THE WORKS OF GEORGE SILVER

COMPRISING

“PARADOXES OF DEFENCE”
[Printed in 1599 and now reprinted]

AND

“BREF INSTRUCTIONS VPÔ MY PRADOXES OF DEFENCE”
[Printed for the first time from the MS. in the British Museum]

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

CYRIL G. R. MATTHEY
CAPTAIN, LONDON RIFLE BRIGADE; MEMBER OF THE LONDON FENCING CLUB; AND MEMBRE D'HONNEUR DU CERCLE D'ESCHIAS DE BRUXELLES

WITH EIGHT COLLOTYPE REPRODUCTIONS FROM THE MS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

LONDON
GEORGE BELL AND SONS, YORK STREET
COVENT GARDEN
1898
INTRODUCTION.

In 1599 a certain George Silver published a work entitled "Paradoxes of Defence, wherein is proved the true grounds of Fight to be in the short auncient weapons, and that the short Sword hath aduantage of the long Sword or long Rapier. And the weakenesse and imperfection of the Rapier-fights displayed. Together with an Admonition to the noble, ancient, victorious, valiant, and most braue nation of Englishmen, to beware of false teachers of Defence, and how they forsake their owne naturall fights: with a briefe commendation of the noble science or exercising of Armes. By George Siluer Gentleman. London, Printed for Edvvard Blount. 1599.", dedicated "To the Right Honorable, my Singvlar Good Lord, Robert Earle of Essex and Ewe, Earle Marshall of England, Viscount Hereford, Lord Ferrers of Chartley, Bourchier and Louaine, Maister of the Queenes Majesties horse, & of the Ordenance, Chancellor of the Vniuersitie of Cambridge, Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, and one of her Highnesse most
in question existed, but remained unknown except to very few people up to about the year 1890, at which time it was discovered in the MS. Department of the British Museum by the late Mr. W. London. He was warned at the Museum to beware of assuming the work to be autograph, but he afterwards stated in a letter to Captain Hutton that he found "the educated but careless and corrupt spelling to be characteristic of Silver," and also that he "considered it to be the oldest English treatise on arms, with the exception of that on the two-hand sword in the Harleian MS. (3542), which dates from the fifteenth century." The "Bref Instructions" consist of thirty-four closely-written pages in very good preservation, there being but few places, and those of comparative insignificance, where the handwriting is too faded to be legible; in such cases the context, however, clearly conveys the meaning. It is interesting to note that the MS.* of the "Paradoxes" is also in the Library of the British Museum, having been purchased in 1892 at the sale of the MSS. of Edwin H. Laurence, Lot 603, at a cost of £11.

From the time that the MS. of "Bref Instructions" first became known to Mr. London he appears to have studied it with considerable care, and, although not himself a fencer, he became at once so convinced of the prac-

* MS. 47 pages. No. 34,192. "With 'Epistle Dedecatorie' (ff. 4-6) to Robert [Devereux, 2nd] Earl of Essex. Probably the actual presentation copy, &c." Vide Thimm's "Bibliography of Fencing and Duelling."
tical value to swordsmen of its contents that he made a complete transcript of it—by no means a light undertaking when the caligraphy and spelling are taken into account.

Knowing Captain Alfred Hutton by reputation as one of the most universally recognized authorities on all matters respecting the sword and its employment, it occurred to Mr. London after completing the transcript that Captain Hutton was of all others the one best qualified by his practical knowledge and experience to pronounce definitely upon the merits of the MS. He accordingly obtained an introduction, and, after some correspondence, left the transcript for perusal. This occurred in 1894. In due course it was returned, and then only Captain Hutton learned of the rather sudden death of the lender, who it appeared had some short time previously expressed a wish that the transcript might be allowed to remain in Captain Hutton’s magnificent collection of fencing and duelling literature.

Thus it was, in 1895, that the “Bref Instructions,” by far the more valuable part of George Silver’s work, first came under my notice.

Realizing the value of this unpublished work Captain Hutton eventually extracted from Mr. London’s transcript of it the material upon which he based a most interesting article in “The Indian Fencing Review” of January, 1897, on “Sword Fighting and Sword Play,” constituting in itself a highly practical little work, and likely to prove of much assistance to the infantry officer
desirous of rendering himself as "handy" as possible with his sword at close quarters. More recently still, namely, on September 25, 1897, Captain Hutton gave practical illustration of the "grips" mentioned by him in that article at an exhibition of swordsmanship at the Whitton Park Club, and this display following upon the publication of his paper immediately recalled to my mind the original MS. at the British Museum. I took an early opportunity of consulting this in order to make a closer acquaintance with Silver's later and more important work, which is probably the earliest (in English, at any rate) to teach what is now considered to be the most telling and classic style of fence, viz., "Parry and Riposte."

Much impressed by what I saw and afterwards read, it struck me that a work so peculiarly English, containing so much matter of value to all swordsmen, and to infantry officers in particular, ought not to remain buried, but should rather be published for the use of those who care to read and learn. I therefore determined to complete the work so nearly finished by George Silver, by publishing his MS. of "Bref Instructions." Captain Hutton and Captain Thimm, whom I consulted on this idea, gave me every encouragement, the former most kindly placing at my disposal the transcript made by Mr. London for comparison when my own transcript was completed.

After reading the "Bref Instructions" carefully through in conjunction with the "Paradoxes," I determined to
INTRODUCTION.

make the work really complete, as George Silver had evidently intended it to be, by reprinting the "Paradoxes" as nearly as possible in their original form, with the "Bref Instructions" following literatim et verbatim in accordance with the MS., and in the same style as the "Paradoxes."

These latter alone contain much to interest the swordsman and the antiquary, but it is not so much to this portion of the work as to the "Bref Instructions" that I desire to direct attention, owing to the remarkably clear and concise manner in which much excellent and serviceable advice upon the handling of the sword is given. Taking into consideration the fact that the weapon recommended by Silver as the most serviceable nearly 300 years ago, though slightly longer and double-edged, was for all practical purposes similar, as regards the blade, to the regulation weapon of to-day, much, if not all, that he has written upon the handling of it in his time may well prove of immense service to those whose lives are at times dependent upon the more or less ready use of their swords.

The fact that so little distinction is now made between the swordsman ship of the duellist and that of the soldier must be incomprehensible to the majority of fencers who have given any consideration to the matter as thus defined. Fencing as now taught throughout Europe is made, and always has been, entirely subservient to the requirements of the duel, with all its attendant etiquette. This distinction is demonstrated by almost any work (whether of
ancient or of modern date) upon the art of sword-fencing, and it is moreover a rule to which there are few exceptions. That this distinction should exist among continental nations cannot be altogether a matter of surprise to us, seeing that the possibility, and even, in certain countries, the probability of a duel is common to both civil and military society alike, but that this method should be adopted in this country, where duelling is altogether a thing of the past, it is not quite so easy to understand.

As a means simply of promoting health, and as a recreation, fencing of the classic schools, whether French or Italian, cannot be too highly commended, and with simply such objects as these in view all the stringent etiquette of the duel and the extreme niceties of the art of fence should be strongly insisted upon in the fencing-room. It is generally admitted that the true basis of all scientific swordsmanship is foil-play—meaning thereby that a man who is fairly expert with the foil will very soon render himself equally so with the sabre; although I do not suggest that a man cannot become a good sabre fencer without the groundwork of foil-fencing—I merely say that he is invariably the better for it.

Now in all probability the only Englishmen to whom swordsmanship can ever be a matter of real necessity are officers in Her Majesty’s Navy and Army, of whom it is perhaps the infantry officer rather than any other that should be considered on this account, and who in particular should be clearly instructed in the vast distinction
that exists between the sabre duel and the sabre fight, shorn of all formality and rules, as he would find it on service, whether against a savage or a civilized enemy. The method of instruction as at present authorized for his use is so closely allied to the duelling system as to be practically indistinguishable from it, and to such an extent is this true that the authority responsible for its invention and adoption has seen fit not only to neglect all instruction respecting either the attack or defence of the lower limbs, but has actually gone so far as absolutely to prohibit the attack or defence of any part of the body below the hip. From this, and from many other instances of a more or less similar nature, it is evident beyond dispute that the system and etiquette of the duel have been rigidly adhered to throughout, and this too in a text-book presumably compiled to teach *free sabre fighting*, such as would be encountered on active service. Clearly, in the place of this, a simple system should have been drawn up to teach an officer how to defend himself thoroughly, and how to attack an adversary, without puzzling him with a number of complicated parries and movements, which, even if practicable with a feather-weight duelling sabre, and in the fencing-room, become utterly impossible with the regulation sword, and in a fight of the "rough and tumble" order. Given the present infantry regulation sword of sufficient weight and strength to render it a really serviceable weapon, it would be impossible for any man to put into practice the principles which he is now
INTRODUCTION.

supposed to be taught. Why not, therefore, having decided upon the pattern of the regulation sword, have drawn up, or have caused to be drawn up, by one or more of our well-known swordsmen, competent from experience to judge what is really requisite for the purpose, a simple common-sense method of sword-fighting suitable for service requirements. This could easily be taught, and devoid of a great deal of that preliminary fencing-room drudgery that so frequently proves to be the real bar to further interest and improvement except in the case of the enthusiast—a system, in fact, of such a description that the advanced “science” of the sword is as far as possible eliminated from it, in order to make way for the simple development of individual coolness and quickness by such means as can without difficulty be practised by officers among themselves at any time.

That such a system can be drawn up, and that there are those who are thoroughly qualified to do it well, there is no doubt—the main point to be borne in mind being from the outset to dismiss all that to any unnecessary extent savours of the duelling school, and then to teach the smallest number and the simplest of parries that will protect a man from head to foot, and the correct and quickest way of delivering a cut or thrust, coupled with careful instruction in the judicious use of the left hand in defence, which is now and has long been totally ignored. So soon as an officer instructed upon such simple lines as these finds that he can always stop deliberate attacks delivered
INTRODUCTION.

without feints (as they might usually be expected), and can make his ripostes with tolerable hope of success, he will at once begin to acquire confidence in himself and in his sword at close quarters, and before long it is not unreasonable to believe that our officers generally would learn properly to understand, and to form a more correct estimate of the value of the weapons they wear as a fighting arm, than with certain almost rare exceptions is at present the case.

The whole matter practically then amounts to this: In order to make a man a fencer it requires an expenditure of much time, patience, and labour on the part of instructor and pupil alike. Why therefore endeavour to achieve so much which at the best can only be done in comparatively few cases, whereas far more practical results can be attained, and that in a much larger number of cases, with infinitely less trouble to all concerned? Surely, if an officer after practical experience found that he could hold his own and render a good account of himself in a hand-to-hand encounter on such lines as already suggested, is it not also reasonable to suppose that this of itself would prove sufficient incentive to him to look into the real "science" of the art of his own accord, and thus eventually to assist, though in a way unintentionally, in the re-establishment of the art of fence in this country upon an even better, and certainly upon a more justifiable basis than that upon which it exists in other countries?

To the infantry officer, then, whether he be a fencer or
not, and perhaps more especially in the latter case, I earnestly recommend a perusal and careful study of the “Bref Instructions;” for I am convinced that a great deal of what he reads therein can be put into practice in sword encounters with highly successful results, especially when they take place against men of savage or barbarian races that Her Majesty’s troops are now so frequently sent to face in various quarters of the globe. To him I particularly commend the “Gryps” (cap. 6), and the ripostes that can be made from them—powerful parries, with strong, rapid, and, in the majority of cases, most unlooked-for ripostes, calculated to thoroughly surprise an adversary under almost any circumstances.

As an example: A rushing opponent delivers a sweeping downward blow at the left side of the head or neck. This is met with a high prime parry, and nothing being less likely than a feint under such circumstances, the blow can be met deliberately, or even with a forward movement of the foot, and the assailant’s sword-wrist gripped firmly with the left hand under the right as his cut is checked, and almost simultaneously with the formation of the parry. The sword-point is then inclined to the rear over the left shoulder, and the pommel dashed into his face with terrific force, the way being further cleared for it by pressure downwards with the left hand upon the adversary’s sword-arm. There are, of course, variations of this, and a man fairly practised in this class of close fighting would be able easily to combine all these movements
almost into a single action; and there is, moreover, a
great point in favour of this, inasmuch as it is hardly
possible for any defence to be brought against a riposte
of this kind in time to prove successful. The more
furious and determined the onslaught the simpler and
more effective the parry and riposte really become.
Silver gives the "gryps" or seizures for use to meet
various attacks with ripostes of this description (in many
cases with the alternative of using the point), which can
most effectively be made from them, and these it is which
appear of such practical value as to warrant the publica-
tion of them after so many years of oblivion.

It is true that they had gone out of vogue before his
time, as is shown by his statement in the "Paradoxes,"
that "there are now in these dayes no gripes, closes,
wrestlings, striking with the hilt, daggers, or bucklers,
vaused in Fence-schools," but which at the same time
proves them to have been previously recognized, taught,
and used, and to have simply been lost sight of as times
and weapons changed.

It is sufficiently remarkable that from the very com-
mencement Silver lays great stress upon defence; every
argument he makes use of points to the absolute necessity
of this in the first instance, and it is only when in safety
that he advises counter-attack or riposte.

The soundness of his views in this is amply justified
by the fact that the most classic fence of the present day
is admitted by schools of fence of all nations to consist of
the correctly-formed parry followed by an instantaneous riposte. He draws particular attention to the fact that for years previous to his time all had been sacrificed to attack, and that defence had been almost if not entirely neglected for the sake of attack by those who made it their business to teach the use of the sword—a fact which he justly condemns. This remains the point of primary importance throughout Silver's work, and forms the very essence of his teaching.

Much that we can read in the "Paradoxes" appears to have been, and doubtless was, written in a feeling of intense irritation against and jealousy of Saviolo (the writer on the rapier)* and his school, but the manner in which he treats his own method of defence and attack in his "Bref Instructions," as opposed to that of the Italian school of his day, clearly proves that he had thoroughly thought out the system which he advocated, and that he had reduced it to a science practically of his own creation, which is remarkable at any rate for much common sense, and in some respects, perhaps, for teaching of a unique kind. His "Bref Instructions" can be still used with great effect, almost without modification, to suit our modern sword, and it is on this account that I have brought them forward, suppressing or adding no-

* "Vincentio Saviolo. His Practise, in two bookes: the first treating of the Use of the Rapier and Dagger, the second of Honour and Honourable Quarrels. 4to, 1595. London: Printed by John Wolfe."
thing, in order to show how wide a scope they still possess for providing a powerful method of defence against all weapons, and some simple though telling ripostes for use in hand-to-hand fighting. Silver, too, fully realized the fact that the hilt or pommeled of the sword (or the butt of any arm) constituted an effectively offensive portion of the weapon if properly handled. A few modern authors, who have written upon bayonet fighting, have taught the use of the rifle-butt, but Silver was, so far as I have been able to ascertain, the first writer to attach any importance to the offensive possibilities of the sword-hilt. That in it he indicates a weapon of great power, when used as an auxiliary to the point and edge at close quarters, there can be no doubt, for whereas many a man can do much damage to his opponent after being run through the body, especially if able for the moment to retain the blade in himself (and thus render his enemy momentarily powerless), few if any would be able to stand up against a back-handed blow in the face with the pommeled of a regulation sword.

I suggest that sword fighting is not taught, and that it ought to be. Fencing should be encouraged to the utmost, but fighting should be regarded, as it was by Silver, as a distinct subject, and of much greater importance in the majority of cases.

My advice to every infantry officer is to study these grips closely, and to thoroughly master the simplicities of sword fighting, and on no account to try to persuade him-
INTRODUCTION.

self that an intricate and possibly faulty duelling school will keep his skin whole in hand-to-hand fighting, unless he be already an expert fencer.

Cyril G. R. Matthey.
PARADOXES OF DEFENCE,
WHEREIN IS PROVED THE TRUE grounds of Fight to be in the short auncient weapons, and that the short Sword hath advantage of the long Sword or long Rapier. And the weakenesse and imperfection of the Rapier-fights displayed. Together with an Admonition to the noble, ancient, victorious, valiant, and most braue nation of Englishmen, to beware of false teachers of Defence, and how they forfake their owne naturall fights: with a briefe commendation of the noble science or excercising of Armes.

By George Silver Gentleman.

LONDON,
Printed for Edwvvard Blount.
1599.
TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE, MY SINGULAR
GOOD LORD, ROBERT EARLE OF
Essex and Ewe, Earle Marshall of England, Vis-
count Hereford, Lord Ferrers of Chartley, Bourchier
and Louaine, Maister of the Queenes Maieflyes horse, &
of the Ordenance, Chancellor of the Vniuersitie of Cam-
bridge, Knight of the most noble order of the Gar-
ter, and one of her Highnesse most ho-
orable Privy Counsell.

ENCING (Right honorable)
in this new fangled age, is like
our fashions, euerie daye a
change, resembling the Ca-
melion, whoaltereth himselfe
into all colours faue white: so
Fencing changeth into all wards faue the right.
That it is so, experience teacheth vs: why it is
so, I doubt not but your wisedome doth con-
ceive. There is nothing permanent that is not
true, what can be true that is vncertaine? how
can that be certaine, that stands vpon vncertain
waters? The mind of man a greedie hunter after truth, finding the seeming truth but chaunging, not alwayes one, but alwayes diverse, for-sakes the supposed, to find out the assured certaintie: and searching every where saue where it should, meetes with all saue what it would. VVho seekes & finds not, seekes in vaine; who seekes in vaine, muft if he wil find seeke againe: and seeke he may againe and againe, yet all in vaine. VVho seekes not what he would, as he should, and where he should, as in all other things (Right honourable) so in Fencing: the mind desirous of truth, huntsafter it, and hating falsehood, flies from it, and therefore having mis-fed it once, it assayes the second time: if then he thrives not, he tries another way: whẽ that hath failed he aduentures on the third: & if all these faile him, yet he never faileth to chaunge his weapon, his fight, his ward, if by any meanes he may compasse what he most affects: for because men desire to find out a true defence for them-selves in their fight, therefore they seeke it dili-gently, nature hauing taught vs to defend our selues, and Art teaching how: and because we misse it in one way we chaunge to another. But though
though we often chop and change, turne and returne, from ward to ward, from fight to fight, in this vnconstant search, yet wee neuer rest in anie, and that because we neuer find the truth: and therefore we neuer find it, because we neuer seeke it in that weapon where it may be found. For, to seeke for a true defence in an vntrue weapon, is to angle on the earth for fift, and to hunt in the sea for Hares: truth is ancient though it seeme an vpstart: our forefathers were wise, though our age account them foolish, valiant though we repute them cowardes: they found out the true defence for their bodies in short weapons by their wisdome, they defended them selues and subdued their enemies, with those weapons with their valour. And (Right honorable) if we will haue this true Defence, we must seeke it where it is, in short Swords, short Staues the halfe Pike, Partisans, Gleues, or such like weapons of perfect lengths, not in long Swords, long Rapiers, nor frog pricking Poiniards: for if there be no certain grounds for Defence, why do they teach it? if there be, why haue they not found it? Not because it is not: to say so, were to gainsay the truth: but because it is not cer-

A 4
tain in those weapons which they teach. To prove this, I have set forth these my Paradoxes, different I confess from the maine current of our outlandish teachers, but agreeing I am well assured to the truth, and tending as I hope to the honor of our English nation. The reason which moved me to adventure so great a task, is the desire I have to bring the truth to light, which hath long time lyen hidden in the cause of contempt, while we like degenerate sons, have forsaken our forefathers virtues with their weapons, and have lusted like men sick of a strange ague, after the strange vices and deuises of Italian, French and Spanish Fencers, little remembering, that these Apish toyes could not free Rome from Brennius sacke, nor Fraunce from King Henrie the fift his conquest. To this desire to find out truth the daughter of time, begotten of Bellona, I was also moved, that by it I might remove the great losse of our English gallants, which we daily suffer by these imperfect fights, wherein none undertake the combat, be his cause neuer so good, his cunning neuer so much, his strength and agilitie neuer so great, but his vertue was tied to fortune: happie man, happie doale,
DEDICATORIE.

doale, kill or be killed is the dreadfull issue of this diuellish imperfect fight. If that man were now alive, which beat the Maister for the scho

lers fault, because he had no better instructed him, these Italian Fencers could not escape his censure, who teach vs Offence, not Defence, and to fight, as Diogenes scholers were taught to daunce, to bring their liues to an end by Art. VVas Aiex a coward because he fought with a feuen fouled Buckler, or are we mad to go nacked into the field to trie our fortunes, not our vertues? VVas Achilles a run-away, who ware that well tempered armour, or are we desperat, who care for nothing but to fight, and learn like the Pigmeyes, to fight with bodkins, or weapons of like defence? Is it valour for a man to go nacked against his enemie? why then did the La
cedemonians punish him as desperat, whom they rewarded for his valour with a Lawrell crowne? But that which is most shamefull, they teach me to butcher one another here at home in peace, wherewith they cannot hurt their ene

 mies abrode in warre. For, your Honour well knowes, that when the battels are ioyned, and come to the charge, there is no roome for them

To this it will be objected, that in the warres we use few Rapiers or none at all, but short Swords. To that I answere: These are insuffi

 cient also, for that they have no
to drawe their Bird-spits, and when they haue them, what can they doe with them? can they pierce his Corslet with the point? can they vnlace his Helmet, vn buckle his Armour, hew a-sunder their Pikes with a Stocata, a reuerfa, a Dritta, a Stramason, or other such like tépeftuous termes? no, these toyes are fit for children, not for men, for stragling boyes of the Campe, to murder poultrie, not for men of Honour to trie the bat-tell with their foes. Thus I haue (right Honorable) for the trial of the truth, betwene the short Sword and the long Rapier, for the suaving of the liues of our English gallants, who are sent to certaine death by their vn certaine fights, & for abandoning of that mischievous and imperfect weapon, which serves to kill our friëds in peace, but cannot much hurt our foes in warre, haue I at this time giuen forth these Paradoxes to the view of the world. And because I knowe such straunge opinions had need of stout defence, I humbly craue your Honorable protection, as one in whom the true nobility of our victorious Auncestors hath taken vp his residence. It will fute to the rest of your Honours most noble cõ-plements, to maintaine the defence of their weapons
Dedicatorie.

weapons whose vertues you possesse. It agrees with your Honourable disposition, to receive with fauour what is presented with loue. It forts with your Lordships high authority, to weigh with reason, what is fit for marshall men. It is an vsuall point of your Honor, which winnes your Lordship loue in your countrey, to defend the truth in whomsoever: and it addeth a supply to that which your Lordship haue of late begun to your unspeakeable honor and our inestima-ble benefite, to reduce the vwearing of swordes vwith hiltis over the hands, to the Romane disci-pline; no longer then they might draw them under their armes, or ouer their shoulders. In all or any of these respects, I rest assured that your Lordship vwill vouchsafe to receive vwith fauor and maintaine vwith honour these Paradoxes of mine, vwhich if they be shrouded vnder so safe a shield, I vwill not doubt but to maintaine vwith reason amongst the wvise, and proue it by pra-ctise vpon the ignorant, that there is no certaine defence in the Rapier, and that there is great aduantage in the short Sword against the long Rapier, or all maner of Rapiers in generall, of vwhat length soeuer. And that the short Staffe
The Epist. Dedicaturie.
hath the vauntage against the long Staffe of
twelue, foureteene, fixteene or eighteene foote
long, or of what length soeuer. And against two
men with their Swordes and Daggers, or two
Rapiers, Poiniards & Gantlets, or each of them
a case of Rapiers: which whether I can per-
forme or not, I submit for triall to your Honors
martiall censure, being at all times readie to
make it good, in what maner, and against what
man soeuer it shall stand with your Lordships
good liking to appoint. And so I humbly com-
mand this booke to your Lordships wisedome
to peruse, and your Honour to the Highest to
protect in all health and happinesse novve and
euer.

Your Honors in all dutie,

George Silver.
AN ADMONITION
TO THE NOBLE, ANCIENT,
VICTORIOUS, VALIANT, AND
MOST BRAVE NATION OF
ENGLISHMEN.

George Siluer hauing the perfect knowledge of all manner of weapons, and being experienced in all manner of fights, thereby perceiving the great abuses by the Italian Teachers of Offence done vnto them, the great errors, inconueniences, & false resolutions they haue brought them into, haue enforced me, euene of pitie of their most lamentable wounds and slaughters, & as I verily thinke it my bounden dutie, with all loue and humilitie to admonish them to take heed, how they submit themselves into the hands of Italian teachers of Defence, or strangers whatsoever; and to beware how they forfaye or suspeet their owne naturall fight, that they may by casting off of these Italianated, weake, fantastical, and most diuellish and imperfect fights, and by exercising of their owne ancient weapons, be restored, or atchieue vnto their natural, and most manly and victorious fight againe, the dint and force whereof manie
braue nations haue both felt and feared. Our plough-
men haue mightily prevailed against them, as also a-
against Maistres of Defence both in Schooles and coun-
tries, that haue taken upon the to stand upon Schoole-
trickes and iugling gambolds: whereby it grew to a
common speech among the countrie-men, Bring me to
a Fencer, I will bring him out of his fence trickes with
good downe right blowes, I will make him forget his
fence trickes I will warrant him. I speake not against
Maistres of Defence indeed, they are to be honoured,
nor against the Science, it is noble, and in mine opinio
be preferred next to Diuinitie; for as Diuinitie pre-
ferueth the soule from hell and the diuell, so doth this
noble Science defend the bodie from wounds & slaugh-
ter. And moreover, the exercising of weapons putteth
away aches, griefes, and diseases, it increaseth strenght,
and sharpeneth the wits, it giueth a perfect judgement,
it expelleth melancholy, cholericke and euill conceits,
it keepeth a man in breath, perfect health, and
long life. It is vnto him that hath the perfection there-
of, a most friendly and comfortable companion when
he is alone, hauing but only his weapon about him, it
putteth him out of all feare, & in the warres and places
of most danger it maketh him bold, hardie, and valiant.

And for as much as this noble and most mightie na-
tion of Englishmen, of their good natures, are alwayes
most louing, verie credulous, & ready to cherish & pro-
tect strægers: yet that through their good natures they
neuer more by strangers or false teachers may be decei-
ued, once againe I am most humbly to admonish the, or
such as shal find in themselves a disposition or desire to
learne their weapons of them, that from henceforth as
stran-
An Admonition.

Strangers shall take upon them to come hither to teach this noble & most valiant, & victorious nation to fight, that first, before they learne of them, they cause a sufficient triall of them to be made, whether the excellencie of their skill be such as they professe or no, the triall to be very requisite & reasonable, euene such as I my selfe would be contented withall, if I should take vpon me to go in their countrie to teach their nation to fight. And this is the triall: they shall play with such weapos as they professe to teach withall, three bouts apecee with three of the best English Maisters of Defence, & three bouts apecee with three vnskillful valiant men, and three bouts apecee with three resolute men half drunke. Then if they can defend the selues against these maisters of Defence, and hurt, and go free from the rest, then are they to be honored, cherished, and allowed for perfect good chers, what countrey men soever they be: but if of anie of these they take foile, then are they imperfect in their profession, their fight is false, & they are false chers, deceivers and murtherers, and to be punished accordingly, yet no worse punishment vnto them I wish, then such as in their triall they shall find.

There are foure especiall markes to know the Italian fight is imperfect. & that the Italian teachers and setters forth of books of Defence, neuer had the perfection of the true fight.

The first marke is, they seldome fight in their owne country vnarmed, commonly in this fort, a paire of Gantlettes vpon their hands, and a good shirt of maile vpon their bodies. The secon marke is, that neither the Italians, nor any
of their best scholers do never fight, but they are most commonly sore hurt, or one or both of them slain.

The third marke is, they never teach their scholers, nor set downe in their bookes anie perfect lengths of their weapons, without the which no man can by nature or Art against the perfect length fight safe, for being too short, their times are too long, and spaces too wide for their defence, and being too long, they wilbe vpon euerie crosse that shall happen to be made, whether it be done by skil or chance, in great danger of death; because the Rapier being too long, the crosse cannot be undone in due time, but may be done by going backe with the feete; but that time is alwaies too long to answer the time of the hand, therefore euery man ought to haue a weapon according to his owne stature: the tall man must haue his weapon longer then the man of meane stature, or else he hath wrong in his defence, & the man of meane stature must haue his weapon longer then the man of smal stature, or else he hath wrong in his defence; & the man of smal stature must beware that he feed not himself with this vaine conceit, that he wil haue his weapon long, to reach as farre as the tall man, for therin he shal haue great disaduantage, both in making of a strong crosse, and also in uncrossing againe, and in keeping his point from crossing, and when a crosse is made vpon him, to defend himself, or indanger his enemie, or to redeeme his lost times. Againe Rapiers longer, then is convenient to accord with the true statures of men, are alwaies too long or too heauie to keepe their bodies in due time from the crosse of the light short sword of perfect length, the which being made by the skilfull out of any of the foure true times, vpon any of the foure chiefe
Actions, by reason of the uncertaintie & great swiftnesse in any of these times, they are in great danger of a blow, or of a thrust in the hand, arme, head, body, or face, & in euerie true crosse in the vncrossing, in great danger of a blow upon the head, or a full thrust in the bodie or face: and being taken in that time & place, the first mouer in vnccrossing speedeth the Rapier man of imperfect length, whether it be too long, too short or too heauie, and goeth free himselfe by the direction of his gouernours.

The fourth marke is, the crosse of their Rapiers for true defence of their hands are imperfect, for the true cariage of the guardant fight, without the which all fights are imperfect.

Of sice chiefe causes, that many valiant men thinking themselves by their practises to be skilfull in their weapons, are yet manie times in their fight sore hurt, and manie times slaine by men of small skill, or none at all.

He first and chieuest cause is, the lacke of the 3 foure Gouernours, without the which it is impossible to fight safe, although a man should practise most painfully and most diligently all the daies of his life.

The second cause is, the lacke of knowledge in the due obseruance of the foure Actions, the which we call bent, spent, lying spent, and drawing backe: these Actions euerie man fighteth upon, whether they be skilfull or unskilfull, he that obserueth them is safe, he that obserueth the not, is in continuall danger of euerie thrust that shalbe strongly made against him.
The third cause is, they are unpractised in the foure true times, neither do they know the true times from the false: therefore the true choice of their times are most commonly taken by chance, and seldom otherwise.

The fourth cause is, they are unacquainted out of what fight, or in what manner they are to answer the variable fight: and therefore because the variable fight is the most easiest fight of all other, most commonly do answer the variable fight with the variable fight, which ought neuer to be but in the first distance, or with the short Sword against the long, because if both or one of them shall happen to prese, and that in due time of neither sides fight be changed, the distance, by reason of narrowness of space, is broken, the place is won and lost of both sides, then he that thrusteth first, speedeth: if both happen to thrust together, they are both in danger. These things sometimes by true times, by change of fights, by chance are avoided.

The fifth cause is, their weapons are most commonly too long to uncoase without going backe with the feet.

The sixth cause is, their weapons are most commonly too heavy both to defend and offend in due time, & by these two last causes many valiant men haue lost their lives.

What is the cause that wise men in learning or practising their weapons, are deceived with Italian Fencers.

There are foure causes: the first, their schoolmaisters are imperfect: the second is, that whatsoever they teach, is both true & false; true in their demonstrations, according with their force & time in gentle play, & in their actions
actions according with true force & time in rough play or fight, false: for example, there is as much difference betwixt these two kind of fights, as there is betwixt the true picture of Sir Bevis of Southampton, & Sir Bevis himself, if he were living. The third, none can judge of the Craft but the Crafts-man; the vnskilfull, be he neuer so wise, can not truly judge of his teacher, or skill, the which he learneth, being vnskilful himselfe. Lastly, & to confirme for truth all that shall be amisse, not only in this excellent Science of Defence, but in all other excellent secrets, most commonly the lye beareth as good a shew of truth, as truth it selfe.

Of the false resolutions and vaine opinions of Rapier-men, and of the danger of death thereby ensuing.

It is a great question, & especially amongst the Rapier-men, who hath the vantage of the thruster, or of the warder. Some hold strongly, that the warder hath the vantage: others say, it is most certain that the thruster hath the vantage. Now when two do happen to fight, being both of one mind, that the thruster hath the vantage, they make all shift they can, who shall give the first thrust: as for example, two Captaines at Southampton even as they were going to take shipping upon the key, fell at strife, drew their Rapiers, and presently, being desperate, hardie or resolute, as they call it, with all force and over great speed, ran with their rapiers one at the other, & were both slain. Now when two of the contrary opinion shall meet and fight, you shall see verie peaceable warres betweene them: for they verily thinke that he
that first thrusteth is in great danger of his life, therefore with all speede do put themselves in ward, or Stocata, the surest gard of all other, as Vincentio faith, and thereupon they stand sure, saying the one to the other, thrust and thou dare; and faith the other, thrust and thou dare, or strike or thrust and thou dare, faith the other: then faith the other, strike or thrust and thou dare for thy life. These two cunning gentlemen standing long time together, upon this worthie ward, they both depart in peace, according to the old proverbe: It is good sleeping in a whole skinne. Againe if two shall fight, the one of opinion, that he that thrusteth hath the vantage, and the other of opinion, that the warder hath the vantage, then most commonly the thrustier being valiant, with all speed thrusteth home, and by reason of the time and swift motion of his hand, they are most commonly with the points of their rapiers, or daggers, or both, one or both of them hurt or slaine; because their spaces of defence in that kind of fight, are too wide in due time to defend, and the place being wonne, the eye of the Patient by the swift motion of the Agents hand, is deceiued. Another resolution they stand sure upon for their liues, to kill their enemies, in the which they are most commonly slaine themselves: that is this: When they find the point of their enemies rapier out of the right line, they say, they may boldly make home a thrust with a Passata, the which they obserue,and do accordingly: but the other having a shorter time with his hand, as nature manie times teacheth him, sodainly turnneth his wrisst, whereby he meeteth the other in his passage just with the point of his rapier in the face or body. And this false resolution hath cost manie a life.
That the cause that manie are so often slaine, and manie sore hurt in fight with long Rapiers is not by reason of their dangerous thrusts, nor cunningnesse of that Italianated fight, but in the length and unweildinesse thereof.

It is most certaine, that men may with short swords both strike, thrust, false and double, by reason of their distance and nimblenesse thereof, more dangerously then they can with long Rapiers: and yet when two fight with short swords, hauing true fight, there is no hurt done: neither is it possible in any reason, that any hurt should be done betwixt them of either side, and this is well knowne to all such as haue the perfection of true fight. By this it plainly appeareth, that the cause of the great slaughter, and sundrie hurts done by long Rapiers, consisteth not in long Reach, dangerous thrustes, nor cunningnesse of the Italian fight, but in the inconuenient length, and unweildinesse of their long Rapiers: whereby it commonly falleth out, that in all their Actions appertaining to their defence, they are unable, in due time to performe, and continually in danger of euerie crosse, that shall happen to be made with their rapier blades, which being done, within the halfe rapier; (unlesse both be of one mind with all speed to depart, which seldom or never happeneth betweene men of valiant disposition,) it is impossible to vncresse, or get out, or to aoid the stabbes of the Daggers. And this hath falne out manie times amongst valient men at those weapons.
Of running and standing fast in Rapier fight, the runner hath the vantage.

If two valiant men do fight being both cunning in running, & that they both use the same at one instant, their course is doubled, the place is wonne of both sides, and one or both of them will commonly be slaine or sore hurt: and if one of them shall runne, and the other stand fast vpon the Imbrocata or Stocata, or howsoever, the place wilbe at one instant wonne of one side, and gained of the other, and one or both of them wilbe hurt or slaine: if both shall prese hard vpon the guard, he that first thrusteth home in true place, hurteth the other: & if both thrust together, they are both hurt: yet some vantage the runner hath, because he is an uncertaine marke, and in his motion: the other is a certaine marke, and in a dead motion: and by reason thereof manie times the unskilfull man taketh vantage he knoweth not how, against him that lyeth watching vpon his ward or Stocata guard.

Of striking and thrusting both together.

It is strongly holden of manie, that if in fight they find their enemy to haue more skill then themselves, they presently will continually strike, & thrust iust with him, whereby they will make their fight as good as his, and thereby haue as good advantage as the other with all his skill: but if their swordes be longer then the other, then their advantage is great; for it is certaine
certaine (say they) that an inch will kill a man: but if their swordes be much longer then the other, then their aduantage is so great, that they wilbe sure by thrusting and striking iust with the other, that they will alwaies hurt him that hath the short sword, and go cleare themselfes, because they will reach him, when he shall not reach them. These men speake like such as talke of Robin Hooe, that neuer shot in his bow; for to strike or thrust iust together with a man of skill, lyeth not in the will of the ignorant, because the skilfull man alwaies fighteth vpon the true times, by the which the vnskilfull is still disappointed of both place and time, and therefore driuen of necessitie still to watch the other, when & what he will doe; that is, whether he will strike, thrust, or false: if the vnskilfull strike or thrust in the time of falling, therein he neither striketh nor thrusteth iust with the other: he may saie, he hath stroke or thrust before him, but not iust with him, nor to anie good purpose; for in the time of falling, if he strike or thrust, he striketh or thrusteth too short: for in that time he hath neither time nor place to strike home, and as it is said, the vnskilfull man, that will take vpon him to strike or thrust iust with the skilfull, must first behold what the man of skil will doe, and when he will doe it, and therefore of necessitie is driuen to suffer the skilfull man to be the first mouer, and entred into his Action, whether it be blow or thrust, the truth therof in reason cannot be denied. Now judge whether it be possible for an vnskilfull man to strike or thrust iust together with a man of skill; but the skilfull man can most certainly strike and thrust iust together with the vnskilfull, because the vnskilfull fighteth vpon false times, which being too long
George Siluer his

to answere the true times, the skilfull fighting vpon the true times, although the vnskilfull be the first mouer, & entred into his Action, whether it be blow or thrust; yet the shortnesse of the true times maketh at the pleasure of the skilfull a iust meeting together: in perfect fight two neuer strike or thrust together, because they neuer suffer place nor time to performe it.

Two vnskilfull men manie times by chance strike and thruste together, chance vnto them, because they know not what they doe, or how it commeth to passe: but the reasons or causes be these. Sometimes two false times meet & make a iust time together, & sometimes a true time and a false time meeteth and maketh a iust time together, and sometimes two true times meet and make a iust time together. And all this hapneth because the true time and place is vknowne vnto them.

George Siluer his resolution vpon that hidden or doubtfull question, who hath the advantage of the Offender or Defender.

he advantage is strongly holden of many to be in the offender, yea in so much, that if two minding to offend in their fight, it is thought to be in him that first striketh or thrusteth. Others strongly hold opinion that the wardr absolutely hath still the advantage, but these opinions as they are contrary the one to the other: so are they contrarie to true fight, as may well be seene by these short examples. If the advantage be in the warder, then it is not good anie time to strike or thrust: if the advantage be in the striker or thwart, then were it a friuolous
Paradoxes of Defence.

a frivolous thing to learne to ward, or at anie time to seeke to ward, since in warding lieth disaduantage. Now may it plainly by these examples appeare, that if there be anie perfection in fight, that both sides are deceiued in their opinions, because if the striker or thruster have the aduantage, then is the warder still in danger of wounds or death. And againe, if the warder hath the aduantage, then is the striker or thruster in as great daunger to defend himselfe against the warder, because the warder from his wards, taketh aduantage of the striker or thruster vpon euerie blow or thrust, that shall be made against him. Then thus I conclude, that if there be perfection in the Science of Defence, they are all in their opinons deceiued; and that the truth may appeare for the satisfaction of all men, this is my resolution: there is no aduantage absolute-ly, nor disaduantage in striker, thruster, or warder: and there is a great aduantage in the striker thruster & warder: but in this maner, in the perfection of fight the aduantage consisteth in fight betweene partie and partie: that is, whosoever winneth or gaineth the place in true pace, space and time, hath the aduantage, whether he be striker, thruster or warder. And that is my re-
solution.

Of Spanish fight vwith the Rapier.

He Spaniard is now thought to be a better man with his Rapier then is the Italian, Frenchman, high Almaine, or anie other countrie man whatsoever, because they in their Rapier-fight stand vpon so manie intricate trickes,
that in all the course of a mans life it shall be hard to
learne them, and if they misfe in doing the least of them
in their fight, they are in danger of death. But the Spai-
niard in his fight, both safely to defend himselfe, and to
endanger his enemie, hath but one only lying, and two
wards to learne, wherein a man with small practise in a
verie short time may become perfect.

This is the maner of Spanish fight, they stand as
braue as they can with their bodies straignt vpright,
narrow spaced, with their feet continually mouing, as if
they were in a dance, holding forth their armes and Ra-
piers verie straignt against the face or bodies of their
enemies: & this is the only lying to accomplish that kind
of fight. And this note, that as long as any man shall
lie in that maner with his arme, and point of his Rapier
straignt, it shall be impossible for his aduersarie to hurt
him, because in that straignt holding forth of his arme,
which way foeuer a blow shall be made against him, by
reason that his Rapier hilt lyeth so farre before him, he
hath but a verie litle way to moue, to make his ward per-
fect, in this maner. If a blow be made at the right side
of the head, a verie litle mowing of the hand with the
knuckles vward defendeth that side of the head or bodie,
and the point being still out straignt, greatly endan-
gereth the striker: and so likewise, if a blow be made at
the left side of the head, a verie small turning of the
wrist with the knuckles downward, defendeth that side of
the head and bodie, and the point of the Rapier much
indangereth the hand, arme, face or bodie of the striker:
and if anie thrust be made, the wards, by reason of the
indirections in mowing the feet in maner of dauncing,
as aforesaid, maketh a perfect ward, and still withall the
point
point greatly endangereth the other. And thus is the
Spanish fight perfect: so long as you can keepe that or-
der, and soone learned, and therefore to be accounted
the best fight with the Rapier of all other. But note how
this Spanish fight is perfect, and you shall see no
longer then you can keepe your point straight against
your aduersarie: as for example, I haue heard the like
ieft.

There was a cunning Doctor at his first going to sea,
being doubtfull that he should be sea-sicke, an old wo-
man perceiving the same, said vnto him: Sir, I pray, be
of good comfort, I will teach you a tricke to avoid that
doubt; here is a fine pibble stone, if you please to accept
it, take it with you, and when you be on ship-bord, put
it in your mouth, and as long as you shall keepe the
same in your mouth, vpon my credit you shall neuer vo-
mit: the Doctor beleued her, and tooke it thankfully at
her hands, and when he was at sea, he began to be sicke,
whereupon he presently put the stone in his mouth,
& there kept it so long as he possibly could, but through
his extreme sicknesse the stone with vomit was cast out
of his mouth: then presently he remembred how the wo-
man had mocked him, and yet her words were true.

Euen so a Spaniard hauing his Rapier point put by,
may receiue a blow on the head, or a cut ouer the face,
hand, or arme, or a thrust in the body or face, and yet his
Spanish fight perfect, so long as he can keepe straight
the point of his Rapier against the face or body of his
aduersarie: which is as easie in that maner of fight to be
done, as it was for the Doctor in the extremity of his
vomite to keepe the stone in his mouth.

Yet one other pretie ieft more, scarce worth the rea-
There was an Italian teacher of Defence in my time, who was so excellent in his fight, that he would haue hit anie English man with a thrust, iust vpon any button in his doublet, and this was much spoken of.

Also there was another cunning man in catching of wildgeese, he would haue made no more ado, when he had heard them crie, as the maner of wildgeese is, flying one after another in rowes, but presently looking vp, would tell them, if there had bene a dozen, sixteene, twetie, or more, he would haue taken euerie one. And this tale was manie times told by men of good credit, and much maruelled at by the hearers: & the man that wold haue taken the wildgeese, was of good credite himselfe: marie they said, indeed he did neuer take anie, but at anie time when he had looked vp, and seene them flie in that maner, he would with all his heart haue taken the, but he could no more tell how to do it, then could the cunning Italian Fencer tell how to hit an Englishman, with a thrust iust vpon any one of his buttons, when he lifted.

Illusions for the maintenance of imperfect weapons & false fights, to feare or discourage the unskilfull in their weapons, from taking a true course or use, for attaining to the perfect knowledge of true fight.

Irst, for the Rapier (faith the Italian, or false teacher) I hold it to be a perfect good weapo, because the crosse hindreth not to hold the handle in the hand, to thrust both far & straignt, & to use all maner of aduantages in the wards,
Paradoxes of Defence.

or sodainly to cast the same at the aduerfarie, but with the Sword you are driuen with all the strength of the hand to hold fast the handle. And in the warres I would wish no friend of mine to weare Swords with hilts, because when they are sodainly set vpon, for haste they set their hands vpon their hilts in steed of their handles: in which time it hapneth manie times before they can draw their swords, they are slaine by their enemies. And for Sword and Buckler fight, it is imperfect, because the buckler blindeth the fight, neither would I haue anie man lie aloft with his hand aboue his head, to strike found blowes. Strong blowes are naught, especially being set aboue the head, because therein all the face and bodie is discovered. Yet I confesse, in old times, when blowes were only vsed with short Swords & Bucklers, & back Sword, these kind of fights were good & most maily, but now in these daies fight is altered. Rapiers are longger for aduantage the swords were wot to be: whe blowes were vsed, men were so simple in their fight, that they thought him to be a coward, that wold make a thrust or strike a blow beneath the girdle. Againe, if their weapos were short, as in times past they were, yet fight is better looked into in these daies, than then it was. Who is it in these daies seeth not that the blow compasseth round like a wheele, whereby it hath a longer way to go, but the thrust passeth in a straight line, and therefore commeth a nearer way, and done in a shorter time the is the blow, and is more deadly then is the blow? Therefore there is no wise man that will strike, vnlesse he be wareie of his life. It is certaine, that the point for aduantage euerie way in fight is to be vsed, the blow is utterly naught, and not to be vsed. He that fighteth vpon the
blow especially with a short sword, wilbe fore hurt or slaine. The deuill can say no more for the maintenance of errors.

That a blow commeth continually as neare a way as a thrust, and most commonly nearer, stronger, more swifter, and is sooner done.

He blow, by reason that it compasseth round like a wheele, whereby it hath a longer way to come, as the Italian Fenfer faith, & that the thrust passing in a straight line, commeth a nearer way, and therefore is sooner done then a blow, is not true: these be the proofes.

Let two lie in their perfect strengths and readinesse, wherein the blades of their Rapiers by the motion of the body, may not be crossed of either side, the one to strike, and the other to thrust. Then measure the distance or course wherein the hand and hilt passeth to finish the blow of the one, and the thrust of the other, and you shall find them both by measure, in distance all one. And let anie man of judgement being seene in the exercise of weapons, not being more addicted unto novelties of fight, then unto truth it selfe, put in measure, and practise these three fights, variable, open, and guardant, and he shall see, that whensoever anie man lyeth at the thrust vpon the variable fight, (where of necessitie most commonly he lyeth, or otherwise not possiblie to keepe his Rapier from crossing at the blow & thrust, vpon the open or gardant fight,) that the blowes & thrustes from these two fightes, come a nearer way, and a more stronger
Stronger and swifter course then doth the thrust, out of the variable fight. And thus for a generall rule, where-foever the Thruster lyeth, or out of what fight foever he fighteth, with his Rapier, or Rapier and Dagger, the blow in his course commeth as neare, and nearer, and more swift and stronger then doth the thrust.

Perfect fight standeth upon both blow and thrust, therefore the thrust is not onely to be vsed.

For there is no fight perfect without both blow and thrust: neither is there anie certaine rule to be set downe for the vs of the point onely, these be the reasons: In fight there are manie motions, with the hand, bodie, and feet, and in euerie motion the place of the hand is altered, & because by the motions of the hand, the altering of the places of the hand, the changes of lyings, wards, and breaking of thrustes, the hand will sometimes be in place to strike, sometimes to thrust, sometimes after a blow to thrust, and sometimes after a thrust to strike, & sometimes in place where you may strike, and cannot thrust without losse of time, and sometimes in place where you may thrust, and cannot strike without losse of time, and sometimes in place where you can neither strike nor thrust, vnlesse you fight vpoun both blow and thrust, nor able to defend your selfe by ward or going backe, because your space wilbe too wide, and your distance lost. And sometimes when you have made a thrust, a ward or breaking is taken in such fort with the Dagger or blade of the Sword, that you can neither thrust againe, nor defend your selfe vnlesse you do strike, which
you may foundly doe, and go free, and sometimes when you strike, a ward wilbetaken in such sort, that you cannot strike againe, nor defend your selfe, vnlesse you thrust, which you may safely doe and goe free. So to conclude, there is no perfection in the true fight, without both blow and thrust, nor certaine rule to be set downe for the point onely.

That the blow is more dangerous and deadly in fight, then a thrust, for prove thereof to be made according with Art, an Englishman holdeth argument against an Italian.

Italian.

Hich is more dangerous or deadly in fight of a blow or a thrust?

Englishman.

This question is not propounded according to art, because there is no fight perfect without both blow and thrust.

Italian.

Let it be so, yet opinions are otherwise holden, that the thrust is onely to be vsed, because it commeth a nearer way, and is more dangerous and deadly, for these reasons: first the blow compasseth round like a wheele, but the thrust passeth in a straight line, therfore the blow by reason of the compasse, hath a longer way to go then the thrust, & is therefore longer in doing, but the thrust passeth in a straight line, therfore hath shorter way to go the hath the blow, & is therfore done in a shorter time, & is therfore much better then the blow, & more dangerous and deadly, because if a thrust do hit the face or bodie, it endangereth life, and most commonly death enfueth: but if the blow hit the bodie, it is not so dagerous.

Englishman.
Paradoxes of Defence.

Englishman.

Let your opinions be what they wil, but that the thrust cometh a nearer way, & is sooner done then the blow, is not true: & for proofe thereof reade the twelfth Paradox. And now will I set downe probable reasons, that the blow is better then the thrust, and more dangerous and deadly. First, the blow commeth as neare a way, & most commonly nearer then doth the thrust, & is therfore done in a shorter time then is the thrust: therfore in respect of time, wherupon stādeth the perfection of fight, the blow is much better then the thrust. Againe, the force of the thrust passeth straight, therefore any crosse being indirectly made, the force of a child may put it by: but the force of a blow passeth indirectly, therefore must be directly warded in the counterchecke of his force: which canot be done but by the cōvenient strength of a man, & with true crosse in true time, or else will not safely defend him: and is therfore much better, & more dāgerous the the thrust, and againe, the thrust being made through the hand, arme, or leg, or in many places of the body and face, are not deadly, neither are they maimes, or losse of limmes or life, neither is he much hindred for the time in his fight, as long as the bloud is hot:for example.

I haue knowne a Gētlemā hurt in Rapier fight, in nine or ten places through the bodie, armes, and legges, and yet hath continued in his fight, & afterward hath slaine the other, and come home and hath bene cured of all his woūds without maim, & is yet liuing. But the blow being strōgly made, taketh somtimes cleane away the hand from the arme, hath manie times bene seene. Againe, a full blow vpon the head or face with a short sharpe Sword, is most commonly death. A full blow vpon the
necke, shouleth, arme, or legge, indangereth life, cutheth off the veines, muscles, and sinewes, periseth the bones: these wounds made by the blow, in respect of perfect healing, are the losse of limmes, or maimes incurable for euer.

And yet more for the blow: a ful blow vpon the head, face, arme, leg, or legs, is death, or the partie so wounded in the mercie of him that shal so wound him. For what man shal be able long in fight to stand vp, either to reuenge, or defend himselfe, hauing the veines, muscles, and sinewes of his hand, arme, or leg cleane cut a-sunder? or being dismembred by such wound vpon the face or head, but shal be enforced therby, and through the losse of bloud, the other a little dallying with him, to yeeld himself, or leave his life in his mercie?

And for plainer deciding this cōtrouersie betweene the blow and the thrust, consider this short note. The blow commeth manie wayes, the thrust doth not so. The blow commeth a nearer way then a thrust most commonly, and is therefore sooner done. The blow requireth the strengthe of a man to be warded; but the thrust may be put by, by the force of a child. A blow vpon the hand, arme, or legge is a maime incurable; but a thrust in the hand, arme, or legge is to be recovered. The blow hath manie parts to wound, and in euerie of them commaundeth the life; but the thrust hath but a few, as the bodie or face, and not in euerie part of them neither.
Of the difference betwixt the true fight & the false: wher-in consisteth (the Principles being had with the direction of the foure Gouernors) the whole perfection of fight with all manner of weapons.

He true fights be these: whatsoeuer is done with the hand before the foot or feet is true fight. The false fights be these: whatsoeuer is done with the foot or feet before the hand, is false, because the hand is swifter then the foot, the foot or feet being a flower mouer then the hand: the hand in that manner of fight is tied to the time of the foot or feet, and being tied there-to, hath lost his freedome, and is made thereby as slow in his motions as the foot or feet: and therfor that fight is false.

Of euill orders or customes in our English Fèce-schooles, & of the old or ancient teaching of weapons, & things very necessarie to be continued for the avoiding of errors, and reviving and continuance of our ancient weapons, and most victorious fight againe.

Here is in my opiniō in our Fence-schooles an euill order or custome in these dayes vsed, the which, if it might stand with the good liking of our Maistres of Defence, I thinke it necessarie to be left: for as long as it is vsed, it shall be hard to make a good Scholler.
That is this, at the single Sword, Sword and Dagger, & Sword and Buckler, they forbid the thrust, & at the single Rapier, and Rapier & Dagger, they forbid the blow. Either they are both together best, or the thrust altogether best, or the blow altogether best. If the thrust be best, why do we not use it at the single Sword, Sword & Dagger, & Sword and Buckler. If the blow be best, why do we not use it at the single Rapier, Rapier & Poinyard? But knowing by the Art of Armes, that no fight is perfect without both blow and thrust, why do we not use and teach both blow and thrust? But howsoever this we dayly see, that when two meet in fight, whether they have skill or none, unlesse such as haue tied the selues to that boyish, Italian, weake, imperfect fight, they both strike and thrust, and how shall he then do, that being much taught in schoole, neuer learned to strike, nor how to defend a strong blow? & how shall he the do, that being brought vp in Fèce-schoole, that neuer learned to thrust with the single Sword, Sword and Dagger, and Sword and Buckler, nor how at these weapons to breake a thrust? Surely, I thinke a downe right fellow, that neuer came in schoole, vsing such skill as nature yeeldeth out of his courage, strength, and agilitie, with good downe right blowes and thrusts among, as shall best frame in his hands, shold put one of these imperfect schoolers greatly to his shifts. Besides, there are now in these dayes no gripes, closes, wrestlings, striking with the hilts, daggers, or bucklers, vsed in Fence-schooles. Our ploughmen by nature wilt do all these things with great strength & agility: but the Schooleman is altogether unacquainted with these things. He being fast tyed to such school-play as he hath learned, hath lost thereby the benefite of
of nature, and the plowman is now by nature without art a farre better man then he. Therefore in my opinion, as long as we barre anie maner of play in schoole, we shall hardly make a good scholler: there is no maner of teaching comparable to the old ancient teaching, that is, first their quarters, then their wardes, blowes, thrusts, and breaking of thrustes, then their Closes and Gripes, striking with the hilt, Daggers, Bucklers, Wraflings, striking with the foote or knee in the Coddes, and all these are safely defended in learning perfectly of the Gripes. And this is the ancient teaching, the perfectest & most best teaching; and without this teaching, there shall neuer scholler be made able, doe his utmost, nor fight safe. Againe their swordes in schooles are too long by almost halfe a foote to vncrosse, without going backe with the feete, within distance or perfectly to strike or thrust within the halfe or quarter sword. And in serving of the Prince, when men do meet together in publique fight, are utterly naught and unserviceable. The best lengths for perfect teaching of the true fight to be used and continued in Fence schooles, to accord with the true statures of all men, are these. The blade to be a yard and an inch for meane statures, and for men of tall statures, a yard and three or foure inches, and no more. And I would haue the Rapier continued in schooles, alwaies readie for such as shall thinke themselves cunning, or shall haue delight to play with that imperfect weapon. Provided alwaies, that the Schoolmaister or Vshers play with him with his short Sword, plying him with all maner of fight according to the true art: this being continued the truth shall flourish, the lye shalbe beaten downe, and all nations not ha-
The grounds or Principles of true fight with all maner of weapons.

Irst Judgement, Lyings, Distance, Direction, Pase, Space, Place, Time, Indirection, Motion, Action, generall and continuall Motion, Progression, Regression, Trauering, and Treading of groundes, Blowes, Thruftes, Faultes, Doubles, Slipes, Wardes, breakings of Thrufts, Closings, Gripe, & Wrafflings, Guardant fight, Open fight, Variable fight, and Close fight, and foure Gouernours.

The wardes of all maner of weapons.

L single weapons haue foure wardes, and all double weapons haue eight wardes. The single sword hath two with the point vp, and two with the point downe. The Staffe and all maner of weapons to be vfed with both handes haue the like.

The Sword and Buckler, and Sword and Dagger are double weapons, and haue eight wardes, two with the point vp, and two with the point downe, and two for the legges with the point downe, the point to be caried for both sides of the legges, with the knuckles downward, and two wardes with the Dagger or Buckler for the head. The Forrest bill is a double weapon by reason of
of the head, and therefore hath eight wardes, foure with the Staffe, foure with the head, foure of them to be vised as with the Staffe, and the other foure with the head, the one vp, the other downe, and the other sidewayes.

The names and numbers of times appertaining unto fight both true and false.

Here are eight times, whereof foure are true, and foure are false: the true times be these.

The time of the hand.
The time of the hand and bodie.
The time of the hand, bodie and foote.
The time of the hand, bodie and feete.

The false times be these.
The time of the foote.
The time of the foote and bodie.
The time of the foote, bodie and hand.
The time of the feete, bodie and hand.

Thus haue I thought good to separate and make knowne the true times from the false, with the true wardes thereto belonging, that thereby the rather in practising of weapons, a true course may be taken for the avoiding of errours and euill customes, and speedie attaining of good habit or perfect being in the true use and knowledge of all maner of weapons.

Of the length of weapons, and how euerie man may fit himselfe in the perfect length of his weapon, according to his owne stature, with briefe reasons wherefore they ought to be so.
O know the perfect length of your Sword, you shall stand with your sword and dagger drawn, as you see this picture, keeping out straight your dagger arme, drawinge backe your sword as far as conueniently you can, not opening the elbow ioynt of your sword arme: and looke what you can draw within your dagger, that is the iust length of your sword, to be made according to your owne ftature.

If the sword be longer, you can hardly uncroffe without going backe with your feet. If shorter, the you can hardly make a true croffe without putting in of your feet, the which times are too long to answer the time of the hand.

The like reasons for the short Staffe, half Pike, Forrest bill, Partisan, or Gleue, or such like weapons of perfect length.
The perfect length of your two hand sword is, the blade to be the length of the blade of your single sword.

To know the perfect length of your short staffe, or half Pike, Forrest bil, Partisan, or Gleue, or such like weapons of vantage and perfect lengths, you shall stand upright, holding the staffe upright close by your body, with your left hand, reaching with your right hand your staffe as high as you can, and then allow to that length a space to set both your hands, when you come to fight, wherein you may conveniently strike, thrust, and ward, & that is the just length to be made according to your stature. And this note, that these lengths will commonly fall out to be eight or nine foot long, and will fit, although not just, the statures of all men, without any hindrance at all unto them in their fight, because in any weapon wherein the hands may be removed, and at libertie, to make the weapon longer or shorter in fight at his pleasure, a foot of the staffe behind the backmost hand doth no harme. And wherfore these weapons ought to be of the lengths aforesaid, and no shorter, these are the reasons: If they should be shorter, then the long staffe, Morris Pike, and such like weapons over and above the perfect length, should have great vantage against them, because he may come boldly and safe without anie gard or ward, to the place where he may thrust home, and at every thrust put him in danger of his life: but if these weapons be of their perfect lengths, then can the long staffe, the Morris Pike, or anie other longer weapon ly nowhere in true space, but shall be still within compasse of the crosse, to crosse and uncrosse, wherby he may safely passe home to the place, where he may strike or thrust him that hath the long weapon, in the head, face, or body at his pleasure.
Of the lengths of the Battel axe, Halbard, or blacke Bill, or such like vveapons of weight, appertaining unto gard or battell.

Of the vantages of weapons in their kinds, places, & times, both in private and publike fight.

Irft I will begin with the worst weapon, an imperfect and insufficient weapon, and not worth the speaking of; but now being highly esteemed, therefore not to be left vremembred; that is, the single Rapier, and Rapier and Poiniard.

The single Sword hath the vantage against the single Rapier.

The Sword and Dagger hath the vantage against the Rapier and Poiniard.
The Sword & Target hath aduantage against the Sword and Dagger, or Rapier and Poiniard.

The Sword and Buckler hath aduantage against the Sword and Target, the Sword and Dagger, or Rapier and Poiniard.

The two hand Sword, hath the vantage against the Sword and Target, the Sword and Buckler, the Sword and Dagger, or Rapier and Poiniard.

The Battel-axe, the Halbard, the Blacke-bill, or such like weapons of weight, appertaining vnto guard or bvatell, are all one in fight, and haue aduantage against the two hand Sword, the Sword and Buckler, the Sword and Target, the Sword & dagger, or the Rapier & Poiniard.

The short staffe or halfe Pike, Forrest-bill, Partisan, or Gleue, or such like weapons of perfect length, haue the vantage against the Battel-axe, the Halbard, the Blacke-bill, the two hand sword, the Sword and Target, and are too hard for two Swords and Daggers, or two Rapiers and Poiniards with Gantlets, and for the long staffe and Morris Pike.

The long Staffe, Morris Pike, or Iauelin, or such like weapons aboue the perfect length, haue aduantage against all maner of weapons, the short staffe, Welch hooke, Partisan, or Gleue, or such like weapons of vantage excepted: yet too weake for two Swords and Daggers or two Swords and Bucklers, or two Rapiers and Poiniards with Gantlets, because they are too long to thrust, strike, and turne speedily: and by reason of the large distance, one of the Sword and Dagger-men will get behind him.

The Welch hooke or Forrest bill, hath aduantage against all maner of weapons whatsoever.
Yet understand, that in battels, and where varietie of weapons be, amongst multitudes of men and horses, the Sword and Target, the two hand Sword, the Battel-axe, the Blacke-bill, and Halbard, are better weapons, and more dangerous in their offence and forces, than is the Sword and Buckler, short staffe, long staffe, or Forrest bill. The Sword and Target leadeth upon Shot, and in troupes defendeth thrusts and blowes given by battel-axe, Halbards, Blacke-bill, or two hand swords, far better then can the Sword and Buckler.

The Morris Pike defendeth the battell from both horse and man, much better then can the short staffe, long staffe, or Forrest bill. Againe, the Battel-axe, the Halbard, the Blacke bill, the two hand sword, and Sword & Target, amongst armed men and troops, when men are come together, by reason of their weights, shortness, and great forces, do much more offend the enemie, & are then much better weapons, then is the short staffe, the long Staffe, or Forrest bill.

Of the insufficiencie and disaduantages of the Rapiers-fight in Battell.

Or the single Rapier, or Rapier & Poiniard, they are imperfect & insufficient weapons: and especially in the service of the Prince, when men shall ioyne together, what service can afouldier dowith a Rapier, a childish toy wherwith a man can do nothing but thrust, nor that neither, by reason of the length, and in euerie moving when blowes are a dealing, for lacke of a hilt is in danger to haue his hand or arme cut off, or his head clouen?
clouen. And for Wardes and Gripes, they have none, neither can any of these fine Rapier men, for lacke of vse, tell howe to strike a sound blow.

Of the vantages and sufficiencie of the short Sword fight in battell.

The short Sword, and Sword and Dagger, are perfect good weapons, and especially in service of the Prince. What a braue weapon is a short sharpe light Sword, to carie, to draw, to be nimble withall, to strike, to cut, to thrust both strong and quicke. And what a goodly defence is a strong sngle hilt, when men are clustering and hurling together, especially where varietie of weapons be, in their motions to defend the hand, head, face, and bodies, from blowes, that shalbe giuen sometimes with Swordes, sometimes with two handed Swordes, battell Axe, Halbardes, or blacke Billes, and sometimes men shalbe so neare together, that they shall have no space, scarce to vse the blades of their Swordes belowe their wastes, then their hiltts (their handes being aloft) defendeth from the blowes, their handes, armes, heads, faces, and bodies: then they lay on, havng the vse of blowes and Gripes, by force of their armes with their hiltts, strong blowes, at the head, face, armes, bodies, and shoulders, and manie times in hurling together, scope is giuen to turne downe their points, with violent thrusts at their faces, and bodies, by reason of the shortnesse of their blades, to the mightie annoyance, discomfort, and great destruction of their enimies. One valiant man with a Sword in his hand, will doe better service, then ten Italians, or Italienated with the Rapiers.
George Silver his

That all manner of double weapons, or weapons to be used
with both bandes, have advantage against the sin-
gle Rapier or single Sword, there is no
question to be made.

That the Sword and Buckler hath the vantage a-
gainst the Sword and Dagger.

He Dagger is an imperfect ward, although borne out straight, to make the
Space narrow, whereby by a little moving
of the hand, may be sufficient to save both
sides of the head, or to break the thrust
from the face or body, yet for lack of the circumference
his hand will lie too high or too low, or too weak, to de-
 fend both blow and thrust: if he lye straight with narrow
space, which is best to break the thrust, then he lieth too
weak, and too low to defend his head from a strong
blow: if he lye high, that is strong to defend his head,
but then his space will be too wide to break the thrust
from his body. The Dagger serveth well at length to
put by a thrust, and at the halfe Sword to crosse the
Sword blade, to drive out the Agent, and put him in
danger of his life, and safely in anie of these two actions
to defend himselfe. But the Buckler, by reason of his cir-
cumference and weight, being well caried, defendeth
safely in all times and places, whether it be at the point,
halfe Sword, the head, bodie, and face, from all manner
of blows and thrustes whatsoeuer, yet I have heard ma-
nie hold opinion, that the Sword and Dagger hath ad-
antage of the Sword and Buckler, at the Close, by rea-
son of the length and point of the Dagger: and at the
point
Paradoxes of Defence.

point of the Sword, they can better see to ward then with a Buckler. But I neuer knew anie, that wanne the Close with the Dagger vpon the Sword and Buckler, but did wish himselfe out againe: for distance being broken, judgement faileth, for lacke of time to judge, and the eie is deceived by the swift motion of the hand, and for lacke of true Space with the dagger hand, which cannot be otherwise, for lacke of the circumference to defend both blow and thrust, it is impossible for lacke of true Space in iust time, the agent having gotten the true place, to defend one thrust or blow of an hundred. And it is most certaine, whosoeuer closeth with Sword and Dagger, against the Sword and Buckler, is in great danger to be flaine. Likewise at the point within distance, if he stand to defend both blow and thrust with his Dagger, for lacke of true space and distance, if he had the best eye of anie man, and could see perfectly, which way the thrust or blow commeth, and when it commeth, as it is not to be denied but he may, yet his space being too large, it helpeth him nothing, because one mans hand being as swifte as another mans hand, both being within distance, he that striketh or thrusteth, hurteth the warder: the reason is this: the Agent being in the first motion although in his offence, further to go then the warder to defend, yet the warders space being too large, the blow or thrust wilbe performed home, before the warder can come to the true place to defend himselfe, and although the warder doe perfectly see the blow or thrust comming, so shall he see his owne ward so farre from the true place of his defence, that although he doe at that instant time, plainly see the blow or thrust comming, it shalbe impossible for him to recouer the
true place of his ward, till he be wounded. But let the warden with the dagger say, that it is not true which I haue said, for as he hath eies to behold the blow or thrust coming, so hath he as good time to defend himself. Herein he shall find himself deceived; this is the reason: the hand is the swiftest motion, the foot is the slowest, without distance the hand is tied to the motion of the feet, whereby the time of the hand is made as slow as the foot, because thereby we redeeme euery time lost upon his comming by the slow motion of the foot, & haue time thereby to judge, whē & how he can performe any actio whatsoever, and so haue we the time of the hand to the time of the feet. Now is the hand in his owne course more swifter then the foot or eye, therfore within distance the eye is deceived, & judgement is lost; and that is another cause that the warden with the dagger, although he haue perfect eyes, is still within distance deceived. For proofe that the hand is more swifter then the eye, & thereby deceueth the eyes: let two stand within distance, & let one of the stand still to defend himself, & let the other flourish & false with his hand, and he shall continually with the swift motions of his hand, deceive the eyes of him that standeth watching to defend himself, & shall continually strike him in diverse places with his hand. Againe, take this for an example, that the eyes by swift motions are deceived: turne a turne-wheele swift, & you shall not be able to discerne with your best eies how many spokes be in the wheele, no nor whether there be any spokes at all, or whereof the wheele is made, and yet you see when the wheele standeth still there is a large distance between euery spoke. He that will not beleue that the swift motion of the hand in fight will deceive the eye, shall stare a-broad
Paradoxes of Defence.

broad with his eyes, & feel himself soundly hurt, before he shall perfectly see how to defend himself. So those that trust to their fight, the excellency of a good eye, their great cunning, & perfect wards of the daggers, that they can better see to ward then with a buckler, shall ever be deceived. And when they be wounded, they say the Agêt was a little too quick for them; sometimes they say they bare their dagger a little too low: sometimes they are thrust under the dagger, then they say, they bare it a little too high: sometimes a thrust being strongly made, they being soundly paid therewith, say, they were a little too slow, & sometimes they be soundly paid with a thrust, & they thinke they were a little too quick. So they that practice or thinke to be cunning in the dagger ward, are all the dayes of their liues learning, and are never taught.

That the Sword and Buckler hath the vantage against the Sword and Target.

He Sword & Target together hath but two 25 fights; that is, the variable fight, & the close fight, for the close fight, the number of his feet are too many to take against any man of skill having the Sword & buckler, & for the variable fight although not so many in number, yet too many to win the place with his foot to strike or thrust home. The sword & buckler-man can out of his variable, open & guard all fight, come brauely off & on, false and double, strike & thrust home, & make a true cross upon every occasion at his pleasure: if the Sword & Target man will fly to his guard all fight, the breadth of his Target will not suffer it, if to his open fight, the hath the Sword & Buckler man in effect the sword and Buckler to the single, for in that fight by reason of the breadth, the target can do little good or none at all.
Ow for the vantage of the short Staffe against the Sword and Buckler, Sword & Target, two hand sword, single Sword, Sword and Dagger, or Rapier and Poniard, there is no great question to be made in anie of these weapons: whensoever anie blow or thrust shall be strongly made with the Staffe, they are euer in false place, in the caiiage of the wards, for if at any of these sixe weapons he carie his ward high & strōg for his head, as of necessitie he must carie it verie high, otherwise it will be too weake to defend a blow being strongly made at the head, then will his space be too wide, in due time to breake the thrust from his bodie. Againe, if he carie his ward lower, thereby to be in equall space for readinesse to breake both blow & thrust, then in that place his ward is too low, and too weake to defend the blow of the Staffe: for the blow being strongly made at the head vpon that ward, will beate downe the ward and his head together, and put him in great danger of his life. And here is to be noted, that if he fight well, the Staffe-man neuer striketh but at the head, and thrusteth presently under at the body: and if a blow be first made, a thrust followeth; & if a thrust be first made, a blow followeth; and in doing of any of them, the one breedeth the other: so that howsoever anie of these sixe weapons shall carie his ward strongly to defend the first, he shall be too farre in space to defend the second, whether it be blow or thrust.

Yet againe for the short Staffe: the short Staffe hath the vantage against the Battel-axe, blacke-bill, or Halbard,
bark: the short staffe hath the vantage, by reason of the
nimblenesse and length: he will strike and thrust freely,
and in better and swifter time then can the Battel-axe,
Blacbe-bill, or Halbard: and by reason of his judgement,
distance and time, fight safe. And this resolue vpon, the
short staffe is the best weapon against all maner of wea-
pons, the Forrest bill excepted.

Also the short staffe hath ad vantage against two
Swords and Daggers, or two Rapiers, Poiniards and
Gantlets, the reason and causes before are for the most
part set downe already, the which being well conside-
red, you shall plainely see, that whensoever anie one of
the Sword & Dagger men, or Rapier and Poiniard men
shall breake his distance, or suffer the Staffe-man to
breake his, that man which did first breake his distance,
or suffer the distance to be won against him, is presently in
danger of death. And this canot in reason be denied, be-
cause the distance appertaining to the Staffe-man, either
to keepe or breake, standeth vpon the moving of one
large space alwayes at the most, both for his offence or
safety. The other two in the breach of their distance to
offend the Staffe-man, haue alwayes foure paces at
the least therin they fall too great in number with their
feet, and too short in distance to offend the Staffe-
man. Now there resteth no more to be spoken of, but
how the Staffe-man shall behaue himselfe to keepe that
distance, that one of the Sword & Dagger men get not
behind him, while the other shal busie him before: to do
that is very easie, by reason of the smal number of his feet,
for by a verie small turning of his feet, as it were in the
Center point of a wheele, the other two to keepe their
distance, are driuen to runne twentie foote for one, as it
were vpon the uttermost part or circle of the wheele: all this while the Staffe-man is verie well. Then it com- meth thus to passe, whether they both labour to get be- hind him, or one keepe directly before him whilest the other get behind him, yet before that be brought to passe, they shal either be both before him or iust against both sides of him: at which time soever the Staffe-man finding either of them within distance, he presently in making of his play, slayeth with blow or thrust one of the, or at the least putteth him in great danger of his life. If the Staffe-man take his time, when they are both before him, that is to say, before they come to the half ring, iust against both sides of the Staffe-man, then he that is nearest within distance is slaine by blow or thrust, or put in great danger of his life. But if the Sword and Dagger men do keepe their distance vntill they come to the iust halfe ring right against the sides of the Staffe- man, and then breake distance, that man that first breake distance is slaine with blow or thrust, or sore hurt, and in great danger of death: and the Staffe-man in making that play at that instant, must turne with one large pace, the which he may easily do, before the other can get neare enough to offend him, by reason that he hath to make with his feet but one large pace, but the other hath at the least three paces. But if the Sword and Dagger-men will in the time that they be before him, keep their distance in the time of their being vpon the middle part of the out SIDE of the circle, right against both sides of him, & will labor with all heed & diligence to be both or one of the behind him, that troubleth the Staffe-man nothing at all, for in that very time, when he findeth them past the middle part of the circle, he pre-
fently turneth, by the which he shall naturally set himselfe as it were in a triangle, and both the sword and dagger-men, shall thereby stand both before him in true distance of three paces, from offending of him at the least, as at the first they did. And take this for a true ground, there is no man able to ward a sound blow with the Sword and Dagger, nor Rapier, Poinyard, and Gantlet, being strongly made at the head, with the Staffe, and run in withall, the force of both handes is such, being in his full motion and course, that although the other do carie his ward high and strong with both handes, yet his feete being moving from the ground, the great force of the blow will strike him with his ward, and all downe flat to ground. But if he stand fast with his feete, he may with both weapons together, strongly defend his head from the blow, but then you are sufficiently instructed, the thrust being presently made, after the blow full at the bodie, it is impossible in due time to breake it, by reason of the largenesse of his space.

The short Staffe hath the vantage against the long Staffe, and Morris Pike, and the Forrest bill against all maner of weapons.

He reason is these. The short Staffe hath the vantage of the long Staffe and Morris Pike in his strength & narrownes of space in his foure wardes of defence. And the Forrest bill hath the vantage of all maner of weapons in his strength and narrownes of space in his eight wardes of defence: and the rather because the Bill hath two wardes for one against the Staffe
or Morris Pike, that is to say, foure with the Staffe, and foure with the head, and is more offensive then is the Staffe or Morris Pike: yet a question may be made by the unskillful, concerning the fight between the long Staffe and the short, in this sort: Why should not the long Staffe haue aduantage against short Staffe, sines that the long Staffe-man, being at libertie with his handes, may make his long Staffe both long and short for his best aduantage, when he shall thinke it good, and therefore when he shall find himselfe ouermatched in the length of his Staffe, by the strength of the short Staffe, and narrownesse of space in his foure wardes of defence, he can presently by drawing backe of his Staffe in his handes, make his Staffe as short as the others, and so be readie to fight with him at his owne length. To this I answere, that when the long Staffe-man is driuen there to ly, the length of his Staffe that will ly behind him, will hinder him to strike, thrust, ward, or goe backe in due time. Neither can he turne the contrarie end of his Staffe to keepe out the short Staffe man from the Close, nor safely to defend himselfe at his comming in.

Against the vantages of weapons.

Ake this for a general rule, all long Staues, Morris Pikes, Forrest bils, Iauelins, or such like long weapons, of what sort soever, being above the true lengthes, the shortest haue the advantage, because they can crosse and vnCorreo in shorter time then can the longer: and all maner of short weapons to be vsed with both handes, as Staues, and such like, being vnder the perfect lengthes, the
the longest haue the aduantage, and all maner of weapons to be vsed with one hand, that are aboue the perfect length of the single Sword, the shortest haue the vantage, and all maner of weapons vnder the iust length of the short Sword, as Fauchions, Skaines, or Hangers, Woodkniues, Daggers, and such like short weapons of imperfect lengths, the longest haue the aduantage, because the fight of these weapons consist within the halfe or quarter Sword, wherein by the swift motions of their handes, their eyes are deceived, and in those weapons, commonly for their handes lieth no defence. And if two shall fight with staues or Swordes, or what weapons foeuer, the one of them hauing his weapon longer then the perfect length, and the other his weapon shorter then the perfect length, he that hath the longest hath the vantage, because the shortest can make no true Crossse in true time. The short Staffe or halfe Pike, Forrest bill, Partisan, or Gleue, or such like weapons of perfect length, to be vsed with both handes, haue the aduantage against two Swordes and Daggers, or two Rapiers, Poniardes, and Gantlets, and against all other weapons whatsoever, the Forrest bill excepted.

Againé for the short Staffe or halfe Pike.

The short Staffe is most commonly the 29 best weapon of all other, although other weapons may be more offensieue, and especially against manie weapons together, by reason of his nimblenesse and swift motions, and is not much inferiour to the Forrest bill, although the Forrest bill be more offensieue, and hath more wardes, because
the Staffe is verie uncertaine, but the Bill is a more cer-
taine marke, by reason of the breadth of the head, wher-
by as the Bill hath aduantage in his wardes in the head,
so therefore hath the Staffe the like defence, or rather
more, to play vpon the head of the Bill, not onely to
make a perfect good ward, but thereby, the rather to cast
the Bill out of the right line, whereby the Staffe-man
may thrust safe, and endanger the Bill-man: and the ra-
ther because therein he is the first mouer, wherein there
is great vantage, both in time and force. And if the Bil-
man be not very skilfull (all vantages and disaduantages
of both sides considered,) the short Staffe will proove the
better weapon. Lastly note this, that long Staues, Mor-
ris Pikes, and such like weapons of imperfect lengthes,
being to be vsed with both hands, notwithstanding their
imperfect lengthes, are perfect weapons to be vsed, the
one against the other, and their fightes therein perfect,
because in drawing of them backe betwixt their handes,
their motions are swifter backewardes, then is the time
of the Agents feet forwardes, by the which all their lost
times are redeemed: therefore these weapons in their
fightes, the one against the other are perfect. And these
weapons in the night are the best weapons of all other,
and haue great aduantage against the forrest Bill, short
Staffe, or anie maner of short weapons whatsoever: for
these causes, they boldly make home their fightes, and
if neede be against desperate men, that will venture
themselfes to run in, they redeeme their lost times. But
the other with shorter weapons for lacke of light, can
make no true defence. Thus endeth the vantages of wea-
pons.
Questions and answers between the Scholler and the Mai-
ster, of the vantages and disaduantages betweene a
tall man, and a man of meane stature, haung
both the perfect knowledge in
their weapons.

Scholler.

Ho hath the aduantage in fight, of a tall 30
man, or a man of meane stature?

Maister.
The tall man hath the vantage, for
these causes: his reach being longer, and
weapon unto his stature accordingly, he hath thereby a
shorter course with his feet to win the true place, wher-
in by the swift motion of his hand, he may strike or
thrust home: in the which time a man of meane stature
cannot reach him, & by his large pace, in his true pace
in his regression further, setteth himself out of all dan-
ger, & these are the vantages that a tall man hath against
anie man of shorter reach then himselfe.

Scholler.

What vantage hath a man of meane stature against
a tall man?

Maister.
He hath none: because the true times in fight, and a-
ctions accordingly, are to be observed and done, as well
by a tall man, as by a man of meane stature.

Scholler.

Why then if this be true, that tall men haue the van-
tage against me of meane stature, it shold seeme in fight
there is no perfection, other then this, when men of like stature, reach, & length of weapon, shall fight together, the which will seldom or never happen, but either in the length of their weapons, statures or reaches (if their swords should be of just length) some difference most commonly there will be in their reaches.

Maister.

Yes verily, the tall man hath still the vantage, and yet the fight is perfect, although the men that shall happen to fight, shall happen to be unequal in their statures, reaches, or lengths of their weapons.

Scholler.

That can I hardly believe, unless you can tell me by Art how to avoid or safely defend my selfe, being but a man of meane stature, against a tall man.

Maister.

I will tell you: there belongeth unto this Art of defence onely to be used with the feet, progression, regression, trauring, and treading of grounds: in any of these you playing the part of the Patient, or Patient Agent, your feet are swifter in their motions then are the Agents, because his weight and number of his feet in his coming to win the true place to strike or thrust home, are greater then yours, and therefore the true time is yours to avoid him, or safely to defend your selfe: so the Art is still true, and the tall man hath still the vantage.

Scholler.

Yet I am not fully satisfied herein, because you tell me still that the tall man hath the vantage, and notwithstanding you say the Art is true, wherein then hath the tall man the vantage, when by your Art you can defend your selfe against him.

Maister.
Paradoxes of Defence.

Maister.

I will satisfie you therein thus. The tall man hath the vantage, he can maintaine his fight, both by nature and Art, with more ease then can the man of meane stature, because the man of meane stature hath thereby a further course with his feete to passe to the place, wherein he may strike or thrust home, and in winning of that place, is druen by Art to come garded under his wards to defend himselfe, because in the time of his comming, the tall man may both naturally or artificially strike or thrust home, in the which time, if the man of meane stature should faile in the least iote of his Art, he should be in great danger of death or hurt. But the tall man can naturally and safely come to the true place open, without any artificiall wards at all, and therein also endanger the other, or drtie him still to trauere his ground, with all the artificiall skill that he hath to defend himselfe; and all this the tall man doth by reason of his length of weapon, large pace, short course, and long reach, with great safetie, pleasure and ease. And for those causes the tall man hath still the vantage of men of meane stature, and yet notwithstanding the noble Science of Defence most perfect and good.

Of the long single Rapier fight betweene valiant men, having both skill, he that is the best wrastler, or if neither of them can wrastle, the strongest man most commonly killeth the other, or leaveth him at his mercie.

When two valiant men of skill at single Rapier do fight, one or both of them most commonly standing vpon their strengthe or skill in wrastling, will presently seeke to run into
the close; but having both skill, not without special care of their gard or crosse, the which they may safely do, by reason of the length of their Rapiers: but hapning both of one mind, the rather do bring themselves together: that being done, noskil with Rapiers auailleth, they presently grapple fast their hilts, wrists, armes, bodies or neckes, as in lustring, wrafling, or struuing together, they may best find for their advantages: wherby it most commonly falleth out, that he that is the best wraflter, or strongest man (if neither of them can wraflle) over-commeth, wrafling by strength, or fine skill in wrafling, the Rapiers from his adversarie, or casting him fro him, either to the ground, or to such distance, that he may by reason thereof, see the edge or point of his rapier, to strike or thrust him, leaving him dead or alieue at his mercie. But if but one of these valiant men shall seeke to run into the close, and that the other shall see his skill in trauersing of his ground, or otherwise by standing upon his gard or Stocata ward, to take all maner of advantages at his coming, yet all auailleth him not, because the Rapiers being long, the crossing of the blades cannot be avoided: that being made, the oppressor runneth faster forwards then can the defendant backwards, and so are brought together, as in the first assault they were, & cuerie action therein accordingly performed.

Of the Rapiers and Poiniard-fight betwixt valiant men, having both skill.

If two valiant men do fight at Rapiers and Poiniard having both skill, one or both of them will presently presse hard to winne the place, wherein in his judgement he may thrust home. If both be
be of one mind; the time is doubled in winning the same: whereby it commeth to passe, that then he that first thrusteth, endangereth, killeth or hurteth the other: and if they both thrust together, as they may do by the equal time of their feet, then they are most commonly both slain, or both hurt. And this is well knowne unto all men of skill, that the place being once gotten, there is neither judgement, space, pace, nor time, either by wards with their Rapiers blades, or by breaking with their Poiniards, or flying backe, that can preferre or defend them. But if but one of them will seeke to win by passage, hard pressing, or otherwise the place, wherein in his judgement he may thrust home, it is impossible for the other to deny him the same, because the length of the Rapiers winneth him the crosse; the crosse being taken, the place is had; the place being had, he that first thrusteth, first speedeth: if both thrust together, they are both in danger: she presently followeth (unlesse it please God otherwise to haue it) the stabs with their daggers, wherein there lieth no defence.

Of the long Rapiers & Poiniard-fight betweene two valiant men, the one having skil, the other none: that he that hath no skil hath the vantage.

When two valiant men shal fight with lōg 33 Rapiers and Poiniards, the one having skill, and the other none, he that hath no skill most commonly proueth himself the better man, for these causes or reasons following. First the skilfull man as knowing the other to haue no skill, or finding it to be so by his shape or
maner of comming towards him, will presently yeeld
to take the advantage of his comming, or else with all
speed put himselfe into his short ward, to be readie at
his comming to make out a strong Stocata (as the Itali-
ans call it:) the other knowing his imperfection in
fight, assureth himselfe there can be no great good for
him to stand long out at the point, presently redoubleth
or reuiueth his spirits with perfect resolution, to make
short worke, courageously with some offensive action,
such as nature shall best yeeld vn to him, slieth in with all
force and agilitie: the skilfull man standeth watching to
take such advantages as his schoolemaister hath taught
him, in the whichtime, manie times it falleth out, he is
taught a new time, euen by an vnskilfull man that neuer
fought before, is sore hurt or slaine: and if it happen
they both misse in their offensive actions, then by rea-
son thereof, and of the imperfect length of their Ra-
piers, they come to stabbing with their Poiniards, wher-
in there lyeth no defence, because distance being bro-
ken, judgement faileth, time is lost, and their eies (by the
swift motions of their handes) are deceiued.

Of the long single Rapier, or Rapier and Poiniard-fight be-
tweene two vnskilfull men being valiant.

Hen two vnskilfull men (being valiant)
shall fight with long single Rapiers, there
is lesse danger in that kind of fight, by rea-
son of their distance in conuenient length,
waight, and vnweildinesse, then is with short Rapiers:
whereby it commeth to passe, that what hurt shall hap-
pen to be done, if anie with the edge or point of their
Rapiers
Rapiers is done in a moment, and presently will grapple and wrastle together, wherein most commonly the strongest or best Wraffler overcommeth, and the like fight falleth out betwene them, at the long Rapier and Poiniard, but much more deadly, because in stead of Close and Wraffling, they fall most commonly to stabbing with their Poiniardes.

Of the imperfection and insufficiency of Rapiers in general, of what length soever they be.

If two fight with long Rapiers, upon euerie Crosse made within the halfe Rapier, if they haue Poiniardes, they most commonly stabbe each other, which cannot be avoided, because the Rapiers being long, the Crosse cannot be undone of either side, without going backe with their feete, the which likewise in due time cannot be done, because the hand is more swifter then the feete, and the feete more swifter in their course forwarcdes then backwardes, neither can the Crosse be preuented, because the point of necessitie lyeth too farre off in his offence, or else within compasse of the true time of the hand and bodie, by reason of his imperfect length: and so by the like reasons, if two fight with long sngle Rapiers, upon euerie Crosse made therewith, within the halfe Rapier, the Close cannot be avoided, wherby it commeth to passe most commonly, that the strongest man or best Wraffler overcommeth. Now if two do fight with short Rapiers, or Rapiers of convenient length, such Rapiers be inconvenient and insufficent also for lacke of an hilt to defend the hand and head from the blow; for no eie (in making a
perfect ward for the head, to defend a blow, can dis-
cerne to take the same within three or foure inches,
wherby it may as well and as often fall vpon the hand, as
vpon the blade of the Rapier. Againe, the hilt as well fer-
ueath to defend the head as the hand, and is a more sure
and strong ward, then is the blade of the Rapier. And
further, understand this for truth, that in gardant and o-
pen fight, the hand without an hilt lieth open to most
blowes that shalbe stroken by the Agent, out of the gar-
dant or open fight, because in the true cariage of the
gardant fight, the hand must lie aboue the head, in such
straightnes and narrownes of space, that which way soe-
uer the Agent shall strike or thrust at the head, face, or
bodie, the remouing of two or foure inches shall save
all. And now somewhat more for the shortnesse or con-
uenient length of Rapiers.

Rapiers hauing no hilts to defend the head, the Ra-
pier-man is driuen of necessitie to lie at the variable
fight or low ward, and being there he can neither defend
in due time, head, face, nor bodie from the blowes or
thrustes of him, that shall fight out of the gardant or o-
pen fight, but is continually in great danger of the A-
gent, for these causes following. First, because his space
is too wide to defend his head from blow or thrust. Se-
condly his Pace standing vpon that fight, wilbe of ne-
cessitie too great or too narrow: if too narrow, too weak:
if too large, his weight and number of his feet, are too
great to endanger him, that is vpon his gardant or open
fight.
Of the imperfection and insufficiencie of the fight of the single Rapier, Rapier and Poiniard, Rapier and Buckler, Rapier and Cloke, and Rapier and Gloue of maile.

The Rapier fight, whether it be single or accompanied with Poiniard, Buckler, cloke, or gloue of male, is still by reason of the insufficiencie or imperfection of the Rapier, an imperfect fight: vnder perfect instruments can make no perfect musicke, neither can vnperfect weapons make perfect fight: let the men that handle them haue all the knowledge that may be in all maner of weapons, yea the full height, or perfection, and true habite by his great labour and industry, euens as it were naturally effected in him, yet if the weapons that they shall fight withall be imperfect or insufficient to performe whatsoever appertaineth vnto true fight, as concerning the perfection of their safetie, it availeth them nothing. What shal we then say for the Rapier? Is the Rapier an imperfect or insufficient weapon to performe whatsoever appertaineth vnto the true fight? Yea: Wherefore? Because vnto the true fight there appertaineth foure fights, Gardant fight, Open fight, Variable fight, and Close fight: without all foure of these fights it is impossible to fight safe: but the Rapier for lacke of an hilt is an vnperfect weapon, and therefore insufficient to fight safe vpon these foure fights, the reasons are alreadie set downe in the Paradoxe before, but it is inferred to looſe the benefit of two of the
best fights, gardant and open fight, and to flie from the, and trust only vnto variable fight, and close fight. Now having proued through the imperfection or insufficiencie of the Rapier, the imperfection of the Rapier fight, it remaineth that I speake of the rest of the weapons, or instruments appertaining vnto Rapier fight.

The Rapier and Poiniard fight, the Rapier & Buckler fight, the Rapier and cloke fight, & the Rapier & gloue of male fight: all these fights by reason of the imperfection of the Rapier, and Rapier fight, are all also imperfect fights: and for prove of the uncertainie and impossibilities of safetie in any of these fights, thus it standeth. These fights depend altogether vppo variable fight and close fight: in anie of these fights it is impossible in true space of Offence to keepe the blades of their Rapiers from crossing, or fro breaking with the Poiniards, buckler, cloke, or breaking or catching with the gloue of male; because in anie of these two fights, the Agent hath still in true space the blade of the Patients Rapier to worke vpon. These things by letters cannot be made more plaine, neither is it unknowne to the skilfull, or in fight by anie meanes to be avoided, the weapon being too farre in true space to be wrought vpon, the place cannot be denied, do the patient Agent what he can for his life to the contrarie, either by blowes, thrusts, falsing, or doubling of thrusts, going backe, indirections, or turnings of the body, or what else foeuer may in the highest touch of wit or strength, or agilitie of bodie be devised or done, to keepe out the Agent: but still the Agent by narrownesse of space bringeth himself by stŋgord to the place, where being brought, it is as impossible to fight safe, as it is for two desperate men set togeth
ther being both blind; because in the true place (wonne in Rapier or variable fight) their eyes by the swift motions of their hands are deceiued, the crosles in that fight are false, their distance, judgements and times are lost, either to offend in safetie, or safely to defend themselves: and these reasons, rules, or grounds of the feates of armes are infallible and invincible.

Now, & you Italian teachers of Defence, where are your Stocatas, Imbrocata, Mandritas, Puntas, & Puynta reuersas, Stramissons, Passatas, Carricados, Amazzas, & Incartatas, & playing with your bodies, remouing with your feet a little aside, circle wise winding of your bodies, making of three times with your feet together, marking with one eye the motion of the aduerary, & with the other eye the aduantage of thrusting? What is become of all these iugling gambalds, Apish deuises, with all the rest of your squint-eyed trickes, when as through your deepe studies, long practisés, & apt bodies, both strong & agilious, you have attainted to the height of all these things? What then availeth it you, when you shal come to fight for your lives with a man of skill? you shall haue neither time, nor place, in due time to performe any one of them, nor gardant nor open fight safely to keep out a man of skill, a man of no skill, or scholler of your owne teaching, from the true place, the place of safetie, the place of uncertaintie or mischiefe, the place of wounds or death, but are there inforced to stand in that mischievous, uncertaine, dangerous, and most deadly place, as two men having lost in part their chiefest fences, most furiously with their rapiers or poiniards, wounding or slaying each other.

Thus endeth the imperfect fights of the rapier with
all maner of weapons or instruiments thereto appertaininge, with their imperfections, through the true grounds and rules of the Art of armes, truly displayed & brought to light.

All laud be unto the Almighty God.

That the reasons used by the Italian Fencers in commending the use of the Rapier and Poiniard, because it maketh peace, maketh against themselves.

It hath bin commonly held, that since the Italians haue taught the Rapier fight, by reason of the dangerous use therof, it hath bred great ciuilitie amongst our English nation, they will not now giue the lye, nor with such foule speeches abuse themselves, therefore there are fewer frayes in these times then were wont to be: it cannot be denied but this is true, that we are more circumspect of our words, and more fearfull to fight, then heretofore we haue bene. But whereof commeth it? Is it from this, that the Rapier maketh peace in our minds; or from hence, that it is not so sufficient defence for our bodies in our fight? He that will fight when he is armed, will not fight when he is naked: is it therefore good to go naked to keepe peace? he that would fight with his Sword and Buckler, or Sword and Dagger, being weapons of true defence, will not fight with his Rapier and Poiniard, wherein no true defence or fight is perfect: are these insufficient weapons therefore the better, because not being sufficient to defend vs in fight, they force us vs unto peace? What else is it, but to say, it is good for subiects
subject to be poor, that they may not go to law: or to lacke munition, that they may not fight, nor go to the warres: and to conclude, what more followeth through the imperfect workes of these Italian peacemakers? They haue made many a strong man in his fight weake, many a valiant man fearefull, manie a worthie man trusting to their imperfect fight, hath bene slaine, and manie of our desperate boyes and young youthes, to become in that Rapier-fight, as good men as England yeeldeth, and the tallest men in this land, in that fight as verie boyes as they and no better. This good haue the Italian teachers of Offence done vs, they haue transformed our boyes into men, and our men into boyes, our strong men into weakesse, our valiant men doubtfull, and manie worthie men resoluing themselfes upon their false resolutions, haue most wilfully in the field, with their Rapiers ended their lives. And lastly, haue left to remaine amongst vs after their deaths, these inconueniences behind them, false Fence-bookes, imperfect weapons, false fightes, and euill customes, whereby for lacke of vs and practise in perfect weapons and true fight, we are disable for the seruice of our Prince, defence of our countrie, and safetie of our liues in private fight.

That the short Sword hath the aduantage against the long Sword or long Rapier.

Hereas for the most part opinions are 38 generally holden, that the long Sword, or long Rapier, hath the vantage in fight against the short Sword, which the Italian teachers of Defence, by their false de-
monstratiōs haue brought vs to beleue. I haue thought good that the truth may appeare which hath the vant-
tage, to adde my helpe vnto the reasons they vse in their owne behalfe, for that yet I could neuer heare them make a found reason for the same. These are the reasons. First with my long Rapier, I will put my selle into my gard or Stocata, holding my hilt backe by the outside of my right thigh, keeping in short the point of my Rapier, so as he that hath the short Sword, shall not be able to reach the point of my Rapier, to make his ward or Crosse with his Dagger, Buckler, Sword, or Cloke, without stepping in of his foote, the which time is too long to answere the time of the hand, by reason of my distance. I can there stand safe without danger of blow or thrust, playing the Patients part: if you strike or thrust you do it too shord, by reason of my distance: if you seek to come nearer, you must do it with the time of your foote, in the which time I may safely thrust home: if in that distance you breake it not, you are slaine: if you do breake it, yet you do me no harme, by reason of my di-
stance, and I may stand fast and thrust againe, or flie backe at my pleasure: so haue you put your selle in dan-
ger of your life, and hauing hardly escaped, are driuen a-
gaine to begin a new bought, as at the first you did. Againe, if I please, I can be the oppresflour, keeping the fame gard, and my point in shord as I did before, and pressing strongly by putting in by litte and little of my feete, vntill the place with my foote be gotten, wherein (in my judgement) I may thrust home, the which I may boldly and safely do, without respect of anie ward at all, by reason of my distance, in which time of my comming he must strike, thrust, ward, or go backe: if he go backe,
it is a great disgrace: if he strike or thrust, it is too short: if he stand to defend, the place being alreadie gotten, where I may thrust home, the thrust being verie quicke & strongly made, such is the force and swiftnesse thereof, that it is impossible by nature or art, for anie man to breake one thrust of an hundred. These reasons in my opinion may suffice to confirme the wise, that there is no question to be made, but that the long Rapier hath the aduantage against the short Sword.

Sir you haue pretily handled your discourse, concerning the vantages of the long Rapier against the short Sword, especially at the first shew, and according to common fence, but for the substance and truth of the true fight, you haue said nothing, because for the performance of anie of your allegations, you haue neither true Pace, Place, Time, nor Space: these are the reasons. Your Pace of necessitie must be too large, because otherwise you cannot keepe safe the point of your long Rapier, from the Crosse of the short Sword, vnlesse you will with a narrow Pace keepe backe your hilt so farre, that the space of your offence wilbe too large or too long in distance, and your bodie vnapt to moue and to thrust both strong and quicke in due time, nor aptly to keepe your distance, to win the place with your feete, to thrust home. So now you may plainly se, if you haue skill in the art or science of Defence, that to performe anie thing which you haue alleadged, you haue neither true Pace, Place, time nor Space. But if you will stand vpon the largenesse of your Pace, to keepe backe or saue the point of your long Rapier from the ward or Crosse of the short Sword, or vpon your Passatos, in all these you haue great disaduantages: and
these are my reasons: Your number will be too great, as thus: whensoever you meane out of your large pace to thrust home, you must of neceessitie make foure times with your feet, and one with your hand, or two times with your feet, and one with your hand at the least: and whensoever you make any of your passages, the number of your feet are greater then the greatest of any of these times done out of the large pace: but the patient with his short sword, to auoyd you, or disappoint you of your thrust, hath but one time with his foot, at or before the which time, as he in his iudgement shall find you in your motion, hath by the slow and great number of your motions or times, sufficient time safely out of all danger to make himselfe readie to take his crosse with his short sword. Now Sir, whether you thrust or not thrust, whether you play the part of an Agent, or Patient, it helpeth you nothing, for he that hath the short sword hath foure times or motions against the long Rapier, namely, bent, spent, lying spent, and drawing backe, in all manner of fights these are to be observ'd both by the Patient and Agent. Now note, he that hath the long Rapier must of neceessitie play vpon one of these foure motions, or be Patient, which soever he shall do, he is still in great danger of the crosse of the short sword, because if he be Agent, his number is too great, he falleth into one of the foure motions, the Patient with his short sword, hauing but the time of the hand, or had & foot, safely vpon these actions or times taketh his crosse with the short Sword: that being done, he presently uncrosseth and striketh or thrusteth at his pleasure him that hath the long Rapier, in the head, face, or bodie. Now here is againe to be noted, that when the crosse
is made, if he that hath the long Rapier stand fast, he is wounded presently in the uncrossing of the short sword, if he step or leape backe to saue himselfe, yet the time of the hand being swifter then the time of the foot, overtaketh him, with blow or thrust in the arme, hand, head, face and bodie. Now if he that hath the long Rapier will be patient & make no play, but lie still watching to make his thrust or Stocata iust in the comming or moving of the Agents feete with his short sword, then he hath as great disaduantage as he had when he was Patient, because the the Agent with his short Sword hath but hand and foot to make his crosse: which is most safely to be done in that time, which we call Bent, and is as impossible for the Rapier-man to preuent, as it is for an unskilfull to strike or thrust iust together with a man of skill. Then thus I conclude, that he that fighteth with a long Rapier, against him that fighteth with a short Sword, can do nothing in due time to defend himselfe, or hurt the other, but is still in daunger of his life, or at the mercie of him that hath the short Sword, or else hath no safe way to helpe himselfe, but onely Cobs Trauerse. This Cob was a great quareller, and did delight in great brauerie to giue foule words to his betters, and would not refuse to go into the field to fight with any man, and when he came into the field, would draw his Sword to fight, for he was sure by the cunning of his Trauerse, not to be hurt by anie man: for at anie time finding himselfe ouermatched would suddenly turne his backe and runne away with such swiftnesse, that it was thought a good horse would scarce take him. And this when I was a young man, was verie much spoken of by many Gentlemen of the Innes of
the Court, and was called Cobs Trauerse and those that had seene anie go backe too faft in his fight, would say, he did tread Cobs Trauerse.

George Siluer his militarie riddle, truly set downe betweene the Perfection and Imperfection of fight: containing the handling of the foure fights: wherein true consisteth the whole summe and full perfection of the true fight, with all maner of wea-
pons; with an invincible conclusion.

Ardant fight stayeth, putteth backe, or beateth gardant fight.

Open fight stayeth, putteth backe, or beateth open fight.

Variable fight answereth variable fight in the first distance, and not otherwise, except it be with the perfect length against the imperfect.

Close fight is beaten by gardant fight.

Variable close & gardant fight, beateth gardant fight, open fight, variable fight, and close fight.

Gardant fight in the imperfection of the Agent or Patient, winneth the halfe sword, and preuenteth the close, and whosoever first ventureth the close, looseth it, and is in great danger of death, and not possible to escape or get out againe without great hurt.

There attendeth most diligently upon these foure fights foure offensive actions, which we call certaine, vncertaine, first, before, iuift, and afterwards: they are to be performed through judgement, time, measure, number and weight, by which all maner of blowes, thrusts,
Paradoxes of Defence.

thumbs, falses, doubles, or slips, are prevented, or most safely defended. And thus endeth my riddle.

Now followeth the conclusion, that who so ever shall think or find himself in his fight too weak for the Agent, or Patient Agent, and therefore, or by reason of his drunkenness, or unreasonable desperateness shall press within the halfe Sword, or desperately runne in of purpose to give hurt, or at least for taking of one hurt, to give another, shall most assuredly be in great danger of death or wounds, and the other shall still be safe and go free.

Veritas vincit.
A BRIEFE NOTE OF THREE ITALIANTEACHERS OF OFFENCE.

Here were three Italian Teachers of Offence in my time. The first was Signior Rocko: the second was Ieronimo, that was Signior Rocko his boy, that taught Gentlemen in the Blacke-Fryers, as Vther for his maister in stead of a man. The third was Vincentio. This Signior Rocko came into England about some thirtie yeares past: he taught the Noblemen & Gentlemen of the Court; he caused some of them to weare leaden foales in their shoes, the better to bring them to nimblenesse of feet in their fight. He disbursed a great summe of mony for the lease of a faire house in Warwicke lane, which he called his Colledge, for he thought it great disgrace for him to keepe a Fence-schoole, he being then thought to be the onely famous Maister of the Art of armes in the whole world. He caused to be fairely drawne and set round about his Schoole all the Noblemens and Gentlemens armes that were his Schollers, and hanging right vnder their armes their Rapiers, daggers, gloues of male and gantlets. Also, he had benches and stooles, the roome being verie large, for Gentlemé to fit round about his Schoole to behold his teaching. He taught none commonly vnder twentie, fortie, fifty, or an hundred pounds. And because all things should be verie necessary for the Noblemé & gentlemé, he had
in his schoole a large square table, with a greene carpet, done round with a verie brode rich fringe of gold, alwaies standing vpon it a verie faire Standish covered with Crimson Veluet, with inke, pens, pin-duft, and sealing waxe, and quiers of verie excellent fine paper gilded, readie for the Noblemen & Gentlemen (vpon occasion) to write their letters, being then desirous to follow their fight, to send their men to dispatch their businesse. And to know how the time passed, he had in one corner of his schoole a Clocke, with a verie faire large Diall, he had within that schoole, a roome the which was called his priuie schoole, with manie weapons therein, where he did teach his schollers his secret fight, after he had perfectly taught them their rules. He was verie much beloued in the Court.

There was one Austen Bagger, a verie tall gentleman of his handes, not standing much vpon his skill, but carying the valiant hart of an Englishman, vpon a time being merrie amongst his friendes, said he would go fight with Signior Rocco, presently went to Signior Rocco his house in the Blackefriers, and called to him in this maner: Signior Rocco, thou that art thought to be the onely cunning man in the world with thy weapon, thou that takest vpon thee to hit anie Englishman with a thrust vpon anie button, thou that takest vpon thee to come ouer the seas, to teach the valiant Noblemen and Gentlemen of England to fight, thou cowardly fellow come out of thy house if thou dare for thy life, I am come to fight with thee. Signior Rocco looking out at a window, perceiving him in the street to stand readie with his Sword and Buckler, with his two hand Sword drawne, with all speed ran into the street, and manfully
let flie at *Austen Bagger*, who most brauely defended himselfe, and presently closed with him, and stroke vp his heeles, and cut him ouer the breech, and trode vp on him, and most grievously hurt him vnder his feet: yet in the end *Austen* of his good nature gaue him his life, and there left hin. This was the first and last fight that euer *Signior Rocco* made, sauing once at Queene Hith he drew his Rapier vp on a waterman, where he was throughly beaten with Oares and Stretchers, but the oddes of their weapons were as great against his Rapier, as was his two hand Sword against *Austen Bagger* Sword and Buckler, therefore for that fray he was to be excused.

Then came in *Vincentio* and *Ieronimo*, they taught Rapier-fight at the Court, at *London*, and in the coun-try, by the space of seauen or eight yeares or therea-bouts. These two *Italian Fencers*, especially *Vincentio*, said that Englishmen were strong men, but had no cunning, and they would go backe too much in their fight, which was great disgrace vnto them. Vpon these words of disgrace against Englishmen, my brother *Toby Siluer* and my selfe, made challenge against them both, to play with them at the sngle Rapier, Rapier and Dagger, the sngle Dagger, the sngle Sword, the Sword and Target, the Sword and Buckler, & two hand Sword, the Staffe, battell Axe, and Morris Pike, to be played at the Bell Sauage vpon the Scaffold, where he that went in his fight faster backe then he ought, of Englishman or Italian, shold be in danger to breake his necke off the Scaffold. We caus'd to that effect, fiue or fixe score Bils of challenge to be printed, and set vp from *Southwarke* to the Tower, and from thence through *London* vnto *Westminster*,
minister, we were at the place with all these weapons at the time apointed, within a bow shot of their Fence schoole: many gentlemen of good accompt, caried many of the bills of chalenge vnto them, telling them that now the Siluers were at the place appointed, with all their weapons, looking for them, and a multitude of people there to behold the fight, sayng vnto them, now come and go with vs (you shall take no wrong) or else you are shamed for euer. Do the gentlemen what they could, these gallants would not come to the place of triall. I verily thinke their cowardly feare to answere this chalenge, had ytterly shamed them indeed, had not the maisters of Defence of London, within two or three daies after, bene drinking of bottell Ale hard by Vincentios schoole, in a Hall where the Italians must of neecessitie passe through to go to their schoole: and as they were comming by, the maisters of Defence did pray them to drinke with them, but the Italians being verie cowardly, were afraide, and presently drew their Rapiers: there was a pretie wench standing by, that loued the Italians, she ran with ourcrie into the street, helpe, helpe, the Italians are like to be slaine: the people with all speed came running into the house, and with their Cappes and such things as they could get, parted the fraie, for the English maisters of Defence, meant nothing lesse then to foile their handes vpon these two faint-harted fellows. The next morning after, all the Court was filled, that the Italian teachers of Fence had beaten all the maisters of Defence in London, who set vpon them in a house together. This wan the Italian Fencers their credit againe, and thereby got much, still continuing their false teaching to the end of their liues.
This Vincentio proued himselfe a stout man not long before he died, that it might be seene in his life time he had bene a gallant, and therefore no maruaile he tooke vpon him so highly to teach Englishmen to fight, and to set forth bookes of the feates of Armes. Vpon a time at Wels in Somersetshire, as he was in great brauerie amongst manie gentlemen of good accompt, with great boldnesse he gaue out speeches, that he had bene thus manie yeares in England, and since the time of his first comming, there was not yet one Englishman, that could once touch him at the sngle Rapier, or Rapier and Dagger. A valiant gentleman being there amongst the rest, his English hart did rise to heare this proude boaster, secretly sent a messenger to one Bartholomew Bramble a friend of his, a verie tall man both of his hands and person, who kept a schoole of Defence in the towne, the messenger by the way made the maister of Defence acquainted with the mind of the gentleman that sent for him, and of all what Vincentio had said, this maister of Defence presently came, and amongst all the gentlemen with his cap off, prayed maister Vincentio, that he would be pleased to take a quart of wine of him. Vincentio verie scornefully looking vpon him, saiid vnto him. Wherefore should you giue me a quart of wine? Marie Sir, said he, because I heare you are a famous man at your weapon. Then presently said the gentleman that sent for the maister of Defence: Maister Vincentio, I pray you bid him welcome, he is a man of your profession. My profession said Vincentio? what is my profession. Then said the gentleman, he is a maister of the noble science of Defence. Why said maister Vincentio, God make him a good man. But the maister of Defence wold not
not thus leave him, but prayed him againe he would be pleased to take a quart of wine of him. The said Vincetio, I haue no need of thy wine. Then said the maister of Defence: Sir I haue a schoole of Defence in the towne, will it please you to go thither. Thy schoole, said maister Vincentio? what shall I do at thy schoole? play with me (said the maister) at the Rapier and Dagger, if it please you. Play with thee said maister Vincentio? if I play with thee, I will hit thee 1. 2. 3. 4. thrusts in the eie together. Then said the maister of Defence, if you can do so, it is the better for you, and the worse for me, but surely I can hardly beleeue that you can hit me: but yet once againe I hartily pray you good Sir, that you will go to my schoole, and play with me. Play with thee said maister Vincentio (verie scornfully?) by God me scorne to play with thee. With that word scorne, the maister of Defence was verie much moued, and vp with his great English fist, and stroke maister Vincentio such a boxe on the eare that he fell ouer and ouer, his legges iust against a Butterie hatch, whereon stood a great blacke lacke: the maister of Defence fearing the worst, against Vincentio his rising, catcht the blacke lacke into his hand, being more then halfe full of Beere. Vincentio lustily start vp, laying his hand vpon his Dagger, & with the other hand pointed with his finger, saying, very well: I will cause to lie in the Gaile for this geare, 1. 2. 3 4. yeares. And well said the maister of Defence, since you will drinke no wine, will you pledge me in Beere? I drinke to all the cowardly knaues in England, and I thinke thee to be the veriest coward of them all: with that he cast all the Beere vpon him: notwithstanding Vincentio hauing nothing but his guilt Rapier, and
Dagger about him, and the other for his defence the blacke Iacke, would not at that time fight it out: but the next day met with the maister of Defence in the streate, and said vnto him, you remember how misused a me yetesterday, you were to blame, me be an excellent man, me teach you how to thrust two foote further then anie Englishman, but first come you with me: then he brought him to a Mercers shop, and said to the Mercer, let me see of your best silken Pointes, the Mercer did presently shew him some of seauen groates a dozen, then he payeth fourteene groates for two dozen, and said to the maister of Defence, there is one dozen for you, and here is another for me. This was one of the valiantest Fencers that came from beyond the seas, to teach Englishmen to fight, and this was one of the manliest frayes, that I haue hard of, that euer he made in England, wherin he shewed himselfe a farre better man in his life, then in his profession he was, for he professed armes, but in his life a better Christian. He set forth in print a booke for the use of the Rapier and Dagger, the which he called his practise, I haue read it ouer, and because I finde therein neither true rule for the perfect teaching of true fight, not true ground of true fight, neither fence or reason for due prooфе thereof. I haue thought it friuolous to recite any part therein contained: yet that the truth hereof may appeare, let two mē being wel experienced in the Rapier and Dagger fight, choose any of the best branches in the same booke, & make trial with force and agility, without the which the truth betweene the true & false fight cannot be knowne, & they shall find great imperfections therein. And againe, for prooфе that there is no truth, neither in his rules, grouds
or Rapier-fight, let triall be made in this maner: Set two vnskilfull men together at the Rapier and Dagger, being valiant, and you shall see, that once in two boutes there shall either one or both of them be hurt. Then set two skilfull men together, being valiant at the Rapier and Dagger, and they shall do the like. Then set a skilful Rapier and Dagger-man the best that can be had, and a valiant man hauing no skill together at Rapier & Dagger, and once in two boutes vpon my credit in all the experience I haue in fight, the vnskilful man, do the other what he can for his life to the contrarie, shall hurt him, and most commonly if it were in continuance of fight, you shall see the vnskilfull man to haue the aduantage. And if I shoule chuse a valiant man for seruice of the Prince, or to take part with me or anie friend of mine in a good quarrell, I would chuse the vnskilfull man, being vnencombred with falsé fights, because such a man stanteth free in his valour with strength and agilitie of bodie, freely taketh the benefit of nature, fighteth moost braue, by loosing no opportunitie, either soundly to hurt his enemie, or defend himselfe, but the other standing for his Defence, vpon his cunning Italian wardes, Pointareuera, the Imbrocata, Stocata, and being fast tyed vnto these falsé fights, stanteth troubled in his wits, and nature therby racked through the largenesse or falsé lyings or Spaces, whereby he is in his fight as a man halfe maimed, loosing the opportunity of times & benefit of nature, & whereas before being ignorant of these falsé Rapier fightes, standing in the free libertie of nature giuen him by god, he was able in the field with his weapo to answere the valiantest man in the world, but now being tied vnto that falsé fickle vncertaine fight, there-
by hath lost in nature his freedome, is now become scarce halfe a man, and euerie boye in that fight is become as good a man as himselfe.

Ieronimo this gallant was valiant, and would fight indeed, and did, as you shall heare. He being in a Coch with a wench that he loued well, there was one Cheefe, a verie tall man, in his fight naturall English, for he fought with his Sword and Dagger, and in Rapier-fight had no skill at all. This Cheefe hauing a quarrell to Ieronimo, ouertooke him vpon the way, himselfe being on horsebacke, did call to Ieronimo, and bad him come forth of the Coch or he would fetch him, for he was come to fight with him. Ieronimo presently went forth of the Coch and drew his Rapier and dagger, put himself into his best ward or Stocata, which ward was taught by himselfe and Vincentio, and by them best allowed of, to be the best ward to stand vpon in fight for life, either to assault the enimie, or stand and watch his comming, which ward it should seeme he ventured his life vpon, but howsoever with all the fine Italienated skill Ieronimo had; Cheefe with his Sword within two thrustes ran him into the bodie and slue him. Yet the Italian teachers will say, that an Englishman cannot thrust straight with a Sword, because the hilt will not suffer him to put the forefinger ouer the Croffe, nor to put the thumbe vpon the blade, nor to hold the pummell in the hand, whereby we are of necessitie to hold fast the handle in the hand: by reason whereof we are druen to thrust both compasse and short, whereas with the Rapier they can thrust both straight and much further then we can with the Sword, because of the hilt: and these be the reasons they make against the Sword.

FINIS.
BREF INSTRUCTIONS

VPÔ MY PRADOXES OF DEFENCE
for the true handling of all Mann‡ of
weapons together w† the fower grounds
& the fower gournors wch gournours
are left out in my pradoxes w†out the
knowledge of wch no Man can fight laf

By George Silver Gentleman
[1599]

[Sloane MS. No. 376.]
TO THE READER.

Or as much as in my padoxes of Defence I haue admonished Men to take heede of faire teachers of Defence, yet once againe in these my breif instructions I do the lyke, because Diuers have wryten books treating of the noble science of Defence, wherin they rather teach offence then Defence, rather shewing men therby how to be slayne than to defend them selues fro the Danger of their enemys, as we may dayly see to the great grief & ouerthrowe of many braue gentlemen & gallent of or ever victorious nation of great britaine, And therfore for the great loue & Care y I haue for the well Doing & preservation of my Countrymen, seeing their Dayly ruens & utter overthrow of Diu'n gallant gent: & others with trust only to that Impfyt fyght of y Rapior, yease although they Deily see their owne overthrowes & slaughter therby, yet becaus they are trayned vp therin, they thinke & do fully persuade them selues that ther is no fight so excelent & wher as amongst div's other their oppynyons y leadeth them to this errous on of y cheifest is, because ther be so many slayne wt these weapons & therfore they hold them so exelent, but these things do
chiefly happen, first because their fyght is Imprefyt for that they use neither the prfyt gronds of true fyght, neither yet the 4 gou' nors w' out w' ch no man can fight saf, neither do they use such other rules w' ch are required in the right use of prfyt defence, and also their weapons for ye most prte beinge of an Imprefyt length, must of necessity make an Imprefyt Defence because they Cannot use them in due tyme & place, for had these valerous mynded men the right prfction of the true fyght w' the short sword, & also of other weapons of prfyt length, I know ye men would com saffer out of the field fro such bloodye bankets & that such would be their prfctions her in, that it would saue many 100 mens lyues. But how should men lerne prfction out of such rules as are nothing els but very Imprefctio it self. And as it is not fy for a man w' ch defyreth ye clere lyght of the Day to go downe into the bottom of a deepe & Darke Dungion, helyng to fynd it there, so is it as Imposyble for men to fynd the prfyt knowledge of this noble science wher as in all their teachings every thing is attempted & acted upo Imprefyt rules, for ther is but one truth in all things, w' ch I wish very hartely were taught & practysed here amongt vs, & ye those Imprefyt & murtherous kynde of false fyghts might be by them abolyshed. Leaue now to quaf & gull any Longer of that fylthy brynyshe puddle, seeing yo may now drink of ye fresh & clere spryngge.

O that men for their Defence would but geve their mynde to practise the true fyght in deed, & lerne to bere true brytish wards for thire defence, w' ch ye they had it in prfyt praetyse, I speak it of myne owne knowledge ye those Imprefyt Italyon Devyses w' rapyor & ponyard would
To the Reader.

would be cleane cast asyde & of no account of al such as blind offections do not lead beyond the bonds of reason. Therfore for the verye zealous & vnfayned loue y't I beare vnto yo' high & royal pris'n my Cuntrymen pittyng their causes y't so many braue men should be dayly murthered, & spoyle'd for want of true knowledge of this noble science & not as som Imagyn to be, only y'e excellece of y'e rapior fyght, & wher as my padoxes of defence is to the most forte as a darke ryddle in many things ther in set downe, therfore I have now this second tyme taken som paynes to write these few breef Instructi

tions ther vppó wher by they may the better attayne to the truth of this scyence & laying open here all such things as was som thinge Intrycat for them to vndr'stand in my p'doxes & therfor y't I haue the ful prfectio & knowledge of the prfyt vse of all mann' of weapons, it Doth embolden me here in to wryte for the better Instrucctio of the Vnskylful.

And I haue added to these my breef Instructi
tions c'taine necesarie admonytions wch I wish every man not only to know but also to ob'ye & follow, Chieflie al such as are desyrous to enter into the right vsage & knowledge of their weapons, & also I haue though't it good to Annex'e here vnto my p'doxes of Defence because in these my breef Instructi
tions, I haue referred y'e reader to div's rules ther in set down.

This haue I wryten for an Infallible truth & a note of remembrance to o' gallant gent: & others of o' brave mynded Nation of great bryttaine, wch bere a mynde to defend them selues & to wyn honour in the feeld by their Actions of armes & syngle Combats.

And know y't I write not this for vineglorie, but out
To the Reader.

of an entyre loue y't I owe vnto my natyve Countrymen, as on who lamentith their Losses, sorrye y't so great an error should be so Carefully nor'yshed as a spant in their bosoms to their vtt'r confusyð, as of long tyme haue byn seene, wher as yf they would but seeke the truth her in they were easly abolisshed, therfore follow the truth & fly Ignorance.

And confyð' y't learnyng hath no greater enemye than Ignorance, nether can the vnskylfull euer Judge the truth of my arte to them unknownen, beware of rash Judgment & accept my labours as thankfully as I bestow them willingly, censuer me Justly, let no man Dispire my worke herin Causeles, & so I refere my self to the censuer of such as are skylful herin & so I comyt yð to the prtection of the almygthy Jehovah.

you in al loue & fрайendly Affectið,

George Syluer.
ADMONITIONS
TO THE GENTLEMEN & BRAVE GALLANTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AGAINST QUARRELS & BRAULES WRITTEN BY GEORGE SILVER.

GENT.

Hereas I have declared in my predoxes of defence of the fals teaching of the noble scyence of defence vset here by the Italyon fencers willing men therin to take heed how they trusted ther vnto wch suffyent reasons & profs why.

And wher as ther was a booke wryten by Vincentio an Italiō teacher whoseyll vsinge practises & vnskylfull teaching were such yt it hath cost the lyves of many of ovr brave gentlemen & gallants, the vnc'taintye of whose false teaching doth yet remayne to yd dayly murthering & ouer throw of many, for he & the rest of them did not teach Defence but offence, as it doth playnlye appere by those yt follow the same Impryft fyght according to their teaching or instructiōs by the orders from them preceedinge, for be the actors yt follow them neuer so pryft or skylfull therin one or both of them are eyther
fore hurt or slaine in their Incountrs & fyghts, & ye they alledge yt we vse it not rightly according to ye prfectio therof, & therfore cannot defend o' selues, to wch I an-
swer yt themselues had had any prfection therin, & that their teaching had byn a truth, themselues would not have byn beaten & slayne in their fyghts, & vling of their weapons, as they were.

And therfore I proue wher a man by their teaching can not be saf in his defence following their owne grounde of fyght then is their teaching offence & not defençe, for in true fyght against the best no hurt can be don. And ye both haue the full prfection of true fyght, then the one will not be able to hurt the other at what prsyt weapon so ever.

For it cannot be sayd yt ye a man go to the feld & cannot be sure to defend him self in fight & to com saf home, ye goid be not against him whither he fyght wt a man of skyll or no skil it may not be said yt such a man is Mas of the Noble scyence of defence, or that he hath the prfection of true fyght, for ye both haue the prfection of their weapons, ye by any Device, on should be able to hurt the other, ther were no prfection in the fyght of weapons, & this firmely hold in yo' mynd for a generall rule, to be the hayth & prfection of the true handling of al maner of weapons.

And also wheras yt said Vincentio in yt fame booke hath written discours of honour & honourable quarrels making many reasons to prve meanes & wayes to enter ye feeld & coba, both for the lye & other disgraces, al wch diabolicall devyces tendeth only to villayne & dis-
truction as hurtynge, Maymynge & Murtheringe or kyllinge.

Annymating
Anonymating ye mynds of yonge gentlemen & gallants to follow those rules to maintaine their honors & credits, but the end therof for the most prte is eyther kyllinge or hanginge or both to their vtter vndoinge & great gref of themselves, & their friends, but then to late to call it a-gaine. they consider not the tyme & place that we lyue in, nor do not throughly looke into the danger of the lawe til it be to late, & for that in divers other countrys in these things they have a larger scope than we have in these our dayes.

Therefore it behoveth vs not upo every abuse offered wher by o’ bloud shalbe Inflamed, or o’ choler kindled presenty w’t the sword or w’t the stabb, or by force of Armes to seeke Revenge, w’t is the propre nature of wild beasts in their rage so to do, being voyde of the vs of reason, w’t thinges should not be in Men of discretion so much to Degenerate, but he y’t wil not endure an Injurye, but will seeke revenge, then he ought to do it by Cyvill Order & prof, by good & hollesom lawes, w’t are ordayned for such Causes, w’t is a thinge far more fyt & requisted in a place of so Cyvell a gou’nment as we lyve in, then is the other, & who so follow these my Admonytions shalbe accounted as valyent a Man as he y’t fyghteth & farr wyser. for I see no reason why a Man should adventure his lyf & estate upo every trysle, but should rather put vp diu’s abuses offered vnto him, because it is agreeable both to the Lawes of god & o’ Countrye.

Why should not words be Answered w’t words againe, but yf a Man by his enemye be charged w’t blowes then may he Lawfully seeke the best meanes to defend himself, & In such a Case I hold it fyt to vse his skyll & to shew his force by his Deeds, yet so, y’t his dealynge be not
not w' full Rygour to the others confusyon yf possyble it may be eschewed.

Also take heed how yō appoynt the field w' yo' Enemye publickly because o' Lawes do not prmyt yt, neyther appoint to meet him in pryvat sort lest yō wounding him he accuse yō of fellownye saying you have robbed him &c. Or he may laye companye closely to Murther you & then to report he dyd yt him self valyently in the feeld.

Also take heed of thyne Enemyes Stratagems, lest he fynd Meanes to make yō to looke a syde vpō somthing, or cause yō to shew whethey yō have on a p'uye Coate, & so when yō Looke from him, he hurt or kyll you.

Take not armes vpō every light occasyon, let not one fryend vpon a word or a tryfle violate another but let ech man zealously embrace fryendshyp, & turne not famylyaritie into strangnes, kyndnes into mallice, nor loue into hatred, norish not these strange & vnnaturall Alterations.

Do not wyckedly resolue one to seeke the others ou'throwe, do not confyrme to end thy Mallice by fyght because for the most prte y' endeth by Death.

Confyder when these things were mosl vsed in former Ages they sought not so much by envye the ruen & destructioon of another, they never tooke tryall by sword but in defence of Innocencye to maintayne blotles honour.

Do not vpon Every tryfle make an Action of revenge, or of Defyance.

Go not into the feeld w' thy fryend at his Intreatye to take his prte but first know y' man of y' quarrell how Justly or unJustlye it grow, & do not ther in maintaine wroenge
wronge against ryght, but examyne the cause of the contrarye, & yt ther be reason for his rage to lead him to yt mortall resolution.

Yet be the cause neuer so Just, go not wt him neyther further nor suffer him to fight yt possyble it may by any meanes be otherwise ended & wyll him not to enter into so dangerous an action, but leue it till nececesytie requireth it.

And this I hold to be the best Course for it is foolishnes & endlessse troble to cast a stone at everye Dogge yt barks at you. this noble science is not to cause on man to abuse another injuriouly but to vse it in their necessities to defend them in their Just Causes & to maintaine their honour & Credits.

Therfore fyye al rashnes, pryde, & doynge of Iniurie all foule faults & errours herin, presume not on this, & therbye to think it lawfull to offer Iniurye to Anye, think not yo'self Invincible, but consider yt often a verye wretch hath kylled a taule man, but he yt hath humanytie, the more skylful he is in this noble science, the more humble, modest, & V'tuous he shold shew him self both in speech & Action, no lyer, no vaunter nor quarreller, for these are the causes of Wounds, Difhonour & Death.

Yf you talke wt great men of honourable qualitie ws such chiefly haue regeard to frame yo'speeches & Answer so reverent, yt a foolish word, or froward Answer geve no occasyon of ofience for often they breed Deadly hatred, Cruell murthers & extream ruens &c.

Ever shun al occasyons of quarrels, but marshall men chieflye generals & great comanders shold be exelent skylfull in the noble science of defence, therby to be
Bref Instructions vpon my pradoxes of Defence for the true handlyng of all Mann' of weapons together w' the fower grounds & the fower gou' nors w'h gouernours are left out in my pradoxes w'out the knowledge of w'h no Man can fight saf.

Cap. I.

The fower grounds or principles of y' true fyght at all manner of Weapons are these 4, viz. 1. Judgment 2. Distance 3. Tyme 4. Place.

He reason wherof these 4 grounds or principles be the fyrst & cheepest, are the following, because through Judgment, yō kepe yo' dystance, through Distance yō take yo' Tyme, through Tyme yō safly wyne or gayne the Place of yo' adu'farie, the Place beinge woon or gayned yō haue tyme safly eyther to ftryke, thrust, ward, cloze, grype, flyp or go back, in the w'h tyme yo' enemye is disapoynted to hurt yō, or to defend himself, by reason that he hath lost his true Place, the reason y' he hath lost his True place is by the length of Tyme
Bref Instructions.

Tyme through the numbs of his feet, to wch he is of necessitie Dryven to yt wilbe Agent.

The 4 gou' nors are those yt follow.

1. The fyrst gou' nor is Judgment wch is to know when yo' Adversarie can reach you, & when not, & when yō can do the lyke to him, & to know by the goodnes or badnes of his lyinge, what he can do, & when & how he can pr'forme it.

2. The second gou' nor is Measure. Measure is the better to know how to make yo' space true to defend yo' self, or to offend yo' enemye.

3. The third & fourth gou' nors is a twyfold mynd when yō pres in on yo' enemye, for as yō have a mynd to go forwarde, so yō must haue at yt instant a mynd to fly backwarde vpō any action yt shalbe offered or don by yo' aduersarie.

Certaine general rules wch must be obsyved in yt prisyte use of al kynde of weapons.

Cap. 2.

1. Yrft when you com into the feeld to encounter w't yo' Enemy, obsyve wel the scope, Evenes & vneunnes of yo' grounde, put yo'self in redynes w't yo' weapon, before yo' enemye Com w'in distance, let the syvvn in his face travers yt possiible yō can still remembrynge yo' gou' nors.

2. Let al yo' lyinge be such as shal best like yo'self, euer consyderinge out what fyght yo' Enemye chargeth yō, but be sure to kepe yo' distance, so yt nether hed, Armes,
hands, body, nor legges be w\textsubscript{th} in hys reach, but y\textsuperscript{t} he
must fyrst of necessytie put in his foote or feet, at w\textsuperscript{th} tyme y\text{o} haue the Choys of iij A\text{ctions} by the w\textsuperscript{th} y\text{o} may endang\text{r} him & go free yo\text{self}.

1. The fyrst is to strike or thrust at him, at y\text{t} instant
when he haue gayned y\text{o} the place by his cominge in
2. The second is to ward, & Aft\text{r} to strike or thrust from
y\text{t}, remembringe yo\text{r} gou\text{rnors}
3. The thyrd is to slippe alyttle backe & to strike or
thrust after hym.

but euuer remember y\text{t} in the fyrst motion of your
Adversarye towarde y\text{o}, y\text{t} y\text{o} flyde a lyttle back to shal
y\text{o} be p\text{r}pred in due tyme to prforme anye of the iij
A\text{ctions} A\text{forsaid}, by disappointynge him of his true
place, whereby y\text{o} shall saf\text{lye} defend yo\text{r}selfe & en-
danger him.

remember also y\text{t} yf through fear or polysye, he strike
or thrust short, & ther w\text{t} go back, or not go back, follow
him vpon yo\text{r} twofold gou\text{rnors}, so shal\text{l} yo\text{r} warde &
slype be prformed in lyke mann\text{r} as before, & yo\text{r}self still be saf.

Kepe yo\text{r} distance & suffer not yo\text{r} adus\text{f}arie to wyn 3.
or gayne the place of you, for yf he shall so do, he may
endanger to hurt or kyll you.

Know y\text{t} the place is, when on may fstryke or thrust
home w\text{t}out puttinge in of his foot.

Yt may be obiected against thys last ground, y\text{t} men
do often strike & thrust at the half sword & yet the
same is prfytly defended, where to I an\text{swer} y\text{t} that de-
fence is prfytly made by reason y\text{t} the warder hath his
true space before the fstryker or thruster is in his force
or entred into his action.

Tercvore
Bref Instructions.

Therefore alwaies do p'vent both blow & thrust, the blow by true space, & the thrust by narrow space y' is true crossing e it before the same come into their full force, other wyse the hand of the Agent beinge as swyft as ye hand of the patient, the hand of ye Agent beinge the fyrst mou', must of necessytie strike or thrust y' prte of ye patient wch shalbe striken or thrust at because the tyme of y' hand to the tyme of ye hand, beinge of lyke swyftnes the fyrst mou' hath ye aduantage.

4. When yo' enemy shal presse vpon you, he wilbe Open in one place or other, both at syngal & dubble weapon, or at the least he wilbe to weake in his ward vpon such presinge, then strike or thrust at such open or weakest prte y' yo' shal fynd neerest.

5. When yō attempt to wyn the place, do it vpon gard, remembringe yo' gou'nors, but when he preseth vpo' yō & gayneth yō The place, then strike or thrust at him in his cōmynge in,

Or yf he shal strike or thrust at yō, then Ward it, & strike or thrust at him from yo' warde, & fly backe. Instantly accordinge to yo' gou'nors, so shall yō escape safelie, for that the fyrst Motion of the feete backwarde is more swyft, then the first motion of the feet forarde, wher by yo' regressyon wilbe more swyftær, then his course in prgressyon to Anoye you, the reason is, that in the fyrst motyon of his prgressyon his Numb'r & Waight is greater then yors are, in yo' first motyon of yo' regressyon, nevtherelss al men knowe that the cō-tyunal course of the feet forarde is more swyft then the Contynuall Course of ye feet backwards.

6. yf yo' enemye lye in varyable syght, & strike or thrust at yō then be sure to kepe yo' Distance & strike.
or thrust at such open prte of him as are neereft vn to you, viz, at the hand, Arme, hed, or legg of him, & go back w't all,

yf ij men fight at varyable fyght, & yf w't in distance, they must both be hurt, for in such fight they Cannot make a true Crosse, nor haue tyme trulye to Judge, by reason y't the swyft motyon of the hand, beinge a swyfter mouer, then the eye Deceyveth the eye, at what weapon foeuer yō shal fyght w't all, as in my pradoxes of defence in the chapter therof doth appere.

Looke to the grype of yo' Enemye, & vpō his flype take such warde as shal best fyt your hand, from w'ch warde strike or thrust, stil remembrynge yo' gouverners, yf yō can Indirect yo' enemye at any kynde of weapon, then yō haue the aduantage, because he must moue his feet to direct him self Againe, & yō in the meane tyme may strike or thrust at him, & fly out fast, before he can offer anything at you, his tyme wilbe so longe.

When you shall Ward blow or thrust, made at yo' right or left prte, w't any kynd of weapon, rememb' to Draw yo' hynde foot a lyttle c'rulerlye, from that prte to w'ch the same shalbe made, wher by yō shall make yo' defence the more prfyt, & shal stand the more Apt to strike or thrust from yt.
A declaration of all the 4 generall fyghts to be 
used w' the sword at double or syngle,
longe or short, & w' Certaine 
p'ticular rules to them
Annexed.

Cap. 3.

1. Pen fyght is to Caruye yo' hand & hylt a loft 
aboue yo' hed, eyther w' poynt vpright, or 
point backwards w'ch is best, yet vse that w'ch 
yo' shall fynd most aptest, to strike, thrust, or 
ward.

2. Gardant fyght in gen'all is of ij sorts, y' fyrst is true A "hanging" 
gardant fyght, w'ch is eyther prfyt or Imprfyt.

The prfyt is to carry yo' hand & hylt aboue yo' hed 
w' yo' poynt doune to w'ards yo' left knee, w' yo' sword 
blade somewhat neer yo' bodye, not bearing out your 
poynt, but rather declynyng in a lyttle towards yo' 
said knee, y' yo' enemye crosfe not yo' poynt & so hurt Command. 
you, stand bolt vpright in this fyght, & yf he offer to 
presse in then bere yo' hed & body a lyttle backwarde.

The Imprfyt is when yo' bere yo' hand & sword hylt 
prfyt hayth aboue yo' hed, as aforesayd but leanyng 
or stooinge forwarde w' yo' body & therby yo' space "imperfect" 
wilbe to Wyde on both syds to defend the blow stryken 
at the left fyde of yo' hed or to wyde to defend a thrust 
from the ryght fyde of the body,

Also it is Imprfyt, yf yo' bere yo' hand & hylt as 
aforesayd, berynge yo' poynt to farr out from yo' knee, 
so y' yo' enemy May Crofs, or strike Asyde yo' poynt, 
& therby endanger you,
The second is bastard gardant fyght w^{ch} is to Carrye yo^r hand & hylt below yo^r hed, breft hye or lower w^t yo^r poynt downwarde towarde yo^r left foote, this bastard gardant ward is not to be vse in fyght, ecept it be to Crosse yo^r enemyes Ward at his comynge in to take the grype of him or such other advantage, as in diu^s placis of ye sword fyght is set forth.

Close fyght is when yō Cros at ye half sword eyther 3. aboue at foremost ward y^t is w^t poynt hye, & hande & hylt lowe, or at true or bastard gardant ward w^t both yo^r poynts doun.

Close is all man^t of fyghts wherein yō have made a 4. true Cros at the half sword w^t yo^r space very narrow & not Cros, is also close fyght.

Variable fyght is al other man^t of lyinge not here before spoken of, wher of these 4 that follow are the cheekest of them.

Stocata: w^{ch} is to lye w^t yo^r right legge forarde, w^t (1.) yo^r sword or rapior hylt back on the out fyde of yo^r right thygh w^t yo^r poynt forarde to ward yo^r enemye, w^t yo^r dagg^r in yo^r other hand extendinge yo^r hand to wards the poynt of yo^r rapior, holdinge yo^r dagg^r w^t ye^e poynt vpright w^t narrow space betweene yo^r rapior blade, & the nayles of yo^r dagg^r hand, kepynge yo^r rapior poynt back behind yo^r dagg^r hand ye posfyble,

Or he may lye wyde below vnd^r his dagg^r w^t his rapior poynt doun towards his enemyes foote, or w^t his poynt fourth w^t out his dagg^r.

Imbrocata: is to lye w^t yo^r hylt hyer then yo^r hed, beringe yo^r knuckles vpwarde, & yo^r point depending towarde yo^r Enemys face or brest.

Mountanta: is to Carrye yo^r rapior pummell in the palm
palm of yo' hand resting it on yo' lytle synger w't yo' hand belowe & so movntyng e it vp a loft, & so to com in w't a thrust vpō yo' Enemyes face or brest, as out of ye Imbrocata.

4. Passata; is eyther to pass w't ye Stocata, or to carrye yo' sword or rapior hylt by yo' right flanke, w't yo' poynt directly against yo' Enemyes belly, w't yo' left foote forwarde, extendinge fourth yo' dagg'r hand w't the poynt of yo' dagger forwarde as yō do yo' sword, w't narrow space between yo' sword & dagg'r blade, & so to make yo' passage vpon him,

Also any other kynd of varyable fyght or lyeinge whatsoever a man can devife not here expressed, is cōtayned vnder this fight.

Of the short syngle sword fyght against the lyke weapon.

Cap. 4.

1. F yo' enemye lye a loft, eyther in open or true A high prime.
gardant fight, & then strike at the left syde of yo' hed or body yo' bezt ward to defend yo' self, is to bere itw't true gardant ward, & yf he strike & com in to the cloze, or to take the grype of you yō may then safly take the grype of him as it appereth in the chapter of the grype,

2. but yf he do strike & not com in, then instantly vpō "ripoce."
yo' ward, vncroste & strike him either on the right or left syde of yē hed, & fly out instantly.

3. Yf yō bere this w't forhand ward, be sure to ward his blowe, or kepe yo' distance, otherwyse he shall decue N you
you w't every false, stil endangeringe your hed, face, hand, Armes, bodye, & bendynge knee, w't blow or thurft. Therefore kepe well your distance, because your can very hardly deferne (being w't in distance), by w'chyde of your sword he will stryke, nor at w'ch of those prts aforesayd, because the swyft motion of your hand deceyveth the eye,

    yf he lye a loft & strike as aforesaid at your head, your may 4. endanger him yf your thrust at his hand, hilt, or Arme, turninge your knuckles dounwarde, but fly back w't all in the instant your thrust,

    yf he lye a loft as aforesaid, & strike a loft at the left 5. fyde of your hed, yf your wil ward his blow w't forehand ward, then be sure to kepe your distance, except he com so certaine that your be sure to ward his blow, at w'ch tyme yf he com in w't all, your may endanger him from your ward, eyther by blow, thrust or grype,

    yf he lye a loft & your lye a lowe w't your sword in the 6. varyable fyght, then yf your offer to ward his blow made at your hed, w't true gardant ward your tyme wilbe to longe

Due in tyme to make a sure ward, for that it is bettr to bere it w't forehand ward, but be sure to kepe your distance, to make him com in w't his feet, wher by his tyme wilbe to longe to do your he intendeth.

    yf ij Men fight both vpo open fyght he your first break- 7.

eth his distance, yf he attempt to stryke at the others hed, shalbe surely stryken on the hed himself, yf the patient Agent strike ther at in his Comynge in, & flyp a lyttle back w't all, for your flydinge back maketh an indirection, wherby your blow Crosseth his hed, & maketh a true ward for your owne, this will you be, because of his length of tyme in his comynge in,
8. Also yf ij fyght vpon open fyght, it is better for the patient to strike home strongly at the Agents hed, when the said Agent shal press vpon him to wyn the place then to thrust, because the blow of the patient is not only hurtful to the Agent, but it also maketh a true Cross to defend his owne hed.

9. yf he charge yō a loft, out of the open or true gardant fyght, yf yō answer him w t yē Imprfyt gardant fyght, w t yōr body leanynge forwarde, yōr space wilbe to wyde on both syde to make a true ward in due tyme, & yōr arme And body wilbe to neere vnto him, so that w t the bending in of his body w t the tyme of hand & foote, he may take the grype of you,

but yf yō stand vpright in true gardant fyght, then he cannot reach to take the grype of you, nor otherwise to offend yō yf you kepe yōr distance, w t out puttinge in of his foote or feete wherin his number wilbe to great, & so his tyme wilbe to longe, & yō in that tyme may by puttinge in of yōr body take the grype of him, yf he pres to com in w t vsing only yōr hand, or hand & foote, & ther vpon yō may stryke or thrust w t yōr sword & fly out w t all accordinge to yōr governors, se more of this, in the chapter of the grype.

10. yf he wil stille press forcibly a loft vpo you, Charging yō out of the open fyght or true gardant fyght, Intendinge to hurt yō in the face or hed, or to take the grype of yō Against such a on, you must vs both gardant & open fyght, wherby vpon euyer blow or thrust that he shall make at you, you may from yōr wards, stryke or thrust him on the face hed or bodye as it appeareth more at large in the 5th Chapter of these my Instructions.

11. yf yōfyght w t on yōr standeth only vpon his gardant fyght A variety of
Bref Instructions.

or yf he seeke to com in to yō by the same fyght, then do yō strike & thrust Contynually at al mann'r of open place that shal com neere yer vnsto you, still remembringe yor gournor, so shal he Contynually be in dang'r, & often wounded, & weryed in that kynd of fyght, & you shalbe saf, the reasoun is, he is a c'taine marke to you, & yō are an vnctaine marke to hym.

And further because he tyeth him self vnsto on kynd of fyght only, he shalbe wearyed for want of Change of lyinge, & yō by reasoun of many changes shal not only styll fyght at ease, & much more braue, but you haue lykewyse iiiij fyghts to his one, to wytt, gardant, open, close, & variable fyght, to his gardant only, therfore y't fight only is not to be stode upon or vsted.

But yfalthis will not sue, & although he hath receyved 12. Many Wounds, wyl contynually run on to com in, & forcibly breake yor dystance, then may you saffly take the grype of him, & hurt him at yor pleasure w't yor sword, as appeareth in the chapter of the grype, & he can nether hurt nor take ye grype of yō, because the numb'r of his feet are to many, to bringe his hand in place in due tyme, for such a on ever geueth yō the place, therfore besyre to take yor tyme herin.

In the lyke sort may yō do at sword & dagg'r, or sword & buckler, at such tyme as I say, y't yō Maye take the grype at the syngle sword fyght, yō may then insteed of the grype, soundly ftryke him w't yor buckler on the hed or stabb him w't yor dagg'r & instantly eyther ftryke vp his heeles or fly out, & as he lyketh y't coolinge card to his hot braine, fyck fyt, so let him com for another.

yf ij fyght & that both lye vpō the true gardant fyght 13. & that one of them will neede seeke to wyn the half sword by
by pressinge in, ye may sóe slye do, for vpó ye fyght the
half sworde may slayle be woon, but he ye first cometh in,
Must fy rst go out, & ye presentl, otherwise his gard wilbe
to wyde aboue to defend his hed, or ye fyte for ye defence,
then wil it be to wyde vnd'neath to defend ye thrust fro
his body wch things the patient Agent may do, & fly out
fafs, & ye Agent cannot avoyd it, because the moving of
his feet maketh his ward unequall to defend both prts in
due tyme, but the one or the other wilbe deceived & in
danger, for he being Agent upon his first entrance histyme
(by reason of ye numbr of his feet), wilbe to longe, so ye
patient Agent may first enter into his action, & the Agent
must be of force an after doer, & therfore canneth avoyde
this offence aforesaid.

14. ye he com in to encounter the Cloze & grype vpó ye
bastard gardant ward, then yó Maye Crose his blade wth
yo's vpó the lyke gardant ward also, & as he cometh in
wth his feet & haue gayned yó the place, yó may presently
vncroste & styke him a sound blowe on ye hed, & fly
out instanta, wher in he cannot offend yó by reason of
his lost tyme, nor defend him self vpó ye vncrossing,
because his space is to wyde wherby his tyme wilbe to
longe in due tyme to prvent ye blowe, this may yó do
safly.

15. ye he cõ in vpon the bastard gardant ward, bearing
his hy lty lower than his hed, or but brest hye or lower,
then strik him soundly on the hed wth thinge yó may
easlye do, because his space is to wyde in due tyme to
ward the same.

16. ye yo' Enemy charge you vpó his Stocata fyght, yó
May ly variable wth large Distance & vnc'taine wth yo's
sword & bodye at yo' pleasure, yet so ye yó may styke,

N 3

thrust
Bref Instructiouns.

thrust or Ward, & go forth & back as occasion is, to take ye advantage of this comyng in, whether he doth it out of the Stocata, or passata, wch advantage yō shallbe sure to haue, yf yō obirue this rule & be not to rash in yo'r actions, by reason y't ye number of his feet wilbe great, & also because when those ij fyghts are met together, it is hard to Make a true Cross, therfore w'out Large dyssance be kept of them, Commonly they are both hurt or slayne, because in narrow distance their hands haue free Course & are not tyed to the tyme of ye foote, by wch swyft motion of the hand the eye is deveyed, as yō may read more at large in the cap: of my prdoxes of defence.

You may also vse this fyght, against the longe sword, or longe rapier, syngle & dubble,

upon this ground som shalow wytte fellow may say, yf the patient must keep large distance then he must be dryven to goback styll, to wch I anwer y't in the contynuall motion & travers of his ground he is to travers circular wyse, forwards, backwards, vpō the right hand, & vpō the left hand, the wch travers is still a certaintye to be vsed w'in him self, & not to be prventeed by ye Agent, because the Agent cometh one vpō an vnctaine marke, for when he thinketh to be sure of his purpose, the patient is somtymes on the on syde, & som tymes on ye other syde, somtymes to far back, & somtymes to neere, so y't stil the Agent must vse the numb'r of his feet wch wilbe to longe to answer ye hand of ye patient Agent, & it cannot be denied but the patient Agent by reason of his large distance, stil seeth what ye Agent doth in his comyng, but the Agent cannot se what the other doth, til the patient Agent be into his Action, therfore to
to late for him eyther to hurt the patient, or in due tyme to defend him self, because he entreth his actio vpō yce knowledge of the patient, but he knōw not what yce patient Agent will do til it be to late.

17. yf the Agent say yt then he wil stand fast vpon som sure gard & somtymes moving & travailing his ground, & kepe large distance as yce patient do, to wch I answer, yt when ij men shal meete yt haue both the prfection of their weapons, against the best no hurt canbe don, other wise yf by any devise on shoule be able to hurt theother, then werther no prfection in yce vse of weapons, this prfection of fyght being observd, prventeth both close fyght, & al mann of clozes, grype & wrestling & al mann of such other devices what so euer.

18. Also yf he charge yō vpō his Stocata, or any other lying aft yt fashion, wth his poynt low & large paced, then lye yō a loft wth yor hand & hylt aboue yor hed, eyther true gardant, or vpō the open fight, then he cannot reach yō yf yō kepe yor distance wthout putting in of his foot or feet, but yō may reach him wth the tyme of yor hand, or wth the tyme of your hand & body, or of hand, body & foot, because he hath al redy put in his body wthin yor reach & haue gayned yō the place, & yō are at lybertye & w'tout his reach, til he put in his foot or feete, wch tyme is to longe to answer the tyme of yor hand, & his space to wyde in that place to make a ward in due tyme to defend his hed, Armes & hande, one of wch wilbe alwaies w't in yor reach.

note stil in this yt yor weapons be both short of yce Equal & convenient length of yce short sword.

19. yf out of his varyable fyght he strike at yce right or left fyde of the hed or body, then yor best ward is to
bere it w't fore hand ward, otherwise yo'r space wilbe to wyde & to far to make yo'r ward in due tyme.

Yf he lye variable aft' the mann' of the paffata then 20. yf yō lye a loft as is aboue said, yō haue the Advantage, because he y't lyeth varyable cannot reach home, at hed hand or arme, w't out putting in of his foote or feet, & theryfore it cannot be denied, but y't he y't playeth aloft, hath stil the tyme of the hand to the tyme of y'e foot, w'ch fight beinge truly handled is adavantage invincible.

Yf he lye variable vpō the Imbrocata, then make a 21. narrow space w't yo'r poynt vpwarde, & sodainly yf yō can Crofe his poynt w't yo'r blade put afyde his poynt strongly w't yo'r sword & strik or thruf't at him, & fly out instantly, euer remembring yo'r gouernors y't he decey yō not in taking of his poynt.

yf he strik or thruf't at yo'r lege or lower prte out of 22. any fyght, he shal not be able to reach the same vnles yō stand large paced w't bendinge knee, or vnles he com in w't his foote or feete, the w'ch yf he shal fo do, then yō may strik or thruf't at his arme or upper prte for then he putteth them into the place gayning yō the place wherby you may strik home vpō him & he cannot reach yō.

but yf he stand large paced w't bendinge knee then wyn the place & strik home freely at his knee, & fly back ther w't.

yf he com to the close fight w't yō & y't yō are both 23. croft aloft at y'e half sword w't both yo'r points vpwards, then yf he com in w't all in his Crossing bere strongly yo'r hand & hylt out his wrif't, close by his hylt putting it ouer at y'e backsyde of his hand & hylt pr'slinge doune his hand & hylt strongly & sodainly, in yo'r entring in, & fo
Bref Instructions.

& so thrust yo' hylt in his face, or strike him vpō ye hed w't yr sword, & strike vp his heele, & fly out,

24. yf yō are both so crost at ye bastard gardant ward, & yf he then presses in, then take the grype of him as is shewed in ye chapter of ye grype,

Or w't yr left hand or arme, strike his sword blade strongly & sodainly towarde yo' left syde by w'ch meanses yō are uncroft, & he is discoued, then may yo' thrust him in the body w't yo' sword & fly out instantly, w'ch thinge he cannot avoyd, nether can he offend yo'

Or being so crost, yō may sodainly vncrofe & strike him vpō the hed & fly out instantly w'ch thinge yō may safly do & go out free.

25. yf yō be both crost at ye half sword w't hys poynt vp & yo' poynt doune in the true gardant ward, then yf he presses to com in, then eyther take ye grype of him, as in the chapter of the grype, or w't yo' left hand or arme, strike out his sword blade towards yo' left syde as aforesaid, & so yō may thrust him in the body w't yo' sword & fly out instantly.

26. Do yō neuer attempt to cloze or com to ye grype at these weapons vnless it be vpō the slow motio or disorder of yo' enemye,

but yf he will cloze w't you, then yō may take the grype of him safly at his co'myng he in, for he y't first by stronge pressing in adventureth the cloze loo'feth it, & is in great danger, by reason y't the numb'r of his feet are to great, wherby his tyme wilbe to longe, in due tyme to answer the hand of ye patient Agent, as in the chapter of the grype doth plainly appere,

27. Alwaies remembring yf yō fyght vpē the variable fight y't yō ward vpō forehand ward, otherwise yo' space

O wilbe
wilbe to wyde in due tyme to make a true gardant ward, to defend yo' self.

yf yo' fyght vpō open fyght, or true gardant fyght, 28. neuer ward vpō forehand ward for then yo' space wilbe to wyde also, in due tyme to make a sureward,

yf he lye aloft w' his poynt towarde you, aft' the 29. mann' of the Imbrocata, then make yo' space narrow w' yo' point upwarde & put by his poynt, & strike or thrust as aforesaid but be sure herin to kepe yo' distance, y' he deceue you not in taking of his poynt.

"Parrying" and "Riposting."

A parry in "high tierce" with its ripostes.

Of dio's aduantages y' you may take by strykinge frō yo' warde at y' sword fyght.

Cap. 5.

If yo' enemy strike at the right syde of yo' hed, 1. yo' lyinge true gardant, then put yo' hilt a little doune, Mounting yo' poynt, so that yo' blade May Crosse a thwart yo' face, so shal yo' make A true ward for the right syde of yo' hed, from the w'ch ward yo' may instantle strike him on the ryght or left syde of the hed, or to turne doune yo' poynt, & thrust him in the bodye, or you may strike him on the left syde of the body, or on the out syde of his left thygh.

Or yo' may strike him on the out syde of the right thygh, on of those he cannot avoyd yf he fly not back instantly vpō his blowe, because he know' not w'ch of these the patient Agent wil do.

Yf yo' lye vpō yo' true gardant ward, & he strike 2. at the left syde of yo' hed, yo' haue the choyse from yo' ward to strike him from yt, on the right or left syde of
the hed, or to turne dounge your point, & thrust him in
the bodye, or yō May stryke him on the out syde of
the right or left thygh, for the reason aboue sayde in
the last rule, except he fly out instantly vpō his blowe.

3. Yf he charge yō vpon the open or true gardant syght,
yf yō wil answer him wō the lyke, then kepe your distance,
& let your gatheringe be all waies in your syght to warde
his right syde so shal yō wō your sword choake vp any
blowe that he can make at yō, from the wch ward yō
May stryke him on the right or left syde of your
hed, or thrust him in the bodye.

but yf he thrust at your face or body, then yō may
out of your gardant sight break it doun warde wō your
sword bering your point strongly towarde your right syde, “seconde,” and
from the wch breaking of his thrust yō may likewise strike
him frō the right or left syde of your
hed, or thrust him in the bodye.

4. Yf yō meet wō on your cannot strike frō his warde, vpō
such a on yō may both dubble & faulse & so deceue
him, but yf he be skylful yō must not do so, because he
wilbe stil so vinc’taine in his traverse that he will styll
prevent you of tyme & place, so wō when yō think to
dubble & faulse, yō shal gayne him the place & ther vpō
he wilbe before yō in his action, & in your conynghe he
will stil endanger yō,

5. Yf yō syght vpō the variable syght, & that yō receuе A parry of
a blow wō forehand ward, made at the right syde of your
hed or body, yō haue your choice of viij ofenciue Actions
frō your ward, the first to stryke him on the right syde,
eyther on the hed shoudr, or thygh, or to thrust him
in the body, or to stryke him on the left syde either on
the hed sholdr or thygh, or to thrust him in the body,

O 2
the lyke may yo do yf he strike eu at yo left syde, as is aboue said, yf yo bere it w fore hand ward.

In this forehand ward kepe yo distance, & take heed 6. yo he deceuyue yo not w the dounright blowe at yo hed out of his open fyght, for being w in distance ye swift motion of ye hand May deceue yo eye, because yo know not by wth syde of yo sword his blow wil com

Alfo se yo he deceue yo not vp any false offerynge to 7. stryke at the on syde, & when therby yo haue turned yo point afyde, then to strike on the other syde, but yf yo kepe distance yo are free from yo, therfore styll in all yo actions rememb yo gou nors

yf he wil do nothinge but thurst, Answer him as it 8. is set doun in the 16th ground of ye short sword fyght & also in divs places of the 8th chapt.

Alfo consider yf he lye at the thurst vpon ye itocata, 9. or passata, & yo haue no waye to avoyde him, except yo can Crosse his sword blade w yo, & so Indirect his point, therfore kepe narrow space vp his point, & kepe well yo distance in vising yo travers.

but yf he put forth his point so y yo may Crosse it w fore hand ward, for yf yo wach for his thurst then lye vp forehand ward w point alittle vp. yf he lye w his point Mounted, & yf yo syngle yo thurst vp the out syde of yo sword to warde yo right syde, or back of yo sword hand, strike or bere his point out towarde yo right syde, & ther vpon putting forward yo body & left foote Circuler wyse to warde his right syde yo May strike him vp his sword Arme, hed, face or bodye.

Or yf yo take it on the Insyde of yo sword blade to warde yo left syde then w yo sword put by his point strongly & sodainly towarde yo left syde, drawing yo
Bref Instructions.

You left foot Circulerwise back behind the heel of your right foot, & strike him on the inside of his sword hand or Arme or on the head, face, or body, & fly out according to your governours.

This May you use against your sword & dagger longe or short, or rapier & ponyard, or sword & buckler.

1. Also remember if he haue a long sword, & you a short sword, ever to make your space so narrow, you may alwayes break his thrust before you be in force if possible you may, & also to keep a large distance whether he charge you out of the Stocata, passata, or Imbocata &c, of this you may see more at large in the 8th chapter.

The maner of Certaine gryps & Clozes to be used at your single short sword figh &c.

Cap. 6.

F he strike aloft at the left side of your head, and run in at all to take the Cloze or grype of you, then ward it gardant, & enter in at your left side putting in your left hand, on the inside of his sword Arme, neere his hylte, bering your hand over his Arme, & Wrape in his hand & sworde under your Arme, as he cometh in, Wrestling his hand & sword close to your bodye turninge back your right side from him, so shal he not be able to reach your sword, but you shall styll have it at libertye to styke or thrust him & endanger the breakinge of his Arme, or the takinge away of his sword by your grype.

2. Yf you are both Crost in Close figh &pon the bastard gardant ward alowe, you May put your left hand on the out side of his sword at the back of his hand, neere or
at the hylte of his sword Arme & take him on the insyde of yt arme wt yo[r] hand, aboue his elbowe is best, & draw him in towarde yo[r] strongly, wrestinge his knuckles dounwarde & his elbowe vpwarde so may yo[r] endangle to break his arme, or cast him doune, or to wrest his sword out of his hand, & go free y[r] self.

in like fowr vp[o] this kynd of cloze, yo[r] may clapec y[r] 3. left hand vp[o] the wrist of his sword arme, holding it strongly & ther wt thrust him hard from yo[r], & prestently yo[r] may thrust him in the body wt yo[r] sword for in y[t] Instant he can nether ward, strike, nor thrust,

yf he strike home at the left syde of yo[r] hed, & ther 4. wt all com in to take the cloze or grype of your hilt or sword arme wt his left hand, first warden his blow gardant, & be sure to put in yo[r] left hand und[r] yo[r] sword & take hold on the out syde of his left hand, Arme or sleve, putting yo[r] hand vnder the wrist of his Arme wt the toppe of yo[r] fingrs vpwarde, & yo[r] thumb & knuckles dounwarde, then pluck him strongly towarde yo[r] left syde, so shal yo[r] indirect his feet turning his left shouldr towarde yo[r], vp[o] wt instant yo[r] Maye strike or thrust him wt yo[r] sword & fly out saf, for his feet being in-directed, although he hath his sword at lyberty, yet shal he not be able to Make any offencyve fight against yo[r] because his tyme wilbe to longe to direct his feet againe to vse his sword in due tyme.

Also yf he attempt the cloze or grype wt you vpon 5. his baftard gardant ward, then crosse his sword wt the lyke ward, & as he cometh in wt his feet you haue the tyme of yo[r] hand & bodye, wherby wt yo[r] left hand or Arme yo[r] May put by his sword blade, wt thinges you must sodainly & strongly do, casting it towarde yo[r] left syde
Brief Instructions.

syde, so may yö uncrosse & thrust him in ye body wt yö sword & fly out instantlye, for yö stay ther he wil direct his sword againe & endanger yö, this may safely be don, or yö May uncrosse & turne yö poynvp, & strike him on the hed, & fly out instantly.

6. Yf he presse in to the half sword vpö a forehand ward, then strike a sound blow at the left syde of his hed turnyng strongely yö hand & hylt pressing doun his sword hand & arme strongly, & strike yö hilt full in his face, beringe yö hilt strongly vpö him, for yö hand beinge vpp'most yö have the advantage in ye grype, for so May yö breake his face wt yö hylt, & strike vp his heels wt yö left foote, and throwe him a great fall, al this May safely be don by reason yö he is weake in his cōmyng in by yö moving of his feet, & yö repell him in ye fulnes of yö strength, as appeareth in the Chapter of ye short single sword fyght, in the 23rd grounde of the same.

7. remember that yö never attempt the Cloze nor grype but looke to his flyppe, Consyder what is said in the 8th gen'all rule in the Second Chapter, & also in the 26th ground of the syngle sword fyght in the 4th Chapter.

Of the short sword & dagger fyght
Against the lyke Weapon.

Cap. 7.

1. BSRVE at these weapons the form rules, defend wt yö sword & not wt yö dagg, yet yö may cros his sword wt yö dagg, yö may conveniently reach the same therwt, wt out puttinge in of yö foote, only by bendinge in of yö body, other
Bref Instructions.

other wyse yo\textsuperscript{r} tyme wilbe to longe, & his tyme wilbe sufficient to displace his owne, so y\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} shal not hyt it w\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r}, & so he may make a thrust vpon yo\text{o}, this tyme y\textsuperscript{t} I here Meane, of puttinge by of his sword is, When he lyeth out spent w\textsuperscript{t} his sword poynthe towarde you, & not else, w\textsuperscript{ch} thinge yf yo\text{o} can do w\textsuperscript{t} out puttinge in of yo\text{t} foote, then yo\text{o} may vse yo\text{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r}, & strike strongly & sodainlye his sword poynther w\textsuperscript{t} vp, or doune, to indirect the same, that don, instantly ther w\textsuperscript{t} strike or thrust at him w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} sword,

Also yo\text{o} may put by his sword blade w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r} When 2. yo\text{r} swords are Croft, eyther aboue at forehand ward, or belowe at the bastard gardant ward & ther w\textsuperscript{t} instantly strike or thrust w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} sword & fly out accordinge to yo\text{r} gou\text{r}nors, of this yo\text{o} may see more at large in ye\text{e} Chapter of the syngle sword fyght in the 24\textsuperscript{th} ground of the same.

Also ye he be so fooloehardye to com to the cloze, 3. then yo\text{o} may gard w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} sword & stabbe w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r}, & fly out saf, w\textsuperscript{ch} thinge yo\text{o} may do because his tyme is to longe by the numb\textsuperscript{r} of his feet, & yo\text{o} haue but the swyft tyme of yo\text{r} hand to use, & he cannot stabbe til he haue fettet in his feeete, & so his tyme is to late to endang\textsuperscript{r} yo\text{o}, or to defend himself.

Know ye\text{t} ye yo\text{o} defend yo\text{r}self w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} dagger in other 4. fort than is aforesaid, yo\text{o} shalbe endang\textsuperscript{r} to be hurt, because the space of yo\text{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r} wilbe stille to wyde to defend both blow & thrust for lacke of Circumference as ye\text{e} buckeler hath.

Also note when yo\text{o} defend blow & thrust w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} sword 5. yo\text{o} haue a neerer course to offend yo\text{r} enemye w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} sword then when yo\text{o} ward w\textsuperscript{t} yo\text{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r}, for then yo\text{o} may for the most prte from yo\text{r} warde strike or thrust him.
6. Yó must neyther Cloze nor com to the grype at these weapons, vnless it be by the slow motyon or disordour of yoʳ advisarie, yet yf he attempt ye Cloze, or to com to the grype wᵗ yó, then yó may safly Cloze & hurt him wᵗ yoʳ daggʳ or buckler & go free yoʳ self, but fly out according to yoʳ gouⁿ nors & ther by yó shal put him from his attempted Cloze, but se yó stay not at any tymé wᵀin distance, but in due tymé fly back or hazard to be hurt, because ye swyft motion of the hand being wᵀin distance will deceu the eye, wher by yó shal not be able to Judge in due tymé to make a true ward, of this yó may se more in the chapter of the back sword fyght in the 12ᵗʰ ground of the same.

7. Yf he extend forth his daggʳ hand yó may make yoʳ fyght at the same, remembring to kepe distance & to fly back according to yoʳ gouⁿ nors.

Every fight & ward wᵀ these weapons, made out of any kynd of fyght, must be made & don according as is taught in the back sword fyght, but only yᵀ the daggʳ must be všed as is abouſsaid, in ſteed of the grype.

8. Yf he lye bent vpó his Stocata wᵀ his sworde or rapior poynt behind his daggʳ so yoᵗ yó cannot reach the same w'Tout putting in of yoʳ foote, then make al yoʳ fight at his daggʳ hand, euer remembring yoʳ gouⁿ nors, & then yf he draw in his daggʳ hand, so that yó may Crofe his sworde blade wᵀ yoʳ, then make narrow space vpó him wᵀ yoʳ poynt & sodainly & strongly stryke or bere his poynt towarde his right fyde, in-dyrecting the same, & instantly strike or thrust him on the hed, face, Arme, or body, & fly back ther wᵀ out of distance stil remembring yoʳ gouⁿ nors.

9. Yf he lye spent vpó his variable fyght then kepe yoʳ distance
Brief Instructions.

distance & make your space narrow vpō him, til yō may Crosse his sword or rapier point wē your sword poynt, wher vpon, yō having won or gayned the place, strike or thrust instantly.

yf he lye bent or spent vpō the Imbrocata bere vp 10. your point, & make your space narrow & do the lyke.

Of the short sword & dagger fght against the longe sword & dagger or longe rapier & poinard.

Cap. 8.

If yō haue the short sword & daggē, defend 1. wē your sword & not wē your daggē, except yō haue a gaultlet or bylt vpō your dagger hand, then yō may ward vpō forehand ward, vpon the dubble wē the poynt of your sword toarde his face.

Lye not aloft wē your short sword yf he lye alowe 2. variable on the Stocata or passata &c, for then your space wilbe to wyde to make a true Crosse in due tyme, or to farr in his course to make your space narrow, the wēch space take heede yō make very narrow, yea, so yē yf it touch his blade, it is better.

I say make your space narrow vntil yō can crose his 3. sword blade strongly & sodainly, so shal you put by his point out of the right lyne, & instantly strike or thrust, & flyp back according to your gou'ners.

but take heede unless yō can surely & safely crose go not in, but although yō can so crose, & ther vpon yō enter in, stay not by yt but fly out according to your gou'ners.

yf wē his longe sword or rapier he charge you aloft 4. out of his open or true gardant fyght ftrykyng at the right
right syde of yo\textsuperscript{r} hed, yf yo\textsuperscript{r} haue a gautlet or close hylt vpon yo\textsuperscript{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r} hand then ward it dubble w\textsuperscript{t} forehand ward, bering yo\textsuperscript{r} sword hylt to warde yo\textsuperscript{r} right shouldr, w\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} knuckles upwarde \& yo\textsuperscript{r} sword poynt to warde the right syde of his brest or fholdr, crosling yo\textsuperscript{r} dagger on yo\textsuperscript{r} sword blade resting yt ther on vpon y\textsuperscript{e} hyer syde of yo\textsuperscript{r} sword beringe yo\textsuperscript{r} hylts close together w\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} dagger hilt a little behind yo\textsuperscript{r} sword hilt bering both yo\textsuperscript{r} hands right out together spent or verye neere spent when yo ward his blowe, Meetinge him so vpon yo\textsuperscript{r} ward that his blow may light at yo\textsuperscript{r} half sword or w\textsuperscript{t}in, so that his blade may flyde from yo\textsuperscript{r} sword \& rest on yo\textsuperscript{r} dagg\textsuperscript{r}, at w\textsuperscript{ch} instant tyme thrust forth yo\textsuperscript{r} poynt at his brest \& fly out instantly, so shal yo cotynually endanger him \& go saf yo\textsuperscript{r} self.

Yf he strike a loft at the left syde of yo\textsuperscript{r} hed, ward as aforesaid, bering yo\textsuperscript{r} sword hilt tourarde yo\textsuperscript{r} left shouldr w\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} knuckles doun warde, \& yo\textsuperscript{r} sword poynt towarde the left syde of his brest or fholdr, bowing yo body \& hed a little forewarde towarde him, \& rememb\textsuperscript{r} to bere yo\textsuperscript{r} warde on both syds y\textsuperscript{t} he strike y not vpon the hed, then vp\textordmashthis blow meet his sword as is aforesaid w\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} dagger crost our yo\textsuperscript{r} sword blade as before, \& when his sword by reas\textordmasht of his blowe vpon yo\textsuperscript{r} sword shal flyde doune \& rest vpon yo\textsuperscript{r} dagger, then sodainly cast his sword blade out to warde yo\textsuperscript{r} left syde w\textsuperscript{t} yo\textsuperscript{r} dagger, to indirect his point, \& ther w\textsuperscript{t} thrustt at his brest fr\textordmasht yo\textsuperscript{r} ward \& fly out instantly, the like may you do yf his sword glance out fr\textordmasht yo\textsuperscript{r}s, vp\textordmashthis blowe.

al this may safly be don w\textsuperscript{t} y\textsuperscript{e} short sword \& close hylted dagger or gautlet
Brief Instructions.

Stay not \( w^t \) in distance of the longe sword or rapior \( 6. \)
\( w^t \) yo\( r \) short sword, nor suffer him to wyn the place of
you, but eyther Crose his sword, or make yo\( r \) space
verye narrow to crose it before his blow or thrust be
in force, yet keping yo\( r \) distance whe by he shall
strike or thrust at nothing, \& so he shalbe subiect to the
tyme of yo\( r \) hand against the tyme of his feet.

Kepe distance \& lye as yo\( ò \) thinke best for yo\( r \) ease \& 7.
lasty, yet so yo\( r \) may strike, thrust, or ward, \& when
yo\( ò \) find his poynt Certaine, then make yo\( r \) space nar-
row \& crose his sword, so shal yo\( ò \) be the first mou\( r \), \&
enter first into yo\( r \) action, \& he beinge an aft\( r \) doer, is
not able to avoyd yo\( r \) Crose, nor narrow space, nor any
such offence as shalbe put in execution against hym.

havinge Crost his longe sword or rapior \( w^t \) yo\( r \) short 8.
sword blade, \& put his poynt out of the strait lyne by
force then strike or thrust at him \( w^t \) yo\( r \) sword \& fly
out instantly accordinge to yo\( r \) gour\( n\)ors.

Stand not vp\( ò \) gardant fyght only, for so he will 9.
greatlye endanger yo\( ò \) out of his other fyghts because
yo\( ò \) haue made yo\( r \) self a c\( ò \)taine marke to him, for in
contynuynge in yo\( ò \) fyght only yo\( ò \) shal not only wearey
yo\( ò \) self, but do also exclude yo\( r \)self fr\( ò \) the benyfyt of
the Open, variable, \& close fyghts, \& so shal he haue
four fyghts to yo\( r \) one, as yo\( ò \) may se in the Chapter of
the short fyngle sword fyght in the 15\( th \) ground therof.

Yf he lye in Open or true gardant fyght, then yo\( ò \) 10.
may vpon yo\( r \) open \& gardant fight safly bringe yo\( r \)
selt to the half sword, \& then you may thrust him in
the body, vnder his gard or sword when he bereth it
gardant, because he is weak in his garde, but fly out
instantly, \& he cannot bringe in his point to hurt yo\( ò \)
except
except he go back w't his foote or feet, w'ch tyme is to longe to answer the swyft tyme of the hand.

yf he put doune his sword lower to defend y't thrust then will his hed be open, so y't yō may strike him on the hed ou'r ouer his sword & fly out ther w't, w'ch thinge he cannot defend, because his space is to wyde to put vp his blade in due tyme to make a true ward for the same.

II. Understand y't the whole som of the long rapior fyght is eyther upon the Stocata, Passata, Imbrocata, or Mountanta, al these, and al the rest of their devyces you may safely prevent by kepinge yo'r distance, because therby you ñal stil dreue him to vse the tyme of his feet, therby yō ñal stil pr'vent him of y'e true place, & therfore he cannot in due tyme make any of these fyghts offensive vpon you by reason y't the number of his feet will stil be to great, so y't he ñal stil vse the swyft tyme of his feet to the swyft tyme of yo'r hand, & therfore yō may safly defend yo'r self & offend him.

Now you plainly se how to pr'vent al these, but for the bett' example note this, wher as I say by kepinge of distance som may obiect y't then the rapior man will com in by degrees w't such warde as ñall best lyke him, & dryve back the sword man continually, to whome I answ'er, y't can he not do, by reason y't y'e sword mans travers is made c'culer wyfe, so y't the rapior man in his cōmyng hath no place to carrye the poyn of his rapior, in due tyme to make home his fyght, but y't stil his rapior wil lye w't in the compass of the tyme of the sword mans hand, to make a true crosse vpon him, the w'ch crosse beinge made w't force he may safly vncrose, & hurt the rapior man in the Arme, hed,
Brief Instructions.

Face or body, w't blow or thrust, & fly out saf before he shal haue tyme to direct his poynt againe to make his thrust vpō ye sword man.

Yf ye rapior man lye vpon the stocata, first make yor 12. space narrow w't yor short sword, & take heed y't he strike not doune yor sworde poynt w't his dagger & so Jump in & hurt you w't the thrust of his longe rapior, w'ch thing he may do because he haue commaundd your sword, & so yō are left open & discov'red & left onlye vnto the vnc'taine ward of yor dagg'r, w'ch ward is to syngle for a man to venter his lyf on, w'ch yf yō myffe to prforme Neuer so lyttle yō are hurt or slaine.

To pr'vent this danger yō must remember your 13. gou'nors, & pr'sently vpon his leaft motion be sure of yor distance, & yor narrow space, then do as follow't.

Yf he lye vpō his stocata, w't his rapior point w't in 14. or behind his dagg'r hand out strait, then lye yō vari-able in Measure w't yor right foote before & yor sword poynt out directly forth w't yor space very narrow as neere his rapior poynt as yō may, betwixt his rapior poynt & his dagger hand, from w'ch yō may sodainly w't a wrisft blow, lyft vp yor poynt & strike him on the out syde or in syde of his dagg'r hand, & fly out w't all, then make yor space narrow as before, then yf he thrust home at yō, yō are redy pr'pred for hys thrust, or yō may thrust at his dagger hand, do w'ch yō shal thinke best, but yor blow must be but only by moving of yor wrisft, for yf yō lyft vp yor hand and Arme to fetch a large blowe then yor tyme wilbe to longe, & yor space to wyde in due tyme to make a true ward to defend yor self from his thrust, so shal yō hurt him although he haue a gantlet therone, for yor thrust wil run vp between
between his finge\textasteriskcentered{s}, & you blow wil cut of the fynge\textasteriskcentered{s} of his gantlet, for he cannot defend himself from on blow or thrust of 20, by reason that you haue the place to reach home at his hand, & for you cause he cannot prevent it, neither can he reach home to you without putting in of his foot or feet, because his distance is to large, but upon eu\textasteriskcentered{r} blow or thrust you make at his hand flypp back a little, so shall you still vp\textasteriskcentered{o} eu\textasteriskcentered{r} blow or thrust you make at him, be out of his reach,

but you upon yo\textasteriskcentered{r} blow or thrust he will enter in w\textasteriskcentered{t} his foot or feet to make home his stocata or thrust vp\textasteriskcentered{o} you, then by reason of you flydynge back, you shalbe prepared in due tyme to make a prsyt ward to defend youself w\textasteriskcentered{t} you sworde.

Therefor ever respect his rapior poynte & remember to make & kepe narrow space upon it w\textasteriskcentered{t} you sword poynt, that you may be sure to break his thrust before it be in ful force.

15. Yf he thrust at you hyer prts w\textasteriskcentered{t} his poynt a lyttle mounted, then make narrow yo\textasteriskcentered{s} space w\textasteriskcentered{t} yo\textasteriskcentered{r} poynt upon his, yf you Crosse his blade on the insyde between his rapior & his daggr, yf he press in then fro you crosse beat or bere backe his poynt strongly towarde his right syde, and havinge indircet his poynt, strike him on the insyde of the rapior or daggr hand or Arme, or on the hed, face, or body, & fly out instantly,

Or you may upon his p\textasteriskcentered{s}finge in w\textasteriskcentered{t} his thrust Slypp you poynt doune as he cometh in, & put vp you hylt & ward it gardant, & ther w\textasteriskcentered{t} from that ward cast out his poynt, & sodainly strike him in one of the placas aforesaid, & fly out instantlye remembrienge yo\textasteriskcentered{g} gou\textasteriskcentered{n}ors.

16. Yf he lye fast & do not com in, then strike & thrust
Brief Instructions.

at his dagg'r hand, w't yo'r wrift blow and flypp back ther w't eve ry tyme

but yf he lye fast & beat doun ye poyn't w't his 17. dagger, & then thruft at you from his Stocata then turne vp yo'r hilt w't yo'r knuckles vpwarde & yo'r nayles dounwarde, takinge his blade vpō the back fyde of yo'r towarde yo'r left fyde & bere it gardant towarde y't fyde, & so may yo offend him as before is said vpō y't ward.

The lyke may yo do vpon him yf he lye out w't his 18. poyn't, when yo haue crost y'e same w't yo's, & strike it to eyther fyde, & so indirect his poyn't, and then strike or thruft & fly out.

The lyke must yo do, yf he lye with his point 19. directly towarde yo'r bellye

but yf yo crose his poyn't so mounted or dyrect as 20. abouesaid, vpō y'e out fyde of yo'r sword w't his poyn't a little hyer than yo'r hylt, so y't you may crose his blade, then yf he thruft ouer yo'r blade synge uncrossing the same, then may you break it w't yo'r forehand ward out towarde yo'r right fyde, & yf he com in ther w't, then strike him on the out fyde of his rapior hand or Arme, or on the hed or face, & fly out ther w't

but yf he thruft in ouer yo'r sword as abouesaid & 21. press in his blade strongly dubble w't the helpe of his dagger, then put doun ye poyn't & turne vp yo'r hylt gardant, so shal yo'l safely defend it beringe it gardant out towarde yo'r left fyde & from yt strike him in between his rapior and dagger in on of the foresaid places, & fly out,

but yf from this crose he flypp his poyn't doun to thruft vnd'r yo'r sword, then strike doun ye poyn't towarde
warde his left foote & ther w't strike him on the out syde of his rapier hand or arme, hed, face, or body, & fly out instantly, according to ye' governors.

Also yō may vpon this of his poynt doune, then turne yo' poynt short ouer his blade in yo' stepp-ynge back, & put yo' poynt doune in the insyde of his blade turnynge vp yo' hilt gardant as aforesaid, & then yf he thrust at yō, bere it gardant towarde yo' left syde, & then haue you the same offencieue blowes & thrusts against him as is abouesaid vpō ye' same ward.

22. Yf he lye aft' the Stocata w't his poynt doune towarde yo' foote, then crose his blade on ye' out syde, & yf he turne his poynt ou' yo' blade to make his thrust vpon you, then turne vp yo' hilt & bere it garden as abouesaid, bering it out towarde yo' left syde, & frō y't ward offend him as is abouesaid

23. Also in this fyght take heed y't he thrust yō not in the sword hand or arme, thersore ever respect to draw it back in due tyme, remembering therin yo' twofold governor, in yo' comyng in, to make yo' crose or narrow space.

24. Yf at sword & dagger or buckler he strike in at the out syde of yo' right legge ward it w't the back of yo' sword, carrying yo' poynt doune holding yo' knuckles dounwarde & yo' Nayles upwarde, bering yo' sword out strongly towarde yo' right syde, vpon w'ch ward yō may strike him on the out syde of the left legge, or thrust him in ye' thigh or belly

25. The lyke may yō do yf he strik at yo' other syde, yf yō ward his blowe w't the edge of yo' sword yo' hand & knuckles as aforesaid, casting out his sword blade towarde
towards your left side, this may be used at short or
long sword fight.

You must never use any fight against the long 26.
rapier & dagger with your short sword but variable fight,
because your space will be wide, & your time to long,
to defend or offend in due time.

Also your must use large distance ever, because out of 27.
your fight really can hardly make a true cross because being
in distance your eye is deceived to do it in due time
remember in putting forth your sword point to make 28.
your space narrow, when he lyeth upon his scissors, or
any thrust, your must hold your handle thereof as it were
a long stick your hand, resting the pomell thereof in the
hollow part of the mydle of the heel of your hand to-
ward the wrist, & the former part of the handle must
be holden between the fore finger & thumb, without
the Mydle Joyn of the fore finger toward the top-
ther of, holding your finger something straight out gryp-
ing round your handle with your other iij fingers, & laying
your thumb straight out upon the handle, so your thumb
lies a alongside upon your same, so shall your lay point
out straight toward his, the better to be able to prforme
this actio prystal, for your grype your handle close
outheart in your hand, then can your not lay your point
straight upon his to make your space narrow, but your
point will til lie to wide to doe the same in due time,
& this is the best way to hold your sword in all kind of
variable fight

but upo your gardant or open fight then hold it with full
gryping it in your hand, & not laying your thumb
along your handle, as som vse, then shall you never be
able strongly to ward a stronge blowe.

This
Bref Instructions.

30. This haue I written out of myne entyre loue yt I bere to my country men, wifhing them yet once againe to follow the truth, & to fly the vaine Imprysyt rapior fight, the bett to faue themselves from wounds & slawghter, for who so attayneth to the pfectio of this true fyght wh I haue here set forth in these my bref Instructiions, & also in my pradoxes of defence, shal not only defend them selues, but shal ther by bring those that fyght vpō that Imprysyt fyght of ye rapior vndr their mercye, or else put them in Cobbs travers, where of yō may read in the 38 Chapter of my pradoxes aforesaid.

Of ye sword & Buckler fyght,

Cap. 9.

WORD & Buckler fight, & sword & daggry fyght are al one, saving yt yō may safly defend both blowe & thrust, syngle w̄ yt yor buckler only, & in likesort yō may safly ward both blowes & thrusts dubble, yt is w̄ sword & buckler together wh is great aduantage against ye sword & daggry, &c, &c is the surest fight of al short weapons.

Of the two hand sword fight against ye like weapon.

Cap. 10.

Hese weapons are to be vsed in fight as the short staf, yt both play vpō dubble & syngle hand, at the ij hand sword, the long sword hath the advantage yt the waigte ther of be not to heavye for his strenght yt hath it, but yt both
both play only vpon dubble hand, then his blade which is of covenient length agreeing with his stature y hath it, which is according with the length of the measure of his syngle swordblade, hath the advantage of ye sword y is to long for ye stature of the contrarye pryue, because he can close & uncrose, strike & thrust, cloze & grype in shorter tyme than the other can.

Of the short staf fyght, being of covenient length, against ye like weapon.

Cap. 11.

HE short staf hath iiiij wards, y is ij w ye point vp, & ij w the poynt doune,

At these weapons euer lye so that yō may 1. be able to thrust syngle & dubble, & to ward, strike, or thrust in due tyme, so shal yo enemye, yf he fyght only vpō dubble hand be druuen of necessitie, seeking to wyn the place, to gayne yō the place wher by yō may safly hurt him, & go free yo self by reason of yo distance, & when yō shal seeke to wyn the place vpon him he shal not be able to gaine the place vpon you, nor to kepe the place frō you wher by he shal eyther be hurt, or in great danger of hurt, by reason of yo large reach, true place & distance, yo fight being truly handled keeping it self from Cloze & grype.

And in like sort shal it be betweene two, wch shal 2. play vpon the best, y is, yf they play both dubble & syngle handed.

yf yō fynd yo self to strong for yo aduñfare in any 3. mann of ward, whether the same be aboue or belowe, put by his staf w force, & then strike or thrust from it, but
4. but ye fynd him to strong for ye vpohys blowes from a loft, so ye can hardly bere them vpon ye ward, then when he stryketh in a loft at ye hed, & by his maine strength would beat doune ye staf, & so geue ye a hurt before ye shalbe able to com againe into ye ward,

Against such a on giue the flypp in this fort, sodainly dram back the hyer prte of ye body a lyttle & ye for most foote w't all, & flyp in the poyn of ye staf vndr his staf, & thrust single at him, & fly out w't all, so shal you be sure to hyt him & go out free,

5. ye he lye a loft w't his staf, then lye ye wt your hind hand alowe, w't ye prynt vptowards his staf making ye space narrow because ye may crose hys staf to ward his blow before it com in ful force, & then strongly & sodainlye indirect his prynt, & so thrust at him fyngle, the w'th ye may do before he can remove his feet, by reason of the swystnes of ye hand & fly out ther w't, do this for both syds of ye hed ye caufe require yt, so shal ye saue both ye hed, body, and al prts, for ye vppr prts are garded, & ye lower prts to farr out of his reach.

6. ye he lye a lowe w't his prynt doune, then lye ye w't ye prynt doune also, w't ye formost hand lowe & ye hind most hand hye, so ye ye may crose his staf, & do in all things as is before said in the other

7. ye he lye vpoh space narrow lying vp or doune w't ye prynt in such fort as you may crose his staf, & therby ye shal be able to put or beat by his thrust before it be in ful force, & then strike or thrust, euer remembring ye governors.

ye vpon this any wil obiect ye ye this betrue, then it
Brief Instructions.

Is in vaine to strike, or thrust, because he yt doth it is stil in danger, this doubt is answered in the short single sword fight, in the 12th ground thereof.

Yf yo' aduersarie strike a loft at any syde of yo' hed & body, ward it wt yo' point vp & making yo' space so narrow yt yō may crosse his staf before it com in ful force bearing or beating doune his blow strongly, back againe towards yt syde yt he stryketh in at you, & out of yt ward, then Instantly, eyther strike frō yt ward, turning back yo' staf, & strike him on yt syde of the hed yt is next yo' staf,

Or lyft vp yo' staf againe, & so strike him on the hed or body, or thrust at his body dubble or syngle, as yō may fynd yo' best aduantage ever in holding yo' staf, let ther be such convenient space between yo' hands, wher in you shal synd yo' self aptest to ward, strike or thrust to yo' best lyking.

Yf yō play wt yo' staf wt yo' left hand before & yo' 9. right hand back behind, as many men do fynd them selues most aptest when yt hand is before, & yf yo' aduersarie vpō his blowe com in to take the cloze of you, when yō fynd his staf crosst wt yo's neere his hand then sodainlye flyp vp yo' right hand close to the hind' syde of yo' formost hand, & p'sently loosing yo' for must hand & put it vndr your owne staf, & then close or put by his staf ther wt & wt yo' hand take hold of his staf in such fort yt yo' lyytle fyng'r be towards the poynct of his staf, & yo' thumb & fore fing'r towards his hands, & p'sently wt yo' right hand mount yt point of yo' owne staf casting the point thereof back ouer yo' right shold', wt yo' knuckles doun wards, & yo' nayles vpwards, & so stabb him in the
the body or face wt the hind end of yer staft, but be sure to stab him at his cōmyng in, whether yō catch his staft or not, for somtymes his staft will lye so farr out yt vpon his cōmyng in yō cannot reach it, then catch yt arme in his comynge in wch he shal first put forth wt in yo' reach, but be sure to stab, for his staft can do yō no hurt, and having so don, yf yō fynd yo' self to strong for him, strike vp his heeles, yf to weake fly out.

10. The like must yō do yf yō play wt yo' right hand before, & yo' left hand back behind, but yf yō neede not to lye downe forth yo' left hand, because yo' right hand is in the right place of yo' staft alredye to vse in yt action, but then yō must displace yo' left hand to take hold of his staft, or the grype as is a foresaid, & to vse the stab as is aboue said,

11. yf both lye a loft as aforesaid, & play wt ye' left hand before, yf he strike at the Ryght syde of yo' hed or body then must yō crose his staft before his blow be in ful force, by making yo' space narrow, & then strike it strongly back againe towards his left syde, & from yt ward yō may turne back yo' staft & strike him backwards ther wt on the left syde of the hed, or lyft vp yo' staft & strike him on the right or left syde of the hed, body, or arme, or thrust him in the body, the lyke blowes or thrusts may you make at him whether he strike or thrust, having put by his staft, remembiring yo' gou' nors.

The like ordr must yō vse in playing with the right hand before,

12. but yf he thrust at yō cōtynually then euer have a speciall care to cōfyder, whether he lye a loft or be-

lowe,
Bref Instructions.

lowe, & do continually thrust at yō ther from, then looke that yō euer lye so yē yō make yoř space so narrow vpon him, yē yō be sure to cresce his staf wž yoř, & put it before it be in full force, and frō yē ward, thrust at him syngle or dubbe as yō fynd it best, & yf he remembř not to fly back at yē instant when he thrusteth it wilbe to late for him to avoyd any thrust yē yō shal make at him,

Of the short staf fyght against the longe staf.

Cap. 12.

If yō haue a staf of the coënvenient length 1. against a staf of longer length than is coënvenient then make yoř space narrow, & seeke not to offend vntil yō haue strongly & swyftly put by his point the wch yō shal wž ease accomplish, by reason of yoř narrow space & yoř force, then strike or thrust as yō shal thinke best.

This short staf fight against ye longe staf is don in 2. the same sort that short staf fight to short staf is don, but yē the man wž the short staf must alwaies remembř to kepe a narrow space vpon ye long staf, wher so euer the longe staf shal lye, Hye or Lowe, coënually make yoř space narrow vpō him, so shal yō be sure yf he strike or thrust at yō, to take the same before it be into his full force & by reason yē yoř force is more wž yoř short staf than his can be at the poynct of his longe staf, yō shal cast his staf so farr out of ye streit lyne wž yoř short staf, yē yō may safly enter in wž yoř feet, & strike or thrust home at him.

Yet this present shift he hath at yē instant, he may 3.
flypp back his staf in his hands, wch tyme is swyfter then yo' feet in cómynge forwarde, wher by he will haue his staf as short as yó's, yet by reason y't at y'e first yó cast his staf so farr out of the right lyne, that yó had tyme to enter in w't yo' feet, yó shall then be só neere him, y't yó may make narrow space vpó him againe, so y't he shall haue no tyme to flyp forwarde his staf agayne in his former place, nor to go back w't his feet, & so to recou' the hind' end of his staf againe, because yf he flyp forth his staf to strike or thrust at you, that may yó safly defend because of your narrow space vpó him, & ther w't al yó may strike or thrust him fró yo' warde, eyther at fyngle or double,

4. but yf he wil go back w't his feet thinking by y't means to recou' the whole length of hys staf againe, y't can he not do in cóvenyent tyme because the tyme of yo' hand is swyft' than y'e tyme of his feet, by reason wherof yó may strike or thrust him in his goyg back.

5. Againe it is to be remembred in y't tyme y't yó keepe him at y't bay, vpó the drawing in of his staf, the hind' end therof lying so farr back behind him wilbe so trobblesom vnto him, that he can make no pryfyt fight against yó & cómonly in his drawing in of his staf it wilbe to short to make true fight against you, nether to offend yó nor defend him self.

6. yf he attempt the Cloze w't yó then stabb him w't the hind' end of yo' staf as is said in y'e fyght of y'e ij short staves of cóvenyent length, in the 9th ground therof

Note. Rememb' y't at Morris pyke, forrest byll, longe staf & two hand sword, y't yó lye in such sort vpó yo' wards y't yó may both ward, strike, & thrust, both
both dubble & syngle, & then returne to yo'r former wards flyps & lyinge againe & then are yō as yō wer before

The like fight is to be vslėd w't yē Javelen, prtyson, halbard, black byll, battle Axe, gleve, half pyke &c.

Off the fight of the forrest byll against the like weapon & against the staf.

Cap: 13.

HE forrest byl haue the fyght of the staf but 1. y't it hath iiiij wards more w't the hed of the byll, y't is one to bere it vpwards, another to beat it downwards so y't the carrage of yo'r byll hed be w't the edge neyther vp nor doune but fyde wyse.

The other ij wards are on to cast his byl hed towards the ryght fyde, thother towards yē left fyde.

And vpon ei' on of these wards or catches run vp to his hands w't the hed of yo'r byll & then by reason y't yō haue put his staf out of yē right lyne, yō may catch at his hed neck arme or leggs &c w't yē edge of yo'r byll, & hook or pluck him strongly to you & fly out w'tall.

Yf yō ca't his staf so farr out y't yo'r byll flyde not 2. vp to his hands, then yō may safe ly run in flyding yo'r hands w'in one yard of yē hed of yo'r byll, & so w't yo' r byl in one hand take him by yē legg w't the blade of yo'r byll & pluck him to yō & w't yo'r other hand defend yo'r self from his gryps yf he offer to grype w't you.

Yf you fight byll to byll do the like in al respects 3. as w't yē staf in yo'r fyght, for yo'r byll fight & staf fyght
is al one, but only for the defence & offence w't the hed of y' beyll, & wher y' staf man vpō the cloze yf he vše y' stabb w't the butt end of his staf, the beyll man at y't tyme is to vše y' catch at his legg w't y' edge of his beyll, as in y' second ground above is said.

4. Remember euver in al yo' fght w't this weapon to make yo' space narrow whether it be against the staf or beyll so y't what so euver he thal do against you, yō thal stll make yo' ward before he be in his ful force to offend you.

5. Also yf yō can reach w'in the hed of his beyll w't the hed of yo' beyll then sodainly w't the hed of yo' beyll snach his beyll hed strongly towards you, & therw' all indirect his byl hed & forcibily run vp yo' byl hed to his hands, so haue yō the lyke advantage as abouefaid, wheras I spake of runying vp towards his hands.

6. Yf he lye alowe w't his byl hed then yf yō can put yo' beyll hed in ou' the hed of his bylle & stronglye put doune his byl staf w't yo' byl hed, bearinge it flat, then yō may p'sently run vp yo' beyll hed sngle handed to his hands & fly out therw't, so thal yō hurt him in y' hand & go free yo'self.

7. The like may yō do w't yo' beyll against the short staf yf yō can press it doune in y' lyke sort, but yf he haue a longe staf then run vp dubble handed w't both hands vpon yo' beyll, w'ch thynge yō may safly do because yō are in yo' strenght & haue taken him in the weak prte of his staf.

8. Yf he lye hye w't his beyll hed then put vp yo' beyll hed und'r his & cast his beyll out to y't syde y't yō shal fynd fyttyn, so haue yō the aduantage to thrust or hook at him & fly out.
The Chapter on the Morris pike is unique, as no other work speaks of parries with that weapon. — W. London.

Of the fyght of ye morris pyke against the lyke weapon.

Cap: 14.

If ye fight wt yeor enemy having both morris pikeys wt both poynys of yeor pykes forwards, alowe upon ye ground, holding the butt end of the pyke in one hand fyngle wt knuckles vpwards & the thumb undrnheth, wt the thumbe & foresyn towards yeor face & the lytyle synger towards the poynyt of ye pyke, bering the butt end of the pyke frō the one syde to ye other right before the face, then lye yeō wt yeor armes spent & yeor body open wt yeor hand to ye right syde wt yeor knuckles Dounwards & yeor nailes vpwards.

Or yeō may lye in ye fort, wt yeor hand over to the left syde wt yeor knuckles vpwards & yeor nayles Dounwards, wherby al yeor body wilbe Open. ye then he shal sodainlye rayfe vp the point of his pyke wt his other hand
hand & com to thrust at yō, then in the Mountinge of
his poynt or his coyng in sodainlye tosse vp the poynt
of yor pyke w't yor hand syngle & so thrust him in the
leggs w't yor pyke & fly out therw't.

Or els you May stand vpō yor w'ard & Not tosse vp
yor pykes poynt but breake his thrust by crosyngne the
poynt of his pyke w't the Mydds of yor pyke by casting
vp yor hand, w't the butt end of yor pyke aboue yor hed,
& so bering ouer hys point w't yor staf, to the other syde
as for example,

2. Yf yō lye w't yor hand spent towards the left syde of
yor bodye, then sodainlye bere his poynt ouer strongly
towards yor right syde.

Yf yō lye w't yor hand spent towards yor right syde
then bere his poynt towards yor left syde, & ther vpon
gather vp yor pyke w't yor other hand & thrust at him
& fly out.

Yf he coyngew his fyght w't his point aboue, & yō
lye w't yor pyke brest hye & hyer w't your hand & point
so, y't yō may Make yor thrust at his face or body w't
yor poynt Directly towards his face, holding yor pyke
w't both your hands on yor staf yor hinder hand w't yor
knuckles vpwards & yor formust hand w't yor knuckles
downwards & ther shaking yor pyke & faulsing at his
face w't yor poynt as Neere his face as you may, then
sodainlye Make out yor thrust fyngle handed at his face
& fly backe w't all, w'ch thrust he can hardly breake one
of 20 by reason y't yō haue made yor space so narrow
upon his gard, so y't yō beinge first in yor action he
wil stil be to late in his defence to defend himself.

4. but note while yō lye faulsinge to Deceive him looke
well to yor leggs y't he in the Meane tyme tosse not vp the
poynt
Bref Instructiouns.

poynt of his pyke syngle handed & hurt yō therw in yē fhynes.

Yf he lye sō wē his poynt vp a loft as you do then 5. Make yo r space Narrow Mountinge yo r point a lyttle & crosē his pyke wē yo rs & stronglye and sodainly cast his poynt out of the right lyne and thurst whome from the fame syngle or dubble as you fynd yo r best aduantage, & fly out therw.

Or yō may run in when yō haue cast out his poynt flydinge both yo r hands on yo r staft til yō com wēn iij quarters of a yard of the hed of yo r pyke & stab him therwē wē one hand & wē yo r other hand kepe him of from yē grype.

Now yf he be a man of fkyll, notwēstandinge yē 6. Making of yē faulte in suffring you to do sō yet this help he hath, as yō are cōmynge in he will sodainlye draw in his pyke poynt & fly back wēll, then haue yō no helpe but to fly out instantly to the myddle of yo r pyke & from thence backe to yē end & then are yō as at the first begynnynge of yo r fyght yō were.

Yf you fynd yē he lye farr out of yē right lyne wē 7. his poynt or yē yō can sō farr Indirect yē same then cast yo r pyke out of yo r hands, crosē over vpon the myds of his pyke, by wēn meanes yō shal entangle his pyke, then while he doth štryve to get his pyke at lybertye, run you in sodainlye drawing yo r Daggē & Štrike or stab at him.

Then yf he haue the prfection of this fyght as well 8. as you, he wilbe as reddy wē his daggr as yō are wē yo rs, then must yō fyght it out at the syngle daggr fyght as is shewed in the 15th Cap: then he yē hath not the prfection of yē fyght gowē to wracke.
9. And here note ye in all the course of my teachinge of these my breef Instructions ye both the prydes have the full perfection of ye true fyght then the on will not be able to hurt thother at what pryde weapon so euer.

10. But ye a Man ye haue the perfection of fight shal fight wt on ye haue it not then must ye vnskylful man go to wrack & thother goe free.

Of the single Dagger fyght against the lyke weapon.

Cap: 15.

1. FIRST know ye to this weapon ther belongeth no Wards nor gryps but against such a one as is fowlehardy & will suffer himself to haue a full stabb in the face or bodye to hazard the geving of Another, then against him ye may use ye left hand in throwinge him aysde or strike yp his heeles after ye haue stabb'd him.

2. In this daggr fyght, ye must use coytynual motion so shal he not be able to put ye to ye cloze or grype, because ye contynual motion disappointeth him of his true place, & the more fierce he is in runyng in, the sooner he gayneth you the place, wherby he is wounded, & ye not any thing the rather endangered.

3. The mann of handling ye coytynual motion is this, kepe out of distance & strike or thrust at his hand, Arme, face or body, ye shal press vpon ye, & ye he defend blow or thrust yt his daggr make ye blow or thrust at his hand.

4. Ye he com in wt his left legg forewards or wt the right, do you strike at ye perte as soone as it shalbe wt in ye reach, remembering ye ye vse contynual motion in
Brief Instructions.

in your progression & regressyon according to your twyfold governors.

Although the dagg'r fight be thought a verye dan- 5.
gerous fight by reason of ye shortnes & synglenes therof, yet the fight therof being handled as is aforesaid, is as saf & as defencive as is the fight of any other weapon, this endeth my brief Instructions.

Finis.
Sundry kinds of play or fight. Thornborow.

1. Uncertain variable
2. Syngle
3. Gardant.

Iij different kinds of fight.

1. He ye forceth or prīsteth on
2. He ye goeth back w't some blow or
   thrust
3. He ye standeth to his wards or
   passato

1. Against him ye prīsteth ye, naked play is best becs
   he useth his foote, ye open lofty play ye hand.

2. Ye 2nd is best followed w't ye variable & uncertain
   handling els should yō be a ma'ke to yo' enemy & too
   slow in motion.

3. Ye 3rd must be incountred w't ye gardant play
   wherein you shal try him at ye B sword or how he can
   escape ye prting blow or thrust.

When yō gather kepe yo' place & space equal &
only be a patient & rememb're ye ye gardant play bring-
eth yō safly in & keps yo' enemy out.

Know this ord' of play els ye best may be deceaved,
to be used against al these differences & bring ye good-
nes
nes therof in suspicio, for all these plaies are good in
their kynd, tyme & occasio offered by divitie of play,
but not on of them to be continually used & played
upon as a pretio against euery assault.
1. In y'naked play yō must set yoself vpright w't
yōr feet in a smale space, observing yōr place of yōr hand
whe yō may strike or thrust most quickly & redely
& to take yōr tyme of him yō pr'feth on (ving yōr tyme
of his feet) w't yōr blowe or thrust whe he is most
open.

1. In y'r variable play, yō dryve him to his thysts
changing yoself into sundry kynds of blowes thruts &
lyings, wch yō must not stay upon,

2. seeking to + him stil in his playes as yō may,
wherby yō shal force him to fly, or els to stand to yō
proof of his B sword play.

3. the gardant play is to be usd against yōr blowe,
thrust & passata yō cometh w'in dangr of hurt, for
treading yōr right way & keping yōr place & hand in
space & strenght you cannot loose yōr tyme to defend
frō either of those offers.

these Judged of in reason & known by som practise
wil make yō deale safly against al sorts, skilful or un-
skilful, so yōr feare or Ang hinder not yōr Knowledge.
Of place space, strength & tyme.

1. yᵉ tyme of yᵉ hand is when yō strike frō a wʳᵈ or stand in place to strike.

2. the tyme of yᵉ foot is when yō step forward to strike or when yō gather towards yoʳ own right syde.

3. yᵉ tyme of yᵉ hand & foot is when yō tread yoʳ ground in course to strike rather than pслиng forwards, or when yō slide back or go back, yoʳ hand & foot being then of equal agillitie.

4. yᵉ tyme of yᵉ foot & hand is when yō handle yoʳ gardant play vſing then a flowe motiō in both.

ther is but i good way to gather vpō yoʳ enemy, gardant. Al other are dangerous & subiect to yᵉ blowe on yᵉ hed or thrust on yᵉ body.

for no way can ward both but as aforf.<br>yoʳ hand & feet in good play must go together, whether it be in quick or slow motion.

In gathering forwards or towʳds yoʳ right syde yoʳ hand falleth frō yoʳ place, space, & strength & so falleth out yᵉ los of tyme.

when yō gather & suffer yᵗ gouⁿe yoʳ fight, defend only. when yō do, be single, or not fixed towards on any lying, but also yᵉ quicknes of yoʳ hand in its pʳpactered, place carried,

In breaking yᵉ thrust when yō lye aloft single or gardant & space yoʳ arme somewhat bowing in warding yᵉ blowe, haue respect to yoʳ place of hand & strength, yoʳ arme strait. this course in yoṛ tyme is best pᵉformed, the on of these wᵗ yoṛ hand aloft yoṛ point downe thother yoṛ hand in place yoṛ more high yoṛ space less curious.
tyme is chiefly to be observed in both actions vpó wth ( place ) waiteth.

Upon these 3 y* 4 following, vpon these 4 y* first
3, upon these y* later 3.

to hurt or defend, a tyme in both is to be observed
to y* furtherance of wth place is to be gotten, wout wth
tyme will to long to p*form y* wth is intended, y* space
is to be noted betwene ij opposits & in respect of
touching, or in regard of saving as also for proving of
tyme, by y* smale way it hath either to y* body, or
puting by y* weapon.

the next 4 must be vsted together to p*forme thother
ij rules, for y* hand being nymble & quick of itself
may els be hindered in y* want of any of these, the
weapon must be framed & inclyned to serve y* agilitie
of y* hand eyther in hurting or defending.

the body vpright or leanyng to y* weapon, y* it
hind* not y* dispositiō of thother ij the foot answerable
to them plying y* hand & ward al in strait space, y* w*rd
w* hand high w* y* point downe, the arme strait out as
ready for both actions.
Bref Instructions.

al yndr play is beaten w't most agil, single & y' lofty the lofty w't y' gardant, His when w't his foot he seeke y' low lying is out of place to offend defend or not so for lack of tyme space & crossing, yf he lye out w't his long' weapo it is put bye fro aloft, who hath place tyme & reach of body & arme al w't y' +.

the lofty naked play is beaten w't y' ward becs of {Cross}

{space}

{tyme}

to Defend, y' lofty naked single loose play s'veth to win y' Tyme of y' lowe & dubble play.

the bent gardant requireth yo' arme strait high & out y' point down towards (93 re II wel) y' body & foote y' way inclyned.
the way vndr ye  

yard y e drawing ye body from harmes, the motio lowe ye actio of ye hand be not hindered. the rest are ye dispositions of ye placed displaced

handlings

Slowfoot: swift hand: quick foot: slow hand. tread: stride: follow: falaway:

When ye seek to offend wt blow or thrust, ye place of hand is lost, ye way to redeeme it is to fyde back vndr ye lofty ward as aforesd alwaies ye ye aduerte lye aloft redy to strike or thrust or vse his hand only,

ye would offend him ye lyeth lowe vp o ye thrust then when ye displace ye weapon fro aloft ye may aft ye blow at hed or arme or neerest place, stand & thrust before ye go backe because he is out of place & space & cannot +, & thereby looseth his tyme to annoy ye & ye may thrust & retyre for a new assault.

this not so found,

In striking or thrusting neuer hinder ye hand wt puting forth ye foote but kepe ye place therof til ye haue offended wt ye one only ye bending of ye body very little foreward may suffice, els ye loose a double tyme, on in setting forth ye foot thother in recouring ye lost place of ye fot both to ye loss of tyme & ye purpose.

Strike: thrust: ward: breake:

the double offence is in striking & thrusting.

the iij fold {warding ye blow

defence in {breaking or putting bye ye thrust

flyding back vndr ye hanging ward.

wyn ye place: stand fast, strike home offend, defend, & go saf.
Open fight.

Open fight is to carry yo' & hilt aloft above yo' hed either w' point upright 
backwards, w' is best

1. In this best to y' guardant ward strike
2. yet use y' w' yó find apace to thrust 
ward

Of y' short single sword agains y' like weapon being both of a length.

1. Answer him in y' same fight is best but kepe your distance
2. let yó' gatherings in be ever towards his right side yó' sword may choake 
up al his blows made at yó before it be in force & fró yó' ward instantly uncrofe 
& strike him on yó' hed or other open place, or thrust him in yó' body & instantly 
fly out

1. tak it not w' forehand w' accept 
yó be sure to w' it if yó do w'd 
so if he com in w' al, then fró 
thrust
yó w' strike 
reminbring yó' 
grype

gow'now, & strike fró yó' 
ward at 
yó' hed &c. or thrust yó' body.
1. perish in to close then 
take yó' grype of him.
2. if w' al he 2.
noth in then infant-
ly uncrofe &thrike him 
on yó' hed & fly out.

If the strike 
at yó'
1. mount yó' point so yó' yó' blade 
be caft out w' his towards yó' 
right hand & yó wil. truly 
ward yó' right side of yó' hed.
2. then put down 
yó' hilt a little &

If the strike 
at yó'
1. strike 
Leod yó' right 
side of 

2. right
3. hed yó lying below in variable fight thrust at his hand or arme by 
erecting yó' point w' yó' knocckes downwards & fly out instantly.
2. he thrust at yó' face or body, then beat it downwards w' yó' sword guardant being yó' point 
strongly towards yó' right fylde & sodainly strike him on yó' hed or thrust him in yó' body & fly out 
sodainly.

If yó lye in open 
or true guardant 
fight
1. forcely pres on yó w' yó' fight intending to hurt yó in yó' face or hed, or 
take yó' grype of yó;
2. & yó lye below in variable yó 
fight then offer not toward 
yó' blow made at yó' hed 
with true guardant ward
3. Answer him not w' yó' 1. 
basard
[Imperfect ] 
Gardant ward 2.
ward thare thare yó
2. yó' tyne wilte to long 3. due tyne to do it.

If yó lye in open 
or true guardant 
fight
1. he yó first breaketh his distance & do attempt to strike at yó' others hed, 
shalbe surely strikeen on yó' hed himself if other strike therat in his coing in, 
and fil a little back w' al, for yó maketh an Indirection therby yó blowe 
crofeeth his hed & maketh a true ward for yó' owne.
3. both fight up5 
open fight
2. it is best' for yó' patient to strike home strongly at yó' agents hed if yó' agent 
pres upon him to win yó' place, then to thrust, for yó' ca laft above said.
4. yó' fight upon open or true guardant feit ne5 ward up5 forehand ward for yó' space wilte to wide 
in due tyne to make a true w' 
he lye aloft w' his point tow'ds yó' aft yó' mamm' of yó' Imbrocara then make yó' space narro w' 
yó' point upwards, therewith put his point & strike or thrust as aforeaid at any open place but be 
sure herin to kepe yó' distance 
1. ( & fly out p'ently
2. yó he deceve yó not in yó' taking his point.