The Author's Apology.

Neither did I but vacant seasons spend
In this my scribble: nor did I intend
But to divert myself in doing this
From worser thoughts which make me do amiss,
Thus I set pen to paper with delight,
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white.
For having now my method by the end,
Still as I pull'd, it came; and so I penn'd
It down: until it came at last to be,
For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.

Well, when I had thus put mine ends together,
I shew'd them others, that I might see whether
They would condemn them, or them justify:
And some said, Let them live; some, Let them die:
Some said, John, print it; others said, Not so;
Some said, It might do good; others said, No.

Now was I in a strait, and did not see
Which was the best thing to be done by me:
At last I thought, Since you are thus divided,
I print it will: and so the case decided.
For, thought I, some I see would have it done,
Though others in that channel do not run:
To prove, then, who advised for the best,
Thus I thought fit to put it to the test.

I further thought, if now I did deny
Those that would have it, thus to gratify;
I did not know, but hinder them I might
Of that which would to them be great delight.
For those which were not for its coming forth,
I said to them, Offend you I am loath:
Yet since your brethren pleased with it be,
Forbear to judge, till you do further see.

If that thou wilt not read, let it alone;