The History of King Richard the Third

Thomas More

A Reading Edition

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For John
frater, ave atque vale

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Preface

My aim has been to provide an edition of the English version of More's *History* (he also wrote a Latin version) that is at once scholarly and readable. The project is thus parallel to that of the "Cambridge *Utopia*," which I edited with Robert M. Adams and Clarence H. Miller (Cambridge University Press, 1995). In particular, the two editions stand in roughly analogous relations to the corresponding volumes of the Yale *Complete Works of St. Thomas More*. At least for those of More's works that have a general readership, the magisterial Yale editions are, as it were, necessary but not sufficient. Their texts are conservative reprints of the most authoritative early editions; their textual apparatus and interpretive commentaries are voluminous. But these editions are, by the same token, books to study rather than to read. By contrast, the Cambridge *Utopia* offers a Latin text with modern punctuation and normalized spelling (as well as the eminently readable Adams translation), and a lean apparatus and commentary. Similarly, the present edition of the *History* has a modernized text, textual notes that are limited to matters of substance, and a commentary that, while fatter than that in the Cambridge *Utopia* (for a reason explained below), is still only about one-fifth the length of the splendid but massive commentary that the late Richard S. Sylvester constructed for the Yale edition. Sylvester himself prepared a compact modernized edition of the *History* (Yale University Press, 1976) for the Selected Works series that Yale offered general readers—an excellent edition, though marred here and there by errors of transcription and misleading punctuation, and now out of print.

Despite its relatively modest overall size, the commentary in the present edition is in one respect heavy: there are a great many glossarial notes explaining the meaning of difficult words and phrases.

Since the profit in reading More's book is sharply reduced if one does not apprehend the meaning of many of its locutions (some of which are not easy even for scholars), these difficulties need to be addressed. There are two ways of providing glosses: by collecting all the difficult locutions into a glossary at the back of the book, or by annotating them individually. The first way saves a great deal of space, but it leaves the reader with the unhappy choice of either not understanding as much as he or she should or of constantly interrupting the flow of reading by recourse to the back of the book. This is also the case with individual annotations, if they are given as endnotes rather than footnotes. To be sure, footnotes are interruptive too, but to a much lesser extent—especially when, as with most glossarial notes, they consist of a single word. I have therefore preferred footnotes.

I began collecting materials on More's *History* in 1994–95 while a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study at Indiana University; after seven years engaged on other projects, I began work on the edition itself in 2001–02 while a Senior Resident at Massey College in the University of Toronto. I could not have wished for more congenial settings for either work or leisure. At various stages of the work, other scholars gave me invaluable assistance in tracking down allusions in the *History:* my colleagues Margaret Pappano and Phillip Rogers at Queen's University; Father Germain Marc'hadour, founder of the Moreanum in Angers, France, and of its journal, *Moreana;* my polymathic friend David Barnard, President of the University of Regina; and Annabel Robinson, Professor of Classics there. Correspondence with Quentin Skinner, Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge, enriched my understanding of More's rhetoric. A. C. Hamilton, Cappon Professor of English (Emeritus) at Queen's, and the best senior colleague a Renaissance scholar could ever have, gave me his copy of J. R. Lumby's edition (long out of print) of the *History.* Catherine Harland, also of the Department of English, gave, as always, valuable counsel. Karen Donnelly, Administrative Secretary to the Head of English, generously accorded me, as she has since 1985, the benefit of her skills and her patience. Alex Buck of the Royal Collection confirmed important points about the portrait of Elizabeth Woodville that serves

as figure 3. My former student Sarah Copland provided both technical and scholarly assistance. My greatest debt is to Clarence H. Miller, Dorothy McBride Orthwein Professor of English (Emeritus) at St. Louis University and Executive Editor of the Yale *Complete Works,* who gave me the benefit of his counsel on the edition from the beginning and, toward the end, read the entire manuscript, making many invaluable suggestions for improvements.

Among the people I have worked with at Indiana University Press, I want first to thank Jane Lyle, until recently Managing Editor, whom I learned greatly to admire, respect, and like while my first Indiana book was in press, and who encouraged me to publish the *History* there too. I have also enjoyed working with Michael Lundell, Sponsoring Editor for History; Elisabeth Marsh, Assistant Sponsoring Editor; Dawn Ollila, Project Editor for the *History;* and the copyeditor, Drew Bryan.

Textual Practices

(1) *Abbreviations.* Allens = Sir Thomas More, *Selections from his English Works,* ed. P. S. Allen and H. M. Allen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924); *CU* = Cambridge *Utopia* (ed. Logan, Adams, and Miller)*; CW* = Yale *Complete Works of St. Thomas More; CWE* = Toronto *Collected Works of Erasmus; EW* = *The English Works of Sir Thomas More,* ed. W. E. Campbell et al., vol. 1 (1931); Lumby = *The History of King Richard III,* ed. J. Rawson Lumby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1883; rpt. 1924); *OED* = *The Oxford English Dictionary,* 2nd edn., 20 vols. (1989). (For additional abbreviations employed in the textual notes, see below, p. 119.)

(2) *Documentation.* The paraphernalia of documentation have been kept to a minimum. In the Introduction and the interpretive notes to More's text, works included in "Further Reading" (where publication data for them are given) are cited only by author and title. Translations of passages of the Latin version of More's *History* are from Daniel Kinney's edition in *CW* 15. Citations to Greek and Roman works are to the editions in the Loeb Classical Library; translations are from the same source. I have not given editors' names or publication data for these editions. In the interpretive notes, I do not cite authorities for standard historical and biographical information.

(3) *Modernization.* Except in the textual notes, I have silently modernized the spelling and punctuation of passages quoted from early texts.

(4) *Editorial procedures.* For an account of the practices followed in preparing the text, and in the textual and interpretive notes, see below, pp. 115–18.

Introduction

Thomas More wrote his unfinished *History of King Richard the Third* in two versions, English and Latin. Both open with the death of Richard's brother Edward IV on April 9, 1483, and recount in some detail the events of the following three tumultuous months, which culminated in Richard's coronation as king on July 6. At this point, the Latin version stops. The English one goes on to narrate the supposed murder, at Richard's behest, of Edward's sons (the rightful heirs to the throne), and then, a few pages into the next episode—which recounts the defection of the usurper's principal ally, the duke of Buckingham—abruptly breaks off.

Despite its unfinished state, the English version of the *History* has been a work of enormous reputation and influence. Unpublished before More's execution (1535), it was, beginning in 1543, incorporated into a series of the popular, successively cannibalizing sixteenth-century chronicle histories, of which it quickly came to be regarded as the finest segment. (It was also published in More's English Works, 1557.) In particular, the *History,* with its continuation in the chronicles, was read and admired by Shakespeare, whose own *Richard III* has More's work as its principal source and historiographical model. Shakespeare's Richard is essentially More's, and between them, these two great writers established what still remains the popular view of Richard, as a man both physically and morally deformed, a consummate dissembler hell-bent on attaining the throne at whatever cost in human life.

This view of Richard has, from the late sixteenth century, been subjected to many challenges by his defenders, who have proved to be a remarkably passionate and persistent group. They have centered their efforts on exposing errors and implausibilities in the *History.* Undeniably, as a characteristic product of the colorful, semi-fictional

historiography revived by Renaissance humanists from classical Greece and Rome, More's book does not meet the critical standards of modern historical writing. By the late twentieth century, though, historical research had made it clear that the *History* accords by and large with the most reliable early accounts of Richard's usurpation, and that it is, despite its inaccuracies, animus, and exaggerations, a valuable source for the events of 1483, about which More was evidently well-informed.

The work is also recognized as a superb piece of literature. More's most celebrated recent biographer, Richard Marius, calls the *History* "perhaps the finest thing he ever wrote."[1] This is saying a good deal, given that More's writings also include one of the most intriguing and influential books of the modern world, *Utopia.* But More wrote *Utopia* exclusively in Latin, and though, like many other medieval and Renaissance writers, he had remarkable fluency in this second language (the lingua franca of European learned discourse), it was still not his native tongue. In the English version of the *History,* by contrast, More found unrestricted scope for the exercise of what Paul Murray Kendall (Richard's most-read modern biographer) calls "the stunning vitality of . . . [his] literary talent."[2]

Stunning vitality: the words convey precisely what makes reading the *History* such an exhilarating experience—similar, in fact, to that of Shakespeare's play, with which More's work offers a fascinating comparison. The full glory of the *History,* though, is easily obscured from a modern reader by the difficulties posed by its early-sixteenth-century English and by unfamiliarity with both its historical milieu and the traditions of historical writing in which it participates. In this edition, I have attempted to minimize these difficulties by modernizing the spelling and punctuation of the text, by glossing its difficult words and its historical references (and errors), and, in the remainder of this introduction, by providing an overview of its contexts and wellsprings, in More's life and career, in the accounts of Richard that were available to him, and in humanist historiography. I have also provided an outline account of the impact of the book on later literature and on the controversy over Richard III, as well as a guide to further reading on More, his book, and its subject.

1. *Thomas More,* p. 98.
2. *Richard the Third,* p. 423.

Thomas More

More was born in London on February 7, 1478, or possibly 1477.[3] His father, John More, a lawyer and judge, evidently hoped his eldest son would follow him into the legal profession. Thomas spent a few years at the grammar school attached to St. Anthony's Hospital, learning the fundamentals of Latin. At the age of about twelve, he became a page in the household of John Morton, lord chancellor to Henry VII, who had become king in 1485 following his defeat of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field. Morton was also archbishop of Canterbury and, from 1493, a cardinal. More's placement with him was thus ideally suited to acquainting the boy with the ways of public life and to securing him a powerful patron. Morton became his most important mentor and exemplar, as is apparent especially in the deeply admiring portrayals of the older man in the *History* (in whose events Morton was in fact a key figure) and in *Utopia* (where More created a role for him in the fictive dialogue that constitutes the earlier part of the work).

After two years at Morton's, More was sent to Oxford, presumably with the primary object of sharpening the skills in rhetoric and dialectic that would be important to a legal career. (Matriculation in the faculty of arts at fourteen or fifteen was not, at the time, uncommon.) He was then, at about sixteen, brought back to London to begin legal training in the Inns of Court.

During his years as a law student, however, More came increasingly under the influence of a group of literary scholars who were central figures in the emerging tradition of English humanism. As modern investigations have made clear, the term "humanism," when applied to the Renaissance, is best used to designate not a particular philosophical position—for no single position is shared by all those Renaissance figures whom we are accustomed to regard as humanists—but to designate a particular scholarly orientation. "Humanism" is a nineteenth-century coinage, but "humanist" is found in the Renaissance itself, where it derived from *studia humanitatis,* a Ciceronian phrase that came to designate a family of disciplines comprising grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral philoso-

3. See Marius, *Thomas More,* p. 7; Peter Ackroyd, *The Life of Thomas More,* p. 4. The biographical sketch below is adapted from *CU.*

phy.[4] Latin, the standard language of learning, had undergone a natural evolution during the Middle Ages. In the late thirteenth century, humanists launched what became a spectacularly successful attempt to resurrect the classical form of the language; by the early fifteenth century, the more advanced of them were keen to master classical Greek. More studied Latin composition with the grammarian John Holt, and Greek with the first Englishman to teach it, William Grocyn. He also fell strongly under the influence of the humanist theologian John Colet. Like Grocyn, Colet had studied in Italy, the center of humanism. After his return to England in 1496, he gave several series of lectures at Oxford on the epistles of St. Paul, lectures that constituted the earliest English application of some of the exegetical and historiographical techniques of Italian humanism; later he became dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. And in 1499, More made the acquaintance of the great Dutch humanist Erasmus, who in that year first visited England.

Indeed, at this period More appears to have been as intent on the pursuit of literary scholarship as of the law. He may also have considered taking clerical orders. According to a biographical sketch that Erasmus wrote of More in 1519, for a time "he applied his whole mind to the pursuit of piety, with vigils and fasts and prayer and similar exercises preparing himself for the priesthood" (*CWE* 7.21). In fact More seems to have tested his vocation not merely for the priesthood—a calling that, as the example of Morton shows, need not have precluded a career in law (and politics)—but also for a life of religious withdrawal. The biography by his son-in-law William Roper says that at about this time More lived for four years with the Carthusians, the strictest of the monastic orders.[5]

Eventually More made his choices. By early 1505, he had closed the door to the priesthood and monasticism by marrying Joan Colt,

4. See the seminal work by Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961).

5. *The Life of Sir Thomas More,* in *Two Early Tudor Lives,* ed. Richard S. Sylvester and Davis P. Harding (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 198. Roper says that More "gave himself to devotion and prayer in the Charterhouse of London, religiously living there without vow about four years." The biography by his great-grandson Cresacre More, however, says that he dwelt "near" the Charterhouse. *The Life of Sir Thomas More,* ed. Joseph Hunter (London, 1828), p. 25.

the daughter of a wealthy landowner;[6] nor is there any sign, in the years following his marriage, that he thought of abandoning the law. Given the necessity of supporting a growing family—Joan bore him four children before her death in 1511 at twenty-three; shortly afterward, More married a middle-aged widow, Alice Middleton—he could scarcely have afforded to entertain such thoughts.

In the decade following his first marriage, More rose rapidly in his profession. Roper says he was a member of the Parliament of 1504 (where supposedly he frustrated Henry VII's bid for a tax levy), and he almost certainly represented the City of London in the Parliament of 1510. In the same year, he was appointed an undersheriff of London, a position whose duties included acting as a city judge. In March 1518, he entered the royal council of Henry VIII (who had succeeded his father in 1509).[7] His duties as councillor were varied, but his main employment, before he himself became lord chancellor in 1529, was as secretary to the king. Thus when Henry decided to publish a book against Martin Luther (in 1521), More acted as his literary adviser and editor.

In the earlier part of his professional life, he also managed to carry out a substantial amount of independent scholarship and writing. His works of this period conform strikingly to the five associated disciplines of the *studia humanitatis*. As grammarian (in the Renaissance understanding of the term), he translated (into Latin) many Greek verse epigrams, as well as four short prose works by the Greek ironist Lucian. As rhetorician, he wrote a declamation in reply to Lucian's *Tyrannicide*. (The declamation was a standard rhetorical exercise, a speech on a paradoxical or otherwise ingenious topic, often involving the impersonation of some historical or mythical figure.) Erasmus reports a lost dialogue, presumably in the spirit of a declamation, defending the community of wives advocated in Plato's *Republic*. Several long polemical letters of these years belong to the rhetorical genre of invective. As poet, he wrote, in addition to a few English poems, a large number of Latin epigrams. As moral and political philosopher, he wrote *Utopia*. As historian, he prac-

6. On her first name, usually given as "Jane," see Germain Marc'hadour, "More's First Wife . . . Jane? or Joan?" *Moreana* 29, no. 109 (March 1992), 3–22.

7. On the date of More's entry to the council, see John Guy, *Thomas More*, pp. 52–53.

ticed the humanist genre of historical biography, first in his translation of a life of the fifteenth-century Italian philosopher Pico della Mirandola, and then in *The History of King Richard the Third.*

By his early forties, though, More's career as a publishing humanist was over. Two of his polemical letters were published together in 1520. But the works he published after that date—his own anti-Lutheran works and a series of devotional works—do not fit the humanist categories.

The *History*

i. Choice of Subject

History evidently held, for More, an extremely strong appeal. According to his sixteenth-century biographer Thomas Stapleton, he "studied with avidity all the historical works he could find."[8] Since he was also, for a time, intent on establishing himself as a publishing member of the community of European humanists, it is not surprising that he should have undertaken to write a history of his own.

Nor is it surprising that the career of Richard III was the particular subject he chose. If history was one of More's special passions, corrupt government—tyranny and amoral statecraft—was one of his supreme antipathies. In his biographical sketch of More, Erasmus reports that his friend "has always had a special hatred for tyranny."[9] This animus is particularly apparent in a series of caustic poems on tyranny included among More's Latin epigrams—where it is, in fact, the single most prominent subject. His loathing for amoral statecraft is a principal concern of *Utopia,* manifested both in direct, scathing condemnation of the practices of contemporary European monarchies and in implicit and explicit comparisons (mostly contrasts) between Europe and the commonwealth of Utopia—whose armies have, moreover, from time to time freed neighboring countries from tyrants (*CW* 4.197, 201; *CU* 197, 201–203). The *History* belongs with these works, as More's most detailed analysis of the (largely un-

8. *The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More,* trans. Philip E. Hallett, ed. E. E. Reynolds (London: Burns & Oates, 1966), p. 14.

9. *CWE* 7.18, which, however, translates *tyrannis* as "absolute rule." For a survey of More's writings on tyranny (which fully confirm Erasmus's claim), see Ewe Baumann, "Thomas More and the Classical Tyrant," *Moreana,* no. 86 (July 1985), 108–27.

changing) machinations and depredations of corrupt politicians, with Richard and other political actors of his era providing the object lessons.

By modern standards Richard III seems, if a tyrant at all, a relatively mild sort of one, more fox than lion. But to More and his contemporaries, he was the most notable English example of the genus; and his seizure of power was, by any standard, a prime example of unfettered *realpolitik*.[10] Richard's usurpation was a scandal of interest not only in England but in Europe generally, and it was already the subject of much written comment and, doubtless, of a huge amount of oral reminiscence and gossip. More himself had, as we shall see, extremely good connections to key parts of the oral material. He may also have believed that writing unflatteringly about Richard would have a beneficial effect on his own political career. (Though Erasmus's biographical sketch propagated—very successfully—the idea that More had to be dragged into the royal service, it now appears that the opposite may be closer to the truth.)[11] Richard's fatal enemy was Henry VII, the father of the current occupant of the throne. In actuality, the oppressive English monarch whose methods More knew best (at the time) was the devious and extortionate Henry VII himself, whom he despised. But he could scarcely write a hostile biography of *him*.[12]

ii. Date

While it seems likely that More wrote (and ultimately abandoned) both the English and Latin versions of the *History* in the decade—1510–20—when most of his other humanist writing was done, it is

10. In the period, "tyrant" (like *tyrannus* in classical Latin) encompassed both "despot" and "usurper"; that is, the usurper's illegal seizure of the throne qualified him as a tyrant in itself, whatever the nature of his subsequent rule. Cf. the opening sentence of Francis Bacon's history of Henry VII: " . . . Richard, the third of that name, king in fact only, but tyrant both in title and regiment [i.e., rule], and so commonly termed and reputed in all times since . . . " *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII,* ed. Brian Vickers, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 5. For a general discussion, see W. A. Armstrong, "The Elizabethan Conception of the Tyrant," *The Review of English Studies* 22 (1946), 161–81.

11. See Guy, pp. 42–58.

12. Shortly before the unfinished *History* breaks off, however, More raises the possibility that he might "hereafter happen to write the time of the late noble prince of famous memory King Henry the Seventh" (p. 97). One wonders how he thought he would manage.

impossible to date the work with much precision, or even to be sure that its composition did not continue into the 1520s. The only piece of external evidence on the matter comes from More's nephew William Rastell, who in the edition of More's English Works that he published in 1557 says that More wrote the *History* "about the year of our Lord 1513."[13] Some passages of the work, however, cannot have been written until *after* 1513—a date that, to be sure, Rastell offered only as an approximation. We don't know whether More ever made substantial revisions to his initial draft. (We do know he did not revise it thoroughly, for the holograph manuscript from which Rastell printed the version in the English Works clearly included several small mistakes, inconsistencies, and duplications of material that even a fairly cursory reading should have caught, as well as a number of blanks—for dates, distances, and names of people and places—that More obviously meant to fill in at some later time.) But the reference, in the first sentence of the book, to Thomas Howard II as the earl of Surrey must have been either written or revised no earlier than February 1514, which is the date at which Howard assumed that title. Moreover, the work's opening pages as a whole seem clearly to be modeled on the opening of Tacitus's *Annals*.[14] But the early books of the *Annals,* which had been lost for centuries, were printed for the first time only in 1515, and were thus available in England that year at the earliest.[15] At least we can say that the reference to Howard as earl of Surrey cannot have been written *after* 1524, because in that year Howard succeeded his father as duke of

13. Below, p. 3. The claim is echoed, with reference to the Latin version, in the prefatory note to it in the edition of More's Latin Works published in Louvain in 1565. Rastell died there in August of the same year, shortly before the publication of this edition, but he surely played some part—perhaps the major part—in it. See *EW* 1.9–12—though also, for an argument against Rastell's having been principally responsible for the edition, *CW* 2.xlviii–l.

On the relation between the English and Latin versions of the *History*—there is compelling evidence that neither is simply a translation of the other but that More worked on them *alternately*—see *EW* 1.47–52, *CW* 2.liv–lviii, and *CW* 15.cxlviii–cli.

14. See below, p. xxxvii–xxxviii.

15. The two earliest references to copies in England date from 1520 (*CW* 2.xci), but it is altogether likely that there were copies there before that date.

A few details in the *History* appear to derive from Robert Fabyan's *New Chronicles of England and of France,* the first part of which—carrying the history through Richard's fall—was com-

Norfolk.[16] All in all, though the work *may* have been begun by 1513, it seems likelier that it was not undertaken until at least a year or two later, and perhaps not until after the completion of *Utopia* in the fall of 1516 (by which time More plausibly could have read the opening of the *Annals*). He probably did not drop the *History*—or perhaps even begin it—until late in the decade, and there is no reason why he could not have continued working on it, if only sporadically, until sometime in the 1520s.[17]

iii. Sources

Only once in the *History* (and then only in the Latin version) does More identify a source: reporting an overheard conversation, he says he learned about it from his father (*CW* 15.328–29). In part, his reticence about his informants may stem from the fact that he was writing about relatively recent events in which some powerful people—a few of them still alive, others with powerful descendants—had played more or less unsavory parts: More might reasonably have felt the need to cloak his sources of information about such matters.[18] But this consideration can hardly account for his not naming (with the single exception noted above) *any* of his oral informants, or for the fact that he never identifies any of the *written* sources he presumably used. For the explanation of most of his reticence, we must look instead to the fact that historians in the tradition in which More wrote—the rhetorical historiography

pleted in 1504 (as Fabyan records) and published early in 1516 or 1517. But More may have been acquainted with Fabyan and may have seen his work in manuscript. See below, p. xxviii.

16. Also in the opening sentence, More says that Edward IV's daughter Katherine "yet . . . liveth"; she died in 1527. About halfway through the book, the famous passage on Edward IV's favorite mistress "Jane" Shore presumably also cannot have been written later than 1527, because it refers to Shore, who died in 1526 or 1527, as still alive. See below, p. 65. On Shore's life, see Nicholas Barker, "The Real Jane Shore," *Etoniana,* no. 125 (June 1972), 383–91 (for her death, 385).

17. In the careful treatment of dating in the Yale edition of the *History,* Richard S. Sylvester assigns the work to 1514–18 (*CW* 2.lxiii–lxv), but he offers no evidence that would rule out More's engagement with it having continued into the 1520s. Alison Hanham argues that the final stage of composition extended to at least 1527 (*Richard III and His Early Historians,* pp. 217–19), but her argument depends on the implausible claim that the chronicle version of the *History* represents a later stage of composition than the manuscript Rastell printed in the English Works.

18. Cf. below, pp. xli–xlii.

established by the Greek and Roman historians and revived by their humanist emulators in the Renaissance—eschewed the naming of sources, and quotation from them, as inelegant.

To be sure, these historians understood that the authority—the persuasive power—of their works depended partly on their appearing to have had good sources and to have judiciously weighed conflicting ones, and so they frequently included formulaic references to (unidentified) sources and to their supposedly well-considered choices among differing accounts. Here too More is at one with his fellows, inserting versions of the standard formulas: "Some wise men also ween"; "this have I by credible information learned"; "Very truth is it, and well known"; "as I have for certain been informed"; "I have heard of [i.e., from] some (that said they saw it)." The most elaborate of these interpolations comes at the beginning of his account of the most mysterious and controversial matter he treats, the disappearance and presumed murder of the sons of Edward IV: "I shall rehearse you the dolorous end of those babes, not after every way that I have heard, but after that way that I have so heard by such men and by such means as methinketh it were hard but it should be true."

Of course the fact that assurances of this kind correspond to conventional formulas does not necessarily mean they are false. Undoubtedly More heard many people, of varying degrees of closeness to the events he wrote about, speak of these events, and he surely tried to assess the relative reliability of his informants. And while More's obfuscation of his sources, together with the complicated interrelations among historical writings of the period, renders it impossible to know for certain just what he got from which authorities, it is still possible to make plausible inferences about his likeliest sources and to determine how close the *History* is to what passed for truth about Richard.

We know for certain that More's oral informants included his father—who must have told him about more than just the rumored conversation referred to above.[19] John More was not an actor in the events his son wrote about, and his reports of any of them other than

19. The best treatments of More's oral sources are in A. F. Pollard, "The Making of Sir Thomas More's *Richard III*," pp. 422–25, and Sylvester's introduction, *CW* 2.lxv–lxx.

public ones must therefore have been hearsay. But he was, at the time of Richard's usurpation, a rising lawyer in his thirties, living and working in London, where most of the events of the usurpation took place. Surely, though, his most important contribution to his son's knowledge of the people and events treated in the *History* was to have managed to place him as a page in the household of John Morton, who is very likely to have been More's most important oral source.[20]

More served Morton *circa* 1490–92—that is, when he was about twelve to fourteen years old and when the usurpation was less than a decade in the past. Morton, who in 1483 was bishop of Ely and an important councillor of Edward IV, was in the midst of the maelstrom that followed Edward's premature death at the age of forty. We need not imagine that he spoke privately to an adolescent boy about these matters, but it is equally hard to imagine that there was not, in the early 1490s, a good deal of talk about them in his household, including by Morton himself. More was there, and he was certainly an intellectually precocious youth. According to William Roper, Morton himself called attention to the boy's great promise: "This child here waiting at the table," he is supposed to have said more than once, "whosoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvellous man" (p. 198). Roper says that it was through Morton that More was subsequently admitted to Oxford; and perhaps Morton did have, before his death in 1500 (when More was twenty-two), occasional private conversations with his brilliant protégé.

Various other men, too, presumably told More things about the 1480s. As A. F. Pollard points out, there were a number of individuals "who had participated in public affairs while Richard reigned and were not only alive when More was writing, but were his friends, acquaintances, or neighbours" (p. 423). It is impossible, of course,

20. There is some slight reason to think that Morton may have left a written account of Richard's usurpation: see A. N. Kincaid, "Sir Edward Hoby and 'K. Richard': Shakespeare Play or Morton Tract?" *Notes and Queries,* 226 (1981), 124–26, and the evaluation of Kincaid's findings by Daniel Kinney in *CW* 15.cxxxvi–cxxxvii*n.* Contrary to the assertions of many of Richard's apologists—and sometimes others—over the centuries (see below, p. xlix), Morton did *not* write either the Latin or the English version of the *History.* The case for his having done so was demolished by R. W. Chambers in his essay "The Authorship of the 'History of Richard III,'" in *EW* 1.24–41; see also *CW* 15.cxxxvi*n,* cxlv*n.*

to determine what in particular any of these people may have told him that made its way into the *History*.[21]

There were also voluminous written sources available to More. First, as a lawyer and undersheriff of London, he would have been easily able to consult public records. There is, however, no evidence that he did so, except for his account of one of the duke of Buckingham's speeches (delivered at the London Guildhall), which in places strikingly resembles a petition presented to Richard (doubtless by his own design) on June 26, 1483, calling on him to accept the throne; the petition was incorporated the following year into the parliamentary "Act for the Settlement of the Crown."[22]

Even in the case of the narrative histories presumably available to More, some of which he surely did read (recall Stapleton's remark about the voraciousness of his appetite for historical works), it is almost always impossible to establish definite links to the *History*. This is so not only because More did not choose to name his sources but also for two other reasons. First, there are no facts or assertions that can be uniquely associated with a particular history, both because a given fact usually appears in more than one of them and because any fact could equally well have come to More from an oral informant. Second, there are only three passages—in Fabyan's *New Chronicles*—where More's *phrasing* is close enough to that in a previous narrative to imply a direct connection with it. Still, it is worth briefly surveying these works, to get a sense of how More's book fits into the matrix of early accounts of Richard.

In England as elsewhere, the predominant form of historical writing in the Middle Ages was the annalistic chronicle: a kind of work that simply recorded events year-by-year, generally with little sophistication either of interpretation or of form and style. Prior to the advent of printing (which began in England in 1476) and for a considerable while thereafter, many chronicles circulated

21. Hanham (p. 163) gives examples of things More presumably learned from oral informants, since they are not in the surviving written sources.

22. This version of the petition—the earliest version extant—is quoted extensively by Hanham (pp. 45–48), who also cites (p. 164*n*) the clearest parallels between it and Buckingham's speech in the *History*. See also the excerpts from the petition in the appendix (below, pp. 129–31), and, in the same place, brief summaries of Buckingham's speech by Fabyan. For More's version of the speech, see pp. 80–90.

in manuscript. Typically, individual copies would be brought up to date by independent continuations. These were often created or augmented by the incorporation of diverse materials copied from various sources; the writers of continuations were normally more compilers than authors. Accordingly, the interrelations among chronicles are often extremely complex, so that it is impossible to trace the genealogy of the materials in them.

Like almost all other historical writing of the European Middle Ages, the British chronicles were produced in monasteries and written in Latin. The monastic chronicle tradition had, however, become moribund in Britain by the later fifteenth century, and with one notable exception the chronicles important to a survey of More's possible sources (or important as independent sources on Richard with which to compare the *History*) belong to a new subspecies, the London chronicles. Written in English and generally more secular in orientation than the monastic chronicles, these were copied or compiled for city officials and merchants and evidently were often updated by their owners. Like the monastic chronicles (and in sharp contrast to rhetorical histories in the classical tradition), the London chronicles frequently incorporated copies of official documents, even, as one modern scholar puts it, "vast heaps" of them,[23] and much of their value (in modern eyes) derives from this practice.

The exception to the general unimportance of the monastic chronicles as possible sources or significant analogues for More's *History* is an extremely interesting chronicle segment from the Benedictine abbey at Crowland in the diocese of Lincoln, an anonymous work known as the Second Continuation of the Crowland Chronicle. The Continuation, which is the most authoritative contemporary source for the history of the reigns of both Edward IV and Richard III, is a shrewd and highly informative work, clearly based on inside information about political affairs.[24] It is extremely unlikely that More had seen this work (which seems not to have been known to other historians before the end of the sixteenth century, and

23. F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*, p. 18.

24. For a detailed and acute discussion of the Continuation, which seems to have been written in April 1486, and of the character and possible identity of its author, see the introduction to *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1459–1486*, ed. Nicholas Pronay and John Cox.

which was not printed until 1684). The continuator's treatment of Richard's reign is far less detailed than More's, but there is a striking closeness of agreement between the two works on the basic facts of the usurpation and in the general view of Richard (though, in the Continuation, without the sensationalistic physiognomic details that More repeats from other sources, if with some skepticism). These parallels constitute the single most important indication that More was well informed about the historical terrain he surveyed and that his unflattering interpretation of the character and actions of its central figure was not mere Tudor propaganda but was harmonious with the interpretation of the best observers contemporary with the events themselves.[25]

Among the London chronicles, the two that need to be singled out in an account of More's possible sources are both associated with Robert Fabyan. Fabyan, who was an alderman of London and in 1493 its sheriff and who, as I noted above, may have known More personally, died in early 1513. In 1516 or 1517, *The New Chronicles of England and of France* was printed in London, without ascription.[26] In 1533, however, William Rastell (More's nephew) printed a different, expanded version of it, and attributed the entire work to Fabyan. There is also considerable reason for assigning him another work, now called *The Great Chronicle of London,* which, completed apparently in 1512, remained in manuscript until 1938.[27] Like most other chronicles, these two are essentially compilations and include relatively little that had not been recorded previously. In the composition of the *History,* More certainly consulted—or had detailed recall of parts of—the *New Chronicles,* either in manuscript or in the 1516/7 printed version (or possibly in some work that shared text

25. More's essential agreement with the earliest sources is likewise evident in the fundamental similarities between the basic narrative of the *History* and the other most valuable contemporary account (which More is also extremely unlikely to have known): *The Usurpation of Richard the Third* by Dominic Mancini, an Italian who was in London at the time of the usurpation and wrote a Latin account of it six months later when he had returned to the Continent. The work, preserved in a manuscript at Lille, was not published until 1936 (see below, p. liv).

26. The date of publication is given as "February 1516," but this could mean either 1516 or 1517, depending on whether the printer regarded the year as beginning on January 1 or, in the old and waning fashion, on March 25.

27. *The Great Chronicle of London,* ed. A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley (London and Aylesbury: George W. Jones, 1938; rpt. Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1983). On the complex question of its authorship, see pp. xxxix–lxix.

with Fabyan's), for at at least three points in the *History* there are passages that, as their factual details and their phrasing indicate, surely draw on the chronicle. Conceivably the debt is in the other direction. But, as I noted earlier (pp. xxii–xxiii*n*), Fabyan claimed to have completed the first part of the work—which extends to the end of Richard's reign—in 1504; and two of the three passages that have close parallels in the *History* are so characteristic of Fabyan, and have such close parallels in other passages of his work where there is no possibility of his having borrowed from More, that it seems highly unlikely that Fabyan is the debtor.[28] There is also enough resemblance, here and there, between the *History* and the *Great Chronicle* to suggest that More may have known that work too.[29]

In addition to these and other chronicles, there were several written treatments of Richard that More may have known. One is the sensational account in the *History of the Kings of England* written (in Latin) by the Warwickshire antiquary John Rous, who died in 1491. In an earlier work (a history of the earls of Warwick known as *The Rous Roll*), composed while Richard was on the throne, Rous had praised him extravagantly. The treatment in his *History,* a few pages in length,[30] includes some seemingly authentic detail, and credits Richard with some good deeds as king. But it is most notable for its comparison of him to the Antichrist and for its outrageous claims about his unnatural birth: he emerged from the womb after a two-year gestation, with hair down to his shoulders, and with teeth. More repeats the last of these claims (which was probably in general circulation), but allows that it may well be false.

There were also, in the period leading up to the writing of More's *History,* four Latin works by European humanists resident in England that treated Richard to one extent or another. The two earliest of these are by the court scholar Pietro Carmeliano: in an epistolary preface to a poem composed during Richard's reign and dedicated to him, the king is praised in terms that could scarcely be more flat-

28. See, for this argument, R. W. Chambers, *EW* 1.37*n,* and, for supporting data, Judith H. Anderson, *Biographical Truth,* pp. 80–81.

29. See Hanham, pp. 163, 165–70, and also the passages of the *Great Chronicle* and the *New Chronicles* quoted in the appendix (below, pp. 128–29)—accounts of Buckingham's speech at the Guildhall that, in miniature, parallel More's account.

30. See the translation in Hanham, pp. 118–24.

tering; a year after Richard's fall, though, Carmeliano condemned him as a murderous tyrant in the course of a poem celebrating the birth of Henry VII's eldest son, Prince Arthur. Some years later, Henry's poet laureate and official historiographer, Bernard André, included a brief, equally hostile treatment of Richard in his Life of Henry VII (begun in 1500 and presented to the king in 1502 or 1503). More had scant respect for either Carmeliano or André, mocking the poetry of each in turn in a pair of verse epigrams, and there seems to be little reason to think that he would have paid much heed to their portrayals of Richard, which were so obviously self-serving. The fourth and final member of this series of humanist works, though, was by a historian of great stature who was also a close friend of More's. This was Polydore Vergil (c.1470–1555), whose *Anglica historia* (*History of England*), commissioned by Henry VII about 1506–07, was a sophisticated work that became enormously influential as the origin of the "Tudor myth."[31] In this view of fifteenth-century English history, the Wars of the Roses were a protracted expiation of the sin of Henry Bolingbroke (Henry IV) in deposing Richard II, an expiation that was completed with the death of Richard III and the enthronement of the Lancastrian Henry VII and his Yorkist queen, Edward IV's eldest child. Polydore's treatment of Richard is somewhat more detached and far less detailed (and less exciting) than More's, but it shares with his and the other works in the tradition we have been examining the conception of the usurper as deceitful, unscrupulous, and tyrannical.

Polydore completed in 1513 a manuscript version of the *Historia* that goes up to that year, so his treatment of Richard can hardly have been indebted to More's *History* (though of course the two friends may have *discussed* Richard). Nor is there much to suggest that More's book was influenced by Polydore's. As Sylvester notes, the works share some particulars—such as Richard's habit of biting his lips in anger—not found in other writers, but "there is very little verbal correspondence" between Polydore's Latin and the Latin version of More's *History,* and though Polydore and More develop some

31. On Polydore's influence, see also below, p. xlv. On his humanist historiography, see Thomas S. Freeman, "From Catiline to Richard III: The Influence of Classical Historians on Polydore Vergil's *Anglica historia*."

similar scenes, each "organizes his material differently and interprets it after his own fashion."[32] Undoubtedly Polydore was—as a personal friend of More's and a man of comparable intellectual stature and interests—of greater importance to him than were the other writers whose works we have surveyed. But here as elsewhere (except probably in the case of Fabyan) our survey does not show what works More actually read, but only what he *may* have read—the kinds of written accounts of Richard that were available to him.

The survey also indicates that, although he portrays Richard as worse—both in absolute terms and in comparison to other political figures of the era—than more balanced modern accounts have shown him to have been, the portrait in the *History* is not substantively very different from those of More's predecessors and contemporaries. More's view of Richard is highly unflattering, but it is no more so, nor in different particulars, than those in previous accounts, including the most authoritative ones. He clearly had an accurate knowledge of many aspects of the usurpation, and, apart from a few particulars that he includes but expresses skepticism about, there is no reason to think that he said anything about Richard's *actions* that he did not believe, with some reason, to be true. He is, of course, speculating when he gives us Richard's thoughts and secret conversations, and the speeches he puts into the mouths of the usurper and other major characters are clearly also to a large extent rhetorical inventions. But he would have expected readers to recognize that this was the case, for such passages were conventions of the kind of historiography he practiced.

iv. Historiography

In all respects, More's was the rhetorical historiography revived by the humanist historians of the Renaissance from their classical predecessors. His work is in fact one of the summits of this tradition.

Among the *studia humanitatis,* rhetoric—the art or craft of verbal persuasion—was the architectonic discipline; and the key fact about both classical and humanist historiography is that their practitioners regarded history as, for the most part, a *branch* of rhetoric. Moreover,

32. *CW* 2.lxxvi. Hanham (pp. 146–47, 159–64) opposes Sylvester's view, arguing—unconvincingly, it seems to me—that Polydore was More's primary written source.

as Cicero (106–43 B.C.)—the greatest of Roman rhetoricians and thus the god of humanism—explains, history belongs to *demonstrative* (or epideictic) rhetoric, the species most concerned with virtuoso stylistic display. Demonstrative is the rhetoric of praise or blame, comprising, as Cicero says, "eulogies, descriptions, histories, and exhortations," and, in general, works that are produced as "showpieces," primarily "for the pleasure they will give" (*Orator* 11.37).

But though Cicero insists that historical writing must be highly eloquent, he also enunciates a second criterion for it, truthfulness: "who does not know history's first law to be that an author must not dare to tell anything but the truth? And its second that he must make bold to tell the whole truth?" (*De orator* 2.15.62). Cicero adds that history should include the author's evaluation of the wisdom (or otherwise) of plans and actions and a thorough exposition of the causes of events. It follows that history is useful as well as entertaining.

There is an obvious tension between the two main points in this classical theory of historiography: the aim of telling "the whole truth" about the past is not necessarily compatible with that of creating a flashy, entertaining narrative about it. In practice, the second aim generally took precedence over the first—a fact that is apparent both in some kinds of materials rhetorical histories characteristically include and in some they characteristically do not.[33] Eschewing whatever they deem inelegant, these historians normally decline to enter into detailed discussions of evidentiary matters, or to quote the unglamorous documents, private and public, that often constitute the most valuable historical evidence. On the other hand, their pages are replete with rhetorical set pieces—especially orations, character portraits, and accounts of battles—that often have only tenuous connection with known historical facts and are, indeed, often stereotyped. (None of this should be taken to mean that there was not, in the best rhetorical histories—as in the best historical novels—profound exploration of historical events and their causes and consequences, as well as beautiful writing: this is, after all, a historiographical tradition that includes, to cite only three of the most distinguished examples, Thucydides, Tacitus, and Plutarch.)

33. Cf. Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), pp. 106ff.

The elastic relation to fact in rhetorical historiography is especially conspicuous in its orations. These are usually remarks supposed to have been made by key actors in the events being narrated, speaking at crucial junctures in them. But the actual words of the speakers on these occasions (if they spoke at all) were normally not known or known only in outline. Accordingly, it was standard practice for the historian simply to invent the speeches. They were intended as—and frequently *were*—dazzling displays of rhetorical prowess, and they usually also served important thematic purposes, conveying the historian's sense of the significance of the events being narrated and often his understanding of their causes, which in this tradition of historical writing were sought primarily in the character and ambitions of powerful individuals.[34] More was a particularly adept and enthusiastic practitioner of the fictional oration: speeches, direct or reported, and including orations comparable in brilliance to those in Shakespeare's plays or *Paradise Lost,* as well as one marvelous debate (the part of the work where More is most a lawyer), constitute 40 percent of the English version of the *History* and more than half of the Latin one.

More also uninhibitedly embraced the rhetorical doctrine of imitation, which decreed that assiduous imitation of the best literary models was not only the way to *learn* to write but also, if done properly, a principal distinction of the accomplished writer. No part of classical and humanist rhetoric is, to us, more alien and suspect than this central doctrine, but it becomes much less so when we understand that according to the theory and practice of the best authorities, imitation is not mere copying. Petrarch, the seminal figure of Renaissance humanism, puts this point well in a passage—imitated from the Roman philosopher and tragedian Seneca—of a letter to Boccaccio:

34. Christians writing this kind of history might find the *ultimate* causes of events in Providence (as notably in Polydore Vergil's interpretation of fifteenth-century English political history) or in God's provision of salutary examples, but the primary focus is on immediate, mundane causality. More finds God-given lessons in the miserable end of the little princes in the Tower (p. 101), but Providence figures most conspicuously in the *History* in a series of hypocritical—and brilliantly burlesqued—appeals to it by Richard and his henchmen, attempting to give the usurpation a color of legitimacy.

> An imitator must see to it that what he writes is similar, but not the very same; and the similarity, moreover, should be not like that of a painting or statue to the person represented, but rather like that of a son to a father, where there is often great difference in the features and members, and yet after all there is a shadowy something—akin to what our painters call one's *air*—hovering about the face, and especially the eyes, out of which there grows a likeness that immediately, upon our beholding the child, calls the father up before us. If it were a matter of measurement every detail would be found to be different, and yet there certainly is some subtle presence there that has this effect. . . . It may all be summed up by saying with Seneca, and with Flaccus before him, that we must write just as the bees make honey, not keeping the flowers but turning them into a sweetness of our own, blending many very different flavours into one. . . .[35]

This seems to me a precisely accurate description of More's practice as an imitator. The *History* is full of imitations of classical Latin writers that range from small turns of phrase to large and crucial matters of interpretation of character and event. The small-scale imitations are, naturally, much more common in the Latin version than in the English, and much more readily apparent there. Documented extensively in Daniel Kinney's edition of the Latin version, the imitative phrases are found to be, though, not copies of the Latin originals but variations on them. Just as Petrarch advises, More generally makes the likenesses "elusive," only "a shadowy something"—often so shadowy, indeed, that one is not entirely sure there *is* a conscious imitation.

35. *Epistolae familiares* (*Familiar Letters*) 23.19, trans. James H. Robinson and Henry W. Rolfe, *Petrarch: The First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), pp. 290–91. Cf. Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus), *Odes* 4.2.27–32, and, for Petrarch's own practice of imitation, Seneca, *Moral Epistles* 84.5–8: "We . . . ought to copy . . . [the] bees, and sift whatever we have gathered from a varied course of reading . . . ; then, by applying . . . our natural gifts, . . . we should so blend those several flavours into one delicious compound that, even though it betrays its origin, yet it nevertheless is clearly a different thing from that whence it came. . . . [O]ur mind . . . should hide away all the materials by which it has been aided, and bring to light only what it has made of them. Even if there shall appear in you a likeness to him who, by reason of your admiration, has left a deep impress upon you, I

While these small-scale imitations span Roman literature from center to periphery, they are concentrated especially on a few major authors: Tacitus, Sallust, Seneca, Cicero, Vergil, Plautus, Terence, Ovid. More's large-scale imitations are restricted to an even smaller group. One member of this group is Lucian—the only Greek writer whom More clearly imitates.[36] As I noted earlier, in 1506 More and Erasmus published a collection of Lucianic translations; one of More's contributions to this volume was a rendering of the dialogue *Menippus.* A passage of this work, in which the Cynic philosopher and satirist Menippus compares human life to a play (and which in 1509 had supplied the basis of a brilliant passage in Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*), lies behind an equally brilliant passage of the *History,* in which More has citizens of London reflect on political life as "kings' games, as it were stage plays, and for the more part played upon scaffolds" (p. 95; for Lucian's passage, and Erasmus's, see the appendix, below, pp. 126–28). With this notable exception, however, the classical imitations in the *History* that extend beyond a phrase or a sentence—that encompass, that is, significant matters of substance or structure—are confined to two Roman historians, Sallust and Tacitus.

Sallust (86–35 B.C.) was important to More on all levels. Along with Tacitus, he is the author whose turns of phrase More most frequently echoes in the Latin version of the *History;* as Sylvester says, More must have had him "almost by heart" (*CW* 2.lxxxvii). He is also the author who codified the historical genre that More's *History* exemplifies. Sallust's two major works are biographical monographs, both on monstrous villains: Catiline, whose failed Roman coup was also given lasting notoriety by Cicero's four orations on it, and Jugurtha, the nephew, adopted son, and co-heir of the Numidian king Micipsa, whose blood sons Jugurtha murdered in order to gain sole possession of the throne.[37]

would have you resemble him as a child resembles his father, and not as a picture resembles its original; for a picture is a lifeless thing."

36. In addition to the passage discussed below, Kinney's commentary on the Latin version (*CW* 15, plus addenda in *CW* 1) cites eight other parallels between More and Lucian, and another ten parallels with other Greek authors. But all these parallels are so general, or on subjects so commonplace, that it is doubtful whether they embody deliberate imitations.

37. The classical author primarily associated with the biographical monograph is of course Plutarch. But Plutarch (c.46–c.120 A.D.) was born nearly a hundred years after Sallust's death.

More echoes *Jugurtha* much more frequently than *Catiline,* and the two passages of the *History* where his debts to Sallust are most substantial are both based on *Jugurtha.* Near the beginning of that work, the dying Micipsa gathers his family and supporters around him and delivers an eloquent oration in which he urges Jugurtha to cherish his adoptive siblings, who are still only boys; the welfare of the kingdom, he says, depends on the harmony of the three princes. Jugurtha (a suave dissimulator like More's Richard) returns "a gracious answer" to the king, though in truth he has "very different designs" in mind. The scene is the model for a parallel set piece near the beginning of More's *History,* in which Edward IV, likewise on his deathbed, urges his divided court to unite in support of *his* two sons.[38] That Edward in his final illness made an attempt to reconcile two key members of his court—Lord Hastings and the Marquis Dorset—is attested in one reliable earlier source,[39] but More's invention of a lengthy and eloquent deathbed oration for the monarch was clearly undertaken in imitation of Sallust's passage, of which it is, as Kinney says, "an elaborate rearrangement and paraphrase" (*CW* 15.cl*n*). Even more striking is the connection between More's account of Richard's insecurity and tortured conscience in the aftermath of the murder of Edward's sons and a similar passage on Jugurtha's state of mind following the mass execution of his opponents.[40]

But while More's portrayal of Richard is related to Sallust's characterization of his two grand villains, it has an even closer and more significant kinship (to use Petrarch's metaphor) with the depiction of the emperor Tiberius by Tacitus (b. 56 or 57 A.D.; d. after 117) in the then recently recovered opening books of the *Annals* (see above, p. xxii). The case could hardly have been otherwise. Not only is Tacitus the Roman writer with whom More had the deepest intellectual affinity, but his account of the reign of Augustus's terrifying successor constitutes the classic treatment of a dissimulating tyrant

38. Below, pp. 14–17; cf. *Jugurtha* 9.4–11.1.
39. Mancini, p. 69.
40. *Jugurtha* 72: see appendix, p. 125. More's imitation is on p. 102.

and of the demoralizing and corrupting effect of such a regime on the citizenry.[41]

As I noted earlier, More appears to have taken the overall design of his opening from Tacitus. Prefacing his history of a tyranny with a reminder of the better times that immediately preceded it, Tacitus leads into his account of Tiberius with a portrait of Rome in the late years of Augustus. With an exception whose significance he minimizes, the empire was at peace, and domestic troubles were far enough in the past that few remembered them:

> War at the time was none, except an outstanding campaign against the Germans. . . . At home all was calm. The officials carried the old names; the younger men had been born after the victory of Actium; most even of the elder generation, during the civil wars; few indeed were left who had seen the Republic. (1.3)

More's opening is very much in this spirit. In the latter days of Edward IV, "this realm was in quiet and prosperous estate: no fear of outward enemies, no war in hand nor none toward [i.e., impending]" (p. 5). Old enmities were largely forgotten:

> At such time as he died, the displeasure of those that bare him grudge for King Henry's sake the Sixth, whom he deposed, was well assuaged and in effect quenched, in that that many of them were dead in more than twenty years of his reign—a great part of a long life—and many of them in the mean season grown into his favor. . . . (pp. 4–5)

And there is much more in this vein, including the claim that the happy state of the realm was owing in part to Edward's having "left

41. See, for example, the passage quoted in the appendix (pp. 125–26).

More also knew the similar characterization of Tiberius by another historian of the turn of the second century A.D., Suetonius (in his *Lives of the Caesars*), and, as Sylvester shows, there are a few passages in the *History* where echoes of Suetonius help to set More's narrative "against the background of Tiberian Rome" (*CW* 2.xci–xcii). But Suetonius's gossipy, scandalous work on the emperors from Julius Caesar through Domitian—essentially a collection of anecdotes—is not an important model for More's history.

all gathering of money (which is the only thing that withdraweth the hearts of Englishmen from the prince)" (p. 7).

A particularly significant (though not immediately evident) feature of this opening is that it is largely false to what More must have known about Edward's reign. First, it was not the case that England was at peace during the king's last years. There were intermittent hostilities with Scotland, and in his final few months Edward seems to have been planning to renew hostilities with France. As for the general tenor of his reign, later in the work other passages convey a considerably different and more accurate view of the matter. In Buckingham's speech at the London Guildhall—a brilliant oration freely elaborated by More, in the manner of rhetorical historians, from brief earlier accounts and, evidently, the petition presented to Richard in June 1483—the duke tries to stir up enthusiasm for Richard by expatiating on Edward's rapacity and his notorious extortions through the abuse of legal proceedings (see below, pp. 81–83). Buckingham's rhetoric is hyperbolic, but key parts of his account are substantiated by reference to actual incidents, and the speech is, on the whole, much closer to the truth about Edward's reign than is the idyllic view of it set forth in the work's early pages—where More is intent on replicating Tacitus's design, with its dramatic contrast of reigns. Although More constantly fabricates public speeches and private conversations, and, as we shall see, sometimes suppresses the names or elides the roles of Richard's supporters from among the great, this is perhaps the only place in the *History* where he departed radically and at length from the truth, as he knew it, of historical *events*.

Fundamentally, Tacitus was important to More because he was, as I noted above, the Roman writer with whom More had the deepest intellectual affinity—a fact that is pervasively evident in the narrative voice and interpretive perspective of the *History*. Though stylistic parallels between works in different languages are perforce limited, Tacitus's style is the great archetype of the kind of spare rapidity and incisiveness that More consistently achieves in his most idiomatic English passages.[42] What is more striking than specifi-

42. The style of the English version of the *History* varies from this direct, brisk, idiomatic *English* style to an elevated, even stately style characterized by elaborately paired and balanced sentence elements. Although there is never a sense of stylistic discontinuity between passages

cally stylistic parallels between the two historians, though, is the similarity between the voices—caustic, clinical, skeptical, superior, and constantly focused on ironic contrasts between appearance and reality, expectation and outcome—that their styles help to define. At one point in the *Annals,* Tacitus steps back from his narrative to remark that "the more I reflect on events recent or remote, the more am I haunted by the sense of a mockery in human affairs" (3.18). This sense permeates More's work as thoroughly as it does Tacitus's, and gives it the same dark coloration—though More's history is also constantly illuminated by the brilliant lightning of his wit, which, unlike his irony, finds no parallel in the austere Roman.

More's use of Tacitus and, to a lesser extent, Sallust represents historiographical imitation at its most interesting, demonstrating that it can be a mode of historical interpretation and a way of uncovering and asserting constants of human experience. This point about imitation, as it relates to More's use of the two Romans and to the relation between his classical models and his English sources, is beautifully expressed by Sylvester:

> What Sallust and Tacitus gave him was a form, a set of techniques and analogues, a literary pattern according to which he could develop his own historical vision. The basic elements in that vision were defined by the sources, oral and perhaps written, which were available to him. More took the raw material that they furnished and shaped it into an historical narrative of compelling power, utilizing, as he proceeded, all that he had learned from the classical authors. The result was a truly humanist history which, combining old forms and new subject matter, often suggested that the present could best be understood when seen in terms of the past. (*CW* 2.xcviii)

Creating a history in this way involved constant extrapolations beyond (and a few contradictions of) known facts, and conflations

of the *History,* More tends to employ the first style in passages of narrative, dialogue, and anecdote, whereas the second is found especially in set speeches and moralizing passages. For detailed analyses, see W. A. G. Doyle-Davidson, "The Earlier English Works of Sir Thomas More," pp. 371–74, and Elizabeth Story Donno, "Thomas More and *Richard III,*" esp. pp. 428–29, 438–40.

of England with Rome. But what finally matters about the *History* is not its *in*accuracies but its profound accuracies: its unsurpassed analysis and indictment of the machinations of unscrupulous, self-serving politicians in any time or place, at their everyday worst.

A Masterpiece Unfinished

We know that More intended to carry the *History* through to the death of Richard, for he tells us so (p. 101). Why did he leave the book unfinished? There is no way of knowing for certain, but one can make some plausible guesses, any of which, or any combination of which, may be correct. At the least, the elaboration of these surmises illuminates the constraints that affected More as he wrote.

First, he may simply not have found time to complete the book. The prefatory letter to *Utopia* (1516) includes an explanation for his slowness in completing *that* work, blaming the delay on excessive professional and personal busyness:

> Most of my day is given to the law—pleading some cases, hearing others, arbitrating others, and deciding still others. I pay a courtesy call to one man and visit another on business; and so almost all day I'm out dealing with other people, and the rest of the day I give over to my family and household; and then for myself—that is, my studies—there's nothing left. . . . My own time is only what I steal from sleeping and eating. (*CU* 33)

According to his biographer Stapleton, More slept four or five hours a night, rising at 2 A.M. Presumably he did not become *less* busy when, two years later, he joined the royal council and began his rise through the series of political offices that culminated in the chancellorship.

Moreover, such writing time as he could find was, from 1521 on, largely or entirely given over to the production of religious works, especially a series of anti-Lutheran treatises in which he was involved both as Henry VIII's editor and collaborator and, partly at Henry's instigation, as the author of several works of his own. The latter comprise an astonishing number of pages. Amid the growing crisis of the Reformation, More would undoubtedly have regarded

these works as taking precedence over the *History*—though most modern readers will, after comparative reading in the two, demur at this ranking.

He may also have become convinced that he could never publish the *History*—and with no possibility of publication, there is much less incentive to write. As I noted earlier, a number of powerful men had played questionable parts in the events he was recounting. Some of these men had died but had passed on their power to their children; some were still alive. It would surely have been awkward for More to publish a book full of caustic Tacitean judgments of these people, and indeed doing so might, as More's modern biographer Richard Marius suggests, have been fatal to his political career (*Thomas More,* p. 119).

The *History* itself seems to provide evidence, in its omissions and evasions, that More felt the constraints that these circumstances imposed. The most telling omissions concern the Howard family.[43] Apart from the duke of Buckingham, John Howard—the first Howard duke of Norfolk—had been Richard's most powerful supporter in the usurpation; but he is not named in the *History* as authoritatively printed—from a manuscript in More's own hand—by More's nephew William Rastell. It is hard not to associate this omission with the fact that both Howard's son Thomas (restored in 1514 to the dukedom that John Howard's support of Richard had cost his family), and his grandson (also Thomas—the father of the poet Henry Howard, earl of Surrey) were extremely powerful individuals at the time More was most probably writing, and also with the fact that Thomas Howard II became (at whatever point), as William Roper tells us, More's "singular dear friend" (p. 225).

Thomas Howard I had also been an active supporter of Richard. In the *History* as printed by Rastell the son shares with the father the good fortune of being nowhere named. In the account of Hastings's fall, More tells of a knight who was sent by Richard to assure the baron's timely arrival at the council meeting where he was to be arrested for treason; the knight is identified only as "a mean [i.e., mid-

43. On More's reticence about the Howards and other still-powerful families, see A. F. Pollard, "The Making of Sir Thomas More's *Richard III,*" p. 425.

dling] man at that time, and now of great authority" (p. 58). But in the first four, unauthorized printings of the *History* (1543–50)—the Hardyng-Hall versions[44]—the knight is identified, very plausibly, as Thomas Howard, who is also, in these printings, named in another passage where Rastell's edition omits to identify an individual who carries out an unattractive assignment for Richard. Moreover, the Hardyng-Hall texts at one point identify another figure left nameless in Rastell's edition as *John* Howard.[45]

The second duke of Buckingham, who figures so largely in the *History,* also had a son who had succeeded to his father's title. This fact had not deterred More from giving a full account of the father's part in the usurpation, but the English version of the *History* does break off in the middle of an account of John Morton's inveigling Buckingham to revolt against the newly crowned Richard, with a view to installing himself on the throne. It may be, as A. F. Pollard suggests, that More stopped at this point because this was where the impossibility of publishing his *History* became overwhelmingly clear to him. During the years when More was most probably writing the book, Henry VIII had no male offspring (his daughter Mary was born in February 1516), and the third duke of Buckingham—an ambitious and intemperate man like his father—was the premier peer of the realm and keenly aware of his strong hereditary claim to the throne. More may well have concluded that it would be imprudent to publish a book that focused so intensively on the second duke's double treason (to Edward V and then to Richard).[46] Then too, as Paul Murray Kendall suggests, More may have been uneasy at finding himself, in this final passage, portraying his old patron

44. See below, pp. xliii–xliv.

45. See pp. 58 and 63 (Thomas), p. 42 (John), and notes. It is possible that More himself was responsible for the identification of the Howards in another, presumably earlier redaction of the *History* that, through whatever process of recopying and editing (cf. below, p. 115), eventuated in the Hardyng-Hall texts. An interesting parallel is found in Polydore Vergil, who, as Denys Hay points out, at one point in his *Anglica historia* evidently decided to suppress Thomas Howard's name: it is included in the manuscript version of his account of Richard's accomplices in the murder of Hastings but omitted from the printed version. See Hay's *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), pp. 204–05; noted by Sylvester, *CW* 2.lxix*n.*

46. Cf. Pollard, p. 430. In the end, the third duke was, like his father, convicted of treason—in the son's case on questionable charges—and executed (1521).

Morton as a "consummate intriguer"[47]—indeed, as a dissimulator as wily as Richard himself.

Whatever the reasons for it, More's failure to complete the *History* was a great loss to English literature. We do not have the rest of Richard's story in More's exhilarating style (the flatness of the continuations in the chronicle histories brings this loss home), and the part he drafted is incompletely revised, as we know from the small lacunae in the text and occasional confusions and inconsistencies in it. More was a careful writer, given to meticulous consideration of the best wording;[48] it is tantalizing to ponder just how good a fully completed *History* might have been. Taken together, *Utopia* and the unfinished narrative of Richard serve to underscore the cost to letters of More's having become an officer of the crown and an anti-Lutheran polemicist.

Aftermath

Even in its unfinished state, the *History* played a major role in the subsequent development of English literature and in a great historical controversy. Although the work was not printed in More's lifetime, it began at some point to circulate in manuscript. (The earliest actual record of the book in others' hands is from 1538, three years after More's execution.)[49] In 1543 the English version of the book first saw print, as a continuation of the fifteenth-century verse chronicle of John Hardyng. This book, published by Richard Grafton, was reprinted (reset), with many spelling changes and a few corrections, later the same year. Five years later, the *History* appeared again, this time incorporated into Edward Hall's *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York,* which was printed posthumously by Grafton and reprinted by him in 1550 with small changes. The Hardyng and Hall versions differ in only minor

47. *Richard III: The Great Debate,* ed. Paul Murray Kendall (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 28.

48. See *CW* 2.xli–xliii and especially the fascinating account of the holograph manuscript of *De tristitia Christi* in Clarence H. Miller's introduction to that work: *CW* 14, Part II, 754–76.

49. See *CW* 2.xxvii.

ways; they surely derive from closely related manuscript versions of the work. Then in 1557 More's nephew William Rastell printed the *History* in his collected edition of More's English Works, using, he tells us, a manuscript in the author's own hand. In his prefatory note, Rastell castigated the Hardyng-Hall versions as "very much corrupt in many places, sometimes having less and sometimes having more, and altered in words and whole sentences"—a fair enough summary. A chastened Grafton printed the *History* twice again, corrected by Rastell's text, in 1568 and 1569 editions of his *Chronicle at Large;* and More's work was also incorporated into the chronicles of Raphael Holinshed (1577; second edition 1587) and John Stow (1580 and later editions).[50]

In Hardyng's chronicle, the *History* was printed without attribution, perhaps because Henry VIII, who had had More executed for treason eight years earlier, was still on the throne. The first printed identification of More as its author came in Hall's 1548 chronicle. (Henry had died the previous year.) In 1553, the humanist scholar Roger Ascham summarized in a prefatory letter to his *Report of the Affairs and State of Germany* the qualities of an ideal historian. At the end of his list (derived primarily from Cicero), he added that "Sir Thomas More, in that pamphlet of Richard the Third, doth in most part, I believe, of all these points so content all men, as, if the rest of our story of England were so done, we might well compare with France, or Italy, or Germany, in that behalf."[51] In 1596, Sir John Harington recorded that "the best and best-written part of all our chronicles, in all men's opinions, is that of Richard the Third."[52]

Reprinted more often than any other historical work of the era, and highly admired, the *History* was in one sense enormously influential: presenting with surpassing eloquence the damning early view of Richard, More's work sealed the historical fate of an English king.

50. On these post-1557 reprints, see the account in *EW* 1.46–47. The Latin version of the *History* was first printed in 1565, among More's collected Latin Works.

51. *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham,* ed. J. A. Giles, 4 vols. (London: John Russell Smith, 1864–65; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1965), 3.6. Though written in 1553, the *Report* was not printed until about 1570.

52. *A New Discourse of a Stale Subject, Called The Metamorphosis of Ajax,* ed. Elizabeth Story Donno (New York: Columbia University Press; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 107–108. (I have modernized spelling and punctuation.) Harington adds that the work was "written, as I have heard, by Morton, but, as most suppose, by that worthy and uncorrupt magistrate Sir Thomas More." On this now thoroughly discredited claim, see above, p. xxv*n.*

Its influence in this regard was particularly potent in combination with that of Polydore Vergil's *Anglica historia*. As I noted earlier, Polydore's work created the "Tudor myth," in which the Wars of the Roses were seen as the expiation of the sin of Henry IV's usurpation, an expiation whose completion was triumphantly marked by the inauguration of the Tudor dynasty in 1485. For the Elizabethans, this view had its most influential embodiment in Hall's chronicle, in which the account of the Wars of the Roses is based on Polydore's *Historia;* More's *History,* amalgamated into Hall's work, fitted perfectly with Polydore's view of the fifteenth-century historical terrain as a whole. As Paul Murray Kendall puts it, "More supplied the portrait of Richard III for the Tudors; Polydore Vergil created the ideological frame of the portrait."[53] It was Hall who placed the portrait into the frame.

But while More's work was incorporated wholesale into the sixteenth-century chronicles and largely determined Richard's historical reputation, it had little apparent influence on *new* historical writing. Ascham made the *History* the primary model for his *Report,* but no other sixteenth-century historian followed his lead.[54] It was not until 1622, when another lord chancellor, Francis Bacon, published his *History of the Reign of King Henry the Seventh* that England produced a work of prose history that can stand as a worthy successor—in terms of narrative verve and Tacitean clinicality—to More's. And even then, although Bacon must certainly have been aware of the parallel between his work and that of his great predecessor, there is no reason to think that his *History*—a product of the late Renaissance vogue for "politic" history modeled on Tacitus and, just as importantly, Machiavelli and Guicciardini—was specifically indebted to More's work.[55]

53. *Richard the Third,* p. 423.

54. Cf. M. M. Reese, *The Cease of Majesty,* pp. 46–47: "[The *History*] was a remarkable book by a remarkable man, and in an aesthetic sense it was too special to have any immediate effect on the writing of history. More had unusual endowments in his great learning, high satiric intelligence and intuitive dramatic art; but the book's real quality is to be found in the man himself, in the extraordinary range of his affections and the breadth and independence of his vision. For two generations his fragment of history was a thing apart, and we have to wait until Shakespeare's *Richard III* before we find anything quite like it."

55. On Bacon and politic history, see the comprehensive introduction in F. R. Levy's edition of Bacon's *History* (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1972), pp. 1–54, and Levy's *Tudor Historical Thought,* pp. 237–85.

On Elizabethan poetry and the Elizabethan stage, however, More's *History* had a clear and substantial impact. Several of the verse fall-of-princes narratives that make up the extremely popular *A Mirror for Magistrates* (1559, 1563, and later editions) treat figures in the Richard saga in ways that clearly depend on More; these works include, in addition to the tragedies of Richard himself, Hastings, and Edward IV's brother-in-law Lord Rivers, the two most celebrated of the poems, Thomas Sackville's tragedy of Buckingham and Thomas Churchyard's "Shore's Wife" (on Edward IV's favorite mistress, made famous by a celebrated passage of the *History*).[56]

In the Elizabethan theater, the impact of the *History* was felt first on the Latin drama that grew up at Oxford and Cambridge in the sixteenth century. In March 1579, Thomas Legge, the master of Caius and Gonville College, produced his massive *Richardus Tertius,* a fifteen-act extravaganza presented over three nights in another Cambridge college, St. John's. In tragedy, the university plays adhered tightly to the ponderously declamatory mode of the tragedies of Seneca. Tyranny is Seneca's major theme, and it was Legge's original contribution to realize that a Senecan tragedy could be made by versifying materials from the English chronicles, specifically the story of the tyrant Richard. Little else is original in *Richardus Tertius,* which stays extremely close to the account of Richard in More's *History* and its continuation in Hall's chronicle—an account that, with its frequent orations and dramatic scenes, readily lent itself to theatrical adaptation. Legge's play was well received and influential, becoming the progenitor of the popular genre now known as the chronicle play.[57]

Richard was transported to the London popular stage in the late 1580s or early 1590s, when playgoers were being introduced not only to English-speaking versions of the Senecan villain-hero but to the Marlovian superhero and the "Machiavel" figure produced by grafting the lurid popular simplification of Machiavelli's doctrines onto the personified Vice of the sixteenth-century morality plays.

56. In the final decade of the sixteenth century, Michael Drayton included verse letters between the king and Shore in his Ovidian *England's Heroical Epistles;* these are freely elaborated from starting points in More.

57. For the play and its reception, see Thomas Legge, *The Complete Plays,* Vol. 1: *Richardus Tertius,* ed. and trans. Dana F. Sutton (New York: Peter Lang, 1993).

The usurper's first London stage appearance may have come in the anonymous *True Tragedy of Richard the Third,* which survives only in a highly corrupted printing of 1594 but is thought to have been first performed several years earlier. Based on the *History,* though more loosely than *Richardus Tertius,* this play, too, incorporates More's Richard into a Senecan framework, while also giving him some distinctly Marlovian characteristics.[58] But the *True Tragedy* is—and surely was, even in its original form—a crude work, and it was left to Shakespeare to exploit the full dramatic potential of More's *History.*

Richard makes his Shakespearean debut toward the end of *Henry VI, Part II.* Though mocked by his enemies for his deformity, he appears in this play, and in the first half of *Henry VI, Part III* (a work in which he has a major role), as a valiant and attractive young warrior. (No one had ever denied that Richard was, as More puts it with grudging litotes, "none evil captain . . . in the war" [p. 10].) Midway in this latter play, though, he suddenly reveals himself as a dissembling villain. The first part of act 3, scene 2, dramatizes More's account of the wooing of Elizabeth Woodville by Edward IV, with the added feature of Richard and his brother George as onlookers and witty commentators; in the second part of the scene, Richard, left alone on stage, delivers a brilliant and lengthy soliloquy—the longest in Shakespeare—in which he boasts of his consummate dissimulation ("Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile") and promises that in pursuit of the crown he will "Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could, . . . And set the murderous Machiavel to school" (ll. 182, 189, 193).[59] From this point on, and throughout the sequent play that bears his name, he is the Richard of More's *History,* though with the addition of the "sardonic jocularity" (in M. M. Reese's phrase) that the stage Machiavel inherited from the morality Vice.[60] In effect (as has often been noticed), Shakespeare

58. For a detailed summary of parallels with Marlowe's Tamburlaine and Faustus, see George B. Churchill, *Richard the Third up to Shakespeare,* pp. 469–74, 480–84.

59. I quote Shakespeare from *The Complete Works,* ed. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

60. See Reese, p. 96*n.* Just as Richard explicitly associates himself with the Machiavel, so also does he with the Vice: "like the formal Vice, Iniquity, / I moralize two meanings in one word" (*R3* 3.1.82–83).

took the wit and caustic irony of More's narrator and transferred them to Richard—who is not, in the *History,* a witty person.

Shakespeare encountered the *History* in both Hall and Holinshed.[61] He knew it well and borrowed from it freely, for plot, characterization (including such details as Richard's gnawing his lips when angry), and, here and there, language. In several cases—the wooing of Elizabeth Woodville, the short-lived reconciliation at Edward's deathbed, the debate on sanctuary, the downfall of Hastings, Buckingham's Guildhall speech, the Lucianic charade at Baynard's Castle—he needed only to rewrite, in full dialogue, scenes that More had already made highly dramatic. (See appendix, pp. 131–34.) It is often thought that Shakespeare's contact with More marked a turning point in the development of his dramaturgy—a view that traces back to R. W. Chambers's celebrated biography of More, and that was subsequently reinforced and elaborated by the distinguished Shakespeareans E. M. W. Tillyard, John Dover Wilson, and M. M. Reese.[62] Shakespeare's mature history plays—on history both British and Roman—are, among other things, culminating works in the tradition of humanist historiography, and More's *History,* along with Polydore Vergil's, is the great exemplar of that tradition with which Shakespeare had intimate contact during the years when he was mastering his craft.

Richard III has always been one of Shakespeare's most popular plays, and, added to More's *History,* it sealed even more tightly Richard's reputation as a monstrous tyrant. Yet Richard has long had his defenders, too, and over the past four centuries their passion and persistence have created around him what has surely been the fiercest, most enduring controversy about any English historical figure. Written panegyrics of Richard (like that in Rous's *Roll:* above, p. xxix) naturally ceased after his displacement by Henry

61. See Randall Martin, ed., *Henry VI, Part Three,* The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 327–56; Anthony Hammond, ed., *King Richard III,* The Arden Shakespeare (London and New York: Methuen, 1981), pp. 79–80.

62. Chambers, *Thomas More* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1935), p. 117; Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1944), p. 39; Wilson, ed., *Richard III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954; corrected edn., 1961), pp. xiv–xxiii; Reese, pp. 46–47, 66. Wilson, p. xvii: "It is . . . difficult to exaggerate Shakespeare's debt to More at this stage of his development; probably he learnt as much from him as he did from Plutarch later."

VII, but by the late sixteenth century caveats at the uniformly unfavorable view of him began to appear. In *Britannia* (1586), the great antiquary and historian William Camden, his view of Richard inflected by the Aristotelian and Machiavellian distinction between the good man and the good ruler, observed that although Richard had attained the throne "by evil arts and crimes[,] . . . he is by all persons of reflection esteemed a bad man, but a good king."[63] Later, Francis Bacon registered a similar judgment: "although he were a Prince in militar virtue approved, jealous of the honour of the English nation, and likewise a good law-maker for the ease and solace of the common people; yet his cruelties and parricides [i.e., murders of near relatives] in the opinion of all men weighed down his virtues and merits; and in the opinion of wise men, even those virtues themselves were conceived to be rather feigned and affected things to serve his ambition, than true qualities ingenerate [i.e., innate] in his judgement or nature."[64] In the last years of the sixteenth century, a witty, paradoxical defense of Richard, written by Sir William Cornwallis the Younger and dedicated to the poet John Donne, was circulating in manuscript; it was finally published in 1616.[65] The first full-scale defense was mounted by the antiquary Sir George Buck, whose work was published (in debased form) in 1646, twenty-four years after his death. Buck accepted the old rumor that Cardinal Morton had written the Latin version of the *History* and that More had merely "translated and interpreted and glosed [i.e., glossed] and altered his master's book."[66] Richard's apologists have often preferred to take this view: Morton, whose own reputation is, despite More's admiration and best efforts, equivocal, and who was obviously a strong partisan of both Edward IV and Henry VII, is a far more desirable opponent than More—though Buck and subsequent Ricardians have not been shy of attacking More too.

63. *Britannia,* tr. Richard Gough, 2nd edn., 4 vols. (London: John Stockdale, 1806; rpt. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1974), 1.386.

64. *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII,* ed. Vickers, p. 6.

65. See *The Encomium of Richard III,* ed. A. N. Kincaid with an introduction by J. A. Ramsden and A. N. Kincaid (London: Turner & Devereux, 1977).

66. Sir George Buck, *The History of King Richard the Third (1619),* ed. Arthur Noel Kincaid (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1979), p. 121.

The best-known defense of Richard has been Horace Walpole's *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third* (1768). Walpole applied, as A. R. Myers says in his fine survey of the historiography of Richard, "rationalist, forensic methods" to the criticism of the standard view, arguing that "it would not have been reasonable or in harmony with Richard's usual character" for him to have committed the acts of which his detractors accused him.[67] Walpole's book provoked many harsh responses,[68] but it also helped to inspire other defenses of Richard, which have grown, over the following two and a half centuries, into a sizable collection of writings. As Kendall notes, the debate over Richard has, since the emergence of professional historians in the later nineteenth century, for the most part pitted amateurs (Richard's apologists) against professionals, with "scholars imperturbably holding ranks against the irregular sallies of guerillas."[69] This is not to say that Richard has not had some very able and learned defenders. Kendall himself has been the most successful of the apologists, in his biography *Richard the Third,* which, first published in 1955, has undoubtedly been the most widely read and influential modern account of Richard's life. To academic historians, however, Kendall (a professor of English) can also seem less than ideally professional. This is, for example, the view of Charles Ross, Richard's other most important modern biographer (1981); and certainly some of Kendall's imaginative reconstructions of Richard's thoughts and of the details of battles are more in the tradition of humanist historiography than of sober modern historiography.[70]

Over the past few decades, though, the differences between the views on Richard of professional historians and those of the most scholarly Ricardians have tended to diminish. For *all* serious students of Richard, it is, as a consequence of twentieth-century

67. "Richard III and Historical Tradition," p. 193.

68. See the edition by P. W. Hammond (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1987), pp. ix–xix.

69. *Richard III: The Great Debate,* p. 11. See the detailed surveys in Kendall's *Richard the Third,* pp. 427–34, and in Myers's article.

70. Cf. Ross, *Richard III,* pp. li*n* (on Kendall's method in general), 21 (on his account of the Battle of Barnet), 215*n* (on Bosworth Field: "Kendall's account of the battle remains an astonishing mixture of imagination, speculation and purple prose, and his description of Richard's last moments seems to suggest that he was perched on the crupper of the king's horse").

scholarship, now difficult to avoid two major conclusions, the first of which is relatively favorable to the last Yorkist king and the second distinctly not. On the one hand, viewed in the fuller historical context afforded by modern studies, Richard does not appear much better or worse than many other political figures of his harsh era. On the other hand, it has become clear that the main charges leveled against him by the Tudor historians do not (as his defenders have traditionally maintained) stem simply from the eagerness of Tudor partisans to blacken his name, but originated in his own time and are supported by the earliest and best sources on the usurpation. As for *The History of King Richard the Third,* the damage it did to Richard must be attributed not to malicious invention but to (recalling Kendall's phrase) "the stunning vitality of More's literary talent"—which fused a varied collection of facts and rumors into a coherent if monstrous figure, and breathed into it enduring life.

Further Reading

William Rastell's edition of *The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England, wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge* (1557), which provides the basis of the text in the present edition, is available in photographic facsimile: introduction by K. J. Wilson, 2 vols. (London: Scolar Press, 1978). There is another facsimile reproduction of the 1557 text of the *History* in *The English Works of Sir Thomas More,* ed. W. E. Campbell et al. (but discontinued after two volumes), Vol. 1 (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode; New York: Lincoln Mac Veagh, 1931), which also includes extremely valuable introductory essays, commentary, and collations with other early printings. The current full critical edition of the English version of the *History* is that by Richard S. Sylvester in the Yale edition of *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More,* Vol. 2 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963). Sylvester's text preserves the punctuation and spelling of the 1557 printing. He adds a comprehensive introduction and a voluminous commentary; these are the first places to look for further information on any aspect or passage of the English *History.* Sylvester's edition also includes the Latin version of the work, but this part of his edition has been superseded by Volume 15 of the Yale edition, ed. Daniel Kinney (1986), with a text based on a newly discovered manuscript. The discussions in these editions of the relations among the various sixteenth-century texts of the *History* are valuably supplemented by David Womersley, "Sir Thomas More's *History of King Richard III:* a new theory of the English texts," *Renaissance Studies,* 7 (1993), 272–90.

John Guy's *Thomas More* (London: Arnold, 2000) gives an authoritative and compact account of More's life; Guy is also excellent on the limits—inherent in the nature of the sources—on biographical knowledge of More. The most celebrated recent full biography is that by Richard Marius, *Thomas More* (New York: Al-

fred A. Knopf, 1984). Marius is relentlessly revisionistic, developing a largely unflattering portrait of More as a deeply conflicted man, but his book has many brilliant passages. The other recent full-scale biography—Peter Ackroyd's *The Life of Thomas More* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998)—presents More as a healthy defender of a dying medieval Catholic culture. No student of More and his works should fail to read Stephen Greenblatt's chapter on him in *Renaissance Self-fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 11–73, including a penetrating brief passage on the *History* (pp. 13–15).

Along with the *History,* the other highly influential early account of Richard of Gloucester's character and career is that found in the *Anglica historia* of More's friend the Italian-born humanist Polydore Vergil. Part of this work is available in a fine sixteenth-century English translation by an unknown hand: *Three Books of Polydore Vergil's English History, Comprising the Reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV, and Richard III,* ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: Camden Society, 1844). On Polydore's humanist historiography, see Thomas S. Freeman, "From Catiline to Richard III: The Influence of Classical Historians on Polydore Vergil's *Anglica historia*," in *Reconsidering the Renaissance,* ed. Mario A. Di Cesare, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, Vol. 93 (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992), pp. 191–214. There are two especially interesting and valuable contemporary accounts of Richard's usurpation. The first is by another Italian humanist, Dominic Mancini, who was in London for a period of several months ending shortly after Richard's coronation; Mancini's narrative, unknown before the twentieth century, has been published as *The Usurpation of Richard the Third,* trans. and with an introduction by C. A. J. Armstrong, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969; 1st edn. 1936). The second of these contemporary accounts is contained in the so-called Second Continuation of the Crowland Chronicle, an anonymous work that incorporates material from an intelligent and well-informed insider and that is now recognized as the most authoritative narrative source for the reigns of Edward IV and Richard III. See *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1459–1486,* ed. Nicholas Pronay and John Cox (London: Richard III and Yorkist History Trust, 1986). Extracts from a wide variety of primary sources for Richard's career

are collected in P. W. Hammond and Anne F. Sutton, *Richard III: The Road to Bosworth Field* (London: Constable, 1985), which is also lavishly and instructively illustrated, and in Keith Dockray, *Richard III: A Source Book* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1997). George B. Churchill, *Richard the Third up to Shakespeare, Palaestra* 10 (Berlin: Mayer & Müller, 1900; rpt. New York and London: Johnson, 1970), surveys almost all the historical narratives and literary texts on Richard from his own time through the late sixteenth century; though to some extent outdated, Churchill's tome is still useful for its astonishingly detailed summaries (with extensive quotation) and its careful genealogies of the manifold aspects of the Richard legend.

Among the many modern biographies of Richard, the most widely read has been the colorful, highly sympathetic *Richard the Third* by Paul Murray Kendall (London: Allen & Unwin, 1955). A better balanced account (and now the standard biography) is Charles Ross's *Richard III* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), which provides both a rich context for More's *History* and a highly readable introduction to Richard and his times; Ross's work is supplemented in both respects by his earlier biography, *Edward IV* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974). A. J. Pollard's *Richard III and the Princes in the Tower* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Alan Sutton, 1991) is a wide-ranging account, wonderfully illustrated, of Richard's career and the vicissitudes of his reputation. Michael Hicks's *Richard III and His Rivals: Magnates and their Motives in the War of the Roses* (London and Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1991) offers a series of re-examinations of various important individuals and events in the years leading up to the usurpation. In Hicks's book as nearly everywhere else, Edward's queen (with her siblings and the children of her first marriage) does not come off well. For an attempt to alter the historically unsympathetic balance of opinion on her, see David Baldwin, *Elizabeth Woodville: Mother of the Princes in the Tower* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Alan Sutton, 2002). The best biography of Richard's successor is S. B. Chrimes's *Henry VII* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972). John Guy's *Tudor England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) provides an excellent general account of England in the late

fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. For a brief overview of the struggle of Lancaster and York, see A. J. Pollard, *The Wars of the Roses,* 2nd edn. (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave, 2001).

Arnaldo Momigliano's *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley / Los Angeles / Oxford: University of California Press, 1990—though based on a lecture series delivered in 1961–62) is a compact, authoritative, and lively introduction to the history of historical writing in the West; it includes an excellent chapter on Tacitus and his influence in the Renaissance. Tacitus's works themselves, and the other classical histories relevant to More's, are readily available in the volumes of the Loeb Classical Library. In *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1967), F. J. Levy provides a survey of sixteenth-century English historical writing and an overview of its classical and medieval backgrounds. A related, more recent work is Antonia Gransden's *Historical Writing in England ii: c. 1307 to the early Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982). Thomas Freeman's article on Polydore Vergil (above) constitutes a superb introduction not only to Polydore's *Historia* but to classical Roman historiography; see especially the pages on causality (pp. 200–206). The fullest and best overview of the humanist rhetorical tradition in England is found in Quentin Skinner's *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 19–211.

The modern critical tradition on the *History* may be regarded as having begun with the introductory essays in the 1931 *English Works* and with A. F. Pollard's "The Making of Sir Thomas More's *Richard III*" (originally publ. 1933). Pollard's essay was influential in directing attention to the *History* as literature, and especially to its affinities with drama. It is reprinted in *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More,* ed. R. S. Sylvester and G. P. Marc'hadour (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1977), along with a number of other key articles on More. Among these, Leonard F. Dean's "Literary Problems in More's *Richard III*" (originally publ. 1943) provides a wealth of illuminating material on More's affinity with classical and humanist historiography and irony. W. A. G. Doyle-Davidson's "The Earlier English Works of Sir Thomas More" (reprinted from the 1931 *English Works*) includes an excellent analysis of the style of the *History.*

Essential Articles also reprints Arthur Noel Kincaid's "The Dramatic Structure of Sir Thomas More's *History of King Richard III*" (originally publ. 1972), which has been influential in the development of a critical trend, dominant since the 1970s, that pushes the affinity between the *History* and drama so far that More's work has often been treated as if it really were a play, of one kind or another, rather than (as it clearly is) a member of a genre—rhetorical history—that has much *in common* with drama. Thus Walter M. Gordon, in "Exemplum Narrative and Thomas More's *History of King Richard III*," *Clio* 9 (1979), 75–88, sets out to prove that the *History* is a parody of the late medieval morality plays, a quest that one can regard only as quixotic. (But the article includes a fine analysis of More's complex characterization of "Jane" Shore.)

Alison Hanham's *Richard III and His Early Historians 1483–1585* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) gives valuable detailed accounts of a wide range of early written sources on Richard, with copious excerpts from many of them. Hanham's comprehensive knowledge of the sources enables her to show how close More's account is to the most authoritative ones, but her major conclusions on the *History*—that the printings of it in the chronicle histories of Hardyng and Hall are more authoritative than that in the 1557 English Works, and that the *History* is a five-act drama satirizing "the whole craft of history" (p. 155)—are unpersuasive. Among other studies of the *History*, the following may be singled out. Elizabeth Story Donno's "Thomas More and *Richard III*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 35 (1982), 401–47, views the *History* as a display piece in the tradition of epideictic rhetoric; the article is full of useful information and excellent rhetorical analyses. In his influential survey of More's works, *Thomas More: History and Providence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), Alistair Fox claims to find in the *History* an implicit critique of humanist historiography from the viewpoint of medieval Providential historiography. Judith H. Anderson's chapter on the *History* in her *Biographical Truth: The Representation of Historical Persons in Tudor-Stuart Writing* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984) provides a sophisticated critical analysis of the work in relation to Renaissance conceptions of history and biography. For those who read German, there is Hans Peter Heinrich's *Sir Thomas Mores "Geschichte König Richards III"* (Paderborn:

Ferdinand Schöningh, 1987) on the *History* as a work of humanist historiography. I must also mention M. M. Reese's *The Cease of Majesty: A Study of Shakespeare's History Plays* (London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1961), which includes deep insights into More, the *History,* and its importance to Shakespeare. For detailed studies of More's English, see Joseph Delcourt, *Essai sur la langue de Sir Thomas More d'après ses oeuvres anglaises* (Paris: H. Didier, 1914), and F. Th. Visser, *A Syntax of the English Language of St. Thomas More: The Verb,* Parts 1, 2, and 3, Materials for the Study of the Old English Drama, New Series, Vols. 19, 24, and 26 (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1946, 1952, 1956; rpt. Vaduz: Kraus, 1963).

There are two recent book-length bibliographies of More: Michael D. Wentworth, *The Essential Sir Thomas More: An Annotated Bibliography of Major Modern Studies* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1995), and Albert J. Geritz, *Thomas More: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism, 1935–1997* (Westport, Conn., and London: Greenwood Press, 1998). The journal *Moreana,* appearing thrice yearly, serves as the clearinghouse for More studies worldwide and can be counted on to call attention to new publications on the *History* and on More's other works. *The Ricardian,* a quarterly published by the Richard III Society, plays the same role for studies of Richard. For surveys of the historical development of scholarship on Richard, and of the long-running controversy over the portrayal of him by More and other early historians, see the biography by Kendall (pp. 419–34), A. R. Myers's "Richard III and Historical Tradition," *History* 53 (1968), 181–202 (the primary basis of the briefer survey in Ross's *Richard III,* pp. xlviii–liii), and, extending the overview to 1993, Dockray's *Richard III: A Source Book.*

Chronology

1437 birth of Elizabeth Woodville (Edward IV's queen)
1442 birth of Edward IV
1452 birth of Richard III
1460 death of Richard duke of York (father of Edward IV, George duke of Clarence, and Richard III), at the Battle of Wakefield
1461 deposition of Henry VI, accession of Edward IV (coronation June 28)
1464 marriage of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville
1470 October: deposition of Edward IV and restoration of Henry VI; November 2: birth of Edward prince of Wales (later Edward V), in sanctuary
1471 April 14: Edward IV regains throne at the Battle of Barnet (the "Easter Day field"); May 4: final defeat of the Lancastrian forces at the Battle of Tewkesbury; May 21: death of Henry VI in the Tower of London
1473 birth of Richard duke of York (Edward IV's second son)
1478 (possibly 1477) February 7: birth of Thomas More
1478 execution (for treason) of George duke of Clarence

1483

April 9: death of Edward IV
April 24: Edward V and his entourage depart Wales for London
April 30: Earl Rivers, Richard Grey, and Thomas Vaughan taken prisoner by Richard
Night of April 30–May 1: Elizabeth Woodville enters sanctuary with her youngest son (the duke of York) and her daughters
May 10: Richard made protector
June 13: execution of Hastings; arrest of Bishop Morton

June 16: removal of the duke of York from sanctuary
June 22: Dr. Shaa's sermon proclaiming the illegitimacy of Edward IV's children
June 24: the duke of Buckingham's speech at the Guildhall expounding Richard's claim to the throne
June 25: Rivers, Richard Grey, and Thomas Vaughan executed at Pontefract Castle
June 25 or 26: Buckingham proffers the kingship to Richard at Baynard's Castle
June 26: Richard takes the crown at Westminster Hall
July 6: Richard's formal coronation
Late July–August: Richard on royal progress to York
October–November: failed insurrection against Richard
November 2: Buckingham executed for treason

1484 death of Richard's only legitimate son (b. 1476?)
1485 August 22: Richard killed at Battle of Bosworth Field; Henry Tudor becomes King Henry VII
1486 Henry VII marries Edward IV's eldest daughter, Elizabeth of York
1487 Morton becomes lord chancellor
c.1490–92 More serves as page in Morton's household
c.1492–94 More at Oxford
c.1494 More enters the Inns of Court, London, to study law
1500 death of Morton
1504 More in Parliament?
1506 More and Erasmus publish translations of Lucian
1509 death of Henry VII, accession of Henry VIII
1510 More in Parliament; appointed an undersheriff of London
c.1513 More begins the *History*?
1515–16 More writes *Utopia*
1518 More joins Henry VIII's council; his Latin poems published
1521 More appointed under-treasurer of the exchequer and knighted; appointed to edit Henry VIII's anti-Lutheran treatise
1523 More made speaker of the House of Commons; writes a defense of Henry VIII against Luther (other anti-Lutheran works follow in subsequent years)

1529 More appointed lord chancellor

1532 More resigns the chancellorship over the "Submission of the Clergy," which gave the king veto power over ecclesiastical legislation

1533 Henry VIII marries Anne Boleyn, and Pope Clement VII launches the process of his excommunication

1534 April 13: More refuses to swear support for the Act of Succession (acknowledging Henry's children by Anne Boleyn as heirs to the throne); April 17: More imprisoned in the Tower of London, where he writes *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* and other devotional works

1535 July 1: More tried and convicted of treason; July 6: beheaded

1543 English version of *History* first printed, as a continuation of Hardyng's *Chronicle*

1548, 1550 English version printed as part of Hall's *Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York*

1557 English version printed in William Rastell's edition of More's English Works

1565 Latin version first printed, in More's Latin Works

c.1592–93 Shakespeare writes *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third*

The History of King Richard the Third

The history of King Richard the Third (unfinished), written by Master Thomas More, then one of the undersheriffs of London, about the year of our Lord 1513.[1] Which work hath been before this time printed in Hardyng's Chronicle and in Hall's Chronicle,[2] but very much corrupt in many places, sometimes having less and sometimes having more, and altered in words and whole sentences, much varying from the copy of his own hand, by[3] which this is printed.

King Edward, of that name the Fourth, after that he had lived fifty and three years, seven months, and six days,[4] and thereof reigned two and twenty years, one month, and eight days,[5] died at Westminster the ninth day of April, the year of our redemption a thousand four hundred fourscore and three, leaving much fair issue; that is to wit:[6] Edward the Prince, a[7] thirteen year of age; Richard duke of York, two year younger; Elizabeth, whose fortune and grace was after to be queen, wife unto King Henry the Seventh and

Textual notes are indicated by the symbol * and are found on pp. 119ff.

1. This elaborate title cum prefatory note, written by More's nephew William Rastell, precedes the text of the *History* in Rastell's *Works of Sir Thomas More* (1557). On this edition, and on problems with Rastell's dating of the *History,* see pp. xxii, 115.

More was an undersheriff from 1510 to 1518. In this role, he advised the sheriffs and sat as a judge in the Sheriff's Court (a city court that heard a wide variety of cases).

2. See above, pp. xliii–xliv.

3. From.

4. In fact Edward (1442–83) was three weeks short of his forty-first birthday at the time of his death. No source is known for More's egregious error; perhaps it derived from some chronicle he consulted.

5. Reckoning the beginning of his reign from March 1, 1461. (His coronation took place on June 28.)

6. *that is to wit:* that is to say; namely.

7. About. Edward prince of Wales (b. 1470) briefly succeeded his father as Edward V. Edward IV's other legitimate issue were Richard duke of York (b. 1473); Elizabeth of York (1466–1503), who married Henry VII in 1486, thus uniting the houses of Lancaster and York; Cecily (1469–1507); Bridget (1480–1513); Anne (1475–1510); Katherine (1479–1527); and three children who predeceased their father.

mother unto the Eighth; Cecily, not so fortunate as fair;[8] Bridget, which, representing[9] the virtue of her whose name she bare,[10] professed and observed a religious life in Dartford, a house of close[11] nuns; Anne, that was after honorably married unto Thomas, then Lord Howard and after[12] earl of Surrey; and Katherine, which, long time tossed in either fortune, sometimes in wealth,[13] oft in adversity, at the last—if this be the last, for yet she liveth—is by the benignity of her nephew King Henry the Eighth in very prosperous estate and worthy her birth and virtue.

This noble prince deceased at his palace of Westminster, and, with great funeral honor and heaviness[14] of his people from thence conveyed, was interred at Windsor.[15] A king of such governance[16] and behavior in time of peace (for in war each part[17] must needs be other's enemy) that there was never any prince of this land attaining the crown by battle so heartily beloved with the substance[18] of the people; nor he himself so specially in any part of his life as at the time of his death. Which favor and affection yet after his decease, by the cruelty, mischief, and trouble of the tempestuous world that followed, highly toward him more increased. At such time as he died, the displeasure of those that bare him grudge for King Henry's sake the Sixth, whom he deposed,[19] was well assuaged and in effect[20] quenched, in that that many of them were dead in more than

8. More seems to allude to Cecily's steadily falling stock on the marriage market. Betrothed first to the heir to the Scottish throne, she was eventually married to the Viscount Welles. After his death, she took a second husband, a Lincolnshire commoner.

9. Exhibiting.

10. Bore. Her namesake was St. Bridget of Kildare, one of the patron saints of Ireland.

11. Cloistered.

12. *then . . . after:* at that time . . . afterward. Thomas Howard II (1473–1554) became earl of Surrey on February 1, 1514—so this passage must have been written or revised after that date. See above, p. xxii.

13. Well-being.

14. Grief.

15. On April 20, 1483.

16. Here, conduct (as the Latin version of the passage confirms).

17. Side, party.

18. *with the substance:* by the greater part.

19. Henry VI (1421–71) was deposed in 1461, restored by the earl of Warwick in 1470, and lost his throne again to Edward the next year. See pp. 70, 75–76.

20. *in effect:* in fact. *in that that:* inasmuch as.

twenty years of his reign[21]—a great part of a long life—and many of them in the mean season[22] grown into his favor, of which he was never strange.[23]

He was a goodly[24] personage, and very princely to behold; of heart courageous, politic[25] in counsel; in adversity nothing[26] abashed, in prosperity rather joyful than proud; in peace just and merciful, in war sharp and fierce; in the field bold and hardy, and nevertheless no farther than wisdom would adventurous.[27] Whose wars whoso[28] well consider, he shall no less commend his wisdom where he voided[29] than his manhood where he vanquished.

He was of visage lovely, of body mighty: strong and clean-made,[30] howbeit in his latter days with over-liberal diet somewhat corpulent and burly, and nevertheless not uncomely. He was of youth greatly given to fleshly wantonness, from which health of body in great prosperity and fortune, without a special grace, hardly refraineth.[31] This fault not greatly grieved the people, for neither could any one man's pleasure stretch and extend to the displeasure of very many, and was without violence; and, over that,[32] in his latter days lessed and well left.[33] In which time of his latter days, this realm was in quiet and prosperous estate: no fear of outward enemies, no war in hand nor none toward,[34] but such as no man looked for;[35] the

21. I.e., many of Edward's enemies had died during the course of his long reign. On the patterning after Tacitus in this paragraph and the next three, see pp. xxxvii–xxxviii.
22. *in . . . season:* in the meantime.
23. Sparing.
24. Good-looking, handsome.
25. Prudent.
26. Not at all.
27. I.e., though bold, he was daring only to the extent consistent with wisdom.
28. Whoever.
29. Retreated.
30. Trim. *howbeit:* although.
31. *hardly refraineth:* finds it hard to refrain.
32. *over that:* moreover.
33. *lessed . . . left:* lessened and almost entirely left off. But the evidence does not support this claim.
34. Impending. In point of fact, Edward's last years were marked by intermittent hostilities with Scotland, and in the months prior to his final illness he had been making plans to renew these and perhaps to invade France (as he had in 1475). More is imitating Tacitus, here to the serious detriment of accuracy.
35. *looked for:* expected.

Image right unavailable

Fig. 1. Edward IV (1442–83), in a portrait that is either the original or an early copy of one datable no later than 1472. Seeing the king in 1475, Philippe de Commynes reported that "he was a very good-looking, tall prince, but he was beginning to get fat and I had seen him on previous occasions looking more handsome." *The Royal Collection © 2005, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.*

people toward the prince not in a constrained fear but in a willing and loving obedience; among themself, the commons in good peace. The lords whom he knew at variance, himself in his deathbed appeased. He had left all gathering of money[36] (which is the only thing that withdraweth the hearts of Englishmen from the prince); nor anything intended he to take in hand by which he should be driven thereto: for his tribute out of France[37] he had before obtained, and the year foregoing his death he had obtained Berwick.[38] And albeit that all the time of his reign he was with his people so benign, courteous, and so familiar that no part of his virtues was more esteemed, yet that condition[39] in the end of his days (in which many princes by a long-continued sovereignty decline into a proud port[40] from debonair behavior of their beginning) marvelously in him grew and increased: so far-forth that[41] in the summer the last that ever he saw, his highness, being at Windsor in hunting, sent for the mayor and aldermen of London to him for none other errand but to have them hunt and be merry with him; where he made them not so stately but so friendly and so familiar cheer,[42] and sent venison from thence so freely into the city, that no one thing in many days before gat[43] him either more hearts or more hearty favor among the common people—which oftentimes more esteem, and take for greater kindness, a little courtesy than a great benefit.

So deceased (as I have said) this noble king, in that time in which his life was most desired. Whose love of his people, and their entire affection toward him, had been to his noble children (having in

36. Edward's French pension (see next note) had rendered him largely independent of parliamentary taxation, but he had been relentless and unscrupulous in squeezing money from his more prosperous subjects, and shortly before his death Parliament had granted him a levy "for the hasty and necessary defense of the realm." The duke of Buckingham's later portrait of Edward as a grasping monarch (pp. 81–84) is much closer to the mark than is More's statement here.

37. An annual pension of £10,000 obtained from Louis XI in the Treaty of Picquigny (1475)—though by the end of 1482 Louis had stopped payment.

38. Berwick Castle on the Scottish border, retaken the previous August, after twenty-one years in Scottish hands, by troops led by Richard of Gloucester.

39. Quality.

40. Bearing. *debonair:* gracious.

41. *so far-forth that:* to such an extent that.

42. Entertainment.

43. Got, won.

themself also as many gifts of nature, as many princely virtues, as much goodly towardness,[44] as their age could receive) a marvelous fortress and sure armor, if division and dissension of their friends had not unarmed them and left them destitute, and the execrable desire of sovereignty provoked him to their destruction which if either kind[45] or kindness had holden place must needs have been their chief defense. For Richard the duke of Gloucester, by nature their uncle, by office their protector,[46] to their father beholden, to themself by oath and allegiance bounden, all the bands[47] broken that binden man and man together, without any respect of God or the world, unnaturally contrived to bereave them not only their dignity[48] but also their lives. But forasmuch as this duke's demeanor ministreth in effect[49] all the whole matter whereof this book shall entreat,[50] it is therefore convenient[51] somewhat to show you, ere we farther go, what manner of man this was, that could find in his heart so much mischief[52] to conceive.

Richard duke of York, a noble man and a mighty, began not by war but by law to challenge[53] the crown, putting his claim into the Parliament, where his cause was either for right or favor so far-forth advanced that, King Henry his[54] blood (albeit he had a goodly prince)[55] utterly rejected, the crown was by authority of Parliament entailed unto the duke of York and his issue male in remainder,[56] immediately after the death of King Henry. But the duke, not en-

44. Natural aptitude.

45. Nature; kinship. *had holden place:* had had their proper effect.

46. As the only surviving adult male of the House of York and the greatest magnate of the realm, Richard (1452–85) was the inevitable choice for the office of protector.

47. Bonds.

48. *bereave . . . dignity:* deprive them not only of their position.

49. *demeanor . . . effect:* behavior furnishes in fact.

50. Treat.

51. Appropriate.

52. Evil.

53. I.e., assert his title to.

54. *Henry his:* Henry's.

55. I.e., son: Edward (1453–71), killed in the Battle of Tewkesbury (May 4, 1471), where the Lancastrian forces suffered their final defeat.

56. *in remainder:* i.e., after the death of the incumbent. This arrangement came into effect on October 31, 1460. Richard (1411–60) had a uniquely strong genealogical claim to the throne, resting on his descent from Edward III through both father and mother.

during so long to tarry, but intending, under pretext of dissension and debate[57] arising in the realm, to prevent[58] his time and to take upon him the rule in King Harry his life, was with many nobles of the realm at Wakefield slain,[59] leaving three sons—Edward, George, and Richard.

All three, as they were great states[60] of birth so were they great and stately of stomach,[61] greedy and ambitious of authority, and impatient of partners. Edward, revenging his father's death, deprived King Henry and attained the crown. George duke of Clarence was a goodly, noble prince and at all points fortunate, if either his own ambition had not set him against his brother, or the envy of his enemies his brother against him. For were it by the queen[62] and the lords of her blood, which highly maligned the king's kindred (as women commonly, not of malice but of nature, hate them whom their husbands love), or were it a proud appetite of the duke himself, intending to be king, at the leastwise[63] heinous treason was there laid to his charge, and finally, were he faulty were he faultless, attainted was he by Parliament and judged to the death, and thereupon hastily drowned in a butt of malmsey;[64] whose death King Edward (albeit he commanded it), when he wist[65] it was done, piteously bewailed and sorrowfully repented.

Richard, the third son, of whom we now entreat, was in wit[66] and courage equal with either of them, in body and prowess[67] far under them both: little of stature, ill-featured[68] of limbs, crook-backed,

57. Strife.

58. Act before. Richard had in fact begun to comport himself as king even before Parliament confirmed his claim.

59. December 30, 1460.

60. Noblemen.

61. *stately of stomach:* haughty of disposition.

62. Elizabeth Woodville (1437–92), whom Edward had married in 1464, when she was a young widow with two children. For More's colorful account of their courtship, see pp. 70–75.

63. *at the leastwise:* in any case.

64. A strong, sweet wine. More gives George (1449–78) the benefit of the doubt, but he had certainly been involved in treasonous activities on several occasions.

65. Knew.

66. Intellect.

67. Virtue (as the Latin—*probitas*—confirms).

68. Malformed. *crook-backed:* humpbacked.

his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favored[69] of visage, and such as is in states called warly,[70] in other men otherwise. He was malicious, wrathful, envious, and, from afore his birth, ever froward.[71] It is for truth reported that the duchess his mother had so much ado in her travail[72] that she could not be delivered of him uncut, and that he came into the world with the feet forward (as men be borne outward)[73] and, as the fame runneth,[74] also not untoothed—whether men, of hatred, report above the truth, or else that nature changed her course in his beginning which in the course of his life many things unnaturally committed. None evil[75] captain was he in the war, as to which his disposition was more meetly[76] than for peace. Sundry victories had he, and sometimes overthrows, but never in default as for his own person, either of hardiness or politic order.[77] Free was he called of dispense,[78] and somewhat above his power liberal: with large gifts he get him unsteadfast friendship,[79] for which he was fain to pill and spoil[80] in other places and get him steadfast hatred.

He was close and secret, a deep dissimuler:[81] lowly of countenance, arrogant of heart; outwardly companable[82] where he inwardly

69. Ill-favored, ugly. The details in this paragraph (which, especially as transmitted through Shakespeare, established the received idea of Richard's appearance) are similar to those given by other early historians—who do not, however, mention a hump (though a law-court record of 1491 does, in a litany of harsh comments on Richard attributed to one William Burton). Weighing the early accounts and portraits, all we can conclude with certainty about Richard's physique is that it was slight. It may be that one of his shoulders was higher than the other; if he was humpbacked, it was surely to a minor, inconspicuous degree.

70. Warlike.

71. Perverse.

72. Labor.

73. I.e., Richard, supposedly a breech baby delivered by caesarean section, came into the world feet-first, as people are borne out of it at their funerals.

74. *as the fame runneth:* as rumor has it.

75. *none evil:* no unskilled. Early evidence of Richard's military prowess is found in his having led, at eighteen, the vanguard of Edward's army in the Battle of Tewkesbury.

76. Suited.

77. *hardiness . . . order:* courage or prudent ordering of matters.

78. *free . . . of dispense:* generous.

79. In actual fact, the beneficiaries of Richard's largess proved generally faithful to him. *get:* got.

80. *pill and spoil:* pillage and despoil.

81. Dissembler. *countenance:* bearing.

82. Companionable, friendly.

Image right unavailable

Fig. 2. Richard III (1452–85), in one of the earliest surviving portraits. X-ray examination reveals that the right shoulder has been repainted to suggest deformity, and the eyes narrowed. More thought Richard's *left* shoulder was "much higher" than the other. *The Royal Collection © 2005, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.*

hated, not letting[83] to kiss whom he thought to kill; dispiteous[84] and cruel, not for evil will alway, but ofter for ambition, and either for the surety[85] or increase of his estate. Friend and foe was muchwhat indifferent:[86] where his advantage grew, he spared no man's death whose life withstood his purpose. He slew with his own hands King Henry the Sixth, being prisoner in the Tower, as men constantly say, and that without commandment or knowledge of the king[87]—which would undoubtedly, if he had intended that thing, have appointed that butcherly office to some other than his own born brother.

Some wise men also ween that his drift, covertly conveyed,[88] lacked not in helping forth his brother of Clarence to his death—which he resisted openly,[89] howbeit somewhat (as men deemed) more faintly than he that were heartily minded to his wealth.[90] And they that thus deem, think that he long time in King Edward's life forethought to be king in case that the king his brother (whose life he looked[91] that evil diet should shorten) should happen to decease (as indeed he did) while his children were young. And they deem that for this intent[92] he was glad of his brother's death, the duke of Clarence, whose life must needs have hindered him so intending, whether the same duke of Clarence had kept him true to his nephew the young king, or enterprised to be king himself.

But of all this point is there no certainty; and whoso divineth upon conjectures may as well[93] shoot too far as too short. Howbeit, this have I by credible information[94] learned, that the self night in

83. Omitting; refraining. The following words may be meant to recall Judas.
84. Pitiless.
85. Safeguard. *estate:* position.
86. I.e., the distinction between friend and foe meant little to him.
87. I.e., Edward IV. A number of other early accounts also make Richard Henry's killer. It is unlikely, though, that Richard or anyone else would have undertaken to kill Henry except at Edward's behest.
88. *ween . . . conveyed:* think that his scheme, secretly communicated (to some accomplice).
89. Outwardly.
90. (Clarence's) well-being. Certainly a bitter rivalry had developed between the two brothers, but whether Richard played an active part in Clarence's downfall is (as More acknowledges in the following paragraph) not known.
91. Expected. *evil:* bad, unhealthful.
92. *for this intent:* on this account.
93. Easily.
94. Intelligence. *self:* same.

which King Edward died, one Mistlebrook, long ere morning, came in great haste to the house of one Potyer,[95] dwelling in Redcross Street without[96] Cripplegate; and when he was with hasty rapping quickly letten in, he showed unto Potyer that King Edward was departed. "By my troth, man," quod[97] Potyer, "then will my master the duke of Gloucester be king." What cause he had so to think, hard it is to say—whether he, being toward[98] him, anything knew that he such thing purposed, or otherwise had any inkling thereof: for he was not likely to speak it of nought.[99]

But now to return to the course of this history. Were it that the duke of Gloucester had of old foreminded[1] this conclusion, or was now at erst[2] thereunto moved and put in hope by the occasion of the tender age of the young princes his nephews (as opportunity and likelihood of speed[3] putteth a man in courage of that[4] he never intended), certain is it that he contrived their destruction, with the usurpation of the regal dignity upon himself. And forasmuch as he well wist (and holp[5] to maintain) a long-continued grudge and heart-brenning[6] between the queen's kindred and the king's blood, either party envying other's authority, he now thought that their division should be (as it was indeed) a furtherly[7] beginning to the pursuit of his intent and a sure ground for the foundation of all his building, if he might first, under the pretext of revenging of old displeasure, abuse the anger and ignorance of the one party to the destruction of the other, and then win to his purpose as many as he could—and those that could not be won might be lost ere they

95. Probably Richard Potyer (or Pottier), one of Richard's servants, who was appointed attorney in chancery of the duchy of Lancaster later the same year; Mistlebrook (above) is presumably William Mistlebrook, one of Edward IV's servants and later an auditor of crown lands.

96. Outside. Cripplegate was one of the gates of the old walled city of London.

97. Quoth, said.

98. In attendance upon.

99. *of nought:* for no reason. In the Latin version, More adds that the conversation was reported to his father by a man who overheard it.

1. Intended beforehand.

2. *at erst:* for the first time.

3. Success.

4. *putteth . . . that:* encourages a man to do what.

5. Helped.

6. Heart-burning—i.e., heated jealousy.

7. Favorable.

looked therefor.[8] For of one thing was he certain: that if his intent were perceived, he should soon have made peace between the both parties with his own blood.

King Edward in his life, albeit that this dissension between his friends somewhat irked him, yet in his good health he somewhat the less regarded it, because he thought, whatsoever business should fall between them, himself should alway be able to rule both the parties. But in his last sickness, when he perceived his natural strength so sore enfeebled that he despaired all recovery, then he, considering the youth of his children—albeit he nothing less mistrusted[9] than that that happened, yet well foreseeing that many harms might grow by their debate[10] while the youth of his children should lack discretion of themself and good counsel of their friends (of which either party should counsel for their own commodity[11] and rather by pleasant advice to win themselves favor than by profitable advertisement[12] to do the children good)—he called some of them before him that were at variance, and in especial the Lord Marquis Dorset,[13] the queen's son by her first husband, and Richard[14] the Lord Hastings, a nobleman then lord chamberlain, again[15] whom the queen specially grudged for the great favor the king bare him and also for that she thought him secretly familiar with the king in wanton company. Her kindred also bare him sore,[16] as well for that the king had made him captain of Calais (which office the Lord Rivers,[17] brother to the queen, claimed of the king's former promise) as for divers other great gifts which he received, that they looked for.[18]

8. *looked therefor:* expected it.
9. Anticipated.
10. Strife—i.e., of the two factions.
11. Advantage.
12. Counsel.
13. Thomas Grey (1456?–1501), created Marquis Dorset in 1475. He was the queen's eldest son.
14. Actually William. His dates are 1431–83; he was made a baron in 1461, and also lord chamberlain—an office that gave him control of access to the king's person.
15. Against.
16. *bare him sore:* could scarcely endure him.
17. Anthony Woodville, who succeeded his father as Earl Rivers in 1469. Edward had granted Rivers command of the garrison at Calais (held by England from 1346 to 1558), but, having fallen out with him, revoked the grant in favor of Hastings. Since the garrison was the largest standing force maintained by the crown, the post was of great importance.
18. *looked for:* had expected (for themselves).

When these lords, with divers other of both the parties, were come in presence,[19] the king, lifting up himself and underset with pillows, as it is reported, on this wise[20] said unto them: "My lords, my dear kinsmen and allies,[21] in what plight I lie, you see and I feel. By which,[22] the less while I look to live with you, the more deeply am I moved to care in what case[23] I leave you: for such as I leave you, such be my children like to find you. Which if they should (that God forbid) find you at variance, might hap to fall themself at war ere their discretion would serve to set you at peace. Ye see their youth, of which I reckon the only surety to rest in your concord. For it sufficeth not that all you love them, if each of you hate other. If they were men, your faithfulness haply[24] would suffice. But childhood must be maintained[25] by men's authority, and slipper youth underpropped with elder counsel: which neither they can have but[26] ye give it, nor ye give it if ye gree[27] not. For where each laboreth to break that[28] the other maketh, and, for hatred of each of other's person, impugneth each other's counsel, there must it needs be long ere any good conclusion go forward. And also while either party laboreth to be chief, flattery shall have more place than plain and faithful advice; of which must needs ensue the evil bringing-up of the prince, whose mind, in tender youth infect,[29] shall readily fall to mischief and riot, and draw down with this noble realm to ruin, but if[30] grace turn him to wisdom—which if God send, then they that by evil means before pleased him best, shall after fall farthest out of favor: so that ever at length evil drifts drive to nought[31] and good plain ways prosper.

19. *in presence:* i.e., into the royal presence.
20. *on this wise:* in this manner.
21. Relations by marriage.
22. *by which:* by reason of which—wherefore. *look:* expect.
23. Condition.
24. Perhaps.
25. Ruled. *slipper:* unstable.
26. Unless.
27. Agree.
28. That which.
29. Infected, tainted.
30. *but if:* unless.
31. *ever . . . nought:* always in the end evil schemes come to nothing.

"Great variance hath there long been between you, not alway for great causes. Sometimes a thing right well intended, our misconstruction turneth unto worse; or a small displeasure done us, either our own affection[32] or evil tongues aggrieveth. But this wot[33] I well: ye never had so great cause of hatred as ye have of love. That we be all men, that we be Christian men, this shall I leave for preachers to tell you (and yet I wot never[34] whether any preacher's words ought more to move you than his that is by and by going to the place that they all preach of). But this shall I desire you to remember, that the one part of you is of my blood, the other of mine allies, and each of you with other either of kindred or affinity[35]—which spiritual kindred of affinity, if the sacraments of Christ's church bear that weight with us that would God they did, should no less move us to charity[36] than the respect of fleshly consanguinity. Our Lord forbid that you love together the worse for the self[37] cause that you ought to love the better. And yet that happeneth. And nowhere find we so deadly debate as among them which by nature and law most ought to agree together. Such a pestilent serpent is ambition and desire of vainglory and sovereignty, which among states[38] where he once entereth creepeth forth so far till with division and variance he turneth all to mischief—first longing to be next the best, afterward equal with the best, and at last chief and above the best. Of which immoderate appetite of worship,[39] and thereby of debate and dissension, what loss, what sorrow, what trouble hath within these few years grown in this realm, I pray God as well forget as we well remember. Which things if I could as well have foreseen as I have with my more pain than pleasure proved,[40] by God's blessed lady (that was ever his oath), I would never have won the courtesy of men's knees with the loss of so many heads.

32. Biased feelings. *aggrieveth:* make grievous; exaggerate.
33. Know.
34. *I wot never:* I'm not at all sure.
35. Relationship by marriage.
36. Love.
37. Same, very.
38. Noblemen.
39. Honor.
40. Learned by experience.

"But sithen[41] things past cannot be gaincalled, much ought we the more beware, by what occasion we have taken so great hurt afore, that we eftsoons[42] fall not in that occasion again. Now be those griefs passed, and all is (God be thanked) quiet, and likely right well to prosper in wealthful[43] peace under your cousins, my children, if God send them life and you love.[44] Of which two things, the less loss were they, by whom though God did His pleasure,[45] yet should the realm alway find kings, and peradventure[46] as good kings. But if you among yourself in a child's reign fall at debate, many a good man shall perish and haply he too, and ye too, ere this land find peace again. Wherefore in these last words that ever I look to speak with you, I exhort you and require[47] you all, for the love that you have ever borne to me, for the love that I have ever borne to you, for the love that our Lord beareth to us all, from this time forward, all griefs[48] forgotten, each of you love other. Which I verily trust you will, if ye anything earthly[49] regard—either God or your king, affinity or kindred, this realm, your own country, or your own surety."[50]

And therewithal the king, no longer enduring to sit up, laid him down on his right side, his face toward them: and none was there present that could refrain from weeping. But the lords—recomforting[51] him with as good words as they could, and answering, for the time, as they thought to stand[52] with his pleasure—there in his presence (as by their words appeared) each forgave other and joined their hands together, when (as it after appeared by their deeds) their hearts were far asunder.

As soon as the king was departed, the noble prince his son drew

41. Since. *gaincalled:* called back again.
42. Soon afterward; a second time.
43. Happy; prosperous. "Cousin" often refers, as here, to any collateral relative more distant than a sibling.
44. I.e., of one another.
45. I.e., if the princes were to die of natural causes.
46. Perhaps.
47. Ask, desire.
48. Grievances.
49. In the world.
50. Safety, security.
51. Consoling.
52. Accord.

toward London—which at the time of his decease kept his household at Ludlow in Wales.[53] Which country,[54] being far off from the law and recourse to justice, was begun to be far out of goodwill, and waxen[55] wild, robbers and reivers walking at liberty uncorrected. And for this encheason[56] the prince was in the life of his father sent thither, to the end that the authority of his presence should refrain[57] evil-disposed persons from the boldness of their former outrages. To the governance and ordering of this young prince, at his sending thither, was there appointed Sir Anthony Woodville, Lord Rivers and brother unto the queen, a right honorable man, as valiant of hand[58] as politic in counsel. Adjoined were there unto him other of the same party; and, in effect,[59] everyone as he was nearest of kin unto the queen, so was planted next[60] about the prince.

That drift,[61] by the queen not unwisely devised, whereby her blood might of youth[62] be rooted in the prince's favor, the duke of Gloucester turned unto their destruction, and upon that ground set the foundation of all his unhappy[63] building. For whomsoever he perceived either at variance with them or bearing himself their favor,[64] he brake unto them, some by mouth, some by writing and secret messengers, that it neither was reason nor in any wise to be suffered that the young king, their master and kinsman, should be in the hands and custody of his mother's kindred, sequestered, in

53. Ludlow Castle on the Welsh border, where Edward (as Prince of Wales) had been sent in 1473. He learned of his father's death on April 14, 1483, but his party did not set out for London until April 24.

54. Region. Southern Wales was under the suzerainty of England as the March of Wales.

55. Grown. *reivers:* robbers, plunderers. *robbers* and *reivers* (or *reavers*) are nearly synonymous.

56. Reason.

57. Restrain, hold back.

58. *of hand:* i.e., in battle. *politic:* prudent. In 1473 Edward IV had appointed Rivers "governor and ruler" of the young prince. Among his many other activities, this exceptionally able and versatile man was a patron of humanist learning; and his own translation (from French) of the *Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers* was the first book printed in England with a definite date (1477).

59. *in effect:* in fact.

60. Nearest.

61. Scheme.

62. *her . . . youth:* her kin might in (the prince's) youth.

63. Mischievous.

64. *bearing . . . favor:* favoring himself. *brake:* broke (his mind); expressed.

manner,[65] from their company and attendance, of which every one ought[66] him as faithful service as they, and many of them far more honorable part of kin than his mother's side: "whose blood," quod he, "saving[67] the king's pleasure, was full unmeetly[68] to be matched with his; which[69] now to be, as who say, removed from the king, and the less noble to be left about him, is," quod he, "neither honorable to his majesty nor unto us, and also to his grace no surety to have the mightiest of his friends from[70] him, and unto us no little jeopardy to suffer our well-proved evil-willers to grow in over-great authority with the prince in youth, namely which is light of belief[71] and soon persuaded.

"Ye remember, I trow,[72] King Edward himself, albeit he was a man of age and of discretion, yet was he in many things ruled by the bend,[73] more than stood either with his honor or our profit, or with the commodity of any man else, except only the immoderate advancement of themself. Which whether they sorer thirsted after their own weal[74] or our woe, it were hard, I ween,[75] to guess. And if some folks' friendship had not holden better place[76] with the king than any respect of kindred, they might peradventure easily have betrapped and brought to confusion[77] some of us ere this. Why not as easily as they have done some other[78] already, as near of his royal blood as we? But our Lord hath wrought His will, and, thank be to His grace, that peril is past. Howbeit, as great[79] is growing, if we suffer this young king in our enemies' hand, which without

65. *in manner:* as it were; almost entirely. *from their company:* i.e., from the company of those *not* of the queen's party.
66. Owed.
67. Without offense to, with all due respect to.
68. Unfit.
69. *which* refers to the young king's relatives on his father's side. *as who say:* as one may say.
70. Away from.
71. *namely . . . belief:* which (i.e., youth) is especially credulous.
72. Believe, trust.
73. Band; faction—i.e., the queen's relations.
74. Well-being.
75. Think.
76. *holden better place:* i.e., carried more weight.
77. Destruction.
78. I.e., the duke of Clarence.
79. I.e., another peril just as great.

his witting[80] might abuse the name of his commandment to any of our undoing;[81] which thing God and good provision[82] forbid. Of which good provision none of us hath anything the less need for the late-made atonement,[83] in which the king's pleasure had more place than the parties' wills. Nor none of us, I believe, is so unwise oversoon to trust a new friend made of an old foe, or to think that an hoverly[84] kindness, suddenly contract in one hour, continued yet scant a fortnight, should be deeper settled in their stomachs[85] than a long-accustomed malice many years rooted."

With these words and writings and such other, the duke of Gloucester soon set afire them that were of themself eath[86] to kindle, and, in especial, twain, Edward duke of Buckingham[87] and Richard Lord Hastings and chamberlain, both men of honor and of great power, the one by long succession from his ancestry, the other by his office and the king's favor. These two, not bearing each to other so much love, as hatred both unto the queen's part,[88] in this point accorded together with the duke of Gloucester, that they would utterly amove[89] from the king's company all his mother's friends, under the name of[90] their enemies.

Upon this concluded, the duke of Gloucester, understanding that the lords which at that time were about the king intended to bring him up to his coronation,[91] accompanied with such power[92]

80. Knowing.

81. *might . . . undoing:* i.e., might, by claiming to be acting on the prince's command, undo any of us.

82. Foresight.

83. *for . . . atonement:* because of the recent reconciliation. (Atonement: "at-onement.")

84. Superficial. *contract:* contracted.

85. We would say "hearts."

86. Easy; ready.

87. Actually *Henry* Stafford, second duke of Buckingham (1454–83). Though married to the queen's sister Catherine, the duke had fallen out of favor at court in the 1470s and had been denied all preferments during the final five years of Edward's reign. Just below, More again has William Lord Hastings's given name wrong.

88. Side, party. *accorded together:* agreed.

89. Remove.

90. *under the name of:* i.e., as being.

91. Edward's coronation was originally set for May 4 (later changed to June 22). The timing was highly significant, since precedent suggested that Richard's protectorship should terminate with the coronation, after which a regency council should govern for the duration of the king's minority.

92. Retinue.

of their friends that it should be hard for him to bring his purpose to pass without the gathering and great assembly of people, and in manner of open war—whereof the end he wist was doubtous,[93] and in which, the king being on their[94] side, his part should have the face[95] and name of a rebellion—he secretly therefore by divers means caused the queen to be persuaded and brought in the mind that it neither were need, and also should be jeopardous, the king to come up strong.[96] For whereas now every lord loved other, and none other thing studied upon but about the coronation and honor of the king, if the lords of her kindred should assemble in the king's name much people, they should give the lords atwixt whom and them had been sometimes debate, to fear and suspect lest they should gather this people not for the king's safeguard—whom no man impugned[97]—but for their destruction, having more regard to their old variance than their new atonement. For which cause they should assemble on the other party[98] much people again for their defense, whose power, she wist well, far stretched. And thus should all the realm fall on a roar.[99] And of all the hurt that thereof should ensue, which was likely not to be little, and the most harm there like to fall where she least would,[1] all the world would put her and her kindred in the wite,[2] and say that they had unwisely, and untruly[3] also, broken the amity and peace that the king her husband so prudently made between his kin and hers in his deathbed, and which the other party faithfully observed.

The queen, being in this wise persuaded, such word sent unto her son[4] and unto her brother, being about[5] the king; and, over that, the

93. Doubtful.
94. I.e., the other.
95. Appearance.
96. I.e., escorted by a strong force. Whether or not Richard secretly caused the queen to be persuaded in this matter, Hastings played the decisive role in persuading the royal council.
97. Was opposing.
98. Side. *again:* in response.
99. *on a roar:* into confusion, tumult.
1. *there . . . would:* likely to fall there where she would least want (it to fall).
2. Wrong.
3. Unfaithfully, treacherously.
4. Richard Grey, the queen's second son by her previous marriage. *her brother:* Earl Rivers.
5. In attendance on. *over that:* moreover.

duke of Gloucester himself and other lords, the chief of his bend, wrote unto the king so reverently, and to the queen's friends there so lovingly, that they, nothing earthly mistrusting, brought the king up in great haste, not in good speed,[6] with a sober[7] company.

Now was the king in his way to London gone from Northampton,[8] when these dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham came thither.[9] Where remained behind the Lord Rivers, the king's uncle, intending on the morrow to follow the king and be with him at Stony Stratford,[10] eleven* miles thence, early or[11] he departed. So was there made that night much friendly cheer[12] between these dukes and the Lord Rivers a great while.

But incontinent[13] after that they were openly, with great courtesy, departed[14] and the Lord Rivers lodged, the dukes secretly with a few of their most privy[15] friends set them down in council, wherein they spent a great part of the night. And at their rising in the dawning of the day, they sent about privily to their servants in their inns and lodgings about, giving them commandment to make themself shortly[16] ready, for their lords were to horsebackward.[17] Upon which messages, many of their folk were attendant when many of the Lord Rivers' servants were unready. Now had these dukes taken also into their custody the keys of the inn, that none should pass forth without their license. And over this, in the highway toward Stony Stratford, where the king lay, they had bestowed[18] certain of their folk that should send back again and compel to return any

6. *in great . . . speed:* derived from the proverb "The more haste the worse speed." The meaning lies in the play on the sense of *speed* as "success," "good fortune": the young king came fast, but only, as it turned out, to his destruction.

7. Moderate-sized. The queen's compromise was that her son should be accompanied by no more than 2,000 men.

8. Northampton is about sixty miles north-northwest of London. The company had deviated from the direct route to the capital so as to join with Richard, coming from the north of England (York).

9. On April 29.

10. A Buckinghamshire town.

11. Ere, before.

12. Gaiety.

13. Immediately.

14. Parted.

15. Intimate.

16. Quickly.

17. *to horsebackward:* ready to ride.

18. Stationed.

man that were gotten out of Northampton toward Stony Stratford, till they should give other license; forasmuch as the dukes themself intended, for the show of their diligence, to be the first that should that day attend upon the king's highness out of that town: thus bare they folk in hand.[19]

But when the Lord Rivers understood the gates closed and the ways on every side beset—neither his servants nor himself suffered to gone[20] out—perceiving well so great a thing without his knowledge not begun for nought, comparing this manner present with this last night's cheer, in so few hours so great a change marvelously misliked. Howbeit, sith[21] he could not get away—and keep himself close[22] he would not, lest he should seem to hide himself for some secret fear of his own fault, whereof he saw no such cause in himself—he determined, upon the surety of his own conscience,[23] to go boldly to them and inquire what this matter might mean. Whom as soon as they saw, they began to quarrel with him and say that he intended to set distance[24] between the king and them and to bring them to confusion; but it should not lie in his power. And when he began (as he was a very well-spoken man) in goodly wise to excuse himself, they tarried not the end of his answer, but shortly took him and put him in ward,[25] and, that done, forthwith went to horseback and took the way to Stony Stratford, where they found the king with his company ready to leap on horseback and depart forward, to leave that lodging for them, because it was too strait[26] for both companies.

And as soon as they came in his presence, they light adown[27] with all their company about them. To whom the duke of Buckingham said, "Go afore, gentlemen and yeomen, keep your rooms."[28] And thus in a goodly array they came to the king, and on their knees in

19. *thus . . . hand:* thus did they delude people.
20. Go.
21. Since.
22. Shut in.
23. *upon . . . conscience:* i.e., relying, for his safety, on his (clear) conscience.
24. *set distance:* create discord.
25. Custody.
26. Small.
27. *light adown:* dismounted.
28. Stations.

very humble wise salved[29] his grace, which received them in very joyous and amiable manner, nothing earthly knowing nor mistrusting as yet. But even, by and by,[30] in his presence they picked a quarrel to[31] the Lord Richard Grey, the king's other brother by his mother, saying that he, with the lord marquis his brother[32] and the Lord Rivers his uncle, had compassed[33] to rule the king and the realm, and to set variance among the states,[34] and to subdue and destroy the noble blood of the realm. Toward the accomplishing whereof, they said that the lord marquis had entered into the Tower of London and thence taken out the king's treasure, and sent men to the sea.[35] All which thing these dukes wist well were done for good purposes and necessary, by the whole council at London—saving that somewhat they must say.[36]

Unto which words the king answered, "What my brother marquis hath done I cannot say.[37] But, in good faith, I dare well answer for mine uncle Rivers and my brother here, that they be innocent of any such matters."

"Yea, my liege," quod the duke of Buckingham, "they have kept their dealing in these matters far from the knowledge of your good grace." And forthwith they arrested the Lord Richard and Sir Thomas Vaughan,[38] knight, in the king's presence, and brought the king and all back unto Northampton, where they took again further counsel. And there they sent away from the king whom it pleased them, and set new servants about him, such as liked[39] better them

29. Saluted, greeted.

30. *by and by:* immediately (the original meaning of the idiom—though the meaning "shortly" is also found in the sixteenth century, and in this text).

31. With.

32. Dorset (Thomas Grey). See p. 14*n*.

33. Plotted.

34. Noblemen.

35. A squadron indeed sailed off (though probably not until shortly after the encounter at Stony Stratford) under another of the queen's brothers, Sir Edward Woodville, but it had the legitimate purpose of countering the depredations of a French fleet launched just after Edward IV's death. As for the treasury, there was precious little in it *to* loot: the expenses of Edward's funeral and of the fleet seem to have exceeded the scarce reserves.

36. *saving . . . say:* i.e., but they had to offer *some* justification. It is true that the launching of the fleet was authorized by the royal council.

37. Because the marquis had been in London rather than with the prince.

38. A great Yorkist warrior, Vaughan was chamberlain and councillor to the prince.

39. Pleased.

than him. At which dealing he wept and was nothing content; but it booted not.[40] And at dinner the duke of Gloucester sent a dish from his own table to the Lord Rivers, praying him to be of good cheer, all should be well enough. And he thanked the duke, and prayed the messenger to bear it to his nephew the Lord Richard, with the same message for his comfort, who he thought had more need of comfort, as one to whom such adversity was strange. But himself had been all his days in ure therewith,[41] and therefore could bear it the better. But for all this comfortable[42] courtesy of the duke of Gloucester, he sent the Lord Rivers and the Lord Richard, with Sir Thomas Vaughan, into the north country into divers places to prison, and afterward all to Pomfret, where they were in conclusion beheaded.[43]

In this wise the duke of Gloucester took upon himself the order and governance of the young king, whom with much honor and humble reverence he conveyed upward toward the city. But anon[44] the tidings of this matter came hastily to the queen, a little before the midnight following, and that in the sorest wise,[45] that the king her son was taken, her brother, her son, and her other friends arrested and sent no man wist whither, to be done with God wot[46] what. With which tidings the queen, in great flight[47] and heaviness, bewailing her child's ruin,* her friends' mischance, and her own infortune,[48] damning the time that ever she dissuaded[49] the gathering of power about the king, gat herself in all the haste possible, with her younger son and her daughters, out of the palace of Westminster, in which she then lay,[50] into the sanctuary, lodging herself and her company there in the abbot's place.[51]

40. *booted not:* was useless.
41. *in ure therewith:* accustomed to it.
42. Reassuring.
43. On June 25. See below, p. 55 and note. Pomfret (Pontefract) is a town in Yorkshire, Richard's power base. The prisoners were executed at the castle there.
44. Soon.
45. *sorest wise:* most distressing fashion.
46. Knew.
47. Flutter, agitation; hence fright. (But possibly *flight* is simply a misprint for *fright*.) *heaviness:* grief.
48. Ill fortune.
49. Advised against.
50. Lodged. *the sanctuary:* in Westminster Abbey, adjoining the palace.
51. Residence.

Now came there one in, likewise not long after midnight, from the lord chamberlain unto the archbishop of York,[52] then chancellor of England, to his place[53] not far from Westminster. And for that[54] he showed his servants that he had tidings of so great importance that his master gave him in charge not to forbear[55] his rest, they letted not to wake him, nor he to admit this messenger into his bedside. Of whom he heard that these dukes were gone back with the king's grace from Stony Stratford unto Northampton. "Notwithstanding, sir," quod he, "my lord sendeth your lordship word that there is no fear. For he assureth you that all shall be well."

"I assure him," quod the archbishop, "be it as well as it will, it will never be so well as we have seen it." And thereupon, by and by after the messenger departed, he caused in all the haste[56] all his servants to be called up, and so, with his own household about him, and every man weaponed, he took the Great Seal[57] with him and came, yet before day, unto the queen. About whom he found much heaviness, rumble,[58] haste, and busyness, carriage and conveyance of her stuff into sanctuary—chests, coffers, packs, fardels, trusses,[59] all on men's backs, no man unoccupied, some lading, some going, some discharging,[60] some coming for more, some breaking down the walls to bring in the next[61] way, and some yet drew to them that holp to carry a wrong way.[62] The queen herself sat alone, alow[63] on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed; whom the archbishop comforted in the best manner he could, showing her that he trusted the

52. Thomas Rotherham (1423–1500), appointed lord chancellor by Edward IV in 1474.

53. York Place, London residence of the archbishops from the thirteenth century until 1529.

54. *for that:* because.

55. Spare. *letted . . . him:* did not refrain from waking him (i.e., the archbishop).

56. *in all the haste:* in the *History* this idiom always includes *the.* Evidently it is felt as a shortened form of *in all the haste possible* (p. 25 above).

57. Kept in the personal custody of the lord chancellor, the Great Seal was used to authenticate royal documents, and was thus an object of the utmost importance.

58. Commotion.

59. *fardels, trusses:* parcels, bundles—the words are essentially synonymous.

60. *lading . . . discharging:* loading . . . unloading.

61. Nearest.

62. *and . . . way:* i.e., and still others joined in who helped to carry things a wrong way—in contrast, that is, to those who broke through the walls in order to carry things the most direct way. (Perhaps the allusion is to thieves taking advantage of the confusion.)

63. Below. *rushes:* the standard floor covering.

matter was nothing so sore[64] as she took it for, and that he was put in good hope and out of fear by the message sent him from the lord chamberlain.

"Ah, woe worth him,"[65] quod she, "for he is one of them that laboreth to destroy me and my blood."

"Madam," quod he, "be ye of good cheer. For I assure you if they crown any other king than your son whom they now have with them, we shall on the morrow crown his brother whom you have here with you. And here is the Great Seal, which in like wise as that noble prince your husband delivered it unto me, so here I deliver it unto you, to the use and behoof of your son." And therewith he betook[66] her the Great Seal and departed home again, yet in the dawning of the day. By which time he might in his chamber window see all the Thames full of boats of the duke of Gloucester's servants, watching that no man should go to sanctuary, nor none could pass unsearched.

Then was there great commotion and murmur,[67] as well in other places about, as specially in the city, the people diversely divining upon this dealing. And some lords, knights, and gentlemen, either for favor of the queen or for fear of themself, assembled in sundry companies and went flock-meal[68] in harness; and many also for that they reckoned this demeanor[69] attempted not so specially against the other lords as against the king himself, in the disturbance of his coronation.

But then, by and by, the lords assembled together at London.* Toward[70] which meeting, the archbishop of York—fearing that it would be ascribed (as it was indeed) to his overmuch lightness[71] that he so suddenly had yielded up the Great Seal to the queen, to whom the custody thereof nothing pertained without especial commandment of the king—secretly sent for the seal again and brought

64. *nothing so sore:* by no means as serious.
65. *woe . . . him:* may evil befall him.
66. Handed over to. More is the only source for this remarkable story.
67. Grumbling; repining.
68. By troops. *harness:* armor.
69. Action.
70. Shortly before; or, in preparation for.
71. Capriciousness; unsteadiness.

it with him after the customable[72] manner. And at this meeting the Lord Hastings, whose truth[73] toward the king no man doubted nor needed to doubt, persuaded the lords to believe that the duke of Gloucester was sure and fastly[74] faithful to his prince, and that the Lord Rivers and Lord Richard, with the other knights, were, for matters attempted by them against the dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham, put under arrest for their surety,[75] not for the king's jeopardy; and that they were also in safeguard,[76] and there no longer should remain than till the matter were, not by the dukes only but also by all the other lords of the king's council, indifferently[77] examined and by other discretions ordered, and either judged or appeased.[78] But one thing he advised them beware, that they judged not the matter too far-forth ere they knew the truth; nor, turning their private grudges into the common hurt, irriting[79] and provoking men unto anger and disturbing the king's coronation, toward which the dukes were coming up, that they might peradventure bring the matter so far out of joint that it should never be brought in frame[80] again. Which strife, if it should hap, as it were likely, to come to a field,[81] though both parties were in all other things equal, yet should the authority be on that side where the king is himself.

With these persuasions of the Lord Hastings—whereof part himself believed, of part he wist the contrary—these commotions were somewhat appeased; but specially by that that[82] the dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham were so near, and came so shortly[83] on with the king in none other manner, with none other voice or semblance, than to his coronation, causing the fame[84] to be blown about that these lords and knights which were taken had contrived

72. Accustomed.
73. Loyalty.
74. Steadfastly.
75. *for their surety:* i.e., for the safety of the dukes.
76. Custody.
77. Impartially.
78. Settled.
79. Irritating.
80. *in frame:* into order.
81. I.e., battlefield—hence battle.
82. *by that that:* because.
83. Quickly.
84. Report.

the destruction of the dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham, and of other the noble blood of the realm, to the end that themself would alone demean[85] and govern the king at their pleasure. And for the colorable[86] proof thereof, such of the dukes' servants as rode with the carts of their stuff that were taken—among which stuff no marvel though some were harness, which at the breaking up of that household[87] must needs either be brought away or cast away—they showed unto the people all the way as they went: "Lo, here be the barrels of harness that these traitors had privily conveyed in their carriage[88] to destroy the noble lords withal." This device, albeit that it made the matter to wise men more unlikely, well perceiving that the intenders of such a purpose would rather have had their harness on their backs than to have bound them up in barrels, yet much part of the common people were therewith very well satisfied, and said it were almoise[89] to hang them.

When the king approached near to the city, Edmund Shaa, goldsmith, then mayor, with William White and John Matthew, sheriffs, and all the other aldermen in scarlet, with five hundred horse[90] of the citizens in violet, received him reverently at Hornsey[91] and, riding from thence, accompanied him into the city, which he entered the fourth day of May, the first and last year of his reign. But the duke of Gloucester bare him in open sight so reverently to the prince, with all semblance of lowliness,[92] that, from the great obloquy in which he was so late[93] before, he was suddenly fallen in so great trust that at the council next assembled[94] he was made the only man chose and thought most meet[95] to be protector of the king and his realm: so that (were it destiny or were it folly) the lamb was betaken to the wolf to keep. At which council also the archbishop of

85. Control.
86. Specious.
87. I.e., the prince's household on the Welsh border.
88. Baggage. *withal:* with.
89. A literary variant of *alms.* The meaning is that hanging them would be a good deed.
90. Horsemen.
91. At the time, a village lying a few miles from the northwest edge of London.
92. Humility.
93. Recently.
94. May 10.
95. Suitable.

York, chancellor of England, which had delivered up the Great Seal to the queen, was thereof greatly reproved, and the seal taken from him and delivered to Doctor Russell, bishop of Lincoln,[96] a wise man and a good and of much experience, and one of the best-learned men, undoubtedly, that England had in his time. Divers lords and knights were appointed into divers rooms.[97] The lord chamberlain and some other kept still their offices that they had before.

Now all were it[98] so that the protector so sore thirsted for the finishing of that he had begun, that thought every day a year till it were achieved, yet durst he no further attempt as long as he had but half his prey in his hand: well witting that if he deposed the one brother all the realm would fall to the other, if he either remained in sanctuary or should haply be shortly conveyed to his farther liberty.[99] Wherefore, incontinent[1] at the next meeting of the lords at the council he proposed unto them that it was a heinous deed of the queen, and proceeding of great malice toward the king's councillors, that she should keep in sanctuary the king's brother from him, whose special pleasure and comfort were to have his brother with him. And that by her done to none other intent but to bring all the lords in obloquy and murmur of the people—as though they were not to be trusted with the king's brother, that by the assent of the nobles of the land were appointed, as the king's nearest friends, to the tuition[2] of his own royal person. "The prosperity whereof standeth," quod he, "not all in keeping from enemies or ill viand,[3] but partly also in recreation and moderate pleasure: which he cannot, in this tender youth, take in the company of ancient[4] persons but in the familiar

96. John Russell (d. 1494) became bishop of Lincoln in 1480, and had been in the royal service since well before that date. Though made chancellor on May 10, he did not actually receive the Great Seal until June 27, the day after Richard assumed the throne.

97. Offices.

98. *all were it:* although it was.

99. I.e. (as the Latin version makes explicit), taken out of the country.

More's chronology now goes astray, placing the extraction of the king's younger brother from sanctuary sometime between May 10 (when Richard was made protector) and June 13 (when Hastings was executed; see pp. 54–57). But in fact Richard proposed that the boy be somehow removed from sanctuary at a council meeting convened later on the day of Hastings's death, and he was brought out on June 16. The same error is found in nearly all of the early accounts.

1. Incontinently: straightway.

2. Protection.

3. *ill viand:* bad food.

4. Old. *conversation* (next page): company.

conversation of those that be neither far under nor far above his age, and nevertheless of estate convenient[5] to accompany his noble majesty. Wherefore, with whom rather than with his own brother? And if any man think this consideration light[6/*] (which I think no man thinketh that loveth the king), let him consider that sometimes without small things greater cannot stand. And verily it redoundeth greatly to the dishonor both of the king's highness and of all us that been about his grace, to have it run in every man's mouth, not in this realm only but also in other lands (as evil words walk far), that the king's brother should be fain to keep sanctuary. For every man will ween that no man will so do for nought. And such evil opinion once fastened in men's hearts, hard it is to wrest out, and may grow to more grief than any man here can divine.

"Wherefore methinketh it were not worst to send unto the queen, for the redress of this matter, some honorable, trusty man, such as both tendereth[7] the king's weal and the honor of his council, and is also in favor and credence with her. For all which considerations, none seemeth me more meetly[8] than our reverent father here present, my lord cardinal,[9] who may in this matter do most good of any man, if it please him to take the pain. Which I doubt not, of his goodness, he will not refuse, for the king's sake and ours, and wealth[10] of the young duke himself, the king's most honorable brother and, after my sovereign lord himself, my most dear nephew—considered that thereby shall be ceased the slanderous rumor and obloquy now going, and the hurts avoided that thereof might ensue, and much rest and quiet grow to all the realm. And if she be percase[11] so obstinate and so precisely set upon her own will that neither his wise and faithful advertisement[12] can move her nor any man's reason content her, then shall we, by mine advice, by the king's authority fetch him out of that prison and bring him to his noble presence: in whose

5. *estate convenient:* suitable rank.
6. Slight, trivial.
7. Holds dear.
8. Suitable.
9. Thomas Bourchier (1404?–86), archbishop of Canterbury since 1454 and cardinal since 1467.
10. Welfare.
11. Perchance. *precisely:* absolutely.
12. Counsel.

continual company he shall be so well cherished and so honorably entreated[13] that all the world shall, to our honor and her reproach, perceive that it was only malice, frowardness,[14] or folly that caused her to keep him there. This is my mind in this matter for this time, except any of your lordships anything perceive to the contrary. For never shall I, by God's grace, so wed myself to mine own will but that I shall be ready to change it upon your better advices."

When the protector had said, all the council affirmed that the motion[15] was good and reasonable, and to the king and the duke his brother honorable, and a thing that should cease great murmur in the realm, if the mother might be by good means induced to deliver him. Which thing the archbishop of York,[16] whom they all agreed also to be thereto most convenient,[17] took upon him to move her, and therein to do his uttermost devoir.[18] Howbeit, if she could be in no wise entreated with her goodwill to deliver him, then thought he, and such other as were of the spirituality[19] present, that it were not in any wise to be attempted to take him out against her will. For it would be a thing that should turn to the great grudge[20] of all men and high displeasure of God, if the privilege of that holy place should now be broken, which had so many years been kept, which both kings and popes so good had granted, so many had confirmed, and which holy ground was more than five hundred year ago by Saint Peter his own person in spirit, accompanied with great multitude of angels, by night so specially hallowed and dedicate to God (for the proof whereof they have yet in the abbey Saint Peter's cope to show)[21] that from that time hitherward was there never so

13. Treated.
14. Perversity.
15. Proposal.
16. More should have written "the cardinal" (as above). The mistake—which is repeated below—probably survives from an earlier stage of composition when More was confused about which prelate had played this role in the council. The error is not found in the surviving texts of the Latin version. Cf. the textual note to p. 48.
17. Suited.
18. Duty—i.e., he would make the utmost effort.
19. *such . . . spirituality:* i.e., the other ecclesiastics.
20. Discontent.
21. According to legend, St. Peter consecrated Westminster Abbey (early in the seventh century) the night before the first bishop of London was to have performed the task. More was doubtless skeptical of the claim that a relic proved the truth of the story.

undevout a king that durst that sacred place violate, or so holy a bishop that durst it presume to consecrate. "And therefore," quod the archbishop of York, "God forbid that any man should, for anything earthly, enterprise[22] to break the immunity and liberty of that sacred sanctuary, that hath been the safeguard of so many a good man's life. And I trust," quod he, "with God's grace we shall not need it. But for any manner need,[23] I would not we should do it. I trust that she shall be with reason contented, and all thing in good manner obtained. And if it happen that I bring it not so to pass, yet shall I toward it so far-forth do my best, that ye shall all well perceive that no lack of my devoir, but the mother's dread and womanish fear shall be the let."[24]

"Womanish fear? Nay, womanish frowardness!" quod the duke of Buckingham. "For I dare take it upon my soul, she well knoweth she needeth no such thing to fear, either for her son or for herself. For, as for her, here is no man that will be at war with women. Would God some of the men of her kin were women too, and then should all be soon in rest! Howbeit, there is none of her kin the less loved for that they be her kin, but for their own evil deserving. And nevertheless, if we loved neither her nor her kin, yet were there no cause to think that we should hate the king's noble brother, to whose grace we ourself be of kin. Whose honor if she as much desired as our dishonor, and as much regard took to his wealth[25] as to her own will, she would be as loath to suffer him from the king as any of us be. For if she have any wit[26] (as would God she had as good will as she hath shrewd[27] wit), she reckoneth herself no wiser than she thinketh some that be here, of whose faithful mind she nothing doubteth, but

22. Undertake.

23. *for . . . need:* for any need whatsoever.

24. Impediment. The cardinal's remarks introduce a lengthy discussion of the privilege of sanctuary—which traditionally meant that almost any fugitive could shelter safely in any church; in England, the twenty-odd "chartered" sanctuaries (including Westminster Abbey) offered especially secure protection, which could be extended for life. Sanctuary was often abused by career criminals, and the privilege was, on occasion, violated by the forcible removal of fugitives. The appropriate limitation of sanctuary was—especially in More's time—a much-disputed issue. More also touches on it in *Utopia* (*CW* 4.81, *CU* 75–77).

25. Well-being.

26. Intelligence.

27. Malignant; cunning.

verily believeth and knoweth that they would be as sorry of his harm as herself, and yet would have him from her if she bide there. And we all, I think, content that both be with her, if she come thence and bide in such place where they may with their honor be.

"Now then, if she refuse, in the deliverance of him, to follow the counsel of them whose wisdom she knoweth, whose truth[28] she well trusteth, it is eath[29] to perceive that frowardness letteth her, and not fear. But go to,[30] suppose that she fear (as who may let her to fear her own shadow?), the more she feareth to deliver him, the more ought we fear to leave him in her hands. For if she cast[31] such fond doubts that she fear his hurt, then will she fear that he shall be fet[32] thence. For she will soon think that if men were set (which God forbid) upon so great a mischief, the sanctuary would little let them. Which good men might, as methinketh, without sin somewhat less regard than they do.

"Now then, if she doubt[33] lest he might be fetched from her, is it not likely enough that she shall send him somewhere out of the realm? Verily, I look for none other.[34] And I doubt not but she now as sore mindeth[35] it, as we the let thereof. And if she might happen to bring that to pass (as it were no great mastery,[36] we letting her alone), all the world would say that we were a wise sort of councillors about a king, that let his brother be cast away under our noses. And therefore I ensure[37] you faithfully, for my mind I will rather, maugre her mind, fetch him away than leave him there till her frowardness or fond fear convey him away.

And yet will I break no sanctuary therefor. For verily, sith the privileges of that place and other like have been of long continued, I am not he that would be about[38] to break them. And, in good faith,

28. Loyalty.
29. Easy. *letteth:* hinders, prevents.
30. *go to:* an interjection similar to "come, now."
31. Contrive. *fond:* foolish.
32. Fetched.
33. Fear.
34. *look . . . other:* expect nothing else.
35. *sore mindeth:* earnestly intends. *let:* prevention.
36. Achievement.
37. Assure. *maugre her mind:* despite her intention.
38. *be about:* go about, set out.

if they were now to begin, I would not be he that should be about to make them. Yet will I not say nay[39] but that it is a deed of pity that such men as the sea or their evil debtors have brought in poverty[40] should have some place of liberty, to keep their bodies out of the danger of their cruel creditors. And also if the crown happen, as it hath done,[41] to come in question, while either part taketh other[42] as traitors, I will well[43] there be some places of refuge for both. But as for thieves, of which these places be full, and which never fall from[44] the craft after they once fall thereto, it is pity the sanctuary should serve them. And, much more, manquellers,[45] whom God bade to take from the altar and kill them, if their murder were willful.[46] And where it is otherwise, there need we not the sanctuaries that God appointed in the old law.[47] For if either necessity, his own defense, or misfortune draw him to that deed, a pardon serveth, which either the law granteth of course,[48] or the king of pity may.

"Then look me[49] now how few sanctuary men there be whom any favorable[50] necessity compelled to go thither. And then see on the other side what a sort[51] there be commonly therein of them whom willful unthriftiness hath brought to nought. What a rabble of thieves, murderers, and malicious, heinous traitors, and that in two places specially: the one at the elbow of the city,[52] the other in the very bowels! I dare well avow it: weigh the good that they

39. *say nay:* deny.

40. *such . . . poverty:* i.e., men who have been reduced to poverty either by the loss of their goods at sea or by bad loans.

41. I.e., in the past.

42. *either . . . other:* each party regards the other.

43. *will well:* am quite willing that.

44. *fall from:* quit.

45. Mankillers, murderers.

46. See Exodus 21:14.

47. I.e., in the Old Testament: see Numbers 35:22–25.

48. *of course:* in its ordinary course.

49. *look me:* see; consider. (*me* is the "ethic dative," which serves only to give additional force to the imperative.)

50. Admissible.

51. Crowd.

52. *at . . . city:* i.e., close by the City of London, at Westminster. The other sanctuary Buckingham refers to is the one at the monastery of St. Martin's le Grande (near Cripplegate)—the chartered sanctuary in the city itself, and one that was particularly associated with the abuses the duke proceeds to summarize.

do with the hurt that cometh of them, and ye shall find it much better to lack both than have both. And this I say although[53] they were not abused as they now be and so long have been that I fear me ever they will be while[54] men be afeard to set their hands to the mendment[55]—as though God and Saint Peter were the patrons of ungracious[56] living!

"Now unthrifts[57] riot and run in debt upon the boldness of these places;[58] yea, and rich men run thither with poor men's goods: there they build, there they spend, and bid their creditors go whistle[59] them. Men's wives run thither with their husbands' plate,[60] and say they dare not abide with their husbands for beating.[61] Thieves bring thither their stolen goods and there live thereon. There devise they new robberies, nightly they steal out, they rob and reive and kill, and come in again—as though those places gave them not only a safeguard for the harm they have done but a license also to do more. Howbeit, much of this mischief, if wise men would set their hands to it, might be amended, with great thank of God[62] and no breach of the privilege. The residue, sith so long ago I wot never what pope and what prince more piteous than politic hath granted it, and other men since, of a certain religious fear, have not broken it, let us take a pain therewith[63] and let it a God's name stand in force, as far-forth as reason will—which is not fully so far-forth as may serve to let us of[64] the fetching forth of this nobleman to his honor and wealth, out of that place in which he neither is nor can be a sanctuary man.

"A sanctuary serveth alway to defend the body of that man that standeth in danger abroad, not of great hurt only, but also of lawful hurt. For against unlawful harms, never pope nor king intended to

53. *And . . . although:* i.e., and I would say this even if.
54. As long as. *afeard:* afraid.
55. Amendment.
56. Wicked.
57. Spendthrifts.
58. *upon . . . places:* i.e., emboldened by the impunity afforded by the sanctuaries.
59. "Go whistle" is proverbial for wasted effort.
60. I.e., plateware of gold or silver.
61. *for beating:* because they beat them.
62. *with . . . God:* with God's approval.
63. *take . . . therewith:* endure it. *a:* in.
64. *let us of:* prevent us from.

privilege any one place: for that privilege hath every place. Knoweth any man any place wherein it is lawful one man to do another wrong? That no man[65] unlawfully take hurt, that liberty[66] the king, the law, and very nature[67] forbiddeth in every place, and maketh, to that regard,[68] for every man every place a sanctuary. But where a man is by lawful means in peril, there needeth he the tuition[69] of some special privilege, which is the only ground and cause of all sanctuaries. From which necessity this noble prince is far, whose love to his king nature and kindred proveth, whose innocence to all the world his tender youth proveth. And so sanctuary, as for him, neither none he needeth, nor also none can have. Men come not to sanctuary as they come to baptism, to require[70] it by their godfathers: he must ask it himself that must have it. And reason,[71] sith no man hath cause to have it but whose conscience[72] of his own fault maketh him need* to require it. What will,[73] then, hath yonder babe? Which, and if[74] he had discretion to require it if need were, I dare say would now be right angry with them that keep him there. And I would think without any scruple of conscience, without any breach of privilege, to be somewhat more homely[75] with them that be there sanctuary men indeed. For if one go to sanctuary with another man's goods, why should not the king, leaving his body at liberty, satisfy the party[76/*] of his goods even within the sanctuary? For neither king nor pope can give any place such a privilege that it shall discharge a man of his debts, being able to pay."

And with that, divers of the clergy that were present, whether they said it for his pleasure or as they thought, agreed plainly that by the law of God and of the church the goods of a sanctuary man

65. *That no man:* i.e., lest any man.
66. *that liberty:* i.e., the right to do wrong to another.
67. *very nature:* nature itself.
68. *to that regard:* in that respect.
69. Protection.
70. Ask for.
71. I.e., for good reason.
72. *whose conscience:* i.e., he whose consciousness.
73. Desire (to ask for sanctuary).
74. *and if:* if. *discretion:* i.e., the requisite maturity.
75. Rough.
76. I.e., the person whose goods have been carried off.

should be delivered in payment of his debts, and stolen goods to the owner, and only liberty reserved him to get his living with the labor of his hands.

"Verily," quod the duke, "I think you say very truth. And what if a man's wife will take sanctuary because she list[77] to run from her husband? I would ween if she can allege none other cause, he may lawfully, without any displeasure to Saint Peter, take her out of Saint Peter's church by the arm. And if nobody may be taken out of sanctuary that sayeth he will bide there, then if a child will take sanctuary because he feareth to go to school, his master must let him alone. And as simple[78] as that sample is, yet is there less reason in our case than in that. For therein, though it be a childish fear, yet is there at the leastwise some fear. And herein is there none at all. And verily I have often heard of sanctuary men. But I never heard erst[79] of sanctuary children. And therefore, as for the conclusion of my mind, whoso may have deserved to need it, if they think it for their surety, let them keep it. But he can be no sanctuary man that neither hath wisdom to desire it nor malice to deserve it,[80] whose life or liberty can by no lawful process stand in jeopardy. And he that taketh one out of sanctuary to do him good, I say plainly that he breaketh no sanctuary."

When the duke had done, the temporal men whole,[81] and good part of the spiritual also, thinking none hurt earthly meant toward the young babe, condescended, in effect,[82] that if he were not delivered he should be fetched. Howbeit, they thought it all best, in the avoiding of all manner of rumor, that the lord cardinal should first essay[83] to get him with her goodwill. And thereupon all the council came unto the Star Chamber[84] at Westminster. And the lord car-

77. Wishes.

78. Trifling. *sample:* example.

79. Before.

80. *malice . . . it:* (sufficient) wickedness to have acquired a claim to it. The sentence sums up Buckingham's argument: the prince cannot be a "sanctuary man" both because he is not sufficiently mature to request sanctuary and also because he is not a criminal—the group for whom sanctuaries (primarily) exist.

81. *temporal men whole:* laymen unanimously.

82. *condescended, in effect:* agreed, in fact.

83. Attempt.

84. This palace room (named for its star-painted ceiling) was the usual meeting place of the council.

dinal, leaving the protector with the council in the Star Chamber, departed into the sanctuary to the queen, with divers other lords with him—were it for the respect of his honor, or that she should by presence of so many perceive that this errand was not one man's mind, or were it for that the protector intended not in this matter to trust any one man alone, or else that, if she finally were determined to keep him, some of that company had haply secret instruction incontinent,[85] maugre her mind,* to take him and to leave her no respite to convey him,[86] which she was likely to mind[87] after this matter broken[88] to her, if her time would in any wise serve her.

When the queen and these lords were come together in presence,[89] the lord cardinal showed unto her that it was thought unto the protector and unto the whole council that her keeping of the king's brother in that place was the thing which highly sounded[90] not only to the great rumor of the people and their[91] obloquy but also to the importable grief and displeasure of the king's royal majesty. To whose grace it were as singular comfort to have his natural brother in company, as it was their both dishonor, and all theirs and hers also, to suffer him in sanctuary. As though the one brother stood in danger and peril of the other. And he showed her that the council therefore had sent him unto her to require her[92] the delivery of him, that he might be brought unto the king's presence at his liberty, out of that place which they reckoned as a prison. And there should he be demeaned[93] according to his estate. And she in this doing should both do great good to the realm, pleasure to the council and profit to herself, succor to her friends that were in distress,[94] and, over that (which he wist well she specially tendered),[95] not only great comfort and honor to the king but also to the young duke himself, whose

85. Immediately.
86. *respite . . . him:* i.e., opportunity to smuggle him out of the country.
87. Have a mind to, intend.
88. Was revealed.
89. *presence* is in the sense of attendance upon a royal personage.
90. Gave rise. *great rumor:* loud expression of disapproval.
91. I.e., the council's. *importable:* unbearable.
92. *require her:* request of her.
93. Treated. *estate:* rank.
94. Referring—in a thinly veiled threat—to those taken prisoner at Northampton and Stony Stratford.
95. Held dear, valued.

both great wealth[96] it were to be together, as well for many greater causes as also for their both disport and recreation—which thing the lord[97/*] esteemed not* slight, though it seem light, well pondering that their youth without recreation and play cannot endure, nor any stranger for the convenience of their both ages and estates so meetly[98] in that point for any of them, as either of them for other.

"My lord," quod the queen, "I say not nay but[99] that it were very convenient[1] that this gentleman whom ye require were in the company of the king his brother. And in good faith methinketh it were as great commodity[2] to them both, as for yet a while, to be in the custody of their mother, the tender age considered of the elder of them both, but specially the younger, which besides his infancy, that also needeth good looking to, hath a while been so sore vexed[3/*] with sickness, and is so newly rather a little amended than well recovered, that I dare put no person earthly in trust with his keeping but myself only; considering that there is, as physicians say and as we also find, double the peril in the recidivation[4] that was in the first sickness—with which disease, nature, being forelabored,[5] forewearied, and weaked,[6] waxeth the less able to bear out a new surfeit.[7] And albeit there might be founden other that would haply do their best unto him, yet is there none that either knoweth better how to order[8] him than I that so long have kept him, or is more tenderly like[9] to cherish him than his own mother that bare him."

"No man denieth, good madam," quod the cardinal, "but that your grace were of all folk most necessary about your children: and so would all the council not only be content but also glad that ye

96. Well-being.

97. Presumably referring to the protector—though the alternative reading, "lords" (see textual note), may well be what More wrote.

98. Suitable.

99. *I . . . but:* I don't deny.

1. Suitable; appropriate.
2. Advantage.
3. *sore vexed:* severely afflicted.
4. Relapse.
5. Tired out beforehand—synonymous with the following word.
6. Weakened. *waxeth:* grows.
7. Illness; fever.
8. Look after.
9. Likely.

Image right unavailable

Fig. 3. Elizabeth Woodville (1437–92), Edward IV's queen and Richard of Gloucester's bitter rival for power, in a portrait that has been dated to 1471–80 and may have been taken from the life—which is not to say that it is necessarily lifelike. Explaining Edward's infatuation when he met the young widow in the spring of 1464, More says she was "both fair, of a good favor, moderate of stature, well made, and very wise" (p. 71).

were, if it might stand with your pleasure to be in such place as might stand with their honor. But if you appoint yourself to tarry[10] here, then think they yet more convenient that the duke of York were with the king honorably at his liberty to the comfort of them both, than here as a sanctuary man to their both dishonor and obloquy; sith there is not alway so great necessity to have the child be with the mother but that occasion may sometimes be such that it should be more expedient to keep him elsewhere. Which in this well appeareth, that at such time as your dearest son, then prince and now king, should for his honor and good order of the country keep household in Wales, far out of your company, your grace was well content therewith yourself."

"Not very well content," quod the queen. "And yet the case is not like, for the one was then in health, and the other is now sick. In which case,[11] I marvel greatly that my lord protector is so desirous to have him in his keeping, where if the child in his sickness miscarried by nature,[12] yet might he run into slander and suspicion of* fraud. And where[13] they call it a thing so sore against my child's honor, and theirs also, that he bideth in this place, it is all their honors[14] there to suffer him bide where no man doubteth he shall be best kept. And that is here, while I am here—which as yet intend not to come forth and jeopard[15] myself after other of my friends, which would God were rather here in surety with me than I were there in jeopardy with them."

"Why, madam," quod another lord,[16] "know you anything why they should be in jeopardy?"

"Nay, verily, sir," quod she, "nor why they should be in prison neither, as they now be. But it is, I trow,[17] no great marvel though[18]

10. *appoint . . . tarry:* resolve to stay.
11. *In which case:* i.e., this being the case.
12. *miscarried by nature:* died of natural causes.
13. Whereas.
14. *it . . . honors:* it is for the honor of them all.
15. Endanger. *after:* like.
16. The Hardyng-Hall versions of the text (see above, pp. xliii–xliv) say he was "the Lord Howard"—i.e., John Howard, who, a baron at this time, was created duke of Norfolk after Richard seized the throne. See pp. xli–xlii.
17. Believe.
18. That. *letted* (next page): forborne.

I fear lest those that have not letted to put them in duress[19] without color will let as little to procure their destruction without cause."

The cardinal made a countenance to the other lord that he should harp no more upon that string. And then said he to the queen that he nothing doubted but that those lords of her honorable kin which as yet remained under arrest should, upon the matter examined, do well enough. And as toward her noble person, neither was nor could be any manner jeopardy.

"Whereby should I trust that?" quod the queen. "In that I am guiltless? As though they were guilty. In that I am with their enemies better beloved than they? When they hate them for my sake! In that I am so near of kin to the king? And how far be they off?[20]—if that would help, as God send grace it hurt not. And therefore, as for me, I purpose not as yet to depart hence. And as for this gentleman my son, I mind that he shall be where I am till I see further. For I assure you, for that[21] I see some men so greedy, without any substantial cause, to have him, this maketh me much the more farther[22] to deliver him."

"Truly, madam," quod he, "and the farther that you be to deliver him, the farther be other men to suffer you to keep him, lest your causeless fear might cause you further to convey him. And many be there that think that he can have no privilege in this place, which neither can have will to ask it nor malice to deserve it.[23] And therefore they reckon no privilege broken, though they fetch him out. Which, if ye finally refuse to deliver him, I verily think they will—so much dread hath my lord his uncle, for the tender love he beareth him, lest your grace should hap[24] to send him away."

"Ah, sir," quod the queen, "hath the protector so tender zeal to him that he feareth nothing but lest he should escape him? Thinketh he that I would send him hence, which neither is in the plight[25] to send out—and in what place could I reckon him sure, if he be not

19. Confinement. *color:* plausible reason.
20. *how . . . off?:* how far distant (in kinship) are they (i.e., Rivers and Richard Grey)?
21. *for that:* because.
22. *more farther:* i.e., more reluctant.
23. *nor . . . it:* The cardinal here echoes Buckingham's words (p. 38).
24. Happen.
25. Condition.

sure in this, the sanctuary whereof was there never tyrant yet so devilish that durst presume to break? And I trust God as strong now to withstand his adversaries as ever he was.* But my son 'can deserve no sanctuary, and therefore he cannot have it'? Forsooth, he hath found a goodly gloss[26] by which that place that may defend a thief may not save an innocent. But he 'is in no jeopardy, nor hath no need thereof'? Would God he had not. Troweth[27] the protector (I pray God he may prove a protector), troweth he that I perceive not whereunto his painted process draweth?[28] 'It is not honorable that the duke bide here; it were comfortable[29] for them both that he were with his brother, because the king lacketh a playfellow'? Be ye sure.[30] I pray God send them both better playfellows than him that maketh so high a matter upon such a trifling pretext—as though there could none be founden to play with the king but if[31] his brother that hath no lust to play, for sickness, come out of sanctuary, out of his safeguard, to play with him. As though princes as young as they be could not play but with their peers, or children could not play but with their kindred—with whom, for the more part, they agree much worse than with strangers. 'But the child cannot require the privilege'? Who told him so? He shall hear him ask it, and[32] he will. Howbeit, this is a gay[33] matter. Suppose he could not ask it; suppose he would not ask it; suppose he would ask to go out: if I say he shall not, if I ask the privilege but for myself, I say he that against my will taketh out him breaketh the sanctuary. Serveth this liberty for my person only, or for my goods too? Ye may not hence take my horse from me; and may you take my child from me? He is also my ward; for, as my learned counsel showeth me, sith he hath nothing by descent holden by knight's service,[34] the law maketh his

26. *goodly gloss:* admirable explanation—as often, the phrase is used ironically.
27. Believes.
28. *painted process draweth:* i.e., clever argument leads.
29. Comforting; advantageous.
30. *Be ye sure:* ironic: "Oh, to be sure."
31. *but if:* unless. *lust:* appetite.
32. If.
33. Specious.
34. In feudal terminology, land was held by knight's service if granted on condition of military service; tenure of this kind marked a man as an independent person. The queen's point, firmly grounded in English common law, is that since her son's holdings are not by knight's service, he cannot be considered independent but is a ward of his mother.

mother his guardian. Then may no man, I suppose, take my ward from me out of sanctuary without the breach of the sanctuary. And if my privilege could not serve him, nor he ask it for himself, yet sith the law committeth to me the custody of him, I may require[35] it for him—except the law give a child a guardian only for his goods and his lands, discharging him of the cure[36] and safekeeping of his body, for which only both lands and goods serve.

<"And[37/*] if examples be sufficient to obtain privilege for my child, I need not far to seek. For in this place in which we now be (and which is now in question whether my child may take benefit of it), mine other son, now king, was born and kept in his cradle and preserved to a more prosperous fortune, which I pray God long to continue. And as all you know, this is not the first time that I have taken sanctuary; for when my lord my husband was banished and thrust out of his kingdom, I fled hither being great with child, and here I bare the prince.[38] And when my lord my husband returned safe again and had the victory,[39] then went I hence to welcome him home, and from hence I brought my babe the prince unto his father, when he first took him in his arms. And I pray God that my son's palace may be as great safeguard to him, now reigning, as this place was sometime to the king's enemy.[40] In which place I intend to keep his brother, sith man's law serveth the guardian to keep the infant, the law of nature will[41/*] the mother keep her child, God's law privilegeth the sanctuary, and the sanctuary my son—sith> I fear to put him in the protector's hands, that hath his brother already,

35. Ask. *except:* unless.

36. Care.

37. The passage here enclosed in angle brackets was translated by Rastell from a manuscript of the Latin version of the *History* and inserted into his edition of the English version to fill what he evidently regarded as a lacuna in the text. (Cf. the textual note.)

38. Edward V was born at Westminster Abbey on November 2, 1470. The queen had taken sanctuary there two months earlier, when her husband—the earl of Warwick having deposed him and restored Henry VI—fled the country.

39. Edward IV regained the throne at the Battle of Barnet, April 14 (Easter Sunday), 1471. The queen actually rejoined him three days *before* the battle.

40. *sometime . . . enemy:* At this point Rastell's translation is faulty: the Latin phrase means "at the time when he was the king's enemy." The reference is to the period of Henry VI's restoration—during which, as the queen has explained, her elder son was born and sheltered in the sanctuary.

41. Demands, requires.

and were, if both failed, inheritor to the crown. The cause of my fear hath no man to do to examine.[42] And yet fear I no further than the law feareth, which, as learned men tell me, forbiddeth every man the custody of them by whose death he may inherit less[43] land than a kingdom. I can[44] no more, but whosoever he be that breaketh this holy sanctuary, I pray God shortly send him need of sanctuary when he may not come to it. For taken *out* of sanctuary would I not my mortal enemy were."

The lord cardinal, perceiving that the queen waxed ever the longer the farther off,[45] and also that she began to kindle and chafe and speak sore, biting words against the protector, and such as he neither believed and was also loath to hear, he said unto her, for a final conclusion, that he would no longer dispute the matter. But if she were content to deliver the duke to him and to the other lords there present, he durst lay his own body and soul both in pledge, not only for his surety but also for his estate.[46] And if she would give them a resolute answer to the contrary, he would forthwith depart therewithal, and shift[47] whoso would with this business afterward: for he never intended more to move her in that matter, in which she thought that he and all other also, save herself, lacked either wit or truth[48]—wit, if they were so dull that they could nothing perceive what the protector intended; truth, if they should procure her son to be delivered into his hands in whom they should perceive toward the child any evil intended.

The queen with these words stood a good while in a great study. And forasmuch her seemed the cardinal[49] more ready to depart than some of the remnant, and the protector himself ready at hand, so that she verily thought she could not keep him there, but that he

42. The corresponding Latin passage suggests that the sense of the sentence is "it is no one's business to question the basis of my fear."

43. I.e., far less. Again the queen cites a precept of the common law, on the authority of counsel.

44. Can do.

45. *waxed . . . off:* i.e., grew, the longer they talked, ever less likely to surrender the child.

46. Position.

47. Deal.

48. *wit or truth:* intelligence or fidelity.

49. *her . . . cardinal:* as it seemed to her that the cardinal was.

should incontinent be taken thence;[50] and to convey him elsewhere neither had she time to serve her, nor place determined, nor persons appointed, all thing unready—this message came on her so suddenly, nothing less looking for than to have him fet out of sanctuary, which she thought to be now beset in such places about[51] that he could not be conveyed out untaken—; and partly, as she thought it might fortune her fear to be false,[52] so well she wist* it was either needless or bootless:[53] wherefore, if she should needs[54] go from him, she dempt it best to deliver him. And over that, of the cardinal's faith[55] she nothing doubted, nor of some other lords neither, whom she there saw, which as she feared lest they might be deceived, so was she well assured they would not be corrupted. Then thought she it should yet make them the more warily to look to him, and the more circumspectly to see to his surety, if she with her own hands betook[56] him to them of trust.

And at the last she took the young duke by the hand and said unto the lords: "My lord," quod she, "and all my lords, I neither am so unwise to mistrust your wits nor so suspicious to mistrust your troths.[57] Of which thing I purpose to make you such a proof as, if either of both lacked in you, might turn both me to great sorrow, the realm to much harm, and you to great reproach. For, lo, here is," quod she, "this gentleman, whom I doubt not but I could here keep safe if I would, whatsoever any man say. And I doubt not also but there be some abroad so deadly enemies unto my blood that if they wist where any of it lay in their own body, they would let it out. We have also had experience that the desire of a kingdom knoweth no kindred. The brother hath been the brother's bane.[58] And may the nephews be sure of their uncle? Each of these children is other's

50. A very plausible surmise—for one thing, because neither Richard's father nor Edward IV had declined, in earlier exigencies, to remove noble enemies from sanctuary by force.

51. Around—i.e., she assumed the sanctuary was surrounded.

52. *fortune . . . false:* happen that her fear was groundless.

53. Useless. So the meaning is that while she thought it possible her fear was groundless, she knew for certain it was pointless (as being either groundless or unavailing).

54. *should needs:* must of necessity. *dempt:* deemed.

55. Loyalty.

56. *betook:* handed over. *of:* in.

57. Truths—i.e., (your) loyalty. (Cf. the cardinal's "wit or truth" above.)

58. Alluding to Edward's and (putatively) Richard's agency in their brother George's death.

defense while they be asunder, and each of their lives lieth in the other's body. Keep one safe and both be sure; and nothing for them both more perilous than to be both in one place. For what wise merchant adventureth all his good[59] in one ship? All this notwithstanding, here I deliver him, and his brother in him, to keep, into your hands, of whom I shall ask them both,[60] afore God and the world. Faithful ye be, that wot I well, and I know well you be wise. Power and strength to keep him, if ye list,[61] neither lack ye of yourself nor can lack help in this cause. And if ye cannot elsewhere, then may you leave him here. But only one thing I beseech you, for the trust that his father put in you ever and for the trust that I put in you now, that as far as ye think that I fear too much, be you well ware[62] that you fear not as far too little."

And therewithal she said unto the child: "Farewell, my own sweet son; God send you good keeping. Let me kiss you once yet ere you go, for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again." And therewith she kissed him and blessed him, turned her back and wept and went her way, leaving the child weeping as fast.[63]

When the lord cardinal and these other lords with him had received this young duke, they brought him into the Star Chamber, where the protector took him in his arms and kissed him, with these words: "Now welcome, my lord, even with all my very heart." And he said, in that, of likelihood[64] as he thought. Thereupon forthwith they brought him to the king his brother into the bishop's palace at Paul's,[65] and from thence through the city honorably into the Tower—out of which after that day they never came abroad.

<When[66/*] the protector had both the children in his hands, he

59. Goods.

60. *I . . . both:* i.e., I shall ask for their safe return (in the future). *afore:* before.

61. Please, like.

62. Wary, watchful.

63. The prince was delivered from sanctuary on June 16, 1583. (The queen and her daughters remained there until the following March.)

64. *of likelihood:* in all likelihood.

65. The palace of the bishop of London within the precinct of St. Paul's Cathedral: the usual residence of English kings in the City of London. There is, though, some evidence that Edward had been removed to the Tower about three weeks before his brother came out of sanctuary.

66. Again Rastell inserted a translation from the Latin version to fill a perceived lacuna. This time, however, he created a problem, since the inserted passage not only treats a subject—the

opened himself more boldly, both to certain other men and also chiefly to the duke of Buckingham—although I know that many thought that this duke was privy to all the protector's counsel even from the beginning. And some of the protector's friends said that the duke was the first mover of the protector to this matter, sending a privy[67] messenger unto him straight after King Edward's death. But other again, which knew better the subtle wit of the protector, deny that he ever opened his enterprise to the duke until he had brought to pass the things before rehearsed.[68] But when he had imprisoned the queen's kinsfolk, and gotten both her sons into his own hands, then he opened the rest of his purpose with less fear to them whom he thought meet for the matter, and specially to the duke: who being won to his purpose, he thought his strength more than half increased.

The matter was broken unto the duke by subtle folks, and such as were their craftsmasters[69] in the handling of such wicked devices, who declared unto him that the young king was offended with him for his kinsfolk's sakes, and that if he were ever able, he would revenge them—who would prick[70] him forward thereunto, if they escaped (for they would remember their imprisonment). Or else if they were put to death, without doubt the young king would be careful[71] for their deaths, whose imprisonment was grievous unto him. And that with repenting the duke should nothing avail, for there was no way left to redeem his offense by benefits, but he should sooner destroy himself than save the king, who with his brother and his kinsfolk he saw in such places imprisoned as the protector might with a beck[72] destroy them all; and that it were no doubt but he would do it indeed, if there were any new enterprise attempted. And that it was likely that as the protector had provided privy guard

origin of the alliance between Richard and Buckingham—that is treated later in the English version (pp. 103–104) but also *contradicts* the later passage. Here, Richard is the instigator of the rapprochement; in the English version, Buckingham instigates it.

67. Secret.

68. Related.

69. *their craftsmasters:* masters of their craft. *devices:* schemes.

70. Spur.

71. Full of care—i.e., grief.

72. Nod.

for himself, so had he spials[73] for the duke, and trains to catch him if he should be against him—and that, peradventure, from them whom he least suspected. For the state of things and the dispositions[74] of men were then such that a man could not well tell whom he might trust or whom he might fear. These things and suchlike, being beaten into the duke's mind, brought him to that point that, where[75] he had repented the way that he had entered, yet would he go forth in the same; and since he had once begun, he would stoutly go through. And therefore to this wicked enterprise, which he believed could not be voided,[76] he bent himself and went through, and determined that since the common mischief could not be amended, he would turn it as much as he might to his own commodity.[77]

Then it was agreed that the protector should have the duke's aid to make him king, and that the protector's only lawful son should marry the duke's daughter,[78] and that the protector should grant him the quiet possession[79] of the earldom of Hereford,* which he claimed as his inheritance,[80] and could never obtain it in King Edward's time. Besides these requests of the duke, the protector of his own mind promised him a great quantity of the king's treasure and of his household stuff. And when they were thus at a point[81] between themselves, they went about to prepare for the coronation of the young king (as they would have it seem). And that they might turn both the eyes and minds of men from perceiving of their drifts otherwhere, the lords, being sent for from all parties[82] of the realm, came thick to that solemnity. But the protector and the duke, after

73. Spies. *trains:* traps.

74. States of mind.

75. Whereas, while.

76. Avoided; prevented. *bent:* braced, nerved.

77. Advantage.

78. Richard's son, Edward (b. 1476?), died in 1484. Buckingham had two daughters, but earlier accounts offer no confirmation of the proposed marriage.

79. *quiet possession:* a legal term: possession guaranteed to be free from contestation.

80. Buckingham had inherited half of the great estate of the last earl of Hereford, Humphrey de Bohun (d. 1373), through descent from one of the two Bohun daughters, who were their father's co-heiresses. The rest had gone to the Lancastrian kings through the marriage of the other daughter to Henry IV. This line having been extinguished with the death of Henry VI and his son, Buckingham regarded himself as rightful heir of the entire estate. Cf. below, pp. 102–103 n. 74 and p. 104.

81. *at a point:* in agreement.

82. Parts. *Parties* is also used in this sense on p. 89.

that that[83] they had set the lord cardinal, the archbishop of York (then lord chancellor),[84] the bishop of Ely,[85] the Lord Stanley,[86] and the Lord Hastings (then lord chamberlain), with many other noblemen,> to commune and devise[87] about the coronation in one place, as fast were they in another place contriving the contrary, and to make the protector king. To which council, albeit there were adhibit[88] very few, and they very secret, yet began there,[89] here and there about, some manner of muttering among the people, as though all should not long be well, though they neither wist what they feared nor wherefore: were it that before such great things men's hearts, of a secret instinct of nature, misgiveth them, as the sea without wind swelleth of himself sometimes before a tempest, or were it that some one man, haply somewhat perceiving, filled many men with suspicion though he showed few men what he knew. Howbeit, somewhat the dealing self[90] made men to muse on the matter, though the council were close.[91] For little and little all folk withdrew from the Tower and drew to Crosby's Place[92] in Bishopsgate Street, where the protector kept his household: the protector had the resort,[93] the king in manner desolate. While some for their business made suit to them that had the doing, some were by their friends secretly warned that it might haply turn them to no good to be too much attendant

83. *after that that:* after.

84. The archbishop of York—Thomas Rotherham—was in fact no longer lord chancellor at this point, having been replaced by John Russell: see pp. 29–30 and note.

85. John Morton (1420?–1500), appointed bishop of Ely in 1479 and archbishop of Canterbury in 1486. Henry VII made him lord chancellor in 1487; he became a cardinal of the Catholic Church in 1493. More, who had served as a page in Morton's household, admired him tremendously. There is a character of him, and a summary of his career, on pp. 105–106 (and see p. xvii), and a similar passage in *Utopia* (*CW* 4.59–61, *CU* 55; see also *CW* 4.87, *CU* 81).

86. Thomas Stanley (1435–1504). A survivor like Morton, Stanley's politics were sufficiently adaptable that he was able to serve under four successive monarchs, holding office, in particular, under both Edward IV (after having helped Warwick temporarily unseat him) and Richard III. Some years after the death of his first wife, he married (1582) the widowed Margaret Beaufort, mother of the future Henry VII.

87. Make plans.

88. Admitted.

89. *began there:* there began.

90. Itself.

91. Secret.

92. This mansion was built by Sir John Crosby in 1466–75; in 1483 it was Richard's London residence. (Much later—1523–24—More owned the lease of it.)

93. Assemblage of people. *in manner desolate:* as it were solitary.

about the king, without the protector's appointment[94]—which removed also divers of the prince's old servants from him and set new about him.

Thus many things coming together, partly by chance, partly of purpose, caused, at length, not common people only, that wave with the wind, but wise men also and some lords eke,[95] to mark the matter and muse thereon—so far-forth that the Lord Stanley, that was after earl of Derby, wisely mistrusted it, and said unto the Lord Hastings that he much misliked these two several[96] councils.

"For while we," quod he, "talk of one matter in the one place, little wot[97] we whereof they talk in the other place."

"My lord," quod the Lord Hastings, "on my life, never doubt you.[98] For while one man is there which is never thence, never can there be thing once minded[99] that should sound amiss toward me but it should be in mine ears ere it were well out of their mouths."

This meant he by[1] Catesby, which was of his near secret counsel and whom he very familiarly used, and in his most weighty matters put no man in so special trust, reckoning himself to no man so lief,[2] sith he well wist there was no man to him so much beholden as was this Catesby, which was a man well learned in the laws of this land and, by the special favor of the lord chamberlain, in good authority, and much rule bare in all the county of Leicester, where the lord chamberlain's power chiefly lay. But surely great pity was it that he

94. Directive. *which:* who. From this point on, the sentence appears to repeat information given earlier (p. 24). The Latin version of the passage includes no equivalent.

95. Also.

96. Separate.

97. Know.

98. *never doubt you:* never fear; don't worry.

99. Purposed; planned.

1. Concerning. *Catesby:* William Catesby (1450?–85), a lawyer, had managed estates for Hastings. More's account of his role in his patron's downfall is evidently accurate. Catesby went on to hold a number of offices under Richard III and to become one of his most influential counselors. With two other henchmen—Sir Richard Ratcliffe and Francis, Lord Lovell—he was the subject of a famous lampoon of 1484:

> The cat, the rat, and Lovell our dog
> Rulen all England under an hog.

("Hog" refers to Richard's emblem, the white boar.) Following the Battle of Bosworth Field (where Richard was defeated and killed), Catesby was executed.

2. Dear.

had not had either more truth[3] or less wit. For his dissimulation only,[4] kept all that mischief up. In whom if the Lord Hastings had not put so special trust, the Lord Stanley and he had departed,[5] with divers other lords, and broken all the dance,[6] for many ill signs that he saw, which he now construed all to the best: so surely thought he that there could be none harm toward him in that council intended, where Catesby was.

And of truth the protector and the duke of Buckingham made very good semblance[7] unto the Lord Hastings, and kept him much in company. And undoubtedly the protector loved him well, and loath was to have lost him, saving for fear lest his life should have quailed[8] their purpose. For which cause he moved Catesby to prove, with some words cast out afar off, whether he could think it possible to win the Lord Hastings into their part.[9] But Catesby, whether he essayed him or essayed him not, reported unto them that he found him so fast,[10] and heard him speak so terrible words, that he durst no further break.[11] And of truth the lord chamberlain of very trust showed unto Catesby the mistrust that other began to have in the matter. And therefore he, fearing lest their motions[12] might with the Lord Hastings minish his credence,[13] whereunto only all the matter leaned,[14] procured the protector hastily to rid[15] him. And much the rather for that he trusted by his death to obtain much of the rule that the Lord Hastings bare in his country,[16] the only desire whereof[17] was the allective that induced him to be partner and one special contriver of all this horrible treason.

3. Loyalty.
4. Alone.
5. I.e., from London, where they were within Richard's reach.
6. *broken all the dance:* i.e., upset all the plans. *for:* because of.
7. *made . . . semblance:* put up a very good front.
8. Spoiled.
9. Side, party.
10. Steadfast.
11. Disclose.
12. Promptings; suggestions.
13. *minish his credence:* diminish his credit.
14. Depended. *procured:* persuaded.
15. Remove—kill.
16. *his country:* i.e., his part of the country (the English midlands).
17. *the . . . whereof:* the desire of which alone. *allective:* enticement.

Whereupon soon after—that is to wit, on the Friday the thirteenth day of June*—many lords assembled in the Tower and there sat in council devising the honorable solemnity of the king's coronation,[18] of which the time appointed then so near approached that the pageants[19] and subtleties were in making day and night at Westminster, and much victual killed therefor that afterward was cast away. These lords so sitting together commoning[20] of this matter, the protector came in among them, first about nine of the clock, saluting[21] them courteously and excusing himself that he had been from them so long, saying merrily that he had been asleep that day. And after a little talking with them, he said unto the bishop of Ely: "My lord, you have very good strawberries at your garden in Holborn; I require[22] you, let us have a mess of them."

"Gladly, my lord," quod he. "Would God I had some better thing as ready to your pleasure as that." And therewith in all the haste he sent his servant for a mess of strawberries. The protector set the lords fast[23] in commoning, and thereupon, praying them to spare him for a little while, departed thence.

And soon, after one hour, between ten and eleven, he returned into the chamber among them, all changed, with a wonderful sour, angry countenance, knitting the brows, frowning, and fretting[24/*] and gnawing on his lips, and so sat him down in his place, all the lords much dismayed and sore marveling of this manner of sudden change, and what thing should him ail. Then when he had sitten still awhile, thus he began: "What were they worthy to have, that compass and imagine[25] the destruction of me, being so near of blood unto the king, and protector of his royal person and his realm?"

18. The outline and some of the details of the famous scene that follows are also found in earlier accounts of Richard's coup d'état. More may have invented other details, though some or all of these could have come to him from an eyewitness (Morton). For Shakespeare's reworking of the scene, see appendix, pp. 131–34.

19. In this context, tableaux or allegorical devices, erected on a fixed stage or carried on a cart: a standard feature of such public celebratory occasions. *subtleties:* symbolic figures for the banqueting tables.

20. Talking.

21. Greeting.

22. Request of, ask (as a favor). The bishop's London residence was Ely Place in Holborn.

23. Earnestly.

24. Here synonymous with *gnawing* (below): one of More's characteristic doublets.

25. *compass and imagine:* contrive and plot (i.e., the words in the doublet are essentially synonymous).

At this question all the lords sat sore astonied,[26] musing much by whom this question should be meant, of which every man wist himself clear. Then the lord chamberlain, as he that for the love between them thought he might be boldest with him, answered and said that they were worthy to be punished as heinous traitors, whatsoever they were. And all the other affirmed the same.

"That is," quod he, "yonder sorceress my brother's wife, and other with her"—meaning the queen.[27]

At these words, many of the other lords were greatly abashed that favored her. But the Lord Hastings was in his mind better content that it was moved by[28] her than by any other whom he loved better, albeit his heart somewhat grudged that he was not afore made of counsel[29] in this matter, as he was of the taking of her kindred and of their putting to death, which were by his assent[30] before devised to be beheaded at Pomfret this selfsame day[31]—in which he was not ware[32] that it was by other devised that himself should the same day be beheaded at London.

Then said the protector: "Ye shall all see in what wise that sorceress and that other witch of her counsel, Shore's wife,[33] with their affinity,[34] have by their sorcery and witchcraft wasted my body." And therewith he plucked up his doublet sleeve to his elbow upon his left arm, where he showed a wearish,[35] withered arm and small (as it was never other). And thereupon every man's mind sore misgave them, well perceiving that this matter was but a quarrel:[36] for well they wist

26. *sore astonied:* greatly astonished, dismayed. *by:* concerning.

27. Two contemporary documents confirm that Richard accused (in the second case, had others accuse: see below, pp. 128, 130) the queen of witchcraft, though neither pertains to the council in the Tower, or to Richard's supposed deformity.

28. *moved by:* said about.

29. *made of counsel:* taken into counsel—into the secret.

30. *by his assent:* with his concurrence.

31. The executions actually took place twelve days later, on June 25.

32. Aware.

33. *Shore's wife:* More and the other early historians don't give her first name (which, as has recently been established, was Elizabeth), but from the late sixteenth century she was known as "Jane Shore." The wife of a prosperous mercer, William Shore, she became the mistress (as More proceeds to explain) of Edward IV and later Hastings—and (though More doesn't mention this fact) Dorset. More tells her story in detail on pp. 63–67.

34. Allies.

35. Shriveled.

36. I.e., an excuse.

that the queen was too wise to go about any such folly. And also, if she would, yet would she of all folk least make Shore's wife of counsel, whom of all women she most hated, as that concubine whom the king her husband had most loved. And also no man was there present but well knew that his arm was ever such since his birth.

Nevertheless, the lord chamberlain (which from the death of King Edward kept Shore's wife, on whom he somewhat doted in the king's life, saving, as it is said, he that while[37] forbare her, of reverence toward his king or else of a certain kind of fidelity to his friend) answered and said: "Certainly, my lord, if they have so heinously done, they be worthy heinous punishment."

"What!" quod the protector. "Thou servest me, I ween,[38] with 'ifs' and with 'ands'![39] I tell thee they have so done, and that I will make good on thy body, traitor!"[40]

And therewith, as in a great anger, he clapped his fist upon the board[41] a great rap. At which token[42] given, one cried "Treason!" without the chamber. Therewith a door clapped, and in come there rushing men in harness, as many as the chamber might hold. And anon the protector said to the Lord Hastings: "I arrest thee, traitor!"

"What, me, my lord?" quod he.

"Yea, thee, traitor," quod the protector.

And another let flee[43] at the Lord Stanley, which shrunk at the stroke and fell under the table, or else his head had been cleft to the teeth: for as shortly[44] as he shrank, yet ran the blood about his ears. Then were they all quickly bestowed in divers chambers,[45] except the lord chamberlain, whom the protector bade speed and shrive him

37. *that while:* during that time.

38. *I ween:* i.e., "I see," or "do you?"

39. As often in the period, *and = if.*

40. There is no real evidence for a conspiracy between Hastings and the Woodvilles—though certainly Hastings shared their loyalty to Edward V, and it is therefore possible that, alarmed by developments, he had sought a rapprochement with these old foes.

41. Table.

42. Signal. *without:* outside.

43. Fly.

44. Quickly.

45. I.e., all the councillors were detained. All but Rotherham and Morton were released shortly. Rotherham was released after three weeks. Morton's story is resumed on p. 105.

apace:[46] "for by Saint Paul," quod he, "I will not to dinner till I see thy head off."[47] It booted him not to ask why, but heavily[48] he took a priest at adventure and made a short shrift, for a longer would not be suffered—the protector made so much haste to dinner, which he might not go to till this were done, for saving of his oath. So was he brought forth into the green beside the chapel within the Tower, and his head laid down upon a long log of timber and there stricken off, and afterward his body, with the head, interred at Windsor beside the body of King Edward; whose both souls our Lord pardon.

A marvelous case is it to hear either the warnings of that he should have voided or the tokens of that he could not void.[49] For the self night next before his death, the Lord Stanley sent a trusty secret messenger unto him at midnight in all the haste, requiring[50] him to rise and ride away with him, for he was disposed utterly no longer to bide; he had so fearful a dream, in which him thought that a boar with his tusks so razed[51] them both by the heads that the blood ran about both their shoulders. And forasmuch as the protector gave the boar for his cognizance,[52] this dream made so fearful an impression in his heart that he was throughly[53] determined no longer to tarry, but had his horse ready, if the Lord Hastings would go with him, to ride so far yet the same night that they should be out of danger ere day.

"Ah, good lord," quod the Lord Hastings to this messenger, "leaneth[54] my lord thy master so much to such trifles and hath such faith in dreams, which either his own fear fantasieth or do rise in the night's rest by reason of his day thoughts? Tell him it is plain witchcraft to believe in such dreams—which, if they were tokens of things to come, why, thinketh he not that we might be as likely to

46. *shrive him apace:* make his confession (to a priest) at once.

47. If this is an allusion to Acts 23:12 (which reports the vow of certain Roman Jews to neither eat nor drink till they had killed St. Paul), Richard's oath makes it a particularly ironic one.

48. Sorrowfully. *adventure:* random.

49. *either . . . void:* i.e., the various occurrences that may be regarded either as warnings through which he might have avoided (*voided*) his death or as portents of an *un*avoidable fate.

50. Asking.

51. Slashed.

52. Emblem; heraldic badge.

53. Thoroughly.

54. Relies, trusts.

make them true by our going, if we were caught and brought back (as friends fail fleers)? For then had the boar a cause likely to raze us with his tusks, as folk that fled for some falsehood.[55] Wherefore either is there no peril (nor none is there indeed), or, if any be, it is rather in going than biding. And if we should needs cost[56] fall in peril one way or other, yet had I liefer that men should see it were by other men's falsehood than think it were either our own fault or faint heart. And therefore go to thy master, man, and commend me to him, and pray him be merry and have no fear: for I ensure[57] him I am as sure of the man that he wotteth of as I am of my own hand."

"God send grace, sir," quod the messenger, and went his way.

Certain is it also that in the riding toward the Tower the same morning in which he was beheaded, his horse twice or thrice stumbled with him almost to the falling: which thing, albeit each man wot well daily happeneth to them to whom no such mischance is toward,[58] yet hath it been of an old rite and custom observed as a token oftentimes notably foregoing some great misfortune.

Now this that followeth was no warning, but an enemious[59] scorn. The same morning, ere he were up, came a knight unto him, as it were of courtesy to accompany him to the council, but of truth sent by the protector to haste him thitherward, with whom he was of secret confederacy in that purpose—a mean[60] man at that time, and now of great authority.[61] This knight, when it happed[62] the lord chamberlain by the way to stay his horse and common awhile with a priest whom he met in the Tower Street, brake his tale[63] and said merrily to him: "What, my lord, I pray you come on. Whereto talk you so long with that priest? You have no need of a priest yet." And

55. Falseness; treachery.
56. *needs cost:* of necessity. *liefer:* rather.
57. Assure. *wotteth:* knows.
58. Impending.
59. Inimical.
60. Middling; undistinguished.
61. The Hardyng-Hall versions of the *History* identify this knight as Thomas Howard (I), son of the baron John Howard, who was shortly to be made duke of Norfolk. By the time More wrote, Thomas Howard himself was the duke (having been restored to that title—lost to his family at Richard's fall—in 1514). See pp. xli–xlii, and cf. p. 63 and n. 98. As A. F. Pollard points out, it can only have been Howard who reported this conversation.
62. Happened, chanced.
63. *brake his tale:* interrupted his conversation.

Image right unavailable

Fig. 4. From a collection of ink drawings, c.1466–70, of heraldic badges. (Badges were worn by followers, used to mark the ownership of movable goods, etc.) (1) Richard III: his white boar, with a motto he sometimes used, "tant le desiere" ("I have desired it so much")—of indeterminate thrust, unlike his other motto, "Loyaulté me lie" ("Loyalty binds me"). (2) William Lord Hastings: presumably the face is his own; but Hastings is usually associated with other, more conventional devices.
By permission of the British Library: Additional MS. 40742, fols. 5, 11.

therewith he laughed upon him, as though he would say, "Ye shall have soon." But so little wist the other what he meant, and so little mistrusted, that he was never merrier nor never so full of good hope in his life: which self thing is often seen a sign of change. But I shall rather let anything pass me[64] than the vain surety of man's mind so near his death.

Upon the very Tower wharf, so near the place where his head was off so soon after, there met he with one Hastings, a pursuivant[65] of his own name. And of[66] their meeting in that place, he was put in remembrance of another time in which it had happened them before to meet in like manner together in the same place. At which other time the lord chamberlain had been accused unto King Edward by the Lord Rivers, the queen's brother, in such wise that he was for the while (but it lasted not long) far fallen into the king's indignation, and stood in great fear of himself.[67] And forasmuch as he now met this pursuivant in the same place, that jeopardy so well passed, it gave him great pleasure to talk with him thereof, with whom he had before talked thereof in the same place while he was therein.[68]

And therefore he said, "Ah, Hastings, art thou remembered[69] when I met thee here once with an heavy heart?"

"Yea, my lord," quod he, "that remember I well; and thanked be God they gat[70] no good nor ye none harm thereby."

"Thou wouldest say so," quod he, "if thou knewest as much as I know, which few know else as yet, and more shall shortly." That meant he by the lords of the queen's kindred that were taken before and should that day be beheaded at Pomfret:[71] which he well wist,

64. *pass me:* go unnoted.

65. Royal or state messenger.

66. By.

67. *of himself:* for himself. The Latin version explains that Rivers had accused Hastings of planning to hand over Calais to the French, and says that the earl was motivated by his resentment (mentioned on p. 14 of the English version) of Edward's having deprived him of the lieutenancy of Calais and bestowed it on Hastings. The Latin attributes Hastings's anxiety under the accusation to his fear that the king *might* come to believe the charge, whereas the English indicates that Hastings *had* fallen into disfavor. (No earlier source confirms this claim.)

68. I.e., while he was in jeopardy. The phrasing in the latter part of this sentence is very awkward.

69. *art thou remembered . . . ?:* do you remember?

70. Got.

71. Recall that Rivers was among those to be executed.

but nothing ware that the axe hang[72] over his own head. "In faith, man," quod he, "I was never so sorry,[73] nor never stood in so great dread in my life as I did when thou and I met here. And lo how the world is turned: now stand mine enemies in the danger (as thou mayest hap to hear more hereafter), and I never in my life so merry, nor never in so great surety."

O good God, the blindness of our mortal nature! When he most feared, he was in good surety; when he reckoned himself surest, he lost his life, and that within two hours after. Thus ended this honorable man, a good knight and a gentle,[74] of great authority with his prince, of living somewhat dissolute,* plain and open to his enemy and secret to his friend, eath to beguile, as he that of good heart and courage[75] forestudied no perils; a loving man and passing[76] well beloved; very faithful, and trusty enough, trusting too much.

Now flew the fame[77] of this lord's death swiftly through the city, and so forth farther about, like a wind in every man's ear. But the protector immediately after dinner, intending to set some color upon[78] the matter, sent in all the haste for many substantial men out of the city into the Tower. And at their coming, himself, with the duke of Buckingham, stood harnessed in old ill-faring briganders,[79] such as no man should ween that they would vouchsafe to have put upon their backs except that some sudden necessity had constrained them. And then the protector showed them that the lord chamberlain and other of his conspiracy had contrived to have suddenly destroyed him and the duke there, the same day, in the council. And what they intended further was as yet not well known. Of which their treason he never had knowledge before ten of the clock the same forenoon: which sudden fear drave[80] them to put on for their defense such harness as came next to hand. And so had God holpen

72. Hung.
73. Distressed.
74. Wellborn, and having the characteristics traditionally associated with good birth: nobility, generosity, courtesy.
75. Disposition. *forestudied:* anticipated.
76. Surpassingly.
77. Report.
78. *set . . . upon:* give some reason or excuse for.
79. *ill-faring briganders:* dilapidated body-armor.
80. Drove.

them, that the mischief turned upon them that would have done it. And this he required[81] them to report.

Every man answered him fair,[82] as though no man mistrusted the matter—which, of truth, no man believed. Yet for the further appeasing of the people's mind, he sent immediately after dinner, in all the haste, one herald of arms[83] with a proclamation to be made through the city in the king's name, containing that the Lord Hastings, with divers other of his traitorous purpose, had before conspired the same day to have slain the lord protector and the duke of Buckingham sitting in the council, and after to have taken upon them to rule the king and the realm at their pleasure, and thereby to pill and spoil[84] whom they list, uncontrolled. And much matter was there in the proclamation devised to the slander of the lord chamberlain, as that he was an evil counselor to the king's father, enticing him to many things highly redounding to the minishing of his honor and to the universal hurt of his realm, by his evil company, sinister procuring,[85] and ungracious example, as well in many other things as in the vicious living and inordinate abusion[86] of his body, both with many other and also specially with Shore's wife, which was one also of his most secret counsel of this heinous treason, with whom he lay nightly, and namely[87] the night last passed, next before his death; so that it was the less marvel if ungracious living brought him to an unhappy ending: which he was now put unto by the most dread commandment of the king's highness and of his honorable and faithful council, both for his demerits, being so openly taken in his falsely conceived treason, and also lest the delaying of his execution might have encouraged other mischievous persons, partners of his conspiracy, to gather and assemble themself together in making some great commotion for his deliverance; whose hope now being

81. Asked.
82. Civilly.
83. *herald of arms:* not distinct from *herald* (a royal officer whose duties included making proclamations): simply the old form of the title.
84. *pill and spoil:* pillage and despoil. *list:* pleased.
85. *sinister procuring:* base contrivances. *ungracious:* wicked.
86. Abuse, misuse.
87. In particular.

by his well-deserved death politicly[88] repressed, all the realm should by God's grace rest in good quiet and peace.

Now was this proclamation made within two hours after that he was beheaded, and it was so curiously indited,[89] and so fair written in parchment in so well a set[90] hand, and therewith of itself so long a process,[91] that every child might well perceive that it was prepared before.[92] For all the time between his death and the proclaiming could scant have sufficed unto the bare writing alone, all had it been[93] but in paper and scribbled forth in haste at adventure.[94] So that upon the proclaiming thereof, one that was schoolmaster of Paul's,[95] of chance standing by, and comparing the shortness of the time with the length of the matter, said unto them that stood about him, "Here is a gay, goodly cast, foul cast away for haste."[96] And a merchant answered him that it was written by prophecy.

Now then, by and by,[97] as it were for anger, not for covetise, the protector sent into the house of Shore's wife (for her husband dwelled not with her) and spoiled[98] her of all that ever she had, above the value of two or three thousand marks,[99] and sent her body to prison. And when he had awhile laid unto her,[1] for the manner sake, that she went about to bewitch him and that she was of counsel with

88. Prudently.

89. *curiously indited:* elaborately composed.

90. *well a set:* professional.

91. Document.

92. A contemporary account (Mancini's; see above, pp. xxviii n. 25, liv), however, claims that "the ignorant crowd" was at first taken in by the proclamation, "although the real truth was on the lips of many" (p. 91).

93. *all . . . been:* even if it had been.

94. *at adventure:* haphazardly.

95. The grammar school attached to St. Paul's Cathedral.

96. *gay . . . haste:* fine, excellent trick, spoiled by haste. (*Gay* and *goodly* are essentially synonymous.)

97. *by and by:* immediately afterward. (The Latin—*protinus*—confirms the sense.) *Covetise:* covetousness.

98. Despoiled. The Hardyng-Hall texts say Richard sent Thomas Howard I to do this dirty job.

99. The mark was a monetary unit equal to two-thirds of a pound, and the British pound itself was worth many times its present value. When he wrote the *History,* More's own yearly income as a successful lawyer and an undersheriff of London seems to have been about £400. So Mistress Shore's property—"above the value of" £1,400–2,000—was substantial.

1. *laid unto her:* charged her. *for . . . sake:* for the sake of appearances.

the lord chamberlain to destroy him, in conclusion, when that no color[2] could fasten upon these matters, then he laid heinously to her charge the thing that herself could not deny, that all the world wist was true, and that nevertheless every man laughed at to hear it then so suddenly so highly[3] taken: that she was nought[4] of her body.

And for this cause (as a goodly continent[5] prince, clean and faultless of himself, sent out of heaven into this vicious world for the amendment of men's manners)[6] he caused the bishop of London to put her to open penance, going before the cross[7] in procession upon a Sunday, with a taper in her hand—in which she went in countenance and pace demure, so womanly, and albeit she were out of all array[8] save her kirtle only, yet went she so fair and lovely, namely[9] while the wondering of the people cast a comely rud[10] in her cheeks (of which she before had most miss),[11] that her great shame won her much praise among those that were more amorous of her body than curious of[12] her soul. And many good folk, also, that hated her living[13] and glad were to see sin corrected, yet pitied they more her penance than rejoiced therein, when they considered that the protector procured it more of a corrupt intent than any virtuous affection.[14]

This woman was born in London, worshipfully friended,[15] honestly brought up, and very well married (saving somewhat too soon),

2. Plausible pretext.
3. Seriously.
4. Immoral. (The Latin version says simply that he charged she was a *meretrix*—a harlot.)
5. Chaste.
6. Morals. Throughout his reign, Richard displayed a marked penchant for denouncing the sexual immorality, supposed or real, of his opponents. He himself, though, acknowledged two illegitimate children.
7. The pulpit-cross in the churchyard of St. Paul's Cathedral, often the scene of public penances.
8. Attire. *kirtle:* a simple fitted gown, not normally worn as an outer garment by women of Shore's economic class. The Latin version adds that she was barefoot, and notes (for the benefit of foreign readers) that the features of her penance were standard. After the penance (not before, as More indicates), Shore was imprisoned—but she gained her release when Richard's solicitor, Thomas Lynom, succumbed (much to Richard's displeasure) to her charms and married her.
9. Especially.
10. Red.
11. Lack.
12. *curious of:* concerned for.
13. Way of life.
14. Inclination.
15. *worshipfully friended:* with worthy friends.

her husband an honest citizen, young and goodly[16] and of good substance. But forasmuch as they were coupled ere she were well ripe, she not very fervently loved for whom[17] she never longed. Which was haply the thing that the more easily made her incline unto the king's appetite when he required[18] her. Howbeit, the respect of his royalty, the hope of gay apparel, ease, pleasure, and other wanton wealth was able soon to pierce a soft, tender heart. But when the king had abused her, anon[19] her husband (as he was an honest man and one that could his good,[20] not presuming to touch a king's concubine) left her up to him altogether. When the king died, the lord chamberlain took her—which in the king's days, albeit he was sore enamored upon her, yet he forbare her, either for reverence or for a certain friendly faithfulness.[21]

Proper[22] she was and fair, nothing in her body that you would have changed, but if you would have wished her somewhat higher. Thus say they that knew her in her youth, albeit some that now see her (for yet she liveth)[23] deem her never to have been well-visaged. Whose judgment seemeth me somewhat like as though men should guess the beauty of one long before departed by her scalp[24] taken out of the charnel-house: for now is she old, lean, withered, and dried up, nothing left but riveled[25] skin and hard bone. And yet, being even such, whoso well advise[26] her visage might guess and devise which parts how filled would make it a fair face.

Yet delighted not men so much in her beauty as in her pleasant behavior. For a proper wit[27] had she, and could both read well and

16. Handsome. *of good substance:* well-to-do.
17. *for whom:* him for whom.
18. Asked for.
19. Straightway.
20. *could his good:* knew what was good for him.
21. More makes this point twice, in very similar language: cf. p. 56. Presumably he meant to cancel one passage or the other. The Latin version has a parallel passage only at the later point.
22. Good-looking.
23. In the Latin version More says she was seventy at the time of writing.
24. Skull. *charnel-house:* a house or vault in which the bones of the dead are piled up.
25. Wrinkled.
26. *whoso well advise:* i.e., anyone who should carefully consider.
27. *proper wit:* excellent mind.

write;[28] merry in company, ready and quick of answer, neither mute nor full of babble, sometimes taunting without displeasure and not without disport.[29] The king would say that he had three concubines which in three diverse properties diversely excelled: one the merriest, another the wiliest, the third the holiest harlot in his realm, as one whom no man could get out of the church lightly[30] to any place but it were to his bed. The other two were somewhat greater personages, and nevertheless of their humility content to be nameless and to forbear the praise of those properties. But the merriest was this Shore's wife, in whom the king therefore took special pleasure. For many he had, but her he loved; whose favor, to say truth (for sin it were to belie the devil),[31] she never abused to any man's hurt, but to many a man's comfort and relief. Where the king took displeasure, she would mitigate and appease his mind; where men were out of favor, she would bring them in his grace. For many that had highly offended, she obtained pardon. Of great forfeitures[32] she gat men remission. And finally, in many weighty suits[33] she stood many men in good stead, either for none or very small rewards, and those rather gay than rich: either for that she was content with the deed self well done, or for that she delighted to be sued unto and to show what she was able to do with the king, or for that wanton women and wealthy be not alway covetous.

I doubt not some shall think this woman too slight a thing to be written of and set among the remembrances of great matters—which they shall specially think that haply shall esteem her only by that[34] they now see her. But meseemeth the chance[35] so much the more worthy to be remembered, in how much she is now in the more beggarly condition, unfriended and worn out of acquaintance, after good substance, after as great favor with the prince, after as great suit and seeking to with all those that those days had business

28. Uncommon accomplishments for a fifteenth-century woman.
29. Amusement.
30. Easily.
31. I.e., to lie even about the devil. Proverbial.
32. Imposed as punishments for crimes.
33. Petitions (to the king).
34. I.e., the condition in which.
35. Case—more precisely, the way things fell out.

to speed,[36] as many other men were, in their times, which[37] be now famous only by the infamy of their ill deeds. Her doings were not much less, albeit they be much less remembered because they were not so evil. For men use,[38] if they have an evil turn, to write it in marble; and whoso doth us a good turn, we write it in dust: which is not worst proved by her, for at this day she beggeth of many at this day living, that at this day had begged if she had not been.[39]

Now was it so devised by the protector and his council that the self day[40] in which the lord chamberlain was beheaded in the Tower of London, and about the selfsame hour, was there (not without his assent)[41] beheaded at Pomfret the fore-remembered[42] lords and knights that were taken from the king at Northampton and Stony Stratford. Which thing was done in the presence and by the order of Sir Richard Ratcliffe,[43] knight, whose service the protector specially used in the council and in the execution of such lawless enterprises, as a man that had been long secret with him,[44] having experience of the world and a shrewd[45] wit, short and rude in speech, rough and boistous[46] of behavior, bold in mischief, as far from pity as from all fear of God. This knight, bringing them out of the prison to the scaffold, and showing[47] to the people about that they were traitors, not suffering them to speak and declare their innocence, lest their words might have inclined men to pity them and to hate the protector and his part,[48] caused them hastily, without judgment, process,[49]

36. Expedite, promote.
37. Who.
38. Are accustomed.
39. More's portrait of Shore made her famous and provided the basis of subsequent literary treatments from Thomas Churchyard's verse "Complaint of Shore's Wife" (1563) through Nicholas Rowe's *Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714) and beyond.
40. As noted above, actually not until June 25, twelve days later.
41. I.e., Hastings's assent (as previously mentioned on p. 55).
42. Fore-mentioned.
43. Ratcliffe (d. 1485, at Bosworth Field) was, like Catesby, one of Richard's most trusted and well-rewarded associates. His power—like the popular perception of his abuse of it—is reflected in the verse lampoon quoted above (p. 52*n*).
44. *long . . . him:* long his confidant.
45. Cunning; malignant.
46. Boisterous.
47. Declaring. *about:* round about.
48. Party, side.
49. Legal proceedings.

or manner of order, to be beheaded, and without other earthly guilt but only that they were good men, too true to the king and too nigh to the queen.[50]

Now when the lord chamberlain and these other lords and knights were thus beheaded and rid out of the way, then thought the protector that while men mused what the matter meant, while the lords of the realm were about him, out of their own strengths,[51] while no man wist what to think nor whom to trust, ere ever they should have space to dispute and digest the matter and make parties,[52] it were best hastily to pursue his purpose and put himself in possession of the crown, ere men could have time to devise any ways to resist. But now was all the study by what mean this matter, being of itself so heinous, might be first broken to the people in such wise that it might be well taken.

To this counsel they took divers,[53] such as they thought meetly to be trusted, likely to be induced to that* part, and able to stand them in stead, either by power or policy.[54] Among whom they made of counsel[55] Edmund Shaa, knight, then mayor of London, which upon trust of[56] his own advancement—whereof he was, of a proud heart, highly desirous—should frame[57] the city to their appetite. Of spiritual men,[58] they took such as had wit and were in authority among the people for opinion of their learning, and had no scrupulous conscience. Among these had they John[59] Shaa, clerk, brother to the mayor, and Friar Penker, provincial of the Augustine friars, both doctors of divinity, both great preachers, both of more learning than virtue, of more fame than learning. For they were before greatly esteemed among the people, but after that, never.

50. At least at the hour of their deaths (cf. the eulogy of Hastings, p. 61 above), More tends to exaggerate the virtue of Richard's victims, whose supposed whiteness makes them foils to his blackness.
51. I.e., strongholds.
52. *make parties:* form alliances.
53. I.e., various men. *meetly:* suitable.
54. Political shrewdness.
55. *made of counsel:* took into confidence.
56. *upon trust of:* in the hope of.
57. Dispose, mold.
58. *spiritual men:* clergy. *wit:* intelligence.
59. Actually Ralph or Rafe. *clerk:* cleric.

Of these two, the one had a sermon in praise of the protector before the coronation, the other after; both so full of tedious flattery that no man's ears could abide them. Penker in his sermon so lost his voice that he was fain to leave off and come down[60] in the midst. Doctor Shaa by his sermon lost his honesty[61] and soon after his life, for very shame of the world, into which he durst never after come abroad.[62] But the friar forced[63] for no shame, and so it harmed him the less. Howbeit, some doubt,[64] and many thinken, that Penker was not of counsel of the matter before the coronation but, after[65] the common manner, fell to flattery after; namely[66] sith his sermon was not incontinent upon it, but at Saint Mary Hospital at the Easter after.[67] But certain is it that Doctor Shaa was of counsel in the beginning, so far-forth that they determined that he should first break the matter in a sermon at Paul's Cross,[68] in which he should by the authority of his preaching incline the people to the protector's ghostly[69] purpose.

But now was all the labor and study in the devise[70] of some convenient pretext for which the people should be content to depose the prince and accept the protector for king. In which, divers things they devised. But the chief thing and the weighty of all that invention rested in this: that they should allege bastardy, either in King Edward himself, or in his children, or both, so that he should seem disabled to inherit the crown by the duke of York, and the prince by him. To lay bastardy in King Edward sounded openly to[71] the rebuke

60. I.e., from the pulpit.
61. Good name.
62. It's true that Shaa died within a year or so of delivering his sermon.
63. Cared.
64. Suspect.
65. In accordance with.
66. Especially. *incontinent upon:* immediately after.
67. The Eastertide sermons delivered from the pulpit-cross in the large churchyard at St. Mary Spital were a notable annual event.
68. The pulpit-cross at St. Paul's.
69. Spiritual, devout.
70. Devising.
71. *sounded openly to:* manifestly suggested.

of the protector's own mother,[72] which was mother to them both: for in that point could be none other color but to pretend that his own mother was an adulteress, which, notwithstanding, to further this purpose he letted[73] not. But nevertheless he would that point should be less, and more favorably, handled, not even fully plain and directly, but that the matter should be touched aslope,[74] craftily, as though men spared in that point to speak all the truth, for fear of his displeasure. But the other point—concerning the bastardy that they devised to surmise in King Edward's children—that, would he, should be openly declared and enforced to the uttermost. The color and pretext whereof cannot be well perceived but if we first repeat you some things long before done about King Edward's marriage.

After that King Edward the Fourth had deposed King Henry the Sixth and was in peaceable possession of the realm, determining himself to marry (as it was requisite both for himself and for the realm), he sent over in embassiate[75] the earl of Warwick,[76] with other noblemen in his company, unto Spain, to entreat[77] and conclude a marriage between King Edward and the king's daughter of Spain.[78] In which thing the earl of Warwick found the parties so toward[79] and willing that he speedily, according to his instructions, without any difficulty, brought the matter to very good conclusion.

Now happed it that in the mean season[80] there came, to make a suit by petition to the king, Dame Elizabeth Grey—which was af-

72. Cecily duchess of York (d. 1495). In his *Anglica historia* (published 1534 but drafted by 1513), More's friend Polydore Vergil reported that men yet living had heard the duchess complain against Richard about this imputation—which, however, was in circulation long before he availed himself of it.

73. Refrained.

74. Obliquely.

75. Embassy.

76. Richard Neville (1428–71), earl of Warwick and Salisbury, Edward's first cousin on his mother's side. A man of extraordinary power, he became known (for reasons More's text explains) as "the Kingmaker."

77. Negotiate.

78. More conflates two of the many proposals for a European marriage for Edward: one by the king of Castile that Edward marry his sister, and one (which Warwick labored to bring to fruition) by the king of France that Edward marry his sister-in-law, the daughter of the duke of Savoy.

79. Obliging.

80. *mean season:* meantime.

ter[81] his queen, at that time a widow—born of noble blood, specially by her mother, which was duchess of Bedford ere she married the Lord Woodville,[82] her father. Howbeit, this Dame Elizabeth, herself being in service with Queen Margaret,[83] wife unto King Henry the Sixth, was married unto one John* Grey, a squire,[84] whom King Henry made knight upon the field[85] that he had on Shrove Tuesday at Saint Albans* against King Edward. And little while enjoyed he that knighthood, for he was at the same field slain.[86] After which done, and the earl of Warwick being in his embassiate about the afore-remembered marriage, this poor lady made humble suit unto the king that she might be restored unto such small lands as her late husband had given her in jointure.[87]

Whom when the king beheld and heard her speak—as she was both fair, of a good favor,[88] moderate of stature, well made, and very wise—he not only pitied her but also waxed enamored on her. And taking her afterward secretly aside, began to enter in talking more familiarly. Whose appetite when she perceived, she virtuously denied him. But that did she so wisely, and with so good manner, and words so well set, that she rather kindled his desire than quenched it. And finally, after many a meeting, much wooing, and many great promises, she well espied the king's affection toward her so greatly increased that she durst somewhat the more boldly say her mind, as to him whose heart she perceived more firmly set than to fall off for a word. And in conclusion she showed him plain that, as she wist

81. Afterward.

82. Elizabeth Woodville's mother, Jacquetta of Luxembourg—a member of Europe's high nobility—was first married to Henry V's brother John duke of Bedford, and then, a year after his death (1435), to Sir Richard Woodville, who had been the duke's chamberlain. So Elizabeth's origins mixed high with (relatively) low.

83. Margaret of Anjou (1429–82). But it is not clear that Elizabeth was ever in her service.

84. I.e., a member of the higher gentry.

85. Battlefield.

86. Henry VI played no active role in the (Second) Battle of St. Albans (1461)—and in any case Grey (who married Elizabeth in the early 1450s) seems to have been knighted earlier. It is true, though, that he died of a wound incurred at St. Albans.

87. Here, a property entailed on a woman by her husband in the event of her widowhood. As explained in the Latin version, the property in question had been confiscated because John Grey had fought on Henry's side.

88. Appearance.

herself too simple[89] to be his wife, so thought she herself too good to be his concubine. The king, much marveling of her constance,[90] as he that had not been wont elsewhere to be so stiffly said nay, so much esteemed her continence and chastity that he set her virtue in the stead of possession and riches. And thus, taking counsel of his desire, determined in all possible haste to marry her.

And after he was thus appointed,[91] and had between them twain ensured[92] her, then asked he counsel of his other friends, and that in such manner as they might eath perceive it booted not greatly to say nay. Notwithstanding, the duchess of York his mother was so sore moved therewith that she dissuaded the marriage as much as she possibly might, alleging that it was his honor, profit, and surety also, to marry in a noble progeny[93] out of his realm, whereupon depended great strength to his estate[94] by the affinity, and great possibility of increase of his possessions; and that he could not well otherwise do, standing[95] that the earl of Warwick had so far moved already—which were not likely to take it well, if all his voyage were in such wise frustrate, and his appointments deluded.[96]

And she said also that it was not princely to marry his own subject, no great occasion leading thereunto, no possessions or other commodities[97] depending thereupon, but only, as it were, a rich man that would marry his maid, only for a little wanton dotage upon her person. In which marriage many more[98] commend the maiden's fortune than the master's wisdom. And yet therein, she said, was more honesty,[99] than honor in this marriage, forasmuch as there is between no merchant and his own maid so great difference as between the king and this widow. In whose person, albeit there was nothing to be misliked, yet was there, she said, "nothing so excellent

89. Low in rank.
90. Firmness.
91. Resolved.
92. Betrothed.
93. Family.
94. State, condition. *affinity:* relationship by marriage.
95. Considering.
96. *appointments deluded:* arrangements mocked.
97. Advantages.
98. *many more:* i.e., many more people.
99. Respectability; decency.

but that it might be founden in divers other that were more meetly,"[1] quod she, "for your estate, and maidens also; whereas the only widowhood[2] of Elizabeth Grey, though she were in all other things convenient[3] for you, should yet suffice, as meseemeth, to refrain you from her marriage, sith it is an unsitting[4] thing, and a very blemish and high disparagement to the sacred majesty of a prince—that ought as nigh to approach priesthood in cleanness[5] as he doth in dignity—to be defouled with bigamy[6] in his first marriage."

The king, when his mother had said, made her answer, part in earnest, part in play merrily, as he that wist himself out of her rule. And albeit he would gladly that she should take it well, yet was at a point[7] in his own mind, took she it well or otherwise. Howbeit, somewhat to satisfy her, he said that albeit marriage, being a spiritual thing, ought rather to be made for the respect of God, where his grace inclineth the parties to love together, as he trusted it was in his, than for the regard of any temporal advantage; yet nevertheless him seemed that this marriage, even worldly considered, was not unprofitable. For he reckoned the amity of no earthly nation so necessary for him as the friendship of his own, which he thought likely to bear him so much the more hearty favor in that he disdained not to marry with one of his own land. And yet if outward[8] alliance were thought so requisite, he would find the means to enter thereinto much better by other of his kin, where all the parties could be contented, than to marry himself whom[9] he should haply never love, and for the possibility of more possessions lose the fruit and pleasure of this that he had already. For small pleasure taketh a man of all that ever he hath beside, if he be wived against his appetite. "And I doubt not," quod he, "but there be, as ye say, other that be

1. Suitable. *estate:* rank in society.
2. *only widowhood:* widowhood alone.
3. Suitable.
4. Unbecoming.
5. Moral purity.
6. Here, marriage to a widow. Cecily is alluding to the fact that "bigamy" of this kind was impermissible to men in, or aspiring to, clerical orders. (Unlike priests, those in so-called "minor" orders could be married.)
7. *at a point:* resolved.
8. Foreign.
9. One whom.

in every point comparable with her. And therefore I let[10] not them that like them to wed them. No more is it reason that it mislike any man that I marry where it liketh me. And I am sure that my cousin of Warwick neither loveth me so little to grudge at that[11] I love, nor is so unreasonable to look[12] that I should in choice of a wife rather be ruled by his eye than by mine own—as though I were a ward that were bound to marry by the appointment of a guardian. I would not be a king with that condition, to forbear mine own liberty in choice of my own marriage. As for possibility of more inheritance by new affinity in strange[13] lands, is[14] oft the occasion of more trouble than profit. And we have already title by that means to so much as sufficeth to get and keep well in one man's days. That she is a widow and hath already children, by God's blessed lady, I am a bachelor and have some too: and so each of us hath a proof that neither of us is like to be barren. And therefore, madam, I pray you be content. I trust in God she shall bring forth a young prince that shall please you. And as for the bigamy, let the bishop hardly[15] lay it in my way when I come to take orders. For I understand it is forbidden a priest, but I never wist it yet that it was forbidden a prince."

The duchess with these words nothing[16] appeased, and seeing the king so set thereon that she could not pull him back, so highly she disdained it that, under pretext of her duty to Godward, she devised to disturb this marriage, and rather to help that he should marry one Dame[17] Elizabeth Lucy, whom the king had also, not long before, gotten with child. Wherefore the king's mother objected openly against his marriage, as it were in discharge of her conscience, that the king was sure[18] to Dame Elizabeth Lucy, and her husband before God. By reason of which words such obstacle was made in the matter that either the bishops durst not, or the king would not, proceed

10. Hinder.
11. What—i.e., whom.
12. Expect.
13. Foreign.
14. Ellipsis of a pronoun subject—here, *it*—is not uncommon in More's English.
15. By all means. *orders:* i.e., clerical orders.
16. Not at all.
17. Prefixed as a title to the name of a woman of rank or position.
18. Assured, betrothed.

to the solemnization of this* wedding[19] till these same were clearly purged and the truth well and openly testified.[20] Whereupon Dame Elizabeth Lucy was sent for. And albeit that she was by the king's mother and many other put in good comfort[21] to affirm that she was ensured unto the king, yet when she was solemnly sworn to say the truth, she confessed that they were never ensured. Howbeit, she said his grace spoke so loving words unto her that she verily hoped he would have married her. And that if it had not been for such kind words she would never have showed such kindness to him to let him so kindly[22] get her with child. This examination solemnly taken, when it was clearly perceived that there was none impediment, the king with great feast and honorable solemnity married Dame Elizabeth Grey, and her crowned queen[23] that was his enemy's wife and many time had prayed full heartily for his loss. In which God loved her better than to grant her her boon.

But when the earl of Warwick understood of this marriage, he took it so highly[24] that his embassiate was deluded that for very anger and disdain he at his return assembled a great puissance[25] against the king and came so fast upon him, or[26] he could be able to resist, that he was fain to void[27] the realm and flee into Holland for succor. Where he remained for the space of two years,[28] leaving

19. I.e., the wedding of Edward to Elizabeth Woodville.

20. Attested. There is no evidence—that is, other than the claim of Richard's allies—for Edward's much-discussed "pre-contract" with (in the usual version of the story) Lady Eleanor Butler or (in More) Elizabeth Lucy, let alone for an episcopal examination of the matter.

21. *put . . . comfort:* encouraged.

22. In the modern senses, but also *kindly* = naturally, in the natural way (deriving from the old sense of *kind* as nature).

23. More conflates Elizabeth's sumptuous coronation as Edward's queen (1465) with her secret wedding to him (1464).

24. Angrily, indignantly.

25. Power—hence army.

26. Ere, before.

27. Depart from.

28. More's chronology is faulty in two respects. First, Edward's exile lasted only five months and twelve days. Second (and far more egregious), in his account of Warwick's disaffection More telescopes half a dozen years, having the Kingmaker's rebellion follow "at his return" from the frustrated embassy. But in fact Warwick drove Edward from the throne in 1470—six years after his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville. Though Warwick would have preferred Edward to have made a dynastic marriage, his crucial quarrel with the king was on a basic matter of foreign policy: whether England should ally itself with France against Burgundy (as he thought), or with Burgundy against France (as Edward insisted).

his new wife in Westminster in sanctuary, where she was delivered of Edward the prince, of whom we before have spoken. In which meantime the earl of Warwick took out of prison and set up again King Henry the Sixth, which was before by King Edward deposed, and that muchwhat[29] by the power of the earl of Warwick—which was a wise man and a courageous warrior, and of such strength, what for his lands, his alliance,[30] and favor with all the people, that he made kings and put down kings almost at his pleasure, and not impossible to have attained it himself, if he had not reckoned it a greater thing to make a king than to be a king. But nothing lasteth alway; for in conclusion King Edward returned, and, with much less number than he[31] had, at Barnet on the Easter Day field[32] slew the earl of Warwick with many other great estates[33] of that party, and so stably attained the crown again that he peaceably enjoyed it until his dying day, and in such plight[34] left it that it could not be lost but by the discord of his very[35] friends or falsehood of his feigned friends.

I have rehearsed this business about this marriage somewhat the more at length because it might thereby the better appear upon how slipper[36] a ground the protector builded his color by which he pretended King Edward's children to be bastards. But that invention, simple[37] as it was, it liked them to whom it sufficed to have somewhat to say, while they were sure to be compelled to no larger proof than themself list to make. Now then, as I began to show you, it was by the protector and his council concluded that this Doctor Shaa should in a sermon at Paul's Cross signify to the people that neither King Edward himself nor the duke of Clarence were lawfully begotten, nor were not the very children of the duke of York, but gotten unlawfully by other persons by the adultery of the duchess their mother; and that also Dame Elizabeth Lucy was verily the wife

29. Largely.
30. The word can encompass kindred, friends, and allies.
31. I.e., Warwick.
32. April 14, 1471, Easter Sunday.
33. Noblemen. *stably:* securely.
34. (Good) condition.
35. True.
36. Unstable.
37. Feeble. *liked:* pleased, satisfied.

of King Edward, and so the prince and all[38] his children bastards, that were gotten upon the queen.

According to this device,[39] Doctor Shaa the Sunday after[40] at Paul's Cross, in a great audience (as alway assembled great number to his preaching), he took for his theme[41] *Spuria vitulamina non agent radices altas,* that is to say, "bastard slips shall never take deep root."[42] Thereupon when he had showed the great grace that God giveth and secretly infoundeth[43] in right generation after the laws of matrimony, then declared he that commonly those children lacked that grace, and for the punishment of their parents were for the more part unhappy, which were gotten in bast,[44] and specially in adultery. Of which, though some, by the ignorance of the world and the truth hid from knowledge, inherited for the season[45] other men's lands, yet God alway so provideth that it continueth not in their blood long but, the truth coming to light, the rightful inheritors be restored and the bastard slip pulled up ere it can be rooted deep.

And when he had laid for the proof and confirmation of this sentence[46] certain examples taken out of the Old Testament and other ancient histories, then began he to descend into the praise of the Lord Richard, late duke of York, calling him father to the lord protector, and declared the title of his heirs unto the crown, to whom it was, after the death of King Henry the Sixth, entailed by authority of Parliament. Then showed he that his very right heir of his body, lawfully begotten, was only the lord protector. For he declared then that King Edward was never lawfully married unto the queen but was, before God, husband unto Dame Elizabeth Lucy, and so his children bastards. And besides that, neither King Edward himself nor the duke of Clarence, among those that were secret in[47] the

38. I.e., all his other.
39. Scheme.
40. I.e., the Sunday after Hastings's death, June 15. But in fact the sermon was given on June 22.
41. Text.
42. Wisdom 4:3 (though for More's *agent* the Vulgate reads *dabunt*—with no appreciable difference in meaning).
43. Infuses.
44. Bastardy.
45. *for the season:* for a time.
46. Opinion.
47. *secret in:* i.e., in on the secrets of.

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Fig. 5. A sermon being delivered from the pulpit-cross in the churchyard of St. Paul's Cathedral, where Dr. Shaa descanted on the supposed bastardy of Edward IV and his children.
The Society of Antiquaries of London.

household, were reckoned very surely for the children of the noble duke, as those that by their favors[48] more resembled other known men than him—from whose virtuous conditions,[49] he said, also, that King Edward was far off. But the lord protector, he said, that very noble prince, the special pattern of knightly prowess, as well in all princely behavior as in the lineaments and favor of his visage, represented the very face of the noble duke his father. "This is," quod he, "the father's own figure, this is his own countenance: the very print of his visage, the sure undoubted image, the plain, express likeness of that noble duke."

Now was it before devised that in the speaking of these words the protector should have comen in among the people to the sermonward,[50] to the end that those words, meeting with his presence, might have been taken among the hearers as though the Holy Ghost had put them in the preacher's mouth, and should have moved the people even there to cry "King Richard! King Richard!"—that it might have been after said that he was specially chosen by God and, in manner,[51] by miracle. But this device quailed,[52] either by the protector's negligence or the preacher's overmuch diligence. For while the protector found by the way tarrying,[53] lest he should prevent[54] those words, and the doctor, fearing that he should come ere his sermon could come to those words, hasted his matter thereto, he was come to them and past them, and entered into other matters, ere the protector came. Whom when he beheld coming, he suddenly left the matter with which he was in hand, and without any deduction[55] thereunto, out of all order and out of all frame, began to repeat those words again: "This is that very noble prince, the special patron* of knightly prowess, which as well in all princely behavior as in the lineaments and favor of his visage representeth the very face of the noble duke of York his father. This is the father's own figure, this his

48. Looks.
49. Morals.
50. *to the sermonward:* to the sermon.
51. *in manner:* as it were.
52. Failed.
53. *found . . . tarrying:* contrived delays along the way. (*tarrying* is a noun.)
54. Arrive before.
55. Introduction.

own countenance: the very print of his visage, the sure undoubted image, the plain, express likeness of the noble duke, whose remembrance can never die while he liveth."

While these words were in speaking, the protector, accompanied with the duke of Buckingham, went through the people into the place where the doctors[56] commonly stand, in the upper story,[57] where he stood to hearken the sermon. But the people were so far from crying "King Richard!" that they stood as they had been turned into stones, for wonder of this shameful sermon. After which once ended, the preacher gat him home and never after durst look out, for shame, but kept* him out of sight like an owl. And when he once asked one that had been his old friend what the people talked of him, all were it that[58] his own conscience well showed him that they talked no good, yet when the other answered him that there was in every man's mouth spoken of him much shame, it so strake[59] him to the heart that, within few days after, he withered and consumed away.

Then on the Tuesday[60] following this sermon, there came unto the Guildhall[61] in London the duke of Buckingham, accompanied with divers lords and knights, more than haply knew the message that they brought. And there, in the east end of the hall, where the mayor keepeth the hustings[62]—the mayor and all the aldermen being assembled about him, all the commons of the city gathered before them, after silence commanded upon great pain, in the protector's name—the duke stood up, and (as he was neither unlearned and of nature marvelously well spoken) he said unto the people with a clear and a loud voice in this manner of wise:[63]

56. Presumably the learned divines.

57. *in the upper story:* see figure 5, which shows robed auditors listening to a sermon from galleries of the cathedral.

58. *all . . . that:* albeit.

59. Struck.

60. June 24.

61. The center of the city government.

62. The Court of Hustings in the Guildhall was the highest London tribunal for civil and domestic actions; Buckingham would have spoken from its dais. More knew the locale well, since the Sheriff's Court, where he sat as a judge, was one of the eight other courts held there.

63. See appendix, pp. 128–31, for other early accounts of this speech—one or more of which may have formed the only basis for More's extraordinary production.

"Friends, for the zeal and hearty favor that we bear you, we be comen to break unto you of a matter right great and weighty, and no less weighty than pleasing to God and profitable to all the realm, nor to no part of the realm more profitable than to you the citizens of this noble city. For why?[64] That thing that we wot well ye have long time lacked and sore[65] longed for, that ye would have given great good[66] for, that ye would have gone far to fetch—that thing we be come hither to bring you, without your labor, pain, cost, adventure,[67] or jeopardy.

"What thing is that? Certes,[68] the surety of your own bodies, the quiet of your wives and your daughters, the safeguard of your goods—of all which things, in times passed, ye stood evermore in doubt. For who was there of you all that would reckon himself lord of his own good, among so many grins[69/*] and traps as was set therefor, among so much pilling and polling,[70] among so many taxes and tallages,[71] of which there was never end and oftentime no need—or, if any were, it rather grew of riot and unreasonable waste than any necessary or honorable charge.[72] So that there was daily pilled from good men and honest, great substance of goods to be lashed out[73] among unthrifts, so far-forth that fifteens[74] sufficed not, nor any usual names of known taxes, but under an easy[75] name of benevolence and goodwill the commissioners so much of every man took as no man would with his goodwill have given—as though that

64. *For why?:* For what reason?
65. Sorely.
66. *great good:* a great quantity of goods.
67. Risk.
68. Certainly.
69. Snares.
70. *pilling and polling:* fleecing, plundering. *Pill and poll* is a common expression, literally meaning "make bare of both skin and hair."
71. *taxes and tallages:* the phrase covers a variety of taxes granted to the monarch by Parliament.
72. Expense.
73. *lashed out:* squandered.
74. I.e., "fifteenths": taxes amounting to a fifteenth of one's personal property.
75. Comfortable. *benevolence:* "Benevolences" were an innovation of Edward's: taxes in the form of coerced or inveigled contributions (transparently masked as goodwill offerings) levied sporadically, without parliamentary authority. Several of Edward's successors (James I being the last) adopted the practice.

name of 'benevolence' had signified that every man should pay, not what himself of his goodwill list to grant, but what the king of *his* goodwill list to take.

"Which never asked little, but everything was hawsed above the measure:[76] amercements[77] turned into fines, fines into ransoms,[78] small trespass to misprision, misprision into treason.[79] Whereof, I think, no man looketh[80] that we should remember you of examples by name—as though Burdet[81] were forgotten, that was for a word spoken in haste cruelly beheaded, by the misconstruing of the laws of this realm for the prince's pleasure; with no less honor to Markham,[82] then chief justice, that left his office rather than he would assent to that judgment, than to[83] the dishonesty of those[84] that, either for fear or flattery, gave that judgment. What? Cook,[85] your own worshipful neighbor, alderman and mayor of this noble city! Who is of you either so negligent that he knoweth not, or so forgetful that he remembereth not, or so hardhearted that he pitieth not that worshipful man's loss? What[86] speak we of loss? His utter

76. *hawsed . . . measure:* raised above the ordinary standard, i.e., excessively. Early readers of this passage would likely have been reminded of the rapacity of Henry VII, which was even more extortionate, and much more recent, than Edward's. More had directly, and with unbridled ferocity, condemned the policies of Henry's reign (which he tactfully blamed on the king's henchmen) in his poem on the coronation of Henry VIII (*CW* 3, Part 2, 100–13).

77. An amercement is a discretionary penalty, its amount left to the "mercy" of the inflicter.

78. A ransom, in this context, is a sum paid to obtain pardon for an offense.

79. *small . . . treason:* The point is that lesser offenses were prosecuted as greater ones. In law, a trespass is any violation of the law not amounting to treason, felony, or misprision of either. Misprision is failure to prevent or notify of another's treason or felony; it is a lesser offense than either.

80. Expects. *remember:* remind.

81. Thomas Burdet, convicted of treason May 19, 1477, and executed the next day. One story has him losing his life for protesting Edward's killing of a pet white buck; but the official charges, at least, were more conventional.

82. Sir John Markham (d. 1479), chief justice of the Court of King's Bench (the supreme court of common law in the realm). He actually lost his office over the Cook case (below).

83. *than to:* i.e., than dishonor to.

84. I.e., the other justices of the court.

85. Sir Thomas Cook (1420–78), a prosperous draper who had been mayor of London in 1462, was impeached of high treason in 1468 after being accused, rightly or wrongly, of involvement in a plot to restore Henry VI. Markham lost his office after directing the jury to find Cook guilty only of the lesser offense of misprision of treason.

86. Why.

spoil[87] and undeserved destruction, only for that it happed those to favor him, whom the prince favored not. We need not, I suppose, to rehearse of these any more by name, sith there be, I doubt not, many here present that either in themself or their nigh friends have known as well their goods as their persons greatly endangered, either by feigned quarrels[88] or small matters aggrieved with heinous names.

"And also there was no crime[89] so great, of which there could lack a pretext. For sith the king, preventing[90] the time of his inheritance, attained the crown by battle, it sufficed in a rich man for a pretext of treason[91] to have been of kindred or alliance, near familiarity or leger[92] acquaintance, with any of those that were at any time the king's enemies—which was, at one time and other, more than half the realm. Thus were neither your goods in surety and yet they brought your bodies in jeopardy—besides the common adventure[93] of open war, which albeit that it is ever the well[94/*] and occasion of much mischief, yet is it never so mischievous as where any people fall at distance[95] among themself, nor in none earthly nation so deadly and so pestilent as when it happeneth among us, and among us never so long-continued dissension, nor so many battles in the season,[96] nor so cruel and so deadly foughten, as was in the king's days that dead is, God forgive it his soul. In whose time and by whose occasion,[97] what about the getting of the garland,[98] keeping it, losing and winning again, it hath cost more English blood than hath twice the winning of France.[99] In which inward war among ourself hath

87. Despoliation. During his imprisonment, Cook's houses were ransacked by servants of Rivers and Sir John Fogge (one of Edward IV's most trusted followers and another kinsman of the queen), and after his conviction he was forced to pay an enormous fine.
88. *feigned quarrels:* false accusations. *aggrieved:* aggravated, exaggerated.
89. Accusation.
90. Acting before.
91. I.e., as a ground for accusing him of treason. *alliance:* relationship by marriage.
92. Slight.
93. Peril.
94. Wellspring.
95. *at distance:* into discord.
96. *in the season:* i.e., during the period of dissension.
97. Action, causing. *what about:* what with.
98. I.e., crown.
99. Referring to the conquests of the Hundred Years' War, first by Edward III and the Black Prince in campaigns of 1339–60, and later by Henry V in 1415–20.

been so great effusion of the ancient noble blood of this realm that scarcely the half remaineth, to the great enfeebling of this noble land, besides many a good town ransacked and spoiled by them that have been going to the field or coming from thence. And peace long after not much surer[1] than war. So that no time was there in which rich men for their money and great men for their lands, or some other for some fear or some displeasure, were not[2] out of peril. For whom trusted he that mistrusted his own brother? Whom spared he that killed his own brother?[3] Or who could perfectly love him, if his own brother could not?

"What manner of folk he most favored, we shall, for his honor, spare to speak of; howbeit, this wot you well all, that whoso was best bare alway least rule, and more suit was in his days unto Shore's wife, a vile and an abominable strumpet, than to all the lords in England—except unto those that made her their proctor[4]—which simple woman was well-named[5] and honest till the king for his wanton lust and sinful affection bereft her from her husband, a right honest, substantial[6] young man among you. And in that point—which in good faith I am sorry to speak of, saving that it is in vain to keep in counsel that thing that all men know—the king's greedy appetite was insatiable and everywhere over all the realm intolerable. For no woman was there anywhere, young or old, rich or poor, whom he set his eye upon in whom he anything liked, either person or favor,[7] speech, pace, or countenance, but without any fear of God or respect of his honor, murmur or grudge of the world, he would importunely pursue his appetite and have her, to the great destruction of many a good woman, and great dolor to their husband and their other friends—which, being honest people of themselves, so much regard the cleanness of their house, the chastity of their

1. Safer, more secure.

2. *not* creates a misleading double negative. The point is that there was no time in Edward's reign when citizens were out of peril, whether because of their money or lands, or because they were objects of fear or displeasure to those in a position to injure them.

3. Alluding to Edward's execution of Clarence (p. 9 above).

4. Advocate.

5. Well spoken of.

6. Well-to-do.

7. *person or favor:* figure or face. *countenance:* demeanor.

wives and their children, that them were liefer[8] to lose all that they have beside, than to have such a villainy done them.

"And all were it that[9] with this and other importable dealing the realm was in every part annoyed,[10] yet specially ye here, the citizens of this noble city, as well for that among you is most plenty of all such things as minister matter to[11] such injuries, as for that you were nearest at hand, sith that near here about was commonly his most abiding. And yet be ye the people whom he had as singular cause well and kindly to entreat[12] as any part of his realm, not only for that the prince by this noble city (as his special chamber and the special, well-renowned city of his realm) much honorable fame receiveth among all other nations, but also for that ye, not without your great cost and sundry perils and jeopardies in all his wars, bare[13] ever your special favor to his part; which your kind minds borne to the House of York sith he hath nothing worthily acquitted,[14] there is of[15] that house that now, by God's grace, better shall—which thing to show you is the whole sum and effect of this our present errand.

"It shall not, I wot well, need that I rehearse you again that[16] ye have already heard of him that can better tell it,[17] and of whom, I am sure, ye will better believe it. And reason is that it so be. I am not so proud to look therefor, that ye should reckon my words of as great authority as the preacher's of the word of God, namely[18] a man so cunning and so wise that no man better wotteth what he should say, and thereto[19] so good and virtuous that he would not say the thing which he wist he should not say, in the pulpit namely, into which none honest man cometh to lie. Which honorable preacher, ye

8. *them were liefer:* they would prefer.
9. *all were it that:* although. *importable:* insupportable.
10. Harmed.
11. *minister matter to:* furnish occasion for.
12. Treat.
13. Bore—i.e., maintained.
14. *nothing worthily acquitted:* by no means worthily requited.
15. I.e., a(nother) scion of.
16. That which. *of:* from.
17. I.e., Dr. Shaa.
18. Especially. *cunning:* learned.
19. Moreover.

well remember, substantially[20] declared unto you at Paul's Cross, on Sunday last passed, the right and title that the most excellent prince Richard duke of Gloucester, now protector of this realm, hath unto the crown and kingdom of the same.

"For as that worshipful man groundly[21] made open unto you, the children of King Edward the Fourth were never lawfully begotten, forasmuch as the king (living his very wife,[22] Dame Elizabeth Lucy) was never lawfully married unto the queen their mother—whose blood, saving that he set his voluptuous pleasure before his honor, was full unmeetly[23] to be matched with his, and the mingling of whose bloods together hath been[24] the effusion of great part of the noble blood of this realm. Whereby it may well seem that marriage not well made, of which there is so much mischief grown. For lack of which lawful accoupling and also of other things—which the said worshipful doctor rather signified than fully explained, and which things shall not be spoken for me,[25] as the thing wherein every man forbeareth to say that[26] he knoweth, in avoiding displeasure of my noble lord protector, bearing,[27] as nature requireth, a filial reverence to the duchess his mother—for these causes, I say, before remembered—that is to wit, for lack of other issue lawfully coming of the late noble prince Richard duke of York, to whose royal blood the crown of England and of France is by the high authority of Parliament entailed—the right and title of the same is by the just course of inheritance, according to the common law of this land, devolute[28] and comen unto the most excellent prince the lord protector, as to the very lawfully begotten son of the fore-remembered noble duke of York.

"Which thing well considered, and the great knightly prowess pondered, with manifold virtues which in his noble person singularly abound, the nobles and commons also of this realm, and spe-

20. Thoroughly.
21. Thoroughly.
22. *living . . . wife:* with his true wife (still) living.
23. Unfit.
24. *hath been:* has caused.
25. *for me:* for my part.
26. That which.
27. Who bears.
28. Devolved.

cially of the north parts, not willing any bastard blood to have the rule of the land nor the abusions before in the same used[29] any longer to continue, have condescended[30] and fully determined to make humble petition unto the most puissant prince the lord protector that it may like his grace at our humble request to take upon him the guiding and governance of this realm, to the wealth and increase[31] of the same, according to his very right and just title. Which thing, I wot it well, he will be loath to take upon him, as he[32] whose wisdom well perceiveth the labor and study both of mind and of body that shall come therewith to whomsoever so well occupy that room[33] as I dare say he will, if he take it. Which room, I warn you well, is no child's office. And that the great wise man[34] well perceived when he said, *Vae regno cuius rex puer est:* 'Woe is that realm that hath a child to[35] their king.'

"Wherefore, so much the more cause have we to thank God that this noble personage, which is so righteously entitled thereunto, is of so sad[36] age and thereto of so great wisdom joined with so great experience; which albeit he will be loath, as I have said, to take it upon him, yet shall he to our petition in that behalf the more graciously incline if ye, the worshipful citizens of this the chief city of this realm, join with us, the nobles, in our said request. Which for your own weal we doubt not but ye will; and nevertheless I heartily pray you so to do, whereby you shall do great profit to all this realm besides, in choosing them so good a king, and unto yourself special commodity, to whom his majesty shall ever after bear so much the more tender favor, in how much he shall perceive you the more prone and benevolently minded toward his election.[37] Wherein, dear friends, what mind[38] you have, we require you plainly to show us."

29. *the abusions . . . used:* the outrages formerly practiced in the same (i.e., in the land).
30. Agreed together.
31. *wealth and increase:* well-being and advancement.
32. One.
33. Office.
34. Solomon: the following quotation is from Ecclesiastes 10:16 (slightly misquoting the Vulgate).
35. As.
36. Mature. *thereto:* moreover.
37. *toward his election:* toward choosing him.
38. Opinion. *require:* ask.

When the duke had said—and looked[39] that the people, whom he hoped that the mayor had framed[40] before, should after this proposition made have cried "King Richard! King Richard!"—all was hushed and mute, and not one word answered thereunto. Wherewith the duke was marvelously abashed, and taking the mayor nearer to him, with other that were about him privy to that matter, said unto them softly, "What meaneth this, that this people be so still?"

"Sir," quod the mayor, "percase[41] they perceive you not well."

"That shall we mend," quod he, "if that will help."

And by and by,[42] somewhat louder, he rehearsed them the same matter again in other order and other words, so well and ornately, and nevertheless so evidently and plain, with voice, gesture, and countenance so comely and so convenient,[43] that every man much marveled that heard him, and thought that they never had in their lives heard so evil a tale so well told. But were it for wonder or fear, or that each look[44] that other should speak first, not one word was there answered of all the people that stood before, but all was as still as the midnight, not so much as rounding[45] among them by which they might seem to common what was best to do.

When the mayor saw this, he with other partners of that counsel drew about the duke and said that the people had not been accustomed there to be spoken unto but by the recorder,[46] which is the mouth of the city, and haply to him they will answer. With that, the recorder, called Fitzwilliam,[47] a sad man and an honest, which was so new come into that office that he never had spoken to the people before, and loath was with that matter to begin, notwith-

39. Expected.
40. Prepared.
41. Perhaps.
42. *by and by:* immediately.
43. Fitting.
44. Looked—i.e., expected.
45. Whispering. *common:* talk about.
46. The Latin version at this point explains that "the Londoners use the title 'recorder' for a mayoral assistant well trained in the laws of his country who prevents any erroneous judgments from being given through ignorance of the law."
47. Sir Thomas Fitzwilliam (1427–97). He had been appointed five days previously, on June 19. *sad:* sober, serious.

standing, thereunto commanded by the mayor, made rehearsal[48] to the commons of that the duke had twice rehearsed them himself. But the recorder so tempered his tale that he showed everything as the duke's words and no part his own. But all this nothing no change[49] made in the people, which, alway after one,[50] stood as they had been men amazed.

Whereupon the duke rounded unto the mayor and said, "This is a marvelous obstinate silence"; and therewith he turned unto the people again, with these words: "Dear friends, we come to move you to that thing (which peradventure we not so greatly needed but that the lords of this realm and the commons of other parties[51] might have sufficed, saving that we such love bear you and so much set by[52] you that we would not gladly do without you that thing) in which to be partners is your weal and honor—which, as it seemeth, either you see not or weigh not. Wherefore we require you give us answer one or other: whether you be minded, as all the nobles of the realm be, to have this noble prince, now protector, to be your king, or not?"

At these words the people began to whisper among themself secretly, that the voice was neither loud nor distinct, but as[53] it were the sound of a swarm of bees; till at the last, in the nether[54] end of the hall a bushment of the duke's servants, and Nesfield's,[55] and other longing[56] to the protector, with some prentices and lads that thrust into the hall among the press,[57] began suddenly at men's backs to cry out as loud as their throats would give, "King Richard! King Richard!"—and threw up their caps in token of joy. And they that stood before cast back their heads, marveling thereof, but nothing they said. And when the duke and the mayor saw this manner, they

48. Recitation.
49. *nothing no change:* no change at all.
50. *after one:* in the same way. *amazed:* stunned, stupefied.
51. Parts.
52. *set by:* esteem.
53. As if.
54. Lower. *bushment:* ambushment, party lying in wait.
55. John Nesfield, a Londoner who performed, and was well rewarded for, a variety of services to Richard.
56. Belonging. *prentices:* apprentices.
57. Crowd.

wisely turned it to their purpose and said it was a goodly cry and a joyful to hear, every man with one voice, no man saying nay.

"Wherefore, friends," quod the duke, "since that we perceive it is all your whole minds to have this nobleman for your king, whereof we shall make his grace so effectual report that we doubt not but it shall redound unto your great weal and commodity, we require ye that ye tomorrow go with us, and we with you, unto his noble grace to make our humble request unto him in manner before remembered."[58]

And therewith the lords came down, and the company dissolved and departed, the more part all sad, some with glad semblance that were not very merry;[59] and some of those that came thither with the duke, not able to dissemble their sorrow, were fain at his back to turn their face to the wall while the dolor of their heart brast[60] out at their eyes.

Then on the morrow after,[61] the mayor with all the aldermen and chief commoners of the city in their best manner appareled, assembling themself together, resorted unto Baynard's Castle,[62] where the protector lay. To which place repaired also, according to their appointment,[63] the duke of Buckingham, with divers noblemen with him, besides many knights and other gentlemen. And thereupon the duke sent word unto the lord protector of the being there of a great and honorable company, to move a great matter unto his grace.

Whereupon the protector made difficulty to come out unto them but if[64] he first knew some part of their errand; as though he doubted[65] and partly distrusted the coming of such number unto him so suddenly, without any warning or knowledge whether they came for good or harm. Then the duke, when he had showed this

58. Mentioned.

59. I.e., not merry at all: ironic understatement.

60. Burst.

61. The morrow after Buckingham's speech was Wednesday, June 25, but the event described here may have occurred on the 26th.

62. This fortress, on the north bank of the Thames, had been the London residence of the duke of York, and was still the residence of his widow. Edward IV had been proclaimed king there in 1461. *lay:* lodged.

63. Agreement.

64. *but if:* unless.

65. Was suspicious of.

unto the mayor and other, that they might thereby see how little the protector looked for this matter, they sent unto him by the messenger such loving message again, and therewith so humbly besought him to vouchsafe that they might resort to his presence to purpose[66] their intent, of which they would unto none other person any part disclose, that at the last he came forth of[67] his chamber; and yet not down unto them, but stood above in a gallery over them where they might see him and speak to him, as though he would not yet come too near them till he wist what they meant.

And thereupon the duke of Buckingham first made humble petition unto him, on the behalf of them all, that his grace would pardon them and license them to purpose unto his grace the intent of their coming, without his displeasure—without which pardon obtained they durst not be bold to move him of[68] that matter. In which, albeit they meant as much honor to his grace as wealth[69] to all the realm besides, yet were they not sure how his grace would take it—whom they would in no wise offend.

Then the protector, as he was very gentle[70] of himself, and also longed sore to wit[71] what they meant, gave him leave to purpose what him liked, verily trusting, for the good mind that he bare them all, none of them anything would intend unto himward[72] wherewith he ought to be grieved. When the duke had this leave and pardon to speak, then waxed he bold to show him their intent and purpose, with all the causes moving them thereunto, as ye before have heard, and finally to beseech his grace that it would like[73] him, of his accustomed goodness and zeal unto the realm, now with his eye of pity to behold the long-continued distress and decay of the same and to set his gracious hands to the redress and amendment thereof, by taking upon him the crown and governance of this realm, according to his right and title lawfully descended unto him, and to the laud of

66. Propose.
67. Out of, from.
68. *move him of:* appeal to him about.
69. Well-being.
70. Courteous.
71. Know.
72. *unto himward:* toward him.
73. Please.

God, profit of the land, and unto his grace so much the more honor and less pain, in that that[74] never prince reigned upon any people that were so glad to live under his obeisance[75] as the people of this realm under his.

When the protector had heard the proposition, he looked very strangely thereat, and answered that all were it that[76] he partly knew the things by them alleged to be true,[77] yet such entire love he bare unto King Edward and his children, that* so much[78] more regarded his honor in other realms about than the crown of any one, of which he was never desirous, that he could not find in his heart in this point to incline to their desire. For in all other nations, where the truth were not well known, it should peradventure be thought that it were his own ambitious mind and device[79] to depose the prince and take himself the crown. With which infamy he would not have his honor stained for any crown; in which he had ever perceived much more labor and pain than pleasure, to him that so would* use it as he that would not were not worthy to have it.[80] Notwithstanding, he not only pardoned them the motion[81] that they made him but also thanked them for the love and hearty favor they bare him, praying them for his sake to give and bear the same to the prince, under whom he was and would be content to live; and with his labor and counsel, as far as should like the king to use him, he would do his uttermost devoir[82] to set the realm in good state. Which was already in this little while of his protectorship (the praise given to God) well begun, in that the malice of such as were before[83] occasion of the contrary, and of new intended to be, were now, partly by good

74. *in that that:* inasmuch as.
75. Rule.
76. *all . . . that:* although.
77. *he . . . true:* i.e., he knew that part (at least) of what they alleged was true.
78. *that so much:* i.e., that he so much. (And see textual note.)
79. *mind and device:* desire and scheme.
80. *to him . . . have it:* i.e., to an individual who would use the throne in such a way that, if one would not so use it, he would not be worthy to have it. The sentiment echoes Buckingham's Guildhall speech, in which he had forecast Richard's reluctance to assume the arduous duties of a crown worthily worn (p. 87). The passage here is one of those where More is most clearly echoing Tacitus on Tiberius: see above, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii, and the appendix, pp. 125–26.
81. Proposal.
82. *do . . . devoir:* make the utmost effort.
83. Previously.

policy, partly more by God's special providence than man's provision, repressed.

Upon this answer given, the duke, by the protector's license, a little rounded as well with other noblemen about him as with the mayor and recorder of London. And after that, upon like pardon desired and obtained, he showed aloud unto the protector, for a final conclusion, that* the realm was appointed[84] King Edward's line should not any longer reign upon them, both for that they had so far gone that it was now no surety to retreat, as[85] for that they thought it for the weal universal to take that way although[86] they had not yet begun it. Wherefore if it would like his grace to take the crown upon him, they would humbly beseech him thereunto. If he would give them a resolute answer to the contrary, which they would be loath to hear, then must they needs seek, and should not fail to find, some other nobleman that would.

These words much moved the protector, which else, as every man may wit,[87] would never, of likelihood, have inclined thereunto. But when he saw there was none other way but that either he must take it or else he and his both go from it, he said unto the lords and commons:

"Sith we perceive well that all the realm is so set, whereof we be very sorry, that they will not suffer in any wise King Edward's line to govern them, whom no man earthly can govern again[88] their wills, and we well also perceive that no man is there to whom the crown can by so just title appertain as to ourself, as very right heir lawfully begotten of the body of our most dear father Richard, late duke of York—to which title is now joined your election, the nobles and commons of this realm, which we of all titles possible take for most effectual[89]—we be content, and agree favorably to incline to your petition and request, and, according to the same, here we take upon

84. Determined.
85. As well as.
86. I.e., even were it the case that. The argument that it is too late to retreat—that usurpation has become the only safe course—had, More has claimed (pp. 49–50), earlier been made to Buckingham himself.
87. Understand. *of likelihood:* in all likelihood.
88. Against.
89. Valid.

us the royal estate, pre-eminence, and kingdom of the two noble realms, England and France: the one from this day forward by us and our heirs to rule, govern, and defend; the other, by God's grace and your good help, to get again and subdue, and establish forever in due obedience unto this realm of England, the advancement whereof we never ask of God longer to live than we intend to procure."[90]

With this there was a great shout, crying "King Richard! King Richard!" And then the lords went up to the king (for so was he from that time called), and the people departed, talking diversely of the matter, every man as his fantasy[91] gave him.

But much they talked and marveled of the manner of this dealing, that the matter was on both parts made so strange,[92] as though neither had ever communed with other thereof before; when that themself well wist there was no man so dull that heard them but he perceived well enough that all the matter was made[93] between them. Howbeit, some excused that again,[94] and said all must be done in good order, though. And men must sometimes for the manner sake[95] not be aknowen what they know. For at the consecration of a bishop, every man wotteth well, by the paying for his bulls,[96] that he purposeth to be one, and[97] though he pay for nothing else. And yet must he be twice asked whether he will be bishop or no, and he must twice say nay, and at the third time take it as compelled thereunto by his own will.[98] And in a stage play all the people know right well that he that playeth the sowdaine is percase a sowter.[99] Yet if one should

90. *the . . . procure:* i.e., let me not outlive my intention to advance England.
91. Fancy.
92. *made so strange:* i.e., handled with such affected surprise.
93. Arranged.
94. In response.
95. *for the manner sake:* for form's sake. *be aknowen:* acknowledge.
96. I.e., papal bulls: writs from Rome authorizing the appointment.
97. Even.
98. *by his own will:* There is perhaps a slip here: should the phrase be "*against* his own will"? Or perhaps the meaning is that he forces himself to accept, through a heroic act of will.

The Latin version of the passage is fuller, and the reformist protest against simony clearer: "when someone is ordained a bishop, he is twice asked if he would be willing, and twice he denies it devoutly, and the third time he is barely induced to say he would be willing in spite of himself, whereas even supposing he has not paid the prince any money, the bulls he has bought from the pope show how he has been angling for the title."

99. *sowdaine . . . sowter:* (the person who plays the) sultan is perchance a shoemaker. I have retained the archaic forms in order to preserve the assonance.

can so little good[1] to show out of season what acquaintance he hath with him, and call him by his own name while he standeth in his majesty, one of his tormentors[2] might hap to break his head, and worthy,[3] for marring of the play. And so they said that these matters be kings' games, as it were stage plays, and for the more part played upon scaffolds.[4] In which poor men be but the lookers-on. And they that wise be, will meddle no farther. For they that sometimes step up and play with them, when they cannot play their parts, they disorder the play, and do themself no good.[5]

<The[6/*] next day[7] the protector, with a great train, went to Westminster Hall,[8] and there, when he had placed himself in the Court of the King's Bench, declared to the audience that he would take upon him the crown in that place there where the king himself sitteth and ministreth the law,[9] because he considered that it was the chiefest duty of a king to minister the laws.[10] Then, with as pleasant an oration as he could, he went about to win unto him the nobles, the merchants, the artificers, and, in conclusion, all kind of men, but specially the lawyers of this realm. And finally, to the intent that no man should hate him for fear, and that his deceitful clemency might get him the goodwill of the people, when he had declared the discommodity[11] of discord and the commodities of concord and unity, he made an open proclamation that he did put out of his mind all enmities, and that he there did openly pardon all offenses com-

1. *can . . . good:* i.e., so little know how to behave as. *out of season:* inopportunely.

2. *his tormentors:* i.e., the sultan's ferocious bodyguards (as the Latin version shows).

3. Deservedly.

4. The word meant both the stage for a play and the platform for an execution.

5. More was particularly fond of the comparison of human life to a play. See the related passages in *Utopia* (*CW* 4.99, *CU* 97) and *The Last Things* (*CW* 1.156). All three passages are indebted to one in Lucian's *Menippus;* see p. xxxv and the appendix, pp. 126–27.

6. As on pp. 45 and 48–51, Rastell here inserted a passage translated by him from the Latin version of the *History.*

7. June 26.

8. Originally part of the congeries of linked structures that constituted Westminster Palace, the hall remained the chief law court of England until the nineteenth century.

9. By the fifteenth century, the king did not normally preside in this court, but it remained the highest in the land. In assuming the crown there, Richard was again following his brother's example.

10. As king, Richard did prove to be especially concerned with law reform and the proper administration of justice—perhaps at least partly in an attempt to confer legitimacy on his rule. Cf. Francis Bacon's appraisal, above, p. xlix.

11. Disadvantageousness.

mitted against him. And to the intent that he might show a proof thereof, he commanded that one Fogge,[12] whom he had long deadly hated, should be brought then before him. Who being brought out of the sanctuary by[13] (for thither had he fled, for fear of him), in the sight of the people he took him by the hand. Which thing the common people rejoiced at and praised, but wise men took it for a vanity. In his return homeward, whomsoever he met, he saluted.[14] For a mind that knoweth itself guilty is in a manner dejected[15] to a servile flattery.

When he had begun his reign, the twenty-sixth day of June, after this mockish election, then was he crowned the sixth day of July.* And that solemnity was furnished for the most part with the selfsame provision that was appointed for the coronation of his nephew.>[16]

Now fell there mischiefs thick. And as the thing evil-gotten is never well kept, through all the time of his reign never ceased there cruel death and slaughter, till his own destruction ended it. But as he finished his time with the best death and the most righteous—that is to wit, his own—so began he with the most piteous and wicked: I mean the lamentable murder of his innocent nephews, the young king and his tender brother. Whose death and final infortune[17] hath nevertheless so far comen in question that some remain yet in doubt whether they were in his days destroyed or no. Not for that only, that Perkin Warbeck,[18] by many folks' malice and more folks' folly so long space abusing the world, was as well with princes as the poorer people reputed and taken for the younger of those two, but for that also, that all things were in late days so covertly demeaned,[19]

12. Sir John Fogge; see above, p. 83*n*.
13. Close by.
14. Greeted.
15. Abased.
16. The records of the king's wardrober for 1483 tend to confirm this claim.
At this point, the Latin version of the book ends.
17. Misfortune.
18. Beginning in 1491, the Fleming Warbeck (1474?–99), aided by powerful British and European enemies of Henry VII, pretended to the English throne by impersonating the duke of York (Edward V's younger brother). Captured after the failure of his final attempt at an invasion (in 1497), he was eventually executed.
19. Managed. The "late days" referred to seem to encompass, in addition to those of Richard

one thing pretended and another meant, that there was nothing so plain and openly proved but that yet, for the common custom of close and covert dealing, men had it ever inwardly suspect—as many well-counterfeited jewels make the true mistrusted. Howbeit, concerning that opinion,[20] with the occasions moving either party, we shall have place more at large to entreat if we hereafter happen to write the time of the late noble prince of famous memory King Henry the Seventh, or percase that history of Perkin in any compendious process[21] by itself. But in the meantime, for this present matter, I shall rehearse you the dolorous end of those babes, not after every way that I have heard, but after that way that I have so heard by such men and by such means as methinketh it were hard but it should be true.[22]

King Richard, after his coronation, taking his way to Gloucester[23] to visit in his new honor the town of which he bare the name of his old, devised, as he rode, to fulfill that thing which he before had intended. And forasmuch as his mind gave him[24] that, his nephews living, men would not reckon that he could have right to the realm, he thought therefore without delay to rid[25] them—as though the killing of his kinsmen could amend his cause and make him a kindly[26] king.

Whereupon he sent one John Green,[27] whom he specially trusted,

III, the reign of Henry VII—whom More detested (cf. p. 82*n*) and who was habitually wary and secretive, and an able dissimulator.

20. I.e., the opinion that the young princes, or at least the duke of York, survived Richard's reign.

21. *compendious process:* concise narrative. There is no evidence that More wrote either of these contemplated histories.

22. *it . . . true:* i.e., it would be difficult for it not to be true. What actually happened to the young princes has been a subject of unending debate. Suffice it here to say that they were not known ever to have been seen alive after Richard assumed the throne; that the early accounts agree that they were murdered; and that, given the precedents (dynastic murders had been the rule in analogous circumstances), it would be surprising if they did *not* meet their deaths at the instigation—or, at the least, through the acquiescence or malign neglect—of the reigning monarch.

23. That is, in a royal progress, ending at York, that occupied late July and all of August.

24. *gave him:* suggested to him.

25. Be rid of.

26. Rightful, lawful, as well as the modern sense.

27. The name is too common to permit certain identification.

unto Sir Robert Brackenbury, constable of the Tower,[28] with a letter and credence[29] also, that the same Sir Robert should in any wise put the two children to death. This John Green did his errand unto Brackenbury, kneeling before Our Lady in the Tower,[30] who plainly answered that he would never put them to death, to die therefor;[31] with which answer John Green, returning, recounted the same to King Richard at Warwick, yet in his way.[32]

Wherewith he took such displeasure and thought, that the same night he said unto a secret[33] page of his: "Ah, whom shall a man trust? Those that I have brought up[34] myself, those that I had went would most surely serve me—even those fail me, and at my commandment will do nothing for me."

"Sir," quod his page, "there lieth one on your pallet without,[35] that, I dare well say, to do your grace pleasure the thing were right hard that he would refuse"—meaning this by[36] Sir James Tyrell,[37] which was a man of right goodly personage, and for nature's gifts worthy to have served a much better prince, if he had well served God and by grace obtained as much truth and goodwill as he had strength and wit.[38] The man had a high[39] heart and sore longed upward, not rising yet so fast as he had hoped, being hindered and

28. Brackenbury had been appointed constable on July 17. Though More (like Polydore Vergil) exculpates him from responsibility for whatever befell the princes, he was, and remained, a loyal and well-rewarded follower of Richard.

29. Credentials.

30. That is, Brackenbury was performing his devotions before an image of the Virgin.

31. *to die therefor:* either "even if his refusal should cost him his life" or (as Lumby thinks) "to have to die himself for so doing." Polydore Vergil's version of the episode supports the latter interpretation: Brackenbury feared "lest if he should obey, the same might at one time or other turn to his own harm" (p. 188). As things fell out, Brackenbury died in Richard's service anyway, at Bosworth Field.

32. *yet . . . way:* i.e., still on his progress. Richard stopped at Warwick for the second week of August.

33. Intimate.

34. *brought up:* elevated, brought into a higher station. *went:* weened—thought.

35. *pallet without:* straw bed outside (in the antechamber).

36. Of.

37. Tyrell had long been a member of Richard's entourage, and—contrary to what More says below—had enjoyed his complete confidence. He survived his master and, over time, received many preferments under Henry VII. In 1502, however, he was implicated in the conspiracies of the Yorkist pretender Edmund de la Pole and was beheaded.

38. Intelligence.

39. Haughty.

kept under by the means of Sir Richard Ratcliffe and Sir William Catesby, which, longing for no more partners of the prince's favor, and namely[40] not for him, whose pride they wist would bear no peer, kept him by secret drifts[41] out of all secret trust. Which thing this page well had marked and known. Wherefore, this occasion offered, of very special friendship he took his time[42] to put him forward and by such wise do him good that all the enemies he had except the devil could never have done him so much hurt.

For upon this page's words King Richard arose (for this communication[43] had he sitting at the draft—a convenient carpet[44] for such a counsel) and came out into the pallet-chamber, on which he found in bed Sir James and Sir Thomas Tyrell, of person like, and brethren of blood, but nothing of kin in conditions.[45] Then said the king merrily to them, "What, sirs, be ye in bed so soon?" and calling up Sir James, brake to him secretly his mind in this mischievous matter. In which he found him nothing strange.[46] Wherefore on the morrow he sent him to Brackenbury with a letter by which he was commanded to deliver Sir James all the keys of the Tower for one night, to the end he might there accomplish the king's pleasure in such thing as he had given him commandment. After which letter delivered and the keys received, Sir James appointed the night next ensuing to destroy them, devising before and preparing the means.

The prince, as soon as the protector left that name and took himself as king, had it showed unto him that he should not reign, but his uncle should have the crown. At which word the prince, sore abashed, began to sigh and said: "Alas! I would my uncle would let me have my life yet, though I lose my kingdom." Then he that told him the tale used him with good words and put him in the best comfort he could. But forthwith was the prince and his brother both shut up, and all other removed from them, only one called Black

40. Especially.
41. Schemes.
42. Opportunity.
43. Conversation. *draft:* toilet.
44. *convenient carpet:* appropriate council table (cf. "on the carpet").
45. Personal qualities.
46. *nothing strange:* not at all unwilling.

Will or William Slaughter[47] except, set to serve them and see them sure.[48] After which time the prince never tied his points[49] nor aught rought of himself, but with that young babe his brother lingered in thought and heaviness[50] till this traitorous death delivered them of that wretchedness.

For Sir James Tyrell devised that they should be murdered in their beds, to the execution whereof he appointed Miles Forest, one of the four that kept them, a fellow fleshed[51] in murder beforetime. To him he joined one John Dighton, his own horse-keeper, a big, broad, square, strong knave. Then, all the other being removed from them, this Miles Forest and John Dighton about midnight (the seely[52] children lying in their beds) came into the chamber and suddenly lapped[53] them up among the clothes—so bewrapped them and entangled them, keeping down by force the featherbed and pillows hard unto their mouths, that within a while, smored[54] and stifled, their breath failing, they gave up to God their innocent souls into the joys of heaven, leaving to the tormentors their bodies dead in the bed. Which after that the wretches perceived—first by the struggling with the pains of death and, after, long lying still—to be throughly[55] dead, they laid their bodies naked out upon the bed and fetched Sir James to see them. Which, upon the sight of them, caused those murderers to bury them at the stair-foot, meetly deep in the ground, under a great heap of stones.

Then rode Sir James in great haste to King Richard and showed him all the manner of the murder; who gave him great thanks and, as some say, there made him knight.[56] But he allowed not, as I have heard, that burying in so vile a corner, saying that he would have

47. The name occurs in some contemporary records, as do those of the two supposed murderers (below). But there is no certain identification of any of the three.
48. Secure.
49. Laces for attaching hose to doublet. *aught rought:* took any care.
50. Sadness.
51. Initiated.
52. Innocent.
53. Wrapped.
54. Smothered.
55. Fully.
56. In fact Tyrell had been knighted in 1471.

them buried in a better place, because they were a king's sons. Lo, the honorable courage[57] of a king! Whereupon, they say that a priest of Sir Robert Brackenbury took up the bodies again and secretly interred them in such place as, by the occasion[58] of his death which only knew it, could never since come to light. Very truth is it, and well known, that at such time as Sir James Tyrell was in the Tower for treason committed against the most famous prince King Henry the Seventh, both Dighton and he were examined, and confessed the murder in manner above written;[59] but whither the bodies were removed, they could nothing tell.

And thus, as I have learned of them that much knew and little cause had to lie, were these two noble princes—these innocent, tender children, born of most royal blood, brought up in great wealth,[60] likely long to live to reign and rule in the realm—by traitorous tyranny taken, deprived of their estate,[61] shortly shut up in prison, and privily slain and murdered, their bodies cast God wot where, by the cruel ambition of their unnatural uncle and his dispiteous[62] tormentors. Which things on every part well pondered, God never gave this world a more notable example, neither in what unsurety standeth this worldly weal, or what mischief worketh the proud enterprise of a high heart, or, finally, what wretched end ensueth such dispiteous cruelty.

For first to begin with the ministers:[63] Miles Forest at Saint Martin's[64] piecemeal rotted away; Dighton, indeed, yet walketh on alive, in good possibility to be hanged ere he die. But Sir James Tyrell died at Tower Hill, beheaded for treason. King Richard himself, as ye shall hereafter hear, slain in the field, hacked and

57. Nature.

58. *by the occasion:* by reason. *which only:* who alone.

59. Neither of these supposed confessions is extant. Some time after Tyrell's beheading, Henry VII gave out that he had confessed to the murders. But the claim lacks corroboration, and one must be skeptical of it because Henry, having suffered much from pretenders claiming to be one or another Yorkist prince, had an overwhelming interest in wanting Edward's sons believed dead.

60. In the sense of happiness, prosperity.

61. Rank. *shortly:* quickly.

62. Pitiless.

63. Agents.

64. The sanctuary at St. Martin's le Grand. See p. 35*n*.

hewed of his enemies' hands, harried[65] on horseback dead, his hair in despite torn and tugged like a cur dog. And the mischief that he took,[66] within less than three years of the mischief that he did; and yet all the meantime spent in much pain and trouble outward, much fear, anguish, and sorrow within. For I have heard by credible report of such as were secret with his chamberers[67] that after this abominable deed done he never had quiet in his mind, he never thought himself sure.[68] Where he went abroad, his eyes whirled about, his body privily fenced,[69] his hand ever on his dagger, his countenance and manner like one alway ready to strike again. He took ill rest a-nights, lay long waking and musing, sore wearied with care and watch, rather slumbered than slept, troubled with fearful dreams, suddenly sometimes start up, leap out of his bed, and run[70] about the chamber: so was his restless heart continually tossed and tumbled with the tedious[71] impression and stormy remembrance of his abominable deed.[72]

Now* had he outward[73] no long time in rest. For hereupon soon after began the conspiracy—or, rather, good confederation—between the duke of Buckingham and many other gentlemen against him.[74] The occasion whereupon the king and the duke fell out is of

65. *harried:* dragged. *in despite:* contemptuously.

66. Received.

67. Attendants in a bedchamber—chamberlains.

68. Secure.

69. Shielded—i.e., by a coat of mail under his clothing.

70. "Start," "leap," and "run" are sometimes past tenses in sixteenth-century English—or More may be using the "historical" or "dramatic" present, in which the present tense is employed to impart special vividness to a narrative of past events.

71. Troublesome, painful.

72. In the two years of his reign, Richard had, to be sure, many hard things on his mind, and there is some evidence that he was troubled—and that he was deeply distressed by the death of his son (see above, p. 50*n*), whether or not by the deaths of his nephews. In any case, the passage is stereotypical: the fear and unhappiness of the tyrant was a ubiquitous convention of the classical and Renaissance literature of tyranny. More's primary model is Sallust's account of the disquietude of the villainous Jugurtha after he had put many of his enemies to death: see the appendix, p. 125.

73. Outwardly, publicly—as opposed to the *inward* disquiet just discussed.

74. Buckingham did not instigate the rebellion that developed in the autumn of 1483 (it arose among the landed gentry of southern England, especially some who had been members of Edward IV's government), but the rising coalesced around him after he declared against Richard. Armed insurrection began in early October; it was put down within six weeks. Buckingham was executed on November 2.

In the present passage, More goes on to recount both the formation and the collapse of

divers folk diverse-wise pretended.[75] This duke, as I have for certain been informed, as soon as the duke of Gloucester, upon the death of King Edward, came to York and there had solemn funeral service for King Edward, sent thither, in the most secret wise he could, one Persal,[76] his trusty servant, who came to John Ward,[77] a chamberer of like secret trust with the duke of Gloucester, desiring that in the most close[78] and covert manner he might be admitted to the presence and speech of his master. And the duke of Gloucester, advertised[79] of his desire, caused him in the dead of the night, after all other folk avoided,[80] to be brought unto him in his secret chamber; where Persal, after[81] his master's recommendation, showed him that he had secretly sent him to show him that in this new world he would take such part as he[82] would, and wait upon him with a thousand good fellows if need were. The messenger, sent back with thanks and some secret instruction of the protector's mind, yet met him again with farther message from the duke his master within few days after at Nottingham, whither the protector from York, with many gentlemen of the north country, to the number of six hundred horse,[83] was comen on his way to Londonward. And after secret meeting and communication had, eftsoon[84] departed.

Whereupon at Northampton the duke met with the protector

Buckingham's alliance with Richard. As he indicates, the reasons for Buckingham's falling off are obscure. Certainly he had been spectacularly well rewarded by Richard—who had also, contrary to what More says here, set in motion the parliamentary process that would result in the duke's being given title to the (rest of) the earl of Hereford's lands; and Richard had already granted him the revenues from these lands. Rastell had earlier inserted a translation of the Latin version's account of the formation of the alliance; see pp. 48–50 and n. 66 . That account differs from this one in several ways and, in particular, has Richard granting Buckingham's request for the Hereford lands.

75. Set forth, related.

76. Probably to be identified with Sir Humphrey Percival (d. 1498).

77. Presumably the John Ward, king's servant, who in 1484 was awarded a royal grant of £40 annually for life.

78. Secret.

79. Informed.

80. Withdrew.

81. In accordance with.

82. I.e., Richard.

83. Horse soldiers, cavalry.

84. Soon afterward.

himself, with three hundred horses, and from thence still continued with him, as* partner of all his devices, till that after his coronation they departed, as it seemed, very great friends, at Gloucester. From whence, as soon as the duke came home, he so lightly[85] turned from him and so highly conspired against him that a man would marvel whereof the change grew.

And surely the occasion of their variance is of divers men diversely reported. Some have I heard say that the duke, a little before the coronation, among other things required[86] of the protector the duke of Hereford's lands, to which he pretended himself just inheritor.[87] And forasmuch as the title which he claimed by inheritance was somewhat interlaced with the title to the crown by the line of King Henry[88] before deprived, the protector conceived such indignation that he rejected the duke's request with many spiteful and minatory[89] words, which so wounded his heart with hatred and mistrust that he never after could endure to look aright on King Richard but ever feared his own life, so far-forth that when the protector rode through London toward his coronation, he feigned himself sick, because he would not ride with him. And the other, taking it in evil part, sent him word to rise and come ride, or he would make him be carried. Whereupon he rode on with evil will and, that notwithstanding,[90] on the morrow rose from the feast, feigning himself sick; and King Richard said it was done in hatred and despite of him. And they say that ever after, continually, each of them lived in such hatred and distrust of other that the duke verily looked[91] to have been murdered at Gloucester. From which, nevertheless, he in fair manner departed.

But surely some right secret at the days[92] deny this; and many right wise men think it unlikely (the deep dissimuling[93] nature of those both men considered, and what need in that green world the

85. Quickly.
86. Asked. Just below, *duke* is a mistake for *earl.*
87. Cf. above, p. 50, and, on Buckingham's strong claim to the Hereford lands, n. 80 there.
88. King Henry VI.
89. Menacing.
90. *that notwithstanding:* i.e., notwithstanding Richard's threat.
91. Expected.
92. *some . . . days:* i.e., some people who were especially privy to secrets at that time.
93. Dissembling.

protector had of the duke, and in what peril the duke stood if he fell once in suspicion of the tyrant) that either the protector would give the duke occasion of displeasure, or the duke the protector occasion of mistrust. And utterly[94] men think that if King Richard had any such opinion conceived, he would never have suffered him to escape his hands. Very truth it is, the duke was a high-minded[95] man, and evil could bear the glory of another; so that I have heard of some (that said they saw it) that the duke, at such time as the crown was first set upon the protector's head, his eye could not abide the sight thereof, but wried[96] his head another way. But men say that he was of truth not well at ease,[97] and that both to King Richard well known and not ill-taken, nor any demand[98] of the duke's uncourteously rejected, but he, both with great gifts and high behests,[99] in most loving and trusty manner departed at Gloucester.

But soon after his coming home to Brecknock,[1] having there in his custody, by the commandment of King Richard, Doctor Morton, bishop of Ely (who, as ye before heard, was taken in the council at the Tower),[2] waxed with him familiar. Whose wisdom abused[3] his pride to his own deliverance and the duke's destruction.

The bishop was a man of great natural wit,[4] very well learned, and honorable in behavior, lacking no wise ways to win favor. He had been fast upon[5] the part of King Henry while that part was in wealth,[6] and nevertheless left it not nor forsook it in woe, but fled the realm with the queen and the prince while King Edward had the king in prison—never came home but to the field.[7] After which

94. Indeed.
95. Haughty. *evil:* ill.
96. Turned.
97. *not . . . ease:* uncomfortable—not feeling well.
98. Surely in the weaker sense: "request."
99. Promises.
1. I.e., the duke's castle of Brecknock in Wales.
2. On Morton, see p. 51*n;* on his imprisonment, p. 56*n*.
3. Deceived.
4. Intelligence. With this character of Morton, cf. the similar passage in *Utopia* (*CW* 4.59–61, *CU* 55).
5. *fast upon:* firmly attached to.
6. Weal, prosperity.
7. I.e., the battlefield. After the Battle of Tewkesbury (see p. 8*n*), he made his submission to Edward IV and was pardoned.

lost, and that part utterly subdued, the other,[8] for his fast faith and wisdom, not only was content to receive him but also wooed him to come, and had him from thenceforth both in secret trust and very special favor; which he nothing deceived. For he, being, as ye have heard, after King Edward's death first taken[9] by the tyrant for his truth to the king, found the mean to set this duke in his top,[10] joined gentlemen together in aid of King Henry, devising first the marriage between him and King Edward's daughter,[11] by which his faith declared[12] and good service to both his masters at once (with infinite benefit to the realm by the conjunction of those two bloods in one, whose several[13] titles had long inquieted the land), he fled the realm, went to Rome,[14] never minding more to meddle with the world, till the noble prince King Henry the Seventh gat him home again, made him archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor of England, whereunto the pope joined the honor of cardinal. Thus, living many days in as much honor as one man might well wish, ended them so godly that his death, with God's mercy, well changed his life.[15]

This man, therefore, as I was about to tell you, by the long and often alternate proof[16] as well of prosperity as adverse fortune, had gotten by great experience (the very mother and mistress of wisdom) a deep insight in politic worldly drifts; whereby, perceiving now this duke glad to common with him, fed him with fair words and many

8. *the other:* i.e., Edward IV. *fast faith:* steadfast fidelity (as demonstrated by his unwavering loyalty to Henry VI).

9. Imprisoned. *for his truth:* because of his fidelity.

10. *set . . . top:* i.e., bring things down about his ears.

11. *devising . . . daughter:* The marriage of Henry VII to Edward IV's eldest daughter, Elizabeth of York (1486), united the houses of Lancaster and York and finally ended the Wars of the Roses. *devising* could mean either "conceiving" or "arranging." The latter is probably more accurate: historians usually accept Polydore Vergil's claim that the match was concocted by Henry's mother and Elizabeth Woodville.

12. *by . . . declared:* by which having demonstrated his fidelity.

13. Separate. *inquieted:* disquieted.

14. No other source confirms that Morton went to Rome after his escape from captivity. Certainly his main base of operations in exile was Flanders. *minding:* intending.

15. *well . . . life:* Obscure and perhaps deliberately ambiguous. The presumptive meaning is that the godly close of Morton's time on earth gives us reason to believe that, with God's mercy, he made a good exchange of his life for the joys of heaven. But one may wonder whether the sentence is meant also to hint that some facets of his life—which included, as in the present, unfinished scene, much unsaintly politics—*needed* to be changed before he faced his Maker.

16. Trial.

pleasant praises. And perceiving by the process[17] of their communications the duke's pride now and then balk out a little braid[18] of envy toward the glory of the king, and thereby feeling him eath to fall out if the matter were well handled, he craftily sought the ways to prick him forward,[19] taking always the occasion of his coming, and so keeping himself close within his bounds* that he rather seemed him to follow him than to lead him.

For when the duke first began to praise and boast[20] the king, and show how much profit the realm should take by his reign, my lord Morton answered: "Surely, my lord, folly were it for me to lie: for if I would swear the contrary, your lordship would not, I ween, believe but that,[21] if the world would have gone as I would have wished, King Henry's son had had the crown and not King Edward. But after that God had ordered him to lose it and King Edward to reign, I was never so mad that I would with a dead man strive against the quick.[22] So was I to King Edward faithful chaplain, and glad would have been that his child had succeeded him. Howbeit, if the secret judgment of God have otherwise provided, I purpose not to spurn against a prick,[23] nor labor to set up that[24] God pulleth down. And as for the late protector and now king . . . "

And even there he left,[25] saying that he had already meddled too much with the world, and would from that day meddle with his book and his beads[26] and no farther. Then longed the duke sore to hear what he would have said—because he ended with the king and there so suddenly stopped—and exhorted him so familiarly between them twain to be bold to say whatsoever he thought; whereof he faithfully promised there should never come hurt, and peradventure more good than he would ween, and that himself intended to

17. Course.
18. *balk . . . braid:* vent a little outburst. (*Balk* is an old form of *belch.*)
19. *prick him forward:* spur him on.
20. Extol.
21. *but that:* anything other than that.
22. Living.
23. *spurn . . . prick:* kick against a goad (said of oxen)—i.e., resist an irresistible authority; proverbial long before its occurrence in Acts 9:5, 26:14.
24. That which.
25. Left off (speaking).
26. *book . . . beads:* breviary and rosary.

use his faithful secret advice and counsel, which, he said, was the only cause for which he procured of[27] the king to have him in his custody—where he might reckon himself at home—and else had he been put in the hands of them with whom he should not have founden the like favor.

The bishop right humbly thanked him and said: "In good faith, my lord, I love not much to talk much of princes, as thing not all out of peril, though the word be without fault—forasmuch as it shall not be taken as the party meant it, but as it pleaseth the prince to construe it. And ever I think on Aesop's tale, that when the lion had proclaimed that on pain of death there should none horned beast abide in that wood, one that had in his forehead a bunch[28] of flesh fled away a great pace. The fox, that saw him run so fast, asked him whither he made all that haste. And he answered, 'In faith, I neither wot nor reck,[29] so I were once hence, because of this proclamation made of horned beasts.' 'What, fool!' quod the fox. 'Thou mayst abide well enough; the lion meant not by thee, for it is none horn that is in thine head.' 'No, marry,'[30] quod he, 'that wot I well enough. But what an[31] he *call* it a horn, where am I then?'"

The duke laughed merrily at the tale and said: "My lord, I warrant you, neither the lion nor the boar[32] shall pick any matter at anything here spoken, for it shall never come near their ear."

"In good faith, sir," said the bishop, "if it did, the thing that I was about to say, taken as well as afore God I meant it, could deserve but thank. And yet taken as I ween it would, might happen to turn me to little good and you to less."

Then longed the duke yet much more to wit[33] what it was. Whereupon the bishop said: "In good faith, my lord, as for the late protector, sith he is now king in possession, I purpose not to dispute his

27. *procured of:* prevailed upon.

28. Protuberance. *a great pace:* at great speed. The fable is not found in the standard Aesopic collections.

29. *wot nor reck:* know nor care.

30. From "Mary" (the Virgin): an interjection: "to be sure!"

31. If.

32. Richard's emblem. Both lion and boar figured in his royal arms. *pick . . . at:* find fault with.

33. Know.

title. But for the weal of this realm whereof his grace hath now the governance, and whereof I am myself one poor member, I was about to wish that to[34] those good abilities whereof he hath already right many, little needing my praise, it might yet have pleased God, for the better store,[35] to have given him some of such other excellent virtues meet for the rule of a realm, as our Lord hath planted in the person of your grace."

34. In addition to.
35. Provision.

Selective Glossary

This glossary contains words in two categories: (1) those that are glossed in footnotes at one or more points in the text but are not glossed in at least one other occurrence where the word has the same or a related sense; (2) some words that I decided—but perhaps wrongly—not to footnote at all.

Note that the glosses do not offer definitions of all the senses taken by the glossed words in the *History* but only of the senses taken in occurrences that could conceivably confuse a modern reader.

Here and there, I have inserted abbreviations, usually to eliminate ambiguities: *n* = noun; *pt* = past tense of; *var* = variant of; *v* = verb.

abiding abode
about around
affinity relationship by marriage
afore-remembered fore-mentioned
atonement reconciliation

bare bore
bend band; faction
booted helped, availed
brake broke

cheer entertainment; gaiety
chose chosen
color pretext
commodity advantage
common talk; talk about
convenience suitability
convenient suitable

debate strife
drifts schemes

eath easy
election choice
ensured betrothed

fain obliged
far-forth far; *so far-forth that* to such an extent that
fet fetched
field battlefield
fond foolish
forbare forbore
forsooth in truth, truly
from away from
frowardness perversity

gat got
goodly of good quality, admirable, splendid; good-looking, handsome

haply perhaps
harness armor
holpen helped
howbeit be that as it may, nevertheless; although

incontinent immediately

jeopardous hazardous

let prevent; hinder
like please
list (v) please
look, look for expect

meet suitable
mind intend
minishing diminishing
murmur grumbling; subdued complaint; repining

namely especially
nothing ware not aware

over this; over that moreover

peradventure perhaps
percase perchance
politic prudent
privily secretly
privy intimate; secret; in on the secret

quod quoth, said

reive rob, plunder
require ask, request
rounded whispered

saving that except that
self very, same
sith since
sore sorely
stand remain; accord
states noblemen
stead place
substance possessions, means; *good substance* substantial means
surety safety, security; safeguard

taper wax candle
that is to wit that is to say; namely

unsurety insecurity

very true

ware aware
waxed grew
weal, wealth well-being
ween think
wise (n) fashion, manner, way
wist knew *(pt wit)*
wit (n) intelligence, intellect
wit (v) know, understand; *that is to wit* that is to say, namely
witting knowing
wot (var wit) know; *wot never* know not

Editorial Practices

Text: My text is based on that in *The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chancellour of England, wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge,* edited by More's nephew William Rastell and printed in 1557. The only other possible copy-text would be one of the printings that preceded Rastell's edition: the Hardyng-Hall versions of 1543–50 (the "H" texts).[1] Since the 1560s, virtually everyone who has considered the matter, starting with Richard Grafton, the printer-editor of all four H texts, has agreed that the Rastell version is the authoritative one; sharing this view, I see no reason to recapitulate here the arguments and evidence that overwhelmingly support it.[2]

All the same, there are occasionally good reasons for departing from *1557.* At some points, the H texts (which must, after all, also ultimately derive, through whatever process, from an authorial manuscript—or *the* authorial manuscript, perhaps at a slightly different stage of revision) have readings that are either clearly or at least arguably likelier to represent what More wrote than those in *1557.* In a number of places, then, I have emended *1557* by adopting readings from these texts. (All but one of the emendations are of words where, except sometimes in spelling, the four Hardyng and Hall versions all agree; the remaining one is from the Hall texts

1. See above, pp. xliii–xliv.

2. For them, see *EW* 1.42–47 (and for detailed collations in tabular form, 221–23, 254–90); *CW* 2.xvii–xxxii, with a full account, in the textual notes, of the substantive variants; *CW* 15.cxlviii–cli; and Womersley, "Sir Thomas More's *History of King Richard III:* a new theory of the English texts." The one notable exception to the agreement on the superiority of Rastell's text to the Hardyng-Hall versions is found in Hanham, *Richard III and His Early Historians,* pp. 198–217; but her arguments have proved unpersuasive.

only.) In other places, I have made conjectural emendations. Most of the emendations in both categories follow previous editors, but some are new. Whenever an emendation is obviously preferable to what is obviously a mistake—a misprint—in *1557,* I have made the correction silently. In all other cases, I have given the rationale of the emendation in a textual note. I have also added textual notes wherever H offers a tantalizing variant that I have not adopted or where a modern editor makes an intriguing conjectural emendation that I have declined to follow. These notes are found on pp. 119ff. and are cued in the text by the symbol *.

I have also departed from *1557* by omitting its numerous marginal glosses. At least three of these are certainly by Rastell, who marked places where he supplemented his text by inserting translated passages from the Latin version of the *History* (see textual notes to pp. 45, 48, and 95); the other glosses are brief notes indicating the contents of the paragraphs they flank (e.g., "Description of Edward the Fourth"; "The queen taketh sanctuary"; "The protector's oration"; "O dissimulation"; "Shore's wife"). These also are presumably by Rastell.

Spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing: My overriding aim in the edition has been to make the *History* as accessible as possible to modern readers. In accordance with this aim, I have modernized *1557* in several ways. (The original form of the text is found both in the photographic facsimiles included in *EW* and in the reprint of *1557* edited by K. J. Wilson (see above, p. liii), and in the transcription in *CW* 2.)

The spelling of *1557* is both archaic and, as with other sixteenth-century texts, variable. (At one point, for example, *assaied* and *assayed* occur within a span of four words.) When a word in *1557* is (as in the vast majority of cases where the *1557* spelling is not already the modern spelling) simply a variant spelling of a word that exists in modern English, I have substituted the standard modern spelling. (Where British and American spellings differ, I have used the American one.) When a word is not merely a variant spelling but an obsolete form—when there is no corresponding modern word or when the *1557* form of a word differs from the modern one not just in spelling but in sound—I have usually retained the old form. The most common cases of this kind are old verb forms: I have, for

example, retained *gat,* an old past tense of *get.* But when the *OED* lists an obsolete word under a different spelling from the one found in *1557,* I have changed the spelling to match that in the *OED:* thus *coumpinable* becomes *companable* (= *companionable*). At least as practiced by me, however, the modernization of spelling is not an exact science. In a number of cases (especially ones that recur frequently), I have modernized obsolete forms, simply because the distraction they cause seems to outweigh the (small) advantages of fully consistent practice and modestly greater fidelity to the original text. Thus *mo* (with variants *moe, mooe, moo*), which appears seven times in *1557* while *more* appears eighty-seven times, is regularized to the modern form; likewise *fro,* which *1557* now and then has instead of *from;* while *shew* becomes *show, sometime* (as an adverb) becomes *sometimes, nathelesse* becomes *nevertheless,* and the redundant construction *the tone . . . the tother* becomes *the one . . . the other.* In accordance with modern usage, *an* becomes *a* before aspirated *h.*

As in other sixteenth-century texts, the punctuation in *1557* is, to a modern reader, generally unhelpful and often actively confusing. I have thoroughly repunctuated, trying always to choose the punctuation that will make the structure of More's sentences most readily apprehensible. There are, however, some places where *1557*'s punctuation, though not correct by modern standards, both facilitates comprehension and seems to convey something important about the movement of More's mind, or some nuance of his narrative voice. In such cases—which involve the use of a colon where a modern writer would use a comma, or the use of a period that creates, following it, a fragmentary sentence—I have preserved the original punctuation.

The text in *1557* is paragraphed, but its paragraphs are, to modern tastes, usually too long and sprawling. As with punctuation, I have freely disregarded *1557* in this respect and have reparagraphed with a view to facilitating comprehension.

Annotations: In addition to the textual notes, there are a large number of interpretive notes—though no more than are necessary, I believe, to render the text fully comprehensible. These notes are of three types.

(1) Glossarial notes: I have given brief glosses of words and phrases that are likely to confuse readers either because they mean nothing in modern English or because they have a modern mean-

ing different from the one in which More employs them. There are a great many of these glosses. (Wherever it seemed feasible, I have combined the glosses of two words into a single note.) Especially in vocabulary, the language of the *History* is significantly more difficult for us than is the language of Shakespeare, who wrote at the other end of the sixteenth century.

When previously glossed words reoccur, I have used my judgment to decide whether it is necessary to gloss them again—weighing the need to minimize notes against the need to assure that the text is fully and readily comprehensible. In cases where I decided not to gloss a previously glossed word again, I have put the word into the Selective Glossary (pp. 111–13)—together with some words that I decided, but not with entire confidence, could do without footnotes.

(2) Historical, biographical, and geographical notes: These include as much information as I think readers need, both to read the text with full comprehension and to be aware of More's factual errors. Where More is in agreement with authoritative early and modern sources on Richard (as he is in a large majority of cases), I do not record that fact—except in a few places where what he reports is well-substantiated, but so outrageous as to strain credulity. But I call attention to places where what he says is known or thought likely to be incorrect, and to a few places where his statements, though perhaps accurate, lack corroboration in other early accounts.

To save space, I have not given the sources of the information included in these notes, all of which is to be found in standard reference works, histories, and biographies. Most of it can also be found, with references to sources, in Richard S. Sylvester's commentary in *CW* 2.

(3) Classical imitations: I call attention to the several places where More's handling of his material is most clearly and substantively influenced by an analogous passage in a classical Latin work. (Translations of all but one of these passages are found in the Appendix; the other one is discussed, and quoted in part, in the Introduction.)

Textual Notes

Abbreviations

H = the Hardyng-Hall texts of the *History* (above, pp. xliii–xliv)

1557 = *The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght* (above, p. 115)

1931 = *The English Works of Sir Thomas More,* ed. W. E. Campbell et al., Vol. 1 (above, p. liii; outside the textual notes, referred to as *EW*)

1963 (or Sylvester or *CW* 2) = *The History of King Richard the Third,* ed. Richard S. Sylvester, Vol. 2 of the Yale *Complete Works* (above, p. liii)

1976 = *The History of King Richard III and Selections from the English and Latin Poems,* ed. Richard S. Sylvester (a modern-spelling edition in the Selected Works series of the Yale *Complete Works*)

Allens = Sir Thomas More, *Selections from his English Works,* ed. P. S. Allen and H. M. Allen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924)

Kinney (or *CW* 15) = *In Defense of Humanism,* ed. Daniel Kinney: Vol. 15 of the Yale edition, including an edition of the Paris manuscript of the Latin text of the *History* (above, p. liii)

Lumby = *The History of King Richard III,* ed. J. Rawson Lumby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1883; rpt. 1924)

Variants from the H texts are given in the spelling found in the first printing of Hardyng (*STC,* 2nd edn., 12766.7).

p. 22: Left blank in both the English and Latin versions; supplied by Sylvester. More doubtless intended to fill it in after checking.

p. 25: *1557* has *rain*. Possibly this is correct, with the meaning "reign" (as the Allens think). But H's *ruyne* is much more plausible.

p. 27: *London* omitted in *1557,* and gap left in text; supplied from H.

p. 31: *light* is supplied from H; *1557* omits. At the corresponding point, the Latin version has *leuicula*—that is, it matches H.

p. 37 (1): *1557* reads *faine neede*. If *faine* is taken as "fain" (= "obliged," as in its five other occurrences in the *History*), then the phrase is redundant, and the presumption is that More, here as elsewhere in his manuscripts, left alternatives between which he postponed choosing. Other editors, however, have retained both words. Lumby and Sylvester eliminate the redundancy by taking *faine* as "feign." But their arguments in support are uncompelling. In the H texts the problem does not arise, because they read *haue* in place of *faine*.

p. 37 (2): *1557 part*; H *party*. I follow Lumby in adopting the latter. Cf. *OED satisfy* I.d: "To pay (a creditor). Const. [i.e., construed with] *of* (the debt, a sum of money)." The Latin also supports the emendation: "For if someone makes off there with another person's property, is the king not at liberty to take it away from the fugitive and restore it to its owner without any infringement of the privilege?" (Kinney's translation, *CW* 15.375).

p. 39: *1557* reads *his minde*; H reads *her will*. As Lumby says, the former may possibly be correct—i.e., the phrase could refer to the cardinal, who had indeed objected to bringing the prince out by force. But Lumby adds that "as allusion has just been made to the queen's determination to keep her son with her, it seems better to make the words refer to her"—i.e., to emend *his* to *her*. The fact that the Latin says "without her consent" (*invitae*) strongly supports this course.

p. 40 (1): *1557: lord*; H *lordes*.

p. 40 (2): *1557* has *no*; H *not*. Lumby argues for retaining *no,* construing *esteemed no slight* as "esteemed no slight matter"—i.e., regarded as not being a trifling matter.

p. 40 (3): *1557* reads *so sore diseased vexed*. The participles appear to

be alternatives between which More never made a choice. I have settled on *vexed*, as evidently (from its position) representing his second thought, and because of the redundancy in "diseased with sickness." *1931* retains both, setting "vexed with sickness" in commas, as an appositive. The H texts eliminate *vexed*.

p. 42: *1557* has *or*; H *of*. The Latin version supports the latter.

p. 44: The sentence (printed here as in *1557*) lacks a verb—though *is* may be thought to be implied clearly enough: *1931* (p. 204) says "for *as* read *is as*," but doesn't emend the text. Lumby does insert *is*, encouraged by the H texts, which read *is now as strong*. Sylvester (*CW* 2.204) hypothesizes that in the composition of this part of the English version More was translating hurriedly from the Latin version, and in *1976* inserts a translation of the words he believes More inadvertently omitted; thus *1976* reads *And, I trust God, the most holy Saint Peter, the guardian of this sanctuary, is as*.

p. 45 (1): I have here set off with angle brackets a passage that Rastell set off between the marks ‡ and *, placing the following note in the margin: "This that is here betwene this marke, ‡ and this marke * was not written by M. More in this history written by him in englishe but is translated oute of this history which he wrote in laten." Immediately following his interpolation, Rastell also printed what he found in More's English manuscript at this point: *Wherefore here intend I to kepe him sins* (i.e., "keep him, since"). Note that these words (which I have omitted) follow smoothly from the end of the preceding paragraph.

p. 45 (2): *1557* reads *will*, H *willeth*. The latter is appealing, for the parallelism with the neighboring "serveth" and "privilegeth." But the instance fits *will* OED 3.c (obsolete): "of an abstract thing (e.g. reason, law): Demands, requires."

p. 47: *1557* reads *waste*, H *wiste*. *OED* does not attest the former as the past tense of *wit* (which is clearly the verb here).

p. 48: Rastell marked this interpolation like the previous one (p. 45) and flanked it with the same marginal note. What More wrote (and Rastell replaced) at this point in the English presumably was close to what H has (here modernized): "When the protector had both the

children in his possession, yea, and that they were in a sure place, he then began to thirst to see the end of his enterprise; and, to avoid all suspicion, he caused all the lords which he knew to be faithful to the king . . ." Note that at the end of Rastell's interpolation the archbishop of York, Thomas Rotherham, is said to be lord chancellor. But More had already related Rotherham's dismissal from that office on May 10 (see pp. 29–30 and note). From this and other discrepancies between Rastell's interpolated passages and the surviving texts of the Latin version, Kinney deduces that Rastell must have used a primitive version of the Latin: see *CW* 15.cxxxv–cxl.

p. 50: *1557* reads *Hertford*: Rastell mistranslated the Latin.

p. 54 (1): *1557* has blanks in place of day and month, which are here filled in from the H texts.

p. 54 (2): *1557* reads *froting*, H *fretyng*. The former, if correct, is from either *frote* ("to froth"; More has *frote* with this meaning in his *Supplication of Souls* [1529]) or *frot* ("to rub, chafe"). But neither appears to fit the context well—"frothing" seems extreme; and what exactly would Richard be "rubbing"?—and neither matches anything in the corresponding Latin passage: "he was grim and dour, knitting his eyebrows, wrinkling his forehead, and biting his lip threateningly" (*CW* 15.409). By contrast, *fretying* ("fretting," in the sense of "gnawing") fits well: it makes, with the following *gnawing*, one of More's frequent synonymous pairs, corresponding to *admorso* in the Latin.

p. 61: *1557* has *dessolate*, H *dissolute*. The former does not fit the context—though *OED* cites three instances of the word (i.e., *desolate*) as meaning "destitute of good quality, evil, abandoned." Nor does it, like *dissolute,* agree with the Latin.

p. 68: An abbreviation in *1557,* but it is not clear whether of *the* (*y*^{e}) or of *that* (*y*^{t}). (Both abbreviations are common in *1557* but, in its messy printing, are sometimes impossible to distinguish—though in other such cases the context makes the correct expansion clear.) Lumby and *1976* expand to *the*; I follow *1931* in thinking *that* (which is also the reading of the H texts) more appropriate to the context.

p. 71 (1): *1557* has a blank space where the given name should be; the H texts supply it.

p. 72 (2): *1557* leaves blanks after *on* and *at*. The H texts say *at the laste battaill of saincte Albones*—from which Sylvester filled in the blanks in *1557,* guided by More's similar phraseology on p. 76 ("at Barnet on the Easter Day field").

p. 75: With some plausibility, Sylvester (*1976*) emends *this* to *his*. The H texts read *the*.

p. 79: *patron* doesn't match *pattern*—the word Shaa had used the first time around—but is probably what More wrote, since the H texts have it in *both* places.

p. 80: *1557* reads *kepe*, the Hall texts *kept*. (The Hardyng texts omit the phrase.) But More may possibly have written *kepe*—which is, according to Lumby, an old form of the past tense of *keep* still heard (at least in the later nineteenth century) in dialect.

p. 81: The H texts read *gynnes*; i.e., *gins*: schemes; snares. It's possible that More wrote this, but it's likelier that *r* was dropped in printing Hardyng's text than that it was added in printing *1557*. In any case, the words are nearly synonymous.

p. 83: *1557* reads *wil*, H *well*. No sense of "will" fits the context; and the Latin has *velut e fonte* ("like a wellspring").

p. 92 (1): The text may be faulty. The Allens emend to *and* (which is the reading of the H texts); or perhaps *he* is missing after *more*. Either or both emendations would bring the passage closer to the Latin version.

p. 92 (2): *1557* reads *that so woulde so use it*. I follow the H texts in omitting the second, superfluous *so*.

p. 93: *1557* reads *that for a fynal conclusion, y*^{t}. I follow the H texts in omitting the first *that*.

p. 95: Again Rastell flanked his interpolation with a marginal note: "This that is here betwene this marke ‡ & this marke * was not writen by master More in this history written by him in English,

but is translated out of this history which he wrote in latin." This time, however, the explanation raises a problem, because the first sentence of the second paragraph of the inserted passage was left, in *1557,* with two blanks in place of dates (see the following note), whereas the known versions of the Latin text include at most a single blank. (The manuscript discovered by Kinney avoids a second blank by leaving the date of Richard's "ludicrous election" blank and saying his coronation took place "a month later" (*CW* 15.485); the 1565 Latin Works does not get into the matter of dates, for either the "election" or the coronation.) The likely explanation is that Rastell was, as Kinney argues (see note to p. 48, above, pp. 121–122), translating from a primitive form of the Latin version. Sylvester had suggested (*CW* 2.260) that Rastell's insertion actually consisted of only the first paragraph. Note, in support of this conjecture, that the second paragraph refers to "this mockish election"—as if nothing intervened between the paragraph and the account of the farce at Baynard's Castle—whereas the Latin version refers to "*that* ludicrous election," the demonstrative adjective (*illam*) acknowledging that the paragraph on Richard's crowning at Westminster Hall has intervened between the account of the "election" and this reference to that event. Still, it is hard to believe that Rastell would have mismarked what he translated.

p. 96: *1557* reads *the daye of June, . . . the day of the same moneth.* I follow Sylvester in filling in the dates.

p. 102: It is tempting (though it would create a double negative) to emend *Nowe* (*1557*) to *Nor*: having dealt with Richard's inner troubles, More here turns to the outward ones.

p. 104: *1557* reads *w*^{t} [= *with*] *partner.* My emendation follows the H texts.

p. 107: *1557* reads *bondes*, which *1931* and *1976* modernize as *bonds.* But *bonde* is also an old form of *bound,* which is much less awkward to construe in this phrase. (The H texts, however, read *bandes*—and *band* was originally just a phonetic variant of *bond.*)

Appendix

Literary Relations

I. Models

More's use of his most important classical models may be illustrated (at its clearest) by comparing the following passages (translations taken from the Loeb Classical Library editions) with their analogues in the History.

i. Sallust on Jugurtha's tortured psyche after executing his enemies (cf. above, pp. xxxv–xxxvi and 102)

from that time forward Jugurtha never passed a quiet day or night; he put little trust in any place, person, or time; feared his countrymen and the enemy alike; was always on the watch; started at every sound; and spent his nights in different places, many of which were ill suited to the dignity of a king. Sometimes on being roused from sleep he would utter outcries and seize his arms; he was hounded by a fear that was all but madness.

Jugurtha 72

ii. Tacitus on Tiberius's charade of declining the imperial throne (cf. above, pp. 90–94; see also the comparison between the opening of the History *and that of the* Annals, *above, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii)*

Then [i.e., after the funeral of Augustus] all prayers were directed towards Tiberius; who delivered a variety of reflections on the greatness of the empire and his own diffidence:—"Only the mind of the deified Augustus was equal to such a burden: he himself had found, when called by the sovereign to share his anxieties, how arduous, how dependent upon fortune, was the task of ruling a world! He thought, then, that, in a state which had the support of so many eminent men, they ought not to devolve the entire duties on any one person; the business of government would be more eas-

ily carried out by the joint efforts of a number." A speech in this tenor was more dignified than convincing. Besides, the diction of Tiberius, by habit or by nature, was always indirect and obscure, even when he had no wish to conceal his thought; and now, in the effort to bury every trace of his sentiments, it became more intricate, uncertain, and equivocal than ever. But the Fathers [i.e., the Roman senators], whose one dread was that they might seem to comprehend him, melted in plaints, tears, and prayers. . . . Wearied at last by the universal outcry and by individual appeals, he gradually gave ground, up to the point, *not* of acknowledging that he assumed the sovereignty, but of ceasing to refuse and to be entreated.

Annals 1.11, 13

iii. Lucian on life as a play (cf. above, pp. xxxv and 94–95). The Cynic philosopher Menippus speaks:

So as I looked at them [i.e., the dead] it seemed to me that human life is like a long pageant, and that all its trappings are supplied and distributed by Fortune, who arrays the participants in various costumes of many colours. Taking one person, it may be, she attires him royally, placing a tiara upon his head, giving him body-guards, and encircling his brow with the diadem; but upon another she puts the costume of a slave. Again, she makes up one person so that he is handsome, but causes another to be ugly and ridiculous. I suppose that the show must needs be diversified. And often, in the very middle of the pageant, she exchanges the costumes of several players; instead of allowing them to finish the pageant in the parts that had been assigned to them, she re-apparels them, forcing Croesus to assume the dress of a slave and a captive, and shifting Maeandrius, who formerly paraded among the servants, into the imperial habit of Polycrates. For a brief space she lets them use their costumes, but when the time of the pageant is over, each gives back the properties and lays off the costume along with his body, becoming what he was before his birth, no different from his neighbour. Some, however, are so ungrateful that when Fortune appears to them and asks her trappings back, they are vexed and indignant, as if they were being robbed of their own property, instead of giving back what they had borrowed for a little time.

I suppose you have often seen these stage-folk who act in tragedies, and according to the demands of the plays become at one moment Creons, and again Priams or Agamemnons; the very one, it may be, who a short time ago assumed with great dignity the part of Cecrops or of Erectheus soon appears as a servant at the bidding of the poet. And when at length the play comes to an end, each of them strips off his gold-bespangled robe, lays aside his mask, steps out of his buskins, and goes about in poverty and humility, no longer styled Agamemnon, son of Atreus, or Creon, son of Menoeceus, but Polus, son of Charicles, of Sunium, or Satyrus, son of

Theogiton, of Marathon. That is what human affairs are like, it seemed to me as I looked.

Menippus or Necromantia 16

The similar passage in Erasmus's Praise of Folly *(1509, with revisions in later editions) is intermediary between Lucian and More; at some points More is closer to Erasmus than to their common model:*

If someone should try to strip away the costumes and makeup from the actors performing a play on the stage and to display them to the spectators in their own natural appearance, wouldn't he ruin the whole play? Wouldn't all the spectators be right to throw rocks at such a madman and drive him out of the theater? Everything would suddenly look different: the actor just now playing a woman would be seen to be a man; the one who had just now been playing a young man would look old; the man who played the king only a moment ago would become a pauper; the actor who played god would be revealed as a wretched human being. But to destroy the illusions in this fashion would spoil the whole play. This deception, this disguise, is the very thing that holds the attention of the spectators. Now the whole life of mortal men, what is it but a sort of play, in which various persons make their entrances in various costumes, and each one plays his own part until the director gives him his cue to leave the stage? Often he also orders one and the same actor to come on in different costumes, so that the actor who just now played the king in royal scarlet now comes on in rags to play a miserable servant. True, all these images are unreal, but this play cannot be performed in any other way.

If at this point some wiseman, dropped down direct from heaven, should suddenly jump up and begin shouting that this figure whom everyone reverences as if he were the lord god is not even a man because he is controlled by his passions like an animal, that he is a servant of the lowest rank because he willingly serves so many filthy masters; or if he should turn to another man who is mourning the death of his parent and tell him to laugh instead because the dead man has at last really begun to live, whereas this life is really nothing but a sort of death; if he should see another man glorying in his noble lineage and call him a low-born bastard because he is so far removed from virtue, which is the only true source of nobility; and if he addressed everyone else in the same way, I ask you, what would he accomplish except to make everyone take him for a raving lunatic? Just as nothing is more foolish than misplaced wisdom, so too, nothing is more imprudent than perverse prudence. And surely it is perverse not to adapt yourself to the prevailing circumstances, to refuse "to do as the Romans do," to ignore the party-goer's maxim "*take a drink or take your leave,*" to insist that the play should not be a play. True prudence, on the other hand, recognizes human limitations and does not strive to leap beyond them; it is

willing to run with the herd, to overlook faults tolerantly or to share them in a friendly spirit. But, they say, that is exactly what we mean by folly. I will hardly deny it—as long as they will reciprocate by admitting that this is exactly what it means to perform the play of life.

The Praise of Folly, trans. Clarence H. Miller
(New Haven and London: Yale
University Press, 1979), pp. 43–44

II. Sources or Analogues

Buckingham's Guildhall oration (above, pp. 80–90) is a masterly example of the fictionalized speeches characteristic of classical and humanist historiography (above, p. xxxiii). Close parallels between More's passage and the accounts of the speech in the two chronicles associated with Robert Fabyan (see above, pp. xxviii–xxix)—parallels in setting, in the characterization of Buckingham's oratorical style, and in the response of his audience—suggest that one or both of these accounts were among More's sources. Close parallels of substance (as well as a few verbal parallels) between More's version of the speech and the petition presented to Richard in June 1483, and later enrolled and ratified by Parliament in the "Act for the Settlement of the Crown" (1484), suggest strongly that the act was More's principal written source for the detailed contents *of the speech. (Note that More has Buckingham twice refer to his speech as the materials for a petition: above, p. 87.) The comparison with all three passages brings home the brilliance of More's virtuoso achievement in the speech.*

Then upon the Tuesday following, an assembly of the commons of the city was appointed at the Guildhall, where being present the duke of Buckingham, with other lords sent down from the said lord protector, and there, in the presence of the mayor and commonalty, rehearsed the right and title that the lord protector had to be preferred before his [nephews the sons] of his brother King Edward to the right of the crown of England. The which process was in so eloquent wise showed and uttered, without any impediment of spitting or other countenance, and that of a long while, with so good sugared words of exhortation and according sentence, that many a wise man that day marveled and commended him for the good ordering of these words; but not for the intent and purpose the which that thereupon ensued.

The New Chronicles of England and of France
(printed 1516/7), folio ccxxviii

Then upon the Tuesday next ensuing the foresaid Sunday, the duke of Buckingham came unto the Guildhall, where against[1] his coming the

1. In anticipation of.

mayor with his brother and a fair multitude of citizens in their liveries were assembled. To the which assembly the said duke then made an oration, in rehearsing the great excellency of the lord protector and the manifold virtues which God had endowed him with, and of the rightful title which he had unto the crown. That it lasted a good half hour, and that was so well and eloquently uttered, and with so angelic a countenance, and every pause and time so well ordered, that such as heard him marveled and said that never tofore that day had they heard any man, learned or unlearned, make such a rehearsal or oration as that was. The which when he had finished, and goodly exhorted the said assembly to admit the said lord protector for their liege lord and king, and they to satisfy his mind, more for fear than for love, cried in small number "Yea! Yea!," he so departed.

The Great Chronicle of London, ed. A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley (London and Aylesbury: George W. Jones, 1938; rpt. Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1983), p. 232

Please it your noble grace to understand the consideration, election, and petition underwritten, of us the lords spirituals and temporals, and commons of this realm of England, and thereunto agreeably to give your assent to the common and public weal of this land, to the comfort and gladness of all the people of the same.

First, we consider how that heretofore in time past this land many years stood in great prosperity, honor, and tranquillity, which was caused forsomuch as the kings then reigning used and followed the advice and counsel of certain lords spirituals and temporals, and other persons of approved sadness,[1] prudence, policy, and experience; dreading God and having tender zeal and affection to indifferent ministration of justice and to the common and politic weal of the land. . . . By which things above remembered the land was greatly enriched, so that as well the merchants and artificers, as other poor people laboring for their living in diverse occupations, had competent gain to the sustentation of them and their households, living without miserable and intolerable poverty. But afterward, when that such as had the rule and governance of this land, delighting in adulation and flattery, and led by sensuality and concupiscence, followed the counsel of persons insolent, vicious, and of inordinate avarice, despising the counsel of good, virtuous, and prudent persons, such as above be remembered, the prosperity of this land daily decreased, so that felicity was turned into misery and prosperity into adversity, and the order of policy and of the law of God and man confounded, whereby it is likely this realm to fall into extreme misery and desolation (which God defend), without due provision of covenable[2] remedy be had in this behalf in all goodly haste.

1. Seriousness.
2. Suitable.

Over this, amongst other things, more specially we consider how that the time of the reign of King Edward IV, late deceased, after the ungracious pretensed marriage (as all England hath cause so to say) made betwixt the said King Edward and Elizabeth, sometime wife to Sir John Grey, knight, late naming herself and many years heretofore Queen of England, the order of all politic rule was perverted, the laws of God and of God's church, and also the laws of nature and of England, and also the laudable customs and liberties of the same, wherein every Englishman is inheritor, broken, subverted, and contemned, against all reason and justice, so that this land was ruled by self-will and pleasure, fear and dread, all manner of equity and laws laid apart and despised. Whereof ensued many inconvenients[3] and mischiefs, as murders, extortions, and oppressions, namely[4] of poor and impotent people, so that no man was sure of his life, land, ne[5] livelihood, ne of his wife, daughter, ne servant, every good maiden and woman standing in dread to be ravished and defouled. And besides this, what discords, inward battles, effusion of Christian men's blood, and namely by the destruction of the noble blood of this land,[6] was had and committed within the same, it is evident and notary[7] through all this realm, unto the great sorrow and heaviness of all true Englishmen. And here also we consider how that the said pretensed marriage betwixt the above-named King Edward and Elizabeth Grey was made of great presumption, without the knowing and assent of the lords of this land, and also by sorcery and witchcraft committed by the said Elizabeth and her mother, Jacquetta duchess of Bedford, as the common opinion of the people and the public voice and fame[8] is through all this land, and hereafter, if and as the case shall require, shall be proved sufficiently in time and place convenient. . . . And how also [we consider] that at the time of contract of the same pretensed marriage, and before and long time after, the said King Edward was and stood married and troth plight to one Dame Eleanor Butler, daughter of the old earl of Shrewsbury, with whom the same King Edward had made a precontract of matrimony, long time before he made the said pretensed marriage with the said Elizabeth Grey in manner and form abovesaid. Which premises being true, as in very truth they been true, it appeareth and followeth evidently that the said King Edward during his life and the said Elizabeth lived together sinfully and damnably in adultery against the law of God and of his church; and therefore no marvel that, the sovereign

3. Abuses.

4. Especially.

5. Nor.

6. Cf. More's language: "In which inward war among ourself hath been so great effusion of the ancient noble blood of this realm that scarcely the half remaineth . . ." (pp. 83–84).

7. Notorious.

8. Common talk.

lord and the head of this land being of such ungoodly disposition and provoking the ire and indignation of our Lord God, such heinous mischiefs and inconvenients as is above remembered were used and committed in the realm amongst the subjects. Also it appeareth evidently and followeth that all the issue and children of the said King Edward been bastards and unable to inherit or to claim anything by inheritance, by the law and custom of England. . . .

Over this, we consider how that ye be the undoubted son and heir of Richard late duke of York, very inheritor to the said crown and dignity royal, and as in right King of England by way of inheritance, and that at this time, the premises duly considered, there is none other person living but ye only that by right may claim the said crown and dignity royal by way of inheritance; and how that ye be born within this land: by reason whereof, as we deem in our minds, ye be more naturally inclined to the prosperity and common weal of the same, and all the three estates of the land have, and may have, more certain knowledge of your birth and filiation[9] abovesaid. . . .[10] For certainly we be determined rather to aventure and commit us to the peril of our lives and jeopardy of death than to live in such thralldom and bondage as we have lived long time heretofore, oppressed and injured by extortions and new impositions, against the laws of God and man, and the liberty, old policy, and laws of this realm, wherein every Englishman is inherited. . . .

[And] albeit that the right, title, and estate which our sovereign lord the King Richard the Third hath to and in the crown . . . been just and lawful, . . . the court of Parliament is of such authority, and the people of this land of such nature and disposition (as experience teacheth), that manifestation and declaration of any truth or right made by the three estates of this realm assembled in Parliament, and by authority of the same, maketh, before all other things, most faith and certainty, and, quieting men's minds, removeth the occasion of all doubts and seditious language. . . .

Excerpts from "An Act for the Settlement of the Crown" (1484), *Rotuli Parliamentorum* (London: Record Commission, 1767–77), 6.240–41

III. Shakespeare from More

On Shakespeare's debt to More's History, *see above, pp. xlvii–xlviii. Perhaps the single most striking instance is found in* Richard III *3.4, a scene based on*

9. Parentage.

10. As Hanham points out (p. 48*n*), the petition thus "touched aslope, craftily"—as, More says (p. 70), Richard required—the allegation (which had long been in circulation) that his brothers, born abroad, were illegitimate.

*More's account of the sudden fall of Lord Hastings (pp. 54–57). (*Richard III *3.2—on Hastings's false sense of security immediately before his fall, and the portents that foreran it—is also based on More's account [pp. 57–61], transposed by Shakespeare to* precede *the scene in the Tower.)*

Enter Buckingham, Stanley, Hastings, Bishop of Ely, Norfolk,[1] *Ratcliffe, Lovell, with others at a table*

Hast. Now, noble peers, the cause why we are met
Is to determine of the coronation.
In God's name, speak: when is the royal day?
Buck. Is all things ready for that royal time?
Stan. It is, and wants but nomination.° *needs only to be named*
Ely. Tomorrow, then, I judge a happy° day. *fitting*
Buck. Who knows the lord protector's mind herein?
Who is most inward with the noble duke?
Ely. Your grace, methinks, should soonest know his mind.
Buck. We know each other's faces; for our hearts,
He knows no more of mine than I of yours,
Or I of his, my lord, than you of mine.—
Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.
Hast. I thank his grace, I know he loves me well.
But for his purpose in the coronation,
I have not sounded him, nor he delivered
His gracious pleasure any way therein.
But you, my honorable lords, may name the time,
And in the duke's behalf I'll give my voice,° *vote*
Which I presume he'll take in gentle part.° *will graciously approve*
Enter Richard
Ely. In happy time, here comes the duke himself.
Rich. My noble lords and cousins° all, good morrow: *fellow nobles*
I have been long a sleeper, but I trust
My absence doth neglect no great design° *delay no important project*
Which by my presence might have been concluded.
Buck. Had you not come upon your cue, my lord,
William Lord Hastings had pronounced your part—
I mean your voice for crowning of the king.
Rich. Than my Lord Hastings no man might be bolder:
His lordship knows me well, and loves me well.—
My lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn

1. John Howard, duke of Norfolk: above, p. xli.

I saw good strawberries in your garden there.
I do beseech you, send for some of them.
Ely. Marry![o] and will, my lord, with all my heart. *Exit* *Mary!*
Rich. Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.
[*Aside*] Catesby hath sounded Hastings in our business,
And finds the testy gentleman so hot
That he will lose his head ere give consent
His "master's child"—as worshipfully[o] he terms it— *reverentially*
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.
Buck. Withdraw yourself a while; I'll go with you.
Exeunt Richard and Buckingham
Stan. We have not yet set down this day of triumph.
Tomorrow, in my judgment, is too sudden,
For I myself am not so well provided
As else I would be, were the day prolonged.[o] *postponed*
Enter Bishop of Ely
Ely. Where is my lord the duke of Gloucester?
I have sent for these strawberries.
Hast. His grace looks cheerfully and smooth[o] today: *untroubled*
There's some conceit[o] or other likes[o] him well *thought / pleases*
When that he bids good morrow with such spirit.
I think there's never a man in Christendom
Can lesser hide his love or hate than he,
For by his face straight[o] shall you know his heart. *immediately*
Stan. What of his heart perceive you in his face
By any likelihood[o] he showed today? *appearance*
Hast. Marry, that with no man here he is offended:
For were he, he had shown it in his looks.
Stan. I pray God he be not, I say.
Enter Richard and Buckingham
Rich. I pray you all, tell me what they deserve
That do conspire my death with devilish plots
Of damnèd witchcraft, and that have prevailed
Upon my body with their hellish charms?
Hast. The tender love I bear your grace, my lord,
Makes me most forward[o] in this princely presence *zealous*
To doom th'offenders, whatsoe'er they be.
I say, my lord, they have deservèd death.
Rich. Then be your eyes the witness of their evil:
Look how I am bewitched! Behold, mine arm
Is like a blasted sapling withered up!
And this is[o] Edward's wife, that monstrous witch, *is the doing of*

Consorted[o] with that harlot, strumpet Shore, *in league*
That by their witchcraft thus have markèd me.
Hast. If they have done this deed, my noble lord—
Rich. "If"? Thou protector of this damnèd strumpet,
Talk'st thou to me of "ifs"? Thou art a traitor:
Off with his head! Now by Saint Paul I swear,
I will not dine until I see the same.
Lovell and Ratcliffe, look[o] that it be done; *see to it*
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.
Exeunt all but Lovell, Ratcliffe, and Hastings
Hast. Woe, woe for England! not a whit for me,
For I, too fond,[o] might have prevented this. *foolish*
Stanley did dream the boar did raze our helms,
But I did scorn it and disdain to fly.
Three times today my footcloth horse[2] did stumble,
And started when he looked upon the Tower,
As loath to bear me to the slaughterhouse.
O now I need the priest that spake to me!
I now repent I told the pursuivant,
As too triumphing,[o] how mine enemies *exulting*
Today at Pomfret bloodily were butchered,
And I myself secure in grace and favor.
O Margaret, Margaret![o] Now thy heavy curse *Henry VI's widow*
Is lighted on poor Hastings' wretched head.
Rat. Come, come, dispatch:[o] the duke would be at dinner. *make haste*
Make a short shrift: he longs to see your head.
Hast. O momentary grace of mortal men,
Which we more hunt for than the grace of God!
Who builds his hope in air of your good looks[o] *favorable glances*
Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast,
Ready with every nod to tumble down
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.
Lov. Come, come, dispatch: 'tis bootless[o] to exclaim. *pointless*
Hast. O bloody Richard! Miserable England,
I prophesy the fearful'st time to thee
That ever wretched age hath looked upon.
Come, lead me to the block: bear him my head.
They smile at me, who shortly shall be dead. *Exeunt*

The Tragedy of King Richard the Third 3.4

2. *footcloth horse:* horse draped with a richly ornamented covering down to its hooves.

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