

A TRANSLATION OF RICHARD MORISON'S APOMAXIS CALUMNIARUM

by
Mary H. Eakin
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Name of Candidate: Mary H. Eakin
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Thesis and Abstract Approved: _____

W. Gordon Zeeveld
Professor of English
English Department

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ABSTRACT

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Mary H. Eakin, Master of Arts, 1968

Thesis directed by: W. Gordon Zeeveld, Professor of English

The thesis includes a foreword and a translation from the Latin of the Apomaxis Calumniarum, a book written by Richard Morison, apologist for Henry VIII, hired by his secretary, Thomas Cromwell. The work was composed as a rebuttal to an attack by the German theologian Johann Coclaeus, and contains a defense of Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon and of the executions of Thomas More and John Fisher, and an attack upon the papacy.

Morison maintains and supports by Biblical testimony that the divorce merely righted a wrong, as Henry's union with Catherine had been incestuous. He claims that More and Fisher were respectively sick and old, and were seeking the glory of martyrdom, but both were deserving of an ignominious death for the horrendous crime of obstinately upholding the power of the pope in England. He charges that the papacy had a spurious origin, and that throughout history popes have had a harmful effect. A large part of Morison's book consists of a personal attack on Coclaeus.

The first half of the sixteenth century in England was an exciting time of change, growth, and peril. There was a tremendous feeling of national pride, which supported the brilliant young king and his actions. Even so, Henry's secretary Thomas Cromwell was always aware of the importance of public relations, and throughout his ministry employed a number of propagandists whose task it was to respond swiftly to the events of the times. One of these was Richard Morison, and one of his most important works was his book Apomaxis Calumniarum.

The word Apomaxis is a Greek military term for a return battle fought to the finish. Morison uses it as the title for his rebuttal to the attack made by the German theologian Johann Coclaeus against Henry's divorce and against the executions of Thomas More and John Fisher. It is interesting to us as an early example of the political utilization of the printing press, but also as a reflection of a very typical Renaissance personality.

It would be difficult to find an Englishman more representative of his time than was Richard Morison. He was a humanist who studied the classics in Italy and returned to England to apply his learning in service to the state. He was an ardent Protestant who followed the Renaissance secular approach to man's problems. He became an outstanding example of the new aristocracy based on ability and accomplishment rather than on birth. He helped advance the press as a political instrument. His writings reflect a concern with the concept of the commonwealth as well as a recognition of the importance of law and an interest in the reformations of the laws. He profited enormously from the dissolution of the monasteries, participating

directly in that great economic upheaval of his time. And he was personally associated with such important figures of his day as Cardinal Wolsey, Reginald Pole, Thomas Starkey, Thomas Cromwell, and Roger Ascham.

Though a youth without social standing, Morison received the finest education his time had to offer and in the process became acquainted with men who were important or were to become important in the affairs of that era. In the Oxford History of England J.D. Mackie speaks of Morison as "once of Wolsey's household."¹ He was most certainly one of Wolsey's "picked young men" in his college at Oxford, where he served as petty canon.² He took a degree in arts in January of 1528 and immediately entered the service of Wolsey for a brief period.³ In 1534 Morison went to Padua to study Latin and Greek. He suffered greatly as a result of his poverty, but was helped by his compatriots who had gathered there, particularly by Pole, who took him into his household.⁴ He sought patronage, borrowed from his friends, and pawned his books, but took such delight in his studies that he was able to write to Starkey, "I am in need of nothing but money."⁵

By the end of the summer of 1535 Morison must have decided to emulate the remarkable success of Starkey, who had been hired by Cromwell to apply his literary talents in service to the king. Accordingly he made numerous appeals to Starkey to intercede in his behalf, and

1. The Earlier Tudors 1485-1558 (Oxford, 1952), p. 487 n.

2. W. Gordon Zeeveld, Foundations of Tudor Policy (Cambridge, 1948), p. 28.

3. Dictionary of National Biography.

4. Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, ed. J.S. Brewer and James Gardiner (London, 1862-1910), IX, no. 102.

5. Ibid., IX, 103.

presumed to bring himself to Cromwell's attention through a long Latin letter, in which he reported the highly unfavorable opinion on the Continent concerning the execution of More and Fisher and his own lengthy defense of the king and his counselors. This letter expresses many of the ideas which Morison later treats at much greater length in the Apomaxis and may actually have been the seed which bore fruit in that book. He describes an incident in which a Spaniard in Venice received one of the many inflammatory letters being circulated in Italy at that time, and was moved by it to say many harsh things about the King of England and his counselors. Morison was present and tells Cromwell, "I thought it my duty not to remain silent any longer." He then reports the various points he made in defense of the king, first of which was the fact that the majesty of kings should be regarded as sacrosanct. This he repeatedly asserts in the Apomaxis. In the discussion reported in this letter he is much more lenient in his treatment of More than he is later in his book. He admits that More was a learned man, whose authority was once great in England, and that More had blamelessly performed the duties of his magistracy—though considered too severe by some. But he does speak of More's obstinacy and accuses him of having been jealous of the king's reputation for clemency. His final point deals with the law itself. He defends the fact that More was condemned by a new law by saying that every law was new at some time, but nonetheless binding for that reason. He says the real matter for discussion is whether or not a law established by consent of the whole kingdom should be overthrown for the benefit of a private man, concluding that clemency is cruelty if it benefits one and hurts thousands. In the

remainder of the letter Morison complains of his poverty and begs for relief.⁶

The following February Morison wrote Cromwell plainly that he "wished to do something else than be wretched in Italy."⁷ In May Cromwell summoned him home and gave him an official appointment.⁸

Morison's learning, wit, and character fitted him remarkably well for the office of propagandist. He had ability in both English and Latin composition, a great talent for satire, and a conscience which sometimes seems extremely adaptable. While in Cromwell's employ, in addition to the Apomaxis, he wrote A Lamentation in which is shewed what Ruine and destruction cometh of seditious rebellyon, A Remedy for Sedition, wherein are containd many thynges, concerning the true and loyall obeysance, that conomies owe unto their prince and soueraygne lorde the Kynge (prompted by the Pilgrimage of Grace),⁸ "Abbreviations of a certain evill willyd man or wryt ayenst the Kynges doinges,"⁹ (the "evill willyd man" was Reginald Pole, Morison's former benefactor), An Invective ayenste the great and detestable vice, Treason, and An Exhortation to styrre all Englyshe men to the defence of theyre countreie, as well as several translations.¹⁰ In addition to these writings Felix Raab attributes to Morison a "commonplace book", reflecting a Christian humanism of a Protestant tenor, and an anonymous theological tract.¹¹

6. Letters and Papers, IX, 198.

7. Dictionary of National Biography

8. C.R. Baskervill, "Sir Richard Morison as the Author of Two Anonymous Tracts on Sedition," Library, Fourth Series, XVII (1936), p. 84.

9. Letters and Papers, X, 975.

10. Anthony Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, I. (1721) p. 95.

11. The English Face of Machiavelli (London, 1964), p. 36.

The Dictionary of National Biography suggests that he may also have written "Comfortable Consolation for the Birth of Prince Edward, rather than Sorrow for the Death of Queen Jane" and "A Defence of Priests' Marriages."¹² In addition Morison must have at least dabbled in Latin poetry. The Apomaxis begins with a poem celebrating the Reformation, and Hans Holbein's painting of the infant Edward VI includes below the portrait a highly laudatory poem written and signed by Morison.

These works brought their author rich rewards of prestige and wealth. He was apparently on very close terms with Cromwell, as attested by letters from various people asking Morison to intercede with his master for them.¹³ A.G. Dickens mentions that in February of 1537 Morison was living in Cromwell's house.¹⁴ In July of that year he was made Prebendary of Yatminster Secunda in the Church of Salisbury, a position which he held till 1539.¹⁵ He was given a number of monastic grants and the library of the Carmelites in London.¹⁶ In 1546 he received a new honor and a new career, when the king named him ambassador to the Hanse towns. In 1550 he was appointed to his highest office, the position of ambassador to the leading regent on the Continent, the Emperor Charles V.¹⁷ Europe was in turmoil, and this was a great responsibility as well as a great honor. As an indication of Morison's prestige and the importance of this office, he was knighted upon receiving the appointment.¹⁸

12. XIII, p. 958.

13. e.g. Letters and Papers XI, 328, 1185.

14. Thomas Cromwell and the English Reformation, (London, 1959), p. 77.

15. Wood, op. cit., p. 95.

16. Dictionary of National Biography, XIII, p. 957.

17. Ibid., p. 958.

18. Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, Relation to the Negotiations between England and Spain, X, ed. Royall Tyler (London, 1914), p. 177.

Sir Richard Morison had become a model of Renaissance success—a man achieving wealth and a political career not through the Church, but through scholarship. The Apomaxis served as an early and important stepping-stone in that career, but it is deserving of our consideration also for larger reasons. It is a most interesting early example of propaganda and shows Henry's (or Cromwell's) eager utilization of the printing press as a means of mass communication. It bears witness to the Renaissance scholar's facility in the classical languages and familiarity with classical literature. But perhaps its greatest value today lies in its contemporary view of a lively and fascinating moment in English history.

Though it is difficult to pinpoint the exact date of composition, the Apomaxis must have been written between the summer of 1536 (the date of the executions of More and Fisher) and that of 1538. In September 1536 Henry Cole wrote to Morison from Padua, congratulating him on his employment by Cromwell, and mentioning that he would like to see Morison's book when it was printed.¹⁹ This book must have been the Apomaxis, but how much had been written at that time we cannot tell. Indeed, it may then have been only an intention which Morison had communicated to his friend. It may well be that in the press of work assigned by Cromwell he did not fulfill his intention for two years. The date given at the end of the dedication in Berthelet's printing is July 12, 1538. Internal evidence would substantiate this. Morison speaks of the Pilgrimage of Grace (October 1536—February 1537) as "not many months ago" (p. 148). Certainly a delay in publication would have been detrimental to the purpose for which it had been written.

19. Letters and Papers, XI, 513.

This purpose was, of course, the defense of Henry's actions. Undoubtedly the book was written in Latin with a view toward Continental consumption.

The heaviest piece in Morison's artillery is personal diatribe. He makes use of historical and Biblical authority in defending Henry and attacking the Pope, but after each such volley he always returns to bitter and usually sarcastic invective against Coelaeus. This is an unsophisticated propaganda device, but we must concede Morison a remarkable talent in this direction.

He commands our respect, no less, as a classical scholar. His Latin is faultless. His many references to Plato, Aristotle, Homer, Cicero, and other Greek and Roman writers testify to a wide knowledge of classical literature. He employs several Ciceronian devices, such as parallel constructions, anaphora skillfully used in invective, and even such a specific device as having the country speak, as it does in the First Catilinarian Oration. The Greek used in the Apomaxis consists largely of quotations. This is not unusual for a second language employed in a literary composition, but nevertheless its simplicity suggests the possibility that Morison may not have been especially facile in Greek and was using it mainly for effect. (Even if this is so, we know that Morison kept up his Greek studies, for some fifteen years later, while he was ambassador to the court of Charles V, he and his secretary Roger Ascham found great pleasure in daily readings in Greek literature.)²⁰

As a piece of literature the Apomaxis has obvious deficiencies. It seems to be entirely lacking in any logical plan of organization. There are inconsistencies and weak arguments, particularly in Morison's attack

20. The Whole Works of Roger Ascham, ed. Giles (London, 1865), I, pt. 1, Letter CXIII, p. 73.

on More. Although he repeatedly accuses him of obstinacy, on page 189 he criticizes him as being inconsistent, for having at first not attributed much authority to the Pope, and then changing after the king's attack on Luther. A few sentences later he attacks men who "accomodate their speaking and writing more to the good opinion of men than to the commands of their conscience." He is apparently unable, or unwilling, to attribute the latter motive to More, even though this was certainly obvious to all. Morison's contentions that More sought glory and that he was seriously ill anyhow, so that his execution did not matter very much to him, were both dubious and weak. On page 192 he boldly makes the very doubtful assertion, "Much, much more seriously he offends God who willingly suffers death because of the defense of a wicked cause, than he who kills the defender of an honorable cause. For the latter harms no one but himself. He also benefits many, whom he teaches that the defense of virtue must be undertaken, even with peril to one's life, and even with sacrifice. But the former by his obstinacy draws many into his dangerous error."

Nevertheless some persuasive argument does remain, much of which would have been far more meaningful to the people of Morison's day than to us. The numerous Biblical references undoubtedly carried a great deal of weight to the Renaissance reader, and the constant insistence on the reverence due to majesty undoubtedly met with deep-felt agreement.

Morison's most obvious literary merit is his lively style. It is assertive, witty, virile, and always interesting.

Disregarding the literary assets and weaknesses of the Apomaxis, we can appreciate it as a contemporary view of the events and personages of the day. In addition to lengthy discussions of Henry's divorce and

More's and Fisher's executions, and the affair of Elizabeth Barton, Morison mentions a recent flooding of the Tiber, the custom of scholars studying theology in Paris, the "flourishing" city of Florence, the genius and religion of Padua, the visit of Charles V to England, Erasmus' tribute to Henry, the Pilgrimage of Grace, the intellectual growth of England under Henry, and the situation of Italian Jews converting to Christianity. He pays tribute to Cromwell, Sampson, Cranmer, Latimer, Gardiner, and Tunstall and makes mention of Luther, Tyndale, Vives, Melancthon, Wolsey, Oecolampadius, Princess Mary, and Machiavelli. The impassioned defense of Henry was certainly not merely a play for royal favor, but a true expression of the Renaissance Englishman's horror at an attack on majesty. More's execution could not have been easy to defend, and Morison's rationalizations give an interesting picture of the tenor of sixteenth century English opinion. He reflects also the strong Protestant feelings and thoughts of his day in his condemnations of the papacy, the belief in Purgatory, the sale of indulgences and dispensations, the faith in miracles and the efficacy of relics, and in his approval of the dissemination of the Scriptures. Yet the Apomaxis is not a dry, historical document, but is alive with the brilliant, sardonic personality of its author.

A Rebuttal of the Calumnies and Insults
by Which John Coclaeus, a Theologian
and Outstanding Professor of the Arts
and an Impudent Buffoon, Strove to
Attack the Reputation of Henry VIII,
Most Serene King of England, to
Darken His Name, and to Taint the
Glory of His Deeds, in a Letter
Recently Published, Not So
Much Against the King, As
in Envy of Him. Written
by Richard Morison,
an Englishman.

A Poem on the Same Theme

Truth conquers, piety triumphs.

Pure and simple soul,

Possess the purified world; artifices, go far away;

Deceits, withdraw.

Truth conquers; trickery, depart from here,

And you, Roman pontiff, go

Where deception, curses, frenzy call you, go

Where wrath might lead the holy.

Truth conquers, and Christ comes again.

Lo, faith, righteousness, and old-fashioned honor;

Behold, virtue and nobility

Have returned to earth.

Therefore, happy England, triumph,

Strew flowers, and strike the earth

With joyful foot, bind your head

With comely crowns.

Henceforth incense is burned on the hearth,

Scents which the genteel Arab sells,

And fragrant garlands now cover the hair,

And the temples drip with nard.

With pure lips the modest maidens
Sing thanks to God above,
And with hair flowing behind them,
Celebrate the festal day.

Why do they sing? For this without doubt,
Even that truth has conquered one. Deceits go far away.
Truth has conquered. Worship Christ
With incense and supplicating fillet.

To that most distinguished man, Thomas Cromwell, secretary and counselor
to the most illustrious king of England. Richard Morison. S.P.D.²¹

Since you alone, most honored man, sustain so many and such great affairs, let me not seem to have harmed the interests of our country for my own benefit if by too lengthy a message I strive to turn your attention from the very grave cares of the state to these trifles of mine. For who does not know, unless he does not know you, that you are all but overwhelmed by all the business of everything at home and abroad, public and private? Who does not marvel both that the most fortunate health of your body is so far from being impaired by your labors that your health and strength seem even to be nourished by them, and that your mind is so able to hold all things, so naturally fashioned for versatility and activity, that scarcely any troubles ever cast it down from its state of dignity and tranquillity? It is completely incredible that the genius, memory, and strength of one man can sustain so many, so great, and such diverse matters. Truly, it is your great and special glory that you, almost alone, receive everyone's letters of supplication, listen to all the complaints of everyone, and send away remarkably few, whom you can help neither directly, nor what is closest to that, with your advice./ Since you, with your lively mind, take up, put in order, and complete everyone's business, are we not ungrateful if we do not seek some alleviation of your labors, so that at your leisure, for some few little hours, you might more fully and more magnificently build up the state and by your exertion, council, and fortitude establish the restored religion of our most illustrious king? Assuredly, if it is proper that someone of our country to whom either the king's majesty or wel-

21. Salutem plurimum dicit -- "Sends warmest greetings."

fare is dear, should do this, so that you might sometime have an opportunity to refresh your exhausted mind, why is it right for it to be done by me, who am under obligation to you for so many benefits that on this day I might be judged, and might be, especially undeserving of life, when I seem to have possessed even my former life by virtue of your deliverance? For what can a servant owe a hero, nay, what can a man owe a man, which I do not owe, with interest, to your beneficence? But why should I speak of your beneficence toward me, when nothing has ever been more beneficial toward everyone, toward the country, its citizens, and those of other countries than you alone? Is there anyone in England esteemed for virtue, learning, or some greater strength of intellect, who, being known to you, has not felt your beneficence at some time? Is there anyone foreign to the household of our country who truly says that you are a patron of the English rather than of learned or honorable men? But what is not now owed to your prudence, your constancy, and watchfulness by England, which now for the first time, with you administering the government, has heard that extraordinary saying, reported to you by the sworn votes of all: "Truth conquers"? Since the priests of truth, even against the will of the Roman pontiff's servants, today not only are held in the highest light before the eyes of all, but even dare to speak the truth in the middle of the market-place, whom do you believe Truth leads in her triumph here? And how many should be led in the triumphal procession? Truth goes, borne in a white four-horsed chariot through all of England's cities, towns, villages, buildings, and corners. From all sides run the citizens, countrymen, old men, boys, and youths, old women, girls, matrons, and unmarried girls—in short all the English advance toward this triumph. They search out, decree, establish, hold, hand over, and pour out the

highest honors—joyful that Truth has triumphed. Gladly everyone, with remarkably few exceptions, sees the popes conquered and bound, the heaps of indulgences, leaden weights, wax easy to bend toward vices, a thousand stratagems of deception, huge armies of robbery, and finally the guardian of papal power, Violence, Terror, Cruelty, Fire Curses, Thunderbolts, captive, sad, and having abandoned all hope, following the course of the triumph. Gladly each one listens to the orators pleading the case against the deceptions, arrogance, and impiety of the Roman pontiffs.

The guardians of papal power, violence, terror, etc.

Ishmael, the firstborn of Abraham, nowhere in sacred literature increased the number of Abraham's posterity or participated in his father's glory.

A.iii.

Esau, the firstborn of Isaac, had no place in the Israelite nation.

These sons of the flesh, fallen away from their parents, the founder established by God does not recognize in the Christian religion. He

does not invite them to the inheritance. No, while the inheritance is snatched away from them just as if they were illegitimate, γνήσιος,²²

Three words of the praetor

that is, to those resembling their father, he says, "Whatever is of the father, I give, I dedicate, I pledge to you." In vain does the Roman pontiff deal with him. Let Peter be the vicar of Christ, let him be pope, if this pleases God, but Peter's first-born, if he occupies Peter's seat and never reflects his life and character, will this possessor of bad faith be forced to restore the inheritance he has received against the will of the founder? Let Caiphas rend his garments and cry aloud, He has blasphemed." Let his satellites be present, let them speak to the lictor, and let them even proclaim, "Go, lictor, bind his hands." Let them shout, "The accused is dead, we have a law; according to it

22. to the true sons

he ought to die; decrees order him to be killed; will he be killed? " Why should I? Why else then that by your virtue and constancy it has been brought about that after this the cruelty of pontiffs will never be able to harm any Englishman? England, when you see how great a prince, and what kind of counselors, bishops, and doctors, not to mention the others, have befallen you, do you not see why you are in debt to the love of heaven toward you? And when at one time so many things appear advantageous to the restoring or establishing of the Christian religion, do you not see that they gravely err who believe that human affairs are directed by the wisdom of men rather than by the very great and good providence of God? Don't you see that the happiness which you and your people have received is too great for anyone to be able to attribute it either to the rashness of fortune or the counsels of men? There is no one who does not marvel and become amazed that so many virtues, so many distinctions can be in one man as are in our king alone. All who rightly know him respect him. There is no one who does not congratulate the kingdom on such a prince, no one who does not proclaim both king and kingdom most felicitous, since to them have befallen counselors of such great justice, prudence, and integrity, and so many bishops of such great knowledge, so excellent holiness of life, and such ardent enthusiasm for the keeping of true piety. But finally to whom do we owe all these--the king, the counselors, the good bishops (rare birds)? To whom if not to the goodness and providence of God? Certainly when I consider how greatly the king is endowed with all the qualities of a very great prince, I sadly fear that his majesty might complain that it was offended by me in that I do not utterly

despise Coclaeus, since I think that so many virtues joined in safety to such great deeds cannot be touched or defiled by vile snails.²³ I know for sure that you will be my patron in this cause. For I do not just dispute with Coclaeus; I wage war with the whole papal mob, battle line, cohort, and army. Otherwise, unless I am mistaken, I shall seem to have stirred up snails rather than to have broken or cooked them. Nevertheless if there is no other/ reason at hand why I should not seem to myself to be great enough for this task, I have made it abundantly clear how bitterly I hate sycophants, not only all of them, but especially those who, flaunting their boldness, strive to wickedly tear apart the reputation of the most deserving of kings in regard to the Christian religion. I do not doubt but that I might prove the reason for this undertaking of mine to you, for whom I know there is nothing more important than the king's honor. If you will have persuaded the king that this labor of ours is worthwhile to him, consider its price aptly satisfied. May Christ long keep you safe for the management of our state and the propagation of His Gospel. At London, July 12, in the year 1538 from the salvation of the world.

A.iii.

23. Morison makes a pun on Coclaeus' name and the Latin coclea, "snail."

A Rebuttal by Richard Morison, Englishman,
Against the Calumnies of John Coclaeus

I believe that there is no one, or remarkably few, who has sufficiently examined the shamelessness, boldness, insolence, and other virtues and embellishments of this type of the pettifogger Coclaeus who does not wonder exceedingly again and again whether I have discarded all consideration for my name that I am not ashamed to argue with such a monster, so great an abomination. For why will the fool not dare to speak against me who makes sport and jokes of royal majesty, than which nothing on earth can be more august, nothing less violable? But let him have, let him use and even abuse the license to slander granted to fools. Why shouldn't I receive glory that I, along with the most highly extolled king of all, am afflicted with abuse, stained with defilement, and slandered with insults, especially by him to whom it was pleasing that there be great proof of wickedness? I have always been a loving man; a theologian wishes completely to be one who, if you defile him, he brings forth his testimony, offers the documents which he has made, and by that little praise, his soul so distinguished by so many virtues so amassed, is not injured at all, is not even moved. Indeed his renowned virtue determines his day's work, and his distinguished learning / seeks worthy honors. Of course a professor of the arts is unimportant, and also if you oppose him, he cites himself as witness, he sets himself up as arbitrator, and finally he establishes himself as a judge. Nevertheless, since you are

A

listening, "Unimportant man, don't you think that some strategem of deceit is being undertaken? Don't you see that a buffoon is ambitiously capturing the commendation of a modest man? Do you not perceive how he wishes to seem to be wholly without any zeal for glory? Don't you notice how decency gives a modest man pains lest in the cause in which he is engaged, he might extol himself more fully?" Certainly a feeling of shame must be supported. For it does not become us to be niggardly in this praise because he is eager to detract much from his praises for industry. By Hercules, a man who is himself shy restrains himself, and although he wishes to have a just honor connected with his name, all his speech suddenly is lost to fear, and although he anxiously wishes to talk about himself at greater length and in a way which would bring more honor to him, he does not dare, perhaps lest we hear his praises unwillingly whom everyone has long since demanded to be punished. Indeed that man, believe me, knows more than three arts, even if he knows that he has learned to recognize not even three out of the seven. One sychophant has absolved the arts for all. There is no position for making insults which he has not mastered to a hair, no seat of calumnies which he does not possess as friendly to the orders of his impudent pen. He has a school for whoever wishes to misuse passages of sacred Scripture for attacking the reputation of the good. There are always at hand pieces of historical writing; he has rhapsodies prepared which serve all causes of all people. Everywhere his writings serve the madness of the pontiffs, the diminished deeds of princes, selected from some Regino and Gigebertus, or rather plucked out, promote the pleasure of chattering

and nourish a lust for disparagement, repeatedly offering from this an occasion to injure oneself. Everywhere the selected patchwork indicates sufficiently how nothing can produce its own otherwise sterile quality except an unusual indication of malevolence. Good God, how many times does he threateningly hold out fabricated crimes by false accusation? How many times does evil go from one lie to another? Does it never tarry, never believe itself? Is there nothing anywhere which might trouble the reputation, faith, integrity, and religion of others in which that one has not presented everything which could be hoped for from the greatest sycophant? But granted he is impudent, granted he dares everything except to act rightly, he fears no one, he despises all men except himself, and finally, he spews out whatever insults he wishes against anyone he wishes; when I shall have joined those Theseuses to myself, I shall not fear that desire for serving the country or zeal for defending religion will start a contest with Coclaeus, who provokes and irritates everyone. For whose devotion to country would not furnish a sufficient abundance of oratory? Or should this / not supply it, would not the defense which has been undertaken in behalf of our restored religion cause anyone to be articulate? The son of Craesus, when his father was in danger, otherwise always mute, was able to say, "Man, do not kill Craesus," and I, inasmuch as our country has been saved from the long tyranny of Roman pontiffs by our most virtuous king's constancy, fortitude, and remarkable prudence and piety, should I say nothing when our religion, which long since changed its name along with its actuality, has now been restored and almost established, but is again

A.ii.

in danger, having been treacherously attacked? I do not regard the hatred of Coclaeuses of so much importance that I would prefer to lose a commendation for piety toward God, love toward the English, and goodwill towards all rather than not to appear to have scorned their insults. But certainly when with one accord all these things eagerly urge me to keep bending all my efforts toward them until such time as Coclaeus, entangled in debt, has paid off to the people the derision which he has long owed, should I not fulfill this obligation to everyone which I cannot fail to confess that I owe to each person? Payment on this debt is demanded, my good man; the sad Kalends are here; I summon you, I order you to appear, I call you to judgment, I hurry you off to trial. Why is it, disgraceful prodigal, that when you are insolvent, you prefer to bear the infamy of debtor rather than to clear your trust with your creditors? How much Coclaeus thinks of himself—worth even much less than a snail—because he has dared to draw his pen against Henry VIII, King of England, most lauded of all kings! But to be sure, unless I am mistaken, you will not in this case have raised your value so much as I shall have detracted from your usual estimation, if it can be done. I am lying; I know myself, I know what and how much I can promise from myself; certainly he should have much more eloquence than I have who would wish that Coclaeus would either be worth more than he is now or would give up his secret contempt for all good and learned men. However I shall give my labor and apply myself to this task with all my heart so that someday it may disturb you more to have catered to profit, lust, and favor than it now shames me to descend into the arena with you. Although I am

Coclaeus
owes de-
rision to
the people

not one of those heroes who struggle with nobody unless for a sure glory, as if led to the fight by the reward, however it can scarcely be said that God loves me so well that, with unwilling and reluctant mind, I take up this dispute with you, that I regretfully argue with Coclaeus. That Alexander, the truly great, even while a boy, was willing to fight only with the sons of kings—truly, the greatest indication of an outstanding soul and completely royal nature. But to set myself straight at last, I, from this industry, or rather amusement, of mine expect almost nothing other than a commendation for avoiding leisure and banishing indolence. Let it be for others to be touched by glory, to follow after glory; the praise for industry, love of country, and zeal for piety sends us away content. Assuredly, I shall feel that I have reaped sufficient glory from this struggle / if I leave a testament to all honorable men that I wish the character and reputation of good people to be unharmed and that I cannot stand sycophants. David while still a youth scorned human protection, although he was about to do battle with the boldest and strongest fighter, as whoever was weighed down with a helmet was not even able to walk, much less to join in combat. Why should I, even though unarmed, fear one who is armed only with the shamelessness of his tongue? But I wish to restrain myself, lest I inflame with wrath a man born for brawls and insults, and lest he, if superior, escape me; if crueler, he triumph over me; if more insolent, he become puffed up. But actually I no longer endure this worry; no, a man of generous spirit has freed me of this fear; for when I had no weapons, he promised me the advantage of his turning his own weapons against himself. For what so bitter has ever been spoken against an

A.iii.

I Kings

excellent king, against Sampson, against the reputation of all the learned men of Paris, Padua, and the others who were supporters of the king, that he, having abandoned a marriage which did not prove suitable, return into grace with the powers above and with honor; what, I say, has been spoken against them so boldly, so vilely, that is there anyone who does not know that Coclaeus always has been able either wickedly to tell all his lies or stupidly to accuse those men because he did not doubt it would be to his everlasting fame to construe as a fault what prudent encomiasts have found well done? I admit your kindness, Coclaeus, and I give you the greatest thanks because you promise me your help in attacking you. My spirit increases; I feel new strength coming on; if I have not entirely lost all my fear, assuredly I am willing for it to be postponed to another time in dealing with papists who have sadly feared that not enough has been accumulated by now from the counsel of sacred Scripture for the purpose of their fabrication. At that time they will feel—indeed, there is already no one now who does not feel, unless profit has taken away all his senses—they will feel, I say, how poorly the foundations of their new creation have been laid in the counsel of Paul the Apostle, and how recklessly and with what great peril to such a structure they have placed so great a weight on the shoulders of one man—a man often tottering and often even shamefully falling. But since I have decided to say a few words at some time about the authority of the Roman bishop, I shall proceed to that first, because it is especially to my purpose.

I greatly wish that through this defense of ours the fame of the most serene and powerful king of England, which Coclaeus in his frenzied letter recently sought to attack and even to destroy by the insults of a most wicked robber, that fame which up till now has never been damaged, I hope that from this it will seem even brighter. By the glory of his deeds the king will flourish, the king, who was born to glory, you obscure, good-for-nothing, jealous pettifogger. And you by your writings against the majesty of his name actually establish him whose honor you so eagerly seek to diminish, to soil, to impair, in the greatest favor of all people. / Everyone plainly sees how you act the sycophant when you attempt to rob a most noble prince of his good name, and how pernicious a flatterer you are when you protect the authority of the most audacious pontiffs.

A.iiii.

The king was at one time involved in this error, that even in a published pamphlet he contended that the boldness and authority of pontiffs ought to be equal and that everything was permitted to popes except what they did not wish. Was it not enough and even more than enough to make a good pontiff equal to Christ, that you should contend a bad, immoral workman is greater than God? Let it suffice that these things have been determined and fixed among the powers above, which, with Christ neither advising nor prohibiting, were set up by good pontiffs for living well and happily, but who unless he is not a Christian, could stand for God's laws being broken by intercessory papal decrees or by dispensations? Henry VIII, King of England, once with the title, now with the actuality of defender of the faith, by the grace of God, which has abundantly come to him, does not allow himself to be idle, does not permit his talents to be

wasted, and cannot bear to be unoccupied. Undoubtedly, since the king, while he served in the camp of the Roman pontiff, or rather led the army, took his part uprightly and innocently, and openly indicated what he would do if truth should someday give him a better cause, Christ the best and greatest, was not able at length not to show him some light of truth, was not able to make it appear to men other than it is, since, being merciful not only to all men, but especially to those whom no malicious spirit or evil mind impels to wrong, but those whom false tenets in place of truth have led to the workhouses of error. For I do not know how it is that no one defends the doctrines of Christ more fiercely than those who once attacked them the most. Why is it that neither faith nor integrity of him who always defends respectable things is as certain as those of him who, having suffered long in the dark caverns of lies, have recently burst forth into the free and pleasant fields of truth, as if from a shattered prison? Why is it that no one more ardently burns with the hatred of errors than he who, at one time steeped in them, loved them? Why is it that truth itself is often more valued than the error of men? Peter's disloyalty in denying that he was Christ's disciple was of benefit to him. His faithlessness and inconstancy brought and nourished a greater desire for faith and constancy. Paul less fiercely and with less animosity would have undertaken the work of Christ, or having undertaken it, carried it out, if through his memory of long-held error, obstinacy and ignorance, he had not joined the joy of sin forgiven with his enthusiasm for piety. The king married his brother's wife—or, as I might say more correctly—for a long

Faithlessness
is often
beneficial
to faith.

time he had her in place of a wife. You are hearing an immoral thing, shameful and wholly evil. Now listen again: thus he married her, thus he had her, as an innocent soul, in a completely impious affair, commits no crime. Truly when Prince / Arthur, our king's elder brother, to whom Catherine had been married, passed away, Henry VII, king and father of them both, was gravely concerned lest the foundations of friendship between us and the Spanish which had long ago been laid, might be prevented by Arthur's death from being built higher. If it was possible for it to be done in this way, he wished for the one wife of the two brothers to be kept in England. You are hearing of a great wrong, but one which was undertaken without any scandalous intention. He wished immediately to refer the affair to Rome, that is, to refer his honor to a place of business, and he would have done it then, if there had not been a very just suspicion that she had been left pregnant by Arthur. For a long time he did not dare to have any dealings with the pontiff at all in regard to a new marriage. But when finally he realized that he had been mistaken and that she was not pregnant, ambassadors were sent to Rome with money. For the king, just like everyone else in England before him, although very wise and good, following the world's error, thought that there could be nothing contrary to the laws of God which would not immediately become perfectly legitimate as soon as the Roman pontiff interposed his authority. Many men, commended by their outstanding erudition and the great sanctity of their lives, discouraged the king from the beginning, repeatedly warning him that the Pontiff could not abrogate the laws of God. Among the laws of

B

God there was one which said, "Let no one approach his next of kin." Likewise, there was one which said, "You shall not reveal your brother's shame, for your brother's shame is your own." Again in another place it has been said, "Whoever marries his brother's wife commits an illicit act; he has revealed his brother's shame, and he will be childless." Notwithstanding the aforementioned crowd of learned men, they seemed to be wise who, having rejected the sense of true brother, find some sort of allegory in that Levitical law, "Thou shall not reveal the shame of your brother's wife." Perhaps whoever is neighbor to a Christian can be said to be—and is—his brother, and we should bring nothing to light and disseminate nothing to the people which might be a deception or disgrace to them. Indeed in appearance a charming invention. But consider the matter more closely, and read those things which are found in that very chapter. You will easily learn how those men are completely in error. For you will hear, "Every man should not approach his next of kin to reveal his shame." "To reveal the shame", they say, "if we believe Augustine, can mean what other than to know a woman carnally, to have intercourse with a woman?" But although this interpretation may be far too groundless to be able to inflict doubt on anyone, whichever error they believe in most strongly, its adversaries twist the meaning to the other. No doubt they believe that conjugal intercourse has not been condemned here so much as fornication. Despite whomever they might persuade of that, certainly when we hear, "Whoever marries his brother's wife," the matter becomes illicit. Do those who rape and ravish marry? Furthermore who would believe this was spoken

Leviticus 18

Leviticus 20

to fornicators when he hears that the punishment of the law is / "He will be childless"? For what fornicator would not have regarded this punishment as a benefit? Indeed, what could be better to an adulterer than not to procreate children by the adultery? What could be more pleasing to a fornicator than not to appear a harlot? Now is that considered a punishment which practically covers the disgrace, conceals the crime, and protects the wrongdoer? Really, what could be more absurd? What could be farther from the truth? Finally what could be less likely than that God, the lawgiver, should more lightly punish men involved in very serious impiety than those caught in adultery, a common and almost everyday crime? For consider this, "If anyone will have lain with the wife of another and will have committed adultery with his neighbor's wife, let him be put to death, both the adulterer and the adulteress." You see that the crime of adultery is punished by a most painful death. If a man has incurred more serious guilt, if he has undertaken a much greater crime than that, is it not right that a more severe punishment would teach him that the sins are not equal? Therefore let us go on to that law with which we are now concerned. If a man marries his brother's wife while his brother is still living (doubtless when those apostles cannot become famous through other mysterious rites, they wish the dead to be alive), how should he be punished? You hear, "He will be childless." Why do you say that? Why is this? Is adultery more serious than incest that you deprive the adulterers of life, but only torture those who commit incest with a longing for children? Isn't it incest if a brother is alive for his wife to come into his brother's

embrace? And to marry his brother, that is, to involve one's whole life for all time in disgrace, must this crime be atoned for by the loss of children? But I know Coclaeus will accuse me of stupidity; he will consider me to be lacking in intelligence; he will question the keenness of my understanding; without a doubt he will say that the punishment has been doubled and redoubled if those guilty of incest are deprived of the solace of children rather than stoned to death. I shall not envy you your enjoyment of the commendation of an intelligent man, and I congratulate you on this liberality of a kind divinity. Admit your rare talents, but Minerva was nodding when we were born, and we find it difficult to be drawn from our opinion, we find it difficult to think adulteresses should fear anything more nor hope for anything less than children who, even if the husband is away, might easily cause a report concerning the mother's crime to be spread, or if the offspring should report the father as an adulterer, they would call them both to the punishment of the law. And if, stained by shame and disgrace, they had to undergo death, is it not better to have been without children than either to die unwillingly through desire for them or to leave them behind as heirs to eternal scorn, marked by a perpetual stigma? How many are there who love their children more freely than themselves? Tell me, Coclaeus, if because you had committed some crime in the past, you had to be put to death for your great guilt, would you consider it sadder to encounter death with no children watching, or to commit your neck to the rope, and with your breathing shut off, / to die with many children deploring your calamity? What would more severely tor-

B.iii.

ment a man already about to die than the future unhappiness, the impending misery, and expected calamity of the offspring he leaves behind? But in an open case longer talk cannot be without blame. What is more unjust, more shameless than to assert that all the other Levitical laws pertain to widows, but this one and only this one pertains to a man with his brother's wife while the brother is living? What of the fact that that elsewhere in this very chapter the wife of a living brother is forbidden to us, so that we have no need of this law? And since we are forbidden any neighbor's wife, are we not forbidden the wife of a living brother? What of the fact that Thomas, Scotus, Bonaventure (you are now in your own arena, Coclaeus, ass, as they say, in the chaff, or if you prefer, in the dirt; I shall not say, "Stink, pig.") while they anxiously and painstakingly dispute whether the gradations of consanguinity and relationship by marriage prohibited in Leviticus should hinder matrimony, do they often cite this Levitical law? What of the fact that general councils bring forth no other reason for forbidden marriage among people joined by these ties of relationship than that they are forbidden by Leviticus as if they were abominable? What of the fact that our Lord God says, "Do not defile yourselves in all these things in which all the nations which I am casting out before your face have defiled themselves"? "Keep my statutes, and do not do any of those abominations. Do not walk in the statutes of the nations among whom you have been living for too long a time now, defiled of shame and natural reverence. The corrupt ways of the peoples have blotted out the law once fixed in your hearts, and accordingly I wished the tables given to your

Leviticus 18

leader Moses by which I, as it were, said to my most faithful prophets both what I wished ordered to you and what things I demanded you observe in all scrupulousness. But let me not forget how great a sycophant I am dealing with; I am offering too apparent an opportunity for satire. For even from this Coclaeus will think that he has correctly concluded that those things were prohibited not by nature, not by law engraved in the hearts of men, but that they were finally handed down to us by the written law. I fear the grifins of a sophist, but, pray tell, why should I fear? Tell me, is theft not prohibited by a law of nature? Is not adultery? Is not homicide? But are not all these things also forbidden by the written law? Chrysostum has correctly said, "The written law was given earlier to men who were aware and understanding, and consequently, when the law orders us to worship God and forbids us to commit adultery or kill anyone, it does not add that whereas the former was good, the latter things are bad. Since conscience comes first, it first teaches us this." This saying of Augustine also pertains to this: "Before the law was given on tablets, by the hand of our Creator, truth wrote its anticipation on our very hearts. Do not do unto another what you do not wish done to you." Doubtless he said / this that there might be a way for them to be judged to whom the law had not yet been given. But afterwards, lest men complain that they had missed something, it seemed to God that the same thing should be written again on tablets. What was written on their hearts they did not read. When it was ^{not} written, they did not consider it; when it was written, they did not read it. Oh, shame, to what length of evil and impurity would the flesh not

Chrysostum

B.iiii.

have rushed headlong, had the human heart listened to no warnings of nature! What would lust not have dared if the law, given to man along with the breath of life, had ceased to defend the worth of a virtuous man and to place the foulness of turpitude before the eyes of men? What would have been the result of that long struggle between the flesh and the spirit if the goodness of God hidden within had not brought its support? Who can touch runny, sticky pitch and not be dirtied? Who can carry burning embers in his bosom and not be burned? Or when so many discussions have been undertaken and held with parents and with relations by blood and by marriage on not the most virtuous subjects, and when so many kisses have been exchanged, would such long intimacy stir up no flames? Would they trouble a sense of decency unless nature had not inwardly taught us that it was most disgraceful to mix with the blood of parents, to befoul the reputation of relatives and disturb the modesty of in-laws? If this law had not been determined, suppose that there had been no natural force, no admonitions of nature—is it believable that men would have lived not as the beasts or that they would have defiled themselves with every wickedness? If a man wished to unite with his mother, and she with her son, was there any reason why they should not? Take away that anticipation, that innate idea, take away the sense of wrongdoing, let shame depart, let disgraceful acts not accuse, and the companions of disgrace—grief and penitence—why was the life of our ancestors who were not yet born when the law was made known not more tainted? Why was it not more defiled? Did nature ordain the decree for beasts; did it reject men touched with no concern for honor and

Leviticus 18

Grief and penitence, the companions of disgrace

imbued with no hatred of vices? The highly respected author Aristotle wrote that the King of Scythia had a splendid mare, whose offspring were all noble stallions. When the king wished to breed one of these, which was considered more outstanding than the rest, with its mother, as it completely resisted this trespass, he then decided to conceal the mother by covering her, so that the colt might approach her unaware and playfully. Indeed he did approach her, but when in the mating he recognized his mother's face, which had become uncovered, he flung himself into flight and, driven onto a precipice, he killed himself. What is it fitting for men to do when beasts, shamefully prostituted, take upon themselves such a severe punishment? But I think it could happen, and if, as is your custom, you wish to contend more stubbornly, I shall grant you it is not very likely, which perhaps was true however, that a horse of such religion and reverence did exist. Assuredly I believe it could be that barbarians and Scythians have been prodded by this example to more honorable ways of living through the providence of the very great and good God. But / I shall cause those things to be passed over. Let us press on our adversary with sacred literature, not profane authors, and with definite proofs, not false conjectures. Let the Roman pontiff annul the fine which has been proclaimed for this wrong in order that he might indeed be the greatest who cannot be counted among the great except by injustice. We shall confess that he is able to dispense with the law (for I must use their nomenclatures). If he cannot take away the former, how will he bear the latter? For what is more absurd than to say that he can dispense with

A remarkable
example of
innate decency.

C

incestuous intercourse, and not be able to remove the punishment for incest? Certainly unless he removes the punishment, it is certain that this precept is not judicial; that is, if this type, that ought to be dependent on a human court. Again it is not proper to be withdrawn or ritualistic or to conjecture from this that it makes our justice to abound more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, having without doubt been established for this purpose, to restrain the force of lust. And hence, since these things are so, I would contend that this precept is necessarily moral and even though it is prohibitory, it prohibits and has always prohibited everyone equally. In addition since without exception Leviticus proclaims, since it unconditionally declares a marriage of this type forbidden, and not only to the Jews but to the Gentiles also, that is, to all mortals, and since the Gentiles at that time would have submitted to no law except the laws of nature, do you infer that this Levitical law was the law of nature and that he offends nature, breaks the goads of conscience with his own evil, and scorns the inwardly resisting voice of God who marries the wife of his dead brother, even without children? It is not the Pope who says this, nor Moses, nor the flesh of the Scriptures, but the living spirit of God in the Scriptures, says, "Let not any man approach his next of kin." Whom do you call the next of kin? According to the law, those who follow. You see that mother, step-mother, sister, maternal aunt, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, paternal aunt, the wife of a brother, and the sister of one's wife are called next of kin. But because it pronounces a sin against nature, because it gathers all these into one group, and finally because it makes general pronouncements concerning them

all, it wishes us to be admonished that all unions here enumerated are in violation against a respect for nature and conflict with the decrees of the honor for which nature has fashioned us. So why do you say that you have not been admonished, when it warns you thus?

"I am the Lord your God; do not be defiled by all those things by which the Gentiles defile themselves, which I cast out before your sight." But at this point let Coclaeus not evade--at which he is

Leviticus 18

an old hand--and say that the Gentiles have done all these things, and they were not cast out because of each of these wrongs. Let

him hear what follows: "Whoever does any of those abominations shall certainly perish from the midst of his people." Is it truly

Leviticus 18

so? Does God punish anything except sin? Again, is something a sin which has not been done in violation of some law? God / has

C.11.

wiped out nations because of marriages of this kind; he has afflicted them even to annihilation and destroyed them, and will it

not be a sin to violate the wife of a dead brother, to marry his wife, who can never be a wife to him, but is always his harlot?

But if you contend it is a sin, by what law, I ask you, has it

been prohibited, especially among the Gentiles, since even yet

no law has been promulgated concerning this matter? Do you see

that these defendants are prosecuted by the law of nature? Do

you perceive that by an edict of nature this law has been estab-

lished? "You shall not marry your brother's wife"? Whoever mar-

ries her violates principles of nature. Mark Antony Sabellicus

Mark Antony
Sabellicus

certainly seems to me to have very sagaciously noted the customs of

the barbarians. He wrote that the Tartars had multiple marriage.

Of course among them it is lawful for a son after his father's

death to marry his step-mother, and it is lawful to marry a woman who had been married to one's brother. Would that most learned man have deemed those things worthy of note if all nations as a usual thing lived according to this manner and these customs? But the man Coclæus, eager for glory and full of the hope of victory, has thrown Deuteronomy up to us, by which it is provided that if brothers will have lived at the same time and one of them will have died childless, the wife of the dead man will not marry another, but his brother will take her and will raise up children for his brother, etc. At first sight this law either conflicts or seems to conflict with that law in Leviticus which warns that you must not reveal the shame of your wife.²⁴ But one might turn his attention to the divine Jerome, who also observing this, states that the term brother is often taken four different ways in Scripture; namely, by birth, blood relationship, race, and affection. Indeed without any difficulty he matches, reconciles, and harmonizes these laws with each other. These laws do not conflict if you can know the various distinctions of brother. Therefore when the one law orders you to take a brother's wife, and the other forbids it, let us consider what the word brother means in each case. Assuredly in the Levitical law brother must be taken altogether as natural brother; both the context itself and the reason for the prohibition convince us of that. And if then no reason urges us, no necessity compels us to think that Deuteronomy dealt with this

Jerome's tract
Adversus
Helvidium
concerning
perpetual
virginity

24. Could Morison have meant "brother's wife"? cf. Leviticus 18:16.

brother, but it must be understood to mean "blood relation" brother; when many very apparent reasons persuade us of this, where is the conflict of Scripture here? Especially since the wife of a brother born of the same parents was prohibited, they were in fact forced to marry the wife of a "blood relation" brother, because of certain reasons which those times produced. Nevertheless the words of this same law make it quite clear that Deuteronomy dealt with this brother, for thus states the text closest to the true Hebrew, interpreted by St. Pagninus: "If brothers will have remained together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man will not marry a stranger, but a relative of his / will go in to her and make her his wife and shall make kinship with her. You see that he used relative in place of brother. And for you to use brother, didn't that ad-
versative but clearly enough indicate to you that that brother is meant which is opposed to a stranger and one not of the same tribe? This phrase is frequent in Scripture, For example, "You will not be able to make a man of another people king, one who is not your brother." Will you be able to interpret it here as brother rather than one who is brother by race? And so it is in the case of this law which forbids a woman to marry a man of another tribe. It is proper that you consider this man a brother, as opposed to a man of this type, that is, one who is of the same tribe, that which even the Hebrew word itself easily implies. For there are two Hebrew words which we translate as foreigner. To be sure Nechar and Zar certainly designate him who is not an Israelite, that is, one who is of a different tribe. Since this word has been used in this place, what other brother would you accept here than him

C.iii.

Deuteronomy 17

Nechar and Zar

who corresponds to this Zar, that is, a man of the same tribe? What of the fact that St. Pagninus translated "And he shall make kinship with her"? Was he not kin before if she was the wife of a true brother? Work yourself out of that, Coclaeus. I wish you would make here a testimony to the world that you perceive nothing in the Scriptures. But all controversy will easily end if we recall that a definite number was established for each tribe and family, and that a certain portion of land was prescribed by God for each tribe and family, lest they transfer from family to family or from tribe to tribe, and this was ordained by a new law. It says that all men may take wives from their own tribe and kinship and that all women may take husbands of the same tribe in order that the inheritance might remain in the families and the tribes not be intermixed. This law without doubt completely explains the idea behind the Deuteronomic law. Certainly they both intend that through the mothers and fathers of families the families might always remain in the same tribe and that fortune might never disturb the inheritance. So look to what lengths of evil you drive men, you who would compel a brother to marry his dead brother's wife. For consider a case where two actual brothers would marry--the one, a mother; the other, her daughter. Then suppose that the one who married the daughter died, and the mother died; or on the other hand if you wish, suppose that the daughter and the one who had married the mother died; if you interpreted Deuteronomy as Coclaeus does, would you force the one to cover up the shame of his wife's daughter, and the other of his wife's mother? But I dwell too long on an exceedingly clear issue. I shall hasten to the matter by

Numbers 36

which Coclaeus considers his entire case sufficiently defended. But is there any reason why this marriage of our king with his dead brother's wife should not be considered legitimate, even though it took place in open violation of the laws of God, since the Pope—not so much tribune of the people as quaestor of his treasury—was intermediary? / For what is so sacred that the holiness of the Pope would not violate it if money intercedes? In this marriage nothing was done without the authority of the highest pontiff. Indeed, who does not acknowledge it, unless I am lying, takes up battle not with the pontiff, but with Christ; who does not follow it rejects, weakens, and breaks the authority not of the Pope, but of Christ. The ass Coclaeus pricks up his ears to this very gladly. He is waiting for what I shall reply. What pope do you tell us about, Coclaeus? Do you think that we do not know that Julius II promised that he would abrogate the law of God in the king's favor or that we do not remember what kind of vicar of God he was? Or could he not seem like a priest of Mars or Bellona—a man who is as much an imitator of Christ as a wolf is of a lamb? No one more effectively laid siege to states than did this vicar. No one more than he at the right moment moved up his catapults—that remarkable craftsman for shaking towers, siezing walls, and pillaging cities. For the glory of popes is in matrons being forced into the evil of adultery, in widows being seduced, and maidens assaulted; most truly the glory of the pontiff lies not in his being the vicar of God. But is it credible for Julius, the second-in-command to the dictator Julius Caesar, the vicar not of Jesus, but of Julius, is it credible that he in so many upheavals of war could have had time

C.iiii.

Pope Julius

to get together, then disperse, then establish those things which the Lord so sacredly instructed in Leviticus, or rather that on any possible occasion, he sought a furlough? Assuredly it is not very likely that he was unskilled in divine law, that he was mistaken, that he had been led astray or deceived—he who was constantly occupied in enrolling soldiers, in posting his leaders, in inspecting his troops, in restraining those who disparaged his power and in keeping under his protection those who plotted revolution, in attacking the enemy, in placing snares and defenses, and in a thousand cares of this type. As I said, it seemed to Julius that Henry VIII could contract a marriage with his brother's wife without any wrong. Bulls, the product of the papal treasury, are issued, they are at hand, and they announce what the very lustful step-mother of Antoninus Caracullus is said to have replied: "It is permitted if it is pleasing." At last not much later the betrothal is arranged, Henry being about thirteen years old. But the less happy outcome of things which have been wrongfully undertaken usually teaches men who are not utterly asleep what has been done rightly and what has been done falsely, what has been done according to the will of heaven, and what has been left undone. Indeed Henry VII, not foreseeing any cause of illness, suddenly fell into worse health, and his weakened body was never able to recover its former state. Lo, one evil right after another—his wife, that most highly praised of all queens, died of a disease not much later. Was it any wonder if the king, admonished by so many signs of divine wrath, began to think the affair was turning out badly for those who in this cause were willing to take / up a quarrel with the laws of God,

Bulls, the product of popes. The wicked utterance of the bulls.

so that they could longer enjoy a friendship with a man? Was it any wonder if he wished undone what was already done, if he then remembered the wholesome counsel of those who warned him that he should not think that one woman could be the wife of two brothers? His own failing health, the loss of his wife, whom he dearly loved, as she indeed deserved, affected him with penitence for the error he had committed. What did he do then? What else than what was befitting to a most Christian monarch? He ordered his son to be brought to him. He was sent for; he was present, and also there were present many very noble men. The king exhorted his son born to the kingdom to consider along with him and with very good and learned men whether it was wrong to think that the laws of God were not the laws of God when the Pope so wished. He did not thus use lengthy oration; he easily changed the mind of his son, who was most subservient to his country. The betrothal which had been contracted was annulled, and by the kindness of the papal authority it was openly renounced. A public notary came, drew up a document, and sworn witnesses of what was done affixed their seals along with their signatures. Finally the son gave a pledge to his father that he would never marry that wife. The king, thinking that was true which had been made famous in proverb—"Love is born from sight; once born, it grows, and having grown, it takes over"—forbid his son not only conversation with Catherine, but even her sight. To be sure, he was not wrong who thought that love has its abode in the eyes, and from there hurls its weapons--meetings, conversations, intimacy, kisses--almost everything. But nevertheless it is not enough to have removed the loved one from sight, unless you remove

Love arises
from sight.

her in such a way that you take away all hope of meeting between the two. For it often happens that we are inflamed with love for one who is absent, though when she is present, we love her only moderately. Indeed this separation between them certainly had the effect that love prevailed more with the king than did the admonitions of his father. Doubtless after his father had completed his life and his power, he thought that Pope Julius would never approve of this marriage unless either it was not contrary to the laws of God or the Pope was able to dispense with the laws of God. We are all eloquent enough at persuading ourselves of whatever we especially wish to persuade others. What of the fact that there were not lacking those who, wrongly employing Scripture, too often informed the king, "He is the vicar of Christ; it has been said to him that whatever he binds on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever he looses on earth shall be set loose in Heaven"? What of the fact that in this blindness of mankind, no one dared to say anything about the authority of the pope, except faintheartedly, and no one yet dared to disparage it? And what about other things? Because of these encouragements and because of his love and the papal bulls which renounced the former pronouncements, the king married his brother's wife. The marriage was celebrated with all ceremony and with every kind of joy and pleasure. For a long time the king persisted in incest; for a long time he bore the annihilation of his line / as a human misfortune; for a long time the wife who could not at all be a wife was pleasing to him. Often the care of physicians was employed in order that someday there might be one who would call the king father. But why bother when the powers of heaven

D.ii.

oppose you? There is no medicine which would save him whom they will to be lost; there is no medicine. The fact that so many times an unborn heir to the kingdom was snatched away to death amid great sorrow—who would not think that had a great deal to do with this matter? Especially when he heard what was the punishment of the law which had been ignored—"he will die childless who makes his brother's wife his own"? If the pontiff is able to dispense with the marriage, why is he not able to take away the punishment for the broken law? If he can change God's mind in this case, when he says, "You shall not reveal your brother's shame", why can he not in this case, when he says, "He shall be without children"? For doesn't the king seem to be without children since the name of a family can be carried on only through males, and since, finally, it is considered almost a curse in Israel and also in almost all nations for one not to be able to propagate his name in the procreation of children? The highly respected author Plato thought that they were in greatest favor with the gods to whom the longest possible line of children rendered the otherwise wretched condition of mortals equal to the privileges of the immortals. Indeed he is closest to an immortal who is outstanding on that account while alive. Since he cannot live forever on earth, by this a perpetual name is prepared for him among posterity. From this marriage for a long time no living offspring could be produced. Finally a daughter was born, and, good God, how worthy, if born of a legitimate mother, how worthy she was that a kingdom not even her own should be given to her! But one must submit to the decrees of the stars, to fate, or that I might say what I wish—to the will of God. And being

Plato

Mary, the
king's
daughter

always engaged in good literature with the greatest profit, even she came to realize that an offense had been made against the laws of God, and even then her uncle's wife was being received by her father in unlawful embrace. Only Mary was able to survive; all the rest were either dead at birth or died soon after. Was it any wonder that the king, warned by the destruction of his line, tried in every way to mitigate the displeasure of the heavenly powers toward his posterity? Longing for offspring and grief for lost children often contrives many things, but at the proper time God admonishes those whom he hopes can easily be led to repentance for a wrong which they have committed. So finally, as God is merciful, a feeling of deep guilt entered the king's mind; to be sure, the greatest impiety was admitted against himself, since he believed that the Roman bishop, whose dispensation he had even repudiated, by the laws of God was able to pass laws. Cast down by this feeling, he deferred the business to the leaders of his church, who although they judged on first appearance that it was not quite honorable to wish to dissolve a marriage which had been ordained by the authority of the highest / pontiff and established for so many years, however to those who examined the matter more diligently, Scripture seemed to admonish the king not to consider it wrong to put an end to what the Pope had so prescribed. Certainly if the word of God lasts to eternity, if the laws of God endure forever, why should we not think that it is the duty of popes to encourage those who have been moved by repentance for their sins rather than to be leaders in perpetrating new crimes? For to make it permissible to persist in wrongdoing, to approach shame without shame, to celebrate an immoral marriage

D.iii.

with no offense to God--neither the pope nor an angel of God nor Christ himself is able to perform this, if it is still his will for it to be said what was formerly said: "I have not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law; I have not come to do my will, but the will of the Father who sent me." But let me meet with the enemy in close combat. Unless I am mistaken, the whole accusation brought by Coclaeus against the king contains these extraordinary points of calumnies: the wife divorced, the pope ejected from England, the pope's defenders slain--she should have been retained, he should have been recalled, and they could never have been killed without great wrong. And what is more, that whole controversy seems to me to concern the authority of the pope and the king and will easily be settled and the king will be freed from all calumny when someone tears down the pillars of papal authority, which were erected through violence and crime, and finally restores to kings the prerogative of royal rank, which through fraud on a blinder generation was taken away and hidden for far too long a time in the storage cases of papal profit. Therefore let us at sometime take up this very matter, and let us not drag out the controversy forever according to the judgment or the whim of men. But come, concerning the right under discussion, let us finally allow Scripture to speak--Scripture, which in no wise sets out to please anyone and by which all cleverness at appealing and evading is taken away. Let the sacred writings be witnesses to the deeds of history, and let them fully explain this whole case. Let us see at what time and of what parents that papacy was born, for a long time now almost the ruin of the world, certainly the sure destruc-

tion of religion and true piety, unless it should itself be destroyed. Listen to Bede: "Phocas ruled for eight years. When Pope Boniface inquired, he stated that the seat of the Roman and apostolic church was the head of all churches because the church at Constantinople appointed itself as the first of all churches." My good man, why do you seek with prayers that which you can by right claim for yourself? Why do you ask when it is in your power to force one even against his will? Why do you not rather settle on this formula: "Christ has assigned this as his seat; he has left us this for a testimony; if you don't wish to be harmful to Christ, you would wish our authority, by which he has willed us to flourish, and which up till now has been disturbed by the audacity of the Bishop of Constantinople, to be established for us." / Is it not the part of an utterly stupid man to force by entreaty someone with whom he can pursue his own right with complete privilege? Or is it not the part of an unskilled advocate to prefer that those things which are his client's should depend on someone else's will rather than to have been placed in his own power? But now let us see what favor has been recompensed to his commander by God, who has restored his vicar, long afflicted with injury, to his proper standing. It is right and it is also very likely for him to have been honored with some great reward. For how could God not think that this benefit has been arranged for him, since Christ plainly taught that whoever did something for even one of the least did it for Christ? But Antonius Sabellicus recounts more fully the kindness of the emperor Phocas toward Boniface, the vicar of God, and he records the gratitude felt toward him for this reason by God, the best

D.iiii.

and greatest: "From the beginning of his administration Boniface had dealings with Phocas that the Roman church be the head of all other churches, and this was granted as the apostolic seat reluctantly and not without much contention. The Greeks, taking this honor for themselves, said that they thought the seat of Christian piety ought to be wherever the seat of government was. The Roman pontiff in reply said that Constantinople was a Roman colony, and that Rome was still, as it were, mother and mistress. Also the Roman pontiff maintained through these things that Rome be declared the chief church of all." You see that he was made pontiff; you see that once established in that seat he administered the other churches; you see to whose account he ought to enter this honor. Now from the successful outcome of these matters learn how likely it is that all things which were attributed to his vicar were pleasing to God. As soon as he was made pope, Cosdras, king of the Persians, invaded the provinces of the Roman Empire. This war was brought on before it was foreseen, and the unexpectedness of it and the huge strength of arms caused there to be no cities or provinces disturbed by the war which the barbarian did not take, and Phocas was not able to oppose the injury. What do I hear? Cannot the Roman pontiff, already almost God's equal, drag God into the emperor's territory? Are you so quickly forgetful of such benefits, oh pontiff? Or if you remember, are you so ungrateful that you are not eager to render at least some thanks for a friendly service to you and to the Christian religion, since you are not able to render fitting thanks? Or is it right that he should be turned out, despoiled, and robbed of his wealth, rank, and power, who has placed

Cosdras

and established you in the highest position of honor, in the highest rank? And if you are ungrateful, is it fitting for God to see that man harassed to whom even for your sake he cannot fail to confess he owes something? And when all Africa defects from him, since you are the God and friend of Phocas, are you so unmoved by the sacrifice of your friend that you even call him daily to new disasters and new ignominy? Do you allow Mesopotamia to be overwhelmed by arms, booty taken from the fields, spoils stolen from the cities, / and also your beloved Jerusalem, oh Christ, to be taken, to be harassed and laid waste? Do you allow both sacred and profane to be thrown into confusion, destroyed, and pillaged by a most cruel and barbarious conqueror? Do you consider it nothing that 90,000 men are seized for slaughter—these dragged off to most wretched servitude, and those most cruelly killed? If all these things are unimportant, do you allow the wood of your cross, honorably stained with your dying blood, witness of the redeemed race of mankind, dear relics of yours, to go to barbarians? Do you not here bring aid to your people, to your emperor? Do you not help? Do you not restore the victory, almost lost by your men, to your already oppressed auxiliaries? But to those whom this matter moves less than it does me, I shall seem to become too excited, to draw out old histories too long. But in my opinion something greater, something more important has been touched upon here than what history itself indicates. When the pope arose, the wood of Christ's cross was carried off; the cross of Christ departed; Christ's blood was stolen from us. Under the pope's regime the salvation of Christ's death and the life of prayer began to be sought not from Christ, but from

E

Christ's cross
departed with
the rise of the
pope.

indulgences, fasts, cowls, and a thousand things of this type perniciously devised by plunder and deceit for profit. Do not be amazed, Emperor Phocas, if your impious piety toward Boniface made God angry with you--do not be amazed. Truly on that day on which you ordained him pope, understand that you seriously harmed the Christian religion, trampled underfoot the standing of the bishops, and removed the glory and honors of the priesthood from the altars. To be sure, modesty deserted the priests, integrity of life was renounced by the bishops, all virtue fled on that day on which desire for power and excess of wealth entered not so much the bishops' gates as their hearts, not so much their courts as their souls. And, Phocas, do you think the church of Christ is glorified and the vicars of Christ are honored when everything shines forth in gold and gems? These are the adornments of harlots--of harlots, not of pontiffs. Or do you truly wish to adorn the church of Christ? Have ecclesiastical interests really been consulted? See to it that in those men piety blazes up; see to it that good morals increase, that sacred teachings thrive and become vigorous in encouraging them to scorn wealth and deny sensual pleasures and overlook personal glory; see to it that they do not so much listen to you as long to fulfill that which you determine; finally see to it that they consider the true and only profit to the church is progress in the Christian life. If you persuade them of these things, Phocas, you will be the greatest friend of God, you will increase your own power by these means, and by these means you will easily not only obtain God as a friend for yourself, but you will also have bound him to yourself. But can he not become wrathful towards you, can he not avenge this audacity, this injury

Profit to the church is progress in piety.

done to religion and piety? Do you burden with wealth the vicar of Christ, the guardian of the bride of Christ, entangling him in sordid, vulgar, and very vile cares? Do you summon him to the tumults of war? / Do you spatter the blood of Christians, do you stain with slaughter, fill up with carnage? You will be taken as a thief into judgment; the accusation of a bribed slave will be made public; how will you clear yourself? On what pretext will you deprecate such remarkable boldness? You will pay the penalty, oh Phocas, you will pay the penalty for that day on which you took him away from his sheep to honors, from the altars to fortresses. You have been deprived of a great part of your power; you will also be deprived of life. What do you seek? Having been stripped of power, turned out of all his possessions, Phocas was taken at Constantinople, his hands and feet were cut off, and he was thrown into the sea, as someone unworthy for the earth to bear when dead, even because when he was alive, it had taken to the highest honors him by whom the earth had suffered from constant disagreements, seditions, and wars, even because by means of his priest he had taken away the justice of earth and the power of the world for his own heirs, for those who had almost been disinherited. But Coclaeus will declare that I am mistaken, that I err, that I who write of those things do not know history. So much was granted to those men by Phocas that they surpassed the rest of the bishops in rank. Who does not know that this prerogative of the rank of Roman pontiff introduced into the Christian religion almost whatever there is of evil? Or that all the wars which the Italians waged with the French, or the Spaniards waged with the Italians were undertaken with popes sounding

E.11.

Phocas' ruin.

the trumpet? What of the fact that the Mohammedans, with the monk Sergius, established in Arabia that most pernicious sect of the Saracens and Turks immediately after a pope arose? What of the fact that at this same time the heresy of the Acephali sprang up again? I won't mention that a little later Rome was taken, her citizens plundered, fire was sent from heaven, and the most grievous pestilence of all swept through the city. Coclaeus will ascribe these things to chance and fortune and will say that I am making false conclusions when I think that those things were done by divine providence rather than by an accident of fate. He will be glad that I, who am able to cite such very clear passages of Scripture, should be involved for so long a time in conjectures of this type. He will be glad that I, who can with one word harm his whole cause, should amuse myself for so long. But now, Coclaeus, see with whom you are dealing. See how I shall depart from the role of a cautious advisor. What you wrongfully demand I grant just as if it were rightly yours, and I shall grant abundantly. Let the Roman pontiff be the sole vicar of Christ on earth. Let us grant that he is so. But, I ask you, what does it mean to be Christ's vicar? What else than to take the place of the absent Christ, to carry out his office, to perform his function? And has Christ not taught you contempt for all human possessions, having spent by far the greatest part of his own life in extreme poverty? And has he not admonished you to obey the civil authorities, he meanwhile paying tax himself? And does he not everywhere try to lead all people, but most of all the apostles, that is, as they see them—bishops,

The Moham-
medans ori-
ginated when
the papacy
originated.

The vicar
of Christ

away from lust for power to the virtues of service and obedience? How many places are there in Scripture / which do this? Look, here are some, chosen for you out of many: "The servant is not greater than his master." The Lord has been servant to everyone; he has often through no fault of his own, been treated in most undeserved ways. Therefore what is fitting for the disciples to do, who are so inferior to their master? "The Son of Man did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life as a ransom for many." As he came, so it is right for you to come. Why so? Hear him: "I send you as the Father has sent me. I have given you an example, that as I have done, you may do likewise." "The Son of Man has not where to lay his head", and so, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth; do not possess gold or silver or money in your money-belt." "The princes of the Gentiles exercise power over them, but not so with you." Undoubtedly this is permitted them that might rule over them. This is necessary. This is of so little use to you that it is not even permitted. For this reason they have been appointed—in order to rule, in order to exercise authority, not in vain bearing the sword, so that when it is necessary they can accumulate wealth, wage war, and repel the injuries of the enemy from their citizens and from those whom they have subdued. But among you, let him who would be greatest be the least of all; let him who wishes especially to rule serve all the interests of all of you; yes, let him even be a servant to all. Let him who wishes to wage war do battle against vice, ambition, luxury, avarice, the desires of the

E.iii.

Matthew 10

Matthew 20

John 13

Luke 9

Matthew 6

Luke 22

flesh, and all the other true enemies of man; let him put them to flight, harass and destroy them. Do you wish triumphs to be decreed for you and the highest honors to be conferred on you? Do you wish your affairs to be held in the greatest glory? Triumph over vice and you will be a far greater general than Alexander the Great. Today not only the many other leaders, but especially the Roman bishops, stain and thoroughly pollute their ministry when they so wickedly combine such incongruous things. They call the inheritance of Peter what he often boasted that he did not possess. They are called apostolic who have nothing in common with the apostles except the position of apostles. They make themselves great with those things which if the apostles had not scorned, they never would have been great; indeed they would not even have been apostles. Why do you, whom the spirit of heaven in its heavenly body—that is, the church, has chosen for the greatest things, permit yourself to be drawn into the frenzied tumults of earthly princes? Why do you who have been destined for eternal matters, cast yourself down to the worries, cares, and baseness of money-lenders? Why do you scorn the gifts of God, taking the uncertain gifts of never constant fortune? For is this not foolishness, or shall I say madness, having scorned and rejected so much of tongues, prophecy, reasonableness, knowledge, wisdom, doctrine and a thousand other gifts of the richest spirit, to turn all your enthusiasm, all your life, to the most deceitful illusions of the vain world? And do you not

have very poor regard for the interests of your rank, who though you are dispensers of the heavenly / sacraments, undertake the management of completely opposite things? For what could defile your ministry if this doesn't? Does only the loss of money move you so, and when you depart from talk in which you converse with God, when you are drawn away from sacred meditation on heavenly matters, in which your predecessors once spent whole days and nights in company with angels, when you are led away from the most delightful feasts of sacred Scripture, where you have Christ as a host and the apostles as table-companions, and finally, when you cast aside the apostolic function of evangelizing, in which alone you approach as near as possible the worthiness of Christ, do you feel there is nothing lost, no damage, no condemnation at all? And to those to whom Christ said, "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose will be loosed", did he not say also, "Behold, I give you power to trample underfoot serpents and scorpions and all the valor of your enemy, and nothing will harm you"? Why I ask you, has everyone seized the former and repudiated the latter, when they were both said to the same people? Once, they say, once there was a time when it was fitting for the disciples of Christ to become famous among the faithful and among those already received into Christ's discipleship for miracles of this kind; there is no place left for miracles. Is it pleasing to jest like this? Are there no Turks? Are there no Jews whom you ought to receive as gain for Christ, when you can? Approach, three times high priest, approach scorpions, order them not to

E.iiii.

Luke 10

harm you with their poison, tread on serpents; how do they have any power to harm you, or if they did have it, how could they exercise it against you, when Christ, having been made surety against future damnation, has given sufficient? Why do you stand there? What is there which causes you to tremble so? I hear that many say that cardinals have often taught popes that even for popes poison is poison. Often a future pope has abolished his predecessor. I could hardly be led to believe that the vicars of Christ would do those things, or that Christ would not stand by his promises in which he so boldly stated that if they drank any deadly thing, it would not harm them. Of course Coclaeus will say that this was spoken to Paul and the other first apostles, not to popes. I am surprised, Coclaeus, that you do not lie here, when in that great hodge-podge of yours you hardly once spoke the truth. For vipers never harmed Paul, nor poison John, as it is written in church history. Obviously these are privileges of perfect men, not of treacherous popes, and they must not be looked for from the cheap purchase of positions, but from those whom integrity of life and full faith in God has raised above the hope and nature of men. And yet who does not know that God, though in other respects omnipotent, could with less difficulty guarantee the bites of scorpions to be harmless (which he has promised he would do) than see his laws, which he wills to be eternally sacred, / broken for the sake of gain? God is truth, and he does not change his name for your favor. The

Mark 16

Acts 28

F

word of God remains eternally. For the Scripture then said this: "Who marries his brother's wife does an illicit thing." I say "then" since Pope Julius made the incestuous union of the King of England and Catherine a legitimate marriage. The Holy Writ has no affinity with the writing of Coclaeus; it cannot lie; indeed it does not even know how to change its tone along with the papal pronouncements. It is the way of Guatonicuses and Coclaeus^{es} to affirm now what they had once denied, and then again deny it if your bulls deny it. The dogmas of truth stand for all time, and do not for some temporal cause take on new roles; they have not learned how to act for your advantage. They do not know how to flatter. On the contrary, if you should on this very occasion consult the Levitical law by which you permitted a brother to marry his brother's wife, it would certainly have been opposed to your boldness, or rather your impiety, and you would have discovered that you had done an evil thing when you led our most worthy king and a very honorable woman to such a crime. Nevertheless they admittedly want it said to all bishops, "Whatever you bind on earth" etc. But what they say so simply is not simple, if they would only listen to the evangelist. John tells the matter thus: "When he had said these things, he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" as if he might say, "Having received it, with it reigning in us, with it controlling our plans, deeds, and words, who^sever sins you remit are remitted unto them," etc. Why else do they wish "Whatever you bind has been bound, and whatever you shall have loosed

John 20

has been loosed" to be said without this condition, except that they see that it is always set within limits? Let them hear the divine Jerome. The bishops and presbyters, not understanding that passage, take on themselves something of the pride of the Pharisees when they either condemn the innocent or think that they themselves can absolve the guilty, since with God the opinion of the priests is not examined, but the life of the man on trial. What of the fact that Moses, in accord with the Lord's instruction, first washed Moses and his sons and then robed them? What of the fact that the prophet said, "Be washed and be clean; put off the wickedness from your spirits"? What of the fact that Paul said, "Put on Christ and you will not have the care of the flesh in lusts? He is not a Christian who has not been cleansed, who has not put aside the desires of the flesh. Certainly he is not a priest of Christ who dares everything and does everything. Or, since he is a priest, is it not fitting for us to charge him with bad faith toward God who has not observed the conditions of the covenant? And the Roman pontiff falsely shows God not to have upheld his promises when he not only does not observe Christ's precepts, but also with his edicts takes care that those who wish him to live more righteously can do so only with great fear of infamy. / Clement VII was vexed that the king had withdrawn from incest, thinking, doubtless, that it was a lesser evil for a king most worthy of heaven and for Catherine, by far the most excellent woman of all of her estate (if you overlook her error), to endanger

F.ii.

their salvation than for himself to be reduced in importance or for the definite limits on his authority, once imposed by Christ but constantly moved farther back by his increased boldness, to be established again at this time. They listen to Christ with reluctance; indeed those who think that it is proper that everything be permitted to them even wish that he had not been born, especially since he promises almost nothing except to his own, that is, to those who have put on his precepts, who are gladly obedient to him. How often he said, "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it will be done for you." And does he say, "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, " to no effect, since he also grants all things to those who do not abide in him and who never cease to attack his words and laws? But who is so impiously wicked as to think that Christ has said anything rashly or to no effect? Therefore, if God's words abide in you, by what means can you, by what external appearance do you claim that incest, covered with the mantle of your dispensation, has been put in the place of a legitimate marriage, when the law of God absolutely forbids it? How great a dishonor is it to you when an execrated marriage occupies the place of a sacrament, with you as sponsors? "Abide, abide in me," says the Lord, "and I shall abide in you; bind on earth what I wish bound, and it will be bound in heaven. Loose on earth what I wish loosed, and it will be loosed in heaven." But if on the contrary, you bind what he wishes loosed and loose what he

binds, we shall correct this passage of the evangelist, as was recently done—not without the great jeering of many people—by a certain priest of our country, who was as skilled in the Latin language as the Roman pontiffs are the true vicars of God. When this man wished his guardian god protected, I mean the pope—that is, the patron of ignorance and wickedness, he basely babbled out very many things in English, finally comparing himself to a sacred anchor. Did he not say that it had been said to him, "Whatever you bind on earth will be loosed in heaven"? If he had not been a man of rather undependable memory, he would have added also, "and whatever you loose on earth will be bound in heaven." Indeed a cover worthy of the dish! He is worthy who all by himself defends a cause so good. Learn modesty, pontiffs, or if you cannot so suddenly from the height of audacity come to the greatest virtue of modesty, learn to be less impudent. "My judgment", said Christ, "is just, because I do not seek my will, but the will of the father who sent me, and is yours not unjust when you make lawful what you see forbidden by the laws of God. Good God, how many successes has boldness had? What could you ever deny to impudence when you have once conceded that a man can propose laws more rightly than God? What can be conceived of more harmful to religion / than that certain laws of God are of this nature, that they can be broken without any offense against piety? It was Plato's wish that no law be proposed—even concerning the slightest thing—which could possibly be scorned, lest, I suppose, audacity be advanced, and we might easily think that even when legislators

Ridicule

F.iii.

Plato

propose laws about very important matters, they could either be scorned or more proper laws could be passed. But it almost slipped my mind what was brought up by Coclaeus, a prudent man and one born to interrupt arguments. They say he brings up the testimony of Pope Nicolas, by which priests in the service of gods are considered gods also, even if it is displeasing to the gods. So why now do you wretched kings, undoubtedly mortals, go against priests—that is, against gods? And why do you wage war with gods? And poor little man, when you see a god, do you not bend the knee? Having cast aside your crown, do you not bare your head? Do you not ask what the other gods are doing in heaven? who prevails? what arrangements they are making about us? what will finally be the outcome in such weighty matters? Do you not adorn with all honor those whom God himself calls gods? Don't you know why Socrates, a most holy man, found fault with Homer in the writings of Plato? He could not stand the quarrels, dissensions, battles, and adulteries of the gods with each other. He could not believe that through Vulcan's help Mars was bound to Venus. That the gods had come to such a sordid spectacle he could not believe. He said either Homer should cease to mention those gods or he should be ashamed to tell those things about gods. Why do you laugh, pontiff? With the name changed, this story is told about you. For either cease to live in a human fashion—to be full of the vices of men—to covet, become angry, to hate—not to mention anything else—or stop saying that you are a god. If someone should attribute such an honor to Moses and Joshua,

Priests
are gods.

Plato
criticizes
Homer.

he would indeed err, but much more honorably, with far greater hope of pardon than one who called some workman with a shaved head a god. Great is the power of a good man, mighty his authority, and great is the strength of his speech. Listen to God as he contends with Moses: "Let me alone that my wrath may scatter this people; let me destroy them; let it influence you not a whit that you govern them; I shall easily find a place where you may rule more widely; I shall place you over a people far greater and stronger than these." You see that in this contention Moses came out the victor, that God gave in to the entreaty of a good man. Listen to an utterance truly worthy of the leader of a people: "Either forgive them this offense or if you do not, take me out of your book which you have written." Joshua was able to say to the sun and moon, "Do not be moved." The sun obeyed, the moon obeyed, subservient even to the lord of nature, the voice of a man. Bring back Moses in his uprightness, fasting for forty days and nights, neither eating bread nor drinking water, and you will subdue the wrath of God. Mingle prayers with tears, and the sins of one's people will easily be forgiven. Consider that God speaks to you; let not the book of his law // depart from your lips; but you will meditate on him day and night, that you may keep and do all things which have been written on him. Then you will direct your path, and you will perceive it. If you do not do these things and you are not going to do them, seek pardon for profaning your office, leave gods to the gods, for even if in poetry the gods often marry or ensnare other people's wives and

Deuteronomy 9

Joshua 10

F.iiii.

Joshua 1

children, it is not fitting for them to do those things among Christians. Either act in a manner befitting the gods or keep for yourselves an entreaty in behalf of human weakness. Look into yourself for a little while, oh great pontiff; see whether you have ceased to be a man, whether you as Paul can say with Paul, "The world is crucified to me, and I to the world." See if your body is free from all desires of the flesh and if your soul is free from ambition, hatred, and pride. Give up everything which you have gained through the support of flatterers; restore whatever they have given speaking in your favor. Look at yourself without the mask of sanctity. See whether it is very likely that they are speaking of you who call you a vicar of God. Enter into the temple of your soul and see whether it can say without any sign of vanity, "I have left all things and followed Christ." "To me have been given the keys of the kingdom of heaven." In vain do I tell my story to the deaf. Therefore, I shall turn my speech to you, oh most serene monarch. It is what the prophet wishes to be spoken to you through me. "Go," he says, "and approach him who dwells in the tabernacle, Sobna, the commander of the temple, and you will say to him, 'Why are you here? Or in what capacity are you here? Are you God's vicar? Or, since you are not, do you deceive the people, as if you were the vicar of God? Do you delude princes? Do you rob the people? Why have you cut out a sepulcher for yourself here? Why have you carved out your memorial with such diligence in such a lofty place? Why have you carved out a tabernacle for

Among
Christians
gods do not
marry.

Matthew 19

Matthew 16

To the king.

Sobna

yourself in Petra?"²⁵ See, oh king, what the Roman pontiffs answer here, who have indeed built up their own throne in Petra, but not properly carved, not made with art. They want to make Peter Christ, a man God, the disciple the master, in other words, as they say, an ass a bird. Rightly the divine Jerome, having seized the opportunity from this situation, notes that pride must be avoided with all zeal, as it is especially offensive to God, and not even the office of pontiff can be secure through privilege. Sobna was haughty, pompous and pleasure-seeking, and of the type which would trample the people under his feet. Jerome said this, so is there nothing which you can say? Oh, he is not even to be compared with our pontiffs. They do not trample on the people but on the crowns of emperors and with a most audacious foot knock them off the sancrosanct head. Emperors for shame are forced to offer them their bodies to be trampled upon. But go on, oh king. Relate the rest of the prophet's sermon. Behold, the Lord will cause you to be removed, as a pugnacious cock is removed, or like a garment, so he will remove you. In place of your triple crown he will crown you with tribulation, and / he will hurl you like a spear into a broad and spacious land. There you will wither away, and there will be the chariot of your glory and the degradation of the abode of your lord. "I shall drive you out. Don't worry, Paul, I shall drive you out," says the Lord, who

G

25. Morison is probably making a triple pun on Peter, rock, and the land of Petra. He uses the Latin Petra.

neither falters nor fails, "I shall expel you from your position and remove you from your ministry." But, I beg you, stand by your promises and do not allow your prophet to cajole us any longer with false joy or to hold out any longer a false hope of freedom. Do not be angry with us any longer. Do not pollute your inheritance any longer. May you have pity at last on a people enduring what they do not deserve. May you be willing for your people, who have remained in error long enough and who have been harassed long enough, bearing burdens among the Egyptians, at last to be set free from the very cruel Pharaoh. May you be willing that what has happened to the English through your remarkable mercy and through the faithfulness of the best of kings may soon be granted to the French and Italians. May they to whom you have been proclaiming for too long a time finally listen to you. Hear the word of the Lord, deceitful men who rule over my people, who say, "We have made a covenant with death, and established a compact with hell." It is not strange that nothing has been said by him about purgatory, that which after a long time has been established for traffic in indulgences. For the prophets could not have seen everything except what does not exist. Listen, deceivers, it will be destroyed, your covenant with death will be destroyed, and your compact with hell will not stand. For a long time, and for too long a time, you have persuaded the people that those who dare to attack you are going straight to hell, and those who have defended your pronouncements enter directly into heaven.

Isiah 47

Isaiah 26

Purgatory has
been set up for
the sale of
indulgences.

Or with this pact between you, hell closed its doors and all its gates as often as you wished to shut in souls hastening to that place in purgatory, and having shut them in, to turn them over and over, and having turned them over with lashes, to slay them, and having slain them, to burn them in the flames. There was no heaven whenever you found a new reason for enslaving men already long resting in their tombs and snatched them from their graves to the flames and called down to hell from heaven souls triumphing before their victory. Good Lord, what should we think the other little souls of saints think when you wrongfully approach and they see companion souls cast down, driven out, and dislodged from the possession of heaven or from their estates? Is it conceivable that they could be without fear and not tremble and grow pale and be in great terror lest, if some little piece of paper should be found at their home which would indicate that while they were living they resented the power of the pope, they would suffer a similar fate and be forced first to give up their joys and then to give themselves up to grief and gnashing of teeth? How could it be that the joy which men feel on being received into heaven would not be diminished in man's heart when this fear mars it? When some commissioned document or prepared pronouncement might order that any soul you wish would straightway depart from heaven to hell (with Christ crying out in vain, "I shall not allow the sheep which the Father has given me to perish")? / Truly Christ can now say what the prophet once said: "My people are taken captive

G.11.

Isaiah 5

because they lack knowledge, and its people of noble birth have perished from thirst." Truly now there is need of an inciter and one who can persuade kings of things worthy of kings. Understand, oh kings, understand the deceits of pontiffs; you who judge the earth are instructed. Learn what it is to trust yourselves and your children, your citizens, your life and salvation to deceivers, and do not allow that blind man from whom you learn always to be more sighted than you. We know that God does not listen to sinners, especially when they call on him in behalf of others, but if anyone is a worshipper of God and submits to his will, God hears him. If you do not believe a blind man, believe the Holy Spirit. When you reach your hands out, I shall turn away my eyes from you, and although you greatly increase your speech, I shall not listen. They will believe Peter, and also the pope. The eyes of the Lord are on the just, and his ears on their entreaty. The bad and wicked pontiff will look upwards, and he will gaze at the earth, and he treats the sacred Scriptures as heavenly things. See the result. The good smell of gain is anywhere you please in this matter. They sometimes show a great concern for our salvation, and think up many things by which the minds of men, conscious of evils, lay aside the fear of purgatory. When the paper has been accepted, the lead affixed, and money given (for this is always the last act of the play), then it is their will that we be purified of all our sins. Oh crime more grave than all crime—to offer for some lead, a paper, and money the honor of God, whose place alone it is to forgive sins. It is wicked-

Psalms 2

Isaiah 1

I Peter 3

Isaiah 8

ness in the soul. These men, without offering herbs, without seeking out sound council, with some burned grass of sacred Scripture, I might say, stir up a hive filled with a swarm of sinners, and having stirred it up, they plunder it, but through trickery, having stolen the coins, they cleanse the moneybag, they empty it, then fill it and stuff it to the top with the threads of spider webs. In want of all things, we are fed with indulgences. Oh, sacred rites without incense—it is the case of one who, longing for food, dreams of cake and feasts elegantly as long as he sleeps, but when he is finally awakened, sees that his belly denies having taken any delicacies. He recognizes the trickery of sleep, and should we be so insane as to entrust everything to deceivers? And can't we realize how paper, lead, and money handed over cannot always be deluded? How much more righteous it would be to follow one who instructs uprightness! "Listen to me, you who follow what is just, and seek the Lord." Listen to the rock (Peter and moreover, Christ), from whom you have been carved out: "I am the Lord; this is my name; I shall not give my glory to another." I am the Lord; I myself am He who blots out your iniquities, and I blot them out because of me—not because you buy indulgences. Because of me I shall not remember your sins. Away with the empty promises of popes! / Listen to your father Abraham and to Sarah, who has borne you. Your faith and your confidence in me will revive. You who were born for serving only me and my officials, commend yourselves to

Fumo senza
rosto.

Isaiah 51

Corinthians 10

G.iii.

Isaiah 42

me and mine. I, even I, oh Zion, shall lighten all your disasters. Harken to me, my people and my tribe. Hear me, you who know that I am just. What will they hear, may I ask? And whom do you ask to listen to you? Kings, kings, on whom for a long time the frauds of the popes have been imposed. Kings, hear me. Why? Because the law will go forth from me, and my judgment to the enlightenment of the gentiles. Why, oh Lord, are you thus disquieted? Why do you so anxiously fear that your people will not hear you, that kings will not listen to you? It is your will that the eyes of your people and the eyes of your kings at last be opened. They will finally see how unjustly unjust, how wickedly wicked, is he whom they follow. Have no doubt, when the rest of the wallets are stuffed and the documents have been thrown out, then the people and the kings will listen to you. There is however a reason why we might fear that it may harm us to have obeyed you. Truly the pontiff, who is taken from men and established for man's salvation, wields the thunderbolt, brings on bad omens, and makes curses. Do you herein free us from fear? There is not anything, my people, there is not anything for you to fear. The Ammonites and Moabites have hired Baal, the son of Beor, to curse the people of Israel. What then have I done? Have I not turned his curse into a blessing? Have you not heard instead, "Let him be accursed who causes a blind man to err in his way"? And all the people will reply, "Amen." But

Deuteronomy 23

Deuteronomy 27

Coclaeus, that most audacious gladiator, is present in all his armor with a great host of insults, roars and burns with fury, and having scorned your precepts, curses the prince of your people. What would lords do when thieves dare such things? That pettifogger claims that the pope cannot be thrown out of England without the loss of our salvation. He raises up the pope, who for a long time now, having been raised up among us, has tried in every way to press you down. Even at this point do you order us to lay aside our fear? Come, come, that man attacks us; he moves every stone; he brings up every catapult. Finally admit that he openly displays his malevolence and that he makes plain to everyone your preserver's vigilance and faith in defending. You have sprinkled water; go, fears, to the ravens. If God is for us, who is against us? Descend and sit in the dust, daughter of Babylon, sit on the earth, take up a millstone and grind meal. Uncover your ugliness, lay bare your shoulder, reveal your shins, and your reproach will be seen. I shall take revenge, and a man shall not stand against me. Sit in silence, let your edicts and decrees no longer be spoken. Sit in silence and within the shadows, daughter of the Chaldeans. Listen, Rome, listen, Roman pontiffs, you will no more be called mistress / of kingdoms. I am angry, I was angry with my people, and I have polluted my inheritance, and I have given them into your hand. I am not at

all surprised that all those sayings concerning the city of Rome were perceived not only by many others but also by the divine Jerome himself, especially since I see written by the interpreters of the Septuagint "Θυγάτηρ Βαβυλῶνος" That is, "Daughter of Babylon." For what offspring ever so expressed its mother's features as Rome expresses the ways, the vices, and impieties of Babylon? For has not Rome, long the mistress of kingdoms, as many times as she wished, stolen the sceptre from kings and emperors? And can God seem to have been angered at his own people, whom for so long a time he has seen subject to the power of this vilest harlot? Has not God's inheritance been defiled? Have they not made the human race foul by their impious decrees? And for a long time to those asking for wine, have they not given their fist? For a long time now have they not given the shadow in place of the substance, a scorpion—as the saying goes—in place of a fish? Listen to the prophet: "You have issued many edicts, many canons, many decrees, but you have not issued mercy." To be sure, you who do not remit sins unless money is given, flaunt yourselves excessively. You say, "I shall be ruler to eternity, nor shall all the army of hell prevail against me." How shall it not prevail, when so many unspeakable crimes reign in you? Ah, wretch, how you deceive yourself! How you do swallow flattery! Hear the nice little things which you say, living in confidence: "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against me." Listen to what you say in your heart (nay, they now dare to speak openly): "I

am, and there is no greater than I." For what could be greater than to maintain the management, the covenants, and pacts of heaven, earth, and hell? To bind all things in heaven, to loose all laws of honor on earth, to fill hell as often as you wish, and to fill up the constant assemblies in purgatory? You have had confidence in your cunning, and you have said, "There is not anyone who sees me. By the appearance of religion, the attitude of honor, and the pretext of piety, whatever blemish is under garments is conveniently covered. By our decrees we will take care that no one dares to call into question my judgment and authority. Anyone who feels otherwise than I do, let him be considered a heretic; let him be put to the flames and reduced to ashes. For unless this condition is plainly established, can I be secure? And will there be anyone who might see me? And if there is, will there be anyone who is willing to lay bare my artifices and my tricks, or who dares to publish them? Or who would not be greatly afraid to give evidence before the tribunal since the sentence is passed by my judges—that is, judges sworn to my benefit?" But can anyone easily be found who would so lightly regard the loss of his life and reputation that after being most cruelly imprisoned, he would go alive into the flames, or—the crowning blow—the infamy—that he would be considered a heretic a traitor to the Christian religion? As there would be few whom piety would govern more than fear would move, when they have been turned into smoke and ashes, would not the others be kept

in allegiance? Would they not be silent? And / do they not show plainly enough what laws they declare and what decrees they establish since they think that people will never observe any of them unless they are compelled by force and by flames? Your wisdom and your knowledge have deceived you. Are you not content to have done injury to kings for so many years without contending that Scripture permits you to do this? You have ruled for a long time. No one has dared to raise an inquiry into your position. But after you abused the laws of God, suddenly citing "Feed my sheep", "Thou art Peter", and other passages of this nature, your fraud has been detected, your tricks exposed. "Feed my sheep"—he orders you to be shepherds, ministers not lords. And once the Roman pontiffs Pelagius and Nicolaus attempted to establish not by decrees of the synod but by an evangelical utterance that the Roman church should be preeminent over all the other churches, and they applied to it, "Thou art Peter", "Feed my sheep", and "Having been turned back, strengthen your brothers." For a long time they seemed to think that they were doing very nicely for themselves who had concealed the privileges of Caesar which they had either wrenched by entreaty or stolen by fraud and who had supported the walls, the roof, the rooftop, and entire architecture of their authority with testimonies of Scripture as if with stronger columns. As often happens, truth goes and then returns. Then not so much later, they changed their action, either because they were forced to do so or because they trusted

Dist. 22 C

All

more in the offerings of emperors than in the sayings of Christ. What an abundance of oratory! Do they extol more Constantine's generosity toward them or piety? How willingly do they recall all things! How they praise everything! They always wish to appear grateful, and they want to have remembered from whence they got for themselves that right or this authority. They offer as evidence, I might say, the documents of emperors and princes, which should bear testimony that Constantine has not so much given primacy in religion to the Roman pontiff as preeminence in all things.

Dist. 96
c. Constantine

For you see that in addition to the regions of the West there have been given to him Judea, Greece, Asia, Thrace, Africa, Italy, the palace of the empire, the diadems of emperors, and the Phrygian crown of the imperial head, and on his shoulder the lotus, the purple robe, the scarlet tunic, and all the other adornments of empresses or trappings of emperors. You see that Constantine adds to these things the procession of horsemen, the imperial sceptre, Banna, as I say they call all these things, and has given in and granted them to Silvester and to his heirs. But I delay the prophet too long. You have said in your heart (lest you now deceive yourself, wretch, if you think thus), you have said in your heart, "I am, and there is no other besides me. I am the catholic church, and besides me there is no other. I am the apostolic seat, and besides me there is no other." You wish to be alone, you wish to preside alone, to rule alone--may

the heavenly powers see to it that you be impious alone, unless you should be eager to recall yourself from your impiety, as for a long time now you have driven far too many people to the contagion of your impiety. / But I fear that they in their insolence will contend that these things can be ascribed to us, but pertain not at all to them. Therefore from the final decision let us learn to whom the first things and those things which follow the first do pertain. You have failed, he said, in the multitude of your councils. Do you hear, oh pontiff, how they are felled before your fortresses, by means of which you thought you were in good shape? Don't you see that the one thing which appears to make up the entire defense of your power very strongly supports us against you? You constantly hold up to us the laws given to the public meetings of Christians; you hold up the general councils. Why, when council attacks council, do you not indicate how you thirst for the spirit? "Woe to the rebellious sons," says the Lord, "you have taken council and not from me. You have added sin upon sin, blasphemy upon ignorance, not seeking my face, that is, thinking nothing of what I have instructed you in Scripture. I have often said this and wish it said to you again. My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are my ways your ways," says the Lord. Why do you take the chaff for the wheat? Are there not words of mine like a fire, and like a hammer pounding rock?²⁶ To be sure, there

H.11.

Isaiah 30

Jeremiah 23

26. Again the pun is evidently intended. Petra is written here with a capital P.

is hope that the rock will pound them. Go to, for a long time, even though against his will, Peter has guarded against Christ. "Behold, I speak to the prophets," says the Lord, "who counterfeit my words, who adopt their own sayings and say, 'Thus says the Lord.' Behold I speak to prophets dreaming up lies, who have told them and led my people astray in their falsehood and in their miracles, though I have not sent them and I have not commissioned them. To what length is it in the prophets' heart to lead the heart away with their prophesying, so that because of them my people forget my name? Do we, or do you, act in such a way that the people forget the name of God? Do we, who desire nothing else than that the people demonstrate their faith to God and to their king? Or do you, who have burdened a wretched people with so many documents, so many wares of indulgences, so many absolutions, dispensations, relaxations, and infinite bulls, and all those things directed toward the people's delusion and your profit, completely persuading them that it is you who save their souls, otherwise damned, from hell, and you who send men straight to destruction? Is there not danger that the people will put aside their memory of God's name, since all things seem to be done by you? Your miracles--how many have they led astray? For why should I not speak of your miracles, when through your priests, not without delusion of the people, wood often sweats, often blood drips from marble, often an impious rascal hiding behind the back of Christ gives oracles to

the people? But a crack has been opened to refuge. They will get away if I don't seize the opportunity for satire which has been presented. Coclaeus will say, / "What prophets are you telling me about?" Whomever of the pontiffs can you call a prophet? Do you ask me? I do not call them prophets, but I call them more than prophets whom I know to be false prophets. And yet he who is now pontiff is said to understand the stars thoroughly. The man has been involved in Ptolemy more than in Paul. However you say he is a prophet. He is not, nor can he be called one, even if he is a great maker of prophecies. Why? Can he not seem to be a prophet who, whatever he says, according to you, cannot err? If you will deny this also, there remains to me that most desperate refuge of all, that they have been called prophets in this place instead of false prophets and imposters. If you still contend that up till now nothing has been said against Pope Paul III which can be seen as plainly spoken about him and not about another, and thus my words do not mean much, I think that nothing can be so aptly said about one man that it would not fit everyone. And finally in order to please friend Coclaeus, I shall seek out some place where Pope Paul might sit far more properly than on the throne of Peter. I owe much to Isaiah, who is so copious that today my table can serve the taste of all popes. Don't leave, Pope Paul; there will be opportunity for you to dine elegantly. There are for you exquisite dainties to your taste. Let them remain, and the augurs of heaven, who con-

H.iii.

template the stars and compute the months that they might
 announce to you what is to come, hail you. If there is
 nothing here which pleases you, Pope Paul, take something
 for yourself from someplace else, from another offering,
 and ignore our poverty, which cannot manage as great a ban-
 quet as befits your rank. Nay, you cannot be angry with me
 if I do not wish you as a guest, who I know could never
 think of anything more disturbing than that you might some-
 how completely lose our kingdom, our king, and us. You are
 the pontifex maximus. Would that you were! Would that you
 who believe Coclaeus not be more wretched than is that pes-
 tilential flatterer who is so eager to render you obscure
 to yourself. For since you consider nothing more certain
 than that you are great through no virtue, and nothing more
 clear than that Coclaeus adorns you with false honors, do
 you not see the deceit? Would you not punish a liar with
 the hatred he deserves? Indeed I would think that you ought
 to strike him with the thunderbolt of excommunication, if
 you ever could or should strike anyone. Whom has Scripture
 ever called great except him whom an outstanding and excel-
 lent commendation of Virtues has made great? Ezekial pur-
 sued whatever of honor was said to be beneficial to one
 until he became great. Moses also was called great, and
 I don't know whether any other besides John the Baptist.
 Assuredly, search all passages of sacred writings, and no-
 where will you find them to lie; they never make a citadel
 out of a sewer, an elephant out of a fly. They were produced

Coclaeus ought
 to be excom-
 municated.

among the Macedonians; they are unsophisticated and completely unskilled in the art of flattery. They call a skiff a skiff, a mattock a mattock, an imposter an imposter. Do you wish to be great? / See to it that you are good; see to it that you have God as a friend; see to it that he would have nothing which he would not think he ought to share with his friend. Give me a man who is no longer a man; that is, one who has already become completely deaf to all the allurements of pleasure, over whom neither the flesh, nor the world, nor Satan has power any longer, one who would say with the apostle: "Our sojourn is in heaven." Give me Elijah the Tishbite, who was able to say, "If I am a man of God, let fire fall down from heaven, and let it devour you and your forty men." Then let fire appear, let it fall down and devour. Who does not think that you ought to be held in the greatest honor among men since you have such great influence with God? Give me Elisha, who divided the waters of the Jordan, who freed the earth from barrenness, who said in truth, "I have restored those waters, and there will be no more barrenness nor death in them." Who will be so unfriendly to me that he does not wish to have him as a friend? Give me one to whom the Scripture (which cannot lie) truly says: "I have spoken to them, and the gods have spoken to them." I shall say also that there are gods, but in that way in which the Scripture speaks. Of course among us, gods can hardly be mentioned without some sign

Scriptures were produced among the Macedonians.

H.iiii.

Philippians 3

of impiety. There is one God, who so works all things in certain men that they never do anything which does not witness to the power of God dwelling within and even that he wishes them to be participants in his name. If the Lord spoke as familiarly with the Roman bishop as he was accustomed to speak with Samuel, doubtless he, having known greater joy, would place aside the care of the most worthless things, in whose behalf sailors, shopkeepers, and panders would scarcely fight without shame, and we would so cherish a man dedicated to divine matters as is right for a friend of God to be cherished by God's friends. For then he would not envy kings their kingdoms nor become angry if whoever is the leader of a people says that he is the leader. But why should I do this injury to very holy men, that I wish to bring them into conflict with the Roman pontiff, that is, the head with the private parts of the body, the anemone with roses? They willingly offered their ears to God when he said, "I am your portion and your inheritance in the midst of the children of Israel. You will possess nothing of theirs in the land, nor will you have a portion among them. What can be sufficient to those for whom Rome is not enough? Among them it is very likely that ambition always makes use of this saying: "Why does not Rome seem too little to you, whose ancestors held all Italy in tribute? Hold fast through the strength of Bologna, and do not be troubled over what human laws do not permit to you. Who has called you into

Ambition
addresses
the popes.

judgment? To whom will you be summoned, since no one has the power to judge you? Enter Ancona through crime. There is an entrance. When the Anconians are reduced to slavery, see to it that the leader of the urban forces turns over to you by far the greatest part of his power. Always strike Ferrara with terror. Never be ashamed to lay snares. Troy was not taken immediately. // What won't force, opportunity, and trickery accomplish? Be quiet; I shall speak. But yet I shall speak. Bring it about that you constantly offer for sale Naples, an hereditary kingdom for the apostolic seat, but at a time when you can more conveniently do so; meanwhile remember that it is not the last glory of a good pontiff to pretend to be a friend when you cannot harm an enemy." Alas, what a wretched situation! Have I so distorted the religious scene that those to whom almost nothing is a religious matter except to act correctly make up the leaders of religion? If you seek authority that you may be of benefit to a flock, why doesn't Italy seem a large enough province for you alone? In that place, Roman pontiff, make known the gospel by a new example. But if you wish that right of yours, constituted for injustices, to remain untouched so that you can rob a flock, there is enough in the home of those shepherds that it is not necessary to seek elsewhere. But you wish that it be said to you first of all "Feed my sheep." I ask you--what prevents you? Feed them as much as you wish. But see again and again that you

judgment? To whom will you be summoned, since no one has the power to judge you? Enter Ancona through crime. There is an entrance. When the Anconians are reduced to slavery, see to it that the leader of the urban forces turns over to you by far the greatest part of his power. Always strike Ferrara with terror. Never be ashamed to lay snares. Troy was not taken immediately. // What won't force, opportunity, and trickery accomplish? Be quiet; I shall speak. But yet I shall speak. Bring it about that you constantly offer for sale Naples, an hereditary kingdom for the apostolic seat, but at a time when you can more conveniently do so; meanwhile remember that it is not the last glory of a good pontiff to pretend to be a friend when you cannot harm an enemy." Alas, what a wretched situation! Have I so distorted the religious scene that those to whom almost nothing is a religious matter except to act correctly make up the leaders of religion? If you seek authority that you may be of benefit to a flock, why doesn't Italy seem a large enough province for you alone? In that place, Roman pontiff, make known the gospel by a new example. But if you wish that right of yours, constituted for injustices, to remain untouched so that you can rob a flock, there is enough in the home of those shepherds that it is not necessary to seek elsewhere. But you wish that it be said to you first of all "Feed my sheep." I ask you--what prevents you? Feed them as much as you wish. But see again and again that you

offer that food which the head of the household has wished left on the ground for our sake. For many have perished, not so much from hunger as from poison. There is enough of orators, but they are seducers of minds who destroy entire homes, teaching what they should not for the sake of shameful gain, trading in God's word. There is so much of decrees, of ordinances, documents, rescripts, dispensations, and excommunications that it is like a miracle that there is any place left for Christ. He did not say, "Feed your sheep," but "my sheep." You see their care delegated to you, but their ownership reserved for Christ and his heirs. Play the part of a shepherd, but may you feed sheep for the Lord, not for yourself. He orders you to be a minister, and do you set yourself up as lord? He commissions you, his servant, to servile duties, and with the enforced care of some do you disturb the rights of others? Do you—destined for flocks of sheep—grab kingdoms? Do you dare to acknowledge power beyond what has been given? Do you, a slave not yet set free, dare to carry off what has not been carried off by force? Do you dare to go off into the courts of pleasure, when Christ has so many times warned you not ever to leave the fields and the flock and sheepfold? But you are ashamed to place aside the headdress, robes, jewels, and gold, and to go back to the bag and purse of the apostles. But Christ, the lord of the apostles, was not at all ashamed to say, "The foxes have holes, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." But no, those men hear Christ

only when they want to. To be sure, when he says, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth", nothing is more attentive that they, no one more heedful. Let him speak; indeed, let him loudly proclaim as much as he wishes. But "Possess neither gold nor silver" falls on deaf ears. But I know Coclaeus will say, "If as much tithes were now given as were once given to Aaron and his fellow priests, amid such great bounty a pontiff would not need either someone else's land or his own." Truly if only the good were allowed to support themselves from those things which were offered to the priests, he who is now in the top position would doubtless among the lowest either carry a crowbar or / extinguish the little lights, and the most holy father would often fast. For these are the words of the testator: "The first fruits which the children have promised and brought to you I give to you, and to your sons and daughters, etc. They will go for your use. Whoever is clean in your house may eat of them." Fast, pontiff; fast, cardinals; let a great part of the bishops that Italy contains fast. Ah, I had almost blabbed out what I have determined to keep quiet about. I who have been in Italy, who have seen the ways of the pontiffs, who have seen from whom popes spring, with how much impiety they are elected, what great dissoluteness disgraces their entire life, how they dishonor God, through transgressions of the law when they boast in the law, I am ashamed that there is anyone so dull and stupid, that he thinks this man is God's vicar, and that there is anyone

Matthew 28

Matthew 10

I.ii.

Numbers 18

who does not think that he is Satan's vicar. I shall not say who the bishops are or why there are so very many of them.

The pope, the vicar of Satan.

Spare your shame. Mark it to my shame that those disgraceful actions profit which cannot even be mentioned among men without shame. Let them wage war with nature like the giants; let them do violence, and as much as in them lies, let them plot the destruction of the human race. Let them think that great patronage of their cause has come through me to them, who commit such crimes against themselves as their worst enemy cannot charge them with. I owe more to the ears of the good than that I should with no little loss of my shame even name such evil. Go now, good pastors, bind in heaven what you bind on earth, etc. Please yourselves, demand that I be a play-fellow in your prevarication, I who would prefer to thank you for so many crimes than to appear to have no consideration either for my shame or for the ears of the good. You whose way of living is too good for you to be able to have known such evil, consider it to be like this: that compared to this, all other crimes almost seem like virtues. Alas, we are empty of the truth and void of heavenly things if we think shadows could take the place of light, or night of day, or Satan of Christ. For do we not hear, "I, the Light, have come into the world that all who believe in me should not remain in darkness"? If popes remained in darkness, (and how would they not, who do the works of darkness?), who can believe in Christ? If they do not believe, who can be that which they wish to be called, vicars of Christ? Who can draw others to the faith when they themselves do not yet believe? We hear the prophet say, "Behold,

Night is not the vicar of day, nor the pope of Christ.

John 12

I shall spread out your stones in order, and I shall surround you in sapphires, and I shall make your ramparts of jasper, and your gates of carved stone, and all your walls of precious stones, and all your sons will be taught by the Lord, and will be established in justice. Where are the sapphires? Where is the jasper? Where are the carved stones? Where is the learning with which you powerful ones seek to render an account concerning that hope which is in you for everyone who asks? Where is / justice? Or with the foundation taken away, do you think the building can stand? Where is your light which shines in the presence of men? If you offer no sapphires other than those which your miter displays, consider that that saying was made about him who has none at all rather than about you. Do you seek primacy among the bishops? See to it that no one is better or more learned or more humble. Scripture already is beginning to recognize you; be the least in order to be the greatest. But I admonish the dead. Good God, what a resemblance to the lost mind of Pharaoh! What great mental blindness or obstinacy! So many warnings of Moses did not correct him. Not one of the twelve plagues recalled him to his duty. Return, oh Rome, into the way; let there come to your mind God's mercy, which for a long time now has called you in vain to better ways. Do not await, if you are wise, a time when frogs, gnats, and flies might make you better. Are you not afraid that you will again burden a greedy soldier with booty which has been taken again? Or that you might be again endangered by the flooding of the Tiber, which just recently almost swamped you? Oh, pontiff, will you not awaken? If Rome perishes, does not faith perish? Does not the apostolic seat perish? Does

I.iii.

not the Catholic church perish? From a flood, lest you fear, Rome, that having fully deserved a fire, you will give the task to fire—unless, Rome, training ground of all crime, you cease to be the school of all evil. May the heavenly powers will that punishment not be taken against the more innocent ones and that the crimes of a few may not more seriously harm Italy, which from my heart I wish well. Let the authors of the crimes perish; let the pope and his puppet cardinals perish. But it cannot be that the church perishes. Do you wish the servants of the church to be the church? Is not the church the bride of Christ? Wouldn't you laugh if Christ married the pope? If he invited the cardinals, whom he recognized as future popes, if he gave them presents, if he wrote love letters, and if he would now sing the Song of Songs for them? But I press too hard a sweating and panting papist; I shall allow the pontiffs to breathe for awhile; a truce of several hours will be set up between us. Let us discuss for awhile the authority of kings, than which there is nothing greater on earth, nothing more important, nothing more august. The people demand a king. First, Coclaeus, at this point I wish you would tell me whether you think it very likely that the people would have asked for a king who had less authority than the high priest, when always before they had a leader who gave orders to the high priest? For how often did the Lord of the law speak to Moses, saying, "Instruct Aaron and his sons"? Aaron led the people to idolatry; but how many times did Moses, an example of the best—of the best leader and best magistrate—reconcile the angered God with the people and with the high priest Aaron? Point out, of course, that that which you

Rome

Kings 8

Moses

wish to be true is highly probable, that the king had less authority than the priest. I grant you that is true. I ask you what you think God thought of royal power when he replied to Samuel asking in the name of the people for a king according to the custom of other nations? / "Listen to the voice of the people in everything they say to you, for they have not rejected you but me from reigning over them." Do you not see how the authority of Samuel will always be inferior to royal power since God himself complains that when he has once established a king, he has almost lost the authority which he had over the people. Of course in order not to assert that, I would not hesitate to say that the king is subject to no one but God himself and the laws of God, and that he has power over all those who are established within the boundaries of his kingdom—common people, nobles, priests, and bishops—in short, all are subject to the king and the royal ordinances. The king is the head of all the inhabitants of his kingdom. I am omitting that the king can compel whomever he wishes to whatever duties he wishes, and I hasten to what will prove that absolute power over all people has been granted to the king. "Behold," said Samuel to King Saul, "the Lord has annointed you as head over his inheritance, and you will free the people from the hands of their enemies, and this is a sign unto you because the Lord has annointed you as head. I beg you, oh pontiff, that without a fight we would cancel, settle, and shake off this disagreement between us. Do you, inconstancy, not believe that the priests—even to Aaron himself—belong to God's inheritance? Doesn't God have power over priests? Are you no part of God's people? And when God wishes

I.iiii.

Kings 8

to take up his inheritance, do you remove yourselves as if under the Falcidian law? But I thought that God must be dispossessed of the laity rather than of his priests and bishops, as he has always made them his beloved, far more than the profane multitude, who are in appearance cheap equipment and a completely rustic estate. Of course if you are so evasive, maybe you might draw me into your opinion, or if not utterly into your opinion, however I shall grant you this, that (would it were not so!) not all the priests and bishops are among the possessions of God. But however you feel about it, you will confess that, once having entered on their inheritance, all the good belong to God, and the bad meanwhile, as if placed in controversy, have not been disinherited, but rather since they can be heirs, if they wish, they can easily be numbered among the heirs. But actually in all honesty you see that God has turned over the entire inheritance which he has on earth to the king. If the king is sole heir, if there are no bequests, if there are no trusts, if no Falcidian legacies are taken away, who do you sons of Belial wish to be outside the inheritance? How would you now excuse Rochester, Coclaeus; how would you defend More for having permitted himself to go over to the pontiff to the damage of his lord, the king? For don't you know that oxen had been cut into pieces by Saul and this very thing warned the people about a king who would refuse the power of a king? The priests are vexed that our king will have at long last taken up the authority which was long ago forcibly taken from him through evil deception. The advocates are present; Rochester, More, and Coclaeus go to the magistrate; / they come in opposition

to the records. They do everything to defraud the king of a great part of his patrimony. They are completely unwilling for the prince of the whole British people to be the head of the British church, that is, of the Britons. They fear treachery. They think elenchí are being made. Of course they do not allow him to be head of the church's ministers who is head of the church's noblemen. They concede that the king is head of barons and even dukes, to whom those men confess that they owe all respect. But that he is head of brothers and monks—that they do not allow, they do not permit, they will not stand for. Does it not seem strange to you that he who is greater than the great is less than the lesser? You see the paradox and that which even then you will scarcely persuade yourself is true, since you have resolved to place all your confidence in priests. They acknowledge the prince. But for the king to be called the head—the phrase is contrary to custom and unheard of in Scripture. They dissimulate. Either they do not deal with Scripture or they think that we do not read it at all. Did not Samuel say to King Saul, "Although you are very small in your own eyes, you have been made head in the tribes"? When he said, "in the tribes", is it not just as if he had said, "in all the tribes"? But they wish a leader and prince, not a pastor. See what it is to have been immersed for so many years in the school of Scotus. You can never so bind those Proteuses that they would not break their chains and get away. You could never so restrict them in confinement that they would not find some crack to escape. Stop, fugitive; you will find that it has been said also to kings, "Feed my people"—you who wish to be a pontiff higher than kings, because

it was said to that one, "Feed my sheep." Consult the book of Kings. Do you not read there, "It was said to King David by the Lord, 'You will feed my people Israel, and you will be leader over Israel'?" But they claim that it is wrong for the king to handle sacred things. We give our assent—if, however, you want what we think you want. For, my good man, we are not willing for the king to celebrate the mass which they name. We are not willing for him to be occupied in baptizing or confirming children. We are not willing for him to ask the bridegroom in the temple whether he takes the bride or not. We are not willing for him to deal with the penitent or to offer the chrismal oil to the sick. He will not burn incense to God, like Ozias. No, he will permit these things and a thousand other things of this type to be your duty, that is, the duty of ministers. It is the royal function to honor with rewards those by whose industry and faithful ministry the people are moved to the mysteries of the faith or kindled to the cultivation of honor or drawn to the love of God or their neighbors, and on the other hand, to punish with fetters, lashes, exile, and finally death those whose obstinacy or boldness incites the people to sedition, equips them for impiety, and encourages them to oppose the king in honorable affairs. What could be more impious than to persuade a Christian king that he has been established by business deals, strife, legal contentions, and the waging of war, and that the sickness of souls, the disturbing of religion, and the matter of piety is of no matter to the king? / And can he wage war against men, but not even undertake war against sins? Or can he restore those who have been cast out of their paternal fields but not even

call back those who have been turned aside from religion, wandering in the paths of the most dishonest pontiffs? The people have played the harlot with the children of Moab; the people have worshiped foreign gods; the people of Israel have been consecrated to Baal of Peor. If the people have not been entrusted to their prince, if princes do not atone for the sins of the people, why did the Lord say to Moses, "Take away all the chiefs of the people, and hang them in the sun, that my anger may be turned aside from Israel"? Hear what Origin says of this passage. He says, "You see what is the condition of the leaders of the people. They are charged not only with their own sins, but they are forced to render account for the wrongs of the people, lest the guilt be theirs that the people have done wrong, lest by chance they might not have taught them, lest they were not accustomed to censure those who made the beginning of the wrong so that the contagion might not spread to the majority", etc. Moses charges them; that is, he says, the law of God charges them. Therefore you see it established by divine law that leaders must take care that the people do not sin. Again listen to Moses: "It is no wonder that I should be angry with the people when the Lord, angered because of you, has said to me, "you will not enter that place, but your helper Joshua, the son of Nun, will enter there instead of you", etc. But when a king is not permitted to be king and to handle sacred things, tell me by what right, by what prerogative of rank, the pope handles sacred things profanely and shamelessly, lest I say that he impiously plays the role of king. Why is it that he, for whom it is not lawful to depart one hair's breadth from the business

Deuteronomy 1
Let Christian
leaders dili-
gently note
this passage.

The pope, the
king, and
priests

of religion, why is it that he is found among armed troops, why does he hire spies, keep an army, listen to trumpets, and even blow one himself? Why does he fill fields with the blood of Christians; why does he triumph over Christians? Why does a wolf, having called himself a shepherd, rage against the flock? Would you not praise him more who, being the guardian of bodies, turns himself to the care of souls, than him who, departing from the tending of souls, throws himself away on the care of trifles? Progress is usually commended everywhere, but especially among Christians. Our whole journey is toward heaven. For how long a time we climb upwards, and when we are moved by a desire for better things, we in nowise go astray. But if we commit ourselves to leaders who are treacherous and hastening toward our destruction, who thrust us, who have been destined for brighter things, down to the vulgar workhouse of cares, indeed from the sacred to the profane, from the highest to the lowest, from the miter to the helmet, from temple to tents, from benedictions to bombardments, from Christ to Mohammed—here indeed the path is suspect, the leaders must be called into question, they must be put to torture that they may openly say whether they work for you or for your adversary. If you will make ambition or wealth the leaders of your path, they will not allow you to raise your head higher, but will keep you on the ground, always placing their hands over your eyes / so that you can never see heaven and so that you will never turn the contemplation of your eyes from the dwellings of ants and midges to the beauty of heaven. Be assured that they are plotting your destruction; realize that a

Progreso is
commended in
Christianity.

K.iii.

fraud is being undertaken. If pontiffs wish that the soul, which was fitted by nature for encounters with angels and conversations with God, be always the purchase of riches, if pontiffs turn all their enthusiasm to the propagation of power or the defense of tyranny, is it reasonable for the king, who in every way is eager that his work appear worthy to Christ, to support the audacity and impiety of pontiffs, to promote their profit, and to lay aside the care of their own kingdom and of their own salvation? It is the role of Christians—not only of all Christians, but especially of kings—to see to it that nowhere do vices hold sway with impunity, and since it is so important that bishops call sinners to better ways, then kings should force them to better ways. What do neighbors owe one another if it is true that you should love your neighbor as yourself? But when the judge will have approached, since you are king, what will you owe for the salvation of souls? Does he not destroy who can save the lost if he does not save them? And does he not sin who can keep you from sinning if he does not keep you from it? But I shall return to the matter. Whoever brings back from Paris the insignia of theology, the reward of all sleeplessness, would he not be laughed at if he should seek the ornaments, titles, and rank of a learned doctor of Louvain? For it has been accepted that they are in error who think that there is more honor in torturing—I meant to say "in caring for"—the body than the soul. And is it not laughable that he who recently served in the camp of the divine Francis, pledged to Christ alone, should now, having been made a pope, that is, a deserter, vanish into the tents of wealth? Listen to Jerome on that statement

of Christ's "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give to the poor, and come and follow me." He is addressing a monk. You have promised that you would be perfect. For when you left your soldiery and castrated yourself on account of the kingdom of heaven, what else were you pursuing than the perfect life? But the perfected slave of Christ possesses nothing except Christ, and if he possesses anything in addition to Christ, he is not perfect. And if he is not perfect who promised that he would be perfect, he has lied. They say that the mouth which lies kills the soul." "This is what he said. In order that I might at last come to the point I wish, I bring up one who, from a monk, having become a pope, became a better man, indeed who did not immediately become a worse man. For I shall grant you that everyone made some step toward honor, and I would not leave out the Bonifaces, Formosuses, Juliuses, Clements, and Pauls. But now perhaps they will say what they often unwillingly say, that there are two leaders in the church, and that in the future they will not be greatly disturbed by the right of kings if they allow their own rank and authority to be untouched. They warn us too late, when the affair has been almost completed. The prophet Hosea does not allow us to do this injury to the truth. / He said, "The sons of Judah and the sons of Israel shall be gathered together, and they will appoint for themselves one leader." Do you hear that two are appointed? You hear and willingly, I guess, even acquiring from this passage a crown taken from kings. You recognize one leader, and I know you will thank me if along with you I interpret this one as the pontiff. Let us establish

To Heliodorus

Kiiii.

Hosea 1

as arbiter of this dispute the divine Jerome, whom pontiffs gladly believe, since what has been said by him defends their excess. And he, as you are accustomed to boast, is friendly to you. Therefore are you willing to commit to his judgment the disputed right of your authority? Why not? Speak openly, Jerome, and look again and again at what you are doing. They wish that you had been a Cardinal. I do not doubt that you might have been, except that you were more dedicated to the truth than to the pontiff. Whom will they appoint as your leader, sons of Judah? Whom as your head? Whom but him about whom the prophet Ezekiel has written? "And one leader in their midst, my servant David." Bernard helps me also. There is a letter of his to King Louis of the French, which that very excellent man has begun in this manner: "If the whole world should conspire against me that I might contrive something against the majesty of kings, nevertheless I would fear God, and I would not dare to offend a king ordained by Him. For I know that I have written, 'Who opposes power opposes the ordination of God.'" What are you saying, Bernard? If the whole world should strive for this concession from you; if the pope, the least part of the world, truly the servant of the Roman church, should order this; if he should show his power; if he should condemn you to death, would you not oppose a king ordained by God? But it has been decreed that all of us always obey all orders of all popes. When was this decreed? Or finally what are these decrees, that God orders what he forbids, and forbids what he orders, does not will what he wills, and again immediately wills that which he does not will? These are the laws of a lover and even of a madman, not of a constant God who can only

Bernard

both be and will the same. But let us see how much Peter claims for himself or for his own, from whom they are always boasting that they have received the greatest power over all things, as if from his very hands. Does he not order his people to be subject to every human institution and every magistrate for the Lord's sake? Or were they not able whom Peter was eager to keep in allegiance of respect and commendation of humility, to deal thus with Peter if he was like our pontiffs wished him to have been? Were they not able to employ this speech with him: "Why are you, who wish us to be obedient to all, obedient to no one? Rather you order everything for everybody. Calling us brothers when it pleases you, you consider us in the position of comrades, and when you wish to please us, we are a chosen race; a holy nation; a royal priesthood; from no people of God, God's people; from a people not having received mercy, a people having received mercy. Well, what are we? Why is it that though you can do anything / except what you don't want, binding whatever is pleasing to you, you will that we can do nothing except what others wish? You who are so eager to copy your preceptor and ours in all things, how does it happen that you do not follow him in this case? He first began to do, then to teach. Be yourself subject to kings if you demand that we be subject. You obey the magistrate, if you want us to obey him. For you are not our teacher, but are along with us a disciple of our teacher, and if you wish to be greater than us, it is necessary that you be less." Peter heard nothing of this; no one spoke against him; everyone thought he should be obeyed; they have all willingly obeyed. For they saw Peter content with his

condition. He never disturbed the authority of kings. He never ambitiously sought anything except that everyone be built along with him as living rocks on that rock, against which there strike not those who think the excess and audacity of the pope ought to be suppressed, but those who do not believe in God, who do not bring forth spiritual offerings acceptable through Jesus Christ. They hear nothing about honoring the apostles, nothing about being subject to themselves or to their future heir, (if we are willing to err) the Roman bishop. No, they see the king's honor has been commended to them right after God, as if it is nearest to God. "Fear God," he says. "Let this be your first care, lest at any point you offend God." But what is next, oh Peter? To whom must it be deferred second after God? Tell us openly. Honor the king. Why do you do yourself and your heirs this wrong, oh Peter, that you do not say that kings must be honored before you and your followers? Either this leniency of yours is indeed too much -- even to hand over to the over-confident servants of kings their own honor, to cast aside all thought of your own rank -- or this arrogance of theirs is intolerable, who compel even emperors to do their bidding. But tell me in good faith, Peter, what honors, what primacy, what power do you ingratiate yourself with? Good words, oh good man, why do you tell me of honors or primacy or power? The servant is not greater than his master, nor the disciple than his teacher. With blood flowing from his shoulders to his feet Christ was afflicted for us, leaving us an example so that we also, though burdened with snares, if the cause of piety demanded, might follow

in his footsteps. Can it be that when the pontiffs read a thousand Scripture passages of this type, or since they do not have the time, do not the 'pontiffs' defenders suffer from shame? Can it be that since there are no errors left, they turn their pens to a defense of truth? What of the fact that Peter himself, content with the title of presbyter, implored his fellow presbyters to feed Christ's flock, not exercising dominion over those in their charge, but in such a way that they might be an example to the flock in the pursuit of piety and zeal for virtue? If it is not permitted you to exercise dominion even over those in your charge, but instead you should ask them rather than command them, how can you have power over kings? Paul was worried that / he might seem to have dealt too boldly with the Corinthians concerning zeal for benevolence, deprecating the fault of his audacity with these words, "not to instruct imperiously, but to encourage; not to force, but to invite." Is that our popes? Why don't they speak out and declare openly to everyone? I have been too long involved in an open affair ever to shamelessly show the silence of a sycophant. Read all the sacred writings. You will find everything full of obedience, humility, and respect; nothing of power, arrogance, and new edicts. You never hear, "To me have been given the keys of the kingdom of heaven." You never hear, "I am his vicar who said 'All power in heaven and earth has been given to me.'" You never hear "Whatever I bind on earth has been bound in heaven; whatever I loose, has been loosed." You see honor being neither advised nor sought out. You see that everywhere the true disciples

I Peter 5

L.ii.

II Corinth, 8

of Christ have disposed themselves toward the ways and the teachings of Christ. If you contend this, that Christ, who had not even any place where he might lay his head, had here a kingdom which he could call his own, why did he not take it up? Why did he pretend simplicity? Why does truth lie? Why does Christ say, "My kingdom is not of this world?" But they say he could have taken it up. Tell what I ask. Pass over what you do not know. Why did he not take it up? Has he left the taking up to you? Bring forth the petitions; show the records; why do you stand there? They are unwilling, but I shall not allow their cause to go undefended. I shall bring it forth myself. "Unless you renounce everything you possess, you cannot be my disciples." Behold the patrimony left by Peter to his heirs. He said, "Lo, we have left all things and have followed you." Attend to Bernard. You have done rightly, Peter, because being burdened, you could not follow him who rejoiced as a giant to run his course. When because he knew that they would come and seize him to make him king, Christ alone went into the mountains, why did he do this? So that by this example you might wage constant war for foreign towns and foreign power? Or so that you, having shunned the name of the king, might openly scorn kings bought from the slave-block yesterday or the day before like some Syrian? But truly, pontiff, ^{if with our King} Caesar and other leaders of Christians now threatened you with action over a changed boundary in accordance with the ~~agarian~~ law instituted by Gaius Caesar, if they brought judgment against you in the matter of dividing up the family inheritance, like a little crow shorn of your stolen plumes, would you not cause laughter?

Matt. 19

John 6

When the inheritance of others is restored, would you then not return as a beggar to your money-bag? For a long time an ass thought to be a lion has imposed on the Cumaeans. At last a stick liberally applied has taught what it is to delude men and to strike false terror. Take care, pontiff, lest a similar thing happen to you. It will happen without a doubt, if Christian princes someday stop being foolish. England will never cease to say to these kingdoms which feel themselves oppressed by your power, "I have given you an example. If you are wise, I have not pointed out to you in vain / the way to your public interest." I have long since taken upon myself all unpopularity. Indeed, having taken it on, I have borne it. I have placed small value on my happiness and that of my citizens, as I have caused it to be terrified by the garment of the pontiffs or the tumult of cardinals. Let them gnash their teeth. I hope that the perpetual blessing of a most excellent king will be for me and mine. We have failed, we have failed, oh pontiff, to fear your bulls, truly bulls. Go ahead and rage with your thunderbolts against those whom you are eager to destroy. Someday, when you who never cease to disturb the world's tranquility have been expelled, the other Christian princes who have been driven by your injuries will learn to have better regard for their own interests. If Pope Paul had desired the peace of Italy, Caesar would long since have attacked the Turks. May the heavenly powers will that those tumults harm no one but their author, and since this is not possible, that they harm as few as possible. Caesar will one day say, and the princes

L.iii.

will say what Isaiah did not fail to say for so many years:

"Seed of adultery and fornication, upon what have you sported? Isaiah 55

Over what have you spread out your mouth and stuck out your tongue? Are you not wicked sons? Lying seed! You have placed your bed on a lofty and very high mountain, and you have ascended to that place to offer your sacrifice." Some one of the kings will say to you, "I shall place a ring in your nose, and lead you back the way you came. I shall lead you back to your old stable, to your law of yesterday, to black bread, that you might finally understand that you are what you are, not by the will of God, but by the overly long patience of kings."

Hosea 10

They will not forever put up with your saying "There is no king for us, for we do not fear the lord, and what will a king do to us?" How long will the wicked exult? How long, oh Lord, will they trample your people underfoot and harm your inheritance?

Psalms 94

How long will they say, "The Lord will not see, and the God of Jacob will not know?" Tell, Hosea, what the Lord wished said through you. "Woe to them because they have departed from me.

Hosea 7

They will be destroyed because they have dealt crookedly with me. I have redeemed them, and they have spoken against me.

My blood has saved the world, but they want it to be saved by documents, Jubilees, and stations. "Behold," says the Lord,

"I shall reveal your shame in your countenance, and I shall show Nahum 3

you nakedness before the nations and your ignominy to the kingdoms. I shall cast your abominations before you. I shall disgrace you, and shall make of you an example, and what I say will be. All who see you will draw back from you and I will say,

'Rome has been destroyed.'" For why cannot what has been said about Nineveh, Babylon, Sodom, and Gomorrah be said about Rome when there was less evil in all of them than there is in Rome today? God says nothing peculiarly to this or that state. He always threatens the faults of men; he does not pursue with his hatred those found in this or that place, and he cannot tolerate wickedness in the Roman pontiff. No, he can endure what he has endured for so many years, but he will not always allow you to abuse his leniency and mercy. At length he will examine that tablet of his. At length you will know that that is true which it has been said would someday without a doubt / be true. You have cultivated impiety; you have reaped iniquity. You have commended the fruit of lies because you have trusted in your own ways and in a multitude of prophecies. A tumult shall rise up among your people. Bishop will write against bishop, monk against monk, Rochester against Luther, More against Tyndale. And all your defenses will be laid waste. It will have profited you little to have established your walls of sacred writings wickedly distorted and forcefully stolen or to have erected your defenses of doctors either speaking to please or fraudulently appealed to. For too long you have ingratiated yourselves with cowls, vests, and vestments. Too long you have been held in honor, but now the time is here about which Hosea prophesied. "And it shall be like people, like priest." Indeed, since their sins are equal, since their sins make them completely equal, why should God prefer one over the other, the priest over the shopkeeper, for he attributes honor to no one without a cause?

What the
Lord says
will be.

L.iii.

Hosea 4

Believe me, pontiff, unless you may have prepared yourself other defenders than men like Coclaeus, it would have been better to have left your cause undefended than for it to be harmed by such a stupid defense of an impudent pettifogger. He does not bring forward to us what no one denies, and what all good people vehemently groan about--that the pontiff has reigned for a long time. Let him reply to Christ, who does not cease to call out, "He has not reigned through me." To be sure, the authority of continuous long custom is not worthless, but however much error should prevail, even if it should last for a thousand years, it could never be so powerful as to overcome reason or not be obliged to yield to the laws of God. Even if they should illegally and shamelessly aspire to civil honors, they do not change their position of slave. Hence if the question of their position should be threatened, it is not enough to say, "Our fathers, our ancestors have obtained these honors." They return again into drudgery, and they are beaten, if they have brought about the reason why they are beaten. The principle of long duration can have some place in buildings, fields, and building sites, and trifles of this nature, but in the cause of religion no one is heard to say, "For a hundred years hypocrisy has reigned and errors have reigned; so it is right that they also reign now. Today he is laughed at who says that for these five hundred years kings have obeyed and been subject to the pontiff; they have recognized his power and practically laid aside their sceptre whenever he ordered. He is laughed at, I say, who says these things unless he also contends by just

arguments that it was right for them to do this, for when you are free, you do not seriously damage the cause of your liberty, even if you enroll yourself as a slave, and I do not think the pontiff's authority is safe, and protected, because kings have written that they were subdued, first driven by false persuasion of the prerogative of the pope's rank, then compelled by force and threats. For the truth of matters is constant and is not changed by the words or writing of men. But the general consent of almost the whole world conceded to the pope and firmly established this its own power, which he abused. The general councils claim that we have acted badly in defecting from the Roman pontiff. / But what councils? For what has ever been more religiously established by men than what was decreed by the Nicene Council? Was it not established here that the Roman bishop ought only to have the care of the churches near the city, and he ought not to be prying into another diocese, and should certainly yield the administration of Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis to the Alexandrine bishop? Is not this bishop ordered to be created by all the bishops of this same province, if this is possible, but if it is not, by at least three, with the power of confirmation reserved to the metropolitans everywhere? Therefore, either the Roman bishop has no jurisdiction over the English and is putting his pruning-hook into somebody else's crop, or those who were in this council did not understand that he was special, and that to him more than to all others it was said, "Feed my sheep. Thou art Peter. Turn and strengthen your brothers." Assuredly since by this council you diminish the faith in this man, I do not see

M

on whom you could ever place firm reliance, especially when several centuries before, the Nicene Council had almost equal authority with evangelical decrees. If it could err, If Char- taginense I, II, III, IV, and V, if Milevitanum, if Arelatense I, II, and III, if Reginense, if Valense, and many others erred, how is it very likely that all the rest have not erred? To your great disadvantage you are at variance among yourselves. For who would believe you, when you do not wish to believe yourselves? Who will defend you when you yourselves attack each other? Truth, truth is eternal. It can be shaken; it can be disturbed; it can be harmed; but it can perish only if God perishes. To its tribunal the king has fled from yours, appealing from you to Scripture. The king was able to have carried out all the business at home and within the walls of his own curio (and would that he had done so!). Indeed if he had not preferred to prove his integrity and constancy to the world, and to do everything openly, he could have not just gotten himself a divorce, but inquired about his right, not just demanded that his will be complied with, but willed that care be taken lest force be applied to the laws of God. And who does not know that there are many things here which drew many people away from the pursuit of truth to the defense of Catherine? I shall not say that this controversy pertained particularly to Caesar. I would venture to assert this, that Clement VII either through fear or for Caesar's favor was able to be prevented from frankly announcing what he judged to be fair. For what did Clement VII not owe to the clemency of Caesar, who, when he had been des-

poiled and stripped of his rank, wealth, and friends, restored him to his former fortune and position? I omit Caesar's accomplishment in, as a new precedent, handing over to the pontiff's nephew the captured city of Florence, which was most deserving of its name--that is, a most flourishing state. I should not greatly wonder if the pope, especially a pope of this type, had not for some time represented himself as grateful and mindful of such a great benefit. I do marvel greatly at this, that God should love me so well, and that anyone should be so stupid as to blame a very wise sovereign because he was unwilling to set up the friend of his adversaries as judge of his cause. Once if any defendant or accuser only entered the home of the judge, he paid a hundred gold coins to the treasury. He became disgraced, and he did not ever wipe out the blot against his name unless he accused another of this crime and prosecuted him. Is it not a great proof of integrity that the king for so many years committed to learned men an affair to be discussed, and that meanwhile he took no action, but just committed the whole controversy to their judgment? Or can he be lacking in such great and lasting patience, the greatest glory of a very modest prince? For who ever, having been deprived in such great longing for legitimate offspring, made haste more slowly in the matter of a wife, or conducted himself more moderately? Coclaeus says that many things were done in a frenzy of passion. Oh, sycophant! If the king had done these things from lust and not from judgment, could he have subdued the frenzy of passion for almost all of ten years, and would he not rather have

Florence

M.ii.

scorned the pontiff's censure, feeling, and judgment? For the whole ten years the king, having complete confidence in the rightness of his suit, never appealed from the pontiff. In so great a lapse of time was the pontiff able to decide nothing concerning the marriage? Surely he had decided nothing. Why did he finally? Doubtless on this side Caesar's favor, fear, and power and on that side the rightness of the cause made his mind so crossed-up that he thought it best, having drawn out the controversy for a very long time, never to make any pronouncement concerning it. Often he who wishes to do harm is helpful. And so for this reason it was openly brought about that the king, most alien to the vice of temerity, could not refer the matter which he had taken up to the council before he had thoroughly investigated what was false or true in it. The learned men did not willingly become involved in such an unfavored business. Doubtless they saw that if anything was decided against Caesar's aunt, Caesar was going to be offended. In this inability of the world to speak they were not able to keep from fearing papal curses. You see, Coclaeus, that the king's cause was attacked by two very powerful men. You see that indeed very many have been deterred through fear of these men, and that the obduracy of their silence has done harm to truth and religion, and that through hope of honor or the incitement of wealth many have been led into a defense of incest. For you have been seen to be quite wise for your own benefit, you who preferred to be in the good grace of Caesar and the pontiff than of the truth and the King of England. Indeed truth hardly ever promises its own

anything but hatred. It is not only almost ^{always} so, but especially in the affairs of princes of this kind. The king is alone, and as a friend can help you his brother less, and as an enemy can harm you less than Caesar can. Certainly it is necessary that the king seem to you lower than your pope, on whose sandals to plant kisses is almost the prerogative only of emperors. Of course this is to be very small; this is to be like a child; this, this is what Christ

says, "Learn from me, for I am meek. If I, your master and teacher wash your / feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." For granted that Caesar who is now emperor voluntarily defers this honor to them, there was however Pope Alexander III, who did not fear to wrest this duty from emperors, and who left to emperors no pretext for entreating against insult or avoiding disgrace. The emperor who was called Rufus, since he could scarcely introduce into his mind such great disgrace and renounce himself in silence, while he kissed his sandals, is said to have murmured "I want this honor given not to you but to Peter." But the pontiff, mindful of his name, could in no way bear such great loss of glory in silence, but suddenly burst forth with this pronouncement truly worthy of a great pontiff, "No, first to me, then to Peter, if you wish." But I shall pass over the pontiffs' insane ambition for honor and intolerable arrogance and shamelessness. They give evidence against rather than help my cause. Do you wonder why the king has found so very few advocates of his cause? Is there not greater cause for wonder in whatever work he has done for religion and truth amid so many threats, such great fear, so many proposed perils, and such great

M.iii.

Pope Alexander III
intolerably proud.

fear, so many propose perils, and such great calumnies which have been committed? Indeed now who would believe, who would not think it like a miracle that there have been not one or another, but entire academies and very great meetings of most learned men, who, not in the least fearing Caesar's displeasure or the pontiff's power, dared to come to the aid of truth when it had been harassed and almost overwhelmed? Is there anyone to whom the name of Paris is not known? Is there anyone who does not know how that assemblage of learned men is esteemed by the witness of the whole world for its so great erudition and integrity? Is there anyone for whom Padua would anxiously prove the genius, judgment, or religion of its people? Is there any one, well-equipped with every type of instruction, who could concede to those men only that everyone does not claim nothing better than to speak maliciously of their fame? There is not time to call to mind the rest of the universities which they designate, as, unless you praise them extravagantly, you cannot mention them honorably enough. For who is there who does not know that all the academies of all of France and most of Italy, having affixed bonds, have openly pronounced that that is evil which the pope affirms sanctified, that that was incest which he called marriage, and that he would involve the king in a very great wrong and that he would take upon himself a very great fault unless, having put away a wife not his own, but his brother's, he should marry a legitimate wife? Why do you complain that in this case action was taken rashly and without consultation? So that you can be a greater sycophant than you are? Why do you charge

that it was not religiously and scrupulously investigated? Why do you pretend that it was accomplished without the greatest discernment and greatest delay? But truly he thought that he would start the matter most auspiciously if he laid the web of the most empty rumor and falsest lie. Doubtless it had been announced to you, and as I think, only to you, and perhaps not even to you, / unless you announced it yourself--it had been announced that Catherine had been recalled by the king to the bed which had been a witness of too long incest. You are silly if you would believe all of that. You are stupid, who when the second pamphlet came out, condemned yourself of untruth when you had not even been accused. For indeed what reward for the so many lies of this ranting lawyer could be more fitting to this architect of lies, who just like a spider knows how to fabricate everything out of himself? He continues, he proceeds, he comes near to his greatest audacity. Whom will that most shameless buffoon fear at last, what will he not dare, who alone does not dread to call so many French, so many Italians, and all of England to the most severe disgrace? Parisians, what are you doing, that you allow such a great peril to your faith and religion as this to be created with impunity by this very wicked trouble-maker? Will you permit your reputation to be stained by this blot? You Italians, I appeal to you who are accustomed to regard almost all ignominy as worse than death, do you prostitute the honor of your nation for these few little coins? Is this tiny sum of money able to lead you to such disgrace, that you would endure having your judgment, in which alone you

M.iii.

Parisians

Italians

are accustomed to glory, bought and ravished? Do you know, Coclaeus what Sampson, the most honored leader, not in the slightest moved by all your insults, told me about you? "I shall know," you say, when you shall have told me." What is there which I would not do for the sake of a friend? I know advice will not displease you." He said, "Let Coclaeus bring in some learned and wise men who would charge me with what that bathkeeper, drunk without wine, accuses me of. He will realize how much I despise him and how much I wish my reputation to be unharmed." Do you who irritate everyone with your jests, know what the Italians, wish to be said to you, turning from your winecups? I know the minds of the Italians. They do not judge anyone worthy of their anger. Do you not remember how they once fought against Tigranes and slaughtered 100,000 foot-soldiers, when only a hundred of the Romans were wounded, so that men were ashamed to have drawn their swords in such an exchange? Do you not remember what the king of Albania wrote to Alexander the Great, to whom he had sent a dog as a gift?" "This dog does not harry swine, deer, boars, or bears. If you wish to know rightly his stock and worth, I match him against lions or elephants, and do you wonder that those bees have not produced their sting against you?" They think your absurdities can be derided sufficiently by me. I know it would shame you, unless you have long since lost all shame, for your insults to be scorned, for your furious pamphlets not even to be read. Do you think that learned men who strive with all zeal to hand down to posterity the honored memory of their name have nothing to do but pay

attention to what you rattle on about? They scorn you, foolish man, --whether you are or not, not everyone knows clearly, unless to them you play the role or make the noise of an Archytas, as / they say. I wanted to find out all about your descent and your family from certain erudite men who I know have often traveled through Germany, as you think no one is good enough and you call everybody obscure. I wanted to know all about your character, which was already too well-known to me. For it could not be that your wicked nature would be content with those insults, that impudence, desire to bear false witness, and intoxication with disparagement. For who ever has these qualities should have far more serious qualities. For vices, just like virtues, are accustomed to live agreeably together in the same dwelling. And you cannot easily find anyone in whom you can truly expose these qualities of yours in whom all other sins do not abound. I say I wanted to know whether you were accustomed to write histories, rescripts, fragments, letters, defenses, rebuttals, and passions of this type sober or drunk, for I could not ever believe either that such a great mish-mash could have been piled together by a sober man or that a drunken man could have remembered all those passages for his calumnies. There is no one to whom you owe more than to yourself. No one would have known you were wicked if you had not long since by much labor persuaded everyone of it. You could have remained concealed in obscurity 27 unless

27. The Latin here is tantum lipsensibus tuis. I have been unable to find the meaning of lipsensibus.

you had preferred like Herostratus to have attained infamy than to die unknown by having committed no crime, leaving behind no hope for your name. Good God, is the fraternity of letters so debased, is all consideration of honor, all desire for virtue and glory fled, destroyed, or extinct so that for the sake of a little bit of profit almost all the learned men that the Christian world contains would defend a most disgraceful cause and with such a great loss of piety would serve, flatter, or assent to a king's lust toward a most noble and honorable woman? Learning has often been harmful; eloquence has stirred up mighty tumults. Very often very great disasters have sprung from very great geniuses. But you will find that never since the beginning of literature have so many academies and so little money conspired toward the destruction of an honorable cause. Private citizens, not even in service to anyone, often defend false causes. Doubtless they are in error. They can and often do misuse writings--even sacred writings. But I do not know whether to think it possible that for some amount of gold so many judgments, writings, and manuscripts of so many men could be turned to badness, crime, and disgrace. "But," you say, "great is the power of money." For you, Coclaeus, a man with experience, I would easily believe this is so. He cannot fail to suspect evil, who himself is evil. For each man judges others by his own character. Money has conquered Coclaeus. It has taken him prisoner and drags him wherever it pleases. Coclaeus does not think others are more self-controlled than he is. Who would believe that this ass, not even worthy of chaff, would so

avidly want cakes ~~so avidly~~ that, frightened by no sign of infamy, he would devote to profit all his writings, his voice, and his whole life? It is ridiculous what I am about to relate, but we shall laugh then, when he, even / if he would very much like to, is unable to deny that all the things I shall have written about him are true. Everyone knows that Coclaeus has often been in conflict with Luther and quite often was conquered and reported wounds instead of victory. Those who were more cautious and wished evil to ~~Luthern~~ were aggrieved that this man handled everything so ineptly. They were aggrieved that often opportunity was given to the Lutherans, which they seized and which supported him and their doctrines more strongly and seemed rather fittingly to take away the abuses of their religion system. They saw that Coclaeus hungered for some prebend and that the man could be induced to be silent if these bones were thrown in his face. There was found one who would have granted him a canonical prebend in the cathedral of Merseburg, but with this stipulation, that he would hereafter not write anything against Luther. I suppose this was so that with his poor writing he would not give a good opportunity for reply, which everyone could see had hitherto been the case, or so that he would not feebly defend their rites which had been originally established for the sake of doing honor to piety and promoting religion, but which through the audacity of pontiffs and the avarice or ignorance of priests had been turned to the destruction of honor and the ruin of a true Christian, so that, I say, he would not defend these things feebly and provide others with an opportunity

N.ii.

Read this
twice, reader

for completely taking away these things. Indeed that man was too wise for his own good who thought that the cause of popes and papists could be harmed by something else more than by your services. But meanwhile what opinion is he likely to hold of you yourself? For could you not seem stupid to yourself, who without being asked are not scorned until such a great insult, a most disgraceful condition. Why? Do you promote the causes of those whom you wish to harm? Do you harm those to whom you have promised your services? After this will you dare to write anything--you who with your writings honor enemies and dishonor friends? Will you assume for yourself the role of advocate, you who ~~attack~~ what you contend is true and who confirm what you wish to be repressed? But truly I am stupid, who do not know the end of your zeal, the scope of your writings is PROFIT. It turned out that a prebend was the reward which you were seeking. How does this explain your reason? You will do the thing correctly if you can; if not, you will do it whatever way you can. For without a doubt you wish to be richer. Coclaeus says, "Who doesn't?" Well said! But I ask Coclaeus, "What way to wealth do you think especially profitable?"

Λέγε καὶ μὴ φοβοῦ.

28

I am ashamed to say." By Hercules, I don't believe it! For what would shame you? Oh, you stupid man! For it is not enough that you have been warned by the example of many, unless my speech also discloses my badness. You will tell everything

28. Tell, and do not be afraid.

and not evade any longer." I shall speak. To act for Rome is for a priest the first step to wickedness and to wealth. If he is learned, let him unsheath his pen against Luther. If he is more learned, let him imitate me: let him learn to caress the slightly holy ears of the pontiff with tender adulation. Then he goes directly to honors. But if you would be more charming and good-for-nothing, be of service to the lusts of cardinals and of the pontifex maximus if you can. The way has been arranged. You may be an abbot; you may be / a bishop, you may be a cardinal--that is, if fortune (the heir of the pontifex maximus) so wills." N.iii.

Be quiet, Coclaeus. It is enough. The rest doesn't hold my attention. I suppose gold can do much, if it has dealings with the wicked, with men like you. However, as I grant you this, which long experience has taught you, that money can accomplish much, just so I think you ought to concede this to me--that there has been much money which has corrupted so many academies. For those which you accuse of a purchased opinion were not of the type that could be hired for a morsel of bread for the defense of whatever you may wish. Therefore produce even one, French or Italian, which has accepted as much as you think enough for defiling the judgment of a good man. For I am unwilling that you would think the matter has been entrusted to men like Coclaeus. I am unwilling that you would think that it would have been enough to corrupt another, a tenth part of which could have led you into all impiety. I confess that money has been given to Coclaeus. Would you say that because of that people were immediately corrupted? But if the pontiff because of such strenuously

defended canons should present you with a new canonicate, will you allow us to tell the truth, that in this business you have not been spotlessly involved? But as you would allow, not all of us, my good man, are just like you, and if lucre can lead you away from honor, it cannot lead everyone. But now let me say this to you. What private citizen in a private property suit has not been able to hire advocates? Who could not have given some fee for his work, some payment for the task to his sweating advocate? Can't the king do what a private citizen can do? If a private citizen wishes to appear generous towards those who he feels were of service to his side of a litigation, is it reasonable for a king--and a very wealthy king--to be sparing toward those by whom he sees his cause to have been managed with the greatest loyalty, discussed with the greatest conscientiousness, and defended with incredible constancy? Or ^{whom} those, free from public duties, even in the name of literature, formerly a king most loving of literature wished to have as witness of his munificence, will he not now regard them, wearied by very great labors and much sleeplessness, as worthy of his beneficence? You certainly tell a strange and incredible thing--that a king who, himself being very literary, always employed the most lavish liberality toward all educated men should have counted out several gold coins to those to whom a private citizen would certainly have given something in the nature of a salary. What human laws decree and divine laws permit, if you are acting of your own accord, if you voluntarily offer a recompense to an advocate, that is, to a day-laborer, why will

there be anyone who will yell, except for Coclaeus? ~~Honesty~~, recommends that the king should give something; why do you discourage it? The laws allow it: why do you interfere? It has never been apart from religion; why does it offend you? Bawling advocate, what is it which you censure? A certain king could have, with less expense and with far greater speed, when the litigation was judged, arrived at hope of offspring, if he had been in no way able to marry. How rash you are in judging, how bold in accusing, how shameless in making false accusations! / I know that the very prudent king's delay in doing those things, his worth in having avoided rashness, offend you greatly. You are aggrieved at having lost an opportunity for making false accusations. You see that you must take refuge in empty insults. And you have taken refuge there. You see that you must distort the generosity of a most munificent prince into a suspicion of a bribed judge. You will distort it. You see that you must establish a complaint against very learned and honorable men. You have established it. By the immortal gods, what great liberty this is--or license--or insanity, rather--to dare not only to say all things against a king, but by your frenzied pamphlets to disperse among the populace whatever your mind or your wicked heart can devise! Once upon a time if any one rambled on at hazard to someone else's reputation, even if he did not definitely designate a name, there was the Cornelian law, there was the Turpilian decrees of the Senate, there was the Rhemian law, there were a thousand remedies against the stings of sycophants, and will this most audacious good-for-nothing heap

...
N.iiii.

up all his attacks against everything with impunity? Will he rage? Will he insult? You whom are known to no one except to those by whom you are hated, do you dare to call Sampson obscure? Or is it right for him to seem obscure just because he is not known to you--to whom to be dear is to be most wicked? Do you call him obscure, than whom no one is more well-known to the king, and few more dear, so that the king has had him constantly in his presence for fifteen years, more or less, and he has always been held in the highest favor of all among the greatest nobles of England? Do you call a monster a man of this dignified position, that all the English recognize him as the embellishment and honor of the distinguished bishops? Is he a heretic who persuaded us to obey God and the king in all matters of honor? Was it by the advice of this man that Rochester was killed, More was put to death, monks were slain, and nuns (none of whom perished for this reason) you say were led to torture,--this man who had no part in judging or condemning them? And I do not say this because he ought to be blamed if by his vote he destined condemned traitors to death, but so that I might show with what great scrupulosity you take care lest something of truth be found in all these writings of yours or lest someone should throw in your teeth that there had been some occasion for stirring up ill-will which you did not fraudulently distort in order to attack Sampson's good name. But truly I suppose you have come from a distinguished family, you who think Sampson appears ignoble and obscure, a man who

has held the greatest public offices, often our most serene king's ambassador to Caesar, to the king of France, to the court of Margaret of Flanders, and to the other leading men of the world. But is it very likely that Coclaeus draws his lineage from others than from snails, who are said to explore the way by feeling with their horns? After this your pamphlet will bear the insignia of your family and race. Allow us to be witnesses of your nobility, / lest always you alone say that you are noble, and forsooth so that when others say that you, an infamous man, a troubler, a sycophant ought not be believed, the honor and nobility of your family will not be destroyed. Aren't you ashamed, ranting lawyer, to call him obscure whom the great Erasmus for almost twenty years has numbered among his special patrons? I know you are not ashamed. For what is more useless than a sycophant's sense of shame? What greater insult than his insults can an impudent mouth make? What advantage of a buffoon can be more desirable than the loss and jettison for all time of all shame, than to have an outward appearance which assumes the features and colors of shame so that one never pales or blushes from a feeling of guilt? But, by Hercules, I do you an injustice to ask that a bishop be safe from your insults when you can take all liberties against a very great monarch. No, I am doing something pleasing to you when I dwell for so long on those petty crimes. Doubtless you will consider me a friend when I object to those things but put up with your greatest sins. Do you dare to blurt out these monstrous things against a king, and even this king, which more prudently

Coclaeus'
birth and
parents

O

Read Erasmus'
letter to
Sampson

O.ii.

you would never say against a mean lackey, against a stupid monk,
 not even if you honestly could? The busybody is pleased with
 himself. He hoped that he would receive the commendation of
 a brave and fearless man. Wretch, for as long as you live
 you will be burdened with the insulting reputation of a very
 silly sycophant and a most audacious buffoon. Would you with
 impunity call a most merciful king a tyrant? By Hercules, if
 he were a tyrant, you would not with impunity mock his royal
 majesty with now these, now those writings. Good God, where
 are the laws now? Are there not any laws which would show
 sycophants that there is no place for libellous pamphlets in
 a well-established state; indeed, that not even a slip of the
 tongue could hope for pardon, especially if it brought insult
 to a state official? If there are laws, why are they now
 inactive? Why do they threaten to no effect? Why is it that
 with the hope of impunity being offered, they nourish a lust
 for slander? Why do they display the forces, and not un-
 shackle them, now when there is the greatest need? If an
 ox attacks a man with his horn and kills him, he is killed
 with rocks, and is it within divine law for a man to obscure,
 defile, and even wish to destroy a man's reputation, which
 is much more important than life? Since this is not lawful,
 since Coclaeus was eager to contaminate the reputation, not
 of a man, but of a king, not just of a king, but of a king
 who deserved the best from a Christian state, are the stones
 in the street quiet? Do rocks move themselves? Do they
 attack an impure mouth? Do they teach the brow of a shameless buffoon

what it is to present a hoof to all precepts of honor? Do they find fault with the skull because it did not maintain the greater care of faith committed to its brain? Once if any rash person even touched a statue of Caesar with a stone, he was beaten with a whip and imprisoned for a long time. He learned what it was to offend Caesar in any way--even not Caesar himself, and would this most disgraceful debauchee, with all his insults and jeers and mocking grimaces, attack, weaken and wound the king's honor, the memory of his name, / and the glory of his deeds? And would he do all this with impunity? The Persians, since they believed there was nothing more certain than that kings, immediately in completing their life and public service were restored to the gods, are said to have so awesomely worshipped them while they were alive that they considered it a great crime to cough, spit, blow the nose, or anything of that kind in the presence of kings. I do not at all know whether I ought to praise or blame Alexander the Great the more in this--that he was not willing to listen to a philosopher who often advised him too straightforwardly of what Calisthenes, an eloquent man, but weak in mind, wished to be a wholesome example to many lest anybody at all say anything at all against the king. An attendant of Alexander is said to have asked Calisthenes just what was the shortest way to illustrious glory. He replied that no way was quicker than to kill some very famous person. I might wish that this much brashness which was proclaimed to Calisthenes had occurred to Coclaeus. Alexander, who could not abstain from the character of cruelty in this matter, could not seem to be even severe

O.ii.

The Persians

enough here. The wretch's ears were chopped off, his nose was
 hacked off, his hands were amputated, his lips were cut off.
 His body--I should say "his corpse" almost--was taken around for
 all to see. Finally, confined in a pit, he was forced to fight
 with a huge dog. When Lysimachus was moved by the wretched
 spectacle and offered him poison as a cure for his calamity,
 by Alexander's command that man, renowned for his virtue and
 deeds, was thrown to a ferocious lion. For he thought it
 proper for them not to die but to be continually tortured who
 showed themselves hostile to the king, than whom, except for
 God, earth has nothing more august or sacred. It is scarcely
 believable that so great a reverence toward kings could have
 been present in the people of God. It is remarkable how David
 trembled, how he could not forgive himself, how deeply he re-
 gretted having cut the garment of Saul, who was an impious
 king and one who was always laying traps for him. Look at
 the circumstances, David's heart was innocent and free from
 evil, which certainly could have excused the deed. Indeed, he
 wanted this piece of garment which he had cut to be a witness
 of his faith, love, and respect toward the king. He wanted
 to recall the king to his duty, to the kindness of that man
 by whom he had been loved so much. And yet he grieved over
 this cut garment of the king; he wished it were in one piece.
 He wished that what was done was not done. Doubtless you have
 read it: "David arose and silently cut off the border of Saul's
 robe. After this David smote his breast because he had cut off
 the border of Saul's robe and said, 'May the Lord be gracious

to me lest I do this thing to my lord, to the Lord's annointed.
 Let me not raise my hand against him because he is the annointed
 of the Lord. For who will lift his hand against the Lord's
 annointed and be innocent? May the Lord be gracious to me.
 Let me not lift up my hand against the Lord's annointed.'" Our
 forefathers considered it a crime bordering on sacrilege / to have
 moved one stone, to have pulled up one piece of sod of the
 graves of the dead, which were consecrated mounds; and will
 this fool attack the reputation of the living---the divine
 good, as Plato says, and the sacrosanct memory of good princes?
 With impunity, without breaking so many ties, will this out-
 standing professor of the arts practice so many arts? Will
 he misuse them for ill-will toward princes? I understand,
 I understand how this good-for-nothing conducts the business.
 I see what he is playing. I see how he insinuates himself
 into Caesar's friendships by means of trickery, and how
 ambitiously he curries the favor of popes. But unless I
 don't know Caesar very well, Caesar is not charmed by these
 ranting lawyers. And he will not think that you ever ought
 to be permitted to take away the good name of this king, in
 whose presence he does not consider it any disgrace to stand,
 nor does he consider it beneath him to go to meet or finally
 to pay him all honor. I know that Caesar has often been
 helped by our king and has often perceived that the king was
 a friend. Certainly I know that when he came to England, he
 was received in our kingdom with the greatest good-will and
 treated with the most obliging kindness and the greatest

I Kings 24

O.iii.

Cod ff de

 Reputation,
 the divine
 good

generosity, and was sent away most abundently honored by every courtesy. Up till now no one has found Caesar guilty of either ingratitude or inconstancy; indeed no one has even accused him that I know of. I would certainly enter suit against him for each offense if he trusted more in your insults than in the kindnesses of the king. You will be able to promise yourself some benefit from the pontiff, to hope for a new canonicate. Nevertheless, to speak frankly, what is there to hope for from an unfriendly pontiff more than that he would have many supporters like you? For is it not a fact that the more there are of you, the more the papal position is endangered? Indeed, those who agree with men prefer that there be many Coclaeuses than that there be no defenders of that cause. But what does it matter to you, since no one defends their authority so stupidly, so feebly that he does not come into great favor with us? They do not wish to appear ungrateful. They see that many learned men live in poverty. They do not cease to heap upon them a hope of better fortune, thinking that by these devices genius and eloquence can be brought together for evil ends. By the grace of God few are contracted today, and also those are of this type that there is need for a defender for those very ones whom the pope procures as his supporters, and nevertheless great gratitude is felt for them also. Certainly, Coclaeus, unless you were exceedingly stupid, Pope Paul would long since have presented you with some priesthood in return for your panegyric, even congratulating you on your disputation, to use your words. You are

too well-known; he gives you nothing. I more than just gladly wish that he would give you something--God should love me so! I wish that he would hire you as a defender. Would that he possessed another title of defender! This badly devised machine of popes seems very much like a sickness to me. As long as anyone is sick and someone says that he can use this or that medicine for recovering his health, with how great a risk to himself does he commit himself and his life to all of them? May the rags of Bamcis bear witness, not without torments he offers bitter herbs, / now in the rear, now in the front. He never gives up hope of better health as long as there is someone to offer him a new drug, even if he should give him poison for a cure. And so it happens that from this the advantages result that from one ailment, they make its double. How many are there who have labored in setting up the machine? How many are there who support its tottering pillars? For a long time cruelty easily warded off all of everybody's insults. The burning flames forced everyone to draw back from a good man's duty. Unless you are far more stupid than you are, you will realize that the pope is indebted to me for not mentioning at this point those men whom he impiously punished for having dared to open their mouths against his dogmas. Someday there will be somebody else to take that task for me. But I cannot leave you, Coclaeus. I have decided to zealously pursue this entire work just for you. You say that the king through his hatred of the pontiff has introduced Lutheranism into his kingdom. Indeed you do what you are used to, not what you

The papacy
like an
illness

O.iiii.

About
Luther

should. You prove that Luther is at variance with Christ's teaching, and I have easily proved that the king has no dealing with Luther. He ejected the pope from his kingdom, to the great joy of all his subjects, freeing his kingdom from tyranny. The king can thank Luther who advised the world that, having read the Scriptures, they could at last see through and despise the tricks of a charlatan and imposter. To you also he owes something, in that, impelled either by your ignorance or your obstinacy, he has seriously approached the Scriptures, which have been profaned by no comments of yours. I would venture to say this--that no king has since the time of Christ ever ruled among Christians who can be compared with him, if you consider either natural ability or progress in letters, especially in theology. Name me one of your pontiffs who has reigned in these past centuries whom you can compare with this king, and I shall call them all learned and holy too. Woe to your tricks if the other kings someday get the idea that he ought to be imitated, if they attempt the study of the Scriptures, if they finally allow themselves to be fully instructed concerning your right, power, and office by Christ, by the Apostles, by the doctors whom you wish to be the patrons of your faction. Woe to you, hypocrites, if the canons and edicts of your cleverness do not serve you better in the writings of others than they do in his writings or than they will serve you in the writings of his descendants in their turn. Happy are you, Henry, most flourishing king of all kings, who realized those men were such

unyielding imposters in a most honorable cause. Once you were
 the patron of ~~p~~apal tyranny, I might say the strenuous defender
 of this faith, which at that time had been set up in opposition
 to Christ through the enemies of faith. But since this was done
 through a certain honest error of the mind rather than through
 any inclination to argue, you see how you and all your people
 have been led not only to the knowledge but also to the cul-
 tivation of true religion through the goodness of Christ, which
 is less able to be non-existent than to fail one who is toiling
 at holy tasks. /Although I know it was difficult to dislodge
 a pope from his possession, I see that it was necessary, and
 being married to your brother's wife and instructed by the
 very best writings, you took from this the occasion for ejecting
 Roman pontiffs. Is it less evil for you to unknowingly have
 been involved for some time in the crime of incest than for
 them once to have been ejected from your kingdom? For what
 could be imagined more contrary to religion than for this
 stronghold to be established which breaks God's laws and
 makes its own and remakes them when it wishes. There has
 shone, oh king, there has shone a greater light at last through
 the grace of God. You see, just like in the Platonic cave,
 that you have admired shadows in place of objects, a cathedra
 in place of power, hypocrisy in place of holiness, the See
 in place of the apostle, the servant in place of the master,
 and the slave in place of the lord, and to conclude once and
 for all, a wolf in place of a lamb. At last you can say with
 the prophet, "Oh Lord, our God, other lords besides thee

have possessed us, but dying they do not live, and they are monsters and after this do not rise again. Indeed why are they not called monsters who capture and take possession of heaven, who although they are men, wish to be considered gods? At last, greatest prince, you are an example to the other monarchs, that, although they are kings, they may not wish to be subordinate to a priest. Now they do not influence you at all, though through many rescripts and their own canons they offer as a bribe the administration and power over all things in heaven, on earth, and in hell, and while they are eager to strengthen this power, they weaken it by the Scriptures which they have distorted and perverted through violence and crime. What do those demigods not claim for themselves? What do they not dare to promise us? What laws do they not violate? And what laws do they not establish? Not content that the authority of God has been shared, they want it all to be turned over to them, and yet the management of earth, heaven, and hell does not seem great enough. There must be maintained also the care of Purgatory, just like some new world recently discovered by the Spaniards. If this is valid according to the laws of God which they have seized on just as if it had been conceded by God, and the pontiffs would someday prove to us that the care of all things had been given over to them by the powers above, I know well enough that not one of the kings is so foolish that he would not rejoice to have been freed of so great a burden, care, solicitude, and finally, peril to his salvation. No one would be so ungrateful that he would not give them the

greatest thanks who had led them, who had been tossed in the waves of so many concerns and thrown on the rocks of so many cares, into the harbor of leisure and pleasure. For a very long time this idea has imposed itself on Christian kings--to sail into harbor, when the people should have enough grain, enough wine, enough clothing, and safe from wars, from seditions, and from theft, they should delight in the abundance of all things, and on no occasion would a greater peril threaten the prince than when the common people, sunk in luxury, should provide free access to all vices. Everybody thought it was the bishops' duty to maintain the care of souls. It is indeed the duty of a true bishop / to serve the word of God, which here even kings, and even the highest emperors ought to obey; it is the duty of the king to see that they serve well. I would say that kings ought to obey them when they prophesy the teachings of God, truly obeying God. But if they bring their own nonsense, their own profit, their own impious traditions, to that extent they should not be obeyed, so that we with a cudgel they might be forced to instruct the people properly. The king has obeyed the pontiff for a long time. For a long time he has showed to him, as a father, nothing but honor. But now he realizes that he has been kidnapped--the pope is not his parent, but a slave-dealer. The pope has honored him with distinguished titles not because he wishes him well, but in order that the property of Rome might grow more splendid for himself, and so that he could sell his empty promises for considerably more. Do you wonder if, having seen through the deceptions, the king should leave

Piii.

Popes are
not fathers
but slave-
dealers.

the slave dealer and returns to his father? You are all brothers, and do not designate for yourselves a father on earth, for you have one Father who is in heaven. They wish, they wish to be called fathers in every respect—even contrary to God's law, but not without profit to themselves. They wish us to be sons. By what right? If you should ask with what injury to us, perhaps I could have said. They cannot bring forth any right unless they would offer custom as the basis of all error. But see the craftiness. Whatever has been said in Scripture about the obedience of children toward their parents, to whom we truly owe life, those fathers (who never wish to take a wife, except for someone else's) seize on that immediately. They always chant to us, if in anything we incur their displeasure, "This is a depraved generation which curses its father," and again, "The eye which mocks a father the ravens from the torrents shall pluck out, and the young of the eagle shall consume it." It can happen, and often does, that there is occasion for your complaint, but the blame is yours. For you are so ungrateful that you do not acknowledge your children, your works, or rather your sons born of impiety. Bring it about that they finally live at your expense. They will not affect you in turn with so great an injury. Certainly your complaint will then be more just. Paul was able, with a perfect right, to call the Corinthians sons, whom he, as a most diligent and prolific father, had begotten for Christ. But the Roman pontiff, who has never come to us and never sees us, who up till now has never made an end or a limit to his robbing of us—does he think that we became his sons in his sleep sometime? Pope Paul III has us in place

Proverbs 30

of children. As soon as he had been made the highest priest by the friendly cardinals who had on this account been summoned from France, and by those who make a far greater profit for Rome from purchased votes than from bought bishoprics, has he by his writings to almost all princes of Christendom and by his letters been able to rouse anyone to the ruin and destruction of the king and kingdom? Or do you think that this man is a shepherd, who, since / he is no longer able to play the sheep, exposes them to their enemies for slaughter? O, a wolf, the guardian of sheep! A harlot has not permitted her child, no matter how it was conceived, to be divided, and you who wish to be more than a father, how many times do you employ the arms of your children against the safety of your children? Though a harlot, she was dutiful because she was a mother, and she considered nothing more important than the safety of her child. You are adulterous and impious, not a father, but a robber and a plague to those whom you call children, not a protector, but a tyrant; you pounce upon someone else's offspring, you tear it apart, you put it back together again, and finally you throw it about and choke it. We have read, oh Paul, that letter of yours which you wrote to Ferdinand, the most illustrious king of Hungary. We have a glimpse of your sense of duty toward your flock, and we have easily learned from this source how much we owe to your fatherly love toward us. As we hoped, you have saved us whom you so avidly wished to destroy. ~~Haman~~ erected a cross for Mordecai; Mordecai was straightway carried off to great wealth, and Haman was crucified. There is no one who

P.iii.

3 Kings 3

Wickedly
done, Pope
Paul III

Read the
book of
Esther.

does not know that you recently presented the king of Scotland with a sword. Everyone knows that he was made the defender of the faith, that is of ~~p~~apal audacity, of tyranny, of impiety. I do not believe that the king is ignorant of your intention in forcing this gift upon him. Prudent man, you saw us inflamed among ourselves in civil strife. You thought that you had given the king of the Scots an opportunity for harrassing us and our possessions. You thought that he lacked someone to encourage him to do this thing well. Old man, you thought that a youth desirous of glory, as many kings, and especially those of this age often are, would willingly attempt this, by which he believed that he might make some progress toward glory, with the Roman pontiff as his promoter. You give to the one an empty title snatched from another. You entrust to him a sword, which I believe had been blessed, as if a king were not wiser or better than you, and without your help might bring harm on himself. Blackbird, defecate evil on yourself--you will never persuade the king of Scotland to freely undertake war with the king of England. Will popes never cease to set Christian princes against each other? Will you always strive this to surpass your betters? Is it not enough for you to have thrown into turmoil Italy, France, Spain, and Greece? Must you now arm a defender of the faith against a defender of the faith? Can you appear as shepherd of the English when you so fail to feed us that you are eager even to take away our life? **H**as paternal piety taught you this? Has your love toward your children brought you to this situation? And when the English, that is,

your children, rush into civil war, exchange of wounds and slaughter, is it not your place to hasten to oppose the dangers of your children, even at your own peril? Does not a good shepherd disregard his own existence, lay down his life, for the safety of his sheep? Do you lose your life to bother about tearing apart of the flock committed to you? If anyone hates his neighbor, is this not murder? Does he not hate the English / who so plots the destruction of the English? Go ahead and plot whatever your frenzy teaches you. Show the world that you seek only profit, that you want to be a father only so long as you can play the part of a robber. Either the excessive piety of emperors or excessive ignorance of God's word produced your predecessors. King's dissensions brought you forth and nourished you. For a long time kings have called you father, though everyone of them has found you to be the greatest scourge of his kingdom. If someday the shadows are dispelled and the covering removed from your hypocrisy, might they not with their eyes open plainly see you, both who you are and what you are like? Would they not look at you? And, having looked, would they not tear apart the exposed imposters? Is this not a sphynx's riddle--that he who begets should be a son and he who is begotten should be a father? Do you call emperors children, when they existed before the papacy? Have I not plainly shown you that Phocas is your father? *O, false sons! Sons unwilling to hear God's law! Oh, subjection of kings! Will you always say to those who see, 'Don't see'?

P.iiii.

And to those who look, 'Don't look'? Do not advise us those things which are righteous; speak to us pleasing things. See wrongs but do not condemn them. Get out of our way; turn aside from our path. Let the Holy One of Israel cease from before us." Thus Isaiah portrays the popes. But let us see what reply he desires in response to those things. For this, because you have condemned this word, and have place your hope in deceit and in confusion and have leaned on it, suddenly while it is not hoped for, your contrition will come, and you will be broken to pieces like a potter's jug. Sinners are terrified and a trembling possesses hypocrites. Do not trust in me; trust in God; the Lord says these things. Behold, I speak to you, Pope Paul, great dragon of the city of Rome. Before him because you have been to the house of Israel a staff of reeds, whenever they grasped you with the hand, you splintered and cut their whole upper arm, and when they leaned on you, you broke into small pieces and ruptured their inner organs. While we trust in your precepts, which were established in opposition to the laws of God, do we not prepare for ourselves the protection of a fig-tree? Have you not almost taken away from us Christ, our sufficiency? Have not our strength, our shoulders, our faith and confidence in God been broken? But hear the rest. Before the other kingdoms your kingdom will in turn be humble. You will not be elevated above the kingdoms. I shall weaken you so that you will not lord it over the nations after this. You will not be over a Christian people in smugness, commonefactor of iniquity, doctor of impiety, Long enough you

Isaiah 32

Ezekial 29

Faith and confidence in God, the strength of Christians.

have contaminated my inheritance. But more frequently than I would wish the tricks of those most wicked imposters impede the course of my oration. Too often against my will I digress from Coclaeus. Overlook it if I am away longer than you would like. I shall eventually get back to you. I shall finally listen to you. You say, "Let truth be attacked in France and in Italy." Believe me, someday / the French will recall this outrage. Someday the Italians will wake up, and will they put up with an uncouth drunk declaiming so freely against their reputation? "Let the English give into brutality and cruelty"--rogue, don't you ever stop harassing us with your curses? "Let the English give in, I, Coclaeus, outstanding professor of the arts, I shall never forsake the truth from fear of death, and I shall never betray by deceit." Oh truly tragic Theocrinus, oh sycophant, charlatan, fool, oh Coclaeus--what fear of death are you telling me about? What untried perils? What threatening terrors? Did you write those things for the purpose of defending truth, and not rather for the purpose of ingratiating yourself with Caesar and the pope? Did you ever--even in a dream--consider dying for the truth, you who in all respects cringe before the pontiff, who in all respects flatter him, led by the hope of some new rank, a new canonicate? You, who give your pledge that after this you will in no wise work against Luther, whom you judge a heretic worthy of all that good men write against him. What can a huge sum of money not accomplish with you, when a prebend can impel you to such a great disgrace? I shall come nearer. I shall meet you in close combat. Examples of long standing influence

Q

you. John the Baptist, Peter, and Paul have spoken so that even as a martyr you might protect honor and truth by the shedding of your blood. Fisher moves you; More moves you, but why, Coclaeus, when so many move you, do you not advance at all? Advance more quickly if you await death so avidly. With the knowledge of such great crimes can life be pleasing to you? Will you set out for that place where long since everyone has called for your punishment? Come to us and believe me, the king will either render you more modest or without ado will bring it about that such a fool as you will in the future not be troublesome to kings. It is plain what has driven you to this madness of false accusation. It is quite plain. The vain hope of Caesar's friendship has foiled you; ambition for papal favor has deceived you; a new and hoped for increase in wealth and rank has seduced you. You wanted to make your witness to the world by this one seditious pamphlet, from which if you take away insult and falsehood, you would leave almost not a line, and how much have you advanced in histories, rescripts and canons, and how much in audacious impudence and crime? Wicked old man, I do not know your age, for you are too famous to be known to any of our countrymen. I think you are old since I have found you such a wily old fox. Wicked old man, if the King of England had acted improperly in that marriage, could you not have left that horrible frenzy of yours at home and have admonished him prudently and in a restrained manner that what he was doing was contrary to Scripture? Could you not have made the Scriptures the judges of the whole controversy and, I might say, the witnesses for the regret,

and assuredly, would you not have done so if had been eager to change the king's opinion instead of trying to get for yourself the commendation of a satirical buffoon? For suppose the king has gone astray--is it thus that he will be led back into the path? Suppose it was not permitted for the king to eject the pope from his kingdom--will you restore the ejected pontiff by these methods? Or will you reconcile the angered king with the pope by those blandishments? But on the contrary, since the king planned everything in that marriage by / the advice and reckoning of the most learned men, and since in every respect he employed the greatest moderation and integrity, who would condone this calumny for you, even if you were beaten to death with whips? Who would forgive this crime? Not that such great harm was done--for whom can Coclaeus harm more than Coclaeus and him whom he is eager to benefit? But if this crime goes unpunished, all the other sycophants might be encouraged to a similar villainy. For it is just as important to the state for the crimes of the wicked to be punished as it is for rewards to be established for those who deserve well of the state. To be sure, I might say what I feel, that Caesar has done many things excellently, which will be to his everlasting fame, but it is almost unbelievable what real glory you often attain from something small and of little worth. For what is of smaller worth than Coclaeuses [snails]? What is more common? But if Caesar afflicted him with this punishment which Alexander meted out to Calisthenes, who would not respect Caesar? Who would not congratulate the world that mocking audacity turns

Q.ii.

out as badly for fools as they wish it would for good men? Let it be; let it be allowed; let us permit sycophants to exercise their sycophancy--but in such a way that they not make jokes and games of kings, or if they want to make sport, that they remember that their power to offend has been cut short. For certainly it is proper for the audacity of these men to fall upon the injured reputation of men of mediocre fortune and not to move a hair's breadth toward the staining of monarchs' fame. Truly, Caesar, you will easily bring it about that never after this will Coclaeuses appear who will attack other people's reputations with their horns. Having lost his shell, he will be a soft sea-urchin. Granted that the laws are lacking, granted that this is a new and hitherto unheard of crime, is it not right that when a new crime arises, a new kind of punishment be established? Indeed, now when so many laws have been proposed for the correction of calumny, why don't we see any proposed against Coclaeus? May you be a slave, wretch; may you be in servitude then to your lust for disparagement; may you serve either profit or ambition, but then only when you have found an equal, when you are ingraved as Esernius on some Pacidianus. We wish royal majesty to be august. We wish the fame of honored princes to be placed higher than where the brazen pen of sycophants can shatter it. We are not willing for it to be the same thing to harm a king or one of the common people; we will not allow it to be the same thing to vomit forth insults onto some wicked fool and onto the most honored of all princes. What is more unworthy than for the reputation of kings not to

Martialis

be able to be unharmed, if a pen be granted to frenzied Coclaeuses? But up till now I have been joking. Now I shall change the whole nature of my undertaking. Ignore him, Caesar. Let it be sufficient punishment for him to be, and be considered, a sycophant by all good men. The king has already granted a pardon to that man against whom that one is thought to have said anything, who charges no crime which the king can admit to his own account unless he admits other peoples! But for many years now the king has thought what has been very truly spoken--that no one is hurt except by himself. If it is right within, do not worry about how the rabble rails. No, Coclaeus, to surprise you further, the king is grateful to you, / indeed, very grateful. For what else could a prince, held in the greatest glory among all writers of our time, fear than that so many virtues would not find anyone so wicked that they could be displeasing to him? Coclaeus frees the king from this fear. Wickedness has been found which finally places the colophon to glory. It is not enough for the highest glory to please all good and prudent men; unless you also displease the wicked, it is not enough. Coclaeus' work has touched on the king. And shall we be angry at him from whom the king confesses he has received some benefit? Coclaeus' intention, not his outcome, is under consideration. I hear that you were once in England and saw the king, but up till now no one has been able fully to persuade me of this. For, by heavens, who is so stupid or so uncultured that he could not see the token of a most merciful king in the very serene countenance of the prince? Who could ever have seen that brow,

Q.iii.

that face even from a distance, and not have recognized the seat of clemency? Who could even from afar have looked upon that august majesty of the entire body, and not say that he was born to the crown, sceptre, baldric, clasp, fringe, and finally to kingship? But shall I permit that those physical endowments which the king, adorned with every kind of virtue, never wished to have a place in his praises should have nothing to do with the matter, so that you might think that the goodness of our good and great God has vied with the providence of nature, and he has given him a much more beautiful mind than she could prepare a body for. In this matter I cite the testimony of Erasmus, while he lived the brightest light of not only all of Germany, but certainly of the Christian world, and even of the world itself. If you had been as friendly to him as you were unworthy of his friendship, you would not be so eager to disparage his authority with your lies. For what worse can you say against Erasmus than that everything which he ascribed to the king was full of adulation and affection? You will not be angry with me, you will not be vexed if I bring up several of the many testimonies of Erasmus concerning our king, when you bring in from all sides the letters of More, which ascribe other people's praises to you. Is there no one among the living who showers you with this pleasure? Or is it just those among us who have ceased to exist ~~who~~ resolve to speak honorably concerning you? Indeed, Coclaeus, there are few who cannot adorn themselves with splendid titles, if only they are allowed to use the records of the dead. I do not believe that More had so taken

Erasmus

leave of his senses as to prefer your knowledge of Scripture to his own. I cannot be induced to believe, I cannot persuade myself that More was so hostile toward Coclaeus that he would wish you to be so inglorious to yourself that you would remain in this error--that Coclaeus was so skilled in theology that scarcely anyone could be compared with him. / If More ever did write this, truly by God immortal, as was his way he wanted to gladden, cajole, or deride a somewhat pretentious friend, for he was so given to jokes and wit, so inclined to irony, that even in most important matters, even in a very great assembly of people, and not even when he was administering justice to the people, was he able to restrain himself. For if he did feel as you would like to have felt, which I certainly cannot believe, he was a *Μυρότερος* ²⁹ More than we ever thought. Do you know why I contend these letters were not More's? There was scarcely any visible token of his genius, certainly no indication of such a great talent, and writing of the type that smacked more of Coclaeus than of More. For I ask you, what kind of beginning is that? "It cannot be said, it can hardly be said too magnificently, (Why do you worry, Romulus? With yourself as encomiast, why are you so pleasing to yourself?) how much I feel I owe to you, who so often deem me worthy of those writings of yours which come to inform me." Do you not see that that word me cannot be repeated everywhere so many times? Do you not see that it

Q.iiii.

abounds disgracefully? I shall say what is very likely, what perhaps you can swear is true, certainly what they think is true who have some cleverness, some talent for detecting trickery. While with the greatest care you composed these letters of yours for More's pen, now here, now there, now in the beginning, now in the last part of the speech, you placed me. Though occupied with such avid zeal for altering and correcting, you finally allow it to remain in each place. So badly does this glory which you strive for turn out for you, that it can hardly happen that this error might crop up in him who copies someone else's writings. What about the fact that, contrary to More's custom, you are excessive in mentioning and honoring the one to whom you are writing? "Whom," you ask, "do I mention too often or honor more than is reasonable?" A worthless man, a sycophant, as much like you as a fig is like a fig or milk is like milk, or you are like yourself. With what joy you are filled, how you exult when you suddenly hear from yourself, "Most honored man," "my Coclaeus", again "my Coclaeus", and then hardly a line later, "most famous man" in the next line. How gladly you hear yourself singing your own praises--"most learned Coclaeus," "dearest Coclaeus", "best and most loving Coclaeus," "Coclaeus most dear"--Good Lord, who ever saw so many kinds of Coclaeuses growing cheap in the market with no takers? How many times does the slave clearly call out, "Snails" and no buyers come running? Ah, Coclaeus, what is on everyone's lips ought to be true--"Truly the wages reveal the headstrong." Good God, how rarely the striving after a little vain glory

Read the letters of Coclaeus edited in More's name.

is well covered! However let me allow you to speak for yourself. I shall not be so mean to you as not to allow you to say what you wish about yourself. Indeed, inasmuch as you permit yourself everything about others, you dare everything, you falsify everything, why shouldn't you lie about yourself? Indeed you do me a favor and you tell me agreeable things when by these letters you plainly indicate that there are few alive / who would praise you; since you beg praises from the dead, which, if they were alive, they would never attribute to you. But now hear how Erasmus talks with posterity about our king: "What region of earth if it is favorable to Britain and does not envy her or not wish her well, does not now congratulate her? What kingdom today in the whole world is more noble or more illustrious? Doubtless it is the spirit of the king which enobles or obscures kingdoms. By what tongues will its posterity be made bright under Henry VIII! Britain will be said to have so flourished in every kind of virtue under this heaven-sent prince that it will appear to have been reborn. It will return so uncorrupted in its morals that even Marseilles itself might seek in her an example of civil discipline, so mightily in piety that she could be a teacher of piety to Rome itself, so abounding in erudite men and in every kind of learning that Italy could envy her, if the emulation of studies knew any envy. Finally, such a prince could be a model for administering power for anyone, and for all princes in the future. God immortal, this, in short, is to play the part of a king; this is to have princely power." Here I shall pass over many things, lest a sycophant be accused of increasing

R

his volume from other people's works. I do not pass over this in silence: "But meanwhile I have said nothing about your excellent gifts of body and mind, which we owe to God and nature more than to our industry, and yet however these good qualities make for the happiness of the state, if they fall to the lot of a good prince. Although for the past few generations, it was not much glory for kings to know literature, however your majesty will bring it about that, just as it was once the especial honor of kings to excel in learning, so after this it will be considered a fine thing for a prince to know literature. Your virtues dispel that old sophistry whereby some men say that the vigor of royal hearts grows faint with the study of literature. For who is there among those who are ignorant of literature who is more dextrous in any royal function than you alone? Who is more attentive to correcting wrongs? You strike down the guilty; you free your authority from personal errors; you restore its vigor with good laws; you remove useless laws and substitute beneficial ones. Who is more skillful in consultation? Who is more gifted in foresight? Who is more resolute in performance? And yet in literature, which your majesty formerly tasted so successfully, it has now progressed to that point--perhaps with not much study--but with unusual felicity of nature, so that the soundness and keenness of your genius is astounding even to most erudite theologians. Indeed, when in disputation, which your majesty recently took up for the sake of the mind, defending the laity's undetermined prayer, except what meditation addresses to God, God immortal, what master do you

surpass? Who could be more expressive in devising? Who could be more vigorous in composing? / Who could be more graceful in expounding? They say that a sort of colophon is added to all your virtues and adornments in that no one is more courteous in a meeting than you alone, no one exhibiting less arrogance or superciliousness, though your royal dignity remains intact as often as the occasion demands. The genius of learned men, which you support and honor in so many ways, will not allow the memory of your virtues to fade away in any remote posterity. It will always be said with equal eloquence in Greek and Latin, thanks to your benefits, that among the Britons was a certain Henry VIII, who alone gave back to his people the gifts and adornments of heroes: the literary studies of Ptolomy of Philadelphia, the success of Alexander the Great, the political acumen of Philip, the unsurpassed mental vigor of Caesar, the reasonableness of Augustus, the mildness of Trajan, the integrity of Alexander Severus, the learning of Mark Antony Pius, the piety of Theodosius, and anything else that is recorded as being unusual in the outstanding men of former times. I shall pass over a thousand other passages where he abounds in praise of our king, but I know that unwillingly, so help me God, I am doing a very great wrong not only to the candor of Erasmus, but also to the praises of the king. But, Coclaeus, why were you not able to read this letter which Erasmus wrote to you? If you were able, why were you not willing? If you read it, why was not the memory of such great praise able to keep you in deference or at least to restrain you from such a great wrong? Why should

R.ii.

His un-
conscious
virtue
will live,
Coclaeus,
It will live,
Zoilus, They
will not let
it die.

he bother to report the consensus of almost all literature?
 Why should I recall Louis Vives or Philip Melancthon or others
 when almost all whom eloquence can call her own eagerly strive
 to praise England's king sufficiently, though all cannot do this?
 How many times has their eloquence put their powers to the test?
 How many times has the power of speech withdrawn from the arena,
 as if conquered by the weight of praises, the number of virtues,
 the glory of the deeds, and the magnitude of kindnesses not
 only to themselves but also to others? But how many times has
 it returned? How many times has it renewed the battle? How
 many times has it confessed itself to be inferior to such a
 great prince? God immortal, what great power of speech, what
 wealth of words, what genius can be so great as to fittingly
 record what you have recently done for your country's liberty
 and for the restoration of Christ's religion? But if England
 could talk, would she not employ these words? "King Henry, -
 I do not know whether I should call you son or parent - although
 your age and physical constitution promise you a long life,
 nevertheless I am not ignorant of what a great disaster your
 death would bring to me and to my people, or I should say 'to
 your people', and I never cease to suspect so many calamities
 of fate, so many snares of life. For a long time now I have
 seemed to myself too fortunate to have to fear some illness and
 too secure, while you live for any illness to be able to harm
 me greatly. I am most grateful to the heavenly powers that
 having recently been through all troubles, in the future there
 is nothing for me to fear, unless I am mistaken. For when

England
 speaks to
 the king.

R.iii.

not many months ago the wicked attempts of certain seditious men / seemed to want to disturb all things and throw everything into confusion, to what length do you think I was driven in fear? Into what grief do you think I was cast? Could I, who am mother of all my people, not know the greatest grief when I see on both sides very great equipment for war and huge troops acting this one part, so that even if great Mars is favorable, my people must die? I summon my people--even those who have drawn weapons against me. Most prudent prince, you have taught me this. For to be frank, it was a long time before I was able to consider as citizens those whom I saw in arms against me, against my laws, against my interests, and finally against the honor of my name. But even when they raged most furiously, you thought not only that they were your citizens, but that they should be saved. Assuredly, when I saw this mandate for your leaders, whom I can neither love too much nor praise enough, that they spare the lives of even the most wicked citizens and not begin war unless all hope of peace was entirely cut off, I rejoiced that from your interests in worthwhile pursuits you brought forth this fruit, that you thought that the best victory destroyed either no one or as few as possible of your citizens, as you considered the highest law to be the safety of the people. I rejoiced that innocent citizens would in no wise be burdened with the guilt or crime of a few. The outcome of sedition is always sad, and it had often before taught me what I should expect from an insurrection of this type of people. I do not remember that a greater peril to our safety was ever created

The highest law is the safety of the people.

at any time. I watched the glowing eyes of frenzied citizens, the pale countenances, savage attacks, the gnashing voices, clashing arms, and the bows, my delight and the protection of our kingdom turned to the destruction of me and of my citizens. I watched the spirits on both sides glow with such great ardor for battle and with such great contempt for peace. As fate dealt with me most kindly, I could not help but fear a very sad outcome. Whichever side won, certain grief was in store for me. A day was set for battle; the night came which preceded the bloody dawn. Let those imposter monks learn, let the soldiers of the pope and the disturbed mob learn that God never abandons the care of his own, not even at night. Behold a small stream did not divide the hostile armies sufficiently to separate them. That night so much rain fell from heaven, such a downpour descended into the bed of this stream, that its banks could scarcely contain the waters violently struggling to overflow. No matter how avid they may have been for battle, all opportunity to wage war with each other was certainly removed by this one providence of the divinity. It can scarcely be said how deeply this incident moved everyone's minds, for almost everybody thought this to himself: "God orders us to be friends with each other; he calls us to concord; he exhorts us not to fight; why do we persist? Why should we not be eager to reconcile whatever differences we might have? The leaders came to a conference, and within a few days the affair / was transacted. Peace was established; not yet did war begin. What great eagerness and joy filled the minds, mouths, tongues, countenances, and gestures

Bows, the
delight of
England and
and the pro-
tection of
the kingdom.

The pope's
soldiers a
disturbed
mob.

R.iiii.

of all people! I, who, along with the king, saw that if the matter had been carried through to arms, there would be mourning for both vanquished and for victor, took the opportunity afforded by this disturbance to do some thinking. For what is so bad that it cannot bring some good to mortals? Excellent prince, I rejoiced that in that number of very wicked men there was found no one so evil who even in the frenzy of battle did not wish your safety to be taken into consideration. I rejoiced that all the barons, with two exceptions, and all the nobility proved their loyalty to you in this most difficult time, and that all the citizens with their money and their arms surely took your side, having been moved neither by the loss of their possessions nor by the danger to their safety. Assuredly you owe something to those traitors by whose crime it was brought about that you know nothing more surely than that your citizens feel the greatest good will toward you. What would they do if foreigners, that is, true enemies, invaded the boundaries of your kingdom? With what great eagerness would they bear witness to their love for you, these Englishmen who advanced against Englishmen, kinsmen who advanced against kinsmen, children who advanced against parents? This fear has completely freed me from all fear in the future. For can external war harm one who cannot be harmed by internal sedition and civil war, the bane, the pestilence, the destruction of Greece, of Italy, of all kingdoms? What of the fact that an everlasting fame for clemency will arise from this for you, who saved those whom you could have destroyed on the basis of what they deserved? What of the fact that we are more prepared to

meet enemy attacks than we were before? What of the fact that weapons which lay covered with rust during a long time of peace now gleam in everyone's home? What of the fact that those who carried out the duty of good citizens rightly take the greatest pleasure in their accomplishments, congratulating themselves that they have so loyally used the opportunity offered them for demonstrating their fidelity? What of the fact that those whom the monk's trickery drew away from duty to crime, now as constant witnesses of your clemency, will do everything to erase the blot on their family? Did you not recently witness the fact that when certain ones of the seditious soldiers from whom the madness of evil took away sanity, and for whom the lasting record of wrongdoing cut off all hope of pardon, wished to stir up the populace again, no men hunted them down more fiercely than those who formerly had been the greatest instigators and agitators of sedition? What of the fact that from this you can conjecture that, except for a few, almost all were led into this madness either against their will or through the deceptive tricks of monks and priests? For how many pretexts of piety or what was believed to be the cause of religion led to these turmoils those whom otherwise no money, no bribery, no favor of man could have armed against men or you? / In this incident what did the pope, the parent of liars and monks, not owe to deceitful monks? What plots did those men not consider in their hearts? What tricks did they not use? What task, undertaken for the cause of the perpetration of evil, did they not bravely carry out? For was not this strategem perilous not only to me, but also to the Christian

S

religion that monks and priests, with silk imitating the color of blood, wear in their cloaks, and persuade others to wear, Christ's wounds, his pierced feet, his bloody hands, and his heart? And is it not miraculous that everyone has not fought against me in hostile array, when priests have used stoles and buckles and the other apparatus set up for the sacrifice of God for promoting seditious uprisings, and when they have taken the crucified Christ from the temples to their warfare? How many times have they mounted the speakers' platforms, even those who formerly never dreamed that they would speak in public? I ask you, o king, what did they teach your people? What else but that they should undertake this war with an eager heart, saying again and again that happy were those whose lot it was to die in this battle, that their souls, while their bodies were still warm, would be carried by angels into heaven? Did it not shame them at all to expose themselves before the world in this despicable role? No, how could they feel any disgrace to be unbearable, those who were found in that battle line of traitors, who could either give destructive counsel to citizens or more boldly advance impious doctrines? Do not be angry with me. If you are good, I do not find fault with you. But if you are wicked, there is no reason why you should be upset. Who would not be surprised that an affair conceived with such craft and promoted with such zeal was settled without bloodshed and slaughter? Not in vain I congratulated my citizens on such a head, not in vain did I give thanks to the powers of heaven who gave him to me as governor, for whom even when

he was a child I had observed that belief of Plato: εἴν μή ἢ
 οἱ φιλοσόφοι βασιλεύουσιν ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἢ οἱ βασιλεῖς
 τε νῦν λεγόμενοι καὶ δῖναται φιλοσοφῇ ὄσωσι γνησίως
 ἢ καὶ ἱκανῶς οὐκ εἰ κακῶν παύλα ἢ ταῖς πόλεσιν ἢ
 τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ γένει 30 why do you smile, ὦ ἄναξ 31, are
 you surprised that I, who when turned over to your care was
 completely uncultured, now speak Greek? I acknowledge your benefits,
 and I can scarcely refrain from being too excessive in expressing
 gratitude for that favor. For how glad do you think I feel when
 I hear that nowadays there is not as much Greek in Greece as there
 is here? And with what sorrow am I afflicted when I hear that on
 that day on which Athens ceased to be in Athens, literature and
 genius said good-bye to Greece? You were almost the first, oh
 king, to order me to be the foster-mother of genius. Under your
 reign honor has always been paid to literature and to virtue. S.ii.
 Certainly I, who formerly / did not dare even to look upon the
 arena, have now begun to undertake a rivalry for intellectual
 glory with several kingdoms and not a few nations. This has
 indeed made me proud because through your constancy I feel that
 I have been freed from the very cruel tyranny of Roman pontiffs.
 Now at last I appear to myself a kingdom and I am seen to rule,
 when the prisons of pretense are thrown down, when the columns

30. Unless either philosophers become kings in this world or till
 those we now call kings and rulers really and truly become
 philosophers, there will be no end to the troubles of states
 or of humanity itself.

31. Oh, king

of hypocrisy are cast down, when the market-places of indulgences, that is of robbery and deceit, are taken away. Now I seem to be in favor with heaven, when the religions of monks has been restored, when bishops tend to their own business, that is, when they feed those whom they had formerly plundered, when there is now not one of them who would be ashamed either to be called a shepherd, or to be a shepherd. I see how happy I am going to be, how I shall have God as my friend, when the ordinances and writings of men yield to the Scriptures, which formerly it was necessary to reject as dead writings, and now, as they say furnish pots for the housewives. There is good reason for hope that the long enmity between the people and the priest will now at last be settled, especially since mint and dill and cumenum do not fight among themselves for tithes. I rule, indeed, but I rule through you, when I thus see the faith of Christ, the sole guardian of all kingdoms, flourishes among my citizens, when I see that considerations of the spirit have changed the nature of the contest. Once learned men contended among themselves, not to see who was the most learned, but who turned out to be the richest..

Bishops vied not over who could call the most souls from avarice to Christ, but who could obtain the most bishoprics. Once almost everyone learned civil laws; they learned that no one was bound to benefit his neighbor by his action, and they did not sufficiently remember to be careful not to harm him. Now not the least part of them think that there is hardly anything so important to them as to employ their services for others. They are preparing for themselves resources which shall not grow old, a treasure never

failing, though their funds should fail. They prepare ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς
 ὅπου κλέπτῃς οὐκ ἐγγίξας, οὐδ' ἐσὶς διαφθέρῃ. ³² Come, come,
 best prince, and what has prudently been taken away from you, ἅ δ' αὖ
 τοῖς λογιζομένοις φαίνεται βέλτιστα, ταῦτα ἔργοις ἐπιτέλῃ. ³³

You have very many bishops, men splendidly honored for every kind
 of literature and virtue, many men in offices and counsels to whom
 I know there is nothing more important than my welfare. But I can
 say with everyone's blessing that you have one man, Thomas Cromwell,
 whom I along with you and the state have regarded for a long time
 now as my especial delight. If you and I can enjoy this one man's
 services for a long time, I do not at all doubt but that those
 things which have not yet been established firmly enough, in a
 short space of time will become firmly fixed for eternity. When
 Agememnon besought fate most strongly in his prayers, he used to
 pray for almost nothing / more vehemently than for ten Nestors.
 Darius, a little more avarous, so loved the prudence and faithful
 affection of Zopirus that it seemed to him that he would not have
 enough Zopiruses even if he had as many Zopiruses as a pomegranate
 has seeds. He loved this one man so much that he said he would
 value his returned nose, his restored face more than if he had
 taken a hundred Babylons. I ask nothing else from heaven than that
 this man might for a long time have you as the originator in ad-
 ministration and that you will always employ his work, counsel,
 and faith in providing for me. For what so great matter can there
 be that he cannot direct by his counsel, protect by his integrity
 and complete with

Thomas
Cromwell

S.iii.

The prayer of
Agememnon

32. in the heavens where the thief does not enter nor the moth destroy.

33. the things that appear better to you as you make your consider-
 ations; these are completed in deeds.

virtue? You have realized how capable he is in a peaceful state
 and times, and how much he surpasses othermen in justice, integrity,
 and religion. But this disturbance has demonstrated that he is just
 as experienced in settling disturbances as he is in establishing
 or retaining all the arts of peace. But the misfortunes of Cardinal
 Thomas Wolsey alone bear a perpetual testimony to what great loyal-
 ty there can be toward a master and toward friends. With his en-
 couragement I have progressed so much that for a long time now
 I have almost ceased to fear the Roman pontiff. My citizens
 know how I suffered while he ruled. They remember how, under his
 absolute counsel, new reasons for lament were found daily. Should
 I not think that one whom I found to be treacherous and cruel in
 friendship, as an enemy hostilely cultivating animosities would
 do everything to harass and plunder me and drag me again into
 servitude? God has granted better things. You have taught me
 what it is to be free. I would now prefer not to exist than to
 be a slave. I willingly support a king; never in the future will
 I be able to bear a tyrant. I am your ward; you are my manager;
 you protect me, and I willingly serve you." Assuredly, most
 serene prince, you will hear these things from your country, and
 much better things than these, if those things which all your
 subdued citizens think could be spoken and expressed. Perhaps
 you will be angry with me, greatest king, that I thus weaken,
 diminish, and pollute your praises with my rash pen, and doubtless
 you will wonder whether you owe more to Coclaeus or to me. Certainly
 if you would look at the works of each of us, he can appear to
 have injured you less than I. But if you could laugh at my intent

or my attempts, you ought to have hated his. Forgive me for this boldness; consider the strength of the joy, which though always great at other times, is usually especially great when after long grief and longer mourning the too eager heart cannot restrain the force of surging joy. Assuredly he who on the spur of the moment thinks that he can even satisfactorily begin the praises of so great a prince, truly he does not see how great a task he undertakes nor can what he does be without tremendous fault. For what sufficiently ample tribute can you pay to him (even if you attribute all things), when he denies that he is great unless he pursues all the highest attainments? Or when he does not think that he is the foremost of his nation / as long as there is anyone in it who can vie with him in the number of virtues? But it is better to turn the discussion to Coclaeus, that is, to descend from the eagle's nest to the spider's cave. Wicked good-for-nothing, do you think that the reputation of the king of England can be obscured by you, when it has been entrusted to the memorials of so many erudit^e men and will perish only when all literature perishes? Or do you think that the destruction of King Henry VIII of England would be anything other than a disaster to the human race, when all learned men have offered and then promised their work to him for the immortality of his name. Do you wonder if he should pay no attention to what pettifoggers think or write? Are you surprised that your rambling insanity should bring you no profit except that your stupidity and malevolence should have as many witnesses as possible? Your boldness increases and your im-

S.iiii.

prudence vies with it. To Coclaeus, the theologian, it is not enough to have snatched the praise of a model for all sycophants from other men of his class. Oh no, just as if he were already jealous of his own glory, Coclaeus struggles to surpass this man, overthrow him, lead him in your triumph, and, believe me, no one ever will be so trifling that he would not willingly yield this honor to you, that he would not gladly confess, and acknowledge that you are far greater than that man. You sycophant, do you not cease to burden the cause of the very best king by your completely baseless lies? You claim that nuns, barons, and doctors have been killed, and when you tell all these lies, are you not in the least ashamed? For this cause no nun has been killed among us. Only one woman has perished, whose name was Elizabeth Barton, but because of something else by far, than what you think, of which I shall say a little. She lived for a long time, unknown to everyone, in this district of England which we call Kent, and she would have lived there still, if the hand of a certain demon had not somehow fallen upon her. For a long time rather often harassed by a disorder, she fell to the earth and looked very much like a dead person. For a long time she was believed to have suffered from an actual disease. People often were grieved by this so

Elizabeth
Barton

by this art. There was present with her by chance a large enough crowd of men of the type which she thought she could easily delude; that is, the Kentish rabble, by far simpler and more crude than all the other common people of England, and those on whom a pretext of piety could much more easily be imposed. She began her mysteries for these spectators. Her color changed. Her face became pale, a tremor seized her inmost being, her whole body shook, her legs no longer held her up; the wretched woman fell, her mouth opened horribly, you wonder that she does not break apart. You would never believe that such a woman had by her torments captured the praises of the multitude and the popular applause. But hear the rest. While she lies thus in a seizure, the people hear these things: "If any of the Christians who are present should doubt, whether this truly a miracle, if anyone thinks the thing is done by an evil trick, the body of this woman will lie thus for nine whole days, and when these are past, God, the avenger of evils, will punish the sins of the impious people." A little later, these things were heard: "This girl is going to continue nine days in this way, and she will not eat anything, and will drink just a little. Almighty God is not now punishing the sins of this girl, but he wishes Christians to be warned by her example, lest they fall into the hands of him. in his wrath. The most blessed virgin mother entrusts everything in those whose virtue and faith and patience she considers sufficiently approved." There are a thousand oracles of this type, issued by this impostor, at that time, when she had not yet been received into the nunnery. But when she now saw

herself to be held in great esteem among the populace because of intimate conversations with God and the virgin mother, she began to apply her soul to religion. And lest she seem to be doing this that she might more easily abuse the credulity of the people, she did not enter the monastic life without consulting the virgin mother. Therefore again she had to fall down, again her face had to become distorted, again her mouth had to open wide. She falls, she distorts her face, she opens her mouth. This utterance reaches the ears of those who are present, "I, the virgin mother, have chosen this maiden for myself, so that after she becomes a nun, she might chastely serve me all her life. Therefore let no mortal ever dissuade her from entering a religious house. It will be granted by my son's father, from whom she abundantly sustains herself." I am ashamed and with difficulty accomplish my intent to write these foolish comments about either a sorceress or a supernatural event. I am ashamed to publish the stupidity of our country to other nations. But since Coclaeus forces me to stoop to these absurdities, I would rather write foolishness than here to begrudge him his own praises. / She entered a monastery of the neighborhood, to which she was not unknown, a monastery of cenobite monks, which the people call the Bene-
dictines, after the founder of the order. Here^{with little difficulty} there was found a remarkably suitable minister for the promotion of this great business, or rather of this impiety, a monk by profession. The years which he had spent in the academy, rather than study, gave him the distinction of doctor. The name of this man was John Boking, and this doctor, alone among us

T.ii.

was executed, and I do not deny that he was a doctor who could teach no one, and who was this type, that he could be a disciple of Coclaeus, or certainly a co-disciple. You have the name; see to it that that man of yours who writes you everything from England looks more diligently into the life and teachings of this doctor. I am certain he lies (as he often does elsewhere) if he does not say that nothing is more unlearned than this "learned man." He has been best adorned by your honors, you who call yourself an outstanding professor^{of} the arts. And that you might know that he was more like you, he was also a great craftsman at promoting these things which can disturb the peace and tranquility of men. Because of her pronouncements this girl dedicated to God had this man in her power, and through him, for greater convenience in accomplishing evil, there were added some monks, several priests and friars, and above all, those whom the people call attendants, a treacherous type of men accustomed to betray kings, whom you can never watch so carefully, that they won't put something over on the world. Whoever wished to talk with this very pure maiden (for so she wished to be considered) convicted themselves in the presence of these men, confessing whatever evil they had done through their whole lives. And although they had entrusted their sins to those men, they were not immediately admitted to the holier cell of this Sibyl, or to colloquy with her. Oh no, those friars had been so trained that the men were kept occupied in repeating Dominican prayers before the image of Christ and the virgin mother, until they would so regretfully inform the nun all the evils which those wretches had perpetrated or had

entrusted to a monk. Then at last, when these mysteries had been ritually observed, the doors of this most holy vestal lie open, and an audience is granted. Oracles are heard, but first of all she was accustomed to exhort them strongly that, having abandoned their vices, they protect her innocence, and that they not continue to abuse the patience of God. And thus she seized the opportunity to reproach more bitterly those faults which he with whom she was now speaking had committed. She said, "That was not rightfully done by you that time. You should not have afflicted that widow with this shame. You should not have taken the honor of chastity away from that maiden." And thus she recalled to the poor man all his sins. And the guilty one sees that nothing so clandestine, nothing so secret, can be committed that it is not apparent to God, and to those whom God favors. She tells everything from the beginning, not without the very great admiration of all. / They stood dumbstruck, as if in the presence of some divinity, and it shamed them much more that they heard these things from a chaste virgin, and that they themselves were saying these things to monks. In this way, by these means, she counterfeited all the sayings and deeds of religion and piety with her impious dissimulation, so that she was all but worshipped as a god by the ignorant multitude. Finally their madness advanced to that stage of audacity or impiety, where they did not hesitate to name the day or the place where the people might expect a definite oracle from them. The man Boking with prominent boldness, often mounted a platform, and spoke many things in praise of Christ, more in praise of God, but by far the most in praise

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of this maiden. The people flowed in from all sides. When Bokings arrived there where they both wished, suddenly in the sight of all she falls to the ground and lies supine, distorting her whole face. She pronounces many things which her teacher, the monk, had taught her before, exceedingly vehement against the Lutheran sect. Suddenly shouting that the vengeance of God threatens those who argue against pilgrimages, who take away the worship of images, who deny the existence of purgatory, who are eager to destroy the authority of the Roman pontiff, the true vicar of God, she alleges that she herself has quite often seen purgatory, and consequently the heretic devisors of such an inconsistency should beware lest God, having becoming more angry, should by punishment recall those whom his leniency had not been able to restrain from error. This hypocrite had such standing among all ranks of men that her miracles already approached an epidemic, they were advertised publicly, they were read everywhere. Not only many other things but also the intimacy and frequent conversations of certain people made a pathway for frauds and trickery. Since Thomas More and John Rochester went to her rather often, and were deemed worthy of all honor, there were very few who could be persuaded that whatever was being done there was not done by the power of God. For Rochester was considered too holy not to be able to discern a hypocrite from a saint, or vices from virtues. More was held too clever by nature, for a nun to defile his speech, and finally each of them was thought better and more faithful to the king than to have the heart to cover up a most wicked plan beginning against the life of the king. Let others infer

what they wish, I shall submit the matter. She made up a tale that during the night she had often been warned by angels that the king would not rule for long if he divorced his brother's wife and married another. Having stipulated silence, she often told these revelations in great confidence to More, Rochester, and others. No one of them ever repressed her audacity or revealed to the king the nefarious counsel of this tricky woman. It is probable that they attributed too much to her holiness, and that they did believe that she spoke the truth. Certainly she persuaded her own monks that nothing was more certain than that she had received from God whatever she told them, and hence it was best that they expose the king to false accusation / among the populace and so make it their concern to dislodge from his kingdom a king who hated God so exceedingly. There was brought into this plot a man made for any kind of evil possible, Clement VII himself, the Roman pontiff. For the spokesman of this affair, Sylvester Darius, reported to Clement the fabricated revelations, oracles, and miracles which had been written about by Boking. He promised that his own labor, diligence, and zeal and those of Clement would not be lacking, to see to it that the king, having been driven from his kingdom, would one day dwell in exile. And as he seemed to want to be responsible for whatever he had promised in good faith, the Roman man wished to abandon his deposit of borrowed holiness. He fell to the ground. (Who would believe that the legate of the Roman pontiff would be able to fall?) He threw himself prone and worshipped the new divinity of the Roman temple in a Roman manner, reverently kissing the feet of the

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Clement VII

Sylvester
Darius

most holy vestal, John Antony Pollionus, Baron of Burgus, and apostolic messenger, bore this mark of respect to her and reported furthermore that her audacity had increased from this so greatly that she did not fear to predict the month in which the king would be deprived of his kingdom. For a long time she was believed to have dedicated her life to God. What does our king not owe to the love of God toward him? How many times has an inclination toward deceit led traitors astray? Who has ever attempted to harm this one who has not perished as a shrew-mouse by his own evidence of the very thing which people are saying? In vain you contrive destruction for him whom God wishes saved. Having spread through almost all parts of the kingdom, this rumor came to the king. He heard that his kingdom was going to be taken from him unless he was willing to continue in incest. The vestal was sent for. Nothing very serious was established against her. And so she was placed in custody along with some of her mystics, and she was ordered to be of good courage, for if she had spoken the truth, neither she nor her associates would suffer any harm. The month is awaited, and comes; let there be thanks to the powers above, Clement the pontiff either is not able or does not wish to fulfill what he has promised. Who would think that the vicar of God would not have been able, since God with certainty predicted beforehand that he would be? Why would he be thought to have been unwilling, who I supposed from this example, could keep kings in office or out of office? This woman, instructed in all deceits, when accused of damaging the faith, on being questioned as to who caused her to circulate these things among the people

and so to make God the author of completely groundless lies, replied boldly that she had falsified nothing, that everything which God had revealed to her was true. She said that in truth the king by God's judgement had already ceased to be king since against his will he had rejected his vicar. But those who were more prudent thought that by her trickery she had deceived all England for a long time. The business was entrusted to men commended for their very great wisdom and learning, so that it could be found out whether her miracles were produced by the power of God or by the artifices of the monks. She was asked whether she could now also tell the things which men had performed before. / She was scarcely able to say anything. When they urged her, she said that it was necessary that it fall to the lot of those who were pure and freed from all guilt to investigate those things, and that perhaps it was not now the time when God wished her to do these things. At this point when the monks were seen to be in great fear, and their brows to change color, their fraud, deceit, and trickery was almost detected. One of the monks, who had not even been summoned to torture, laid open the whole affair. At last she also confessed before the illustrious Duke of Norfolk and other very noble men that she had done all those things at the urging of the monks. She had been ordered to fall to the ground, to distort her face, to open wide her mouth. She fell, she distorted her face, she opened her mouth as many times as they wished. She confessed that she had learned the signs of the men from the priests, and that ambassadors of the Roman pontiff had often promised her this, that Clement would do all

to deprive the king of his kingdom. Since these things were related in public by the confession of the men, for which statements they gave evidence, should all the common people and nobles, and finally this kind of plague--that is, to say, the pope and his followers--be driven from Britain? Should she along with the monastic imposters have been executed? She has perished, and in your judgement also, unless I am mistaken, she was worthy to perish a hundred times, if she should revive a hundred times. Or ought she to live any longer who has so deluded men, and abused the sacraments? Or can you be a friend of the Roman pontiff, and not judge this woman worthy of death, who brought herself to lower his ambassadors to such disgrace? Or can you be regarded as worthy of your own life who would wish nuns of this type to live? Do you question the unfortunates? Or do you write about those afflicted by injustice? Or can it happen that there be anyone in England so idle that he might have written such things to you? Anyone who had such ill will toward you that he wished you to publish to the world these things more twisted than the twigs of little figs? Indeed she has perished, and some of her monks have perished along with her. And what is more, they gave the occasion of proposing a very useful law. For it was suddenly decreed by the united vote of all that after that day anyone stubbornly applying the authority of the Roman pontiff in England should be considered guilty of treason. More applied it. Roches^{ter} applied it. And their opinion could not in any way be drawn away from their obstinacy. It must be regretted, it must be deeply regretted that two minds of such genius should have been turned

from the interest of England to the profit of the Roman pontiff. For why was it that More and Rochester were able to have been prominent in their country's esteem except that the course of studies instituted not rightly enough by the former were changed by the latter, and led them both from serious matters to plainly ridiculous affairs? I shall not have told this to you reluctantly, that Rochester formerly undertook the business of the pontiff because of his religion, and once having undertaking it, he wished to defend it forever. However I am willing that this be told on this condition, that you yourself not be reluctant if the affair demands it, to repay a debt to me, demanding payment; because what I have deposited with you I do not wish donated to you. / Cer- V.ii.
 tainly Rochester, having been involved for by far the greatest part of his life in those authors who by their own declaration had zealously devoted all their efforts to establishing the authority of the Roman pontiff, certainly he was able to believe that the pope was the vicar of Christ. But there are very many things which could easily persuade me that More was not always of this opinion. In those great dialogues of his which he wrote in English he handles this passage, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my church." And likewise this, "I have asked whether your faith fails." He said the faith of Peter failed, but never of the church. Consequently "I asked whether your faith fails" was said to Peter, not to the church, and therefore the foundation of the church was not Peter but Christ. What of the fact that he often used to say that the

pope should give thanks to heaven on a twofold account? First because Luther had married a nun, then because the king of England had undertaken the defense of the pontifical cause. Undoubtedly he thought that otherwise the poorly shored-up authority of the popes would collapse. Doubtless with that marriage Martin Luther alienated the hearts of the people, and he saw all the nobles and important people hindered by the authority of the king from using their own judgement. When those who had been instructed saw that no one could write or even say anything against the pope without great disaster to themselves, and when for truth they saw crosses erected everywhere, prisons awaiting, and flames prepared, was it any wonder that so many fled from the camp of the Roman pontiff to the tents of Christ? But let us grant to our adversary, to More and to Rochester, what they could never wring from me if I did not grant it, that with Scriptures as authority, the pope was the vicar of Christ. Since now they will have been able to see plainly that popes have been able to insinuate themselves into this power not by the authority of Christ, but by the ignorance of men, was it proper to be unwilling to see what they saw to such a high degree? Ought the audacity of this one have flaunted itself to the very wicked defense or strengthening of this cause? Should the unlearned have thought nothing of the judgement of the academicians and followed the authority of this one man? But as I shall overlook the testimonies and sworn reckoning of foreign countries, are there not many of our own people here at home who can be compared with them? Who by the everlasting God is so much

more stubborn than even More and Rochester that he does not give credence to all the bishops of England, and to all the English theologians and those skilled in the law rather than to More and Rochester? Add to them also some monks. You may compare them either in life or in learning, but would I do injury to Thomas Crammer, Archbishop of Canterbury, if I compared him with Rochester? Is there anyone truly pious, truly learned, who thinks that the gospel of Christ has ever had an enemy more harmful than the Bishop of Rochester? There are extant works of the former? Whatever subjects has he written on? Why, where, and how has he been active? Why does such a great writer labor? Why other / than so that both the living and traveling expenses of unlearned priests might vie with their piety, often surpass it, and never be excelled, and so that the pope *ὁ ἀνθρώπος τῆς ἀμαρτίας*³⁴ and son of perdition, might be exalted over against God ~~and God~~, and so that a Paul--against Paul's will-- might take his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself--an enemy and adversary of God--to be God. He exalts the pope, this excellent leader; he led Christ back from the threshold to us, he quarreled with Luther and Oecolampadius all his life, more desirous of glory than loving of the flocks entrusted to him. For how does he love his flock who either never or rarely feeds them, and then when he does feed them, offers them bitter wormwood in place of sweet grass, the pope in place of Christ, nonsense in place of the gospel, tortures of the conscience in place of the supreme joy of a soul returning into grace with Christ? Rochester gave human and very illustrious things to

34. the man of sin

V.iii.

Thesaaloni-
ans 2

men. Canterbury, an administrator who often ascends the heights of heavenly learning, teaches heavenly things. He sends souls away imbued with the greatest hatred of vices and burning with a very great desire for virtues. He teaches from whence salvation must be sought, in whom the confidence of men ought to lie. He teaches what is the place for works, and what is fruit of faith. What you owe to your neighbor and that everyone is your neighbor to whom you can be of benefit. What it is suitable for you to feel about yourself when you have done all things. Finally what Christ has promised, and for whom he will fulfill those things which he has promised. Then all these things, as many as are supported by testimonies of Scripture, by how much uprightness of life are they adorned? Indeed when I consider the exceptional modesty, rare prudence, incredible piety, and even innocence of the man, I can scarcely bring myself to believe that also the greatest erudition might be any part of his glory. But then when I see what great learning abounded and how his great knowledge of sacred literature benefits not only all people, but especially the leaders, I well perceive it and I give the greatest thanks to the powers above; I joyfully congratulate my country, so much does learning vie with piety in this man, that you can scarcely tell whether one or the other takes precedence. And who could I ever say has proclaimed the gospel more sincerely, more purely, more free from error not only in England but in other nations since the time of the apostles than has Hugh Latimer, the Bishop of Worcester? Good God, how is it pleasing to watch the forces of Moses and Christ, of law and grace,

fighting among themselves? With what phalanxes of evil committed does not the savage Moses beset the souls of men? ~~where he wishes?~~ What battering rams does he not bring up for attacking our confidence? How does the law present dangers with on every occasion that one haranguing the troops? How do one's own crimes terrify anyone? How do they easily seem to be going to lead the captive consciences of men to torments? Do not surrender, let him come where he wishes, the pedagogue law will never force you to remove its hand from the rod. / No, when grace has been commenced with grace, the conscience is never anxious, though it looks upon a pedagogue who formerly seemed more fond of flogging than Orbilius. The soul long since almost consumed with sorrow has a source of solace, not even fearing the whip, unless there is a time when the grace of Christ seems to depart. I say "seems" because I have learned from him that nothing can be more certain than that it absolutely cannot flee from them whom God has once received into the roll of his glory. As Latimer has encouraged us, grace, mindful of its own name, gives itself to us gratis. It alone often recalls Moses from his bold undertakings, often declaring that we are heirs, and that he is not permitted to oppress heirs with lashing, nor is it proper for the sons of God to be demoted to the duties of slaves, to the host of ceremonies of the Jews, who are unwilling to give themselves up, who refuse to come into a relationship with Christ, who turn away. Latimer does not assert that men hastening to heaven are seized by bandits on the way, and having been seized are cast

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into purgatory, that is into the prison of the Roman pontiffs, and are harassed, and never depart from there unless money is counted out to the robbers. With difficulty he permits the lame to seek safety or pardon for sins in stations, the deaf in chants, and the blind in cowls dyed this or that color. The people hear that Christ alone is the author of salvation and that he alone has sanctified for all time all the believing by the offering up of his body. To him the key of the house of David has been given, and he and he alone opens it, and no one shuts it, and he shuts it, and no one opens it. They hear that God has loved the world, and so loved it that he gave his only begotten son to be harassed by tormentors, so that all who believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life. They hear that he is the propitiation for our sins, and that on him alone all hope should be thrust. There they thrust it, and hence though burdened with sins, they are certain that they will never perish to whom he imputes no sins. They are certain that none of those who hope in him will fail. They hear that the very vigilant serpent always keeps watch and always lies in ambush against the heels of the elect, and walks here and there backward and forward, seeking out someone to devour. The people hear, the nobles hear, "Give your name to Christ, go into his camps, place all your confidence in him, not all the armies of Satan nor the gates of hell themselves will prevail against you." No? What then shall I say now about Stephen Gardiner, what about Edward Fox, the former the Bishop of Winchester, the latter Bishop of Hereford? What has England produced untill this time more learned

Isaiah 22

John 3

I John 2

Psalms

Stephen
Gardiner.
Edward Fox.

than them? Whom more trained for defending the cause of truth or breaking the boldness, overbearing and impiety of the very arrogant pontiffs? Who may so praise Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, that many things about his industry seem not to have been omitted? Will I / taint his praises, if, most heartily in opposition to More, I shall use even this testimony of More, that the world today has hardly anything more erudite, or wiser or better? What could More, who was always occupied in business, have seen in Scripture, which Tunstall, a man engaged all his life in the best authors, and a man most avid for the truth, could not have seen in this matter or in any other? If he alone differed from More, and equal arguments on both sides made a victory uncertain, was it not appropriate for More, inferior to Tunstall in all kinds of literature, to yield to one so much more learned than he? But what will you say now, when not only that one, who even if he had been alone, should have conquered, but all the rest of the bishops, all the doctors, the highest and the lowest, took a stand for the king and against Rochester, for Christ and against the pope? But remember what More replied to the tribunal, that though all England was against him, France, Italy, and Spain would protect his side. Take away the flames, my good man, take away the crosses, permit the French people, the Italians, the Spanish to listen to the deceits of popes, permit the nobles to understand that they have long been held as laughing-stocks, that no primacy is due those men from Scripture, indeed they are being forced to repudiate all primacy, even that which has been voluntarily offered; do you not think that the Roman pontiff will in turn

Cuthbert
Tunstall

X

be brought down? Or that the Italians, burdened by so many injuries of these men, broken and almost lost, would pursue the popes with, as they say, a Vatinianic hatred? For how many years have those men, who I believe making sport of us, continue to say, "Peace be with you," for how many years have they nourished differences, rivalries, and wars of the Greeks and the Lombardi, and have pursued these honors and this dignity by this sole treachery, by which they attempt to sell themselves? Gregory III contrived this method for increasing power for his heirs, that the peace of Christian princes must absolutely be disturbed, that foreigners must often be sent for to stir up Italy; Gregory II called

Pippin II king³⁴ of France into Italy, and when the king delayed, and Aistulf, prince of the Lombardi, daily increased in power and occupied it as far as Ravenna, the pope went into France, where he was received with all honor, as the very leader of the future war returned into Italy with a great army. Gregory V was so hated by the Romans that with one accord everybody thought that he should be driven out of Rome. He was driven out, he lived in exile for a long time; at last he was restored to power by Otto III, thus avenging an injury received from the Roman people. He transferred the right of electing the emperor to the princes of Germany.

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Then Pope Nickolas II, since he / got along poorly with the Roman people, gave to the cardinals, that is to the guardians of the parish of the city of Rome, the right of electing the pope, which he had taken away from the people. When you consider

34. Actually it was Pippin III.

the beginning of the ancient order of cardinals, are you surprised that these satraps were once parish priests? But I shall not tarry here. Pope Alexander, to whom Thomas, The Bishop of Canterbury, went to seek power--was he magnified by the Romans? No indeed, he was held in contempt, if we are to believe Nicholas Maccahiavelli, who has very diligently written down in the Italian language, the things done in Italy, and having been driven out by the Roman people, he spent his life in Tusculum, and he was not allowed to return into the city even though he promised that he would not claim any power for himself except in ecclesiastical matters. Even so, that one said, things which are visible, rather than actual, exist, and what is far off is dreaded much more than what is near. And has he caused us any terror? Did Henry tremble when the pontiff's wrath was announced? The Romans did not fear him to such an extent that they even thought nothing of the vigors of exile. It did not even shame him to struggle over this matter with us--that no king of the English ever in his turn received the rule unless the Roman pontiff had appointed him. They were so unable to bear the rule of this priest that they were unwilling to live within the same walls with him. And those popes whom our age has seen and sees now, would they who are born in Italy today have driven them out, would they drive them out, if they were so much more powerful than they wish? Are the Italians, men not only of incredible prudence but also gifted with remarkable judgment, able to consider equal to Christ him whose crimes place him lower than the lowest? Him who having angered Christ usurped the office of pontiff? Can they esteem

him highly whom all Italy has called a Phrignensian cardinal--that is, as I might say, a prostitute cardinal--instead of a Farnensian cardinal? Really not so many Italians valued him, but they are so divided among themselves, they differ so, that even if they very much wanted to, they would not be able to overthrow the pope, that is the most certain scourge of Italy. They have often tried to throw him out, he has often been re-established to the great detriment of Italy. How highly they regard his authority, his oaths and curses and angry outbreaks, the perpetual hostility between him and certain Italian princes would indicate; indeed it is indicated likewise by the common people, who observe practically none of those things which he admonishes them that they must observe. They fast when he fasts, that is, either never or when it does not please him to eat. Certainly the cause of public tranquility, the fear of stirring up Italy, makes them not completely scorn his authority, and not the fact that they think that according to the laws of God they owe him any especial honor. They do not throw him out; undoubtedly they consider the peace and tranquility of Italy, but without a doubt they would throw him out if they had any hope that they could ever do it without strife. Meanwhile, why do they attack us--they who, if they could, would fight in our behalf? But let them attack; why do you hold up the opinions of men / against proofs, obstinacy against verity? Even if Italy and France have recognized the pope, Greece has never recognized him, Bohemia has already rejected him whom they had once recognized. And I do not know any of the popes who has

ever deluded the Germans after that. Certainly Henry VIII, the end of Roman power over the English, has by the vigorous publication everywhere of the divine word so overthrown the intemperance of the Roman pontiffs, so weakened and destroyed it, that we have nothing more sure than that the pope will never after this lay down the law for the English. That generation which sees our grandchildren will wonder how our ancestors were ever so foolish as to believe that "foed sheep" and "mock at kings and emperors" were equal, and that the latter was permitted to him who was directed to the former. But I return to Rochester. For a long time this man was involved in sacred literature; he read everything, he explained the books of all the doctors. Listen again, Coclaeus. It matters a great deal with what spirit one approaches the sacred Scriptures. For there is hardly anything which you cannot seem to defend if either you believe all things by all people or if you interpret what you read favorably to your cause and, as is the custom of the Lesbians, fit the pattern to the structure, not the latter to the former. I entreat you, if anyone should have imbibed any error, and then reads the sacred writings with this spirit, that he might defend it by all means, does he not profane his judgment and his mind more, the more he is immersed in Scriptures? And does there not become less hope of returning to the truth the longer he nourishes error? Permit me to concur with Plato that ordinary minds cannot greatly benefit or harm the state, but great geniuses must be greatly feared, for they can build up when they so wish, and tear them down when they wish. Alcibiades, Themistocles, the Gracchi,

Catiline, and countless others whose genius or eloquence often stirred up great disturbances do not allow me to waste many testimonies in this celebrated affair. Permit me to agree with Marcus Cicero that scarcely anything more dangerous has been given us by the powers above than our reason if we abuse it. For what is more destructive than the acumen of genius turned to evil and the defense of errors? And what is sadder in the Christian religion than that certain people are found who do any possible thing which they wish? It is not much trouble to draw a dull and stupid man into your way of thinking. But it is not a thing of genius to draw away More and Rochester from the defense of papal tyranny; it is not a thing of genius. For, how many years does each of them do this? How long has each one toiled in setting up his authority and defending his power? / For always there was nothing in Scripture, nothing in the doctors themselves, which could be stolen, drawn out, or twisted, which they did not have prepared or on hand. For what could be brought so openly against the primacy of this one, that they would not consider something false, at least, by which they might protect themselves and fulfill their task for their adversary? And what about when you had dealings with More, who at every third word, even while you were discussing very serious matters, answered you in his turn with some taunt in a very respectful manner? Very important men endowed with great learning approached him prepared to dispute with More about this law by which it had been decreed that those who stubbornly held that the Roman pontiff had any power over the English should be given the most

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severe penalty. They hoped that they would either draw him away from his opinion or that this man who had been so indoctrinated as to why he should be unwilling or obliged not to do so, would willingly lay aside his cause. Now listen, I ask you, to what this great Thales replied. "For a long time now," he said, "I have thought of nothing but the death of Christ. Let us suffer what has been sent." Who is so stupid that he could not defend his own stubbornness in such a way? But you say, he saw his death certain at hand unless he changed his mind; he saw that this was immutable, and the man was unwilling to struggle in vain with those whom he thought he would not persuade at all, and by whom he knew nothing strong enough could be brought forward to force him to give up the pope. But they were involved in a very serious error, and even in very great danger of their salvation! Was it the part of ^{any} man at all rather than of him who holds the salvation of his neighbor and himself equally dear to be unwilling to squander a few words so that those by whose decisions he saw all things being done in England should be recalled from error? If he did not care to do them a favor, then the piety of his country should have wrested this duty from him who considered that this law--passed with everyone's approval--would be greatly harmful to the state if it were not repealed. Would it be any wonder if this rendered stubbornness invincible everywhere? For to what end has so much vigilance of More, have so many volumes of Rochester in behalf of papal prerogatives been brought into the light if now they forsake his power, which has been brought to the point of crisis, at sword's point, as they say? There is

that work inscribed to the name of William Rossie, both written and edited by the labor of Thomas More. More was the author of this pamphlet. Undoubtedly this ingenious man, who knew these things would not have been pleasing to the learned men, preferred to bring out this book in a name other than his own. But there is almost no one among the learned men in England who does not know that More was the author of the little book. Certainly the king, in whose favor he wrote this, was especially aware of it. Hence it was that More was afraid he would come under the king's suspicion, and was afraid to do anything except what was in accord with his own well-considered best interests or to carry it out any longer than usefulness demanded. Hence it was that he preferred to take upon himself the peril of pertinacity than to bear the brand of a flatterer. They are not the first who preferred to meet death than to be involved in / a very great disgrace of inconstancy and infamy. Rochester was an old man and sickly and would not have been able to live long even if he had been in greatest favor with the king and warmed his old age with every delight. It was less serious a disaster to die with the hope of immortality than for many volumes of his to speak a perpetual testimony against him. More, who had already filled all public offices, suffered from a very dangerous disease of the chest, with even the doctors pronouncing not wholly propitious things. What ought a man, more desirous of fame and glory than was fitting, wish for more eagerly from his death than that, by the judgment of those for whom he saw his writings in behalf of the pope were approved, he died with glory? In the opinion of Coclaeus

Y

and perhaps in his own opinion, what he wished came to be. Without doubt they both felt so strongly that it would be to their eternal glory, that they were willing obstinately, as we see it, for us to make use of the opportunity presented for their name's glory. A little glory, how powerful you are--even in minds properly trained! Those who seem to scorn you wish and seek you; those who completely ignore you, earnestly entreat you. "Publish," said More, "Erasmus, publish my letter, in which I have indicated to you that I have voluntarily given the king my resignation from a very great office. I was not rejected, as certain prattlers do not cease to spread among the people. I had written several pamphlets in our native language for the sake of our faith; I think that I should defend the integrity of my name." Hence those tears, that devotion. He was unwilling for his little books, the vessel of his genius, his hope of immortality to be lost. He saw that if they would be lost, his fame would be snatched away; he saw that he would be all but stripped of praise, if with Tyndale, with whom he constantly disagreed, he weakened the power of the pontiff. He preferred to die than to hold up to disgrace that countenance of his which had been distinguished by so many offices. If a harlot lioness, harassed by every means, is able in a disgraceful affair to endure every torment applied to her, every torture, is it any wonder if More, if Rochester, when on the one side the hope of martyrdom is offered to them, on the other is held out as a threat the infamy of disloyalty and inconstancy before all people, and with danger threatening also in several heresies, unless they should die,

is it any wonder if they were willing to die rather than to spend their lives, as they thought, in the greatest disgrace? Especially when for the one old age, and for the other a disease of the chest promised a short life anyhow? It is a dangerous thing to defend in writing either side of a controversial subject. It involves impiety if in a matter of religion you choose to defend the weaker side. But now is it likely, they say, that so many nations stumbling for so long a time have been in darkness, in ignorance in filthy errors, have for so long a time stood by error against truth? Now at last a few have risen, who, having dispelled the clouds of ignorance, show to the world the light of truth, who having left for Rome the Roman church, make known everywhere the church of Christ? Who now finally having seen through the trickery of the Roman pontiffs, / stop feeding wolves in place of the lambs? It seems to me that ~~Isaiah~~ says certain things on this subject. When that one has said what he wished, then it will be my function to complete the rest of the story. Your merchants--every single one--from their youth have erred in their way." And since this error had great supporters and it was not lawful to counsel better things without mortal peril, what was strange if none or as few men as possible dared to come to the assistance of one who risked the truth? For a long time kings thought that nothing was less befitting a king than the knowledge of literature, and especially of sacred literature; at that time either the bishops alone were learned or those whom

Isaiah 30³⁵

35. This quotation is actually found in Isaiah 47:15 and not in Isaiah 30.

the bishop's generosity did not stop from disagreeing with the bishops. And they were not ever so able to fortify their authority that they were not forced to prevent frequent efforts of learned men by violence and fire. What tyrannical law could ever be seen by any Scythian or by anyone born in any far-off savage country, if that was not tyrannical--that they who dared to detract anything from the power of the pontiff should be consumed by flames? Add to this that if one had written anything which neither the pontiff was able to deny, nor they themselves were able to destroy, an edict set forth that his head would be consecrated for death with all dire omens, who even saw such a little book. Threats of the leaders followed that whoever did not submit to the decree of the most holy pontiff would be deprived of all his goods. If the extensive laws of Mohammed were with us, could they be strengthened or enforced by these methods or these threats? For whom do you impose the fear of the tyrant? For whom do you forbid anyone from disagreeing with your laws? You do forbid it. Why don't your laws endure; laws written in men's blood and fortified by flames? Why are not many involved in errors, when you allow no one to differ from you unless he is prepared to undergo martyrdom? They have been involved. They are involved--good God, with how great a loss of Christian piety? If a pope is the judge, if popes are the witnesses, if popes are our adversaries, does it seem strange to the pope, if the pope makes a decision favorable to the pope? Oh, ye powers above, what was that era when it was sufficient to have said, "The pontiff orders this, he has established this, therefore let it be settled."

If any king felt otherwise, he was deprived of his kingdom. It is strange how powerful is the purchased rank of the papacy, holiness furnished by copper, or more likely by gold. Yesterday he who was stupid and evil, what can he not do today, who if it pleases the gods establishes laws more rightly than the Holy Spirit? Yesterday no one more inept, no one more unlearned-- whence this great change of affairs? Whence this so sudden learning? By what argument will they prove to us that along with his new rank, a new spirit and a new mind have occurred? When arguments fail, by what miracles finally might they assert that the deer who is now Marcus, the deer, is not a deer? Lo, the sure indications of a changed mind, lo, miracles for you: the blind walk, the deaf see, / the lame hear; I have made a mistake; let me say it again. The blind see--they have settled points on the sacred Scriptures who never saw the testament of Christ except in a bookstore. The dumb speak--they make public pronouncements about Christ who are not able to even name Christ. The lame walk. For where doesn't the brazenness of the monks heedlessly rush? Where doesn't there break out the itch for writing commentaries? The infection of making glosses? The lust for distortion? What position of sacred literature has been so placed on high that those lame ones do not ascend to it, those holy ones who do not think about the most lofty peak on the mountains but they run, they do not run--they fly. Yesterday it was permitted to differ from the pontiff, so that one might also speak the truth. Today you listen--the high priest is not able to err. So has he really changed his mentality along with his name? By

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some charming fiction do they think that they can fool us when they change their names? They want to be called Clements, Pauls, Alexanders, Juliuses--I am surprised that the name Hannibal didn't appeal to any of them, since they portray so many of his ways. They who call themselves lions have not so deceived the populace. For what could be more similar if you should transpose Silenus? For lions are easily confined by bars, those who, more unmanageable than the very beasts, break open all restraint, wish there to be no barriers to their power. They wish the limits of their will and their power to be the same. Such great power cannot be held in by the whole world. Therefore since there is nothing here, where they might sufficiently extend themselves, they take on heaven, thus scorning kings and emperors, so that for a long time now they have been contending with God himself. Nevertheless, since they have been established under this name, in order to constantly invoke God in behalf of the salvation, fortune, and prosperity of the human race, there was no one who in like manner might solicit God for deliverance--full of wrath and curses, but their anathemas do not harm us any more than letters of recommendation. They give the conditions for purgatory even to one very young and to one hardly born. How many of you direct these beasts, or those lions, who are tame? Who with the same roaring will dash these down to hell, and will raise those from purgatory to heaven? Or do you, a man, bring letters, that you might congregate with beasts? Or does anything disturb you when they hand themselves over to Coclaeuses as if to those who fight with beasts in public games? Or do you approach the pontiff,

hemmed in by the trains of so many flatterers? Do you think that you are available to this man--but now not a man, but a god--so that he might be free to hear those things? And that he might hear, his soul pierced by the darts of a thousand flatterers--do you hope to be able to bear these things willingly? Will ears constantly filled with favor and pleasure drink in the acrid vinegar of truth? There is one alone who is able to save him, God; if he wills a man to be lost, truly you waste your labor to no avail. They cannot err, but imagine it would happen--even if you think it cannot happen--that the pope would sometime return to his former ways, that he would err, that he would oppose the truth; do you not see that the precepts of God would be fighting with the precepts of God, the holy with the holy, God with God? Let the pope oppose the truth; just apply the precept, "Obey the Roman pontiff" and I make you my intermediary. But you and the pope don't say, "Attack the truth," do you? And as you say, as you dare to say, you would not wish us to be so insane that we would believe you that we have been instructed by God / to oppress the truth, to attack God? For a long time we believed that error which was handed down from fathers to grandsons like an inheritance was not error; for a long time, exploiting the guilelessness of our ancestors and the ignorance of kings, almost to the destruction of piety, More and Rochester were able, as I have said, at first to be deceived, to be led astray, to err, I shall say more boldly they were able to err without loss of their integrity. Yes, almost. It is not disgrace to err when

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Your conscience forces you to the error. Nor when whatever might be true under other conditions, you cannot commit without the offended witness of your soul. But as religion had once deceived them, as piety forced them to the defense of impiety, as Scripture equipped them for an attack on Scripture in this most fortunate generation of ours, when the sacred writings have been disseminated and presented to the light, which formerly lay in greater darkness than the proverbial Cimmerians, could they not distinguish apostate from apostle, imposter from pastor? Could not the judgment and opinions of very learned men disagreeing with them have warned More and Rochester of an error perhaps not wickedly conceived but wickedly defended? They were able--to be sure, they were able to point out the abandoned path of truth, but to lead men overcome by just stubbornness back onto the path is the work of God, not of men. But there are very well-justified conjectures that More once did not attribute so much to the authority of pontiffs--that he then changed his mind in favor of the king when the king wrote against Luther. There are many places in his dialogues which openly tell that to any man not utterly stupid. If Coclaeus should urge me, he would sense how much More owes to him. Now listen to Paul, "It is not possible to restore again through repentance any who have once been enlightened and tasted the good word of God and the excellencies of the age to come, if they should slip, crucifying anew the son of God on their own account, and exposing him to mockery." A weighty thought indeed, and one which would sufficiently move all men not utterly wicked not to accommodate their speaking and writing more to the good

opinion of men than to the commands of the conscience. But for the most part we are all exceedingly eager for glory; too much we desire that the enduring memory of our name be commended to posterity. Rochester did not wish to lose glory achieved by great labor (in the short space of one little hour). And More's fame too, established by so many books--did it perish if one utterance had wiped out anything which had ever been written before? They both wished before death so to die that by death they might live a little bit famous. They do live on indeed, but among men of better judgment, they live on in infamy. But in truth, in order that wickedness not be present, in order to put on an appearance of religion, in order that no thirst for glory might nourish stubbornness, in order that the commendation of posterity might not confirm boldness, / and finally in order that they might think that the prerogative of the pope should be unharmed and that it was proper for the king to be content with his diminished rank, was not the king, for the reason already made clear, able to punish the robbers of his majesty? If the king did not wish to punish them, shouldn't the law? For a long time the king's clemency opposed the law. For they were not immediately condemned. No, they were only cast into prison; no fetters were imposed on them, no force applied; there was perfectly free access for their friends and acquaintances. For our most merciful prince hoped that the most obstinate arrogance of both of them would finally overcome itself because of his leniency. Undoubtedly the king so dearly loved More's genius and wit, that he thought the man should be saved by

all means. He wished to restore them both to their former merit, when he was not able to cast them down from their position of favor. Who is not disturbed by implacable obstinacy? Whose clemency is not shattered by the unsubdued wickedness of a perverse soul? Even God, who cannot be unmerciful, willingly lets go his praise for mercy when a mind so drawn by penitence does not draw you away from evil, so that you do not even recognize guilt. Men full of ambition have preferred to appear to have received an injury, to life. And so they forced themselves to die rather than that they were condemned. Indeed, perversely immoveable by all the advice of friends, they were so unwilling to try to avert blame that on both sides the one was eager to encourage the obstinacy of the other by means of the written word. What was it fitting for the king to do in this case? They were condemned by laws. If you spare them, if you do not remove these defenders of the pope, what will the rest of the popal phalanxes not dare, with these men as their leaders? Would you spare them against their will--against the will of good citizens? Would you remit punishment to obstinate men? Why should you ask? Without doubt the king shouldered the whole burden to save them with the law intact and his majesty unharmed; by them, nothing was done, so that the piety of the king might become unpopular. The higher powers might wish that More and Rochester not pay the more serious penalty for their obstinacy; but they, for the favor of the impious pontiffs, preferred to seek death than to save their lives for truth. God more easily forgives the death of his son who was subjected to the cross than he fails to punish the sin of an attack on truth. Christ

had to die once, that we might live forever. Truth cannot die, even once. Christ said, "I shall not give my glory to another." Christ, who alone suffered death for all, thinks that all belong to him alone, and that those are especially ungrateful who give their lives to the tyranny of popes, established in contradiction to his laws. For we ought to live not for a pontiff but for Christ; we ought to die not for a pontiff, but for Christ. Nay, what evil, what disgrace more serious can you take on against yourself than to suffer prison, baseness, stench, to bear chains, and finally to undergo death rather than not to commit an offense against the laws of God? / Much, much more seriously he offends Z.ii. God who willingly suffers death because of the defense of a wicked cause, than he who kills the defender of an honorable cause. For the latter harms no one but himself. He also benefits many, whom he teaches that the defense of virtue must be undertaken, even with peril to one's life, and even with sacrifice. But the former by his obstinacy draws many into his dangerous error. Certainly in the case of those who have erred before, is the error now to their liking, after they see it warded off by the executioner's axe? I agree with Plato that he deserves worse from you who Plato instills into your mind falsehood in place of truth, destructive rather than saving things, than he who involuntarily kills you. Truly I think that the crime of offending divine, no less than royal, majesty must be imputed to More and Rochester, who have been willing for papal right to be of such affect that what God has forbidden as immoral, that they make virtuous, when the pope wishes it so. The king has taken violent action

against no one; the law has punished those men and has taken life from the leaders of this wicked faction, who were undeserving of life. Why do you complain? What has been done illegally here? Why shouldn't More die? Why should Rochester live, who did not wish to? Both paid the penalty. If you wish to contend that anything was wrongfully done by us, show that by divine right the Roman bishop has power over the English. Show that the king has been subjected to him, that the pope could command him in all things, in place of his own right. For what, I ask you, did More and Rochester have to defend their obstinacy, this opinion of theirs about the king's marriage or about the primacy of the Roman pontiff? Did they have anything other than what they had formerly communicated to Coclaeus and his friends? All their hope is in Deuteronomy, and in Tamar and Boaz and other examples of this type, pertaining to the same thing but all of which would never persuade what they wish. They have not thought it very likely that Judah, a man who was a patriarch as well as one blessed by his father over all his sons, was of this impiety, that he wished to be a leader to his children in defiling the law of nature. Truly they think we are amazingly naive, or just plain stupid, those who think we are fooled by absurdities of this nature. For does not Scripture record that his most innocent brother Joseph was sold to the Egyptians by that same Judah, the blessed and the patriarch? Does he not seem to have been the prototype of that worst man, Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Christ to the Jews? And this although he was considered--and was--

one of the twelve apostles! Scripture recalls that the former had once been accused at his father's home of the worst crime except idolotry. And further, that we might grant him indulgence for all the other crimes that Scripture says he perpetrated from time to time, let us look in the Scripture itself. Take Genesis 38. Do you see this to make any honorable mention of him? And when Jacob, almost consumed by sorrow, rent his garments and vexed his ancient loins with the harshest sackcloth, / mourning for many days his beloved Joseph, and did not this one, at this very time, differ from his brothers, who, along with their sisters were consoling the wretched old man, who did not wish to be consoled; did he not, spurning his own people, turn to Hiram, an Adulamite man, and make a marriage with the Canaanites and be comforted by the shameful violation of his daughter-in-law? And is it very likely that he lived morally and in fear of the Lord when Tamar, who was able to know well his life and customs through long association, by pretending to be a prostitute, knew that she could easily pass herself off on him? Or that she would ever have conceived of anything so wicked, if she had not been certain that he would rush into venery rashly and without considering any choice of women, and that he would never be able to pass up any opportunity for satisfying his lust? And would it have been strange if he had not conscientiously trained his children? If he permitted them to form an alliance in violation of devine law? Or, where such blindness of soul, such perversity, or rather impiety existed, would you wonder at anything he had been able to do or teach his children, because it differed from

Genesis 37

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the laws of nature or was opposed to decency? But lest I seem to declaim against him alone, consider for a while in your minds, you who ever at some time happen to read these words of ours, the thefts, adultery, concubinage, incest, murders, idolotry, drunkenness, lies, and the like, the crimes which Noah, Abraham, Lot, David, and other holy fathers, to whom this Judah must not even be compared, are recorded to have committed. Do you want us to be so foolish as to think that the vices of men are the laws of God? Lot lay with his daughters, Abraham went into his maidservant Hagar, David fell in love with Bathsheba and ordered the innocent Uriah killed; these things were done, so you see; therefore is it fitting that we do them? Let Judah be a holy man, let us establish him as the equal of Abraham, should we follow Judah's actions and not the jurisdiction of sacred scripture? But you will say, I know, "If holy men are overcome by the desires of the flesh, if they have at some time sinned, they are not however the leaders to the other people, that they should sin." Judah would not have told Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and lie with her" if it had not been lawful. Let me distort the evidence like you do: is it not lawful for husbands to take pleasure in maidservants, neglecting the sacred right of matrimony? For did not Sarah say to her husband Abraham, "Enter into my maidservant, if by chance I may have sons from her?" And in not just once instance this was done. Rather often wives have given this counsel to their husbands. Rachael and Leah, most virtuous women, said to their husbands, "Go into my maidservant." But there is found only Judah in

such a great multitude of men who said to his son, "Go into your brother's wife." But here now I should like this granted me by More and Rochester (for I don't want to ask anything of Coclaeus), or since they are no longer here, by their defenders, that they consider a little when Judah lived, with whom he dwelt, what wife / he had; when he gave those instructions to his sons, had he not lowered himself from his brothers, in associating with the Adulamite Hirah? Did he not marry a Canaanite wife? He did. Is it reasonable to believe that Judah, when he was by himself, when he lived alone in a foreign land, far from his friends, would have been able to force the nation of the Canaanites to follow the laws of the Jews in contracting marriages? Or rather is it not very likely that in this case he had given himself up to affection for his wife and lust for his daughter-in-law, who were themselves Canaanites, and in accordance with the nature and ways of the region, where it was customary to marry the surviving brother, he had granted this? Scripture easily shows that this conjecture is by no means groundless. For from Abraham himself, the father of the Jews, and even from Noah himself right up to Judah, the Scripture faithfully enumerating all the marriages of everyone and the genealogies, however many were recounted among the people of God, never makes mention of this kind of marriage. But nothing is convincing. Not until our adversaries cease annoying us and showing their stupidity the more. Judah, his father, grandfather, and even great-grandfather, they say, lived for a long time among the Canaanites. And yet they never compelled him to obey their laws. Therefore

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should I not be eager to have pleased him at some time? There are very many other things I know which do not delight him so; indeed which would make him angry with me. In order that he not become completely insane I wish I could just make the pharmacists keep some hellebore / for curing those who when they have been restored to themselves, could be some benefit to a Christian state. The inept rejoices, and the man made for controversy willingly watches these laws fighting among themselves. You are a great artifex for inciting hatred and hostilities. But you will never cause these laws to be incongruous. Since Deuteronomy does not pertain to the forming of customs or even to the promotion of any enthusiasm for virtue, why can it not be seen as directed toward the condition of the Jewish people and a certain temporary and private usefulness, indeed, soon to withdrawn and taken away? Through indeed many indulgences of God he conceded to the Jews things which openly opposed the morals which they had formerly been taught, but he made these concessions not for all time, and not to any people other than the Jews. Indeed he ordered certain things which if done at any other time, that is, today, would plainly render a man impious. Augustine has rightly said that the intermarriages of relatives was once permitted, even commanded. Once men married their own sisters. To the degree an action was compelling in ancient times, so much in later times it was condemned by religion. And although that which could be done should have been done because of compelling necessity, when there was no longer that necessity, not only should the thing not be done, but if it was done, it was even

a violation of divine law. Therefore thus was Jacob excused for his lying, the Israelites for theft, Sampson for murder, and thus are the patriarchs and the others who had several wives at the same time or in the same family, excused for adultery. And so he who marries his brother's wife cannot be sinning against the law, since the lord of the law and of nature and of all things annuls laws as many times as he wishes and whatever laws he wishes. God wished the geneology of Christ to be certain, lest the prophecies be disordered. He had been promised from a Jewish woman. Should each man marry the wife he wishes, things concerning birth come into question. Certainly the most sacrosanct lineage of Christ has always shuddered at any intercourse with the Canaanites, though the law which forbid the people of Israel to contract marriages with the Canaanites, had not been made known. Rebecca exclaimed that if Jacob took a wife of Canaanite stock, she would not wish to live. Not willingly did Isaac look on the daughters of Heth. That great prophet of the homeland of Christ, and according to the flesh, a sort of first parent, Abraham, charged Eleazar, servant of his household, that he would not get him a wife of the Canaanite race, having placed his hand under his thigh while making the oath. That is, as all the doctors interpret it, because Christ was anticipated in his seed. For "Abraham saw my day and rejoiced," said Christ. Now listen to the words of the law. "You will not form a covenant with them, nor have compassion on them, nor join with them in marriage. You will not give your daughter to the son of one of them /, nor will you accept one of their daughters for your son. Because she will

lead your son away from following me." And in the gospel how severely Christ rejected the supplicating tears, saying, "I am not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Is it right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs?" A harsh rebuke, which censured only the enemies of the cross of Christ. But you see that that law passed away entirely, ^{when} Christ was born. No, Abraham is father not so much to those who are now in the circumcision, but to those who follow in the footsteps of faith, which is in the foreskin of Abraham. But now that Christ has been born, now that the sun has risen, why should we think there are any shadows not driven away? When the prime reason for the institution of law has passed away, why does the law not appear to have passed away? Certainly we are not subject to the curse of sterility, and do not consider it necessary to conserve the name of our family, to record definite geneologies, for the heredity of each family to be intact, and for the general population to have their own possessions kept separate, their fortunes distinct. No, this law, when it was its most vigorous, covered not even all Jews. For the tribe of priests, which had no inheritance, mixed in with all the tribes. Aaron took as his wife Amminadab³⁷, sister of Nahshon, who was leader of the tribe of Judah, while the Israelite people were going through the wilderness away from the Egyptians. Joshabeth, the daughter of king Jora, although she was of the tribe of Judah, married the priest Jorada. Finally how could Mary and Elizabeth have been related if it was not permitted for

37. According to Exodus 6:23 it was the daughter of Amminadab.

women to move from one tribe to another? For the latter was born of Zachariah and the priestly line, and the former of the tribe of Judah? Certainly it was permitted women, who had no inheritance, to seek a husband from whatever tribe they wished. Finally in order that I may bring this to an end sometime, just as the Falcidian law was broad for the purpose of preserving the inheritance to the 30th part, so the Deutuonomic law plainly seems to me for the purpose that brother should marry brother--that is, a man of his own tribe--not his blood brother. For here it is pleasing to seek payment of a debt. False things should of course be conceded only for the sake of guarding the truth. When this is done, one must return to the truth immediately. If you disagree with us, see to it that you do not, as is your way, bring up custom in place of law, error in place of proof. There was a place for such foolishness when you were a boy; now, believe me, now boys are wiser than you are as an old man. By God immortal, where has shame gone? Where the principle of honor? Do not so many lies shame you? Does it not shame you that it is vain for you to seek everywhere for glory? Or for someone like you? Has your shame perished along with your mind, that you do not consider either what you say or what others are going to say about you? Do you say that we may not receive letters from foreign countries? That we ourselves may not write to others? You do say it and I know you will never deny it. But see how I have departed from the custom of a cautious man; / I have found one so wicked, so without shame, so like you, that he alone would speak with you; I yield the whole controversy to you. Because with More cast

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into prison or dead, no one writes to you, do you think it is because no one has been permitted to write to foreign countries? Because you have no friend here to whom you can write, do you think other people don't write to their friends? It embarrasses me that God should love me so well that it should be up to me to deal with whom all other nationalities--French, Germans, Spaniards, Italians, in short, all people have caught in a most manifest lie. I am sorry that it is necessary for me to call you a sycophant so many times. But come, come, after this you will not so much hear what you deserve, as that I shall say what they tell me. For I allow you to narrate the wonders of Rochester's life with impunity because all the people of this country easily understand with what faith you carry out the task, you who place all hope of victory in lies of this type. You speak your disparagement to a blockhead. Those who wish better for you than you deserve do not so much wish that your head be one time affixed to a pole as that it never be knocked down by a blockhead. Yield to us and even yet you will see the head of both beheld in the place where they had first been placed. For even yet men can be admonished by that sight not to plot any evil against the king or against the laws of the kingdom. And he said, "Listen to what surpasses all savagery, listen to the most monstrous crime: More's head, softened only by long boiling was placed on a spear." Assuredly if I had not pledged my faith to you that I would not keep burdening you with the insult of sycophancy, twice before this, believe me, I would have called you a shameless sycophant. It is an ancient custom among

the English to place the head and limbs of traitors, which would otherwise be covered with clotted blood, into warm water. I suppose this is so that when the blood is turned into gore, the stench of the body will not cause a peril to the health of the citizens in the neighborhood. Learn, stupid ~~but~~, ah, I have spoken against my will. Anything insulting that I said, I wish unsaid. Learn, Coclaeus, that that was done wisely for the sake of the citizens' safety, which you wish to appear as a monstrous crime. You record that there were three causes of death. At last you speak the truth. For God's sake, don't be ashamed. It is within God's law that you do this for once; only lest you keep it up, I shall recall your nature. You return to your natural bent. There are many charges concerning the trial, many letters have been sent which express feeling about More and Rochester. Never within the memory of man in any trial ever held was the court more noble, or the judges more upright. There was no one who was not far more noble than More. The leaders of the whole kingdom, the greatest men of all were present; many barons, all men of knightly rank. Look, Coclaeus, how you help me, who up to this point have contended that they were killed for this one charge, that they preferred to be subject to the pontiff rather than to the king. You say letters were produced. You speak the truth. Then apply the law. No one in England is permitted to defend the tyranny of the pope, either by writing or by word of mouth. / Whoever defended it would be considered a traitor. Certainly up to that time there was no decree that those who did not disapprove of the king's illegitimate marriage with Catherine should be given the supreme

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penalty. No, it had been established that those who were charged with that crime should be held in prison, until either longer life had changed their opinion or death had put an end to their obstinacy. Learn, Coclaeus, learn how Henry II, king of England, handed over his sceptre to the Roman bishop, who promised that no one would reign in England except he whom the Roman pontiff designated. Henry VIII did not wish to be told whether he would reign. For he did not think it concerned his affairs very much that there had once been a king of his own name who handed over to his posterity the shame of servitude. He felt that it would be an eternal glory to him if he would be the one who handed over to his heirs a free English kingdom-- that is, a kingdom. He thought that he would be the one who first cast out this monstrous tyranny. But boldness increases. Shameslessness vies with it. A sycophant does not stop wishing to burden the king's cause by groundless lies. He proclaims that priests, monks, barons, and doctors are being killed. He claims that all the bishops and elders are compelled by force to approve of manifest impieties, whether they like it or not. No baron among us has ever wished to die for the sake of the pontiff; for this distinction never came to More, whom you for the first time now that he is dead, make a baron, just a little bit too late. The king, who holds literature and letters in the greatest esteem, wished this man's honors to be a stimulus to us in the pursuit of virtue. He bestowed on him everything which a citizen more learned than More could or should hope for from a most liberal and learned prince. But he did not bestow so

much that you shouldn't be branded a lying buffoon for building ill-will against the king by asserting that we have killed batons. Boking was the only doctor among us who was executed. But come now, if the accusations against the king cannot furnish you with material for calumnies, search out something new. Burden him with false and fictitious charges, attack his innocence, reclining on your couch, detract from the glory of the great things he has done. You plot, and we have presented you to the world beautifully adorned by your own virtues, and not with virtues borrowed from another source. Meanwhile lest some fool assigns me a mark of ingratitude, I shall give the greatest thanks to you because up till now you have made no true accusation against the king. And we who accuse you of lying restrain ourselves with difficulty, though you so feebly defend the power of him for whom you have zealously done this work, and so ineptly accuse the king, whose fame you have wished completely effaced. Undoubtedly you have a double meaning. While you praise the king, your pen bears witness that you wish to censure him. For what greater praise is there than that although you are the greatest sycophant, you can make only false accusations against him. But / do enmities delight you, that you wish all the bishops of England, all the elders, all leaders and nobles to be angry with you? Do you not yet regret writing what would bring dishonor to so many prominent men if it were true, and if false, would heap on you the everlasting ill fame of a very wicked good-for-nothing? If all the bishops, if all the elders, if all the doctors and all the others felt otherwise, in view of the license in England, do you think the king can permit so much

that one person should hold an opinion contrary to so many? Either stop lying or stop looking as if you are lying. What pretense, what defense for your worthlessness, do you so openly conceal? And to go back--I hear, "The king has divorced a wife whom he has known as his own for twenty years." Why do you bring up years as a justification for incest? Why do you misuse a great length of time as a defense of evil? Is it that what is immoral today, if you do it tomorrow, it will cease to be immoral? There is need for evidence, Coclaeus. Your insults--so many and so great--what can they show other than that you are stupid and bold? You monster, why do you talk idly about the most illustrious Mary, the king's daughter, not only so much more prudent than I am ashamed to compare her with you, or with your insult. Having confessed her error, having entreated against the guilt of her error, she is now, deservedly, in greatest favor with the king. Stop troubling her cause. She owes very little to you and to your kind, as having followed their advice longer than she now wishes, she resisted the will of her father. Do you know how much favor you receive among all people for your mocking satire? Those whom you reproach laugh at you, those whom you defend wish you had never been born, those whom you attack are grateful toward you, and finally those whom you praise the most hate you the most. Surely the king is too wise to make use of your testimony against the bishops. Their frequent addresses to the people tell well enough what kind of men they are. He loves his children too much not to love his daughter because he knows that she is praised by you. He is better than to hold priests suspect

About Mary,
the daughter
of the King.

who he sees obey him willingly. O how much do those priests owe you, when you are so unreliable that the king cannot believe you at all? It would be bad for them if you were not well-known to everyone as wicked and a liar. But, good Lord, what should I say now, or on what pretext could I deprecate the ignominy of a just censure? This cuckoo of ours, I mean Coclaeus, said, "If you could sense anything, and if you had eyes which see and ears which hear, you would at least take notice of and you would fear the infallible sayings of the prophets, which presage and pronounce divine vengeance on you. For this Isaiah speaks, 'We have heard of the pride of Moab, how very haughty he is, of his arrogance and pride, / and his indignation is more than his bravery.'" Is there anything, Coclaeus, which can be said more aptly against your pontiff? Is he not too arrogant, who although he is a servant and minister, invites, urges, compels the most august commanders to kiss his sandals. Is he not exceedingly arrogant, who, although he is a man and a sinner, dares to annul, to remove, to violate laws given by God, by the son of God, written by drops of his blood, and confirmed by a bond of the Holy Spirit? But I ask that we run through the 48th Chapter of Jeremiah, which you bring up yourself, and let us see if what was said about the country of Moab, might fit the king more than Rome, more than the pope and his puppets. For thus spoke the prophet, "Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully." May you be a vicar of God, oh pontiff, let it be your duty to perform the function of God on earth, to exhort men to turn from their sins to a life

Isaiah 16

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worthy of a Christian. Is there anyone who does the work of the Lord more deceitfully than you, who neither exhort men yourself nor permit others to exhort them without peril? How is this the function of a good pastor--to take care that none of the Jews be permitted to adopt a profession of the Christian religion without adding all their possessions to the pontiff's treasury? How evil this decree, how impious this law, not to allow ^{you,} forsaken Jew, to yield your sins to Christ unless, having given money and abandoned all your goods, you establish the religion for yourself. What a shameful situation, that many Jews in Italy, having been converted to Christianity, live in the greatest need, whereas they were formerly wealthy and lived in splendor! So is it any wonder that the pontiffs' bait attracts few to Christianity, especially when among the Jews no Jew may be a beggar? Wouldn't it be more proper for a good shepherd of his own will to hand over his lands to sheep who had been led astray by error? What kind of shepherd is it who would admit no sheep into the flock who had not given up its wool? Yes, its wool, its hide, its food and its hope of food? If it gives up its wool, doesn't it deserve to eat? For what means do the Jews now have to nourish themselves, to spend their lives in comfort, when they give it all to you? And when with their wives and children they are molested on all sides, crying out that they have nothing to eat, nothing with which to stave off cold, heat, or injuries, are you deaf? Do you hear nothing at all? You are not moved. You think that those things are yours which they ceded to you not that you might employ them for luxury, but that you might

be in grace with Christ. Hunger oppresses them, and do you not feed them, worthless shepherd? Do you take away their food and use the name of shepherd for an opportunity to plunder? Moab was fertile, and from his youth was supported by his produce. What was ever more inviolable than Rome, who of any place on earth was more fertile, who of all the world had more good men? / She was fruitful, and too content to rest in her fruits. The Roman bishops were good, pious, and excelling in virtuous character. They did not solicit landed estates or kingdoms belonging to others. As long as spiritless wine was pleasing to them, as long as they drank no more than the withered dregs of decaying vinegar, the prophet proclaimed in vain, "Make them drunk; now when they have risen against the Lord, why do they not appear drunk?" For a long time its taste remained and its odor was unchanged. But when Boniface, having forsaken those good things which truly make a man good, turned his spirit to those things which often make bad whatever they touch, his religion departed, his piety departed, God departed. Immediately and on the spot they failed to say, "My God is my salvation; in Him have I placed my trust; I shall not be put to shame." Nations have been in confusion, kingdoms have been shaken; the Lord of hosts is with us; God is our confidence and our fortitude; the God of Jacob is our protection." When they failed to say those things, the king, the Lord of hosts, says, "Moab has been destroyed. Her strong sceptre has been broken, her glorious rod. The destruction of Moab is near. Let it come, and let its evil run swiftly before it." When God failed to say,

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Psalm

Psalm

Jeremi

Isaiah 49

Jeremiah 48

"Behold, I have purged you, I have plucked you out on the forge of poverty"; when he failed to say, "Behold, I have written you in my hands; your walls are always before my eyes," immediately they heard, "Come down from glory and sit in the parched dwelling place of the daughter of Dibon. For the destroyer of Moab comes up against you, and he will destroy your strongholds, your councils, your decrees. They will force you to say what the prophet has long since said for you: "We have received from you as from the Lord, and we have, as it were, borne and brought forth the spirit of salvation. For a long time we have promised the people salvation through ourselves. We have brought destruction to many. We have not produced justice on earth." They will force you to say, if you wish some advice for them, "The Lord says these things, and the pope does not say these things in contradiction to the Lord." They will force you to say, "The Lord has given me a learned tongue, that I may know how to uphold him who is weary with his word. The Lord God has opened my ear; I shall not speak in contradiction to him. I have not slipped back." But I shall return to Jeremiah. "Leave your cities and dwell in Petra." Not Petra—Christ. Inhabitants of Moab, leave at last the falsehoods of men, the traditions of men, which because they were born in darkness, lead you to darkness. And immediately he goes on, "We have heard of the pride of Moab; he is exceedingly proud." Exceedingly lofty—an eagle who builds his nest on the breast of Jove. Exceedingly

arrogant who substitutes his own regulations for the laws of God, which have in turn been restricted. Exceedingly lofty who against the will of God in heaven holds up many things, and releases many things when he wishes. / But we are attacked by the testimony of Sophonia. "As I live," says the Lord, "Moab will be as Sodom, and the sons of Amon as those of Gomorra." Go to Rome, Coclaeus. Say that Sodom has not perished; say that Gomorra could not have fallen unless Rome falls soon. Go to the palace of the pontiff. Ask if Sodom never entered the court of the pontiff himself, however great he may be, into his bedchamber, but with Clement VII dead, I would not dare to say into his bed. But I am vanquished at last, At last a blade of green must be extended to Coclaeus. How pleasantly he appears to himself to joke, our theologian, when he contends by this argument that the king should be called Moab because he has received the kingdom from his father, no further ancestor of his being a king, about whom he might boast! Will anyone seem noble enough to him who thinks a king's son, presented with an hereditary kingdom, is not noble enough? Does he scorn king Saul as humble, who, born of the most despised tribe of Israel, did not even have a noble father? Undoubtedly David is going to be an object of ridicule to him, as he was lifted up from baseness to a scepter, from a sheepfold to the kingdom. Coclaeus will say that there are those who even though born in an obscure place, cannot be called Moab, who have not had a king for a father. And so will our king alone be called Moab. Will we find none who can be joined with him? Unless I am mistaken, one has been found. For what do you say about Solomon, who

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received the kingdom from his father, who was no king, nor was was his grandfather, nor his great-grandfather? O stupid man, who has spent so much time and trouble on these trifles! Good God, how painstakingly he has sought out and investigated all the places where any mention was made of the land of Moab! He cites Isaiah, to that he adds Jeremiah, Amos is there, he takes the trouble to make Sophonia a concern to us. O wretched sycophant, have you nothing against the king, no accusation you can make except that his grandfather was not a king? Who would not be ashamed of such vanity? I am thoroughly ashamed to have wasted so much time arguing with you already. For what commendation could there be for having condemned you for your folly, when everybody knows you are completely crazy? Or to accuse of calumny you whom all sycophants with one accord set up as leader of their flock? Or shall I judge the magnitude of a king by the figures of his ancestors? Why should I investigate his birth, when learning, the chief commendation of nobility, when virtue, which alone enobles, demands that King Henry VIII be the most noble. This is a well-known proverb of the Greeks "Who praises the father if the children are not unfortunate?" But now, if I should wish to waste time in searching out the popes' family trees, how many fisherman would you find have labored before they were able to conceive some popes of a salt-fish dealer, having conceived them to nourish them, and finally to bring them to birth? But you press me so with the handling of more serious matters that I cannot tarry here. The king

you say, in defending popal supremacy, / has written in contradiction to Luther that by the authority of their rank and lofty position popes precede kings by a great measure. Are you listening? Philip, while going to sleep, declaims against

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"I provoke you, oh king," he said. "To what?" said Philip. "To Philip," he said, "but awake." The King of England has proclaimed against the majesty of kings. This summons him. To what? To the king of England, but a more learned king, more versed in Scripture. If I should answer nothing else, let me ask you, "Don't you appear stupid when you say that Sampson fights with the king when it is certain that they agree with each other? God gods, what a clever man he is, and though he is most stupid, how much more clever than everybody else he seems to himself when he pits the king and Sampson against each other. While he watches them disputing, good Lord, how pleased he is! It is permitted and it always will be permitted, having abandoned error, to change one's mind and to return into favor with the truth. We are not all like you, Coclaeus, and when some error has at one time persuaded us, it doesn't please us to hold it by the teeth. We wish to be vanquished and reckon it as profit when we suffer a loss of our obstinacy. It did not harm Stesichorus to sing a palinode. It is not a long story. When he had censured Helen, he realized

38. The Latin here is Machetam Quid machetes? I have been unable to find the meanings of the words machetam and machetes.

immediately that he had been deprived of his sight. So having changed his mind, in most brilliant verses he sang the praises of Helen. His eyes received their power again and functioned as well as ever. Did not Augustine say, alluding to this, that Christian truth is incomparably more beautiful than Helen of the Greeks? Undoubtedly he led the divine Jerome to the palinode. Do you laugh that I deal with Augustine in this way? But do you wish thus, Augustine, that Jerome should attack Jerome? Or would you drive a most learned man to such a token of williness? O, stupidity! Don't you see that because what was unable to persuade Jerome, he fulfilled by publishing a pamphlet of retractions? It did not shame a man more learned than More and Rochester, having changed his sail, to correct an error of direction. If Paul had never thrown off Saul, if he had never changed his mind, how great an apostle the gospel of Christ would have lost! Of how much light we blind ones would have been robbed of such great doctrine! Very many others have changed their minds also about matters regarding religion, not only giving profit to posterity but also serving as a good example. For where is it more fitting to depart from your opinion if you are wrong than in religion? After this if you wish properly to accuse either the king or Sampson, show that those things which they are writing now conflict with the truth, not that they conflict with what they previously wrote. Show that one of them is now in error, not that he has been in error. For how could it be / that they are not inconsistent who once so imprudently attacked the truth and now defend it? But to say something besides

invective, explain how they are inconsistent with themselves who at the same time differ with each other on some subject. For when they now agree on religion, can you say that they conflict with each other? For nowhere does he tarry, he never comes to a standstill on one accusation, he holds all things suspect, he considers nothing secure enough. Throwing up now this objection, now that, he often returns to insult, and sometimes he is wrecked on the rocks of calumny. Here again the venom of his soul breaks forth; "The religion of the business which has been taken up makes itself known. He challenges Caesar, that most powerful leader against himself and his own kingdom, he challenges the highest pontiff." Who does not think that this good-for-nothing has been led by the hosts of evil to sound the trumpet to a battle between Caesar and the King of England? From what I have been able up to now understand of Caesar's feelings on war, I think it would involve damage to his affairs and some sacrifice of his reputation to seek the mutual peace and tranquility of the Christians. Indeed, it is my opinion that for Caesar there was enough of the enemy; let him not seek recruits, with your encouragement. He will not seek, I know, and our king will not send back to him the token of friendship. Not your pamphlet, nor your frenzy, nor your insult would make the king of England love Caesar less. However, if Caesar should turn his attention to a loquacious pettifogger of this type, and would not allow you to make up all kinds of lies about a king, and a friendly king, with impunity, the king will rejoice that his fame was valued by Caesar as highly as he wished, and this is

as it should be. He will rejoice that Caesar acknowledged no part of the accusation against him, Caesar who when he could and should deal out punishment for a crime, did so. But for much too long a time I entertain him, attributing so much power to him that I would think that he could be an instigator for calling out kings to war. You wage a war with me, Coclaeus. But see to it that you contend with me in such a way that it would not be a disgrace to me to vie with such a very wicked sycophant. Fight by means of arguments and you will have those who willingly dispute with you. Fight by means of insults, and perhaps you will be seen alone in the arena. Either do not make up so many lies and be in such a rage, or write verses as a poet. "I cannot," you say. O how much you would owe to yourself, if you could ever manage that much in a free oration, you who do not know how to use freedom. But go ahead, vulgar man, worthless of soul, with excessive bile and intolerable pride, you have someone against whom you can hurl the filth, corruption, and venom of your tongue. You have someone from whom you can hope for everlasting fame as a satirical pettifogger. You have him. Enjoy him.

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