

## *A note about this file*

Although the principle of images formed by small apertures had been described in antiquity, the first account of doing it in a camera obscura is from the 1558 book *Natural Magic* by Giovanni Battista della Porta.

It occurs on page 363 in Chapter VI of Book 17, which deals primarily with lenses.

This scan is from a 1957 facsimile edition by Basic Books.

Nick Dvoracek  
dvoracek@uwosh.edu

### CHAP. VI.

#### *Other operations of a Concave-Glass.*

**B**Efore I part from the operations of this Glass, I will tell you some use of it, that is very pleasant and admirable, whence great secrets of Nature may appear unto us. As,

*To see all things in the dark, that are outwardly done in the Sun, with the colours of them.*

You must shut all the Chamber windows, and it will do well to shut up all holes besides, lest any light breaking in should spoil all. Onely make one hole, that shall be a hand's breadth and length; above this fit a little leaden or brasse Table, and glew it, so thick as a paper; open a round hole in the middle of it, as great as your little finger: over against this, let there be white walls of paper, or white clothes, so shall you see all that is done without in the Sun, and those that walk in the streets, like to Antipodes, and what is right will be the left, and all things changed; and the farther they are off from the hole, the greater they will appear. If you bring your paper, or white Table neerer, they will shew less and clearer; but you must stay a while, for the Images will not be seen presently: because a strong similitude doth sometimes make a great sensation with the sense, and brings in such an affection, that not onely when the senses do act, are they in the organs, and do trouble them, but when they have done acting, they will stay long in them: which may easily be perceived. For when men walk in the Sun, if they come into the dark, that affection continues, that we can see nothing, or very scantily; because the affection made by the light, is still in our eyes; and when that is gone by degrees, we see clearly in dark places. Now will I declare what I ever concealed till now, and thought to conceal continually. If you put a small cunicular Crystal glass to the hole, you shall presently see

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all things clearer, the countenances of men walking, the colours, Garments, and all things as if you stood hard by; you shall see them with so much pleasure, that those that see it can never enough admire it. But if you will