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P. J. S. WHITMORE

*A Seventeenth - Century
Exposure of superstition:*

SELECT TEXTS OF CLAUDE PITHOYS
(1587-1676)



SPRINGER-SCIENCE+BUSINESS MEDIA, B.V.

A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY
EXPOSURE OF SUPERSTITION

P. J. S. WHITMORE

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A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY
EXPOSURE OF SUPERSTITION:

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(1587-1676)

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

by

P. J. S. WHITMORE



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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work of Claude Pithoys has never been given in a modern edition. It deserves to be known to the present-day reader who is interested in the history of ideas. Pithoys gave a systematic criticism of two prevalent forms of superstition, witch-craft and astromancy. Although clinging to many attitudes of mind which were becoming out-dated in the seventeenth century, he was ahead of many of his contemporaries not only in the substance of his criticism but in the pungent, ironic form that it frequently took. First a monk, and then Professor of Philosophy, Law and Geography in the protestant Academy at Sedan, Pithoys in a long life spanned the period Montaigne-Bayle.

In the preparation of this selection my thanks are chiefly due to the British Academy whose grant for research in the humanities, made in 1968, enabled me to travel and purchase photocopies. My thanks are also due to Professor R. Shackleton, Bodley's Librarian, and Dr. W. H. Barber, Birkbeck College, University of London, for encouragement and advice.

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Highgate, London, 1970.

P. J. S. WHITMORE.