

# St. Thomas More Society of San Francisco

[www.stthomasmore-sf.org](http://www.stthomasmore-sf.org)

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*Regis Servus Dei Prius*

July 2, 2015

Dear Members and Friends of the Society:

July was a momentous month for St. Thomas More. On July 1, 1535, he was tried for the crime of high treason, including by allegedly denying the validity of the Act of Supremacy. Thomas Cromwell, who led the prosecution, summoned the Solicitor General, Richard Rich, to offer crucial testimony that an imprisoned More had denied that the king was the legitimate head of the church. Ever the trial lawyer, More eviscerated Rich's credibility: "In good faith, Master Rich, I am sorrier for your perjury than for mine own peril ...." *See* [luminarium.org/renlit/moredefense.htm](http://luminarium.org/renlit/moredefense.htm). But to no avail. The jury, which included Anne Boleyn's father, brother, and uncle, deliberated for "scarcely a quarter of an hour" before returning its verdict of guilty.

More was martyred five days later, on July 6, 1535. The king having commuted his sentence from being drawn and quartered to beheading, More quipped in mounting the scaffold, "I pray you, I pray you, Mr. Lieutenant, see me safe up, and for my coming down, I can shift for myself." The final scene is described in *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings Upon Impeachments for High Treason, etc.* (London, 1719):

Being about to speak to the People, he was interrupted by the Sheriff, and thereupon he only desired the People to pray for him, and bear Witness he died in the Faith of the Catholic Church, a faithful Servant both to God and the King. Then kneeling, he repeated the *Miserere* Psalm with much Devotion; and, rising up the Executioner asked him Forgiveness. He kissed him, and said, "Pick up thy Spirits, Man, and be not afraid to do thine Office; my Neck is very short, take heed therefore thou strike not awry for having thine Honesty." Laying his Head upon the Block, he bid

the Executioner stay till he had put his Beard aside, for that had committed no Treason. Thus he suffered with much Cheerfulness; his Head was taken off at one Blow, and was placed upon London Bridge, where, having continued for some Months, and being about to be thrown into the Thames to make room for others, his Daughter Margaret bought it, enclosed it in a Leaden Box, and kept it for a Relique.

[law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/more/moretrialreport.html](http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/more/moretrialreport.html). Truly, he was a great man. Almost 500 years on, may he continue to serve as a professional and personal model and inspiration for each of us.

With our summer break, there will be no monthly lunch in July or August, but we will return with a full slate of events in the fall, including our September lunch and the Red Mass. We look forward to seeing you refreshed from your summer vacation.

### **June Luncheon Re-Cap**

Jennifer Lahl, the President of The Center for Bioethics and Culture, spoke at our June lunch about the industry, law, and ethics of assisted reproductive technology. It was an educational and thought-provoking discussion about new technology and social conventions outpacing, if not ignoring, legal, medical, and ethical concerns, and it generated quite a few questions from the audience. Those of you who missed it may want to check out the documentary films *Lines That Divide: The Great Stem Cell Debate*; *Eggsploitation*; *Anonymous Father's Day*; and *Breeders: A Subclass of Women?*

### **Habemus Chaplain!**

Under the Society's Bylaws, our Chaplain is appointed by the Archbishop and serves as an *ex officio* member of the Society. He "shall represent the Society in its dealings with ecclesiastical authorities and shall have the duty of advising the Executive Committee and members in spiritual and other matters." Bylaws, Article VI, Section 12. Since the spring, we have been in search of a successor to our long-time and now-retired Chaplain, Msgr. Labib Kobti, who set a high bar for the position. After considering candidates and working with the Archbishop's Office for the past several months, we are excited to announce that we have a new Chaplain. Please join the Executive Committee in welcoming our new Chaplain, Fr. Roger Gustafson of St. Hilary in Tiburon.

Fr. Roger grew up outside of Atlanta, Georgia, the son of a Georgia Tech chemistry professor (and professed atheist) father and a Lutheran mother. Although raised a Lutheran, he was confirmed and received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1989 at the age of 24. Fr. Roger earned a B.S. in Applied Biological Sciences from the Georgia Institute of Technology and an M.B.A. from Georgia State University, and after graduation he worked as a health care administrator, managing four kidney dialysis centers in the Atlanta area. He later became interested in theology and religious studies and received a Ph.D. in Religion and Social Ethics from the University of Southern California in 2000, as well as a J.D. from the University of

July 2, 2015

Page 3

Chicago in 2002. He practiced employment law first for O'Melveny & Myers LLP in San Francisco and later for Hunton & Williams LLP in Atlanta.

After considering a vocation to the priesthood for a number of years, Fr. Roger was accepted to the seminary in August 2009 and was ordained in June 2014. In July 2014, he began his first assignment as a priest at St. Hilary.

Many of you have already met Fr. Roger, who joined us at a number of events in the past year, and we look forward to his company and spiritual guidance. Please see below for some thoughts from our new Chaplain.

### **Law Student News**

Please keep in mind our law student members and friends who will be taking the bar examination at the end of this month. An extra prayer to our patron and to St. Joseph of Cupertino (the patron saint of test-takers) – if not also St. Jude – on their behalves would be appreciated. Good luck, grads!

### **Mass at San Quentin**

Members and friends of the Society are invited to join the congregation at San Quentin State Penitentiary for 10:00 a.m. Mass on Sundays. The prison allows up to 10 visitors each Sunday, and advance clearance is required. If you are interested in attending, please contact Rev. George Williams, S.J., the prison's Catholic Chaplain, at least two weeks in advance. You will need to provide him with the full name, date of birth, social security number, and driver's license number for each visitor. You can reach Fr. Williams at [george.williams.cdcr@ca.gov](mailto:george.williams.cdcr@ca.gov).

“For I was in prison, and you visited me.” Mt. 25:35-46

### **Mentor Program**

Our Mentor Program matches law students and younger lawyers with more experienced attorneys who share practice and other interests. If you would like to participate as a mentor or mentee, please indicate your interest on the Membership Application or contact Laura Vartain Horn at [lvartain@gmail.com](mailto:lvartain@gmail.com).

### **The Red Mass**

The Red Mass will be held Thursday evening, October 22, 2015, at Ss. Peter & Paul Church. The St. Thomas More Award, which the Society presents each year to a community member who exemplifies the Society's goal of practicing the ideals of service and sacrifice in the pursuit of justice as reflected in the life and death of St. Thomas More, is bestowed at the Red Mass, which will be followed by our celebratory dinner at the Italian Athletic Club. Keep your eyes on this space for the announcement of the St. Thomas Award winner.

### **Summer Reading**

“Sir Thomas More is one of those *worthies* of whom it is delightful to write and to read.” So begins our Patron’s chapter in the 1854 edition of *Biography, Exemplary and Instructive, of Distinguished Men*, which Society member and antique book collector Jon Rodriguez recently discovered in an upstate New York book store. With thanks to Jon, the chapter on St. Thomas More is reprinted below.

Looking for something to read on a beach or plane other than deposition transcripts, CFRs, and indenture agreements? Check out these new offerings (all available on Amazon) about St. Thomas More:

- *Thomas More’s Trial by Jury*, by Henry Ansgar Kelly, Louis W. Karlin, and Gerard B. Wegemer (eds.)
- *The One Thomas More*, by Travis Curtright
- *Young Thomas More and the Arts of Liberty*, by Gerard B. Wegemer

Former Society President Tom Hockel recommends the two latest books from Catholic novelist Michael O’Brien, *The Father’s Tale* and *Father Elijah: An Apocalypse*. You might also take a look at the summer reading list suggested by *First Things*, a publication of the Institute on Religion and Public Life: [firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2015/06/the-summer-reading-list](http://firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2015/06/the-summer-reading-list).

And don’t forget the latest Papal Encyclical, *Laudato Si*, which can be found along with other encyclicals at [papalencyclicals.net](http://papalencyclicals.net).

### **Oakland Diocese Pro Bono Legal Clinic**

The Diocese of Oakland is in the process of starting a pro bono legal clinic to serve the poor and needy in Oakland. If you are interested in getting involved in this worthy cause, please contact Nico Herrera at 917-774-3511 or at [nico@herreralegal.com](mailto:nico@herreralegal.com).

### **Chaplain’s Corner**

With this edition we begin the “Chaplain’s Corner,” which I hope will become a regular part of our monthly newsletters.

\* \* \*

“I am the King’s True Subject”

In a recent *New York Times* op-ed, Nicholas Kristof highlights the work of New York Catholic physician Tom Catena, the only doctor at a 435-bed hospital in a highly unstable region of the Nuba mountains in the Sudan. For eight years, he has practiced under extreme conditions, with no running water and primitive supplies. He regularly dodges bombs dropped by the Sudanese government on hospital grounds. While “[t]here also are many, many secular aid

workers doing heroic work,” Kristof writes, “the people I’ve encountered over the years in the most impossible places—like Nuba, where anyone reasonable has fled—are disproportionately unreasonable because of their faith.”

That kind of unreasonableness is precisely what has fueled the Catholic faith for over 2,000 years. It began with the early Christians refusing to worship the Roman emperor, as all “reasonable” people from a variety of faiths did at the time. And that “irrationality” has continued to inspire Christians through the ages, such as Saint Anselm of Canterbury, who was exiled twice around the turn of the twelfth century for refusing to submit to the English monarchy’s claim for royal control over both Church and State, or Charles Lwanga, who lost his life when he refused to turn a blind eye to the persecution of Christians by the Ugandan king, when other more “reasonable” people would have complied.

In today’s world also, it may prove difficult on occasion both to be a faithful Catholic and to “support the Constitution of the United States,” as the Attorney’s Oath for the California Bar requires, when that supreme document is interpreted in a manner contrary to Catholic teaching and the law of God. As Justice Alito wrote in the court’s recent opinion upholding lethal injection, for instance, “[t]he death penalty was an accepted punishment at the time of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.” *Glossip v. Gross*, \_\_ S. Ct. \_\_, slip op. at 2 (June 29, 2015). The “penumbra” of the Constitution was used as a basis to uphold abortion on demand in *Roe v. Wade*. The introduction of a physician-assisted suicide bill in the California legislature and the recent Supreme Court opinion in *Obergefell v. Hodges* on same-sex marriage are similar examples. Yet, we are called to be faithful to both Church and State, even “in the most impossible places” and even if we are perceived by many as “disproportionately unreasonable,” for Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches that human reason, when infused with God’s grace, leads us to uphold all that is good, in season and out.

In the climactic scene of the classic film *A Man for All Seasons*, Thomas More stands before the tribunal and declares that a law “directly repugnant to the law of God is insufficient in law to charge any Christian to obey it.” In the same breath, he adds: “I am the King’s true subject. I pray for him and all the realm. I do none harm. I say none harm. I think none harm. If this be not enough to keep a man alive, then in good faith, I long not to live.” When it comes to the truth of God and his love for all humanity, may we have the courage to lose our heads when all around us are eminently reasonable, for patriotism and our treasured Constitution demand no less.

- Father Roger Gustafson, Chaplain

### **2015 Dues**

The 2015 Membership Form is attached to this letter and may be used to pay your dues and to update membership records. Annual dues for 2015 are \$75.00 for attorneys with five years or more of practice and \$25.00 for retired attorneys and those with fewer than five years of practice. Law student membership is free. Your dues are essential to the Society and enable us to fund events, attract quality speakers, and award scholarships, so please get them in. You can make your dues payment through PayPal or Venmo by following the links provided above.

July 2, 2015

Page 6

We are continuing our efforts to attract new members, particularly among younger lawyers, and we encourage you to help us recruit new members to join the Society. Feel free to start by forwarding this newsletter to someone you think may be interested in joining. Remember that lunch is free for prospective members, so bring along a colleague, a friend, a parishioner, or even opposing counsel to our September lunch.

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We welcome your input, so if you have any questions, comments, or ideas for the Society, please feel free to contact any member of the Executive Committee.

Your good servant,



Timothy P. Crudo  
President



**ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
2015 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

*Use this form to pay your annual dues and update your membership record.  
New members may use this form to join the Society.*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Firm, Company, Court, or School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Area(s) of Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State and Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parish:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year Admitted to Bar:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Retired from Practice?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Law Student?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Note: Law students membership is free.**

**Would you like to participate in our Mentor Program as a mentor or mentee?** \_\_\_\_\_

Please accompany this application with your dues payment. Annual dues for 2015 are \$75.00 for attorneys with five years or more of practice and \$25.00 for retired attorneys and those with fewer than five years of practice. Law student membership is free. Please make checks payable to St. Thomas More Society.

*Return form and check to:*  
**Andres Orphanopoulos**  
**North Coast Land Holdings LLC**  
**2350 Kerner Boulevard, Suite 360**  
**San Rafael, California 94901**  
**Phone 650-224-1129 | Fax 415-461-5946**  
**orphanopoulos@gmail.com**

BIOGRAPHY,  
EXEMPLARY AND INSTRUCTIVE,  
OF  
DISTINGUISHED MEN.



PHILADELPHIA:  
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO, AND CO.  
1854.



## N O T I C E.

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IN Education, the study of Biography is profitable in two ways. Its least, though most obvious use, is to convey historical information in a pleasant manner. Its more important utility has a reference to the great Educational principle of imitation, which, though inferior to training and exercise, has a decided advantage over precept, the advantages of which it may be said, indeed, to combine with those more properly its own. Under a conviction of these truths, it was determined that, in connection with the works prepared by us for youth, there should be a series of Biographical volumes, and one especially containing a selection of the lives of those who, while generally exemplary in their private lives, had become the benefactors of their species, by the still more exemplary efforts of their intellect. Such a volume, it is hoped, the present will be found. The principal persons who have advanced science and art ; the most remarkable discoverers and inventors ; those who have distinguished themselves by their humanity, their patriotism, and their successful contendings with depressing circumstances ; are here presented, in the manner which was judged most likely to stimulate others to take similar courses, and to manifest similar virtues.

W. AND R. C.



of London, and afterwards mayor. The name *merc*er was given at the time to general merchants trading in all kinds of goods. After he had served his apprenticeship, Caxton took up his freedom in the Mercers' Company, and became a citizen of London. Some subsequent years he spent in travelling in various countries on the Continent of Europe. In 1464, he was appointed ambassador to the court of the Duke of Burgundy. During his residence in the Low Countries, he acquired or perfected his knowledge of the French language, gained some knowledge of Flemish or Dutch, imbibed a taste for literature and romance, and, at great expense, made himself master of the art of printing. About 1472, Caxton returned to England, and introduced that art in an improved form into his native country. The common opinion is, that the "Game of Chess" was the first book printed by Caxton, though Mr Dibdin thinks that the "Romance of Jason" was printed before it. Caxton was most indefatigable in cultivating his art. Besides the labour necessarily attached to his press, he translated not fewer than five thousand closely printed folio pages, though well stricken in years. The productions of his press amount to sixty-four. In 1480, he published his *Chronicle*, and the *Description of Britain*, which is usually subjoined to it. These were very popular, having been reprinted four times in the fifteenth, and seven times in the sixteenth century.

Among the books which Caxton published, were two editions of Chaucer's Tales. He seems to have had a veneration for the memory of this poet, and to have formed, with sound judgment and good taste, a most correct and precise estimate of the peculiar merits of his poetry. As a proof of the former, it may be mentioned, that Caxton, at his own expense, procured a long epitaph to be written in honour of Chaucer, which was hung on a pillar near the poet's grave, in Westminster Abbey.

Caxton died in 1490-1, and was buried in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, to which he bequeathed a number of books.

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## SIR THOMAS MORE.

SIR THOMAS MORE is one of those *worthies* of whom it is delightful to write and to read. He was perhaps the first Englishman of learning and talent who became extensively known in Europe, and he was certainly the first person who acquired distinction in his own country as an orator or public speaker. In his



political writings he shot far ahead of his age, and, by the force of profound reflection, anticipated many of the ideas of later and more enlightened times. With all these merits, joined to singular integrity as a lawyer and a judge, he was, in private life, the most cheerful, innocent, and affectionate of men: there was, in his character, an almost infantine degree of simplicity, a child-like purity and softness, which has perhaps served, more than all his intellectual glories, to endear him to posterity. Altogether, Sir Thomas More is entitled to be considered one of the greatest, most perfect, and most amiable characters in the whole range of English history.

Born in 1480, the son of a lawyer of eminence, he was educated to that profession, first at Oxford and then at New Inn in London, though his fondness for study inclined him rather to become a monk. After having entered at the bar, he married the daughter of a country gentleman named Colt, in whose house he happened to live for a short time. Colt, it seems, had three daughters, and the young barrister liked the second; however, he espoused the eldest, merely that she might not have the mortification of seeing a younger sister married before her. He very early entered Parliament, and in 1503, when only twenty-three years of age, opposed a subsidy demanded by Henry VII. for a portion to his daughter (who had married James IV. of Scotland), with such eloquence, that the king's wishes were defeated. Finding himself consequently exposed to the royal anger, he retired from public life, and spent some years in study. After the death of the king in 1509, he resumed his professional duties, and speedily rose to distinction. The new sovereign, Henry VIII., admitted him to his friendship, appointed him Master of Requests, and conferred upon him the honour of knighthood. The king was perhaps as much induced to do so from the enjoyment he felt in the facetious conversation of More, as from any appreciation of his more valuable qualities. He used to send for Sir Thomas night after night to entertain himself and the queen at supper, and would sometimes take him up to the leads of the palace in order to hear him discourse about the stars. Sir Thomas had a just sense of the real value of the king's friendship, and of his selfish and passionate character. When congratulated on being seen with the king's arm round his neck, he said he had no cause to be proud of such a mark of favour, for if his head could win his majesty a castle in France (with which Henry was then at war), it would not fail to go. Finding at length that the king engrossed too much of his time, which he wished rather to spend in study or in the bosom of his family, he found it necessary to restrain his natural humour, and make himself some-



what less entertaining, whereupon King Henry ceased to ask him so often to the palace.

In 1518, Sir Thomas became Treasurer of the Exchequer, and, five years after, he was made Speaker of the House of Commons. The whole of his public career seems to have been a violation of his natural tendencies, which would have led him rather to a learned seclusion. Having drunk deeply at the fountain of classical literature, then recently opened to the modern world, he early began to communicate his own thoughts according to that model. His most celebrated production is the "Utopia," which he seems to have written about the year 1516, and which, under the fictitious description of an imaginary commonwealth, communicates many views of the author respecting political institutions, and the possibility of bringing them to perfection. Sir Thomas here declaims against the severity of the laws of England towards the second-rate offences, particularly theft—a code, however, which to this day remains unaltered, notwithstanding the great advance of humane feeling since his time. He also makes the remarkable concession that no man ought to suffer for his religious creed, or his want of one; a degree of toleration which has not yet been brought into practice, and which, it must be confessed, the author himself did not, in the subsequent part of his life, realise. Sir Thomas More was theoretically liberal; but he was latterly scared, by the progress of the Reformation, into the composition of many violent and narrow-spirited pamphlets against the Protestants, and even into an occasional countenancing of the use of torture for their correction. It is but an additional proof of the imperfection of the very best human qualities, that the mildest and most upright man of his age should have degraded himself even by an occasional injustice or cruelty of this kind.

While he acted as Speaker in the House of Commons, the king had occasion for a large subsidy, which it was anticipated that the Parliament would have some difficulty in granting. Cardinal Wolsey, therefore, came to the house with a magnificent train, in order to give the request all possible weight. When this great minister of the crown had finished his speech, he was surprised to find that the house remained silent, and turned in a rage to the Speaker, whom he more particularly expected to give an answer. Sir Thomas, however, though favourable to the royal wishes, stated that it was not customary for Parliament to answer the messages of the king, except by some of its own members, and, for his part, "although, as Speaker, he was to be considered as the voice of the House of Commons, yet, till every one of them put their several judgments into his head, he could say nothing." At this answer, which has become



famous in English history, the Cardinal retired in a rage, and made several strenuous but ineffectual attempts to ruin Sir Thomas with the king.

In 1529, at the downfall of Wolsey, Sir Thomas More succeeded him as Lord Chancellor, being the first layman who ever filled the office. At this time Sir Thomas's father was still alive, and held the dignified but inferior office of a judge in the Court of King's Bench. Sir Thomas, however, to mark that he still owed filial obedience to his parent, used to go into the King's Bench every day as he entered Westminster Hall, and, if his father had taken his seat, would kneel down before him for his blessing. The anecdote is characteristic of an age in which many simple virtues flourished amidst much brutality and ignorance.

By far the most engaging view of More's character, is in the relations of private life. It is seldom we are enabled to contemplate statesmen with their minds unbent from exertion; and the admiration which their public exhibitions had raised, is not always increased by a closer inspection. But of More's *domestic* life we have ample details; and it is the contrast of his great elevation and profound knowledge, with his tenderness of affection, and his playfulness, simplicity, and unaffected serenity of temper, which forms the true sublime of his character. In him there is no disguise of artificial representation, no *management* of conduct to produce effect: every act flows, without effort, from the even tenor of a mind well poised on itself, which nothing external can either elevate or depress. We do not follow him from the Speaker's chair or the wool-sack, to see him put off the robes of greatness, and resume the man; but we go with him from the bosom of his family, to see him retain, in those dignified seats, all the child-like simplicity and unaffected lowliness of his nature.

He was twice married. His first wife lived only long enough to produce him all the family he ever had, three daughters and a son. His second partner was a lady named Alice Arderne, a widow, and, as More himself says, *nec bella nec puella*; that is, neither handsome nor young. She was indeed seven years older than her husband, and, in point of temper and intellect, altogether unworthy of him. The same simplicity which actuated him in the selection of his first wife, is supposed to have, in this union, made him the victim of trick and cunning. Whatever her demerits might be, they had no effect upon the cheerful and serene temper of Sir Thomas More. The following letter to her is so illustrative of his equanimity and mild benevolence, and so good a specimen of his English style, that we give it to the reader without abridgement. It was written



immediately after his return from assisting at the negotiations at Cambray, and was meant to comfort his penurious wife for a fire which had consumed part of his house, all his barns, and some of those of his neighbours.

“Mistress Alice, in my most hearty wise I recommend me to you. And whereas I am informed by my son Heron of the loss of our barns and our neighbours’ also, with all the corn that was therein : albeit (saving God’s pleasure) it is great pity of so much good corn lost ; yet, since it has liked him to send us such a chance, we must, and are bounden, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitation. He sent us all that we have lost ; and since he hath, by such a chance, taken it away again, his pleasure be fulfilled ! Let us never grudge thereat, but take it in good worth, and heartily thank him, as well for adversity as for prosperity. And peradventure we have more cause to thank him for our loss, than for our winning ; for his wisdom better seeth what is good for us, than we do ourselves. Therefore, I pray you be of good cheer, and take all the household with you to church, and there thank God, both for that he hath given us, and for that he hath taken from us, and for that he hath left us ; which, if it please him, he can increase when he will ; and if it please him to leave us yet less, at his pleasure be it !

“I pray you to make some good onsearch what my poor neighbours have lost, and bid them take no thought therefor ; for if I should not leave myself a spoon, there shall no poor neighbour of mine bear no loss by my chance, happened in my house. I pray you be, with my children and your household, merry in God : and devise somewhat with your friends what way were best to take, for provision to be made for corn for our household, and for seed this year coming, if we think it good that we keep the ground still in our hands. And whether we think it good that we so shall do or not, yet I think it were not best suddenly thus to leave it all up, and to put away our folk from our farm, till we have somewhat advised us thereon. Howbeit, if we have more now than ye shall need, and which can get them other masters, ye may then discharge us of them. But I would not that any man were suddenly sent away, he wot not whither.

“At my coming hither, I perceived none other, but that I should tarry still with the king’s grace. But now, I shall, I think, because of this chance, get leave this next week to come home and see you : and then shall we further devise together upon all things, what order shall be best to take.

“And thus, as heartily fare you well, with all our children, as ye can wish ! At Woodstock, the third day of September, by the hand of Thomas More.”



Sir Thomas More is said to have not been fortunate in his son. He used to say that his wife had prayed long for a boy, and now she had got one who would be a boy all his life. His daughters, however, especially the eldest, Margaret, were more than worthy of their father. They were excellent classical scholars, and wrote Latin with the greatest purity. Margaret, who was married to a gentleman named Roper, was a woman of extraordinary understanding, and possessed all the gentle virtues of her father. Sir Thomas was so devoted to her, that, during a dangerous illness with which she was visited, he resolved, if she had died, to withdraw himself wholly from the world; and her recovery was imputed to the efficacy of his prayers. She was the dispenser of her father's secret charities; and to her alone he entrusted the knowledge of the severe religious austerities to which he subjected himself—his hair-shirt, and his repeated scourgings—in some of which self-inflicted penances she imitated her parent.

Sir Thomas lived with his wife, his amiable children, and other relations, in a house which he had built for himself at Chelsea; and nothing can be more delightful than the picture which has been drawn of his domestic circle by his friend Erasmus, who visited him there. "He lives at Chelsea, near London, in a commodious house, neither mean, nor subject to envy, yet magnificent enough; there he converseth affably with his family, his wife, his son and daughter-in-law, his three daughters and their husbands, with eleven grandchildren. There is not any man living so loving to his children as he; and he loveth his old wife as well as if she were a young maid; and such is the excellency of his temper, that whatsoever happeneth that could not be helped, he loveth it as though nothing could happen more happily. You would say there were in that place Plato's academy; but I do the house injury in comparing it to Plato's academy, wherein there were only disputations of numbers and geometrical figures, and sometimes of moral virtues. I should rather call his house a school, or university of Christian religion; for there is none therein but readeth or studieth the liberal sciences; their special care is piety and virtue; there is no quarrelling, or intemperate words heard; none seen idle; which household discipline that worthy gentleman doth not govern by proud and lofty words, but with all kind and courteous benevolence. Every body performeth his duty, yet is there always alacrity, neither is sober mirth any thing wanting. He suffered none of his servants either to be idle, or to give themselves to any games; but some of them he allotted to look to the garden, assigning to every one his sundry plot; some again he set to sing, some to play on the organ:



he suffered none to give themselves to cards or dice. The men abode on the one side of the house, the women on the other, seldom conversing together; he used before bed-time to call them together, and say certain prayers with them."

This life of almost Utopian felicity, this realisation of the poet's Dream of Home—

- - - - - "the resort  
Of love, of joy, of peace, and plenty, where,  
Supporting and supported, polish'd friends  
And dear relations mingle into bliss"—

was suddenly destroyed by the decree of a tyrant. After executing the duties of Chancellor with singular zeal and impartiality, he resigned the office in May 1532, because he could not sanction the destruction of the Romish church in England, or countenance the divorce of the king from Catherine of Arragon. By abstaining from the coronation of the new queen, Anne Boleyn, he provoked the king's anger to such a degree, that a charge was brought against him of misprision of treason, for his conduct in the affair of an impostor called the Maid of Kent. The evidence adduced in this case was defective, and he escaped; but a crisis was at hand which no honest man could evade. In 1534, an act was passed, by which every subject was required to take an oath for the maintenance of the succession in the issue of the king's marriage by Anne Boleyn; and as Sir Thomas refused to do so, he was thrown into the Tower, where he remained about a year. Henry is not supposed to have at first contemplated the ruin of his illustrious counsellor; he earnestly wished to have the approbation of so popular a man to his base and sensual alliance, and he thought that imprisonment would obtain what he wanted: gradually, however, as he found sterner and severer measures unavailing, he contracted that virulent hatred against the venerable prisoner, which induced him to persecute him to the scaffold. Sir Thomas was brought to trial, May 7, 1535, when, though only fifty-five years of age, he appeared much broken down by the severity and long continuance of his imprisonment, but yet seemed to possess the same serene and cheerful spirit as ever. His faculties were undisturbed, and the mild dignity of his character did not forsake him. As was to be expected, he was found guilty, and sentenced to die the death of a traitor, which, however, was commuted by the king into simple decapitation; a boon which Sir Thomas acknowledged, by one of those lively sallies for which he was as much celebrated as for his graver talents: "God forbid," said he, "the king should use any more such mercy unto any of my friends; and God bless all my posterity from such pardons."



On his return from Westminster, where he had been tried, he was met on the Tower Wharf by his eldest daughter, the noble Margaret Roper, who feared she might have no other opportunity of seeing him. He stretched out his arms, in token of a blessing, while she knelt at some distance to implore and receive it. This, however, would not satisfy the strong affection of the daughter, who, according to the narrative of her husband, "hastening towards him, without consideration or care of herself, pressing in amongst the throng, and the arms of the guard, that with halberds and bills went around him, ran to him, and openly, in presence of them all, embraced him, took him about the neck, and kissed him. He, well liking her most natural and dear daughterly affection, gave her again his fatherly blessing. After she was departed, she, like one that had forgotten herself, being all enraptured with the entire love of her dear father, having respect neither to herself nor to the multitude, turned back, ran to him as before, took him about the neck, and divers times kissed him most lovingly; the beholding of which made many who were present, for very sorrow, to weep and mourn." In his answer to her on the last day of his life, he expressed himself thus touchingly, in characters traced with a coal, the only means of writing which was left within his reach:—"Dear Meg, I never liked your manner better towards me, as when you kissed me last. For I like when daughterly love and dear charity have no leisure to look to worldly courtesy."

The execution of this venerable person took place July 7, when, so far from being depressed by his unfortunate condition, he talked with all his usual gaiety, and even jested as he laid his head upon the block. The love of Margaret Roper continued to display itself in those outwardly unavailing tokens of tenderness to his remains by which affection seeks to perpetuate itself; ineffectually, indeed, for the object, but very effectually for softening the heart and exalting the soul. She procured his head to be taken down from London Bridge, kept it during her life as a sacred relic, and was buried with that object of fondness in her arms, nine years after she was separated from her father.

The death of More excited the indignation of all the eminent men throughout Europe, almost without regard to the religion to which he had in some measure been a martyr; and it has been held by posterity as perhaps the most signal instance of wickedness in the history of the crowned monster by whom it was dictated.