



## Don *Alexis* vnto the Reader.

**T**hey that haue knowne me in time  
passe, or to speake plaine, haue bled  
me familiarlie all my life time, can  
peradventure, tell how God by his  
great goodnesse, hath made me to  
be borne of a noble house (according  
to the common, I will not saie vain  
persuasion of them, that stablish no-  
bility more in the merits of another man, then in our own)  
and that besides I haue alwaies had my pleasures, & great  
plentie of riches, yea, far passing the smalnesse of my de-  
serts. I will saie yet more (not to boast or to aduance my  
selfe, but to the end to refozme the gentle Reader, and to  
giue thanks to God) that there be many which know, how  
I being giuen euen from my first youth vnto studie, haue  
gotten not onlie the knowledge of the Latine, Greek, He-  
brew, Caldei, and Arabick tongues, and also of diuers o-  
ther nations and countries: but aboue all things, hauing  
by a naturall inclinasion, taken a singular pleasure in phi-  
losophie, and in the secrets of Nature, haue wandered and  
trauelled abroad in the world, the space of seuen and twen-  
tie yeares, to the intent to acquaint my selfe with all sortes  
of learned and discreet men. By the which diligence and  
curiositie, I haue learned many Secretes, not alonlie of  
men of great knowledge and profound learning, and po-  
ble men, but also of poore women, Artificers, Velsants, and  
all sortes of men. Moreover, I haue bene three times at  
Luant, and sundrie times haue trauelled almost all other  
parts

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parts of the worlde, without resting or sojourning at any time in one place above sixe moneths. Now this my studie and desire of knowledge, as well of the vniuersall sciences, as of particular secrets, and although it was giuen me by nature, as to the most part of men (for euery man by an instinct of nature, desireth to know thinges) yet haue I alwaies been nuzzled by by a certeine ambition and vainglorie, to know that which another should be ignorant of: which thing hath grafted in me, a continuall nigardnesse, or sparing, to distribute or communicate any of my secrets, yea, vnto my most singular friends that I had saying: that if the secrets were knowne to euery man, they should be no more be called secrets, but publike and common.

Now it chanced these few daies past, being in Milan, in the fower score and two yeare, and seuen moneths of mine age, that a poore artificer was marvellous tormented with the stone, and had bin two daies without making his vyne. The Chirurgian that dressed him, knowing wel that I had many secrets, and singularlie for the stone, came vnto me, and requested me that I would teach him the receipt, or at the least to giue him the medicine composed and readie made, for the health of the patient: But I perceluing that he would vse other means things for his own profit and honour, refused to giue it him, but willed him to bring me to the sicke man, and that I my selfe would minister the medicine vnto him gratis. The physitian, either fearing blame if it should be knowne, that he had recourse to the aide of another man, hauing peradventure boasted that he had the secret himselfe, or else in the meane time, still to make his profit in dissembling the matter, and deferring it yet two daies more: with diuers excuses and colours, til he brought me to the patient, whom at my coming I found so nigh his end, that after he had a little lifted up his eyes, casting them pitiously toward me, passed from this into a better life: Not hauing any need, neyther of my secret, nor any other Receipt to recover his health.

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With this case I was moued to such a compassion and sorrow, that not onelie I wished my selfe euil, but also I desired to die, seeing my ambition and vaine glorie to haue bin the cause that this poore man was not succored, with the remedie and gift that God the Father, and Worde of vs all had giuen me. Wherefore, so great was the remorse of conscience in me, that desiring to sequestrate my self from the world, & not finding my selfe of such a disposition of minde, that I coulde liue in a monasterie, among religious men, better edified than I, I was at the last fullie resolved with my selfe, to chuse a place separate from any towne, where I haue a little land, some Bookes, and a studie, for to auoyd idlenesse. Here I liue a life, which I call a monks life, with one seruant, which goeth to the towne, not to beg, but to buy my provision, and other things necessarie: for to sustain his poore life and mine, as long as it shall please God.

But yet not hauing the power to put out of my fantasie but that I was a verie homicide and murderer, for refusing to giue to the physitian the receipt and remedie, for the healing of this poore man, I haue determined to communicate and publish to the world all that I haue, being assured that few other men haue so many as I. And minding to set forth none, but such as are most true & proued, I haue these daies past (taken partlie out of my books, and partlie out of my memoire, al those that came to hand) made a collection of such as I am certaine to be true & experimented, not caring if some of them be written or printed in any other books. For of this my collection the reader, as touching those may at the least take this profit, that whereas before he might haue doubted, whether such remedies set forth by any other man, were true or not, he shall be now assured, vnder the affirmance of my faith: for truelie I would not set my selfe (being in the age and disposition, both of bodie and mind, that I am now in) to write fables or lies, that  
should

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Should continue alwaies. But of one point I wil aduertise the Reader, and that is, that he do the things with good diligence, and that with medicines concerning mans bodie, he vse the ayde and helpe of Physitians: although indeede many of them, moued with a certeine rusticke and euill grounded enuie, with a passion of gelousie, are wont to blame and contemne things that come not of themselves. Wherefore, as wel in this, as in euerie other point, if he that will vse these, should perchance find, that the thing woulde not take effect according to his contentation, let him take heed that he abuse not himselfe in the confection of them, & to begin againe with more diligence. Assuring himselfe, that (as I haue said) there is nothing in this Booke, but it is true and experimented: and giuing alwaies glorie & praise vnto God onlie for all, haue a good hope that by meane of his diuine grace, I will consequentlie make you a pre-

sent, of the rest of all that I haue gotten in so  
many trauailes, volages, costs,  
and diligent studie.

## Farewell.

