THE HISTORY OF KING
KING RICHARD THE THIRD

by

Master Thomas More
Undersheriff of London
c. 1513

Page and line numbers correspond to
*The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*
(Yale University Press), volume 2.

This is the version that Shakespeare would have
read in Holinshed’s *Chronicles*; it is based on
the 1557 *Works of Sir Thomas More*.

Spelling and punctuation modernized, and notes added,
by Mary Gottschalk
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The History of King Richard III (unfinished), written by Master Thomas More, then one of the undersheriffs of London, about the year of our Lord 1513. Which work hath been before this time printed, in Harding’s Chronicle and in Halle’s Chronicle, 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 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, and thereof reigned two and twenty years, one month, and eight days, 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, Edward, the Prince, a thirteen-year-of-age; Richard, Duke of York, two years younger; Elizabeth, whose fortune and grace was after to be queen, wife unto King Henry the Seventh and mother unto the Eighth; Cecily, not so fortunate as fair; Bridget, which, representing the virtue of her whose name she bore, professed and observed a religious life in Dartford, a house of close nuns; Anne, that was after honorably married unto Thomas, then Lord Howard, and after Earl of Surrey. And Catherine, which, long time tossed in either fortune—sometimes in wealth, often in adversity—at the last, if this be the last (for yet she liveth), is by the benignity of her nephew King Henry VIII 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 of his people from thence conveyed, was interred at Windsor. A king of such governance and behavior in time of peace (for in war each party 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 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

1 after that: after
6 much . . . issue: many promising children thirteen-year-of-age: thirteen-year-old
8 fortune: destiny grace: gift from God after: later
9 fair: beautiful 10 which: who representing: exhibiting
12 close: cloistered that was after: who was later
14 which: who fortune: happenstance
15 wealth: prosperity, well-being 15–16 yet she liveth: she is still alive
16 benignity: kindness, graciousness 17 very . . . estate: a very prosperous state
17 worthy: befitting birth: parentage; i.e., descent from nobility
19 heaviness: heavyheartedness thence: there 22 other’s: the other’s
24 substance: majority
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 bore 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, of which he was never strange. He was a goodly personage and very princely to behold, of heart courageous, politic in counsel, in adversity nothing 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. Whose wars, whoso well consider, he shall no less commend his wisdom where he voided than his manhood where he vanquished. He was of visage lovely, of body mighty, strong, and clean-made; 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. 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, in his latter days lessened and well left. 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, but such as no man looked for; the people toward the prince, not in a constrained fear, but in a willing and loving obedience; among themselves, the commons in good peace. The lords whom he knew at variance, himself in his deathbed
appeased. He had left all gathering of money (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 he had before obtained, and the year foregoing his death, he had obtained Berwick. 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 in the end of his days (in which many princes by a long-continued sovereignty decline into a proud port from debonair behavior of their beginning) marvelously in him grew and increased, so far forth that 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, and sent venison from thence so freely into the city, that no one thing in many days before got 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 themselves also as many gifts of nature, as many princely virtues, as much goodly towardness, 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

1 left: ceased
8 benign: warmhearted courteous: kind familiar: down-to-earth
9 condition: disposition
11 port: bearing
11–12 debonair . . . beginning: i.e., the gracious way they behaved when they started out
15 errand: purpose
16 be merry: have a good time
16–17 made . . . cheer: gave them not such formal, but such friendly and down-home hospitality thence: there
21 courtesy: nice gesture
26 goodly towardness: excellent promise
26–27 as their age could receive: as they could have at their age
28 friends: relatives
their destruction which if either kind or kindness had held
place, must needs have been their chief defense. For Richard
the Duke of Gloucester—by nature their uncle, by office their
Protector, to their father beholden, to themselves by oath and
allegiance bound—all the bands broken that bind man and
man together, without any respect of God or the world
unnaturally contrived to bereave them not only their dignity,
but also their lives. But forasmuch as this duke’s demeanor
ministreth in effect all the whole matter whereof this book shall
treat, it is therefore convenient somewhat to show you, ere
we farther go, what manner of man this was, that could find in
his heart so much mischief to conceive.

Richard, Duke of York, a noble man
and a mighty, began not by war, but
by law, to challenge the crown, putting his claim into the
Parliament. Where his cause was, either for right or favor, so
far forth advanced that, King Henry’s blood (albeit he
had a goodly prince) utterly rejected, the crown was by
authority of Parliament entailed unto the Duke of York and his
issue male in remainder, immediately after the death of King
Henry. But the Duke, not enduring so long to tarry, but intending,
under pretext of dissension and debate arising in the realm, to
prevent his time and to take upon him the rule in King
Harry’s life, was with many nobles of the realm at Wakefield
slain, leaving three sons: Edward, George, and Richard. All
three as they were great states of birth, so were they great and
stately of stomach, greedy and ambitious of authority, and

Edward
impatient of partners. Edward, revenging
his father’s death, deprived King Henry

5/29—6/1 him . . . which: to their destruction him who
1 kind: nature; humanity kindness: kinship; natural affection arising from this
5 bands: bonds
7 unnaturally: cold-bloodedly not . . . dignity: of not only their high position
8 demeanor: conduct
9 ministreth . . . matter: supplies practically the whole entire subject matter
10 convenient: appropriate 12 mischief: wickedness
13 noble: illustrious; distinguished by intelligence and exploits
17 blood: i.e., bloodline be: i.e., King Henry
18 goodly: splendid prince: i.e., son who had been the heir apparent to the throne
20 issue male: male descendants
20 in remainder: to take effect upon the ending of the current reign
21 not . . . tarry: not submitting to waiting that long
22 debate: strife 23 prevent: prematurely bring about
24 Harry: A nickname form of “Henry”
26 states of: noblemen by 26–27 great . . . stomach: proud and haughty of disposition
28 impatient of partners: i.e., unwilling to share the limelight 29 deprived: deposed
George, Duke of Clarence 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 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, 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, whose death King Edward (albeit he commanded it), when he wist it was done, piteously bewailed and sorrowfully repented.

Richard, the third son, of whom we now treat, was in wit and courage equal with either of them, in body and prowess far under them both: little of stature, ill-featured of limbs, crookbacked, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favored of visage, and such as is in states called warly, in other men otherwise. He was malicious, wrathful, envious, and, from before his birth, ever froward. It is for truth reported that the Duchess, his mother, had so much ado in her travail 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), and, as the fame runneth, 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 captain was he in the war, as to which

5–6 of her blood: related to her    which: who
7 not . . . nature: not out of malice but by nature
8 appetite: disposition    9 heinous treason: high treason
10–11 were . . . faultless: whether he was guilty or innocent
11 attainted: convicted    judged to the death: sentenced to death
13 butt: barrel Malmsey: a strong, sweet wine    14 wist: knew
9–13 heinous . . . whose: i.e., there was charged with high treason (and convicted, etc.)
a man whose
15 piteously: mournfully / piously    17 wit: intelligence
19 under: inferior to    ill-featured: malformed
21 hard-favored: unattractive; ugly    visage: face    states: noblemen
21 warly: warrior-like    23 froward: perverse
23 for truth reported: reported as being a fact    24 ado . . . travail: trouble in her labor
26 outward: i.e., out of the world, at their funerals
26–27 as the fame runneth: as rumor has it    of: out of
28–29 his . . . which: the beginning of him who
30 none evil: not a bad    in the war: i.e., in battle
his disposition was more meet than for peace. Sundry victories had he, and sometime overthrows, but never in default (as for his own person) either of hardiness or politic order. Free was he called of dispense, and somewhat above his power liberal; with large gifts he got him unsteadfast friendship, for which he was fain to pillage and despoil in other places and get him steadfast hatred. He was close and secret, a deep dissimuler, lowly of countenance, arrogant of heart, outwardly companionable where he inwardly hated, not letting to kiss whom he thought to kill; despiteous and cruel, not for evil will always, but ofter for ambition, and either for the surety or increase of his estate. Friend and foe was muchwhat indifferent: where his advantage grew, he spared no man’s death whose life withstood his purpose. He slew with his own hands King Henry VI, being prisoner in the Tower, as men constantly say; and that without commandment or knowledge of the King, 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, lacked not in helping forth his brother of Clarence to his death—which he resisted openly, howbeit somewhat (as men deemed) more faintly than he that were heartily minded to his wealth. 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 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 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 shoot too far as too short. Howbeit, this have I by credible information learned: that the self night in which King Edward died, one Mistlebrook, long ere morning, came in great haste to the house of one Pottier, dwelling in Red Cross Street, without Cripplegate; and when he was with hasty rapping quickly let in, he showed unto Pottier that King Edward was departed. “By my troth, man,” quoth Pottier, “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 him, anything knew that he such thing purposed, or otherwise had any inkling thereof. For he was not likely to speak it of naught.

But now to return to the course of this history. Were it that the Duke of Gloucester had of old foreminded this conclusion, or was now at erst 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 putteth a man in courage of that 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 helped to maintain, a long-continued grudge and heart-burning between the Queen’s kindred and the King’s blood, either party envying other’s authority, he now

1 for this intent: on account of this plan  1–2 his . . . death: the death of his brother  3 hindered . . . intending: obstructed that plan of his  4 him: himself  4–5 enterprised to be: attempted to become  all this: this whole  6 whoso divineth: whoever infers  well: easily  7 Howbeit: But be that as it may  8 self: very same  10 without: outside  hasty: urgent; impatient  showed: announced  12 troth: word  15 toward: in attendance upon  anything knew: had some knowledge  16 any: some  17 speak it of naught: say that for no reason  21 of . . . conclusion: at an earlier time premeditated this outcome  22 at erst: for the first time  24 speed: success  putteth . . that: encourages a man to do what  25 intended: had in mind to do  27 well wist: was well aware of  28 grudge: resentment  heart-burning: rankling jealousy  other’s: the other’s
thought that their division should be (as it was indeed) a furtherly 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 looked therefor. 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 always 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 than that that happened, yet well foreseeing that many harms might grow by their debate while the youth of his children should lack discretion of themselves and good counsel of their friends

(of which either party should counsel for their own commodity, and rather by pleasant advice to win themselves favor than by profitable advertisement to do the children good)—he called some of them before him that were at variance, and in especial the Lord Marquis Dorset, the Queen’s son by her first husband, and Richard the Lord Hastings, a noble man

1 division: discord should: would furtherly: helpful
11 friends: family members 4 displeasure: offense, injury abuse: exploit
7 ere they looked therefor: i.e., before they knew it
12–13 business . . . fall: troubles should come himself should: he himself would
15 sore: extremely despaired all recovery: gave up all hope of recovering
16 the . . . children: how young his children were
17 mistrusted: had any foreboding of 18 grow by their debate: come of their strife
18–19 while . . . and: i.e., as long as his children at their tender ages lacked both a say-so of their own and
20 of their friends: from the relatives responsible for them
23 of which: i.e., of which relatives
24 commodity: advantage pleasant: pleasing; accommodating
25 advertisement: guidance 26 at variance: at odds with one another
26–27 in especial: in particular Lord . . . Dorset: Thomas Grey
28 Richard: actually, William
then Lord Chamberlain, against whom the Queen especially grudged for the great favor the King bore him, and also for that she thought him secretly familiar with the King in wanton company. Her kindred also bore him sore, as well for that the King had made him captain of Calais (which office the Lord Rivers, brother to the Queen, claimed of the King’s former promise) as for divers other great gifts which he received, that they looked for. When these lords, with divers others of both the parties, were come in presence, the King, lifting up himself and underset with pillows, as it is reported on this wise said unto them: “My lords, my dear kinsmen and allies, in what plight I lie, you see and I feel. By which the less while I look to live with you, the more deeply am I moved to care in what case I leave you; for such as I leave you, such be my children likely to find you. Which, if they should (that God forbid) find you at variance, might hap to fall themselves 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 would suffice. But childhood must be maintained by men’s authority, and slippery youth underpropped with elder counsel, which neither they can have but ye give it, nor ye give it if ye agree not. For where each laboreth to break that 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 infected, shall readily fall to mischief and riot and draw down with this noble realm to ruin,
but if 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 naught and good plain ways prosper. Great variance hath there long been between you, not always for great causes. Sometimes a thing right well intended, our misconstruction turneth unto worse; or a small displeasure done us, either our own affection or evil tongues aggrieveth. But this wot 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 ne’er 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; 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 than the respect of fleshly consanguinity. Our Lord forbid that you love together the worse for the self 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

\begin{quote}
Ambition. serpent is ambition and desire of vainglory and sovereignty, which among states 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, and thereby of debate and dissension, what loss, what

1 \textit{but if:} unless
3 \textit{ever . . . naught:} always, in the long run, evil schemes come to nothing
4 \textit{prosper:} succeed; win out \textit{variance:} conflict
6 \textit{misconstruction:} misconstruing \textit{worse:} less good \textit{displeasure:} wrong; injury
7 \textit{affection . . . aggrieveth:} feelings or malicious tongues magnify \textit{wot I:} I know
10 \textit{wot . . . whether:} don’t know that
11 \textit{than . . . going:} than those of one who is about to go 12 \textit{of:} about \textit{desire:} ask
13 \textit{allies:} in-laws
13–14 \textit{each . . . affinity:} i.e., each of you is related to every other, either by blood or by marriage \textit{kindred:} kinship
15 \textit{affinity:} relation by marriage 16 \textit{would . . . did:} God would have them bear
17 \textit{respect:} consideration \textit{fleshly consanguinity:} being of the same blood biologically
18 \textit{love together:} love one another \textit{worse:} less well \textit{self:} very same
20 \textit{debate:} strife \textit{them which:} those who 21 \textit{agree together:} live in harmony
24 \textit{states:} noblemen 25 \textit{division:} discord \textit{variance:} conflict \textit{mischief:} harm
26 \textit{next the best:} second best 27 \textit{appetite:} desire
28 \textit{worship:} prestige, renown \textit{debate:} strife
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, 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. But since things past cannot be gaincalled, much ought we the more beware by what occasion we have taken so great hurt before, that we eftsoons fall not in that occasion again. Now be those griefs past, and all is (God be thanked) quiet, and likely right well to prosper in wealthy peace under your cousins my children, if God send them life and you love. Of which two things, the less loss were they, by whom though God did his pleasure, yet should the realm always find kings, and peradventure as good kings. But if you among yourselves 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 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 forgotten, each of you love other. Which I verily trust you will if ye anything earthly regard—either God or your king, affinity or kindred, this realm, your own country, or your own surety.” And therewith 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 him with as good words as they could, and answering for the time as they thought to stand 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

1 grown: sprung up; come about  4 proved: learned by experience  
5 courtesy: i.e., respectful bending  7 gaincalled: taken back; made not done  
8 so . . . hurt: such great harm  8–9 eftsoons . . . in: not soon afterward fall into  
9 griefs: offenses  11 wealthy: bountiful, happy  cousins: relatives, kinsfolk  
12 love: i.e., of one another were: would be  
13 by: with his pleasure: as he pleased (by taking them young)  
14 peradventure: perhaps  15 at debate: into strife  16 he: i.e., the child  
17 that . . . look: I expect ever  18 require: beg  
21 griefs: offenses other: every other  
22 anything . . . regard: care about anything at all  
23 affinity: in-laws country: part of the country; district  
24 surety: safety, security enduring: managing 25 him: himself  
26 recomforting: reassuring  
28 as . . . pleasure: i.e., as they thought he would like them to answer  
29 each forgave other: forgave each other  
30 it after appeared: was later made obvious  31 asunder: apart
Prince his son drew toward London—which at the time of his decease kept his household at Ludlow, in Wales. Which country, being far off from the law and recourse to justice, was begun to be far out of good will and waxen wild, robbers and reivers walking at liberty, uncorrected. And for this encheason the Prince was in the life of his father sent thither, to the end that the authority of his presence should refrain 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 as politic in counsel. Adjoined were there unto him others of the same party; and in effect everyone as he was nearest of kin unto the Queen, so was planted next about the Prince. That drift by the Queen not unwisely devised, whereby her blood might of youth 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 building. For whomsoever he perceived either at variance with them or bearing himself their favor, he broke 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 manner from their company and attendance of which every one ought him as faithful service as they—and many of them far more honorable part of kin than his mother’s side, “whose blood,” quoth he, “saving the King’s pleasure, was full unmeet to be matched with his—which now to be, as who say, removed from the King, and the less noble to be left about him, is,” quoth he, “neither honorable to His Majesty nor unto us, and also to His Grace no surety to have the mightiest of
his friends from 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 and soon persuaded. Ye remember, I trow, King Edward himself, albeit he was a man of age and of discretion, yet was he in many things ruled by the band, more than stood either with his honor or our profit, or with the commodity of any man else, except only the immoderate advancement of themselves. Which whether they sorer thirsted after their own weal or our woe, it were hard, I ween, to guess. And if some folks’ friendship had not held better place with the King than any respect of kindred, they might peradventure easily have betrapped and brought to confusion some of us ere this. Why not as easily as they have done some others already, as near of his royal blood as we? But our Lord hath wrought his will, and, thanks be to his grace, that peril is past. Howbeit, as great is growing, if we suffer this young king in our enemy’s hand which without his witting might abuse the name of ‘his commandment’ to any of our undoing; which thing God and good provision forbid! Of which good provision none of us hath anything the less need for the late-made atonement, in which the King’s pleasure had more place than the parties’ wills. Nor none of us, I believe, is so unwise over-soon to trust a new friend made of an old foe, or to think that a hoverly kindness, suddenly contracted in one hour, continued yet scant a fortnight, should be deeper settled in their stomachs than a long-acustomed malice many years rooted.”

With these words and writings and such others, the Duke of Gloucester soon set afire them that were of themselves easy to kindle, and in especial twain: Edward, Duke of Buckingham, 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 party—
in this point accorded together with the Duke of Gloucester: that
they would utterly remove from the King’s company all his mother’s
friends, under the name of 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 accompanied with such power 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 doubtful, and in which, the
King being on their side, his part should have the face 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. 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 betwixt whom and them had
been sometime debate to fear and suspect lest they should
gather this people, not for the King’s safeguard—whom no man
impugned—but for their destruction, having more regard to their
old variance than their new atonement. For which cause they
should assemble on the other part much people again for their
defense whose power, she wist well, far stretched. And thus should
all the realm fall on a roar. And of all the hurt that thereof should
ensue—which was likely not to be little, and the most harm there
likely to fall where she least would—all the world would put her and her
kindred in the wight, and say that they had unwisely, and untruly
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 part faithfully observed.

3 friends: relatives name: classification their enemies: i.e., enemies of these three men
4 which: who 5 about: in attendance on
6 power: a military presence friends: supporters 8 in manner: as it were
9 wist: realized end: outcome 10 their side: i.e., the side of his mother’s relatives
10 part: (own) side 10–11 have . . . rebellion: look like and be called a rebellion
11 by divers means: via several intermediaries
12–13 neither . . . strong: would be not only unnecessary but also dangerous for the King
to show up with a strong military presence
14–15 every . . . coronation: the lords all loved one another, and were taking thought of
nothing but the coronation
16, 22 much: a great number of 18 sometime debate: occasional dissension
19 the King’s safeguard: the security of the King
20 their destruction: i.e., the destruction of the lords not related to the Queen
20 impugned: opposed having more regard to: taking more heed of
21 variance: enmity atonement: reconciliation
21–23 they . . . stretched: i.e., there would in response be assembled on the other side a great
number of people by men who she well knew had far-reaching power
24 on a roar: into turmoil 24–25 of . . . ensue: for all the harm that would come thereof
25–26 there . . . would: likely to fall there where she least would want it to
26–27 in the wight: to blame 27 untruly: dishonorably 29 in: on 30 part: side
The Queen, being in this wise persuaded, such word sent unto her son and unto her brother being about the King; and over that, the Duke of Gloucester himself and other lords, the chief of his band, 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, with a sober company. Now was the King in his way to London gone from Northampton, when these dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham came thither.

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, eleven miles thence, early, ere he departed. So was there made that night much friendly cheer between these dukes and the Lord Rivers, a great while. But incontinent after that they were openly with great courtesy departed, and the Lord Rivers lodged, the dukes secretly with a few of their most privy friends set them down in counsel, 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 themselves shortly ready, for their lords were to horsebackward. 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 certain of their folk, that should send back again and compel to return any man that were gotten out of Northampton toward Stony Stratford, till they should give other license; forasmuch as the dukes themselves 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 bore they folk in hand. But when the Lord Rivers understood the gates closed and the ways on every side beset—neither his servants nor himself suffered to go out—perceiving well so great a thing without his knowledge not begun for naught, comparing this manner present with this last night’s cheer, in so few hours so great a change marvelously misliked. Howbeit, since he could not get away—and keep himself close 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, 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 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, 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 for both companies. And as soon as they came in his presence, they

1 lay: spent the night
2 bestowed . . . should: stationed some of their servants, who were to
3–4 that . . . toward: who had gotten out of Northampton and was heading for
5 license: instruction
6 diligence: assiduousness in service
7–8 thus . . . hand: so they led people to believe
8–9 understood . . . gates: learned that the gates were blocked
10 suffered: allowed
11 marvelously misliked: hugely disliked
13 matter: business
15 keep . . . not: he did not want to keep himself confined
16 secret: inward of his own fault: caused by his guiltiness (of something)
17 surety of: assurance given him by
18 and: alienate the King from
20–21 set . . . and: alienate the King from confusion: ruin
23 in goodly wise: in an excellent way
23 excuse: defend
24 shortly: abruptly
25 ward: custody
26 went to horseback: mounted their horses
27 way: road
lighted a-down, with all their company about them. To whom the
Duke of Buckingham said, “Go before, gentlemen and yeomen; keep
your rooms.” And thus in a goodly array they came to the King,
and on their knees, in very humble wise, saluted His Grace—which
received them in very joyous and amiable manner, nothing earthly
knowing nor mistrusting as yet. But even by and by, in his presence
they picked a quarrel to the Lord Richard

_The Lord Grey_

Grey, the King’s other brother by his
mother, saying that he, with the Lord Marquis his brother
and the Lord Rivers his uncle, had compassed to rule the
King and the realm, and to set variance among the states,
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. All which things these
dukes wist well were done for good purposes and necessary, by the
whole Council at London; saving that somewhat they must say.
Unto which words the King answered, “What my brother
Marquis hath done, I cannot say. 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,” quoth 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, 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

2 _before:_ ahead  
2 _gentlemen:_ members of the gentry  
2 _yeomen:_ a class of freeholders below the gentry  
3 _keep your rooms:_ stay grouped by rank  
4 _a goodly array:_ an appropriate order  
4 _saluted:_ greeted  
5–6 _nothing . . . yet:_ not yet knowing or suspecting a thing  
6 _even by and by:_ literally right away  
7 _to:_ with  
9 _Lord Marquis:_ i.e., Dorset (Thomas Grey)  
10 _compassed:_ plotted  
11 _set variance:_ create discord  
12 _states:_ noblemen  
12 _subdue:_ bring to a low state  
14 _thence taken out:_ taken out of there  
16 _wist well:_ well knew  
17 _saving:_ except  
17 _somewhat . . . say:_ they had to say something (by way of a charge)  
19 _in good faith:_ in all honesty  
21, 22 _matters:_ things  
21, 22 _dealing:_ involvement
about him, such as liked better them than him. At which
dealing he wept and was nothing content, but it booted not. 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, and therefore could bear it the better. But
for all this comfortable 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.

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 the
tidings of this matter came hastily to the Queen, a little before the
midnight following, and that in the sorest wise: 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 what.

With which

tidings the Queen in great flight and heaviness, bewailing her child’s ruin,
her friends’ miscalance, and her own infortune, damning the time that
ever she dissuaded the gathering of power about the King,
got herself in all the haste possible, with her younger son and her
daughters, out of the Palace of Westminster, in which she then lay,
The Queen taketh sanctuary. into the sanctuary, lodging herself and her company there in the abbot’s place. Now came there one, in like wise not long after midnight, from the Lord Chamberlain unto the Archbishop of York (then Chancellor of England), to his place not far from Westminster. And for that he showed his servants that he had tidings of so great importance that his master gave him in charge not to forbear 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,” quoth he, “my lord sendeth Your Lordship word that there is no fear. For he assureth you that all shall be well.” “I assure him,” quoth 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 all his servants to be called up, and so, with his own household about him, and every man weaponed, he took the Great Seal with him and came, yet before day, unto the Queen. About whom he found much heaviness, rumble, haste, and busyness; carriage and conveyance of her stuff into sanctuary; chests, coffers, packs, fardels, trusses, all on men’s backs; no man unoccupied; some lading, some going, some discharging, some coming for more, some breaking down the walls to bring in the next way—and some yet drew to them that helped to carry a wrong way. The Queen herself sat alone, alow on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed,

whom the Archbishop comforted in the best manner he could, showing her that he trusted the matter was nothing.
so sore 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,” quoth she, “for he is one of them that
laboreth to destroy me and my blood.” “Madam,” quoth 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 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, 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 themselves, assembled in sundry companies and went,
flockmeal, in harness;

and many also for that they reckoned this
demeanor 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 which meeting, the Archbishop of York—fearing that it
would be ascribed (as it was indeed) to his overmuch lightness 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
it with him after the customary manner. And at this meeting

Hastings, whose troth toward the King no man doubted nor
needed to doubt, persuaded the lords to believe that the Duke of
Gloucester was sure and fastly 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, not for the
King’s jeopardy; and that they were also in safeguard, 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 examined, and by other discretions ordered, and
either judged or appeased. 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,
irritating 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 again. Which
strife, if it should hap, as it were likely, to come to a field,
though both parts 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 especially by that the dukes of
Gloucester and Buckingham were so near, and came so shortly on
with the King, in none other manner, with none other voice or
semblance, than to his coronation—causing the fame to be
blown about that these lords and knights which were taken
had contrived the destruction of the dukes of Gloucester and

1 after . . . manner: in the customary manner  3 troth: loyalty
5 sure and fastly: quite steadfastly  prince: ruler  7 matters: things
10 their surety: the safety of the dukes
10–11 for the King’s jeopardy: to put the King in danger
11 safeguard: protective custody  14 indifferently: impartially
14 discretions: competent authorities ordered: disposed
15 appeased: settled  beware: beware of / be aware of
18 disturbing: interfering with  20 peradventure: perhaps
20 that: such that; so that  21 in frame again: back in shape, right order
22 hap: happen  field: battlefield  23 parts: sides
26 wist the contrary: knew the opposite to be true
27 by that that: by reason that  29–30 voice or semblance: talk or appearance
30 fame: rumor  31 taken: arrested contrived: plotted
Buckingham, and of other the noble blood of the realm, to the end that themselves would alone demean and govern the King at their pleasure. And for the colorable 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 harnesses, which at the breaking up of that household 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 harnesses that these traitors had privily conveyed in their carriage to destroy the noble lords with.” 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 harnesses 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 alms to hang them.

When the King approached near to the city, Edmund Shaa (goldsmith, then mayor) with William White and John Mathew (sheriffs) and all the other aldermen in scarlet, with five hundred horse of the citizens in violet, received him reverently at Hornsea, 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 bore him in open sight so reverently to the Prince, with all semblance of lowliness, that from the great obloquy in which he was so late before, he was suddenly fallen in so great trust that at the Council next assembled, he was made the only man chosen, and thought most meet, 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

1 other . . . blood: members of the nobility 2 demean: handle, control
3 colorable: ostensible 5–6 among . . . harnesses: among which things it was no wonder that there were suits of armor 7 cast: thrown 9 privily: secretly
10 device: ploy 11 well perceiving: i.e., they well realizing 14 much part: a great number 15 it were alms: it would be a good deed
16 Shaa: The name is pronounced (and sometimes spelled) “Shaw.” 19 horse . . . violet: citizens in violet, riding on horses
20 Hornsea: what is now called Harringay Park 23 bore . . . sight: bore himself in the public view
24 all semblance: every appearance 25 obloquy: disrepute, infamy 26 in so: into such
27 lowliness: humility 28 meet: fit 30 folly: lack of good sense 31 betaken: handed over
keep. At which Council also, the Archbishop of 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, 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 unto divers rooms. The Lord Chamberlain and some others kept still their offices that they had before. Now, all were it 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. Wherefore, incontinent, 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 of his own royal person.
“The prosperity whereof standeth,” quoth he, “not all in keeping from enemies or ill viand, but partly also in recreation and moderate pleasure—which he cannot in this tender youth take in the company of ancient persons, but in the familiar conversation of those that be neither far under nor far above his age. And nevertheless of estate convenient to accompany his noble majesty. Wherefore, with whom rather than with his own brother? And if any man think this consideration light (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 be 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 naught. 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 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 meet than our Reverend Father here present, my Lord Cardinal, 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,

6 prosperity whereof: thriving of whom 7 ill viand: bad food 9 in . . . youth: at this young age  ancient: much older 10 familiar conversation of: natural interaction with 11 of estate convenient: of a rank that makes them suitable 14 light: trivial, unimportant 20 be fain to: have to 17 about: in attendance on 19 evil words walk: negative talk travels 20 fain: obliged 21 ween: suppose  no . . . naught: no one will do that for no reason 22 evil opinion: bad opinion (i.e., either of the King’s brother—that he took sanctuary because he committed some crime—or of the lords) 24 grow . . . grief: end up causing more grief  divine: guess 25 methinketh . . . worst: I think it would not be a bad idea 26 trusty: trustworthy 27 tendereth: has a heartfelt concern for  weal: well-being 28 is . . . her: i.e., is also someone she likes and trusts 29 seemeth . . . meet: seems to me more suitable 30 Lord Cardinal: Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury 32 pain: trouble
for the King’s sake and ours, and wealth 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 so obstinate, and so precisely set upon her own will, that neither his wise and faithful advertisement 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 continual company he shall be so well cherished and so honorably treated that all the world shall, to our honor and her reproach, perceive that it was only malice, frowardness, 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 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, whom they all agreed also to be thereto most convenient, took upon him to move her, and therein to do his uttermost devoir. Howbeit, if she could be in no wise entreated with her good will to deliver him, then thought he, and such others as were of the spiritualty 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 of all men, and high displeasure of God, if the privilege of that holy place should now

Sanctuary be broken! Which had so many years been kept, which both kings

1 wealth: well-being
3 considered: considering
4 slanderous . . . going: scandalous rumor and calumny now spreading
5 hurts: harms  rest: peace  6 grow . . . realm: come to the whole realm
6 percase: by any chance  7 precisely: literally
8 faithful: sound, trustworthy  advertisement: advice
9 reason: argument, reasoning  content: satisfy
12 all the world: everyone in the world  honorably: respectfully
14 frowardness: perversity, contrariness  folly: lack of good sense
15 except: unless  18 advices: judgments  19 said: finished speaking
20 motion: proposal  21 cease . . . murmur: put a stop to a lot of the murmuring
22 means: intermediaries  23 deliver him: hand him over  York: actually, Canterbury
24 convenient: suitable  24–25 took . . . her: volunteered to appeal to her
25 uttermost devoir: absolute best
26–27 be . . . him: in no way be persuaded to hand him over willingly
27–28 such . . . present: the other clergymen who were present
28 in any wise: by any means  30 turn to: bring about  grudge: anger and resentment
and popes so good had granted, so many had confirmed, and which holy ground was more than five hundred years ago—by Saint Peter’s own person in spirit, accompanied with great multitude of angels by night—so specially hallowed and dedicated to God (for the proof whereof they have yet in the abbey Saint Peter’s cope to show) that from that time hitherward was there never so undevout a king that durst that sacred place violate, or so holy a bishop that durst it presume to consecrate. “And therefore,” quoth the Archbishop of York, “God forbid that any man should, for anything earthly, enterprise 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,” quoth he, “with God’s grace, we shall not need it. But for any manner need, I would not we should do it. I trust that she shall be with reason contented, and allthing 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.” “Womanish fear? Nay, womanish frowardness!” quoth 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 ourselves be of kin. Whose honor if she as much desired as our dishonor, and as much regard took to his wealth 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

6 hitherward: till now 10 earthly: in the world  enterprise: undertake 11 liberty: right 13 not need it: i.e., have no need to do that 13–14 for . . . it: regardless of whatever need, I would not have us do it 15 reason contented: satisfied by good arguments allthing: everything 18 my devoir: effort on my part 19 let: hindrance; problem 20 frowardness: perversity; contrariness 20–21 take . . . soul: say this staking my salvation upon it 25 rest: peace 25–26 for that: for the reason that evil deserving: ill merit 31 wealth: well-being 31–32 suffer him: allow him to be kept away 32 have any wit: has any sense
(as would God she had as good will as she hath shrewd wit), she reckoneth herself no wiser than she thinketh some that be here, of whose faithful mind she nothing doubteth, but 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 troth she well trusteth—it is easy to perceive that frowardness letteth her, and not fear. But go to, 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 such fond doubts that she fear his hurt—then will she fear that he shall be fetched thence. For she will soon think

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 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. And I doubt not but she now as sore mindeth it as we the let thereof. And if she might happen to bring that to pass (as it were no great mastery, we letting her alone), all the world would say that we were a wise sort of counsellors about a king, that let his brother be cast away under our noses! And therefore—I assure you faithfully—for my mind, I will rather maugre her mind fetch him away

1 would God: I wish to God  
2 shrewd wit: bad sense  
3 faithful mind: good faith  
4 nothing doubteth: has no doubt whatever  
5 verily: truly  
6 content: willing  
7 thence: out of there  
8 troth: uprightness  
9 frowardness letteth her: it is perversity that is holding her back  
10 go . . . fear: come on, let’s suppose that she is afraid  
11 as . . . her: since who can disallow her  
12 doubt lest: fear that  
13 from . . . there: be away from her if she stays there (in the sanctuary)  
14 somewhat less regard: have somewhat less regard for  
15 cast: conceive, entertain  
16 thence: out of there  
17 hurt: being harmed  
18 as . . . mastery: as would be no great feat  
19 misdick: wrongdoing  
20 let: deter  
21 might, as methinketh: could, in my opinion  
22 somewhat less regard: have somewhat less regard for  
23 look for none other: expect nothing else  
24 sore mindeth: earnestly intends  
25 cast away: prevention  
26 doubts: fears, suspicions  
27 as . . . sort: were some sensible bunch  
28 about: attending upon  
29 cast: driven  
30 faithfully: sincerely  
31 maugre her mind: notwithstanding her wishes
than leave him there till her frowardness or fond fear convey him
away. And yet will I break no sanctuary therefor. For verily,
since the privileges of that place and others like have been of long
continued, I am not he that would be about to break them. And
in good faith—if they were now to begin, I would not be he that
should be about to make them. Yet

Of sanctuaries
deed of piety that such men as the sea or their evil debtors
have brought in poverty 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) to come in
question, while either party taketh other as traitors, I will
well there be some places of refuge for both.

But as for

thieves, of which these places be full, and which never fall from the
craft after they once fall thereto, it is pity the sanctuary should
serve them. And much more manquellers, whom God bade
to take from the altar and kill them, if their murder were willful.
And where it is otherwise, there need we not the sanctuaries that
God appointed in the Old Law. For if either necessity, his own
defense, or misfortune draw him to that deed, a pardon serveth,
which either the law granteth of course or the king of pity
may.

“Then look me now how few sanctuary men there be whom
any favorable necessity compelled to go thither. And then see,
on the other side, what a sort there be commonly therein, of them
whom willful unthriftiness hath brought to naught.”

“What a rabble of thieves, murderers, and malicious heinous
traitors! And that in two places especially: the one at the elbow
of the city, the other in the very bowels. I dare well avow it:
weigh the good that they 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 they were not abused as they now be,

and so long have been that I fear me ever they will be, while

men be afeard to set their hands to the amendment—as

though God and Saint Peter were the patrons of ungracious living!

The abuse of sanctuaries

“The abuse of sanctuaries

Now unthrifts riot and run in debt, upon the boldness of these

places; yea, and rich men run thither with poor men’s goods; there they build, there they spend and bid their creditors go whistle them. Men’s wives run thither with their husbands’ plate and say they dare not abide with their husbands for beating. 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 and no breach of the privilege.

The residue, since so long ago I wot ne’er 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 and let it in 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 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 always 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

2 say . . . they: would say even if sanctuaries
2 abused: taken undue advantage of
3 I . . . they: I’m afraid they always
3 white: as long as
4 afeard: afraid
5 ungracious: wicked, ungodly
7 unthrifts: spendthrifts
8 boldness: i.e., assurance that they can always run to
9 whistled: do what they will
11 abide: stay
12–13 for beating: because the husbands beat them
15 reive: raid
16 come in again: come back in
17 mischief: evil
19 thank of: credit from
20 wot ne’er: have no idea
21 piteous: pious
22 politic: prudent
23 take . . . therewith: put up with it
24 reason will: reason will allow
25 let us of: deter us from
26 wealth: well-being
28 say . . . they: would say even if sanctuaries
3 I . . . they: I’m afraid they always
3 white: as long as
4 afeard: afraid
5 ungracious: wicked, ungodly
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22 politic: prudent
23 take . . . therewith: put up with it
24 reason will: reason will allow
25 let us of: deter us from
26 wealth: well-being
The king intended to 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
unlawfully take hurt, that liberty the king, the law, and very
nature forbiddeth in every place, and maketh, to that regard, for
every man every place a sanctuary. But where a man is by
lawful means in peril—there needeth he the tuition 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 it by their godfathers; he must ask it
himself that must have it. And reason, since no man hath cause to
have it but whose conscience of his own fault maketh him fain
need to require it. What will, then, hath yonder babe?

Which, and if 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 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 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 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
And what if a man’s wife will take sanctuary because she list to
run from her husband? I would ween if she can allege none

3 That: In order that        4 that liberty: i.e., the liberty to do others wrong
4–5 very nature: nature itself
5 to that regard: in that respect        7 tuition: protection
10, 11 proveth: make evident        11 tender youth: young age
11–12 neither . . . have: he not only does not need any, but also cannot have any
13 require it by their godfathers: request it via their godparents
14 reason: that stands to reason        15 it: i.e., sanctuary
15 whose . . . fain: he whose consciousness of his own guilt makes him gladly
16 will: desire (for it)        17 and if: even if
18 had discretion: was of age        21 homely: unceremonious; direct
24 even: right there        31 get: earn        32 you . . . truth: what you say is very true
33–34 list to run: wants to get away        ween: think
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 saith 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 as that example 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 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, 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, and good part of the spiritual also, thinking none hurt earthly meant toward the young babe, condescended in effect that if he were not delivered, he should be fetched. Howbeit, they thought it all best, in the voiding of all manner of rumor, that the Lord Cardinal should first essay to get him with her good will. And thereupon all the Council came unto the Star Chamber at Westminster. And the Lord Cardinal, 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, maugre her mind, to take
him, and to leave her no respite to convey him; which she was
likely to mind after this matter broken to her, if her time would in
any wise serve her.

When the Queen and these lords were come together in
presence, 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, not only to the great rumor of the people, and their
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 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 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, and over that (which he
wist well she specially tendered), not only great comfort and
honor to the King but also to the young duke himself, whose both
great wealth it were to be together, as well for many greater causes
as also for their both disport and recreation; which thing the lord
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 meet in that
point for any of them as either of them for other.

The Queen’s answer

“My lord,” quoth the Queen, “I say not
nay but that it were very convenient

2 incontinent . . . mind: immediately, regardless of her wishes
3 respite . . . him: opportunity to smuggle him out of the country
4 mind . . . matter: intend once this thing was 5 wise: way
7 presence: royal assembly showed unto: told 8 unto: by
10 sounded (to): redounded to; was responsible for 11 their obloquy: i.e., the bad repute of the Council
10–11 importable . . . displeasure: unbearable sorrow and unhappiness 12 were: would be
13–14 their . . . also: a dishonor to them both, and to all the Council members and also her
14 suffer him: allow him to be 16 showed: told
17 require: request of delivery: handing over
19 reckoned: regarded demeaned: treated 20 estate: position; rank
22 friends . . . distress: relatives who were in trouble (Rivers, Grey, and Vaughn)
23 wist well: well knew tendered: cared about
24–25 whose . . . were: for both of whom it would be very good for them
26 their . . . recreation: the fun and recreation of them both lord: i.e., the Cardinal
27 though: even if light: unimportant pondering: taking into consideration
28 any stranger: anyone outside the family
29 convenience: suitability to their . . . estates: the ages and ranks of them both
30 meet: appropriate 30 any: either either of them for other: each of them for the other
31–32 say not nay but: do not deny were: would be convenient: appropriate
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 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 especially the younger, which besides his infancy, that
also needeth good looking to, hath a while been so sore diseased 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 that was in the first sickness,
with which disease nature, being forlabored, forwearied, and weakened,
waxeth the less able to bear out a new surfeit. And albeit there
might be found others that would haply do their best unto
him, yet is there none that either knoweth better how to order him
than I that so long have kept him, or is more tenderly like to cherish
him than his own mother that bore him. “No man denieth, good
madam,” quoth 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 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 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; since there is
not always so great necessity to have the child be with the mother
but that occasion may sometime 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,” quoth 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 I marvel greatly that my Lord Protector
is so desirous to have him in his keeping, where if the child in his

1 gentleman: nobleman require: ask for 2 in good faith: in all honesty
2 were: would be 3 commodity: a benefit
5 infancy: younness 6–7 sore . . . sickness: badly afflicted with illness
8 earthly: on earth
11 recidivation: relapse sickness: bout of illness
12 disease: illness forlabored, forwearied: already exerted and worn out
13 waxeth: becomes bear out: weather surfeit: bout 15 order: care for
19 about: to have around 20 not . . . glad: not just willing but glad
20, 21 stand: accord 22 appoint yourself: decide tarry: remain
22–23 think . . . convenient: they think it nevertheless more appropriate
25 their . . . obloquy: the dishonor and disgrace of them both
27 occasion: the situation sometime: once in a while should: would
28 expedient: advisable Which . . . appeareth: Which is made quite evident by this
29 should: had to 32 yet: furthermore 34 case: condition
sickness miscarried by nature, yet might he run into slander and suspicion of fraud.

And where they call it a thing so sorely against my child’s honor, and theirs also, that he bideth in this place, it is all their honors 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 myself after others of my friends—which would God were rather here in surety with me than I were there in jeopardy with them.” “Why, madam,” quoth another lord, “know you anything why they should be in jeopardy?” “Nay, verily, sir,” quoth she. “Nor why they should be in prison, neither—as they now be! But it is, I trow, no great marvel though I fear lest those that have not letted to put them in duress 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

1 miscarried by nature: died of natural causes  slander: disrepute, opprobrium
2 fraud: foul play  19 where: whereas  sore: terribly  20 bideth: stays
21 all . . . bide: to the honor of them all to let him stay in that place
22 while: as long as  23 which: who
23–24 jeopardy . . . friends: put myself in danger, like some relatives of mine
24 which . . . God: who I wish to God  surety: safety  25 anything: any reason
27 Nay, verily: No indeed  28 I trow: I’m sure  28 marvel: wonder
29 though . . . letted: if I fear that those who have not forborne
30 without color: without any show of reason
32 made a countenance: gestured; made a sign
34 nothing doubted but: had no doubt
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?” quoth 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?—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 I see some men so greedy without any substantial cause to have him, this maketh me much the more farther to deliver him.” “Truly, madam,” quoth 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. 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 to send him away.” “Ah, sir,” quoth 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 to send out—

and in what place

could I reckon him sure, if he be not 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
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 the Protector (I pray God he may prove a
protector!)—troweth he that I perceive not whereunto his painted
process draweth?

‘It is not honorable that the Duke bide here’; ‘it were
comfortable for them both that he were with his brother, because the
King lacketh a playfellow’—be ye sure! 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 found to
play with the King but if 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, an he will. Howbeit, this is a gay 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, since he hath nothing by descent
held by knight’s service, the law maketh his mother his guardian.
Then may no man, I suppose, take my ward from me out of

1 trust: believe      3 goodly gloss: splendid rationale
8 Troweth the Protector: Does the Protector think
9–10 whereunto . . . draweth: where his glitzy argument leads to
11 were: would be      12 comfortable: comforting
13 playfellow: playmate    be ye sure!: oh sure!
14–15 maketh . . . pretext: i.e., makes such a mountain out of such a molehill
15 none: no one        16 lust: desire     for: on account of
17 safeguard: protective custody      20 for . . . part: more often than not
20 agree . . . worse: get along much less well
20 strangers: people outside the family  21 require: request   so: that
22 an he will: if he wants    gay matter: specious issue      26 liberty: right
27 hence: out of here     29 showeth: tells
29–30 hath . . . service: i.e., has not inherited even by way of a knight’s service anything
endowing him with independence
sanctuary without the breach of the sanctuary. And if my privilege could not serve him, nor he ask it for himself, yet since the law committeth to me the custody of him, I may require it for him—except the law give a child a guardian only for his goods and his lands, discharging him of the cure and safekeeping of his body,

This that is here between this mark ‡ and this mark* was not written by M. More in this history written by him in English, but is translated out of this history which he wrote in Latin.

... for which only both lands and goods serve. And 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 bore the Prince. And when my lord my husband returned safe again and had the victory, 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. In which place I intend to keep his brother, since [etc.].”

“Wherefore, here intend I to keep him, since man’s law serveth the guardian to keep the infant, the law of nature will the mother keep her child, God’s law privilegeth the sanctuary, and the sanctuary my son—since I fear to put him in the Protector’s hands, that hath his brother already, and were, if both failed, inheritor to the crown. The cause of my fear hath no man to do to examine. 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 land than a kingdom!

3 require: request 4 except: unless 5 discharging . . . care: making him (the guardian) not responsible for the care 6 only: alone 7 examples: precedents 15 all you: you all 17 hither: here 19 hence: away from here 20 hence: here 23 sometime: at one time 26 infant: child not yet of age 26 will: demands that 28 the . . . that: the hands of the Protector, who 29 were: would be 30 hath . . . do: is no one’s business 33 less: i.e., far less
I can 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, 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. And if she would give them a resolute answer to the contrary, he would forthwith depart therewith, and shift 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 others also, save herself, lacked either wit or troth. Wit, if they were so dull that they could nothing perceive what the Protector intended; troth, 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 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 should incontinent be taken thence; 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 fetched out of sanctuary, which she thought to be now beset in such places about that he could not be conveyed out untaken—

and partly, as she thought it might fortune her fear to be false, so well she wist it was either needless or bootless: wherefore, if she should needs go from him, she deemed it best to deliver him. And over that, of the Cardinal’s faith 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 him to them of trust. And at the last she took the young duke by the hand, and said unto the lords:

“My lord,” quoth she, “and all my lords, I neither am so unwise to mistrust your wits nor so suspicious to mistrust your troths. 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,” quoth 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.

And may the nephews be sure of their uncle? Each of these children is other’s 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 goods 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 nothing . . . for: i.e., she having nothing less expected beset . . . about: i.e., so strategically surrounded 4–5 as . . . false: just as she thought her fear might turn out to be groundless so . . . bootless: so she well knew it was either needless or useless should . . . him: was going to have to part with him regardless deliver him: hand him over over that: moreover faith: loyalty nothing doubted: had no doubt at all lest: that 10 yet: also warily . . . him: carefully to watch out for him surety: safety of: out of unwise to mistrust: so unwise as to doubt wits: intelligence troths: uprightness lacked: were lacking gentleman: nobleman but: that would: wanted to some . . . so: out there some such wist: knew may: can other’s . . . asunder: the other’s defense as long as they are separated sure: safe, secure adventureth: takes the risk of putting your hands: i.e., the hands of you men shall ask: i.e., shall one day ask the return of
them both, before 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, neither lack ye of yourselves 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 ye well ware that you fear not as far too little.” And therewith 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. 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 as he thought. Thereupon forthwith they brought him to the King his brother, unto the bishop’s palace at Paul’s, and from thence through the city honorably into the Tower, out of which after that day they never came abroad.

‡ When the Protector had both the children in his hands, he 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 messenger

1 before . . . world: in front of God and everybody
2 wot I well: I well know
3 list: please; choose to
5 ever: always
7 well ware: very watchful
9 keeping: looking after
10 once yet: one more time
12 weeping as fast: crying as hard
17 even: literally
18 of likelihood: probably
19 . . . brother: his brother the King
20 Paul’s: St. Paul’s Cathedral
21 thence: there
22 honorably: in an honorific fashion
25 opened: revealed, disclosed
29–30 privy . . . beginning: in on all the Protector’s secrets right from the start
32 mover: person to incite

This that is here between this mark ‡ and this mark* was not written by M. More in this history written by him in English, but is translated out of this history which he wrote in Latin.
unto him straight after King Edward’s death. But others 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. 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 especially 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 craftmasters 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 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 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 destroy them all; and that it were no doubt but the Protector had provided privy guard for himself, so had he spies 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 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, whereas 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, 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.
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, and that the Protector should grant him the quiet possession of the earldom of Hereford, which he claimed as his inheritance, 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 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 parts of the realm, came thick to that solemnity. But the Protector and the Duke, after that that they had set the Lord Cardinal, the Archbishop of York (then Lord Chancellor), the Bishop of Ely, the Lord Stanley, and the Lord Hastings (then Lord Chamberlain), with many other noblemen,* to commune and devise 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 adhibited very few, and they very secret, yet began there, 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 itself 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 itself made men to muse on the matter, though the council were close. For little and little all folk withdrew from the Tower and drew to Crosby’s Place in Bishopsgate Street, where the Protector kept his household. The Protector had the resort, the King in manner

* noblemen: distinguished men
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 about
the King without the Protector’s appointment—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, 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 disliked these two several councils. “For while we,” quoth he,
“talk of one matter in the one place, little wot we whereof they talk
in the other place.” “My lord,” quoth the Lord Hastings, “on my life, never
doubt you. For while one man is there which is never thence, never
can there be thing once minded 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 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, since
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 bore in all the county of Leicester, where the
Lord Chamberlain’s power chiefly lay. But surely great pity was it
that he had not had either more troth or less wit. For his
dissimulation only kept all that mischief up in whom if the
Lord Hastings had not put so special trust, the Lord Stanley and he

44/33—45/1 in manner desolate: virtually isolated
1–2 for . . . doing: i.e., were simply taking their business directly to the people who
could take care of it
3–4 haply . . . which: perhaps not be good for them to be around the King too much
without authorization from the Protector—who 5 divers: several
6 Thus many things: Many things thus 6–7 of purpose: by intent
8 eke: too  mark: take note of 9 muse thereon: murmur about it
10 that: who  after: later; afterward 11 mistrusted it: was suspicious of it
13 disliked: disliked  several: separate
14 little . . . talk: little do we know what they are talking about 15–16 doubt you: fear
16 while: as long as which . . . thence: who is never away from there
17 thing: a thing  minded: contemplated toward: to
19 This . . . Catesby: i.e., By this “one man” he meant (William) Catesby which: who
20 was . . . counsel: was deeply in his confidence
21 very familiarly used: was very friendly with 22 lief: dear
26 Lord Chamberlain: i.e., Lord Hastings in good: having a lot of
27 in all: throughout 29 troth: honesty; trustworthiness wit: intelligence
29–30 his . . . up: all that evildoing was kept going solely by the dissimulation of him
had departed, with divers other lords, and broken all the dance, 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 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 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. But Catesby, whether he essayed him or essayed him not, reported unto them that he found him so fast, and heard him speak so terrible words, that he durst no further break. And of truth, the Lord Chamberlain of very trust showed unto Catesby the mistrust that others began to have in the matter. And therefore he, fearing lest their motions might with the Lord Hastings diminish his credence, whereunto only all the matter leaned, procured the Protector hastily to rid him.

And much the rather for that he trusted by his death to obtain much of the rule that the Lord Hastings bore in his country—the only desire whereof was the allective that induced him to be partner and one special contriver of all this horrible treason.

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, of which the time appointed then so near approached that the pageants and subtleties were in making day and night at Westminster, and much

1 had: would have     divers: several     broken . . . dance: ended the whole game
2 for . . . signs: on account of many bad signs
3–4 there . . . intended: no harming of him could be planned in any council
7 of truth: indeed     8 very good semblance: a very good show
10 loved him well: liked him a lot
11 life: staying alive     quailed their purpose: killed their plan
12 moved: urged     prove: find out by testing
12–13 with . . . off: i.e., with some very vague, indirect statements
14 into their part: over to their side     essayed him: put him to the test
15 fast: steadfast; unmoving
16 so terrible: such frightening     durst . . . break: dared not reveal to him anything further
17–18 showed . . . in: told Catesby about the suspicions that others were beginning to have about 19 motions: ideas; impressions
19–20 with . . . credence: lessen the confidence the Lord Hastings had in him
20 whereunto . . . leaned: on which alone the whole thing depended     procured: got
21 rid: do away with     the rather: the more readily     for that: because
24 country: i.e., part of the country     the only desire: solely the desire
25 allective: allurement, enticement     partner: an accomplice (in)
29 devising: planning
31–32 pageants and subtleties: stage props and table decorations
victual killed therefor that afterward was cast away. These lords so sitting together communing of this matter, the Protector came in among them—first about nine of the clock, saluting 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 you, let us have a mess of them.” “Gladly, my lord,” quoth 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 in communing, 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 wonderfully sour, angry countenance, knitting the brows, frowning and frothing 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 sat still a while,

thus he began: “What were they worthy to have, that compass and imagine the destruction of me—being so near of blood unto the King, and Protector of his royal person and his realm?” At this question all the lords sat sore astonished, 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 others affirmed the same. “That is,” quoth he, “yonder sorceress—my brother’s wife!—and others with her,” meaning the Queen. 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 her than by any other whom he loved better—albeit his heart somewhat

1 victual killed therefor: game killed for the occasion
2 cast: thrown
3 saluting: greeting
4 from: away from
5 merrily: facetiously
7 require: ask of
8 a mess: a dish
9 ready. . . pleasure: available for you to enjoy
10–11 set . . . communing: really got the lords talking
11 praying: begging
12 spare: excuse
16 a wonderfully: an exceedingly
17 frothing: foaming at the mouth
18 sore marveling of: anxiously wondering at
19 what . . . all: (wondering) what could be the matter with him
21–22 what . . . have: what would they have coming to them; what would they deserve to have happen to them
22 compass and imagine: plot and plan
24–25 musing . . . meant: trying hard to figure out whom he could mean by this question
25 wis. . . clear: knew himself to be in the clear
26–27 as . . . boldest: i.e., thinking that, because of the affection between him and Richard, he was the one who had least to fear in speaking to him
27 were worthy: would deserve
28 heinous traitors: persons guilty of high treason
31 abashed: disconcerted, upset
32–33 better . . . better: more willing that the charge be made against her than against some other person he liked better
grudged that he was not before made of counsel in this matter,
of the taking of her kindred and of their putting to death, which were by
his assent before devised to be beheaded at Pomfret this selfsame
day, in which he was not aware that it was by others 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, with their affinity, 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,
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.

For well they wist 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 harm 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 forbore 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?” quoth the Protector. “Thou
servest me, I ween, with ‘if’s and with ‘and’s! I tell thee, they have so done;
and that I will make good on thy body, traitor!” And therewith, as in a
great anger, he clapped his fist upon the board, a great rap. At which
token given, one cried “Treason!” without the chamber. Therewith, a door
clapped, and in came there rushing men in harness, as many as the
chamber might hold. And anon the Protector said to the Lord
traitor!” quoth the Protector. And another let fly at the Lord Stanley, which shrank at the stroke and fell under the table, or else his head had been cleft to the teeth; for as shortly as he shrank, yet ran the blood about his ears.

Then were they all quickly bestowed in diverse chambers—except the Lord Chamberlain, whom the Protector bade speed and shrieve him apace; “for by St. Paul,” quoth he, “I will not to dinner till I see thy head off.” It booted him not to ask why, but heavily 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 avoided, or the tokens of that he could not avoid.

For the

The Lord Stanley wounded...
he had so fearful a dream,

_The Lord Stanley's dream_

in which him thought that a boar with his tusks so razed them both by the heads that the blood ran about both their shoulders. And forasmuch as the Protector gave the boar for his cognizance, this dream made so fearful an impression in his heart that he was thoroughly 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.

“Ay, good lord,” quoth the Lord Hastings to this messenger, “leaneth 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 make them true by our going, if we were caught and brought back (as friends fail fleeers)? For then had the boar a cause likely to raze us with his tusks, as folk that fled for some falsehood. Wherefore either is there no peril—nor none there is, indeed—or if any be, it is rather in going than biding. And if we should needs cost 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 assure him I am as sure of the man that he wotteth of as I am of own hand.” “God send grace, sir,” quoth 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, 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 scorn.

3 him thought: it seemed to him 4 razed: slashed 5 both their shoulders: the shoulders of them both 6 cognizance: coat of arms; insignia 8 tarry: stick around 10–11 leaneth . . . so much to: puts . . . such stock in 12 fantasie: concocts 14 tokens: portents 16 as: since 17 had . . . likely: the boar would have probable cause 18 falsehood: act of treachery 19 biding: staying 20 other: the other 21 falsehood: treachery 22–23 either . . . heart: i.e., because of either our own guilt or our own fearfulness 23 pray . . . merry: implore him to cheer up 24 wotteth of: has in mind 29 each . . . happeneth: everyone well knows happens all the time 30 mischance: misfortune 31 a token: a sign; an omen 32 enemious: inimical
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 hasten him thitherward, with whom he was of secret
confederacy in that purpose—a mean man at that time, and now of
great authority. This knight, when it happed the Lord Chamberlain by the
way to stay his horse and commune a while with a priest whom he met in
the Tower street, broke his tale 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 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 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 of his own name. And of 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.

And forasmuch as he now met this pursuivant
in the same place, that jeopardy so well past, it gave him great
pleasure to talk with him thereof with whom he had before talked thereof

1 as it were: supposedly  2 of truth: actually
3 hasten him thitherward: speedily send him to the Protector
4 mean: low-ranking  5–6 it . . . way: the Lord Chamberlain happened along the way
6 commune: chat  met in: ran into on
7 broke his tale: cut into his conversation  merrily: cheerily
8 whereto: why  9 upon: at  10 would: wanted to  wist: knew
11 so little mistrusted: was so unsuspecting  merrier: happier
12 self: very  seen a sign: seen as a portent
13 pass me: go uncommented upon  vain: cocky / unwarranted  surety: assurance
16 pursuivant: royal messenger
16 of . . . name: having the same name he had; i.e., Hastings  of: by  23 of: for
28 met: came across  29 past: over with  30 with . . . with: about it with the person with
in the same place while he was therein. And therefore he said, “Ah, Hastings, art thou remembered when I met thee here once with a heavy heart?” “Yea, my lord,” quoth he, “that remember I well; and thanked be God they got no good, nor ye none harm, thereby.” “Thou wouldst say so,” quoth 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—which he well wist, but nothing aware that the axe hung over his own head. “In faith, man,” quoth he, “I was never so sorry, 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, of great authority with his prince; of living somewhat dissolute; plain and open to his enemy and secret to his friend; easy to beguile, as he that of good heart and courage forestudied no perils; a loving man, and passing well beloved; very faithful, and trusty enough, trusting too much.

Now flew the fame 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 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 brigandines, 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 others of

1 therein: i.e., in that jeopardy
2 art thou remembered: do you remember   met: ran into
4–5 Thou . . . so: i.e., You would all the more want to say that
5 few know else: few others know   6 That . . . by: By that he meant
6–8 the lords . . . Pomfret: i.e., the group including Lord Rivers, the cause of the previous jeopardy   7 taken: imprisoned
8 wist: knew nothing aware: had no idea   9 In faith: Truly   sorry: miserable
11 lo: look   12 merry: happy   13 surety: safety   14 in good surety: safe enough
17 gentle: noble (one)   19 authority: influence
19–20 plain and open to: straightforward and unreserved with
20 secret: uncommunicative   as he that: being one who
21 courage: disposition forestudied: anticipated passing: exceedingly
22 faithful: loyal trusty: trustful / trustworthy   23 fame: word
25–26 set . . . matter: make the thing somehow seem justified
26 in all the haste: posthaste substantial: respectable; of influence in society
27 himself: he himself
28 harnessed . . . brigandines: suited up in old, dilapidated pieces of armor
29 ween: suppose vouchsafe: deign   31 showed: told
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 that same forenoon; which sudden fear drove them to put on for their defense such harness as came next to hand; and so had God helped them that the mischief turned upon them that would have done it. And this he required them to report.

Every man answered him fair, 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 with a proclamation to be made through the city in the King’s name, containing that the Lord Hastings with divers others 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 pillage and despoil whom they list, uncontrolled. And much matter was there in the proclamation devisèd 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 diminishing of his honor and to the universal hurt of his realm, by his evil company, sinister procuring, and ungracious example, as well in many other things as in the vicious living and inordinate abuse of his body, both with many others 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 the night last past, 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 themselves together in making some
great commotion for his deliverance; whose hope now being by his
well-deserved death politicly 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, and so
fair written in parchment, in so well a set hand, and therewith of itself so
long a process, that every child might well perceive that it was prepared
before. For all the time between his death and the proclaiming could scant
have sufficed unto the bare writing alone, all had it been but in paper
and scribbled forth in haste, at adventure. So that upon the proclaiming thereof,
one that was schoolmaster of Paul’s, 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.” And a
merchant answered him that it was written by prophecy. Now then, by and
by, as it were for anger, not for covetousness, the Protector sent into the house of
Shore’s wife (for her husband dwelled not
with her), and despoiled her of all that ever she had—
above the value of two or three thousand marks—and sent her body to prison.
And when he had a while laid unto her, for the manner sake, that
she went about to bewitch him and that she was of counsel with the Lord
Chamberlain to destroy him—in conclusion, when that no color 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
taken: that she was naught of her body. And for this cause—as a goodly,
continent prince, clean and faultless of himself, sent out of heaven into
this vicious world for the amendment of men’s manners—he caused the
bishop of London to put her to open penance: going before the cross 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 save her kirtle only, yet went she so fair and lovely, namely
while the wondering of the people cast a comely rud in her cheeks (of

2 politcly: prudently 4 curiously indited: carefully worded; skillfully composed
4 after that: after 5 fair: neatly in: on so . . . hand: such a good ceremonious handwriting
5–6 therewith . . . process: moreover, in itself such a long discourse might: could
7 before: i.e., before the beheading scant: hardly
8 bare: mere all . . . paper: even if it had been just on paper
9 forth . . . adventure: out in a hurry, recklessly
10 one . . . Paul’s: i.e., a teacher at the school at St. Paul’s Cathedral 11 matter: thing
12 gay . . . cast: brilliant, splendid ruse foul . . . for: shamefully ruined by
13–14 by and by: immediately (after the reading of the proclamation) as: as though
17 two . . marks: i.e., about £1,500–2,000; a considerable sum in those days
18 laid unto: charged against 18 for . . . sake: for the sake of legal protocol
20–21 no . . . matters: these things could not be made believable
21 laid . . . charge: charged against her as a high crime
22 herself: she herself all . . . wist: everyone in the world knew 23 highly: gravely
24 naught . . . body: sexually immoral goodly: admirable
25 continent: chaste clean . . . himself: himself pure and spotless
26 vicious: vice-ridden; immoral manners: ways
26–27 caused the bishop . . . to put: had the bishop . . put open: public
27 the cross: i.e., the large cross outside St. Paul’s Cathedral 28 taper: candle
30–31 were . . . only: had nothing on but her undergown namely: especially
32 while: when wondering: i.e., stares and whisperings rud: redness
which she before had most miss), that her great shame won her much praise among those that were more amorous of her body than curious of her soul. And many good folk, also, that hated her living 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. This woman was born in London, worshipfully friended, honestly brought up, and very well married, saving somewhat too soon; her husband an honest citizen, young and goodly and of good substance. But forasmuch as they were coupled ere she were well ripe, she not very fervently loved for whom she never longed. Which was haply the thing that the more easily made her incline unto the King’s appetite when he required her. Howbeit, the respect of his royalty—

5  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 her husband (as he was an honest man and one that could his good—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 forbore her, either for reverence or for a certain friendly faithfulness. Proper 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) 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 taken out of the charnel house. For now is she old, lean, withered, and dried up, nothing left but riveled skin and hard bone. And yet, being even such, whoso well advise her visage might guess and devise which parts how

1 miss: lack  2 curious: solicitous  3 living: way of life  4 corrected: punished
5 procured it: brought it about  7 affection: motivation
8 worshipfully friended: befriended by persons in high places  honestly: respectably
9 honest: respectable  10 goodly: handsome  of good substance: well-to-do
11 well ripe: fully mature  for whom: him for whom  12 haply; perhaps
13 incline unto: give in to  appetite: desire  required: asked for
14 Howbeit: But be that as it may  15 respect: consideration
15 gay apparel: fancy clothes  ease: a comfortable life
16 wanton wealth: extravagances  soft: impressionable  tender: immature
17 abused: violated; defiled  anon: immediately  honest: respectable
18 could his good: knew what was good for him  21 which: who  22 sore: very much
22 upon: of  23 friendly faithfulness: i.e., fidelity to the King, based on friendship with him
23 proper: elegant  fair: beautiful  25 but if: unless  26 higher: taller
27 yet . . . liveth: she is still living  to . . . well-visaged: to have had a pretty face
29 scalp: skull  30 the charnel house: a building in which skulls and bones are piled up
31 riveled: wrinkled  32 whoso . . . visage: anyone who takes a good look at her face
32 devise: imagine
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 had she, and could both read well and write; merry in company, ready and quick of answer, neither mute nor full of babble, sometimes taunting—without displeasure and disport. 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 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 the truth (for sin it were to belie the devil), 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 she got men remission. And finally, in many weighty suits she stood many men in great stead, either for none or very small rewards, and those rather gay than rich—either for that she was content with the deed itself 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 always 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 especially think that haply shall esteem her only by that they now see her. But meseemeth the chance 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 to
speed, as many other men were, in their times, which 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, 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.

Now was it so devised by the Protector
and his council that the self day in which the
Lord Chamberlain was beheaded in the
Tower of London, and about the selfsame hour, was there (not without
his assent) beheaded at Pomfret the foreremembered lords and
knihts 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 Radcliff, knight, whose
service the Protector especially used in the
counsel and in the execution of such lawless enterprises, as a man that had
been long secret with him, having experience of the world and a shrewd wit,
short and rude in speech, rough and boisterous 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 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 party)—caused them hastily, without judgment,
process, 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. 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, 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—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 means 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, such as they thought meet to be trusted, likely to be induced to that part, and able to stand them in stead—either by

Edmund Shaa, Mayor of London

Mayor of London, which upon trust of his own advancement (whereof he was, of a proud heart, highly desirous) should frame the city to their appetite. Of spiritual men, they took such as had wit and were in authority among the people for opinion of their

Doctor Shaa, Friar Penker

learning, and had no scrupulous conscience. Among these had they John Shaa—cleric, brother to the Mayor—and Friar Penker, Provincial of the Augustinian 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. Of these two, the one had a sermon in praise of the Protector before the

57/30—58/1 caused . . . beheaded: hastily had them beheaded, without a conviction or a trial or any kind of established procedure
1 other earthly guilt: i.e., their having been guilty of anything else whatsoever
2 nigh: close    4 rid: gotten
5 mused . . . meant: i.e., were trying to figure out what was going on
6 strengths: strongholds    7 wist: knew
8 space: time    dispute: discuss    make parties: form alliances
9 purpose: goal    10 was all the study: the whole question was
11 matter: thing    heinous: highly criminal    12 wise: a way
13 counsel: deliberation    divers: several (men)    meet: fit
14 induced . . . part: won over to that side    stand them in stead: be of benefit to them
15 power: military force    policy: political savvy
15–16 made of counsel: took into confidence    17 which: who
18–19 frame . . . appetite: bring the city into line with what they wanted
19 spiritual men: members of the clergy
20 wit: intelligence    were in authority: had influence
20–21 for . . . learning: i.e., because of how erudite the people thought they were
22 John: actually, Ralph    cleric: diocesan priest
23 Penker: Thomas Penker    Provincial: superior of the local province
24 doctors of divinity: theologians    25 fame: renown    27 had: gave
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 in the midst.

Doctor Shaa by

his sermon lost his honesty and soon after his life, for very shame of
the world, into which he durst never after come abroad. But the friar
forced for no shame, and so it harmed him the less. Howbeit, some doubt,
and many think, that Penker was not of counsel of the matter before
the coronation, but, after the common manner, fell to flattery after—namely
since his sermon was not incontinent upon it, but at St. Mary’s Hospital
at the Easter after. 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, in which he should
by the authority of his preaching incline the people to the Protector’s
ghostly purpose. But now was all the labor and study in the devise 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 the
rebuke of the Protector’s own mother, 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 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, 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 child—that would he should be openly declared, and
enforced to the uttermost. The color and pretext whereof cannot be well

3 was fain to: had to 5 honesty: respectability 7 shame of: embarrassment in the face of
6 durst . . . abroad: never afterward dared come out 8 forced . . . shame: had no concern
about shame 9 after . . . manner: in the typical way 10 was . . . upon: was given
not immediately after (the coronation) 11–12 of . . . beginning: in on it from the start
13 first: i.e., be the first to 14 authority: influence 15 bend
Paul’s Cross: an open-air pulpit (with a large cross on top),
on the grounds of St. Paul’s Cathedral 16 convenient: suitable
pretext for: alleged ground upon 18–19 In . . . devised: i.e., In which effort, they came up with several things
17–18 of . . . beginning: in on it from the start
18–19 chief . . . rested: chief and momentous thing in that whole contrivance consisted
21 disabled: disqualified 21, 22 by: from 24 lay: allege
24–25 sounded . . . rebuke: obviously involved a shaming 26 color: show of reason
26 pretend: claim 28 letted not: did not forbear to do 29 even: quite 30 touched aslope: discussed obliquely
27 would . . . should: wished that that point 32 devised: planned 33–34 would . . . uttermost: he wanted stated openly, and stressed to the utmost
31 all the: the whole 32 his displeasure: offending him 33–34 would . . . uttermost: he wanted stated openly, and stressed to the utmost
34 color: plausibility
perceived but if we first repeat you some things long before done, about King Edward’s marriage. After that King Edward IV had deposed King Henry VI 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 embassage the Earl of Warwick,

with other noblemen in his company, unto Spain, to entreat and conclude a marriage between King Edward and the king’s daughter of Spain. In which thing the Earl of Warwick found the parties so toward 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 there came, to make a suit by petition to the King, Dame Elizabeth Grey (which was after his queen), at that time a widow—born of noble blood, especially by her mother, which was Duchess of Bedford ere she married the Lord Woodville, her father. Howbeit, this Dame Elizabeth, herself being in service with Queen Margaret, wife unto King Henry VI, was married unto one John Grey, a squire

whom King Henry made knight upon the field that he had on Shrove Tuesday at St. Albans against King Edward. And little while enjoyed he that knighthood, for he was at the same field slain. After which done, and the Earl of Warwick being in his embassage about the foreremembered 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.

1 but if: unless  repeat: relate to  2 about: concerning  After that: After
4 determining himself: making up his mind  as: since  requisite: needful
5 in embassage: as an ambassador
5–6 the Earl of Warwick: i.e., Richard Neville, a cousin of Edward’s
8 entreat: negotiate  8–9 the . . . Spain: the daughter of the king of Spain
10 toward: cooperative  11 any difficulty: a hitch
12 mean season: meantime  a suit: an appeal  14 which was after: who was later
15 which: who  16 ere: before  her: i.e., Elizabeth’s
18 was: i.e., had been; was formerly  21 the field: i.e., the field of the battle
22 Shrove Tuesday: the day before Ash Wednesday
24 in his embassage: on his ambassadorial mission
25 foreremembered: aforementioned  30 restored unto: given back
31 in jointure: i.e., as community property to be hers in the event of his death. (These lands had been confiscated by Edward because of John Grey’s having sided with Henry against him.)
Whom when the King beheld and heard her speak—as she was both fair, of a good favor, 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 plainly that as she wist herself too simple to be his wife, so thought she herself too good to be his concubine. The King, much marveling of her constancy, 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, and had between them twain ensured her, then asked he counsel of his other friends, and that in such manner as they might easily perceive it booted not greatly to say nay. Notwithstanding, the Duchess of York, his

6 fair: beautiful of a good favor: charming stature: height
7 well made: possessed of a good figure pitied: took pity on
7–8 waxed . . . on: grew enamored of
15 Whose . . . perceived: When she realized what he wanted
16 with . . . manner: with such tactfulness
17 set: chosen and phrased affection toward: feelings for
21 durst: dared say: speak
23 in . . . plainly: finally she told him straight out wist: knew 24 simple: low-born
25 of her constancy: at her firmness as he that: he being one who
26 so . . . nay: so inflexibly said no to
30 appointed: decided them twain: the two of them ensured: become engaged to
34 booted . . . nay: would not do much good to say no
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 out of his realm—whereupon depended great strength to his estate by the affinity, and great possibility of increase of his possessions—and that he could not well otherwise do, standing 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 frustrated and his appointments deluded. And she said also that it was not princely to marry his own subject, no great occasion leading thereunto, no possessions or other commodities 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 commend the maiden’s fortune than the master’s wisdom. And yet therein, she said, was more honesty, 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 disliked, yet was there, she said, “nothing so excellent but that it might be found in divers others that were more meet,” quoth she, “for your estate, and maidens also;

whereas the only widowhood of Elizabeth Grey, though she were in all other things convenient for you, should yet suffice, as meseemeth, to refrain you from her marriage, since it is an unsitting thing—and a very blemish, and high disparagement—to the sacred majesty of a prince, that ought as nigh to approach priesthood in cleanness as he doth in dignity, to be defouled with bigamy in his first marriage.”

1 sore moved: extremely perturbed dissuaded: discouraged
2 might: could alleging: arguing
2–3 was . . . out: i.e., would increase his honor, wealth, and security as well, to marry into a royal lineage outside
3 great . . . estate: a great strengthening of his position
4 affinity: relationship with the in-laws
5 standing: considering so far moved: gotten so far with his negotiations
6 which were: who was all his voyage: his whole undertaking 8 wise: a way
7 frustrated: brought to nothing appointments deluded: arrangements made a mockery of
8 occasion: circumstance; consideration 10 commodities: advantages
9 as it were: as if it were 12 wanton . . . person: lascivious doting upon her body
10 standing: considering so far moved: gotten so far with his negotiations
11 which were: who was all his voyage: his whole undertaking
12 wise: a way
13 as it were: as if it were
14 therein: i.e., in the marriage between the rich man and his maid
15 more . . . honor: more respectability than there was honor
16 In . . . person: In whom as a person 17 disliked: disapproved of
18 that were: who would be
19 meet: appropriate estate: position; rank maidens: virgins
20 the only: just the
21 though: even if 22 convenient: suitable meseemeth: it seems to me
23 the only: just the
24 though: even if
25–26 refrain . . . marriage: keep you from marrying her unsitting: unbecoming
26–28 high disparagement: serious degradation cleanness: chastity defouled: polluted
29 bigamy: marriage involving a widowed person. (A man who had been married twice could not become a priest.)
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 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 alliance were thought so requisite,

he would find the means to enter thereinto much better by others of his kin, where all the parties could be contented, than to marry himself whom 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,” quoth he, “but there be, as ye say, others that be in every point comparable with her. And therefore I let 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 I love, nor is so unreasonable to look 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

1 said: finished speaking  1–2 made her answer: gave her an answer  
3 merrily: facetiously  wist: knew  out of her rule: no longer under her authority  
3–4 would . . . should: would gladly have her  was . . . mind: (he) had his mind made up  
6–7 for . . . God: with consideration to God  love together: love each other  
9 him seemed: to him it seemed  worldly considered: considered from a worldly perspective  
10 no . . . nation: no nation on earth  13 marry . . . of: marry someone from  yet: even  
13 outward alliance: union (through marriage) with some foreign entity  
14 requisite: needful  17 by . . . kin: by way of relatives of his (marrying foreigners)  
17 contented: made happy  18 whom: someone whom  haply: perhaps  
19 fruit: benefit  20 beside: otherwise  21 appetite: inclination  
26–27 I . . . them: i.e., those who like them can marry them, I not standing in their way  
27 reason: reasonable  28 dislike: displease  it . . . me: I so please  
31 to . . . love: as to resent that I am in love  32 to look: as to expect
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 lands, is often 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 likely 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 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 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

Elizabeth Lucy Dame 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 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 to the solemnization of this wedding till these same were clearly purged and the truth well and openly testified. Whereupon Dame Elizabeth Lucy was sent for. And albeit that she was by the King’s mother and many others put in good

1 appointment: arrangement 2 forbear: give up 3–4 by new affinity: via the acquiring of new in-laws in foreign lands 4 is . . . profit: that often causes more trouble than it’s worth 12–13 pray . . . content: ask you to be happy 17 hardly: by all means 18 take Orders: receive Holy Orders 19 I . . . yet: I never yet heard 20 nothing: not at all 21 disdained: was offended by 22 to Godward: toward God 23 disturb: block 24 objected . . . against: openly put up as an objection to 25 also: i.e., in addition to all the other women who had proved he was unlikely to be barren 27 objected . . . marriage: publicly put forward as an objection to his marriage 28 as . . . conscience: as if to get it off her conscience 29 before: in the eyes of 30 words: statements (of hers) 31 durst: dared 32 these same: i.e., words; statements 33 testified: attested
comfort 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 shown such
kindness to him, to let him so kindly get her with child. This examination
solemly 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 that was his enemy’s wife
and many times 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 that his embassage was deluded that for very anger and
disdain he at his return assembled a great puissance against the
King, and came so fast upon him, ere he could be able to resist, that
he was fain to void the realm and flee into
Holland for succor.

Where he remained
for the space of two years, leaving 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 VI, which was before by King Edward deposed—
and that muchwhat 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, 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 always; for in conclusion
King Edward returned, and, with much less number than he had, at

The Earl of
Warwick slain

Barnet on the Easter Day field slew the Earl of Warwick with many other great estates of that party, and so stably attained the crown again that he peaceably enjoyed it until his dying day, and in such plight left it that it could not be lost—but by the discord of his very 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 slippery a ground the Protector built his color by which he pretended King Edward’s children to be bastards. But that invention, simple 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 themselves list to make. Now then, as I began to show you, it was by the Protector and

Doctor Shaa’s sermon

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 begotten unlawfully by other persons by the adultery of the Duchess, their mother. And that, also, Dame Elizabeth Lucy was verily the wife of King Edward, and so the Prince and all his children bastards that were begotten upon the Queen.

According to this device, Doctor Shaa the Sunday after at Paul’s Cross, in a great audience (as always assembled great number to his preaching), he took for his theme “Spuria vitulamina non agent radices altas,” that is to say, “Bastard slips shall never take deep root.” Thereupon when he had shown the great grace that God giveth and secretly infoundeth 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 begotten in bastardy, and especially in adultery. Of which though some, by the ignorance of the world and the truth hid from knowledge,
inherited for the season other men’s lands, yet God always 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

5 pulled up ere it can be rooted deep. And when he had laid for the proof and confirmation of this sentence 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 VI, 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.

10

And besides that, neither King Edward himself nor the Duke of Clarence among those that were secret in the household were reckoned very surely for the children of the noble duke, as those that by their favors more resembled other known men than him—from whose virtuous conditions he said also that King Edward was far off. But the Lord Protector, he said, “that very noble prince, that 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,” quoth 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

1 the season: i.e., the time in which the truth about their paternity was not known
5 laid: submitted 6 proof: bearing out sentence: scriptural text
6–7 out of: from histories: accounts 8 descend into: home in on
9 declared: explained his: i.e., Edward’s title: entitlement
11 showed: announced his: i.e., Edward’s
12 very right: true rightful only: solely
13 declared: explained 14 before: in the eyes of
23–24 that . . . household: i.e., those in the household who were in the know
25 as . . . resembled: i.e., since they looked more like
26 known: well-known conditions: dispositions; mentalities
28 descend into: home in on
29 lineaments: features favor: attractiveness visage: face represented: manifested
33 before devised: previously planned
the Protector should have come in among the people to the sermonward, 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, by miracle. But this device quailed, either by the Protector’s negligence or the preacher’s overmuch diligence. For while the Protector found by the way tarrying lest he should prevent those words, and the Doctor, fearing that he should come ere his sermon could come to those words, hastened 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 thereunto, out of all order and out of all frame, began to repeat those words again: “This is the very noble prince, the special pattern 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 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 commonly stand, in the upper story, 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 got 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 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 struck him to the heart that, within few days after, he withered and consumed away.
Then on the Tuesday following this sermon, there came unto the Guildhall 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 keepest the hustings), 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:

“The Duke of Buckingham’s oration

Friends, for the zeal and hearty favor that we bear you, we be come to break unto you of a matter right great and weighty, and no less weighty than pleasing unto 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? That thing that we wot well ye have long time lacked and sorely longed for, that ye would have given great good for, that ye would have gone far to fetch—that thing we be come hither to bring you, without your labor, pain, cost, adventure, or jeopardy. What thing is that? Certes, 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 past ye stood evermore in doubt. For who was there of you all that would reckon himself lord of his own goods, among so many grins and traps as was set thereafter, among so much pilling and polling, among so many taxes and tallages, of which there was never end and oftentimes no need—or if any were, it rather grew of riot and unreasonable waste than any necessary or honorable charge. So that there was daily pill’d, from good men and honest, great substance of goods to be lashed out among unthrifts, so far forth that fifteenths sufficed not—not nor any usual names of known taxes—but under an easy name of ‘benevolence and good will,’ the commissioners so much of every

5 keepeth the hustings: i.e., holds the hearings on civil and domestic matters
6 commons: commoners 7–8 upon great pain: i.e., upon threats of great punishment
9–10 in this manner of wise: words to this effect
11 zeal: fervent devotion hearty: heartfelt 12 be: are
12–13 break . . . matter: speak to you about something 16 why: what reason
16 wot well: well realize 8 great good: a great deal 19 be . . . hither: are come here
19–20 labor . . . jeopardy: (having to undergo any) labor, trouble, risk, or peril 20–21 the . . . bodies: your own physical safety 21 quiet: security; lack of disturbance
22 of all: for all 23 evermore in doubt: always in fear 24 reckon: think; consider
25 grins: snares therefor: for them 26 pilling and polling: fleecing and extortion
26 tallages: levies 28 riot: extravagance 29 wasted: squandered unthrifts: profligates
30 fifteenths: taxes on personal property, equivalent to one-fifteenth of it 31 easy: innocuous
32 benevolence . . . good will: Edward was the first to levy what he termed “benevolences” and “good will” offerings: taxes imposed arbitrarily, without approval by Parliament.
32 of every: from every
man took as no man would of his good will have given. As though the name of ‘benevolence’ had signified that every man should pay, not what himself of his good will list to grant, but what the King of his good will list to take! Which never asked little, but everything was hawsed above the measure: amercements turned into fines, fines into ransoms, small trespass to misprision, misprision into treason.

5

10

think, no man looketh that we should remember you of examples by name—as though Burdet 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, then Chief Justice, that left his office rather than he would assent to that judgment, than to the dishonesty of those that, either for fear or flattery, gave that judgment.

15

Whereof, I think, no man looketh that we should remember you of examples by

Burdet name—as though Burdet were forgotten, that was for a word spoken in haste cruelly beheaded, by the misconstruing of the laws of this realm for the

Markham prince’s pleasure; with no less honor to

Markham, then Chief Justice, that left his office rather than he would assent to that judgment, than to the dishonesty of those that, either for fear or flattery, gave that judgment.

Coke What? Cook, your own worshipful neighbor—

Who is of you either so negligent that he knoweth not, or so forgetful that he remembereth not, or so hard-hearted that he pitieth not, that worshipful man’s loss—what speak we of loss? his utter spoil, 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, since there be, I doubt not, many here present that either in themselves or their nigh friends have known as well their goods as their persons greatly endangered, either by feigned quarrels or small

2 name of: term signified: meant 3 himself: he himself 3, 4 list: chose
4 Which: Who 5 hawsed: hoisted measure: limit
5 amercements: discretionary penalties (generally lighter than fixed fines)
6 ransoms: fees for pardons small trespass: misdemeanor
6 misprision: an offense similar to treason, but not punishable by death
12 looketh: expects remember you of: call to your mind
14, 17, 19, 29 that: who 18–19 to the dishonesty of: dishonor to
21, 25 worshipful: honorable 23–24 Who is of you: Who among you is
26 what: why spoil: despoliation
27 it... whom: i.e., he happened to be favored by people whom
28 rehearse... more: mention any more of these 30 nigh: close
31 feigned quarrels: trumped-up charges
matters aggrieved with heinous names. And also there was no crime so
great, of which there could lack a pretext. For since the King, preventing
the time of his inheritance, attained the crown by battle, it sufficed
in a rich man for a pretext of treason to have been of kindred or alliance,
near familiarity or leger 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

Open war the common adventure of open war, which
albeit that it is ever the well and occasion of much mischief, yet is it
never so mischievous as where any people fall at distance among
themselves, 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, nor so cruel and so deadly
fought, as was in the king’s days that dead is, God forgive it his soul.
In whose time and by whose occasion, what about the getting of the
garland, keeping it, losing and winning again, it hath cost more English
blood than hath twice the winning of France. In which inward

Civil war war among ourselves hath been so great
this realm that scarcely the half remaineth, to the great enfeebling
of this noble land, besides many a good town ransacked and despoiled
by them that have been going to the field or coming from thence.
And peace long after not much surer than war. So that no time
was there in which rich men for their money, and great men for their lands,
or some others for some fear or some displeasure, were not out of peril.
For whom trusted he that mistrusted his own brother? Whom spared he
that killed his own brother? 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
whose was best bore always least rule, and more suit was in his days
unto Shore’s wife, a vile and abominable strumpet, than to all the
lords in England—except unto those that made her their proctor—

1 aggrieved: aggravated  heinous names: i.e., names of more serious offenses
1 crime: charge 2 of: for  since: ever since preventing: jumping the gun on
4 of treason: i.e., upon which to accuse him of treason alliance: connection by marriage
5 near: close leger: slight
7–8 were . . . jeopardy: i.e., not only were your goods not safe, but they even put you in
physical danger 9 adventure: peril 10 well: wellspring mischief: harm
11 mischievous: harmful at distance: into alienation
12 none . . . nation: no (other) nation on earth
14 in the season: for the duration 15 the . . . is: the days of the deceased king
16 by whose occasion: on account of whose actions 17 garland: i.e., crown
18 inward: internal 20 effusion: shedding 22 spoiled: plundered
23 field: battlefield from thence: (back) from there
24 long after: for a long time after not . . . surer: i.e., not affording much more security
25, 26 for: on account of 26 out of: made of; i.e., in extreme
27–29 he . . . his . . . him: i.e., Edward(’s) brother: i.e., George, Duke of Clarence
30 for his honor: out of respect for him this . . . all: this you all well know
31 whoso: whoever more suit was: i.e., more resort for the making of appeals was made
33 proctor: advocate
which simple woman was well-named and honest till the King for his wanton lust and sinful affection bereft her from her husband, a right honest, substantial 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, speech, pace, or countenance, but without any fear of God or respect of his honor, murmur or grudge of the world, he would importunately 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 wives and their children, that them were liefer to lose all that they have beside than to have such a villainy done them. And, all were it that with this and other importable dealing the realm was in every part annoyed, yet especially 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 such injuries as for that you were nearest at hand, since that near hereabout was commonly his most abiding. And yet be ye the people whom he had as singular cause well and kindly to treat as any part of his realm—not only for that the prince by this noble city (as his special chamber and the specially 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, bore ever your special favor to his party. Which—your kind minds borne to the house of York—since he hath nothing worthily acquitted, there is of 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

1 simple: ordinary, undistinguished  was . . . honest: had a good name and was honorable
2 wanton: uncontrolled  affection: passion  bereft: stole
3 honest: honorable  substantial: well-to-do  3–4 in good faith: in all sincerity
4 counsel: confidence  appetite: desire, lust  8 person: figure  favor: facial looks
5 speech: manner of speaking  pace: walk  countenance: demeanor
9–10 respect . . . world: i.e., concern for his good name, or about everyone’s criticizing and resenting him
11 his appetite: the object of his desire  12 dolor: sorrow
13 friends: loved ones  being . . . themselves: themselves being upstanding people
14 house: household; family
15 them were liefer: to them it would be preferable  beside: otherwise
16 villainy: dishonor  17 importable dealing: intolerable behavior  annoyed: injured
19 minister matter to: furnish occasion for
20–21 near . . . abiding: he usually stayed mostly around here
22 well and: good and; very  24 chamber: place of royal residence
29 kind minds: sympathies; allegiances
30 nothing: not at all  acquitted: requited  that now: someone who now
31 show: make known to  32 errand: mission
33 wot well: well realize  need: be necessary  rehearse: relate to
again that ye have already heard of him that can better tell it, 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 a man so cunning and so wise that no man better wotteth what he should say, and thereto 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 well remember, substantially declared unto you, at Paul’s Cross on Sunday last past, 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 made open unto you, the children of King Edward IV were never lawfully begotten, forasmuch as the King (living his very wife, 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 unmeet to be matched with his, and the mingling of whose bloods together hath been 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 coupling, and also of other things (which the said worshipful doctor rather signified than fully explained, and which things shall not be spoken for me, as the thing wherein every man forbeareth to say that he knoweth, in avoiding displeasure of my noble Lord Protector, bearing, 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

1 that...that: what you have already heard from him who (i.e., Doctor Shaa)
2 of: from reason is: it stands to reason
3 to look therefor: as to expect this 4 the preacher’s: those of the preacher
4, 7 namely: especially 5 cunning: learned wotteth: knows
6 thereto: moreover 7 wist: knew namely: especially 8 honest: honorable
9 substantially declared: thoroughly explained
14 worshipful: estimable groundly: soundly 15 open: evident
16–17 living...Lucy: his true wife, Dame Elizabeth Lucy, still living
18 voluptuous: sensual 19 full unmeet: quite unfit
20 hath...effusion: has caused the shedding
22 there...grown: so much harm has come
24 worshipful: esteemed signified: intimated
25 shall...me: shall go unspoken for my part
26 that: what in...of: so as to avoid offending 27 bearing: i.e., he bearing
29 before remembered: previously mentioned 30 issue: progeny; offspring
to the common law of this land, devolved and come unto the most
excellent prince the Lord Protector, as to the very lawfully begotten son
of the foreremembered 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 especially of the north parts), not willing any bastard blood to
have the rule of the land, nor the abusions before in the same used any
longer to continue, have condescended 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 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 whose wisdom well perceiveth the labor and
study both of mind and of body that shall come therewith to whosoever
so well occupy that room 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 well perceived when he said, ‘Vae regno cuius rex puer est’
(‘Woe is that realm that hath a child to 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
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 beside, in choosing
them so good a king, and unto yourselves 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. Wherein, dear friends, what
mind you have, we require you plainly to show us.” When the Duke

2 very: true  3 foreremembered: aforementioned  5 commons: commoners
7 abusions . . . used: abusive behavior formerly carried on in the same land
8 condescended: come to agreement  9 puissant: mighty  10 like: please
11 wealth: prosperity  increase: aggrandizement  12 wot it well: well realize
13 loath: reluctant  as . . . perceiveth: he being so wise as to perceive well
13–14 labor and study: trouble and stress  15, 16 room: office
16–17 the great wise man: i.e., Solomon; see Ecclesiastes 10:16.
18 to: for  20 righteously: rightfully  so sad: such a ripe
21 thereto: furthermore  24 worshipful: estimable  25 weal: good
26 pray: entreat  29 all . . . beside: all the rest of this realm
30 commodity: benefit  32 prone: disposed; inclined
33 his election: the choosing of him  34 mind: view  require: ask  show: tell
had said—and looked that the people, whom he hoped the Mayor
had framed 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 others that were
about him privy to that matter, said unto them softly, “What meaneth
this, that these people be so still?” “Sir,” quoth the Mayor, “percase they
perceive you not well.” “That shall we amend,” quoth he, “if that will
help.” And by and by, somewhat louder, he rehearsed them the same
matter again in other order and other words, so well and ornately, and
nevertheless so evidently and plainly, with voice, gesture, and countenance
so comely and so convenient, 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 looked
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 among them, by which they might seem to
commune 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, which is the mouth of the city; and haply to him they will
answer.” With that, the Recorder,

Fitzwilliam,
called Fitzwilliam, a sad man
Recorder

and an honest, which was so newly come
into that office that he never had spoken to the people before—and loath was
with that matter to begin—notwithstanding, thereunto commanded
by the Mayor, made rehearsal 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 made in the people, which always, after one,
stood as they had been men amazed. Whereupon the Duke
rounded unto the

1 said: finished speaking
2 framed: brought into line
3 marvelously abashed: extremely disconcerted
4–5 that . . . matter: others around him who were in on that affair
7 percase: perhaps
8 perceive . . . well: don’t quite understand you
9 by and by: immediately
10 other order: a different order
11 countenance: look on his face
12 comely: decorous
13 amend: remedy
14 well and ornately: very elaborately
15 evidently: clearly
16 of all: i.e., by any of
17 rounding: whispering
18 commune: be conferring as to
19 partners . . . counsel: accomplices in that scheme
21 which: who
22 mouth: spokesman
23 happily: perhaps
24 called: named
25 sad: sober; dignified
26 honest: honorable
27 rehearsed: report
28 commons: commoners
29 rehearsed them: reported to them
tempered: managed
tale: telling
30 showed: presented
31 nothing no change made: made no change whatsoever
32 as: as if
33 amazed: stunned (as by a blow on the head)
34 rounded unto: turned around to
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 parts might have sufficed, saving that we such love bear you, and so much set by 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 themselves secretly, that the voice was neither loud nor distinct, but, as it were, the sound of a swarm of bees; till at the last, in the nether end of the hall, a bushment of the Duke’s servants and Nashfield’s, and others belonging to the Protector, with some apprentices and lads that thrust into the hall among the press, 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 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,” quoth the Duke, “since that we perceive it is all your whole minds to have this noble man 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

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1 marvelous: terribly  obstinate: persistent  2 unto . . . again: back around to the people
3 move you: bring you around  4 needed: i.e., needed to do  commons: commoners
5 parts: i.e., parts of it  6 so . . . by: have so much regard for
7 partners: collaborators  is your weal: is to your good
8 weigh: ponder  require: ask that  9 answer . . . other: an answer one way or the other
10 secretly: privately  that: in such a way that  voice: sound of their talking
11 nether: lower  12 a bushment: a secretly planted group
13 Nashfield: probably John Nesfield, of London
14 thrust: forcibly made their way  among the press: amidst the crowd
15 token: evidence  21 before: in front  cast . . . heads: turned their heads around
16 21–22 marveling thereof: wondering about that  26 manner: behavior
17 goodly: splendid  cry: shout  29 all . . . minds: your unanimous wish
18 so effectual: such an enthusiastic
19 weal and commodity: good and advantage  32 require: ask
before remembered.” 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; 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 burst out at their eyes.

Then on the morrow after, the Mayor with all the aldermen and chief commoners of the city, in their best manner appareled, assembling themselves together, resorted unto Baynard’s Castle, where the Protector lay. To which place repaired also, according to their appointment, 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 he first knew some part of their errand; as though he doubted 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 unto the Mayor and others, 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 propose their intent, of which they would unto none other person any part disclose, that at the last he came forth of 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 propose unto His Grace the intent of their coming without his
displeasure—without which pardon obtained they durst not be bold to move him of that matter. In which albeit they meant as much honor to His Grace as wealth to all the realm beside, 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 genteel of himself and also longed sore to wit what they meant, gave him leave to propose what him liked, verily trusting, for the good mind that he bore them all, none of them anything would intend unto himward wherewith he ought to be aggrieved. 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 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 God, profit of the land, and unto His Grace so much the more honor and less pain in that that never prince reigned upon any people that were so glad to live under his obeisance 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 he partly knew the things by them alleged to be true, yet such entire love he bore unto King Edward and his children, that so much 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 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

1 displeasure: taking offense  pardon: forbearance
2 durst . . . matter: dared not venture to make to him that proposition
3 wealth: well-being  the realm beside: the rest of the realm
4 would in no wise: in no way wished to  5 as: as if  of himself: by nature
6 longed . . . meant: was very eager to hear what they had in mind  propose: set forth
7 what him liked: whatever he pleased  for . . . mind: on account of the good will
8 anything . . . himward: would have any intention toward him
9 waxed . . . show: he took a confident tone and proceeded to tell
10 like: please  accustomed: customary; wonted  11 zeal: fervent devotion
12 decay: decline  13 zeal: fervent devotion
14 pain: trouble  in . . . upon: in that never a prince reigned over
15 obeyance: rule  16 strange thereat: unfavorable to it  17 all . . . that: although
18 partly . . . true: knew that some of the things they were alleging were true
19 that: i.e., he who  20 regarded his honor: cared about his good name
21 about: here and there  22 pain: trouble
23 upon: over
24 in . . . upon: in that never a prince reigned over
25 strangle thereat: unfavorable to it
26 that: although
27 incline . . . desire: accede to their request
28 mind and device: desire and idea
him that so would so use it as he that would not were not worthy
to have it. Notwithstanding, he not only pardoned them the motion
that they made him, but also thanked them for the love and hearty
favor they bore 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 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
occasion of the contrary, and of new intended to be, were now,
partly by good 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 that for a final conclusion, that the realm was appointed
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 for that they thought it for the weal universal to take that way
although 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, 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: “Since 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
against 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

1–2 so . . . it: so much would in such a way use it as whoever would not do so
would not deserve to have it
3 hearty: heartfelt; sincere
4 praying: imploring
5 like: please
6 use: make use of
7 uttermost devoir: absolute best
8 before: previously
9 it . . . surety: it would now not be safe
10 like: please
11 surey: way
12–13 by . . . license: with the Protector’s permission
13 a little rounded: privately conferred a little
14 like: please
15 desired: requested
16 showed: stated
17 appointed: agreed that
18 it . . . set out on it
19 thought it: i.e., thought it would be
20 weal universal: common good
21 way: road
22 to do so
23 loath: most unhappy
24 which else: who otherwise
25 inclined: yielded
26 in all probability
27 of likelihood: in all probability
28 inclinéd: yielded
29 commons: commoners
30 set: determined
31 earthly: in the world
32 suffer: allow
33 appertain: belong
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: we be content, and agree favorably to incline to your petition and request, and, according to the same, here we take upon us the royal estate, preeminence, 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.” 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 gave him. But much they talked and marveled of the manner of this dealing, that the matter was on both parts made so strange, as though neither had ever communed with other thereof before, when that themselves well wist there was no man so dull that heard them but he perceived well enough that all the matter was made between them. Howbeit, some excused that again and said, “All must be done in good order, though. And men must sometimes for the manner sake not be acknown what they know. For at the consecration of a bishop, every man wotteth well, by the paying for his bulls, that he purposeth to be one, and 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. And

1 very right: true rightful
3 your election: the choice made by you commons: commoners
4 effectual: binding 5 favorably: graciously incline: accede
6–7 according to: in accord with
8 royal estate: monarchical rank preeminence: pride of place; supremacy
9 kingdom: kingship; sovereignty
11 get . . . subdue: get back and bring into subjection
15–16 never . . . than: ask that God let us live no longer than procure: strive for
19 of the matter: about all this as . . . him: according to his own impressions
20 marveled . . . dealing: marveled at the way this exchange took place
21 matter: thing parts: sides so strange: to seem so out-of-the-blue
22 commoned . . . thereof: discussed it with the other
22 when . . . themselves: when they themselves wist: knew
24 all . . . made: the whole thing was set up
25 excused that again: in reply made excuses for that order: form
26 for . . . sake: for the sake of protocol be acknowledged: not acknowledge
28 by . . . bulls: i.e., by the fact that the candidate pays for the papal documents authorizing his being made a bishop purposeth: intends
28–29 and though: even if 31 as: as if
in a stage play all the people know right well that he that playeth the soudan is percase a souter. Yet if one should can so little good 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 might hap to break his head—and worthy, 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. 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 themselves no good.”

‡The next day the Protector, with a great train, went to Westminster Hall, 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 administreth the law—because he considered that it was the chiefest duty of a king to administer the laws. 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 good will of the people—when he had declared the discommodity 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 committed against him. And to the intent that he might show a proof thereof, he commanded that one Fogge, whom he had long deadly hated, should be brought then before him. Who being brought out of the sanctuary by (for thither had he fled, for fear of him), in the sight

1 right: perfectly  2 soudan . . . souter: sultan is perhaps a shoemaker 2 can . . . to: have so little sense as to  3 show . . . season: reveal at a wrong time 4–5 his tormentors: the sultan’s executioners  hap: happen 5–6 worthy . . . play: i.e., he would deserve it, for ruining the play 6 matters: things  7 more: most  scaffolds: stages for plays / platforms for executions 8 lookers-on: spectators  meddle: involve themselves 10 disorder: mess up  good: favor  12 great train: large retinue 19 declared: explained  22 pleasant: pleasing; agreeable 24 artificers: craftsmen  all: every  27 declared: pointed out 28 discommodity: unprofitability  commodities: advantages 34 by: nearby  thither: to there
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. For a mind that knoweth itself guilty is in a manner dejected 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.*

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 hath nevertheless so far come in question that some remain yet in doubt whether they

Perkin Warbeck were in his days destroyed or no. Not for that only that Perkin Warbeck, 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, one thing pretended and another meant, that there was nothing so plainly and openly proved but that yet,

Close dealing is ever suspected, for the common custom of close and covert dealing, men had it ever inwardly suspect, as many well-counterfeited jewels make the true mistrusted. Howebeit, concerning that opinion, with the occasions moving either part, we shall have place more at large to treat if we hereafter happen

2 a vanity: an empty show 3 saluted: greeted
4 in a manner: in some way 5 dejected: abased
9 mockish: sham 11 appointed: earmarked; supposed to be
election: choosing 13 fell . . . thick: misfortunes came fast and furious evil-gotten: ill-gotten
14 never ceased there: there never ceased 16 righteous: rightful
17 piteous: deplorable 19 tender: constitutionally delicate infortune: misfortune
21–22 Not . . . Perkin: Not only because Perkin
23 folly: foolishness so . . . abusing: for so long a time deluding
25–26 for . . . demeaned: also because in recent days everything was so slyly handled
pretended: asserted 28 for: because of custom: practice close: clandestine
29 had . . . suspect: always inwardly held it suspect true: genuine
31 that opinion: i.e., the opinion that at least one of the boys did not die during
Richard’s lifetime occasions . . . part: circumstances persuading either side
32 have . . . treat: an opportunity to discuss all that at greater length
to write the time of the late noble prince of famous memory King Henry VII, or percase that history of Perkin in any compendious process 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 such means as methinketh it were hard but it should be true. King Richard, after his coronation, taking his way to Gloucester to visit in his new honor the town of which he bore 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 that, his nephews living, men would not reckon that he could have right to the realm, he thought therefore without delay to rid them—as though the killing of his kinsmen could amend his cause and make him a kindly king. Whereupon he sent one John Green, whom he specially trusted, unto Sir Robert Brackenbury, Constable of the Tower, with a letter (and credence 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!), who plainly answered that he would never put them to death, to die therefor; with which answer John Green returning, recounted the same to King Richard at Warwick, yet in his way. Wherewith he took such displeasure and thought, that the same night he said unto a secret page of his, “Ah, whom shall a man trust? Those that I have brought up 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,” quoth his page, “there lieth one on your pallet without, that, I dare well say, to do Your Grace pleasure the thing were right hard that he would refuse”—meaning this by Sir James Tyrell, which was a man of right goodyly personage, and for

2 percase: perhaps  
3 history: story  
2–3 any . . . process: some succinct little work  
4 rehearse: relate to  
5 dolorous: sad; heartbreaking  
6 by . . . means: from such men and by such means  
5–6 it . . . true: i.e., it would be hard for it not to be true  
7 taking: making  
8 honor: position of honor  
9 of his old: in his previous one (Duke of Gloucester)  
9 devised: made plans  
10 fulfill: carry out  
10 intended: decided upon  
10–11 his . . . him: it did occur to him  
12 thought: planned  
13 rid: do away with  
14 kindly: legitimate / humane  
15 credence: a document furnishing credentials  
16 in any wise: by whatever means  
17 did his errand: delivered his message  
18 our Lady: the statue of the Blessed Virgin at the Tower (just outside it)  
19 plainly: bluntly  
20 to die therefor: even if he had to die for not doing it  
21 did his errand: delivered his message  
22 renotated: i.e., he relayed  
23 yet . . . way: i.e., Richard still being on his way to Gloucester  
24 displeasure and thought: offense and vexation  
25 brought up: elevated; moved up in the world  
26 went: expected  
27 surely: reliably  
28 pallet: makeshift bed  
29 were . . . hard: would be really hard to think of  
30 this by: by this  
31 man . . . personage: quite impressive-looking man
nature’s gifts, worthy to have served a much better prince, if he had well served God and by grace obtained as much troth and good will as he had strength and wit. The man had a high heart and sore longed upward, not rising yet so fast as he had hoped, being hindered and kept under by the means of Sir Richard Radcliff and 

Authority loveth no partners. Sir William Catesby, which, longing for no more partners of the prince’s favor—and namely not for him, whose pride, they wist, would bear no peer—kept him by secret drifts 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 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 had he sitting at the draught—a convenient carpet for such a council) 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. Then said the King merrily to them, “What, sirs? Be ye in bed so soon?” and calling up Sir James, broke to him secretly his mind in this mischievous matter; in which he found him nothing strange. 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

2 troth: integrity 3 wit: intelligence  high: haughty
6 which: who  7 partners of: sharers in  8 namely: especially wist: realized 
8 bear no peer: i.e., make him intolerant of having equals
9 drifts: schemes 10 marked and known: observed and recognized
11 time: opportunity 12 wise: a way 14 communication: conference
15 draught: toilet a convenient carpet: an appropriate setting
16 pallet chamber: waiting room on which: upon which; when
17 of . . . like: of like build brethren of blood: biological brothers
17–18 nothing of kin: not at all akin conditions: character traits
19 calling up: summoning
19–20 broke . . . matter: secretly made known to him his wishes concerning this evil business
20 nothing: not at all 21 strange: uncomplying 22 deliver: hand over to
26 appointed . . . them: decided to kill them during the night of the next day
26 devising before: planning ahead 27 left: dropped 28 name: designation
28 showed: announced 29 should: would
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 others removed from them—only one (called “Black Will,” or “William Slaughter”) except, set to serve them and see them sure. After which time the Prince never tied his points, nor aught rought of himself, but with that young babe his brother lingered in thought and heaviness 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 in murder beforetime. To him he joined one John Dighton, his own horsekeeper; a big, broad, square, strong knave. Then, all the others being removed from them, this Miles Forest and John Dighton about midnight, the seely children lying in their beds, came into the chamber and suddenly lapped 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, smothered and stilled, 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 thoroughly 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

1 sore abashed: very distraught  
2 I . . . though: I wish my uncle would at least let me live, even if  
3 told . . . tale: gave him the news used . . . words: spoke kindly to him  
3–4 put . . . could: encouraged him as best he could  
5 shut: locked  
7 see them sure: see to it that they stayed locked up  
7 points: laces for attaching hose to doublet  
8 aught rought: took any care  
9 thought and heaviness: anxiety and despondency  
11 execution: carrying out  
13 fellow: lowlife fleshed: experienced  
15 knave: scoundrel  
17 seely: poor, helpless  
18 chamber: bedroom lapped . . . clothes: bound them up in the bedclothes  
19 featherbed: mattress  
20 tormentors: executioners  
22 after that: after  
27 Which: Who  
28 caused . . . bury: had those murderers bury  
28 at the stair-foot: by the foot of the staircase meetly: fairly
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. But he allowed not, as I have heard, that burying in so vile
a corner, saying that he would have them buried in a better place
because they were a king’s sons. (Lo the honorable courage 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 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 VII, both Dighton and
he were examined, and confessed the murder in manner above-written;
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, likely long to live
to reign and rule in the realm—by traitorous tyranny taken, deprived
of their estate, 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 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: Miles Forest at St. Martin’s piecemeal
rotted away. Dighton, indeed, yet walketh 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 hewed of his enemies’ hands, harried on
horseback dead, his hair in despite torn and tugged like a cur dog.
And the mischief that he took, 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,
that after this abominable deed done he never had quiet in his
mind, he never thought himself sure. Where he went abroad, his eyes whirled
about, his body privily fenced, his hand
ever on his dagger, his countenance and manner like one always 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 about the chamber—so was his restless heart continually
tossed and tumbled with the tedious impression and stormy remembrance of
his abominable deed. Now had he outward 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. The occasion whereupon the King and the Duke fell out is

1 St. Martin’s: a sanctuary        1–2 piecemeal . . . away: gradually wasted away
5 in the field: on the battlefield        6 despite: contempt
5–8 the . . . did: i.e., this evil that he suffered took place less than three years after
that evil that he committed
8 yet . . . meantime: even all the time in between was
10 secret . . . chamberers: in the confidence of his valets        12 sure: safe
13 Where . . . abroad: Wherever he went out
14 privily fenced: secretly shielded (i.e., by light armor worn under his clothing)
16 again: back        17 care and watch: worry and vigilance        18 slumbered: dozed
19 about the chamber: around in the bedroom
20 tedious impression: troublesome aftereffect        21 outward: externally
24 gentlemen: upper-class men
of diverse folk diverse-wise pretended. 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 Persale, his trusty servant, who came to John Ward, a chamberer of like secret trust with the Duke of Gloucester, desiring that in the most close and covert manner he might be admitted to the presence and speech of his master. And the Duke of Gloucester, advertised of his desire, caused him in the dead of the night, after all other folk voided, to be brought unto him in his secret chamber, where Persale, after 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 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 horses), was come on his way to Londonward. And after secret meeting and communication had, eftsoons departed.

1 of: by pretended: put forward; asserted 4 thither: there wise: way
5 Persale: probably Sir Humphrey Percival chamberer: valet
6 desiring: requesting close: secret
7–8 admitted . . . master: i.e., allowed to see and speak with Richard
desire: request voided: were gone
8 advertised: notified desire: request
9–10 caused him . . . brought: had him . . . brought secret chamber: bedroom
10–11 after . . . recommendation: i.e., after conveying Buckingham’s regards
11 showed: told he: i.e., Buckingham show him: let him know
12–13 such . . . would: i.e., whatever part Richard should want him to
13 good fellows: reliable companions
14–15 instruction . . . mind: information of what the Protector had in mind
15 yet . . . again: met him (Richard) yet again
15–16 the duke his master: i.e., Buckingham
16 whither: to where gentlemen: members of the landed gentry
17 horses: horsemen; cavalry to Londonward: toward London
19 eftsoons: (the messenger) for a second time
Whereupon at Northampton the Duke met with the Protector himself, with 300 horses, and from thence still continued with, 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 turned from him and so highly conspired against him that a man would marvel whereof that change grew. And surely the occasion of their variance is of diverse men diversely reported. Some have I heard say that the Duke, a little before the coronation, among other things required of the Protector the Duke of Hereford’s lands, to which he pretended himself just inheritor. 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 before deprived, the Protector conceived such indignation that he rejected the Duke’s request with many spiteful and minatory 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, 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 to have been murdered

1 the Duke: i.e., of Buckingham  
2 from . . . with: from then on stayed constantly with (him)  
2 partner . . . devices: accomplice in all his schemes  
3 departed: parted  
5 lightly: quickly  
6 from: on  
6 highly: seriously  
6 occasion: cause  
7 variance: falling-out  
9 required: requested  
10 pretended . . . inheritor: claimed to be the rightful heir  
11 interlaced: intertwined  
12 King . . . deprived: the previously deposed King Henry (VI)  
14 minatory: menacing  
15–16 look . . . Richard: look King Richard in the face  
16 feared . . . life: feared for his life  
17 he: i.e., the Duke  
18 would not: did not want to  
18–19 taking . . . part: taking it badly; taking offense at it  
19 rise: get up  
20 evil: ill  
22 despite: contempt  
24 other: the other  
looked: expected
at Gloucester. (From which, nevertheless, he in fair manner departed.) But surely some right secret at the days deny this; and many right wise men think it unlikely (the deep dissimulating nature of those both men considered, and what need in that green world the 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 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 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 his head another way. But men say that he was of truth not well at ease, and that both to King Richard well known and not ill taken, nor any demand of the Duke’s uneffectuously rejected, but he, both with great gifts and high behests, in most loving and trusty manner departed at Gloucester. But soon after his coming home to Brecknock, 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), waxed with him familiar. Whose wisdom abused his pride to his own deliverance and the Duke’s destruction. The Bishop was a man of great natural wit, very well learned, and honorable in behavior, lacking no wise ways to win favor. He had been fast upon the part of King Henry while that part was in wealth, 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

1 in fair manner: in a good way; i.e., intact
2 surely: indeed
3 right wise: very astute
4 green: new, uncultivated
5 tyrant: usurper
6 or . . . Protector: i.e., or the Duke would give the Protector occasion of mistrust
7 utterly: really
8 suffered: allowed
9 high-minded: haughty
10 evil: ill
11 of some that: from some who
12 wried: turned
13 is well: was truly well
14 . . . ease: was truly not feeling well
15 that . . . taken: that this was both well known to King Richard and not taken badly by him
16 he: i.e., the Duke
17 trusty: confident
18 departed: parted (from Richard)
19 taken captive
20 waxed . . . familiar: (he) became friendly with him
21 abused: exploited
22 wit: intelligence
23 honorable: respectable
24 fast . . . part: steadfastly on the side
25 while: as long as
26 the King: i.e., Henry
came home but to the field. After which lost and that party utterly subdued, the other, 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 by the tyrant for his troth to the King—found the means to set this duke in his top: joined gentlemen together in aid of King Henry. Devising first the marriage between him and King Edward’s daughter—by which his faith declared, 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 titles had long inquieted the land—he fled the realm, went to Rome, never minding more to meddle with the world, till the noble prince King Henry VII got 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. This man, therefore, as I was about to tell you, by the long and often alternate proof 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 pleasant praises; and, perceiving by the process of their communications the Duke’s pride now and then balk out a little braid of envy toward the glory of the King, and thereby feeling him easy to fall out if the matter were well handled, he craftily sought the ways to prick him forward—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 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 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. 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 nor labor to set up that God
pulleth down. And as for the late Protector and now King . . .” And even
there he left, saying that he had already meddled too much with the
world, and would from that day meddle with his book and his beads
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 the 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 use his faithful, secret advice and counsel—
which he said was the only cause for which he procured of 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 found 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 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, so I were once hence, because of this proclamation made of horned beasts.’ ‘What, fool?’ quoth the fox. ‘Thou mayest abide well enough—the lion meant not by thee. For it is none horn that is in thine head.’ ‘No, marry,’ quoth he, ‘that wot I well enough. But what an 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 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 before 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 what it was. Whereupon the Bishop said, “In good faith, my lord, as for the late Protector, since he is now king in possession, I purpose not to dispute his 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 those good abilities whereof he hath already right many (little needing my praise), it might yet have pleased God, for the better store, 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.”

1 ever . . . on: I always think about 3 in his: on his 4 bunch: growth 5 a great pace: very speedily 6 whither . . . haste: where he was going to in such a hurry 7 In faith: Honestly 8 wot nor reck: know nor care 9 so . . . hence: as long as I can just be out of here 7 of: about 10 Thou . . . enough: You can plenty well stay 11 mean . . . thee: didn’t mean you 12 in: on 13 marry: of course 14 that . . . enough: that I know plenty well 15 pick . . . at: pick any bone with 16 the . . . boar: i.e., Richard (whose emblems were the lion and the boar) 17 In good faith: In all honesty 18 but thank: nothing but credit 19 ween: believe 20 would: i.e., would be 21 might: i.e., it might 22 turn . . . less: be little to my benefit and less to yours 23 wit: know 24 late: former 25 store: provision 24 meet: suitable