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Learned Discourse of the Light of Nature"; The porch, or introduction -- The explication of the words -- What nature is -- Of the nature of a law in general -- Of the eternal law -- Of the law of nature in general, its {nature/subject} -- The extent of the law of nature -- How the law of nature is discovered? not by tradition -- The light of reason -- Of the consent of nations -- The light of reason is a derivative light -- The light of reason is a diminutive light -- The light of reason discovers present, not future things -- The light of reason is a certain light -- The light of reason is directive -- The light of reason is calme and peaceable -- The light of reason is a pleasant light -- The light of reason is an ascendant light.

Sommario/riassunto

Composed in a period of religious and political upheaval, Culverwell's "Discourse of the Light of Nature" is an imaginative statement of the teachings of Christian humanism concerning the nature and limits of human reason and the related concepts of natural and divine law. In it the scholasticism of the academy and the art of the preacher join hands to form an uneasy, although familiar, alliance. Elements from many Renaissance educational forms are recognizable: the sermon, the declamation, the disputation and determination, the commonplace, the treatise, all are represented. The lengthy introduction to this new critical edition throws light on the evolution of English rationalism in the seventeenth century, and the annotation establishes for the first time the full range of Culverwell's sources - classical, medieval, and Renaissance - and enables the reader to appreciate his manner of citing authority and handling illustration.