A Swarne of Bees:  
With their honie, and  
Honicombs

Gathered out of the sweete and 
Odoriferous garden of  
Gods word.

Heerin such lessons are to bee lear-
ned, as concerne  
the whole course of our  
life, both towards God and man  
being an number two hundred:  
where of some perswade vs to  
vertue and godlinesse, o-
thersome diswade vs  
from vice and  
wickedness.

By Abraham Fleming

Ecclesiast. 11.3.  
The Bee is but small among fowles, yet  
Doth her fruit passe in sweetnes.

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A Preface to the true Christian Reader.

We see that Bees being a sociable creature, that is apt for companie, flee together in swarmes, and assembled vnnder one hiue, discharge the dutie wherevnto they are ordained; namelie, to make Honie. The benefite of this labou-ring and diligent creature is so necessarie, that such as haue knowne and tasted by due proofe and expe-rience the fruites of their trauell, and the sweetenesse of their worke, will bee hardlie persuad-ed to neg-lect the fostering of them, for feare of loosing so singular comodities as they do yeeld.

Euen so this swarme of Bees, which I, not by the saounde of a ba-son, but by the painfulnesse of my pen, haue gathered togither out of the pleasant Garden of Gods most holie worde, where I found them scattered heere and there among the fragrant flowers, and sweete beds of wholesome hearbes, ma-king most comfortable Honie, and offering thee a taste thereof, are not lightlie to be esteemed, considering that the issue and euent of their trauell wel ordered and vsed, is so bene-ificial, as nothing more, if anie thing like.

For their Honie hath this vertue, that so such as eat it, and digest it thoroughlie, it giueth a regenerated mind, a sanctified soule, a circumci-seed heart, a mortified bodie, and all good thinges that man can imagine or deuise: of which spirituall gra-ces who so hath once possession, his conscience will tell him what it is to taste, to sucke, to eate, and thro-roughlie to digest Honie made by such a swarme of Bees. These Bees followe one another orderlie and decentlie, without desire of first or highest place: out of one Garden they gathered it, in one hiue they
made it, and for all godlie disposed peoples feeding heere they leaue it in their honicombs.

There is none that hauing wit, will finde fault with water of the clearest fountaine, with floure of the finest wheate, with a garment of the costliest silke, with a ring of the purest golde, with a iewell of the highest price. For it is the na-ture of man to couet the verie best thinges, yea and to obtaine them, if they may be gotten for anie monie. Heere thou hast a swarme of Bees making moste excellent Honie, sweete, pleasant and wholesome. It differeth from ordinarie Honie because the Bees that made it are extraordinarie; and the flowers whereout they sucke it, grew in no common Garden: it is offered vn-to the gratis, no gaine looked for, but onelie thy good will in recei-uing it and thy diligence in vsing it. Make much therefore of these Bees, and open thy mouth wide that thy throate swallowing their sweete Honie, may distribute the same to al thine inward parts, and that the outward & inward man may be refor-med.
A SWARME
Of Bees

The first Honi-combe, yeelding most wholesome exhortations vnto vertue and virtuous life.

1 BE merciful and faithfull, binde these two jewells about thy neck and write them in the tables of thine heart.
2 Be joyfull in the Lord the God with all thine heart, and leane not upon thine owne will.
3 Bee obedient in the lawe of the Lord, honour him with thy substance, and with thy firstlings.
4 Be a searcher after wisedome and an inquerier after understanding and knowledge.
5 Be wise, so shalt thou have honour in possession, but shame is the promotion that fooles shall haue.
6 Be a lover of wisedome, she shall beautifie thy head with manifold graces, and garnish thee with a crowne of glorie.
7 Be conversant with the righteous, for their path shineth as the light that is brighter & brighter.
8 Be carefull to keepe thine owne counsel in a matter of weight: for therein consisteth the safetie of thy soule.
9 Be obedient to the voice of thy teachers, and harken vnto them that informe thee.
10 Be circumspect in choosing thy way, so shalt thou escape misfortune and danger.
11 Be thou a drinker of the water of thine owne well and of rivers that run out of thine owne spring.
12 Be bountiful, & and let thy welles flowe abroade, that there may be rivers of waters in the streetes.
13 Be thou contented with thine owne prouision, and be glad with
the wife of thy youth.
14 Be glad with thy yong wife, let her bee as the louing hinde and pleasante roe, let her breastes alway satisfie thee.
15 Be wise & warie in thy waies, for the Lord seeth thy footsteps, and pondereth all thy goings.
16 Be carefull to save thy selfe as a doe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the snare of the Fowler.
17 Bee prouident in Summer what shall serue thee in Winter least thou haue not to supply thy want.
18 Bee obedient to thy fathers commandement, and forsake not the law of thy mother.
19 Bee al defiance with a wicked and naughtie woman, for her house is the high way to hell.
20 Bee temperate in thy diet: for gluttone and gormondising is vnmeete for a man.

The second Honicombe yeelding most wholesome exhortations to vertue and virtuous life

21 BF. true and trustie o thy friend, so shall he be bolde to commit the secrets of his soule into thy hands.
22 Be conuersant with thy wife, and with such as bee of vnderstanding keepe companie.
23 Be desirous of the feare of the Lord: for it is the beginning of Wisedome and vnderstanding.
24 Be a wise sonne, so shalt thou make thy fathers heart glad, and drive away heauinesse from thy mother.
25 Bee a worshipper of the Lorde thy God, and in the day of thine hunger hee will refresh thee.
26 Be thou painefull and laborious in thy trade and occupation, so shalt thou attaine to be rich.
27 Be iust and righteous in thy life and couersation, so shalt
thou have a good report
28 Bee warned at the mouth of
the wise, & despise not the coun-
sel of such as haue experience.
29 Be diligent in doing thy duty,
and towards such as are
thy betters use reverence.
30 Be a moderate spender, so
shalt thou be thrifty: for prodi-
gality bringeth poverty.
31 Be earnest in a quarrel of equi-
ty, and whiles thou liueth be ne-
ever ashamed of the truth.
32 Bee zealous in religion and
righteousnesse, rebuke the offen-
der that he may amend.
33 Be patient in the time of trou-
ble so shalt thou receive a gar-
land of glory at the last.
34 Be wordly wise according to
honestie, and in all thy dealings
haue an upright conscience.
35 Be painefull in thy life whiles
thou art strong and healthfull,
so shalt thou be counted wise.
36 Be rich in vertue, and poore in
vice, with such riches God is
 glorified, and with such poverty
he is honoured.
37 Be mercifull to the needy, and
from such as lacke, turne not
thy face, least God be displeased.
38 Be a harbourer of the succour-
les, and let thine hands bee open
to the refreshing of the needy.
39 Be plentifull in good workes,
and where occasion is mini-
stered, leave a testimonie of com-
passion.
40 Be sparing in speech & laug-
ter, for a babler is abhorred of
such as be sober and wise.

The third Honicombe yeelding
most wholesome exhortations
to vertue and virtuous life.

41 BE merciful, so shalt thou do
thy selfe a benefite: for who
so hurteth his neighbour is a
tyrant.
42 Be liberall in giuing, so shalt
thou haue plenty: for hee that
watereth, shall be watered also himselfe.
43 Be a searcher after good things,
so shalt thou find fauour: for
who so seeketh after mischiefe, it
shall happen vnto him.
44 Bee a louer of corection, so
shalt thou loue knowledge: for
he that hateth to be reproved is
a foole.
45 Be true in thy talke and speak
that which is right: for a false
witness deceiveth by his lying.
46 Be iust and righteous, so shall
no aduersitie happen vnto thee:
but the vngodlie shall be filled with miserie.
47 Bee a wise sonne, and hearken
too thy fathers warning, least
being scornefull thou be repro-
ued.
48 Be sure to keepe thy mouth, so
shalt thou keepe thy life: for who
so rashlie openeth his lips, de-
stroyeth himselfe.
49 Bee righteous, and thou shalt
abhore lies: whereas the vng-
godlie shameth himself, and is
put to silence.
50 Be innocent and harmelesse in
thy waie: for vngodlines ouer-
throweth & drowneth the sinner.
51 Be righteous if thou wilt ex-
cell, and loue wisedome if thou
ilt bee honourable and wor-
shipfull.
52 Bee a walker in the waie of
righteousness, for therein is life:
but in the contrarie is death and
destruction.
53 Be virtuous and thou shalt
leave vnto thy children an euer-
lasting inheritance, and riches
that shall neuer rust.
54 Bee plentiful in thine almes,
and God shall increase thy store
and giue thee his blessing abun-
dantlie.
55 Bee faithfullie occupied in the
feare of the Lord, and thou shalt
walke uprightlie before him all
thy life long.
56 Bee contented with a little in
righteousness, for that is better
than great rentes wrongfullie
gotten.
57 Bee content to commite thy worke vnto the Lord, so shall that prosper which thou deuisest and intendeth.
58 Be righteous in thy toonge, and sober in thy talke, for such are pleasnt vnto kings and great estates.
59 Be obedient and loyall, so shalt thou bein fauour, and thine or-der of liuing shall bee good ex- ample vnto others.
60 Be careful to do thy dutie, and haue a single eie ouer the charge committed vnto thine hand.

The fourth Honi-combe, yeelding most wholesome exhortations to vertue and virtuous life.

61 BE humble and lowlie in the whole course of thy life, let the lawe of the Lord be thy rule to guide thy goings.
62 Be readie to doo thy friend good in the daies of his distresse, for in so doing thou sauest his life.
63 Be comforted in thy heauines with the counsel of thy neigh- bour, and cast not away at hope.
64 Bee to others as thou wouldest haue other to be to thee: that is iust, louing, fauourable, gentle and couteous.
65 Bee in thy youth mindfull of thine age, and lay vp in the yong yeares to keepe thee when thou art old.
66 Be merrie of heart, for that ma- keth a lustie age: but a sorrow- full mind drieth up the bones.
67 Be wise and vse fewe wordes, embrace understanding & make much of knowledge and science.
68 Be a searcher after vertue, and an enemy to vice, so shalt thou finde perfect blessednesse in the ende.
69 Be merrie with them that bee merrie, and mourne with them that mourne, yet exceede not measure.
70 Be careful ouer thy charge, so shalt thou get double credit, and
increased in favour.
71 Be discreet in thy talke & communication, and in thy behaviour bee milde, humble, and courteous.  
72 Bee pitifull to the distressed succour such as be afflicted, and to the needie reach out thine hand.  
73 Bee to thy friend in aduersitie a present helpe, that in thy necessity hee may make retribution.  
74 Bee true and trustie in thy vocacion and in al thy dealings, set Gods feare before thy face.  
75 Bee content with thine estate, and breake not beyond thy tender: for in doing thou wastest wisedome.  
76 Bee gentle and curteous in speeche: for a smooth tongue purchaseth fawor among the people.  
77 Be liberall and lend, lay not vp thy treasure and see thy brother lache, but giue of thy goods to the needle.  
78 Be obedient to thy parents, to thy betters giue reuerence, lieu within law and loyaltie.  
79 Be circumspect and warie in all thy business, and attempt nothing without aduisement.  
80 Bee zealous over thine honest name, least thou bring thy selfe to shame among the people.

The fifth Honi-combe, yeelding most wholesome exhortations to vertue and virtuous life.

81 BE neere to thy selfe in the time of need, least such as be wise laugh thee to scorne, and make thee a byward.  
82 Be faithfull to thy friend in all his affaires: for thereupon dependeth thine estimation and credit.  
83 Bee a companion with honest women, but of wanton minions beware: for they are the verie doores of death.  
84 Bee modest at the table, least
they that sit by, seeing thine in-
temperance abhore thee.
85 Bee sparing at wine: for too
much drinking there of infebleth
the wit, and weakneth the me-
more.
86 Bee louing and carefull ouer
thy wife, for to use her hardlie,
and not like a husband, is the
next way to make hir a harlot.
87 Bewarie howe thou viewest
the beautie of a woman too nar-
rowlie, least thou be taken in
hir loue, and fall to follie.
88 Bee Chaste in communication
and talke, for many times the
heart give vutterance to the
toong.
89 Be carefull to keepe thee in one
place, and continue in thy calling
if thou intend to be thriftie.
90 Bee more desirous to saue then
to spende, least in the time of
neede thou haue not to serue thy
turne.
91 Be a true paymaster of thy hi-
red servaut, and let him haue his
wages for his worke.
92 Be curteous and gentle, so
shall such as be absent commend
thee and they that bee present
shall reioice in thy company.
93 Bee merrie at thy meate, and
giue God thankes for the same,
so shalt thou haue alwaies en-
ough.
94 Bee mindefull of thy dutie to
God, & euerie morning and eve-
ning magnifie his holie name.
95 Be sober and continent among
young women, in the presence of
thy wife, least she burne in jea-
lousie ouer thee.
96 Be in thy conuersation humble
and gentle, and have a regard to
the whole course of thy life.
97 Be in thine apparel modest, in
thy communication honest, in thy
behaviour sober, and in all thy
doings discreet.
98 Bee to the stranger curteous,
to thy neighbour friendlie, to al
a wel willer, to none an enemy.
99 Bee to thy prince trustie and
loyall, to the magistrate obedient, and to thy betters dutifull.

100 Be thankfull to God for all his benefites, and let his praise be alwaies in thy mouth.

Thesix Honi-combe yeelding
most wholesome dehortations
from vice and vicious life.

1 BE notforgetfull of the lawe of the lord, but see that thine hart keepe his commandements.
2 Be not wise in thine owne conceipt, but feare the Lorde and de part from euill.
3 Bee not a murmerer at the chastisement of the Lord neither faint when thou are corrected of him.
4 Bee not a withdrawer of anie good thing from him that hath neede, so long as thine hand is able to do it.
5 Bee not a procurer of hurt against thy neighbour, he hopeth to dwell and rest bythee.
6 Bee not a striuer with anie man without a cause, whereas he hath done thee no harme.
7 Bee not a follower of the wic ked in their wicked waies, and choose not to be their companion.
8 Be not scornfull, for the Lorde laugheth such to scorne, but vnto the lowlie he giueth grace.
9 Be not inquisitiue after the footsteps of the forward, least thou bee partaker of their frowardnesse.
10 Be not a company keeper with the vngodlie: for their waie is darknesse, and they know not where they go.
11 Be not thou of a frowarde mouth, and let the lips of slander be far from thee.
12 Bee not wandering either to the right hand or to the left, but withhold thy foot from euill.
13 Bee not the lips of a strange woman dropping honi-embe and her throat more glittering than oile?
14 Be not delighted with an har-
lot for she is as bitter as wormwood, and as sharpe as a two edged sword.

15 Bee not pleasant and sportfull with a common woman, and embrace not the bosome of an harlot.

16 Bee not suretie for a stranger and for him whom thou knowest not, be not handfasted.

17 Be not in thy neighbours danger: if thou be humble thy selfe, and with thy friends entreate thy creditor.

18 Be not sluggish, but consider the Emmet, and by her example learne to be wise.

19 Be not slouthful and idle, least pouertie creepe vpon thee, and beggarie ouertake thee as a traueiler.

20 Be not proude of countenance, abhorre a lying tongue, and detest handes that shed innocent bloud.

21 BE not haunted with an hart that is full of wicked imagi-nations: for that is the next way to mischief.

22 Bee not a flase witnesse that bringeth lies, nor a sower of discord among brethren.

23 Bee not a companie keeper with a faire woman, least thou be taken and intrapped with her faire lookes.

24 Bee not familiar with an harlot, for shee gringeth a man to beggarie: but an honest woman is worth gold.

25 Be not a temper of thy neighbours wife to lewdnesse, least thou runne in danger of Gods curse.

26 Bee not a blasphemer of the Lords name, least he be sharpe-ly auenged of thee for thy pre-Sumption.
27 Be not a reprover of the scornful, least he owe thee euill will: but rebuke a wise man, and hee will loue thee.
28 Be not of the number that say Stolne Waters are sweete, and The bread that is priuilie eaten Hath good taste.
29 Bee not a gatherer of goodes wrongfullie, for they profit nothing in the end.
30 Bee not a stirrer vp of hatred and a strife, but imbrace loue: for loue couereth the multitude of sinnes.
31 Bee not a much babler, for therein is great offence: but re-fraine thy lips, so shalt thou bee wise.
32 Bee not double of tongue and a dissembler: for the Lord abhorrith the counterfeite hypocrite.
33. Bee not an extortioner, nor an oppressor of the poore: for the Lorde will take their cause in Hand.
34 Bee not fugitive and lightfoo ted from place to place, but continue content with thine owne estate.
35 Bee not iealous ouer the faire and youthfull wif, least thou turne her loue into hate.
36 Bee not couetous and greedie of money, for in time both thou and thy wealth shall away.
37 Bee not delicate and nice: for that is the propertie of women, but auoid all such vanities.
38 Bee not inquisite after thinges aboue thy knowledge, least thou be counted a busie bodie.
39 Be not a maintainer of wrong judgement, least the Lord confound thee in thy wickednesse.
40 Be not ouer carefull for thy life, least thou fal in mistrust and de-spaire of Gods prouidence.

The eight Honi-combe yielding most wholesome dehortations from vice and vicious life.
41 BE not a talebearer from eare to eare least thou be forsaken of thy friends, and made an out-cast.
42 Bee not vnjust in buying and selling let they ballance be euen, and thy weights without fault.
43 Bee not a dissembler, nor a discoverer of secrets: but faithfull of heart, and trustie in counsel.
44 Bee not a purchaser of thy neighbours house ouer his head in so doing thou suckest his bloud.
45 Bee not suretie for a stranger, least thou smarte for it: for hee that hateth suretiship is sure.
46 Be not a worker of deceitful workes, but a sower of righteousnesse, so shalt thou receiue thy reward.
47 Bee not corrupt in heart, for such doth the Lord abhore: but in such as are of an undefiled conversation he hath pleasure.
48 Be not overbolde to trust in thy riches, least thou haue a fall, but vse them in the feare of the Lord.
49 Bee not a sower of disquietnesse in thine owne house, least thou haue wind for thine heritage.
50 Bee not malicious, least thou bee insnared with thine owne mouth: but be meeke of speech, so shalt thou be honoured.
51 Bee not a meddler in other mens matters, least thou be il though of and haue final thanks for thy labor.
52 Bee not hastie in vttering thy wrath least thou bee counted a foole, and in the end thou discover thine owne shame.
53 Bee not a slanderous person, for such a one woundeth like a sworde: but a wise mans toong is wholesome.
54 Bee not an imaginer of euill, for commonly mischiefe doth followe; but be a counsellor of that that which is honest.
55 Bee not a lier, and a forger of untruths, for such doth the Lorde abhor: but they that deale truely
please him.
56 Bee not a sluggarde faine to
have, and not to get: but be dili-
gent and thou shalt have plenty.
And abundance.
57 Bee not proude, for after pride
followeth strife, whilst thou
thinketh none comparable in
worthinesse vnto thyself.
58 Bee thou not a getter of thy goodes
by vanitie: for they are soon
spent: but they that are gathe-
red together with the hand,
shall increase.
59 Be not desperate, and out of
hope in thy heauinesse: for that
is the next way to kill thy hart.
60 Bee not a bolsterer of the wic-
ked in his wickednesse least
thou bee partaker of his punish-
ment.

The ninth Honi-Combe, yielding most
wholesome dehortations from vice
and vitious life.

61 BE not deceitfull, for such a
one shall not [rost] that hee
took in hunting: but the riches
of the iust are of great value.
62 Bee not shamelesse in sinning
least the vengeance of the Lord
ouertake thee, and thou bee cru-
shed in pieces.
63 Bee not sparing in vsing the
rod, least thou hating thy sonne
bee an occasion that he cursse
thee another daie.
64 Bee not scornefull, least in see-
kimg for wisedome, thou finde it
not, though thou wouldest give
gold for it.
65 Bee not familiar with a foolish
man, when thou perceiueth not
in him the lips of knowledge
and understanding.
66 Be not injurious and wrng-
full to the poore, for therein thou
blasphemest thy maker, and dis-
honour his maiestie.
67 Bee not proud and haughtie of
heart: for such doth the Lorde
abhorrre, and hee hateth them e-
uen to hell.
68 be not frowardin thy waies, if thou wilt please the Lord, but followe in the path of peace and e-
quitie.
69 Bee not a deuiser of vanities which please thine owne heart, for with such toies is the Lords wrath kindled.
70 Bee not a wicked dooer: for such as exercise themselues in naughtinesse, and an abomination vnto him.
71 Be not careless at the Kings displeasure: for the wrath and anger of the Prince is the messenger of death.
72 Bee not rash in thine enterpri-
es: for of rashnesse and hardi-
nesse commeth repentance and sorrow.
73 Be not a controller of thy bet-
ters: for in so dooing thou dooest run among thornes and thistles.
74 Bee not offensiue to thy brother in any thing, least he being gra-
ued, complaine against thee bit-
terly.
75 Bee not a prouoker of the an-
grie, least by heaping fire vpon fire, thou selfe feele the fla-
ming heate.
76 Be not acquainted with a sor-
erer, and with an inchanter or soothesayer keepe not companie.
77 Bee not curious in vanities least thou become a scorne a-
mong the wise, and a mocking-
stocke among the sober.
78 Bee not ouercome with wine and strong drinke: for thereby manie a wise man hath shewed himselfe a foole.
79 Bee not fauourable to the ma-
lefactour, and seuere agaynst the innocent, for that is to peruerst iustice.
80 Bee not a shifter, to lieu by o-
ther mens sweate, but let thine owne labour minister vnto thee allowance.
The tenth Honi-combe yielding most wholesome dehortations from vice and vitious life.

81 BE not wanton nor light in thy behauior, least thy manners being marked, thou reape shame and rebuke.
82 Bee not a couerer of an offence where the offender falleth wilfully, but open his fault that hee may be reported.
83 Be not seditious and giuen to discord and strife, least thou bee counted a mainetainer of mischiefe.
84 Be not vainglorious and con-fident in thy foolishnesse, for such a one is like a shee beare robbed of her whelpes.
85 Be not a rewarder of euill for good: for if thou so doe, euill shall not depart from thy house.
86 Bee not a justifier of the vn-godlie, nor a condemner of the innocent: for both these doth the Lord abhorre.
87 Be not delighted in sinne and wickednesse, for that is to bring destruction & euerlasting death to thine owne soule.
88 Bee not forward of heart, least thou thereby obteine no good: neither beare thou a double tong in thy mouth.
89 Bee notwilfull in thine owne opinion, neither defend thou obstinatelie that which is not right.
90 Be not wise in thine owne conceit, least in so doing thou bee counted a foole among the discreete.
91 Be not married to thine owne fansie, and like not so well of thy selfe, as to haue others in contempt.
92 Bee not hastie to bee reuenged vpon thine enemie, but bridle thy raging lust for a time with reason.
93 Be not stubborne and rebellious against a magistrate, least thou heape coles of fire vpon
thine head.
94 Be not presumptuous, and of an haughtie heart: for the end of pride is shame and confusion.
95 Bee not a listener after newes, nor a rayler vp of reports, least thou become a common scorne.
96 Be not a laughier at other mens miseries: for thine estate is subject to the like wretchednes and calamitie.
97 Bee not a grudger against God, if hee afflict thee: but pati-entlie beare all tribulations and sorrowes.
98 Be not suspicious where there is no appearance, and though there bee, yet be not too rash in thy judgmeent.
99 Be not liberal of another mans least thereby thou gro out of credit with thy friends.
100 Bee not a decieuer of the simple, not guilefull in thy deal-ings: for that is the waie to lose loue and fauour.

The Conclusion.

Taste of the bonie here in this huiue If thou wilt learne to liue well and thrive

FINIS

A.
A Referendarie to the
Premises

No cookery is so exquisite,
   No dish so dainty dressed,
But ouercomes the appetite,
   By gluttony oppressed:
And therefore wise king Salomon
Commendeth moderation.

No kind of sweete restoritie,
   Though curioslie compounded,
No instrumnetall melodie
   In time and measure founded,
But by degrees superlatiue,
Offendes the vertue sensitiue.

Such store of honie is gathered,
   Heere in this swarming Beehive,
All being often swallowed,
   So whets the power digestiue,
That maore and more it coueteth,
And neuer faints of surfeteth.

Who would not then most hungerlie,
   Eate plenty of this honie,
Which tasteth so sweete and sauourlie,
   And costs so little mony?
The vse thereof is generall,
God grant it proue effectuall,