

## Thomas More Reader: Clerical Satire and Apocrypha: Part Six

### 63. "Special Cures at Saint Walery's in Picardy and the Veneration of Saints"

[From *A Dialogue concerning Heresies* ; Works, pp. 194b-196a; 197a-198b]

"What say we then," quoth he, "of the harm that goeth by going of pilgrimages, roiling about in idleness, with the riot, revelling and ribawdry, gluttony, wantonness, waste and lechery? Trow ye that God and His holy saints had not liefer they sit still at home than thus to come seek them with such 'worshipful' service?"

"Yes, surely," quoth I.

"What say we, then," quoth he, "to that I spake not of yet in which we do them little worship while we set every saint to this office and assign him a craft such as pleaseth us? Saint Loy we make an horse-leech and must let our horse rather run unshod and mar his hoof than to shoe him on his day, which we must for the point more religiously keep high and holy than Easter Day. And because one smith is too few at a forge we set Saint Hippolytus to help him. And on Saint Stephen's day we must let all our horses bleed with a knife because Saint Stephen was killed with stones. Saint Apollonia we make a tooth-drawer and may speak to her of nothing but of sore teeth. Saint Sythe, the women set to seek their keys. Saint Roch we set to see to the great sickness, because he had a sore. And with him they join Saint Sebastian, because he was martyred with arrows. Some serve for the eye only. And some for a sore breast. Saint Germain only for children. And yet will he not once look at them but if the mother bring with them a white loaf and a pot of good ale. And yet is he wiser than Saint Willgefert, for the good soul is (as they say) served and content with oats. Whereof I cannot perceive the reason, but if it be because she should provide an horse for an evil husband to ride to the devil upon, for that is the thing that she is so sought for (as they say). Insomuch that women hath therefore changed her name and instead of Saint Willgefert call her Saint Uncumber, because they reckon that for a peck of oats she will not fail to unencumber them of their husbands!

"Long work were it to rehearse you the divers manner of many pretty pilgrimages, but one or two will I tell you. The one Pontanus speaketh of in his dialogues—how Saint Martin is worshipped. I have forgot the town but the manner I cannot forget, it is so strange. His image is on his day borne in procession about all the streets. And if it be a fair day, then use they as he cometh by to cast rose water and all things of pleasant favor upon his image. But an it happen to rain, out pour they pisspots upon his head at every door and every window. Is not this a 'sweet' service and a 'worshipful' worship? And this, as I say, Pontanus writeth and telleth where it is. But this that I shall now tell you I dare as boldly make you sure of as if I had seen it myself.

"At Saint Walery's, here in Picardy, there is a fair abbey where Saint Walery was monk. And upon a furlong off, or two, up in a wood is there a chapel in which the saint is specially sought unto for the stone, not only in those parts but also out of England. Now was there a young

gentleman which had married a merchant's wife. And having a little wanton money which him thought burned out the bottom of his purse, in the first year of his wedding took his wife with him and went over the sea for none other errand but to see Flanders and France, and ride out one summer in those countries. And having one in his company that told by the way many strange things of the pilgrimage, he thought he would go somewhat out of his way either to see if it were true or laugh at his man if he found it false, as he verily thought he should have done in deed.

"But when they came into the chapel they found it all true. And to behold, they found it fonder than he had told. For like as in other pilgrimages ye see hanged up legs of wax or arms or such other parts, so was in that chapel all their offerings that hung about the walls, none other things but men's gears and women's gears made in wax. Then was there besides these, two round rings of silver, the one much larger than the other, through which every man did put his privy members at the altar's end. Not every man through both, but some through the one and some through the other: for they were not both of a bigness, but the one larger than the other. Then was there yet a monk standing at the altar that hallowed certain threads of Venice-gold. And them he delivered to the pilgrims, teaching them in what wise themselves or their friends should use those threads against the stone: that they should knit it about their gear and say—I cannot tell you what—prayers. And when the monk had declared the manner, the gentleman had a servant that was a married man (and yet a merry fellow!) and he thanking the monk for the thread, desired him to teach him how he should knit it about his wife's gear—which (except the monk had some special craft in knitting) he thought would be cumbrous, because *her* gear was somewhat short.

"It need not to tell you that every man laughed then, save the monk that cast up his rings and threads in a great anger and went his way. Was not this—Abide, by God! I had almost forgotten one thing that would not be left for a groat.

"As this gentleman and his wife were kneeling in chapel there came a good sad woman to him, shewing him that one special point used in the pilgrimage and the surest against the stone, she wist here whether he were yet advertised of. Which if it were done she durst lay her life he should never have the stone in his life. And that was, she would have the length of his gear and that should she make in a wax candle which should burn up in the chapel, and certain prayers should there be said the while. And this was against the stone the very shootanker. When he had heard her (and he was one that in earnest feared the stone) he went and asked his wife's counsel. But she, like a good faithful Christian woman, loved no such superstitions. She could abide the remnant well enough. But when she heard once of burning up the candle she knit the brows, and earnestly blessing her[self]: 'Beware in the virtue of God what ye do!' quoth she. 'Burn up,' quoth A? 'Marry, God forbid! It would waste up your gear upon pain of my life. I pray you beware of such witchcraft. Is this kind of service and worship acceptable and pleasant unto God and His saints?'

"Now when people worship saints in such wise that they make them fellows to God and images in such wise that they take them for the saints [them]selves; and then again on the other side, honor them with such superstitious ways that the paynim gods were worshipped with no worse; finally, the worst is of all, pray to them for unleeeful things, as thieves pray to the chief that hung on the right side of Christ to speed them well in their robbery, and have found him a name also, calling him Dismas, I ween, and his fellow, Gismas, to rime withall: think you not that this gear

is such among the people as rather were likely so to provoke God and his saints to displeasure that the devil should have licence and liberty therefore to work his wonders in delusion of our superstitious idolatry than so to like and content our Lord that he should shew miracles for the comprobatation \* of that manner of worshipping, which we may well perceive all reason, religion, and virtue reproveth."

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"Now as touching that third point of superstitious manner of worshipping or unlawful petitions desired of saints, as one example may serve both, if woman offer oats to Saint Willgefot to have her unencumber them of their husbands somewhat is it indeed that ye say and yet not all thing to be blamed that ye seem to blame. For as to pray to Saint Apollonia for the help of our teeth is no witchcraft considering that she had her teeth pulled out for Christ's sake. Nor there is no superstition in such other things like. And peradventure, sith Saint Loy was a farrier \* it is no great fault to pray to him for the help of our horse."

"Well then," quoth he, "sith Saint Crispin and Saint Crispian were shoemakers, it were well done in likewise to pray them sit down and mend our shone. And pray to Saint Dorothy for some flowers, because she beareth always a basketful."

"Nay," quoth I, "the things be nothing like." For the one thing pertaineth nothing to our necessity that other we may do ourselves or soon find who shall. But as for your horse is a thing wherein as well as in our own bodies a right good leech may fail of his craft, and is to many a man a greater loss than he may well recover. And albeit that God commanded that we should chiefly seek for heaven and promiseth that if we so do, all other things that we need shall be cast unto us, and would that we should in nowise live in anxiety, and trouble of mind for any fear of lack, considering that Our Father in heaven provideth meat for the very birds of the air, by whom he setteth nothing so much as he doth by us, yet willed not He the contrary but we should with our bodies labor therefore, having our hearts all the while in heaven. And willed also that we should ask it of him without whose help our labor will not serve. And therefore is our daily food one of the petitions of the Pater Noster, the prayer that Himself taught His disciples. And that horse He set not so little by but that rather than it should perish He reckoned it no breech of the Sabbath day to pull him out of a pit. And therefore indeed me seemeth that devotion to run somewhat too far, if the smithies will not for any necessity set on a show upon Saint Loy's day, and yet leeful enough to pray for the help of a poor man's horse.

"But as for your teeth, I ween if they ached well ye would yourself think it a thing worthy and not too simple to ask help of Saint Apollonia of God too."

"Ye, marry," quoth he, "and of the devil too, rather than fail, as the Lombard did for the gout. That when he had long called upon God and Our Lady and all the holy company of heaven and yet feeleth himself never the better, he began at last to call as fast for help unto the devil.. And when his wife and his friends, sore abashed and astonied, <sup>so</sup> rebuked him for calling on the devil, which he wist well was naughty, and if that he help him it should be for no good, he cried out as loud as he could again, 'Ogni aiuto è buono,' 'all is good that helpeth.' And so I ween would I," quoth he, "call on the devil and all, rather than abide in pain."

[ *IN MARGIN : A merry Tale* ]

"Nay," quoth I, "whatsoever ye say I cannot think ye would believe in the devil as that Lombard did. Ye would rather fare like another, that when the friar apposed <sup>2</sup>him in confession whether he meddleth anything with witchcraft or necromancy <sup>2</sup>or had any belief in the devil, he answered him, 'Credere en le diable, my Sir, no, Io grand fatigue a credere in Dio'—'Believe in the devil' (quoth he), 'nay, nay, Sir. I have work enough to believe in God, Aye.' And so would I ween that ye were far from all believing in the devil, ye have so much work to believe in God Himself that ye be loath methinks to meddle much with his saints."

"When he had laughed a while at our merry tales:—

"In good faith," quoth I, "as I was about to tell you, somewhat indeed it is that, ye say. For evil it is, and evil it is suffered that superstitious manner of worship. And as for that ye told of Saint Martin, if it be true, it hath none excuse, but that it nothing toucheth our matter. For it is not of worshipping but despising and disworshipping <sup>2</sup>of saints. Touching the offering of bread and ale to Saint Germain, I see nothing much amiss therein, where ye have seen it used I cannot tell. But I have myself seen often times and yet am I not remembered that ever I saw priest or clerk fare the better therefore, or once drink thereof, but it is given to children or poor folk to pray for the sick child. And I would ween it were none offence in such fashion to offer up an whole ox and distribute it among poor people.

But now as for our merry matters of Saint Walery, because the place is in France we shall leave the matter to the University of Paris to defend. And we will come home here to Paul's and put one example of both, that is to say, the superstitious manner and unleeful petitions, if women there offer oats unto Saint Willgefert in trust that they shall unencumber them of their husbands.

Ye can neither the priests perceive till they find it there that the foolish women bring oats thither, nor it is not I think so often done nor so much brought at once that the church may make money of it above the finding of the canon's horses."

"Nay," quoth he, "all the oats of an whole year's offering will not find 3 geese and a gander a week together." "Well," quoth I, "then the priest's maintain not the matter for any great covetous[ness]; and also what the peevish women pray they cannot hear. Howbeit, if they pray but to be unencumbered, me seemeth no great harm nor unleefulness herein. For that may they be by more ways than one. They may be unencumbered if their husbands change their cumbrous <sup>2</sup>conditions; or if themselves peradventure change their cumbrous tongues, which is happily the cause of all their cumbrance. And, finally, if they cannot be unencumbered but by death, yet it may be by their own, and so their husbands are safe enough."

"Nay, nay," quoth he, "ye find them not such fools, I warrant you. They make their covenants in their bitter prayers as surely as they were penned, and will not cast away their oats for nought."

"Well," quoth I, "to all these matters is one evident easy answer: that they nothing touch the effect of our matter which standeth in this: whether the thing that we speak of, as praying to

saints going in pilgrimage and worshipping relics and images may be done well—not whether it may be done evil. For if it may be well done then, though many would misuse it, yet doth all that nothing minish the goodness of the thing [it]self. For if we should for the misuse of a good thing, for the evils that grow sometimes in the abuse thereof, not amend the misuse but utterly put the whole use away, we should then make marvelous changes in the world.

"In some countries they go on hunting commonly on Good Friday in the morning, for a common custom. Will ye break that evil custom or cast away Good Friday? There be cathedral churches into which the country[folk] cometh with procession at Whitsuntide, <sup>25</sup> and the woman following the cross with many an unwomanly song; and that such honest wives as out of the procession ye could not hear to speak one such fouler ribaldry word <sup>26</sup> as they there sing for God's sake whole ribald songs as loud as their throats can cry. Will you mend the lewd manner or put away Whitsuntide?

"Ye speak of lewdness used at pilgrimages. Is there, trow ye, none used on holy days? And why do you not then advise us to put them clean away, Sundays and all? Some wax drunk in Lent of wigs and cracknels, <sup>27</sup> and yet ye would not, I trust, that Lent were fordone. <sup>28</sup> Christmas, if we consider how commonly men abuse it, we may think that they take it for a time of liberty for all manner of lewdness. And yet is not Christmas to be cast away among Christian men, but men rather monished <sup>29</sup> to amend their manner and use themselves in Christmas more Christianly."

## NOTES

(1) **Saint Loy** : English name for St. Eligius who was called Eloi or Loy. He was originally a courtier and an artist who found a school of enamel work in France. Chaucer's Prioress had as her greatest oath, "but by Saint Loy." **Saint Hippolytus** was a legendary martyr of the third century tortured to death by his own pupils, pulled apart by horses. One of the first Christian martyrs, **Saint Stephen** was stoned to death for allegedly having made blasphemous statements against Moses and against God, and for saying that he saw "the Son of Man standing at God's right hand" ( *Acts* 6:11-12; 7:56-59). **Saint Apollonia** was martyred in Alexandria around 249. All her teeth were broken by her tormentors, and she herself sprang into a fire built to execute her. She was consumed still refusing to repeat certain impious words. She is represented in art with pincers holding a tooth. **Saint Sythe** : St. Zita (known as St. Sytha) of Lucca was the daughter of a very poor Italian family who spent nearly fifty years as a much harrassed servant of the ill-tempered Fatinelli family. On one occasion, after walking ten miles to church and finding the doors locked she fell asleep on the porch. Awakening in the morning, she was dry, even though a wild storm had come up during the night. The parish priest arrived to say morning Mass and was astonished to find the doors open and St. Zita praying by the altar. No one but himself had the key, so he knew no human hands had opened the doors for her—hence the reason, as More says, "women set to seek their keys" by her. **Saint Roch** was born with a red cross on his breast. He appeared in numerous Italian cities during a plague and dissipated its scourge with his miraculous power. In 1414 the Council of Constance ordered prayers and processions in his honor during a plague and the pestilence miraculously ceased. **Saint Sebastian** was a soldier who served under Maximilian and Diocletian in the third century. He was converted to Christianity, and later was martyred for refusing to desist from proselytizing. **Saint Germain** : More probably refers to the Bishop of Auxerre (d. 448), a charitable man who preached in

Britain on two occasions, helping combat Pelagian heresy. He was honored at St. Alban's. **Saint Willgefort** : St. Willgefortis was known also as "Uncumber" and by some dozen or more other names. The legend has it that she was the daughter of the pagan king of Portugal, and that to keep her vow of chastity she prayed God to disfigure her body so as to avoid marrying her father's choice of a pagan prince. God miraculously caused a beard to grow on her chin, whereupon her father had her crucified. The name " **Uncumber** ," rose from the belief that everyone who invokes the saint in the hour of death will die "ohne Kummer," that is, without anxiety ( *Catholic Encyclopedia* , vol. XV, p. 622f). Sir Thomas More jokingly claims that women call her Saint Uncumber because "she will not fail to unencumber them of their husband!" **Saint Martin** : There were several St. Martin's but none seems appropriate for the ludicrous observation that on rainy days villagers pour the contents of their pisspots on his image as it is being carried through the village (perhaps an example of 'modern' art in his day?). **Saint Walery's in Picardy** may possibly refer to St. Valerius of Aquitaine, a disciple of St. Desiderius, and to the monastery of Saint Valéry sur Somme, but it is more likely that name, place and anecdote have been invented by More, even though he spent a week and a half in Abbeville in 1529, a town quite near Saint Valery sur la mer (See Marc'hadour's note, CW 6, p.667, n. to p. 227.)

**Saint Crispin and Saint Crispian** in imitation of St. Paul labored with their hands making shoes. They were tortured under Diocletian (ca. 285). Crispin was tied to a rack, thongs cut from his flesh and awls driven under his finger-nails. St. Crispian (or Crispinian) was thrown into a river, but he survived, only to be burned and finally beheaded. They both are patron saints of shoemakers. **Saint Dorothy** was martyred also under Diocletian. Before she was executed, her headdress, sent to her tormentor's lawyer, was found to be miraculously filled with roses and fruit. He had asked her sarcastically to send him fruits "from her bridegroom," that is, Christ. He was converted on the spot.

(2) Giovanni Pontano (1426-1503) or **Pontanus** , Secretary of State for Pope Innocent VIII in 1486, was the author of works on various subjects, including a history of the war of the French against Naples, but he is perhaps better known for his Latin *Dialogi V* , which Erasmus found somewhat 'obscene.' Of the five Dialogues, only the fifth, "*Asinus*," has any real claim to obscenity today, and that only in parts. It is a dramatic satire which, according to its translator, is, however, "crudo e selvaggia," smacking of Aristophanes (C.M. Tallarigo, II, 513-554). None of the five dialogues, however, contains the anecdote of St. Martin or the tale of St. Walery's; presumably they are once again fabrications of Sir Thomas More, though not necessarily out of whole cloth: G. Marc'hadour argues convincingly that More here *conflates* two stories from Pontano ( *Opera omnia* , 2, sig. H3) in CW 6, p. 667, n. to p. 227.

(3) **Gismas** : Fanciful reduplication from *Gis* , a shortened euphemism for "Jesus, Jesus"—compare "By Gis!" ( *Hamlet* , IV, v, 58). *Dismas* may ultimately be derived from " *Dis* ," or "Father Dis," a name for the god of the underworld, i.e. Pluto. "The Gospel of Nicodemus, an apocryphal work well known to the Middle Ages, named the penitent thief Dismas and his unrepentant fellow Gestas" (CW 6, p. 668 n. to p. 229.)

(4) **Whitsuntide** is the seventh Sunday after Easter, as well as the whole season (at least the weekend and Monday of Pentecost). It was an occasion for merry festivals and dramatic

performances, in addition to church services.

#### **64. "A Loud Preacher in Saxony"**

[From *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* ; Works, p. 1175a-b]

[Vincent] "And surely, mine Uncle, I have marvelled the less ever since that I heard the manner of their preachers there. For as you remember when I was in Saxony these matters were in a manner but in a mammering <sup>30</sup>; nor Luther was not then wedded yet; nor religious men out of their habit but suffered were those that would be of the sect freely to preach what they would unto the people. And forsooth I heard a religious man there myself, one that had been reputed and taken for very good and which, as far as the folk perceived, was of his own living somewhat austere and sharp, but his preaching was wonderful. Methinks I hear him yet, his voice was so loud and shrill, his learning less than mean. But whereas his matter was much part against fasting and all affliction for any penance which he called men's inventions, he cried ever out upon them to keep well the laws of Christ:—

"Let go [your] <sup>31</sup> peevish penance and purpose then to mend and seek nothing to salvation but the death of Christ, for He is our justice and He is our Saviour and our whole satisfaction for all our deadly sins. He did full penance for us all upon His painful cross; He washed us there all clean with the water of his sweet side, and brought us out of the devil's danger with His dear precious blood. Leave, therefore, leave, I beseech you, these inventions of men, your foolish Lenten fasts and your peevish penances. Minish <sup>32</sup> never Christ's thank <sup>33</sup> nor look to save yourself. It is Christ's death, I tell you, that must save us all—Christ's death, I tell you yet again, and not our own deeds. Leave your own fasting, therefore, and lean to Christ alone, good Christian people, for Christ's dear bitter Passion!

"Now so loud and so shrill he cried 'Christ' in their ears, and so thick he came forth with Christ's bitter Passion and that so bitterly spoken with the sweat dropping down his cheeks that I marvelled not though I saw the poor women weep, for he made my own hair stand up upon my head! And with such preaching were the people so brought in that some fell to break their fasts on the fasting days, not of frailty or of malice first, but almost of devotion, lest they should take from Christ the thank of his bitter Passion. But when they were a while nuzzled <sup>34</sup> in that point first, they could abide and endure after many things more with which, had he begun, they would have pulled him down."

#### **65. "A Vainglorious Lutheran Bishop"**

[From *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* ; Works, pp. 1221b-1222b]

[Vincent] "When I was first in Almaine, <sup>35</sup> Uncle, it happened me to be somewhat favored with a great man of the church and [of] great state, one of the greatest in all that country there. And indeed whosoever might spend as much as he might in one thing and other were a right great estate in any country of Christendom. But glorious was he very far above all measure, and that

was great pity, for it did harm and made him abuse many great gifts that God had given him. Never was he satiate of hearing his own praise.

So happened it one day that he had in a great audience made an oration in a certain manner wherein he liked himself so well that at his dinner he sat (him thought) on thorns till he might hear how they that sat with him at his board <sup>36</sup> would commend it. And when he had sat musing a while, devising (as I thought after) up on some pretty proper way to bring it in with all, at the last, for lack of a better—lest he should have letted <sup>37</sup> the matter too long—he brought it even bluntly forth and asked us all that sat at his board's end (for at his own mess in the midst there sat but himself alone) how well we liked his oration that he had made that day.

But, in faith, Uncle, when that problem was once proponed, <sup>38</sup> till it was full answered no man (I ween) ate one morsel of meat more: every man was fallen in so deep a study for the finding of some exquisite praise. For he that should have brought out but a vulgar and a common commendation would have thought himself shamed forever.

Then said we our sentences by row, <sup>39</sup> as we sat, from the lowest unto the highest in good order, as it had been a great matter of the commonweal in a right solemn council. When it came to my part—I will not say it, Uncle, for no boast—methought, by our Lady, for my part I quit myself meetly well.

And I liked myself the better because methought my words being but a stranger[']s] went yet with some grace in the Almaine tongue, wherein letting my Latin alone, me listed to shew my cunning. <sup>40</sup> And I hoped to be liked the better because I saw that he that sat next me and should say his sentence after me was an unlearned priest, for he could speak no Latin at all. But when he came forth for his part with my Lord's commendation, the wily fox had been so well accustomed in court with the craft of flattery that he went beyond me too far. And then might I see by him what excellent a right mean wit may come to in one craft that in all his whole life studieth and busieth his wit about no more but that one. But I made after a solemn vow unto myself that if ever he and I were matched together at that board again, when we should fall to our flattery, I would flatter in Latin [so] that he should not contend with me no more. For though I could be content to be out-run of an horse yet would I no more abide it to be out-run of an ass! But, Uncle, here began now the game.

He that sat highest and was to speak, was a great beneficed <sup>41</sup> man, and not a doctor only but also somewhat learned indeed in the laws of the church. A world it was to see how he marked every man's word that spake before him! And it seemed that every word the more proper it was the worse he liked it for the cumbrance <sup>42</sup> that he had to study out a better to pass it. The man even sweat with the labor so that he was fain <sup>43</sup> the while now and then to wipe his face. Howbeit, in conclusion, when it came to his course we that had spoken before him had so taken up all among us before that we had not left him one wise word to speak after."

(Anthony) "Alas, good man, among so many of you some good fellow should have lent him one."

(Vincent) "It needed not, as hap was, Uncle. For he found out such a shift <sup>44</sup> that in his flattering



he passed us all the many."

(Anthony) "Why, what said he, Cousin?"

(Vincent) "By our Lady, Uncle, not one word. But like, as I trow Pliny telleth when Apelles the painter in the table that he painted of the sacrifice and the death of Iphigenia had in the making of the sorrowful countenance of the other noble men of Greece that beheld it, spent out so much his craft and his cunning that when he came to make the countenance of King Agamemnon her father (which he reserved for the last, lest that had he made his visage before he must in some of the others [would] after either have made the visage less dolorous than he could, and thereby have forborne <sup>as</sup> some part of his praise; or, doing the uttermost of his craft, might have happened to make some other look more heavily for the pity of her pain than her own father, which had been yet a far greater fault in his painting), when he came (I say) to the making of his face therefore last of all, he could devise no manner of new heavy cheer and countenance for her father, but that he had made there already in some of the other a much more heavy, before. And therefore to the intent that no man should see what manner countenance it was that her father had, the painter was fain to paint him holding his face in his handkercher!

"The like pageant in a manner played us there, this good ancient, honorable flatterer. For when he saw that he could find no words of praise that would pass all that had been spoken before already, the wily fox would speak never a word, but as he that were ravished unto heavenward with the wonder of the wisdom and eloquence that my Lord's Grace had uttered in that oration, he fet a long sigh with an "Oh" from the bottom of his breast, and held up both his hands and lift up his head, and cast up his eyes into the welkin, <sup>as</sup> and wept!"

## NOTES

(1) **Pliny** (the Elder) (d. A.D. 79) briefly alludes to the story of Timanthes ( *not* Apelles), the artist who portrayed Iphigenia awaiting her doom at the altar, with others, including her uncle, whom Timanthes, because of the great grief of the uncle, "was unable adequately to portray." More confused the two painters no doubt because Pliny refers briefly to Timanthes then almost at once develops a lengthy discussion about Apelles, the more famous artist "who painted portraits so absolutely lifelike" ( *Trans., H. Rackham* , IX, 315, 319, 321-333).

(2) **handkercher** is an unusual spelling for "handkerchief," perhaps to distinguish the word from "kerchief," or amice, a garment folded about Christ when "He was buffeted and mocked." The word as More spelled it is found also in an amusing piece of advice for children by More's good friend Erasmus: "...dry the filth of the nose with thy handkercher....If any snit [snot] fall on the ground after thou has snit thy nose with two fingers, by and by tread it out under thy feet" ( *De civilitate moru[m] puerilium* [1532, ed. of 1540], sig. A4<sup>v</sup> ).

<sup>1</sup> I.e., the Messenger of the *Dialogue*

<sup>2</sup> Wandering, roaming

<sup>3</sup> Rather

<sup>4</sup> Horse-doctor

- <sup>5</sup> I.e., kidney, gall bladder, or bladder-stone
- <sup>6</sup> I.e., "loose," "mad" money
- <sup>7</sup> More foolish or silly
- <sup>8</sup> Sexual organs
- <sup>9</sup> I.e., gold thread produced in Venice, and very popular in the 15th Century
- <sup>10</sup> I.e., as a cure for
- <sup>11</sup> "Wise"
- <sup>12</sup> Sheet-anchor, i.e., an ultimate reliance
- <sup>13</sup> *Abide the remnant* : i.e., put up with what little was there
- <sup>14</sup> Partners, equals
- <sup>15</sup> Pagan
- <sup>16</sup> Unlawful
- <sup>17</sup> (See note)
- <sup>18</sup> Sanction
- <sup>19</sup> One who shoes horses and cures their diseases
- <sup>20</sup> Stunned
- <sup>21</sup> Questioned
- <sup>22</sup> Magic
- <sup>23</sup> Dishonoring
- <sup>24</sup> Troublesome
- <sup>25</sup> Whitsuntide (see notes)
- <sup>26</sup> *Ribaldry word* : i.e., words concerned with debauchery
- <sup>27</sup> *Wigs and cracknels* : small cakes and bisquits (often associated with drinking

ale)

- <sup>28</sup> Given up, abolished
- <sup>29</sup> Admonished
- <sup>30</sup> *In a mammering* : in doubt
- <sup>31</sup> *Your* : Folio reads *their* but More slips into direct dialogue
- <sup>32</sup> Belittle
- <sup>33</sup> Grace
- <sup>34</sup> Nurtured, educated
- <sup>35</sup> Germany
- <sup>36</sup> Dining table
- <sup>37</sup> Delayed
- <sup>38</sup> Put forward
- <sup>39</sup> *Said we...by row*: i.e., we delivered our short speeches, one after the other
- <sup>40</sup> *Letting...cunning*: i.e., putting aside my Latin, I chose to show off my skill (in

German)

- <sup>41</sup> I.e., endowed by the church with a good living
- <sup>42</sup> Annoyance, burden
- <sup>43</sup> Obliged [a rare sense of a common word]
- <sup>44</sup> Stratagem
- <sup>45</sup> I.e., lost (his praise)
- <sup>46</sup> Sky