

Aske our lord that this tombe and hea-
uen may ioine vs together. So deathe

shall glue vs, that thyng that life could
not.

Here folow foure letters

which syr Thomas More wrote after he had gyuen
ouer the office of lord Chauncellour of England
and before he was imprisoned.

A letter written by sir Tho. More
to maister Thomas Cromwell (than
one of the kinges priuie counsell the
first day of february in þe yere of our
lord god. 1533. after the computacion
of the churche of England and in the
xxv. yere of the raigne of king Henry
the viii.

Right woꝛshipfull in my moſte
harty wiſe I recomēd me vnto
you. Sir my cofyn William
Kastal hath enforimed me, that
your maſterſhip of your godnes ſhewed
him, that it hath bene repoꝛted, & I haue
againſt þe booke of certain articles (whi-
ch was late put foꝛth in print by þe kinges
honoꝛable counſail) made an anſwere, &
deliuered it vnto my ſaid cofyn to print.
And albeit that he foꝛ his part truly de-
nied it, yet because he ſomewhat remai-
ned in doubt, whether your maſterſhip
gave liſen therin ful credēſoz not, he deli-
uered me foꝛ his farther diſcharge to de-
clare you þe very troth. Sir as help me god
neither my ſaid cofyn noꝛ any man el-
ſe neuer had any booke of mine to print, one
oꝛ other, ſince the ſaid booke of þe kinges
counſail came foꝛth. foꝛ of tꝛouth þe laſt
booke þe printed of mine was that booke
that I made againſt an vnknowē here-
ſyke which hath ſent ouer a woꝛke that
walketh in ouer many mens handes na-
med the Souper of the lord, againſt the
bleſſed ſacrament of the alter. My an-
ſwere whereunto albeit that the prin-
ter (vnware to me dated) ſt Anno. 1534.
by which it ſemeth to be printed ſince
the feaſt of the circumſcion, yet was it
of very tꝛouth both made and printed &
many of them gone befoꝛe Chꝛiſtmas.
And my ſelfe neuer eſpied the printers
ouerſight in the date, in moꝛe then thꝛee
wekes after. And this was in god faith
the laſt booke that my cofyn had of myne.
Which being true as of tꝛouth it ſhal be
founde, ſuffiſe h foꝛ his declaracion in
this behalfe. As touching myne owne
ſelfe, I ſhal ſay thus much farther, þon
my faith I neuer made any ſuch booke

noꝛ neuer thought to do. I red the ſaid
booke ones ouer and neuer moꝛe. But I
am foꝛ ones reading very farre off from
many thinges, whereof I would haue
metely ſuer knowledg, eue euer I wold
make an anſwere, though the matter &
the booke both, concerned the poꝛeſt mā
in a towne, & were of the ſimpleſt mans
making to. foꝛ of many thinges which
in that booke be touched, in ſome I know
not the lawe, & in ſome I knowe not the
fact. And therfoꝛe wold I neuer be ſo
childiſh noꝛ ſo plaiſe the pꝛoud arrogant
ſole, by whomeſeuer the booke hat bene
made, & to whomſeuer the matter had
belonged, as to pꝛeſume to make an an-
ſwere to þe booke, concerning the matter
whereof I neuer wer ſufficiently lerned
in the lawes, noꝛ fully enſtructed in the
facts. And thē while the matter pertai-
ned vnto the kinges highnes, & the booke
pꝛoſeſſeth openly þe it was made by hys
honoꝛable counſail, & by thē put in print
to his graces licens obteined therunto, I
berely truſt in god faith þe of your god
mind toward me, though I neuer wꝛote
you woꝛde thereof, your ſelfe will both
think & ſay ſo much foꝛ me, that it were
a thing far vnlikely, þe an anſwer ſhould
be made therunto by me. I wil by þe grace
of almighty god, as long as it ſhal pleaſe
him to lend me life in this woꝛlde, in all
ſuch places (as I am of my duety to god
& the kinges grace bounde) truly ſay my
mind, & diſcharge my conſciēce, as be com-
meth a poꝛe honeſt true mā, wherſeuer
I ſhal be by his grace commaūded. Yet
ſuerly if it ſhould happen any booke to be
abꝛode in the name of hys grace oꝛ hys
honoꝛable counſail, if þe booke to me ſemed
ſuch as my ſelfe wold not haue giuen
mine owne aduife to the making, yet
I know my boūden duety, to bere moꝛe
honour to my pꝛince, and moꝛe reuerēce
to his honoꝛable counſail, than that it
coude become me foꝛ many cauſes, to
make an anſwere vnto ſuch a booke, oꝛ to
counſail and aduife any mā els to do it.
And therfoꝛe as it is a thing þe I neuer
doꝛd

A did not entendid, so I hartely besech you if you shal happē to perceue any mā, either of euil wil oꝝ of lightnes, any such thig repoꝛt by me, be so god maister to me, as helpe to byng vs both together. And thā neuer take me foꝛ honest after, but if ye finde his honesty sōewhat enpaired in h̄ mater. Thus am I bold vpon your goodnes to encomber you with my longe rude letter, in the contentes wherof, I estiones hartely besече you to be in maner afoꝛesaid, good maister and frend vnto me: wherby you shall binde me to be your bedesmā while I liue: as knoweth our lord, whose especiall grace both bodely and godly long pꝛeserue & kepe you. At Chelch the in h̄ vigile of h̄ purificacion of our blessed lady by the hand of

Assuredly all your owne
Thomas More knight.

A nother letter writte by sir Thomas More to maister Tho. Crōwel in February oꝝ in March in the yere of our lord god. 1533. after the computacio of the church of Englad, & in the .xxv. yere of the raigne of kyng Henry the eight.

Right woꝛshipful after right hartye recomēdactōs, so it is h̄ I am enfor- med, h̄ there is a byl put in against me into the higher house befoꝛe the lordes, cōcerning my cōmunicacion w̄ the nome of Cāterbury, & in writting vnto her: wherof I not a little meruaile, the trouthe of the matter being such as god & I know it is, & as I haue plainly declared vnto you by my former letter's, wher in I found you thā so good, h̄ I am now bold estiones vpon your goodnes to desire you to shew me h̄ fauour, h̄ I might the rather by your good meanes, haue a copy of h̄ bil. Which sene, if I finde any vntrue surmise therein as of liklihode there is, I may make mine hūble sute vnto h̄ kinges good grace, & declare the truth, either to his grace oꝝ by his graces commaūdemēt, wherfoeuer the matter shal require.

I am so sure of my truth toward his grace, h̄ I cannot mistrust his graces fauoure to- wardes me, vpon h̄ trouthe knowen, noꝛ the iugement of any honest mā. Noꝛ neuer shal there losse in this mater greue me, being my self so innocent as god & I know me, what- soeuer should happē me therin, by the grace of almighty god, who both bodely & godly pꝛeserue you. At Chelsey this pꝛesent sater- day by the hand of

Hartely all your owne
Tho. More knight.

A letter written by sir Tho. More vnto kyng Henry the eight in February oꝝ in March, in the yere of our lord god. 1533. after the cōputacion of the church of England, and in the .xxv. yere of the raigne of kyng Henry the eighth.

I may like your highnes to call to your gracious remēbrāce, h̄ at such time as of the great weighty come &

office of your chaunceller (with which so farre aboue mi merites oꝝ qualities able & mete therfoꝛe, your highnes had of your in- cōparable goodnes honozed & exaltid me) ye were so god & gracious vnto me, as at my poꝛe hūble sute to discharge & disburden me, giuing me licens w̄ your gracious fauour to bestow h̄ residue of my life to cōse, about h̄ pꝛouisiō foꝛ my soule in the seruice of god, & to be your bedesman & pꝛay foꝛ you, it pleased your highnes ferther to saye vnto me, h̄ foꝛ the seruice which I befoꝛe had done you (which it thā liked your goodnes far aboue my deseruing to comēd) h̄ in any sute that I should after haue to your grace, that either should cōcerne mine honour (h̄ woꝛd it liked your highnes to vse vnto me) h̄ should pꝛe- teine vnto my pꝛofite, I should finde your highnes god & gracious loꝛde vnto me. So is it now gracious souerain h̄ woꝛldly ho- nour is the thing wherof I haue resigned both h̄ possion & the desire, in, h̄ resignacion of your most honoꝛable office. And woꝛldly pꝛofite I trust experiens pꝛoueth and daily moꝛe & moꝛe shal pꝛue, that I neuer was ver- gredy theron. But now is my most humble sute vnto your excellēt highnes, to besече h̄ same sōewhat to cōder my poꝛe honesty: howbeit pꝛincipally, h̄ of your accustomed god- nes, no sintter informaciō moue your noble grace to haue any moꝛe distrust of my troth & deuociō toward you, thā I haue oꝝ shall during my life geus cause. Foꝛ in this ma- ter of the nūne of Cāterbury, I haue vnto your trusty cōsiller maister Tho. Crōwel by my writig as plainly declared h̄ trouthe, as I possible cā. Which my declaracion, of his duti toward your grace, & his goodnes to- ward me, he hath I vnderstā declared vnto your grace. In any pt of al which my deal- ing whither any other mā may paduēture put any dout oꝝ moue any scruple of suspi- ciō, h̄ cā I neither tell, noꝛ lieth in my hand to let. But vnto my self, it is not possible a- ny part of my sayd demeanure to seme euil, h̄ very clerenesse of mine owne conscience, knoweth in al h̄ matter my mind & entēt so god. Wherfoꝛe most gracious soueraine, I neither wil, noꝛ yet cā wel becede me, w̄ your highnes to resō oꝝ argue h̄ mater, but in my most humble maner pꝛostrate at your graci- ous fete, I only besече your grace, w̄ your owne highe pꝛudence and your accustomed godnes, considir & way the matter. And if that in your so doing, your owne vertuous minde shal giue you, that notwithstanding the manifold & excellent goodnes that your gracious highnes hath by so many maner wayes bled vnto me, I were a wꝛetche of such a monstruous ingratitude, as couide with anye of them all, oꝝ any other person liuing, digresse from my bounden dutye of

A allegeans toward your good grace, than desire I no further fauour at your gracious hand, than the losse of all y^e euer I may lese, goodes, landes, liberty and finally my lyfe with all: wherof the keeping of any part vnto my self, could neuer do me penitworth of pleasure, but only should my comfort be, that after my thort life and your long (which w^{ch} continnall prosperite to goddes pleasure our lord of his mercy send you) I should ones mete your grace againe in heauen, & there be merry with you: where amonge mine other pleasures this shoulde yet be one, that your grace should surely se there than, y^e how soeuer you take me, I am your true bedemaⁿ now, & euer haue ben, & wil be til I die, how

soeuer your plesure be to do by me. Howbeit if in the consideryng of my cause, your high wisdom & gracious godnes, perceue (as I verely truste in god you shall) that I none other wise haue demeaned my self, thā well may stande with my bounden duty of faithfulness toward your royal maiesty, thā in my most humble wise I beseech your most noble grace, that the knowlege of your true gracious perswasion in that behalfe, maye relieue y^e torment of my present heauines, conceued of the dreadd and feare (by that I here such a greuous bill put by your lerned counsaile into your high court of parlemēt

against me) lest your grace might by some sinister informacion, be moued any chyng to thinke the contrary. Which if your highnes do not, as I trust in god and your gret goodnes (the matter by your own high p^{ro}vidence examined and considered) ye wil not, than in my most humble maner I beseeche your highnes further (albeit y^e in respect of my former request this other thing is very sleight) yet sith your highnes hath here befoze of your mere abundant goodnes heped and accumulate byō me (though I was ther to farre vntowthy) from time to time bothe w^{or}ship & great honour to, sith I now haue lest al such thinges, & nothing seke o^r desire but the life to come, & pray for your grace y^e while, it may like your highnes of your accustomed benigrite, somewhat to tender my poze honesty, & neuer suffer (by the meane of such a byll put forth against me) anye man take occasiō hereafter against the troth to flander me: which should yet by the peryll of their owne soules, do themselves moze hurt then me: which shal I trust settle my harte with your gracious fauour, to depende bypon the comforte of the troth and hope of heauen, and not vpon the fallible oppinion o^r sone spoken wordes of light and sone changeable people. And thus most d^{ra}dde and most dere soueraine lord, I beseeche the

blessed Trinite p^{re}serue your most noble

grace both body and soule, and all that are your well willers, and amende al the contrarye: among whome, if euer I be o^r euer haue bene one, than praye I God that he maye with mine open shame and destruction declare it.

A nother letter w^{ri}tten by sir Tho. More to mayster Tho. Cromwell in February 02 in Marche, in the yere of our lord 1533. after the computacion of the church of England, and in the xxx. yere of the raigne of kinge Henry the eight.

Right w^{or}shipful, after my most hartly recomendacio, it may please you to vnderstand, that I haue perceued by the relacion of my sonne Koper (for which I beseeche almighty god reward you) your most charitable labour taken for me toward y^e kinges gracious highnes, in y^e p^{ro}curyng at his most gracions hande, the relief & comfort of this wo^{or}ldly heauines in which my hart stādeth, neither for the losse of goodes, landes o^r libertie, no^r of anye respect either, of this kinde of honesty that standeth in the opinion of people & wo^{or}ldly reputacio: al which maner thinges (I thāk our lord) I so little esteeme for any affection therin toward my self, that I can wel be content to tubard lese & so go them al & my lyfe therewith, without any further respice than euen this same present day, either for y^e pleasure of god o^r of my p^{ri}nce. But surely god maister Cromwel (as I by mouth declared vnto you some part, for all could I neyther than saye no^r nowe w^{ri}te) it thowoly perceith my poze hart, that the kinges highnes (whose gracious fauour toward me farre aboute al the thinges of this wo^{or}ld I haue euer moze desired, & wherof, both for the conscience of mine own true faithful hart and deuocio toward him, & for the manifold benefites of his high godnes continually bestowed byō me, I thought my self alway sure) should conceue any such oppinion of me, as to think that in my communicacion, either with the nūne o^r the freres, o^r in my letter w^{ri}tte vnto the nūne, I had any other maner minde, than might well stand with the duty of a tender louyng subiect toward bys naturall p^{ri}nce: o^r that his grace should reken in me any maner of obstinate hart against his pleasure, in any thinge that euer I said o^r did concerning his gret mater of his marriage, o^r concerning the p^{ri}mary of the Pope. Neuer would I wishe other thing in this wo^{or}ld moze life, than that his byghnes

A in these things all thze, as parfitelly knew
 my dealing & as thozowly saw my mind, as
 I do my selfe, or as god doth himself, whose
 sight passeth deper into my thoughte than
 mine owne. For sir as for the first matter,
 that is to wytte my letter or communi-
 cation (with the nunne) h whole discoure
 whereof, in my former letter I have as
 plainly declared unto you as I possible ca-
 so pray I god to withdrow that scruple and
 dout of my good minde out of the kinges
 noble bress: and none otherwise, but as I
 not only thought none harme, but also pur-
 posed good: and in that thing most, in whi-
 (as I perceue) hys grace conceueth moste
 grieffe and suspicion, that is to witte in my
 letter which I wrote unto her. And therfore
 sir sith I haue by wytting declared h truth
 of my dede, and am redy by mine othe to de-
 clare the truth of mine entent, I can deuise
 no ferther thing by me to be done in h mater
 but onely beseeche almighty God to put into
 the kynges gracious minde, that as God
 knoweth the thing is in dede, so hys noble
 grace maye take it. As to touching the
 second point, concerning his graces great
 matter of his marriage, to thentent that you
 maye see cause wyth the better conscience
 to make sute vnto his highnes for me, I
 shall as playnely declare you my demean-
 ure in that matter, as I haue already de-
 clared you in the tother, for moze plainly I
 can not.

Sir upon a tyme at my coming from
 beyond the sea, where I had bene in the kin-
 ges busines, I repayred (as my duty was)
 vnto the kinges grace, being at that tyme at
 Hamptō court. At which tyme sodenly his
 highnes walking in the gallery, brake with
 me of his great matter, and shewed me that
 it was now perceued, h his marriage was
 not onely agaynst the positue lawes of the
 church, and the written law of God, but al-
 so in such wise agaynst the lawe of nature,
 that it coulde in no wyse by the church be
 dispensable. Nowe so was it befoze my go-
 ing ouer h sea, I had hard certayn thynges
 moued agaynst the bull of the dispensacion,
 concerning the woordes in the law leuiti-
 call and the lawe deutronicall, to pzooue
 the pzohibition to be *De iure diuino*. But yet
 perceued I not at that tyme, but that the
 greter hope of the matter, stode in certayne
 sawtes that were founde in the bull, wher-
 by the bul shoulde by h law not be sufficient.
 And suche comfort was there in that point
 (as farre as I perceued) a god season, that h
 counsaile on the tother part, were sayne to
 bring forth a brief, by which they pretended
 those defawtes to be supplid: the trueth of
 whych briefe was by the kynges counsaile

suspected, and much diligence was there
 after done for the tryall of that point: wher-
 in what was finally founden, epyther I ne-
 uer knewe, or elles I not remember. But I
 rehearse you thys, to the entent you shall
 knowe that the firste tyme that euer I hard
 that poynt moued, that it shoulde be in such
 hyghe degree agaynst the lawe of nature,
 was the tyme in which as I beganne to tell
 you, the kynges grace shewed it me hym-
 selfe, and layde the Wyble open befoze me,
 and there redde me the woordes that moued
 hys hyghnes and dyuers other crudite per-
 sons so to thynke, and asked me further
 what my selfe thought thereon. At whych
 tyme, not pzeluming to loke that his high-
 nes shoulde any thyng take that point for
 the moze pzooued or impzooued, for my poze
 minde in so great a mater, I shewed neuer
 thelesse (as my duty was at hys com-
 maundement) what thyng I thought by
 on the woordes which I there redde. Wher-
 uppon hys hyghnes acceptyng benignely
 my sobaine vnaduised aunswere, commaun-
 ded me to commune ferther wyth mayster
 For nowe hys gracious almaynner, and
 to reade wyth hym a booke that than was
 in makyng for that matter. After whych
 the booke redde, and my poze oppinion est-
 fones declared vnto hys hyghnes thereup-
 on, his highnes lyke a prudent and a berre-
 ouse prynce assembled at a nother tyme
 at Hampton court, a good nombze of very
 well learned menne. At which tyme as
 farre as euer I harde, there were (as was
 in so greate a matter moste lykely to be) dy-
 uers oppinions amonge theim. Howbe-
 it I neuer harde, but that they agreed at
 that tyme vpo a certayn forme in whych the
 booke shoulde be made, whych was after-
 warde at Woze place in my lord Cardy-
 nalles chambze redde, in the presence of
 dyuers byshoppes and many learned men.
 And they all thought that there appered in
 the booke, good and reasonable causes,
 that myght well moue the kynges hygh-
 nesse beyng so vertuouse a prynce to con-
 ceue in hys mynde a scrapple agaynst
 hys maryage: whych while he coulde not
 otherwyse auoyde, he dyd well and vertu-
 ously for the acquieting of his conscience,
 to sewe and pzooure to haue hys doubte
 decydid by iudgement of the church. After
 thys, the sute beganne, and the legates late
 vpon the matter. During all which tyme
 I neuer meddled there, nor was a manne
 mete to do, for h mater was in hande by an
 ordinarie proces of the spyrytuall lawe,
 wherof I coulde lyttle skil. And yet while h
 legates wer sitting vpon h mater, it pleased h
 kings highnes to send me in h copany of mi-
 lozde Embasiare,

A of london now of duresme, in embassiate
 aboute the peace, that at our being there
 was concluded at Camerape, betweene
 his highnes and the Emperour and the
 frenche kinge. And after my comming hōe,
 hys hyghnes of hys onely goodnes (as
 farre as woꝝd hys as I was thereto) made
 me as you well knowe hys chanucellour of
 this relme. Some after which time, hys
 grace moued me againe yet estones, to
 loke & consider his gret matter, and wel and
 indifferētly to pōder such thinges as I shold
 find therein. And if it so wer that ther upō
 it shold hap me to se such thinges as shoulde
 partwade me to y part, he would gladly vse
 me amōg other of his counsaillours in y mat-
 ter. And neuer thelesse he graciously decia-
 red vnto, y he would in no wise, y I shold
 other thing do oꝝ say therein, thā vpon that
 that I shold perceiue mine own conscience
 should serue me, & that I shold first loke vnto
 god, & after god vnto him. Which moste
 gracious woꝝds, was y first lesō also y euer
 his grace gaue me at my first cōming into
 his noble seruice. This mocion was to me
 verry cōfortable, & much I longed beside ani
 thing y my self either had sene oꝝ by fether
 searche shoulde hap to finde foꝝ the tone part
 oꝝ y to tocher, yet specially to haue some cō-
 onferens in the matter, w some such of his
 graces learned counsel, as most foꝝ his part
 had labored, & most had found in the mater.
 Ther upō his highnes assigned vnto me, y
 now most reuerent fathers Archbishops
 of Canterburp & Poꝝk, w maister doctour
 ffor now his graces Almoigner, & maister
 doctoz Nicholas y Italiō frere. Ther upon
 I not only sought & red, & as foꝝ foꝝth as my
 poze witte & lerning serued me, wel wised &
 considered enery such thing as I could find
 my self, oꝝ rede in any other mā labour y I
 could get, which any thing had writtē ther-
 in, but had also diligēt cōferens w his gra-
 ces cōsellers afoꝝsaide: whose honours &
 woꝝships I nothing mistrust in this point,
 but y they both haue & will repoꝝt vnto hys
 highnes, y they neuer found obstinate ma-
 ner oꝝ fashon in me, but a mind as toward
 & as confirmable, as reson could in a mater
 disputable require. Ther upon the kinges
 highnes being farther aduertised bothe by
 thē and by my self, of my poze oppinion in y
 matter (wherin to haue bene able oꝝ mete to
 do him seruice, I wold as I thā thewed his
 highnes, haue bē moꝝe glad, than of al such
 woꝝldly cōmodities as I either thā had, oꝝ
 euer shold come to) his highnes graciously
 taking in gre my good mind in y behalf, bled
 of his blessed disposicō in y persecuting of
 his gret matter, onli those of whō his grace
 had good nōbze) whose consciens his grace
 pcepulch, wel & fully perswaded vpo y part.

And as well me as any other to whom hys
 highnes thought y thing to seme otherwise,
 he vled in his other bulines: abiding of his
 abundant godnes neuer thelesse gracious
 loꝝd vnto euery mā, noꝝ neuer was willing
 to put any mā in ruffle oꝝ trouble of his cō-
 science. After this did I neuer nothting
 moꝝe therein, noꝝ neuer anpe woꝝde wꝝote I
 therein to the pairing of his graces part,
 neither befoꝝe noꝝ after: but setting my
 minde in quiet to serue his grace in other
 thinges, I wold not so much as loke noꝝ let
 ye by me any boke of the tother part, albeit
 that I gladly red after ward diuers bokes y
 were made on his part. Noꝝ neuer would I
 rede the boke that maister Abel made on the
 tother side, noꝝ other bokes which wer (as I
 hard say) made in latten beyonde y sea, noꝝ
 neuer gaue eare to y popes pꝝoceding in the
 mater. Noꝝ euer where I had found in my
 study, a booke y I had befoꝝe boꝝowebde of
 my loꝝd of Wathē, which boke he had made
 of the matter at such time as y legates sate
 here thereupon, which boke had ben by me
 negligētly cast aside, & that I thewed him I
 wold sende him hōe his boke againe, he told
 me y in god faith he had longe time befoꝝe
 discharged hys minde of y mater, & hauing
 foꝝgotten that copy to remaine in my hād,
 had bur ned his own copy that he had therof
 at home: and because he no moꝝe minded to
 meddle any thing in the matter, he desired
 me to burne the same boke to. And vpon my
 faith so did I. Besides this, dyuers other
 ways haue I so vled my self, y if I reberfed
 thē al, it shold wel apere that I neuer haue
 had against his graces marriage any maner
 deuenure wher by his highnes might haue
 ani maner cause oꝝ occasion of displeure to
 ward me. foꝝ likewise as I am not he whi-
 ch either cā, oꝝ whō it could become to take
 vpon me y deteminacō oꝝ diccion of such
 a weighty matter, wherof diuers pointes a
 gret way passe my lerning, so am I he, that
 among other his graces faithful subiectes,
 his highnes being in possession of his mar-
 iage, wil most hartely pray foꝝ y pꝝosperous
 estate of his grace, longe to continue to the
 pleasure of god. As touching the thirde
 point, y pꝝimacy of the pope, I nothing med-
 dle in y mater. Trough it is, y as I told you,
 whē ye desired me to thew you what I tho-
 ught therein, I was my self sōetime not of y
 mind y the pꝝimacy of y se, should be begun
 by thinsirucō of god, vntil y I red in y ma-
 ter those thinges y the kinges highnes had
 writtē in his most famous boke against the
 heresies of Martine Luther. At y first redig
 wherof, I moued y kinges highnes, either to
 leane out that point, oꝝ els to touch it moꝝe
 slenderly, foꝝ dout of such thinges as after
 might hap to fal in questō betweene his high-
 nes

Anes and some pope, as betwene princes
 & popes diuers times haue done. **W**hen
 unto his highnes answered me, that he
 would in no wise any thing minilye of
 that matter, of which thing his highnes
 shewed me a secre. cause, wherof I ne-
 uer had any thing herd befoze. But sure-
 ly after that I had red his graces booke
 therein, & so many other things as I
 haue seene in that point by this continu-
 ance of his. vii. yeres sins and moze, I
 haue soude, in effect the substans of al y
 holy doctours fro saint Ignatius dis-
 ple of saint John the euangelist vnto our
 owne daies both latins & grekes, so con-
Sonant & agreeing in that point, and the
 thing by such general counsailes so co-
 firmed also, y in good faith I neuer nei-
 ther red noz hard any thig of such effect
 on the other side, that euer could leade
 me to thinke that my conscience wer wel
 discharged, but rather in right gret pe-
 rill, if I shoulde folow the other side, &
 deny the primacy to be prouided by god.
Which if we did, yet can I nothing (as
 I shewed you) perceiue any commodite
 ther could coe by that dental. For that
 the primacy is at the least wise institu-
 ted by the corps of Christendome, & for
 a gret vrgent cause in auoiding of scis-
 ms, & corroborate by continual succes-
Ssion in ze than the space of a thousande
 yere at y lest (for there are passed almost
 a thousand yeres sith y time of holy saunt
 Gregory). And therefore sith al christe-
 dome is one corps, I cannot perceiue
 how any membre therof, may withoute
 the comon assent of the body, depart fro
 the comon hedde. And than if we maye
 not lawfully leue it by our self, I canot
 perceiue but if the thing wer a treating
 in a generall counsaile, what y question
 could analle, whether the primacy wer
Instituted immediately by god, or ordi-
 ned by the church. As for the generall
 counsailes assembled lawfully, I neuer
 could perceiue, but that in the declara-
 tion of the truth, it is to be beleued and
 to be standen to, the aucthoritie wherof
 ought to be take for vndoutable. **W**els
 were there in nothing no certentie, but
 through christendome vpon euery mans
 affectionate reason, al thinge might be
 brought fro day to day into continuall
 ruffle & confusion. From which by the
 general counsailes, the spirite of god as-
 sistig euery such counsell wel asseblid,
 kepeth and euer shall kepe the corps of
 his catholik church. And verely sith the
 kinges highnes hath (as by the boke of

his honorable counsaile appereth) ap-
 peled to the general counsaile from the
 Pope, in which counsaile I beseeche our
 lord sende his grace comfortable spede,
 me thinketh in my poze minde it coulde
 be no furtherance there vnto his graces
 cause, if his highnes shoulde in his own
 realme befoze, either by lawes making
 or bokes putting forth, seme to derogate
 and deny, not onely the primacye of the
 see apostolike, but also the aucthoritie of
 the general counsailes to. **W**hich I ver-
 rely truste his highnes intendeth not.
For in the next general counsaile it may
 well happen, that this pope may be de-
 posed, & a nother substitute in his rome,
 with whom the kinges highnes may be
 very wel content. For albeit that I haue
 for mine own part such opinton of y po-
 pes primacye as I haue shewed you, yet
 neuer thought I the Pope about the ge-
 neral counsaile, noz neuer haue in anye
 boke of mine, put forth among y kinges
 subiectes in our bulgare tongue, an aunc-
 ced gretly y Popes aucthorite. For albe-
 it y a man may peraduenture finde ther-
 in, y after the comen maner of al christe-
 realmes, I speke of him as primate, yet
 neuer do I stick theron w reasoning and
 prouing of that point. And in mi booke
 against the Walker, I wrote not I wrote
 wel. v. times & yet of no mo but only saie
Peter himself, fro whose person many
 take not the primacye, even of those that
 graunt it none of his succellours. And yet
 was that boke made, printed, & put forth
 of very trowth, befoze that any of y bokes
 of the counsaile was either printed or
 spokē of. **W**ut wheras I had writte ther
 of at length in my confutation befoze, &
 for the prooffe thereof had compiled to-
 gether all that I coulde fonde therefore,
 at such time as I little loked that there
 should fall betwene the kinges highnes
 and the pope, such a bzeche as is fallen
 sith, whan I after that sawe the thinge
 likely to draw toward such displeasure
 betwene the, I suppressid it vtterly, and
 neuer put worde therof into my booke,
 but put out the remenant without it.
Which thing well declareth, that I ne-
 uer intended any thing to medel in that
 matter against the kinges gracious plea-
 sure, whatsoeuer mine owne oppinion
 were therein. And thus haue I good
 maister Cromwel, long troubled your
 maister ship, with a long proces of these
 matters, with which I neither durste,
 noz it coulde become me, to encomber y
 kinges noble grace. **W**ut I beseeche you
 for

A for our lordes loue, that ye be not so we-
ry of my most comberouse sute, but that
it may like you at such oppoztune tyme
oꝛ times as your wisdomē may finde,
to help y^e his highnes may by your good-
nes, be fully enfozmed of my true faith-
ful minde, that he may the rather by the
means of your wisdomē, and dexterite
consider that in the mater of the nonne,
there was neuer on my parte any other
minde than good: noꝛ yet in any other
thing elles, neuer was there noꝛ neuer
shall there be, any further faute founde
in me, than that I cannot in euery thig
thinke the same way that some other mē
of moze wisdomē and deper learning
W do: noꝛ cā finde in mine hart otherwise
to say, than as mine owne cōscience gy-
ueth me. Which condicion hath neuer

grovone in any thinge that ever might
touch his gractous pleasure, of any ob-
stinate minde oꝛ misse affectionate ap-
petite, but of a timorouse conscience, ris-
ing happely for lakke of better percey-
uing, & yet not without tender respecte
vnto my most bounden duty towardes
his noble grace. Whose only fauour I
so much esteeme, that I nothing haue of
mine own in al this woꝛlde except only
my soule, but y^e I will with better wyl
foꝛgo it, than abyde of hys highnes
one heauye displeasante loke. And thus
I make an ende of my long troubelous
proces, beseching the blessed trinite for
great goodnes ye shew me, and the gret
comfozte ye doe me; bothe bodely and
ghostely, to prosper you and in heauen
rewarde you.

Here folow certeyn letters

*and other thynges, which syr Thomas More wrote while
he was prisoner in the towre of London.*

C Sir Thomas More, vpon warning
giuen him, came befoze y^e kinges com-
missioners at y^e Archebisshop of Can-
terburis place at Lambeth (y^e monday
the. xiii. day of April in y^e yere of our
lord god. 1534. and in the latter ende
of the. xv. yere of the raigne of king
Henry the. viii.) where he refused the
othe than offred vnto him. And ther-
upon was he deliuered to the abbot of
westminster to be kept as a prisoner:
with whom he remained till fridaye
folowing, & thā was sent prisoner to
the towre of London. And shortly af-
ter his coming thither he wrote a
letter and set it to his eldest doughter
maistres Margaret Koper: the coppe
wherof here foloweth.

D **W**hen I was befoze y^e lordes at La-
beth, I was the first y^e was called
in, albeit that maister doctour the
vicar of Croidon was cōc befoze
me, & diuers other. After the cause of my
sendyng for, declared vnto me (wherof
I some what meruailed in my mind, cō-
sidering that they sent for no mo tēpo-
rall men but me) I desired the sight of y^e
othe, which they shewed me vnder the
great seale. Than desired I the sight of
the act of the succession, which was de-
liuered me in a printed rol. After which

redde secretly by my self, and the othe cō-
sidred with the acte, I shewed vnto the,
y^e my purpose was not to put any faute,
either in the act oꝛ any mā that made it,
oꝛ in y^e othe oꝛ any mā that sware it, noꝛ
to cōdemne the conscience of any other
man. But as for my selfe in good sayth
my consciece so moued me in the mater,
that though I would not deny to swere
to the succession, yet vnto that othe that
there was offred me, I could not swere,
wout the iubarديو of my soule to per-
petual dāpnatio. And that if they doub-
ted whither I did refuse the othe onely
for the grudge of my conscience, oꝛ for a
ny other fantasy, I was redy therein to
satisfy them be mine oth. Which if they
trulcred not, what should they be y^e bet-
ter to giue me any othe: And if they trust-
ed that I would therein swere true, thā
trusted I y^e of their goodnes they would
not moue me to swere the othe that they
offred me, perceiuing y^e for to swere it,
was against my conscience. Vnto this
my lord chawnceller saide, that they all
were verie soꝛye to here me saye thus,
and se me thus refuse the othe. And
they sayde all, that on thepze saythe I
was the very fyrst that ever refused it:
which would cause the kinges highnes
to conceue great suspicion of me & great
indignacton toward me, And therewith
they

Str Thomas
subler than
lord chawnceller