of water, and earth, he is subject to death, and to dote upon all worldly things, deprived of that divine part; That the measure after which a man ought to live, is religion which goodnesse follows, and which seems*  
to

*to be perfit, when being armed with Vertue it despiseth the coveting of other mens goods or any thing hurtfull to it, as possessions, the body it self, and all those things we lust after, even the very sense of appetite. For so far he ought to be called a man, whiles that this opinion is led only by reason, and that in contemplation of the divinity he contemneth and despiseth that part of him which is mortall; more then may serve for the preservation of his life.*

*Aclepius divineth that of the succeeding Egyptians, that there shall be none after them to attain to the pure Philosophy of the knowledge of God. Now Hermes asketh, to what end man ought to learn the dimensions of the earth, that is Geometry, the qualities, quantities, the depth of the Sea, and the nature of fire, and the effects of all these, that is the Universall Philosophy,*

44 The second Book of  
lofophy of numbers, celeftiall  
globes, and naturall things, cer-  
tainly to admire, adore, and  
praise, the Art, excellent Invention  
and Workman of all these for this is  
pure Philosophy and only depending  
upon divine religion; this is Musick,  
this is harmony, to know the or-  
der of all things, which all divini-  
ty partaketh of, and which artifi-  
cially pitched upon one generall,  
will make in divine melody, a cer-  
tain well tun'd and most sweet har-  
mony and that is Philosophy, which  
is corrupted by no unfit curiosity of  
the minde, which with a pure soul  
and mind doth worship the diety,  
and honour his works, as also to  
give thanks for the will of God,  
which is so full of goodnesse, and  
confirmeth the Prophecy of Ascle-  
pius. This is the sixth partiti-  
on.

CHAP.

Hermes Trismegistus. 45

CHAP. VII.

**O**F a Spirit, and such like, I  
will now begin. There  
was God, and Hyle, which in  
Greek signifieth the world, and  
the Spirit was in the world; but  
not as with God, neither are  
those things God, of which the  
world is, wherefore they were  
not, when they were not crea-  
red; but even then they were  
in that, from whence they had  
their being. For those things  
are not onely said to be, which  
are not yet created, but those  
also which have not a fruitfu-  
nesse in generating; so that no-  
thing can be produced and ge-  
nerated of them. Whatsoever  
things therefore have in them a  
nature of conceiving, those are  
things



46 The second Book of

things apt to ingender, which may be created of these, albeit they ingender, or are created of themselves; wherefore God everlasting, God eternall, neither is, or could be begotten; he both is, hath been, and ever shall be. This is that therefore which in it self is the whole nature of God.

But the nature of the world, and of the Spirit, albeit they seem to be created from the beginning; yet they have in themselves a vertue of begetting and procreation, as also fruitfulness; for a beginning is in the quality of the nature, which contains in it self a quality, and nature of conception and birth. This is therefore onely generable, or easie to be ingendered without the conception of another; but that which hath in it onely the vertue of  
concei-

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 47

conceiving, is by the mixture of another nature. So they are to be discerned, that this place of the world may not seem to be created with those things which are in themselves, as which hath in it self the power of whole Nature. I call it a place in which are all things; for neither could all these things be, if a place were wanting which might contain all things; for a place was to be provided for all things that were; for neither the quantities, nor qualities, nor situations, or effects, can be known of things which are not: therefore the world, albeit it be not so created, yet it contains in it self the nature of all things, as which giveth (in all things) rich and fruitfull matter to conceive. This is therefore that whole quality & matter which maybe created,  
C red,

48 The second Book of

red, albeit it be not created: For as Nature is a fruitfull matter of quality, so the same is as fruitfull in malignity. Neither have I said, O *Asclepius* and *Ammon*, which is said of many, whether God could weaken and turn away evil from the nature of things? To which we answer not at all; yet for your sake I will prosecute what I began, and give a reason: For they affirm, that God ought all manner of wayes to have freed the world from wickednesse; for he is so in the world, as though he seems to be a member, or part of it; for it is so provided and ordained by the most high God, as much as with reason he could then, when he hath vouchsafed to dignifie the mindes of men with sense, discipline, & understanding; for with those things in which we excel other creatures, we can only shun the deceit of

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 49

sin, guile, and all other corruption. For he, before that he is ensnared in them, shall by the very sight & ugliness of them, avoid them, that man is guarded with divine knowledge and wisdom; for it is the foundation of discipline, consisting in the excellencie of knowledge: for by the Spirit all things are ministered, and refreshed in the world, and (as it were) an organ, or instrument, is subject to the will of the great God. Wherefore hitherto in our souls, let us conceive of that wise Moderatour and sensible Governour of God, which is called the Spirit, or holy Ghost, which comprehends in it self every place, and the substance of every thing, and the full matter of things begotten and created; and whatsoever else in the world, either for substance, quality, or quantity: for

50 The second Book of

all the **Species** in the world, and every thing according to that nature which is given it of God, is moved and governed by the Spirit. But the world is the receptacle of all things, and the haunt and place to move in for all creatures, of which God is the Governour, dispensing in all worldly things, as much as is necessary to every one, who with his Spirit fills all things, of what nature and quality soever. For the world is round, like unto a Ball or sphere, being for the form or qualities sake invisible to it self. For if you shall chuse any high place in it only to look down, thou canst not see from thence what is below, and because it consists of many places and parts, it is supposed to have a quality and by the alone forms of the **Species**, in whose **Effigies** it seems to be engraven, it

is

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 51

is supposed to be visible, when it is shewed, drawn out, or painted, but indeed it is always to it self invisible. Whereby, the bottom or lowest part of the Sphere (if there be any) is called in Greek *Ωδης*, for *ὠδῆν* in the Greek tongue signifieth to see, which sight the bottom of the Sphere may want, whereupon the **Species** are called *ὠδῆν*, for that they are of an invisible form; and for that they are deprived of light, the Grecians call *Ωδῆν*, and for that they are in the bottom of the Sphere, the Latines, **Inferi**. These are therefore the ancient principles, or are (as it were) beginnings and heads of all things contained in any part or parts of these.

**Asclep.** All these things therefore, as you speak of, which are earthly, O **Trismegistus**,

e 3                      are

52 The second Book of  
are present as well in every  
*Species*, as in the full substance  
of every thing.

*Trism.* Therefore the world  
nourisheth the bodies, the Spi-  
rit the life or soul and sense, or  
reason; the understanding being  
a gift with which man is only en-  
riched, neither all men but few  
who have a heart & judgment to  
be capable of so great a benefit:  
for as the world is inlightned by  
the Sun; so mans minde is il-  
luminated by this light & much  
more. For whatsoever the Sun  
doth enlighten, by the Eclipses  
and interposition of Earth and  
the Moon, and by the approach  
of night; it loseth, and is depri-  
ved of that light: but reason  
when it shall be once mixed  
with mans Soul it becomes; by  
that lively & growing mixture,  
of

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 53  
of one nature with it. So that  
minds thus qualified are never  
intangled with misty and ob-  
scure errors. Whereby the  
sense or reason may well be said  
to be the soul or Spirit of God;  
but I say not of all, but of  
some excellent, and principall  
ones.

#### The COMMENTARY.

*The seventh Chapter containeth a hidden Philosophy of the generation, and matter of the World, of the Spirit accompanying it, and of the place. The world in God he calleth the Common place, wherefore he will not have the place of the world to be created, but that it is created and not created, created indeed if you respect*  
C 4 the

54 The second Book of  
the workmanship of the Creatures,  
and not created if you respect the  
truth of the workmanship. For  
the world and the spirit, to wit the  
world and a certain divine power  
passing, and disfusung it self  
through all things, were not in the  
world when they were not created,  
but he saith they were in that from  
whence they were to be created;  
but in what were they, but in that  
divine word by which all things  
were made? But in which and  
what was made was life, and  
from whence at length every thing  
came that was made. The world  
to be as fruitfull in evil as good,  
being as capable of evil as good,  
as the Earth is fruitfull both of  
medicinable Herbs and hurtfull  
Weeds, and that the earth hath by  
a kind of propriety, so likewise  
the World notwithstanding God  
(as much as with reason he  
might) hath provided for men reason

Hermes Trismegistus. 55  
son, discipline, and understanding,  
against this kind of materiall pro-  
priety, least sinne should overrunne  
the World, as brambles and hurt-  
full weeds, a neglected and untilled  
desert or wildernesse. Moreover of  
the spirits disfusung through all  
things, and those things that be un-  
der us, of sense or reason, which is a  
distilling of divine graces into  
mens souls, as of the Sun beames on  
the eyes, he discourseth somewhat  
in this seventh part.

---

CHAP. VIII.

Asclep. Whom affirm you, O  
Trismegistus, to be the  
heads and beginings of the first  
Principles.  
Trism. I reveal & disclose unto  
thee great & divine Mysteries of  
which

56 The second Book of  
which I now begin by the desi-  
red help and assistance of God.  
There are divers kinds of Gods,  
and of those one part intelli-  
gible, another sensible. They  
are called intelligibles, not be-  
cause they may be supposed not  
to be subject to our senses, (for  
we perceive them more then  
those which we call visibles)  
as our discourse shall shew, and  
thou if thou mark it maiest per-  
ceive: for divine reason passing  
beyond the reach and capacity  
of men, if thou with good care,  
and great attention listen not  
unto the speakers, will fly away  
and passe through thee, and re-  
turne to the Fountain of it own  
waters. There are therefore  
chief Lords or Gods of all Spe-  
cies, the Prince of whom is  
Ista; these are like one to ano-  
ther in their Original, who by  
nature effect all things, every  
one

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 57  
one illuminating one anothers  
work. The chief Lord of Hea-  
ven or whatsoever is concluded  
under that name, is Jupiter,  
for from Heaven Jupiter gives  
life to all. The chiefe Lord of  
the Sun, is the Light. For the  
benefit of light is distributed un-  
to us by the globe of the Sun.  
There are 34. Lords of the ho-  
roscope, or which speculate in-  
to the Hours of Nativity, placed  
alwayes amongst the fixed Pla-  
nets, the Prince of these they  
call Παντόμορφος, that is, which  
hath all snapes or which, in dif-  
ferent Species, makes divers  
Shapes. The seven wander-  
ing Planets have also their  
Lords which they call, Fortune  
and Fate by which all things are  
changed which, were firmly sta-  
blished by the law of nature, & al-  
tered by a continual motion. But  
the Aire is the Organ of instru-  
ment

58 The second Book of  
ment of all things, in which all  
things are brought to passe; and  
the chief Lord or Prince of this is  
second in degree conferring  
mortall things, and the like, up-  
on mortall Creatures. These  
things therefore being so, that  
these lower things are moved by  
the higher; So likewise all  
naturall things are joynd to  
themselves, as mortall things  
with mortall, and sensible  
things with sensible. But the  
chief matter of Government,  
belongs to that great Lord, being  
not many but only one for from  
that one all things descend: rather  
flowing from him when they  
seem to be distant, & are suppo-  
sed to be a many things apart by  
themselves but indeed are uni-  
ted being one or rather two  
from whom all things are ef-  
fected, and from which they are  
created; that is; the matter of  
which they are made, & from his  
will,

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 59  
will by which other things are  
brought to passe.

*Asclep.* Again, what is the  
reason of this, O *Trismegistus*?

*Trism.* This, O *Asclepius*.  
For God the Father, or the  
Lord of all things, and whatso-  
ever name he is more religiously  
and devoutly called of men,  
which ought for our understand-  
ing sake to be revered of us,  
in contemplation of so great a  
Majesty, we have expressly called  
him by none of those names,  
for if this sound uttered, setteth  
forth the whole will of man or  
that understanding he shall con-  
ceive by the spirit; the substance  
of which name consisting of a  
few syllables, is limited and  
circumscribed, that there  
might be in man a necessary and  
familiar intercourse betwixt the  
voice, & the eares, the spirit and  
the understanding, and so of  
all things by these: Whether  
then

60 The second Book of  
then the name of God be com-  
plete or wholly in these? for  
I suppose not, that the effici-  
ent cause of all Majesty, and  
the Father and Lord of all  
things, can be expressed by one  
name though compounded of  
many Syllables: it is necessary  
therefore that he should be cal-  
led not by one name but rather  
by all names, (seeing that he  
is both one and all things) be-  
ing meet that all things should  
be his name; or that He  
should be styled by the name of  
All. This therefore being but  
one, as being all, is full of the  
fruitfulnesse of both natures,  
and rich in his own will bring-  
eth forth whatsoever he hath  
a desire to create. His will is  
all goodnes, and this same good-  
nes pertaines to all things, from  
his divinity nature proceeds  
that all things may be as they  
are,

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 61  
are, and have been and in all  
things which shall be, nature  
hence forward may of it self be  
sufficient to beget. Let this  
therefore be the reason given  
thee, O *Asclepius*, wherefore  
and how all things, of both  
sexes are made.

*Asclep.* You mean God,  
*Trismegistus*?

*Trism.* Not only God, O  
*Asclepius*, but all Creatures  
having life, and all Creatures  
without life; for it is impossible  
that any of those things which  
are, should be unfruitfull, for  
fruitfulnesse being barred  
from all things that are, it will  
be impossible that there be a  
perpetuity of those things which  
are: for, I say, that Nature and  
Reason, and the World do con-  
tain in them this nature, and  
preserve in themselves all things  
created; for every Sex is full  
of



The second Book of 62  
of procreation, and the Con-  
junction or uniting of both is  
incomprehensible, which you  
may call Venery or lust or both:  
this therefore being well under-  
stood and clearly conceived, that  
from the God of nature the  
invention and office of procrea-  
tion is for ever, in whom is  
naturally perfect charity, joy,  
mirth, and divine love; and it  
might be said how great the  
force and necessity of his mini-  
stry is but that by the contem-  
plation of him, it is manifest to  
every ones understanding. For  
if you observe the first time  
wherein we are fashioned, how  
both natures frameth an offspring  
either Male, or Female, how  
that the one greedily snatcheth  
the seed of the other, & shuts it  
up close within the womb, and  
lastly how by that common  
Conjunction at the same time  
they

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 63  
they beget men and women,  
which the woman for a certain  
time beareth in her womb. The  
effects therefore of so pleasing,  
and necessary a work, is com-  
mitted in the dark, lest that  
by the derisions and mockings  
of common ignorant fooles,  
the divinity of nature by the  
conjunction of both sexes,  
should be compelled to blush, if  
it should be subject to the open  
view of irreligious and ungodly  
persons, for there are very few  
in the world that may be coun-  
ted modest and religious, where-  
by it hapeneth that in many  
there remains malice and  
lewdnesse, through the want of  
wisdome and knowledge in  
those things which are: for by  
the understanding of divine  
knowledge, and religion, by  
which all things are sweetly  
disposed, and ordered, there  
is

64 The second Book of

is not only a contempt of  
but also medicine for all  
the evils in the world: but so  
long as ignorance and want of  
knowledge abide, there all man-  
ner of sin gets head, and wounds  
the soul with incurable Vices,  
which being infected, and defiled  
with them, swells it, as it  
were with Poyson, which can-  
not be cured but by a soul fur-  
nished with divine graces and  
understanding. If therefore  
only to a few this shall be pro-  
fitable, it is meet to prosecute  
and conclude this tractate, to  
wit, wherefore God hath  
vouchsafed to impart, only un-  
to men understanding and disci-  
pline. Hear therefore, when  
God the Father, and Lord of  
all things, had after other in-  
feriour Gods or Angels made  
man of the corrupter part of  
the world, and of a like measure  
of

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 65

of divinity, it happened that  
sin did remain mixed with those  
Bodies, with a necessary desire  
after food and living, (which  
nature hath given in common  
to other living creatures) as also  
other affections and vices of the  
minde incident to mans cor-  
ruption. But the Angels  
which were made of the purest  
part of nature, and wanting  
no helps of Reason and Know-  
ledge, and in a continuall state  
of immortality yet for unity of  
order, and for discipline, and  
understanding he hath ordained  
by an eternal Law, (being an or-  
der by the Law of necessity limi-  
ted) that they should not be far  
from them, or much different in  
nature; appointing man above all  
creatures to be only endued with  
reason and knowledge by which  
he might shun the corruption &  
vices of his body, hath assigned  
them

66 The second Book of  
them for the purpose and hope  
of immortality, finally he hath  
made man that he might be im-  
morrall of a divine and omorrall  
nature, that it might appear  
that man being thus made after  
the will of God, is in better  
state then the Angels, who are  
made only of an inmorrall na-  
ture, as also all other mortall  
creatures. In which respect,  
man comming nearest to the  
nature of God he should wor-  
ship him in pure and undefiled  
religion with an honest heart,  
and that the Angels with a pi-  
ous and loving affection  
should pity and preserve all hu-  
mane things. But this is spo-  
ken of some few men who are  
indued with chaste and pure af-  
fections; we have nothing to  
do with the Vicious, lest this  
holy discourse be defiled by the  
thought of them. *de iis*  
The

Hermes Trismegistus. 67

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This eighth Chapter treateth of  
the materiall Lords or Princes;  
which he calleth Gods: The Lord  
of Heaven he calleth Jupiter; the  
Lord of the Sun, the Light: he  
reckons 34 Horoscopes, or markers  
of the hours of childrens nativity in  
the same place of the fixed Plan-  
ets, and the chief of these he calleth  
Pantomorphos, and the Lords of  
the seven wandering Spheres; or  
Planets, he maketh Fortune, and  
Fate: also he appointeth a Lord  
of the air: but these seem to be the  
fictions of Devils, and certain va-  
nities smelling of the errors of the  
Gentiles, and which cause those  
which trust in them, rather to pe-  
rish, than to be in any safety. From  
hence he returneth to the contem-  
plation of the most high and inef-  
fable*

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*fable God, or which is to be named by all names, being full of fruitfulness, whereby all things have that which makes them altogether fruitfull: From hence is that love of procreation, and that great work of Nature, which hath nothing deformed or unseemly in it, whiles that the thoughts, speech, and actions be modest and religious; for that is given and permitted for the imitation of divine fruitfulness. But because the greatest part of men is ignorant of these mysteries, they profane these divine Laws, and after the manner of brut beasts, unreverently, unseemly, and outrageously use these things; therefore we dare not speak of such things, even for modesties sake, because those inordinate and irreverent thoughts and gestures are apt to thrust themselves into the minds of men, and not that seemly, holy, and undefiled*

Hermes Trismegistus. 69

*defiled Ordinance of God: and because few have pure and good affections, I suppose that we should neither think, or speak much of this matter. Then he addeth, that God hath bestowed onely upon men reason and understanding, whereby that immortall, and divine part of him might shun vices, which otherwise, by the admixture of his earthly substance, he might easily run into: for by reason of this body and dissoluble part, men must needs fall into lusts, and other temptations of the mind. This, of the eighth Part.*

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CHAP. IX.

**A**ND because we are now speaking of the similitude, and mutuall fellowship of men and God, acknowledge, O  
**Asclepius,**

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**Asclepius**, the authority and power of man. For as the Lord and Father, or most high God, is the Creatour of the heavenly Gods or Angels; so Man is the creatour of those gods which are set in Temples, contented to be neighbours unto men, and are not onely illuminated, but do also illuminate, doing not only good unto men, but also confirmeth that there is a God. Dost wonder at this, O **Asclepius**, or dost thou doubt of it, as many do?

**Asclep.** I am confounded, O **Trismegistus**: but giving credit to what you say, I judge man to be most happy, who hath attained to so great blessednesse.

**Trism.** Neither unworthily is he worthy of admiration, who is the greatest amongst the gods. For the **Genus** of all things is manifest without confusion, being

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 71

ing propagated of the purest part of Nature, and the similitudes of them to be (as it were) the heads of all; but the **Species** of the gods, which man represents, is fashioned of two natures; Divine, which is the more excellent and noble part; and Earthly, which is that which is here conversant in earth, and which consists of the whole Fabrick, or severall parts of the outward Man. So Man being mindfull of his Divine Nature and Originall, remains still in the likenesse of God. For as the Father and the Lord hath made eternal Gods, that might be like unto him. So man hath fashioned out unto himself gods; after the similitude of his own countenance.

**Asclep.** Do you mean images, O **Trismegistus**?

**Trism.** Do you not see how  
D far

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far you are mistaken & living  
images, full of sense and spirit,  
doing such and so great things!  
Images having fore-knowledge  
of things to come, and fore-tel-  
ling by many other things, infir-  
mities, cares, and sorrows, which  
shall happen deservedly to men.  
Are you ignorant, O *Asclepius*,  
that *Egypt* is the image of Hea-  
ven, or, which is more true, a  
translation of descension of all  
things, which are governed and  
exercised in Heaven? And if we  
speak rightly, Our land is the  
Temple of the whole World,  
and yet for that it becometh  
wise men to fore-know all  
things, it behoveth you not to  
be ignorant, that the time will  
come when it may appear, that  
the *Egyptians* have by a con-  
stant and pious practice in reli-  
gion served God in vain, and all  
their holy worship shall become  
void, and of no effect: For the

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 73

Divinity shall return back from  
Earth into Heaven, *Egypt* shall  
be forsaken, and the Land which  
was the seat of the Divinity, shall  
be destitute of Religion, and  
deprived of the presence of  
the Deity. For when strangers  
shall possess, and fill up this  
Land and Kingdom, not onely  
there shall be a neglect of Reli-  
gion; but, which is more misfe-  
rable, there shall be Laws en-  
acted against Religion, Piety, and  
Divine Worship, with punish-  
ment inflicted upon those that  
seem to favour it: then this ho-  
ly seat shall be full of Idolatry,  
Idols Temples, and dead mens  
Sepulchres. O *Egypt*, *Egypt*,  
there shall remain only a fained  
shew of thy Religion, and which  
will seem incredible to posteri-  
ty; and onely letters shall stand  
ingraven upon thy pillars, which  
may declare thy pious deeds,

D 2 and

74 The second Book of

and in thee shall inhabit the Scythian, Indian, or some other neer barbarous Nation. For the Divinity shall fly to Heaven, the whole Nation forsaken shall die, and so Egypt shall be forsaken of God and man. I call upon thee, thou most holy River, and presage unto thee things which shall come to passe; thy waters and divine streams shall be filled with blood, which shall overflow thy banks, and make a violent inundation, so that there shall be more dead than living, and he that remains alive, shall onely by his language be known to be an Egyptian, but by his deeds he shall seem a Barbarian. Why weep you, O *Asclepius*, Egypt shall be furnished with far greater, and worse evils than these, she being heretofore a holy and great Favourer of the Deity, and  
Divine

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 75

Divine Worship and Religion, and that worthily upon earth, separated alone from other Nations, became the Mistresse of Sanctity and Piety, shall be an example of the greatest cruelty, and then with grief of heart, the world shall not seem to be admired and adored. This whole good (than the which there neither is, hath, or shall be any thing that shall appear, of more excellencie) shall be indangered, and seem burdenous to men, and in this respect shall be despised: neither shall the world be esteemed, which is the immutable work of God, a most glorious Fabrick, a work compounded with the different variety of shapes, an instrument of the will of God, who in his work (without envie) bespake all things to become one; which, of the beholders, might be honoured,

D 3      noured,

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noured, praised, and loved, being an united heap of sundry shapes. For darknesse shall be preferred before light, death shall seem sweeter than life, no man shall look up to Heaven, a religious man shall be accounted a mad man, an irreligious and profane person seem wise, a mad man, valiant; and the worst of all men, good and pious: for the Soul, and all things about it, wherein it is either mortall, or conceiveth that it shall attain to immortality, accordingly as I have declared unto you, shall not onely be esteemed a thing worthy of laughter, but also a meer vanity: For beleve me, it shall be reckoned a capital offence for him that shall study to be religious, there shall new Statutes and Laws be stablished: nothing which is religious shall be heard worthy of Heaven,

*Hermes Trismegistus:* 77

ven, or heavenly things, or be entertained in the hearts of men: there shall be a separation of God, which is much to be lamented, from the Society of men; onely evil angels shall remain mixed with the humanity, which shall violently move to all manner of audacious mischiefs, stir them up to wars, sedition, robberies, deceit, and unto all things contrary to the disposition of the Soul, then the Earth shall not stand, the Sea shall not be sailed in; and in Heaven, the course of the Stars and Planets shall cease, all divine knowledge shall (of necessity) be buried in silence; the fruits of the earth shall be corrupted, neither shall the earth be fruitfull, and the air it self shall languish with a sorrowfull countenance; these and such like times shall come; irreligion



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and confusion of the world; with  
a senselesnes & vacancy of al good  
things. When these things shall  
happen, O **Asclepius**, then that  
Lord and Father God Almighty,  
Governour onely of the world,  
looking into the manners, and  
voluntary deeds of men; after  
his own will (which is his good-  
nesse) punishing vices, taking  
away all errours and corruption,  
and drowning all manner of  
wickednesse, either by an inun-  
dation of waters; or else consu-  
ming them by fire, or else by  
plague and pestilence, he will  
end this world, and restore it to  
its ancient beauty; so that the  
world it self may seem to be ad-  
mired and honoured: and God,  
the Creatour and Restorer of so  
great a work; shall of all men  
then being, be magnified with  
continuall praises and thankgi-  
vings: For this generation of the  
world,

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 79  
world, and the reformation of  
all good things, and the most  
holy and religious restitution of  
nature it self, in due time both  
is, and hath been eternall from  
the beginning, for the will of  
God wants beginning, which  
is the same, and continuall in  
every place.

**Asclep.** For the nature of  
God is the counsaile of his will,  
and his excellent goodnesse,  
his counsaile, O **Trismegis-  
tus**.

**Trism.** O **Asclepius**, his will  
proceeds from his counsaile, and  
his will from his will, neither  
wills he any thing ambitiously,  
which is full of all things, and  
those which he wills he hath,  
but he wills all good things,  
and hath all he wills. For he  
thinks and wills all good things;  
but this is God, and the world is  
the Image of that Good.

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**Asclep.** Good O **Trismegistus.**

**Trism.** Good, as I shall teach thee, O **Asclepius**, for as God is the dispenser and giver of all good things, to every **Genus** and **Species** in the World, that is, both of Soul and life, so likewise the world is the distributor and giver of all things, which seem good to mortall creatures; that is, change of parts, seasonable fruites, nativity, encrease and maturity, and the like, and by this God sitting above in the highest Heavens, is every where, and beholds all things: for there is above these Lower Heavens, a place without Stars, far from all earthly things, this place betwixt Heaven and Earth the dispenser of all things inhabiteth, whom we call **Jupiter**, or god, but on the earth and the Sea, Reigneth  
**Jupiter**

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 81

**Jupiter Pluto**, and he is the nourisher, and preserver of all Living and fruitfull mortall Creatures, by the power of all these, Fruits, Trees, Plants, and the ground are refreshed, and the power and effects of other Gods are distributed through all things that are. They are distributed that shall bear rule on the Earth, and shall be placed in the very entrance of **Egypt**, in that City which is built in the West, or where the Sun sets. To which place all mortall Creatures both in Land and Sea shall hasten.

**Asclep.** But at this time where are they, O **Trismegistus.**

**Trism.** They are placed in the great City, in the **Libyan** Mountain, and thus far this declaration.

The

The  
COMMENTARY.

This whole Ninth Chapter is prophane. which Augusting well reproveth in his Book of the City of God. It mainrains Idolatry, extolling and setting it forth with wonderfull praises; and the decay or fall of it, it much deplores. In the highest Heaven, he seeth a certain God beholding all things; but, in that place betwixt Heaven and Earth, he placeth Jupiter, the disposer, or Steward; and Pluto Jupiter to be the God; and dispenser on Land; and Sea; as though there were one God in Heaven, another in the Aire, and another on the Land, and Sea; all which contain an infinite impiety of errars: for out of divine writ we are uncorruptly, purely, and holily taught, that the Lord he is  
God.

God in Heaven above, and in Earth below, and that there is no other God: but against Idols and Idolatry the word of God and the holy Prophets do warily admonish us that we be not defiled, with so great a blot of impiety, nor corrupted with so great an error, for the Idol it self is cursed, and him that made it, and again, the worshipping of cursed Idols is the cause beginning, and end of all mischief. An Idol maker, and this Idol are both an abomination to the Lord, for both that which is made, with him that it shall be consumed with fire, these and many more things of Idolatry out of the Book of wisdom, and in Leviticus God himself out of his own mouth commandeth, I am the Lord your God, you shall not make to your self any Idol, or graven Image; neither shall you erect any monument, or Pillar in your Land to worship

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worship it. And of the Idols of Egypt, he advertiseth in Ezekiel, Be not polluted with the Idols of Egypt, for I am the Lord your God: and of their abolishing, he speaketh by the same Prophet, I will destroy their Images and make an end of their Idol Memphis; he shall no more lead them out of the Land of Egypt. What Mercurius calleth the soule Spirit, and sense of Idols, and Images in that they shall bring diseases, in firmities, and fears upon men, we know without doubt to be evil Spirits, and in assurance to be those of which the Prophet truly affirmeth, that all the Gods of the gentiles, are devils, or evil Spirits. Let this little be sufficient against the impiety of Trismegistus in this ninth part, for we speake to those who are seasoned with the true knowledge of God, which (as the wiseman saith) to know and understand

## Hermes Trismegistus. 85

derstand is perfect righteousness, and to know his righteousness and power is the root of immortality, Lazarelus draweth this place to an Analogie, as though the Idols were the Apostles; the Image of man, Christ; the power given from above, the holy Ghost; Egypt, the darknesse of the gentiles; and the persecution of the Disciples Apostles & Martyrs, the graven pillars, declaring their pious works, and that the heart of posterity did retain, not their works, but their faith only: these are piously invented, but peradventure far from the Letter, or meaning. I think with Augustine that Hermes overshot himself both in this and the 13. Chapter, for they seem to have the Prophets of the Gentiles, as Balaam and the Sybils, that they may suffer both Light and darknesse the lucid and obscure intermixture of Prophecies sometimes pure

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*pure, and sometimes impure;*  
*This, for the ninth Chapter.*

CHAP. X.

**N**OW we are to discourse of  
mortality & immortality: for  
hope and fear of death torments  
many, which are ignorant of the  
true reason: for death is caused by  
dissolution of the body, tyed  
out with labour and the har-  
mony being ended whereby  
the members of the body are  
fitted into one composition for  
lively uses, for the body dieth  
when the vitall parts of man  
faile. This is therefore death;  
a dissolution of the body, and  
an utter decay of the bodily  
senses, about which to take  
thought for, is to no purpose;  
but

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 87  
but there is an other thing ne-  
cessary, which either igno-  
rance, or mans incredulity fet-  
teth leight by.

**Asclep.** What is that, O  
**Trismegistus**, that they are  
either ignorant of, or believe  
not to be?

**Trism.** Hear therefore, O  
**Ascleptus**, when there shall be a  
separation of the soul from the  
body, then the Judgement,  
and examination of his deserts  
shall passe over unto the great  
God; and he when he shall see  
that it is just and righteous shall  
suffer it to abide in a fit Mansion  
but if he shall see it to be spot-  
ted and defiled with sin and ini-  
quity he will cast it down, and  
deliver it to Stormes, Whirle-  
Winds, fire, Lightning, and  
Tempett; and it shall be snatch-  
ed up betwixt Heaven and  
Earth, with worldly tempests,  
and

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and with continuall torments,  
be driven into divers places,  
that in this respect the eternity  
of them is prejudicious because  
by an immortall sentence, the  
Soul is condemned to everlast-  
ing judgment; lest therefore we  
be infolded with these miseries,  
know that we must fear tremble,  
and beware; for the unbelievers  
are after their faults and plea-  
sure in sin compelled to believe  
not by words, but by exam-  
ples, not by threatenings  
but by the very suffering of pun-  
ishment.

**Asclep.** Are not then, O **Tris-**  
**megistus**, the faults of men pun-  
ished only by mans Law.

**Trism.** Forsooth, O **Ascle-**  
**plus**, first all earthly things  
which are mortall, then those  
things also which live by corporal  
reason and which swarve from  
living after that Law of reason,  
all

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 89

all these according to their  
deserts and faults are liable to  
punishment, but after death  
so much the sorer punishment  
as their faults have been concea-  
led & unpunished in this life, for  
God foreknowing all things  
renders a like punishment to  
evey one according to the  
measure and quality of the  
fault.

**Asclep.** Who are worthy of  
the greatest punishment, O **Tris-**  
**megistus**.

**Trism.** Those who being  
condemned by the Laws of  
men come to a violent death,  
which seem not to yeeld unto  
the debt of nature, but to suffer  
punishment for their deserts.  
Contrarywise, God is a shield  
and defence unto a righteous  
man, who loveth piety and re-  
ligion; for he defendeth such  
from all manner of dangers and  
evils,

evils, for the Father and Lord of all things, who alone is all, shoves himself willingly to all, nor where he is in place, nor what in quality, nor how great in quantity, but illuminating man with the alone understanding of the mind, who when the darknesse of mind is removed; and the brightnesse of truth perceived, participates himself by the full sense of divine knowledge, by whose love he is freed from that naturall part which is mortall, and conceiveth hope of future immortality. This therefore shall be the difference betwixt good and evil men, for every one by piety religion divine worship and reverence of God, shineth and becometh bright as the eye-sight, when he hath throughly seen the truth of reason, and the confidence of hope, and excelleth so far other men.

men, as the Sun excelleth other Starrs in his Light: for the Sun it self not so much in greatness of diety, as in divinity and sanctity illuminateth the other Starrs. For I suppose this, O *Asclepius*, to be the Second God governing all other things, & illustrating all worldly things whether they be creatures with life or without life, for if the creature the world hath, is & shall alwaies be Living, nothing in the world is mortal. For there is no place of mortality, for every living part which is in the world, as in one and the same continual living creature, wherefore it ought to be full of life and eternity, if it must always live. The Sun therefore as the world is eternall, and so is the governor of life and livenessse, and the continual dispenser of them. He is therefore the God of the living

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living and of those things which  
have life in the world; the  
continuall governour, and eter-  
nall dispensator of life it self,  
for he hath once dispensed by an  
eternall Law; and giveth life  
to every Living thing. In this  
manner which I will speake of,  
for in that quicknesse of eter-  
nity, the world is moved, and  
in that living eternity, is the  
place of the world, for which  
hereafter it shall neither stand  
nor be destroyed, the world be-  
ing intrenched, and as it were  
wrapped in with the eternity of  
life. It is therefore the dis-  
penser or giver of life to all  
things which are in it, and the  
place of all things which are  
governed under the Sun, the  
commotion of which world  
consisteth of a twofold effect.  
For it self is outwardly enliven-  
ed from eternity, and it quick-

ens

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 93

ens and inlivens those things  
which are within it, differing  
in proportions, and appointed,  
and prefixed times, all things  
are known and ordered by the  
effects of the Sun, and by the  
course, and influence of the  
Starrs, all temporall things are  
established by reason and divine  
Law, the Earthly seasons are  
known by the quality of the  
Aire, as either in the variety of  
heat, or cold, the Heavenly  
seasons by the return of the  
Starrs to the same places, and  
by the temporall change of  
tides, and the world is the re-  
ceptacle of time, by whose  
course and motion it is refresh-  
ed, but time is kept by order.  
Order and time make an inno-  
vation of all things which are in  
the world by course,

The



The  
COMMENTARY.

*This Tenth Chapter, speaketh of death and the examination of the Soul, when the body shall die, that they shall be most punished after death, whose life justly is taken away by mens Lawes, for the greatnesse of their offences, that God is a defence to the righteous; of the divinity of the Sun, and the world, for he puts the World to be the first sensible God, the Sun to be the Second, that the world shall never take rest, nor be destroyed. But we give not the incommunicable name of God, neither to the Sun, nor to the world, and believe that the world shall one day be dissolved. These things therefore being understood, (as the bare words of Hermes shew,) they set out the error of the Gentiles, yet*  
we

*we do grant by participation to these a divinity, as to excellent works of God. This the tenth part.*

## CHAP. XI.

**VV**Herefore all things being so, neither of things created, Heavenly things or Earthly, is any thing stable fixed or immoveable, for on'y God, and worthily he alone is in himself from himself, and on all sides wholly full and perfect, and this is his firme stability which cannot be removed by the enforcement, or occasion of any other seeing in him are all things, and in all things he is only, unlesse any man will dare to say that his motion consisteth in eternity, but much rather his eternity is unmoveable, into which  
E the

96 The second Book of  
the motion of all times return-  
eth, and from which the mo-  
tion of all times takes it begin-  
ning. God hath therefore been  
alwayes stable, and his eterni-  
ty alwaies alike stable with him,  
containing the world not crea-  
ted within himself, which we  
rightly call sensible. The  
Image of this God is the world,  
which is made an imitator or  
resemblance of eternity: for  
time hath the force, and nature  
of stability in the very necessity  
of return again into it self:  
wherefore albeit eternity be  
stable immoveable and fixed,  
yet because by the mobility of  
time, motion is alwayes called  
back into eternity, and that  
mobility is turned by reason of  
time, it comes to passe that  
eternity it self is certainly im-  
moveable, and may seem only  
by time to be moved in which it  
self

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 97  
self is, for in that time is all the  
motion; so it happens that the  
stability of eternity is moved,  
and the stability of time, be-  
comes stable by the rule of mo-  
tion, and so it is credible that  
God is moved into himself, by  
the same immoveableness, for  
there is an in immoveable moti-  
on in the greatnesse of his very  
stability, for the condition of  
his greatnesse is immoveable.  
This therefore which is so,  
and not obvious to our senses,  
is infinite, incomprehensible  
and inestimable, which can nei-  
ther be sustained, reported of,  
nor found out; whereupon it  
is uncertain wherein, where,  
how, and in what fashion it is:  
for he is reported to be in the  
greatest stability, and in him is  
his stability, whether he be  
God or Eternity, whether  
the one be in the other, or both  
E 2 in

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in either, for which cause eter-  
nity is without definition of  
time: but time which may  
be defined, returning either by  
order course or circuit of another  
is eternal, wherefore both seem  
to be infinite, both eternall, for  
stability considering that it is  
fixed, for that by the Benefit of  
strength it can sustein all  
things that are moveable, it  
worthily obtaineth Dominion:  
for the beginning of all things  
which are, is God, and eternity;  
but the world because it is mo-  
veable hath not the principali-  
ty, for his mobility prevents his  
stability by the rule of continu-  
all motion, having an immove-  
able strength. All sense there-  
fore of the divinity being alike  
and immoveable, moveth it-  
self by his stability, and is incor-  
rupt, and eternal; or whatsoever  
may more fitly be called; eter-  
nity

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 99  
nity consisting in the very truth  
of the high God, full of all sen-  
sible things, and full knowledge  
abiding as I said with God; but  
worldly sense is the receptacle  
of all sensible things, both for  
*Spectes* and discipline, but hu-  
mane sense by the strength of  
memory, for that it remembers  
all things that it hath done: for  
divine reason and sense come  
down continually to man,  
and God would not that excel-  
lent, and divine sense should be  
confounded with all Creatures,  
lest it should blush in being  
mixt with brutes. For the un-  
derstanding of humane sense, of  
what sort, and how great it is,  
is wholly in the memory of  
things past: for by that strength  
of memory it is made govern-  
our of the earth; but the un-  
derstanding of Nature, and of  
the quality and sense of the  
E 3 world,

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world, may be perceived by all  
sensible things in the world;  
eternity, which is the second  
is known to be a sense and qua-  
lity given of the sensible world,  
but the understanding of the  
quality, and quality of the sense  
of the high God, is the alone  
truth, the shadow of which  
truth in the world is not cer-  
tainly known in the last line,  
for where is any thing known by  
the dimension of time, where  
there seem to be leafings gene-  
rations and errors? You see  
therefore, O **Asclepius**, in  
what things we are agreed up-  
on, which we handle or which  
we dare to touch: but I give  
unto thee thanks, O great God,  
which hast illuminated me with  
the light of seeing thy divinity:  
and you O **Tatus**, **Asclepius**,  
And **Ammon**, conceale secre-  
ly within your breasts and keep  
close

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 101  
close these divine Mysteries.  
But in this differeth under-  
standing from sense, for that our  
understanding commeth by the  
intention, and diligence of  
the mind to understand and  
know the quality of the sense  
of the world, but the under-  
standing of the world reacheth  
to eternity, and to know God  
who is above it self, and so it  
happens unto us men, that as  
in a mist we see those things  
which are in Heaven, as much  
as it is possible through the  
condition of humane sense.  
And this intention or reach in  
perceiving so great good things  
is very narrow and weak, but is  
most large when it shall see it  
by knowledge, and the testi-  
mony of a good conscience.

The  
COMMENTARY.

*The eleventh Chapter discloseth that onely God is immovable and stable, and all other things mutable; God is infinite, incomprehensible, and is unknown what he is: the holy, incorrupt, and eternall sense of God, treateth of the sense of the world, of the sense of man, of the difference of the understanding from the sense. This is the Sum of the eleventh Part.*

## CHAP. XII.

**B**ut of Vacuity, which also with many seems to be a great matter, I thus think, that a Vacuity neither is, can, or shall be any thing; for all things  
of

of the world are most full parts, as the world it self is full of bodies different in quality and form, having both their form and grearnesse, of which one is greater than another, and one lesse than another, different in strength and weaknesse: for some of these easily seem to be the stronger, as the greater: but the lesser and smaller can scarcely, or not at all be seen, which things to be, we know onely by feeling, whereby it happeneth, that many beleve that these are not bodies, or substances, but empty places, which is impossible; for if any thing be named out of the world, if there be any thing (which I hardly beleve) therein so full of intelligible things, that is, things like to the Divinity, as this place which is called the sensible world, is full of bodies and creatures, agreeing both in

104 The second Book of  
nature and quality to it, all  
whose representations we see  
not; but some exceedingly  
great, some exceeding little,  
and short, which either through  
the length of distance, or that  
we are dull of eye-sight, they ap-  
pear to be such unto us, or to be  
short, for their exceeding smal-  
nesse they are supposed of some  
not to be. I speak now of An-  
gels, which, I suppose, sojourn  
with us, and Spirits above us,  
which are betwixt the purest  
part of the air, and the earth,  
where there is neither place for  
Clouds, nor combustion by the  
motion of any Meteor, Comet,  
or Signe. In this respect, O *A-*  
*telepius*, thou canst say nothing  
to be subject to Vacuity, unless  
thou vauntest there may be a  
Vacuity of what thou affirmest  
to be empty, as a Vacuity from  
the fire, from the water, and  
from

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 105  
from the like, which although it  
happens to seem so (For that  
may be void of such things,  
which are great, or little, which  
makes it seem empty) yet there  
cannot be a Vacuity of Spirit,  
and Air. The like also we may  
speak of a place, for the word  
only wants understanding; for  
a place appeareth what it is,  
from that of which it is: for  
when the principall name is ta-  
ken away, the signification, or  
interpretation is imperfect.  
Wherefore the place of water,  
the place of fire, or such like, we  
truly say; for as it is impossible  
for any thing to be void, or em-  
pty, so the place alone what it is  
cannot be known. For if you  
put the place without that of  
which it is, it shall seem to be  
an empty place, which I beleeve  
the world hath not: For if  
there be no Vacuity, neither a  
place

place appeareth what it is by it self, unlesse you shall adde unto it, either longitudes, latitudes, or altitudes, as signes to the bodies of men. These things being so, **Asclepius**, and you that are present know, that the intelligible World that is God, who is known only by the sight of the soul, is incorporeal; neither can any thing corporall be mixed with his Nature, that is, which may be known by quality, quantity, and numbers, for no such thing abideth in him; therefore this world, which is called sensible, is the receptacle of all sensible **Species**, qualities, or bodies; all which without God, cannot receive Vegetation, and be refreshed; for all things are God, and from him and his will are all things: that which is wholly good, comely and wise, sensible and

and intelligible, belongs to him alone, and without this there neither is, hath, or shall be any thing; for all things are from him, in him, and by him; both qualities of many shapes, and great quantities, and greatnesse exceeding measure, and varieties of **Species** and Forms, which if you shall understand, O **Asclepius**, you will give God thanks, and if you shall wel observe the whole, you shall by true reason perfectly learn, that the world it self is sensible, and all things that are in it, to be covered (as with a garment) from that upper world; for every kinde of creature, O **Asclepius**, of what kind soever, as well mortal, immortal, or rational, whether it be a living creature, or be not, each of them retain the image and form of their kinde, and albeit every kind of creature possesseth

108 The second Book of  
fesseth the full form of his kind;  
yet in the same form of shews,  
they are all unlike one to ano-  
ther, as the **Genus** of men, al-  
though it be uniform, that a  
man may naturally be known,  
yet all of them are in the same  
form unlike to themselves; for  
the **Species**, which is divine, is  
incorporeal, and whatsoever  
else is comprehended in the  
soul, or mind: seeing therefore  
these two, of which the Form  
consisteth, are corporeal, and in-  
corporeal, it is impossible that  
every Form should be created,  
or born like one to another, the  
moments of hours and climates  
differing, and being distant, but  
are changed so often, as an hour  
hath minutes, in which is that  
God of all shapes we have spo-  
ken of; therefore the **Species**, or  
Form, remaineth, begetting so  
often from it self, so many, and  
so

*Hermes Trismegistus. 109*  
so different shapes, as the course  
of the world hath moments,  
which world is turned by con-  
version and changes, but the  
**Species** is neither turned, nor  
changed. So the Forms of each  
kind are permanent and stable,  
but unlike to themselves in the  
same Form.

**Asclep.** And the world chan-  
geth his **Species**, or Form, O  
**Trismegistus.**

**Trism.** Do you perceive  
therefore, O **Asclepius**, that all  
things are spoken unto thee, as  
to one in a sleep, or in a dream?  
For what is the world, or of  
what consisteth it, but of all  
things created?

**Asclep.** Therefore you mean to  
speak of the Heaven, and of the  
Earth & of the Elements, **Tris-  
megistus**? For other things are  
more frequently changed into  
Forms, the Heaven moystening,



110 The second Book of

or drying up, cooling or heating, bright or lowring. In one Form of the Heaven, these things are, which Forms are altered by the Form, also the Earth hath alwayes many alterations of her Form; as when it bringeth forth fruits, and when it nourisheth her fruits, and when it giveth sundry and divers qualities, and quantities of all fruits, and places, and times, for the qualities, sents, relishes, and forms of all trees, flowers, and berries. The fire also hath many and diverse alterations; for the Forms of the Sun and the Moon, they are of all shapes, for they are (as it were) our looking-glasses for representation. But of these things enough.

The

Hermes Trismegistus. 111

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This twelfth Chapter declareth, that there is no Vacuity, or Emptinesse in things; that Angels are conversant, and dwell with us, who, in regard of their too much subtilty, are not perceived of us; that Spirits possesse the purer part of the Air; the alone name of a place to be void, that it belongs to somewhat, which being not understood, it cannot be conceived what a place is, and that is common to all Relatives. He affirmeth an intelligible World, with which the sensible World, and all things in it, are veiled as with a garment seeing who is contained in the intelligible World, that the Forms of all kinds whatsoever, that are of one shape, are unlike, and that according to the circles, moments, and minutes*

of

112 The second Book of

of hours, of which he maketh Pantomorphos Lord, whom before he affirmed to be God of the Horoscopes: but we acknowledge no such God: but leave it to the folly and ignorance of the Gentiles: if any as yet be so apparantly blind, mad, and stupified; but we, according to the saying of St. Paul, have but one God, the Father, in whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. The Species and Forms, that is, the Ideas of which there is so much dispute with Plato and the Platonicks, the immutable and unchangeable Forms he placeth in Pantomorphos, having this name, as though he consisted of all shapes, and of every Idea, from which severall hours and moments, every particular Form is diversly shaped; but that the rest are mutable, as the World, the Heavens, and the Earth, but

Hermes Trismegistus. 113

but there are who account Mercurius his Pantamorphos, and Plato his Idea to be meer forged things and fictions. This is the summe of the twelfth Chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

Let us return again to man, and to reason, by which divine gift, man is called a reasonable creature, for those things are lesse to be wondered at, (albeit they deserve admiration) which are only spoken of man. But of all wonders this is the greatest wonder, that man could find out and supply the divine nature: because therefore, our forefathers erred much, being incredulous about the reason and nature of the Gods; and

114 The second Book of  
and not looking into divine  
worship, and religion, they  
found out an art whereby they  
might make them gods; to  
which invention they joynd  
the work of nature, and because  
they could not make souls, they  
called out the souls of Devils or  
Spirits, and put them into their  
Idols, and divine Myteries, by  
which alone the Idols had pow-  
er to do either good or hurt.  
Forthy Grandfather, O *Asclepi-*  
*us*, was the first inventor of  
Phyick, to whom a Temple is  
consecrated in a mountain of  
Libya, or Africa, near unto the  
shoare of Crocodiles, in which  
lieth his body; the rest of him,  
or rather the whole of him be-  
ing his better and Spirituall  
part, is gone back again to Hea-  
ven, affording all manner of  
help and cure to diseased and  
sick persons, now by vertue of  
his

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 115

his diety, as he was wont to give  
before by art or skill of Phyick,  
and *Hermes* which was the  
name of my Auncestors, doth  
not he now in his Country re-  
reining that surname, cure all  
persons that come from all parts  
to him? Also Isis the wife of  
Osiris being well pleased how  
much good she hath done? and  
displeased, how much evil do we  
know? for it is an easy matter  
for earthly gods to be displeased,  
seeing that they are made of the  
same nature that man is, where-  
upon it happened that these ho-  
ly creatures were called upon,  
and their soules worshipped  
throughout every City, by the  
*Aegyptians* who living consecra-  
ted them so that they continued  
in their Lawes, and were called  
by their names: for this cause  
O *Asclepius*, those which seem  
to some worthy to be worship-  
ped

ed and honoured to others seem otherwise, therefore Egyptian Cities are wont to fall out, and warr one with another.

**Asclep.** And what is the quality or substance **O Trismegistus** of these earthly Gods?

**Trism.** It consisteth, **O Asclepius**, of herbs, of Stones, of Spices which have in them a naturall power of divinity, and for this cause they are delighted with often sacrifices, Hymns, praises, and most sweet musick resembling an Heavenly harmony, that that which is Heavenly may by a Heavenly and frequent use be allured into the Idol, and there stay a long time, as glad and desirous of humane society: so man is the feigner of the gods, and you should not suppose the effects of these earthly gods to be casual, **O Asclepius**, the Heavenly Gods inhabite

inhabite the highest heavenly places fulfilling and preserving that order which he hath received. But these our Gods, regarding peculiarly certain things, and foretelling some things by lot and conjecture, foreseeing many things and after a manner helping them, become as it were by a friendly alliance aiders unto mens affairs.

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This Thirteenth Chapter is full of impiety like unto the ninth, wherein Mercurius will have a man to be most divine, and most to be admired; he is certainly most impious, and profane, to wit that he shall be the inventer of Idolatry, that he should thrust in devilish Spirits called up into Idols,*

118 The second Book of  
Idols, and adde Rites, and sa-  
crifices concerning Æsculapius  
Mercurius, Isis, Osiris, which were  
worshipped of the Egyptians; and  
of those plants and creatures which  
in Egypt were esteemed holy, and  
had in reverence of herbs, and  
Stones, musick and hymns; with  
which they did appease & reconcile  
those Spirits which were put into  
their Idols and Images, which  
still some Pythonists are ac-  
customed to do at this day (O  
naughty age) who think that they  
have Spirits closed up either in  
rings or boxes: a most impious  
sort of men, hatefull to God and  
man; a very profest enemie: and  
against this profane error of impi-  
ery, St. Augustine well inveigheth  
in his book of the City of God. This  
for the 13. Chapter.

CHAP.

Hermes Trismegistus. 119

CHAP. XIV.

**A**sclep. What part therefore  
of the world do the fates a-  
bide in, O Trismegistus? If the  
Heavenly Gods beare universal  
rule, do the earthly Gods which  
we call Fortune and Fate  
inhabite in particular pla-  
ces?

Trism. O Asclepius, that  
is the necessity of all things that  
are governed, that they are al-  
wayes joyned and lincked to-  
gether: this is therefore the  
efficient cause of things, or  
the most high God, or next  
unto God, which second  
effect is God, or the discipline,  
of all earthly and Heavenly  
things, stablished by divine  
F laws.

120 The second Book of  
lawes. Theſe therefore, Fortune  
and Neceſſity, are both tyed to-  
gether by an individuall knor.  
The former of which, Fortune  
or Fate, begets the beginning of  
all things, but Neceſſity entor-  
ceth them to their effects, which  
depends from thoſe beginnings.  
Order, followeth theſe, which  
is the continuance, and diſpoſiti-  
on of time in bringing things  
to paſſe, for nothing is with-  
out the agreement of Order. In  
all theſe this world is perfit, for  
the world it ſelf is carried by  
Order, or conſiſteth wholly of  
Order: wherefore theſe 3. Fate,  
Neceſſity, and Order, are brought  
to paſſe, eſpecially by the will  
of God, who governeth the  
world by his own Law and di-  
vine reaſon. By theſe there-  
fore both will and nill are by a  
divine hand fully croſſed; for  
they are neither moved by an-  
ger,

*Hermes Trimegiſtus.* 121  
ger, nor bowed by favour, but  
ſerve the neceſſity of eternall  
reaſon, which Eternity is un-  
changeable, immoveable, and  
inſoluble. Fate therefore is  
the firſt; which, the ſeed being  
as it were caſt in, receives the  
encreaſe of all future things. Ne-  
ceſſity follows, by which all  
things are enforced violently to  
their effects. The Third is  
Order, which preſerveth the  
frame of thoſe things which  
Fate and Neceſſity hath diſpoſed  
of. This is therefore eternity,  
which neither hath beginning  
nor ending, which by a fixed  
immutable law of continuall  
motion is preſerved. It riſeth  
and falls oftentimes by courſe,  
ſo that when the times vary, it  
riſeth again in thoſe ſame parts  
in which it fell, for ſo is reaſon  
a voluble rotundity that all are  
ſo firmly joyned that you can-

122 The second Book of  
not know what is the begin-  
ning of volubility, when all  
things seem to go before, and  
follow themselves, for chance  
and fortune are mixed in all  
worldly things.

The  
COMMENTARY.

The fourteenth Chapter speaketh of the Destinies, which he calleth Fate, Necessity, and Order; others, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. About which the Ethnicks were not wont lesse to trifle, than about other gods, which they feigned unto themselves, coyning new and wonder-working Deities: but Mercurius treats of these more briefly and sparingly, and (as it were) doubtfully, like as these three should be the determination, and predestination of the Divine Will; which Necessity of things, as they  
be,

Hermes Trismegistus. 123  
be, follows; which lastly Order preserves, even as it is stablished by Divine and Eternall Law: So that the first Fate is Divine Predestination; the second, Consequence of things; and the third, Preservation. And these three, or the Divine Law, or those things that follow the course of Divine Law, contein the order both of finite causes, and those which are according to nature, but yet Fate admitteth in casuall things indefinite, and indeterminate causes beyond nature: but of these let others judge. And this for this present part.

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CHAP. XV:

WE have spoken of all things as we could, and as the divinity would suffer.

124 The second Book of  
and permit: It onely remaines  
that we praise God and pray  
unto him, and so return to the  
care of the body. For treating  
sufficiently of divine matters,  
we have satisfied our minds as it  
were with the food of the soul.  
But as they passed out of the  
cloyster, when they began to  
pray to God, they looked back  
towards the South; for when the  
Sun setteth, if any man will  
pray to God, he ought to look  
that way; as also when the Sun  
riseth, to look East: Now as they  
were saying their prayers,  
**Asclepius** said, with a low  
voice. **Plutus** let us put the Fa-  
ther in mind that he command  
that we should dedicate our  
prayers unto God, with an ad-  
dition of frankincense, and in-  
cense. **Trismegistus** hearing of  
it, and being moved, saith.  
Guess better O **Asclepius**, for  
this

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 125  
this is like unto thest when you  
pray unto God to burn frankin-  
cense, and the like: for nothing is  
wanting unto him, who himself  
is all things, for in him are all  
things; but let us give thanks,  
and adore him, for these are  
the cheif sacrifices of God, when  
thankes are given of mortall  
men. We give thee thankes, O  
great and glorious God, for by  
thy grace only we have attained  
to the Light of thy knowledge.  
Thou Name, holy and worthy  
to be honoured, one name by  
which God as a Father is de-  
voutly to be praised, because  
thou vouchsafest to give unto all  
fatherly piety religion and love,  
or whatsoever thing else is of  
most efficacy, when thou dost  
reward us with sense, reason,  
and understanding; with sense  
that we may know thee; with  
reason, that we may look up un-



126 The second Book of  
to thee, and search into thy di-  
vine nature; with understanding  
that knowing thee we may re-  
joyce in thee, and being pre-  
served by thy Majesty, we may  
delight our selves in thee, that  
thou wast pleased to shew thy  
self wholly unto us: let us give  
thanks that thou hast vouch-  
safed to consecrate us, who  
are placed in these earthly ta-  
bernacles to be heirs of eterni-  
ty. For this is only mans con-  
gratulation and knowledge of  
thy Majesty. We have known  
thee, thou great Light, by reason.  
we have known thee to be the  
most wise and sensible God, O  
true way of Life, O fruitfull  
increase of all naturall things;  
we have known thee in the full  
conception of thy whole na-  
ture, we have known thee in  
thy eternity, for in all this our  
prayer adoring the bonny of  
thy

*Hermes Trismegistus.* 127  
thy goodnesse, we only beseech  
thee, that thou wilt be pleased  
to continue us in the love of  
thy knowledge, and that by this  
kind of life we be never separated  
from thee: desiring this we be-  
take us to a pure Supper with-  
out flesh.

The  
COMMENTARY.

*This Fifteenth Chapter religi-  
ously endeth the Dialogue with  
giving of thanks. When thank-  
giving and adoration is ended,  
Mercurius, Asclepius Amnon  
and Tatius, the Four men which  
filled the holy place or cloister, ac-  
cording to the religious Rites of the  
Egyptians, betake themselves to  
a pure banquet not consisting of flesh:  
and thus far Hermes, of the will of  
God.*

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*Vbi a scriptura  
non recedit hic  
amplector, et suscipio.*

*Qua Intellego, pulchra  
sunt: atq' cuiusmodi  
illa, quae non sapio,  
Arbitror.*

*Lux alia Soli, alia*

*Lychnoru*

*9e*