

**THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC
LIBRARY. VOLUME THE THIRD.
A DIALOGUE OF COMFORT
AGAINST TRIBULATION**

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The English Catholic Library. Volume the Third. A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation by
Sir Thomas More

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SIR THOMAS MORE

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THE
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VOLUME THE THIRD.

A DIALOGUE
OF
COMFORT AGAINST TRIBULATION:

BY
SIR THOMAS MORE, KNIGHT,

SOME TIME LORD CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND.



SAINT GEORGE PRAY FOR ENGLAND.

LONDON:
CHARLES DOLMAN, 61, NEW BOND STREET.

MDCCCXLVII.

A
DIALOGUE
OF
COMFORT AGAINST TRIBULATION,

MADE BY THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS, WISE AND LEARNED MAN,

SIR THOMAS MORE,

SOMETIME LORD CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND, WHICH HE WROTE IN THE
TOWER OF LONDON, A.D. 1534,

AND ENTITLED THUS:

A DIALOGUE OF COMFORT AGAINST TRIBULATION,

MADE BY AN HUNGARIAN IN LATIN, AND TRANSLATED OUT OF LATIN INTO
FRENCH, AND OUT OF FRENCH INTO ENGLISH.

NOW NEWLY SET FORTH,

WITH MANY PLACES RESTORED AND CORRECTED

BY CONFERENCE OF SUNDRY COPIES.

LONDON:
CHARLES DOLMAN, 61, NEW BOND STREET.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE present volume of the ENGLISH CATHOLIC LIBRARY introduces to modern readers a treatise by Sir Thomas More, "one of the ornaments of the English nation, one of the wisest, best, and most religious of mankind."* We say *introduce*, because, with the exception of his most notable UTOPIA, the works of that eminent martyr are known, save by name, to very few of his countrymen. Whether this has arisen from the cold and depressing influence of a system antagonistic to that faith of which he testified; or whether, from his name being so tragically incorporated with the great historical events of the sixteenth century, all attention to his writings has been absorbed in the contemplation of the man; is a question on which it is needless to speculate. Let us hope that the improving spirit of the present age will repair this disgraceful neglect; and that ere long a complete and satisfactory edition of the works of Sir Thomas More will be as rife and familiar on our shelves as those of Shakspeare and Bacon.

The biography of the virtuous Chancellor requires not to be penned by us anew. The *Life* by his great-grandson Cresacre, so ably edited by the learned and acute Mr. Hunter, is one of the most charming compositions in that department of literature; and in point of fidelity and interest is only equalled by that of *Wolsey*, which

* Rev. J. Hunter, *South Yorkshire*, i. 374.

the sagacity of the same editor has restored to the real author, George Cavendish. Those by Roper,* Cayley, and, more recently, by Mr. Walter,—apart from scarcer tractates within the cognizance of the erudite—comprise every particular of importance to their subject.

As the title-page bears, and as Cresacre More narrates, the *Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* was composed during its author's imprisonment in the Tower of London in 1534. "Which subject," this his descendant well observes, "he handleth so wittily as none hath come near him either in weight of grave sentences, devout considerations, or fit similitudes; seasoning always the troublesomeness of the matter with some merry jests or pleasant tales, as it were sugar, whereby we drink up the more willingly these wholesome drugs, of themselves unsavory to flesh and blood; which kind of writing he hath used in all his works, so that none can ever be weary to read them, though they be never so long."† And again, when speaking of his various works,—Surely of all the books that ever he made, I doubt whether I may prefer any of them before the said three Books of Comfort, yea or any other man's, either heathen or Christian, that have written (as many have), either in Greek or Latin of the said matter. And as for heathen, I do this worthy man plain injury, and do much abase him, in matching and comparing him with them, especially in this point: seeing that, were they otherwise never so incomparable, they lacked yet, and knew not the very especial and principal ground of comfort and consolation, that is, the true faith of Christ, in whom and for whom, and whose glory we must seek and fetch all our true comfort and consolation: well, let that pass; and let us further say, that as the said Sir Thomas More notably passeth many learned Christians, that have of the same matter written before, so let us add, that it may well be doubted, all matters considered and weighed, if any of the rest may seem much to pass him. There is

* The edition by Mr. Singer is a worthy companion to the labour of his friend, Mr. Hunter.

† P. 110.

in these books so witty, pithy, and substantial matter, for the easing, remedying, and patiently suffering of all manner of griefs and sorrows that may possibly encumber any man, by any manner or kind of tribulation, whether their tribulation proceed from any inward temptation or ghostly enemy, the devil, or any outward temptation of the world, threatening to bereave or spoil us of our goods, lands, honour, liberty, and freedom, by grievous and sharp punishment, and finally of our life withal, by any painful, exquisite, and cruel death; against all which he doth so wonderfully and effectually prepare, defend, and arm the reader, that a man cannot desire or wish any thing of any more efficacy or importance thereunto to be added. In the which book his principal drift and scope was to stir and prepare the minds of Englishmen manfully and courageously to withstand, and not to shrink at the imminent and open persecution which he foresaw, and immediately followed against the unity of the Church, and the Catholic faith of the same; albeit full wittily and warily, that the books might safer go abroad, he doth not expressly meddle with these matters, but covereth the matter under a name of an Hungarian, and of the persecution of the Turks in Hungary, and of the book translated out of the Hungarian tongue into Latin, and then into the English tongue."* And such golden consolations and encouragements, and genuine philosophy, were inscribed "with a coal;" his enemies having enhanced the pains of incarceration by depriving him of all ordinary writing materials!

The first edition of the *Dialogue of Comfort* was printed at London by Richard Tottel, 1553, in quarto. The next, from which our present reprint is obtained, at Antwerp, in 1573, in 16mo.: and again, at the same city, in 1574 and 1578. The portrait in this first Antwerp edition was unknown to Granger and Bromley.

The "Right Honourable and Excellent Ladie," to whom Fowler dedicated the work, was Jane, second daughter of Sir William Dormer (father of the first Lord Dormer of Wenge), by his first wife Mary, daughter to

* P. 340.

Sir William Sidney, ancestor to the Earls of Leicester. She was maid of honour to Queen Mary, and married Don Gomez Suarez de Figueroa y Cordova, Count of Feria, who came to England with King Philip, and was afterwards the first duke of Feria in Spain.* According to Haro, his love for her cost the duke somewhat of rank and fortune. His words are: "*De quien se avia enamorado y aficionado de tal manera, que escrivē, que por esta causa no sucedio en el estado y Marquesad de Priego, por no aver contrahido matrimonio con la Marquesa doña Catalina su sobrina, hija del sobredicho Conde don Pedro su hermano.*" †

With the exception of adapting the orthography to that of our own day, and amending the punctuation, the present reprint is a faithful copy of its original, carefully collated with the text in the collected works of 1557.

Mr. Mitford has recently ‡ rescued from oblivion the following epitaph on More by Henry Harder, from the *Deliciae Poetarum Danorum*. This we here preserve; and conclude with the much more elegant tribute of the Jesuit Balde, the most estimable poet of his illustrious order.

Thomæ Mori Epitaphium.

Mori memento, quisquis hunc tumulum vides;
 Ille ille gentis tanta lux Britannicæ,
 Columenque voxque civium, Regis manus,
 Et purpuratorum alpha *Morus* presidium,
 Charitum voluptas, dulce Musarum decus,
 Virtutis ara, terminus Constantiæ,
 Virque omnium, dum vixit, integerrimus.
 Hic ille *Morus* ille divisius jacet
 Iræ furentis immolatus principis.
 Poena quid ista fecerit dignum rogas?
 Age, arrige aures: ipse quamvis mortuus
 Tibi dicet ipse—nempe quid dicat? Nihil.

* Collins' Peerage, by Brydges, vii. 69.

† Nobiliario de España, i. 433.

‡ Gentleman's Mag. for April, 1846, p. 384.

THOMÆ MORI CONSTANTIA.

Hic ille Morus quo melius nihil
Titan Britanno vidit ab æthere,
Funesta cùm Regem Bolena
Illicito furiasset æstu :

Audax iniquas spernere nuptias
Amore veri, propositum minis
Obvertit Henrici, tyranno
Fortior, indocilisque flecti.

Non carcer illum, non Aloysia
Dimovit uxor ; nec trepidus gener
Nec ante Patrem Margarita
Fœmineo lacrymosa questu.

Fertur monentem mîcia conjugem,
Sed non et isto digna viro, procul
Abs se remotam, cum feroci,
Ut fatuam, pepulisse risu.

Mox, quâ fluentem se Thamesis rotat
Ad destinatum funeribus locum,
Casto coronandus triumpho,
Per medios properavit Anglos.

Ductum secutâ flente Britannîâ,
Non flevit unus ; marmore durior,
Et certa despectante vultu
Fata tuens, bilarisque torvum.

Atqui sciebat, quid sibi regius
Tortor parasset, non aliter tamen,
Quâm laureatos Sulla fasciis,
Ipse suam petiit securim.

Plenus futuri quo tumulo stetit,
Postquam paventem carnificis manum,
Mercede firmasset, cruento
Colla dedit ferienda ferro.

Easter Monday, 1847.